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# Memorial Day Salutes the Valor, Sacrifice of Generations of Heroes

On Monday, we will again join together as a grateful nation in honoring the fallen men and women of our military, whose courage, commitment and sacrifice has kept freedom's light aglow for more than 240 years. Memorial Day is a solemn reminder of these altruistic heroes, some only in their teens, who safeguarded with their lives the future of our country and the world. Their ranks span the entire history of the republic, from our earliest colonial campaigns for independence through present-day defenders of liberty around the globe.

This weekend, towns will pay homage through poignant words and music, ceremonies and parades. There will be shared memories as well, of the lost husbands and fathers, siblings and friends. While absent from our midst, they eternally remain an indelible part of us and our communities.

The grand marshals of this year's local parades represent three generations of heroes. In Scotch Plains and Fanwood, the honor will be shared by World War II Navy veterans Joe Murano and Joe Schott. Cranford has designated Lee Blowe, who served with the first Marine division in Vietnam. The Westfield parade will have as honorary grand marshal the late Dr. Derrick Nelson, principal of Westfield High School. A longtime Army Reservist, Dr. Nelson embodied the definition of hero in and out of uniform, having lost his life from complications from a stem cell transplant that he hoped would save a youth he had never met.

While these men served our country in different eras, they each represent America's best, and we owe them and all who likewise gave of themselves an incalculable debt of gratitude.

A milestone year for our nation and its military, 2019 marks the 75th anniversary of the D-Day invasion in World War II. This pivotal event, on June 6, 1944, would lead to an Allied victory in Europe less than one year later. The valor of those who served during that chapter of our nation's history led them to become known as the "greatest generation," and their legacy has been reflected in those who followed in their footsteps.

This year also is the centennial of the American Legion, including Martin Wallberg Post No. 3 in Westfield, named for one of the town's fallen "Boys of '17." Since its founding a year after the close of World War I, the American Legion has been a steadfast advocate for veterans, active-duty personnel and communities through an array of programs and services nationwide.

This Memorial Day, we call upon our fellow residents to express their appreciation to our military members — living and deceased — for the precious gift of our freedom. We encourage members of the community to attend parades or other commemorations, or to simply voice their gratitude with heartfelt words. Whether they are present among us or live on only in memory, we say to all who answered the call, "thank you for your service."

# Dem Primary Fight Heating Up Between Scutari, Mahr Lines

The Democratic Primary Election coming up on Tuesday, June 4, may get heated by evidence of letters in today's issue of this newspaper. As we have been reporting, there are nine candidates running on three lines for Union County Freeholder. In addition, several hundred seats on the Union County Democratic Committee are facing competitive races in this election.

The real issue boils down to the chairmanship of the Democratic Party. The so-called "old guard" of the party — Charlotte DeFillippo, who chaired the party for 18 years, and later Jerry Green, a state assemblyman — are deceased. Mr. Green, who ran the party for five years, was replaced by Nicholas Scutari, a former freeholder and current state senator. Mayor Colleen Mahr, who is unopposed in the Primary in her quest for a fifth, four-year term as mayor of Fanwood, has been wearing T-shirts promoting the "Column B" line for her and her running mates, while Freeholder Alexander Mirabella and his wife, Phyllis, have been doing the same in plugging "Column A" for the Union County Regular Democratic Organization line of Mr. Scutari. In fact, Phyllis Mirabella is running against Mayor Mahr for county committee in Fanwood's sixth voting district.

Mr. Scutari is running candidates for county committee in six of Fanwood's seven voting districts. Voters can see sample ballots on the County Clerk's website at [www.unioncountyvotes.com/](http://www.unioncountyvotes.com/). Democrats have held all nine freeholder seats since 1998.

Among the nine candidates running for freeholder is former Fanwood councilman Jack Molenaar, who is running under Column B on the Mahr line. One position mentioned by Mr. Molenaar in a letter on Facebook is that of the county manager Ed Oatman, who previously was chief of staff for Mr. Scutari. Mr. Molenaar brought up that Mr. Oatman is a partner in the political consulting firm Parktowne Associates.

Union County's manager serves at the pleasure of the board. Five of New Jersey's 21 counties elect county executives — Atlantic, Bergen, Essex, Hudson and Mercer. The other counties appoint county administrators. Salem abolished its administrator in 2014, handing off those duties to the freeholders and county clerk.

The head of the Democratic Party has a lot of say over who runs for freeholder. The freeholders are responsible for appointing department directors at the direction of the county manager.

The change of Democratic chairs, in our view, does not have much overall impact on county operations. Internally, however, there would likely be significant changes, as there would likely be changes in department heads, not just a new manager.

In our view, high-level positions in county and state government should be advertised to the general public, and not just discussions behind closed doors. Electing a county executive would create an entirely new dynamic as that individual would become a separate branch of the county government.

In the meantime, it will be fun watching how this all plays out in the end.

## Letters to the Editor

### We Are Grateful to Community And Organizations For Book Sale Success

The Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library's 46th annual book sale was a great success. Co-chairs, Cindy Colicchio and Mike Miller, worked tirelessly to coordinate this community event, which is also our primary fundraising activity.

With eager and dedicated volunteers, generous donors, and enthusiastic customers, the Friends are able to sponsor a series of children's programs, free museum passes, librarian scholarship awards, plus numerous other endeavors that enhance the library experience.

We are grateful to the community organizations who contributed to make the sale work well: Westfield's Board of Education, Department of Public Works, Police and Fire Departments. With gratitude, we also acknowledge Trader Joe's Supermarket, Kings Supermarket, ShopRite Liquors, Peterson's Liquors and Costco for their donations of boxes and bags. In addition, we must thank the library staff for their help and who patiently tolerated our disruptions for two weeks.

As a vital asset to our town, the community's involvement of the sale helps the Friends sustain our support of our vibrant library.

**Jerry Skotnicki**  
**Suzanne O'Rourke**  
 Co-Presidents of the Friends of the Westfield Library

## Fanwood Democratic Committee Seeks Your Support In June 4 Primary

We are the Fanwood Democratic Committee seeking your support on the June 4 primary ballot on Column B, along with Mayor Colleen Mahr and a slate of Democratic Council Candidates.

We read with great interest the recent interview given by Union County Freeholder and Scotch Plains Township Administrator Al Mirabella and his wife, Phyllis, on the upcoming election. We felt it merited a response from those of us who were personally and directly affected by their representations of who we are, what we think, what we are allegedly saying and why we are running on Column B, the People First Democrats ticket.

The Mirabellas are backed by Union County Party Chairman/New Jersey State Senator Nick Scutari who has forced a Primary challenge here in Fanwood and in several municipalities across the county. The Democratic chairman has pitted Democrats against each other. While they speak of how Mayor Mahr was "offered the line but didn't take it," what they conveniently leave out is that Senator Scutari refused to allow us, many long-standing committee members, to run with Mayor Mahr on the County Democratic Party line. His motive is simple — build a party that supports him, and him alone.

So let's call this Primary challenge what it is — political retribution for supporting Mayor Mahr over him for county chair. Mayor Mahr and the Column B Council candidates did not and would not turn their backs on us for the idea of running on the county Democratic line, something that would have made their lives easier. Instead, they chose to stand shoulder to shoulder with us.

Who are we? We are Fanwood Democrats who represent a town with people of different ages, from a variety of cultural, ethnic and professional backgrounds, who are joined together by our common Democratic beliefs. Some of our members are

new to our team this year. All have impressive resumes as volunteer members of Fanwood boards and commissions, as well as other community activities. We are invested in Fanwood. Together, we are all working to build a better Fanwood and a stronger Democratic Party.

The call by the Mirabellas to bring a diversity of opinions and new ideas to our local Committee is curious since they have been absent from our meetings, social events and local efforts to elect Fanwood Democrats, all opportunities to share these so-called new ideas. Freeholder Mirabella has been on our county Freeholder Board for 22 years and has been supposedly active in our committee for 16 years, ample time to present ideas and bring new members to the committee. So, you can see why this new-found interest in rebuilding our party came as a surprise to the entirety of the Fanwood Democratic Committee.

In reading the interview, one thing is very clear — this election is indeed about more than one person. It's about two people — County Chair Scutari and Freeholder Mirabella who are both trying to control what happens here in Fanwood. Our Fanwood Democratic Committee's door has always been open to all who want to join our cause. We encourage the voters to visit our website, [fanwooddems.com](http://fanwooddems.com).

From now until June 4, we will be actively working to re-elect Mayor Mahr and the entire Column B team!

- District 1: Kathy Mitchell, Bill Lee
- District 2: Patricia "Trisha" Walsh, Steve Falco
- District 3: Scott Sinclair, Amy Boroff
- District 4: Matt Glennon, Adele Kenny
- District 5: John Celardo, Erin McElroy Barker
- District 6: Sal Fazzino
- District 7: Tom Plante, Pat Plante

## Scutari's Actions Where One Can See His Daffy Visions of Grandeur

As a registered Union County Democrat, I and other observers are watching the Union County Democratic political boss, Senator Scutari, slowly unwind into a personal Jihad against any good Democrats trying to restore inclusiveness, integrity and fiscal sanity into my county Democratic Party, and collaterally into the Union County government that has many Democratic elected officials.

Watching Scutari's actions, one can see his daffy visions of grandeur. When he came into political power last year, anyone who questioned him was shown the door. This happened to Freeholder Jalloh, who exhibited a difference of opinion behind closed doors, and then suddenly did not get the candidacy for the November election, even though he did nothing wrong as freeholder. Scutari also had the freeholders appoint Scutari's friend, who lives in Middlesex County, with a high-salary patronage job as county manager, even with no experience for this high-level position and in violation of the county's own bylaws stating that the county manager must be a resident of Union County.

Freeholders such as Mirabella and Hudak, et. al. supported this action since they were given low-work, high-salary patronage jobs previously. And Scutari in control of the Freeholders are having them dole out 4 percent, 5 percent, to 7 percent raises to those favored county people enabling this corrupted system. (all at county taxpayers expense.)

Internally, the good Democrats are embarrassed at Scutari's actions of waste, patronage, enabling a corrupted county system and say our Democratic Party is better than this. The good Democrats have mounted challenges in this upcoming June Democratic Primary,

especially in committee seats of the various county towns.

Scutari's Jihad has gone so far as for him to generate lawsuits in three towns in attempts to squelch what he apparently views as a challenge to his unfettered power. And he has put up opposition committee candidates against those that showed any displeasure to his corrupted actions. Plus he is abusing his senatorial powers to create legislature against a mayor who challenged and won over his candidate last year, this as Scutari's personal and juvenile agenda.

And just now it was found that Freeholder Mirabella, who is a Scutari committee candidate in Fanwood, has just been caught plagiarizing a news media article to make it sound like it is endorsing his committee candidacy. The news media denies the endorsement. Note, that Al Mirabella and his wife received high-salary patronage public employment even though proven they have no experience for them. Just more taint that must be excised.

To the Democrat readers, and even those unaffiliated that are considering voting Democrat: We must uphold the Democratic Party's ideals and expunge the taint done by the Jihad obsessed political boss Scutari and his minions that show obeisance in return for patronage. Where Scutari's minions are on the Primary line A, I respectfully request that the readers seriously consider the good challengers on line B, and where shown on certain ballots, also line C.

Dismiss line A for a better Democratic Party in the county and collaterally a better Union County government for us all.

**Bruce Paterson**  
**Garwood**

ABCD EFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

**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. Succor — Aid or assist
2. Oneiroscopist — One who interprets dreams
3. Sudor — Sweat or perspiration
4. Wynkernel — The European water hen

**TAMPOON**

1. A plug, such as in barrels
2. A slipper
3. A marsh or swamp
4. A wax candle

**HYLOBATES**

1. Having many legs, such as with centipedes
2. A whirlwind; a firework that rises with a spiral motion
3. Afflicted with gout
4. A genus of apes including the gibbons

**INFIBULATION**

1. Humiliation; shame; falling from grace
2. An intestinal infestation causing severe cramping and associated spasms
3. Claspings with a buckle or padlock
4. An abnormal fear of falling

**AURIGAL**

1. Pertaining to a chariot or carriage
2. Pertaining to the fleece of sheep
3. The north wind
4. A Roman mineral bath

## Policy on Political Endorsements

The newspaper will publish political endorsements in its online media, available with download of the newspaper at [www.goleader.com](http://www.goleader.com). Submittals should be emailed to [editor@goleader.com](mailto:editor@goleader.com).

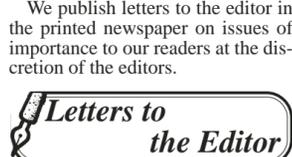
Those who would like their political endorsements also published in the printed newspaper can do so by using the paid service at <https://www.goleader.com/form/bulletin.htm>.

We publish letters to the editor in the printed newspaper on issues of importance to our readers at the discretion of the editors.

## Letters to the Editor

The Deadline is Monday 9 AM for publication on the coming Thursday. The size limit is 200-500 words.

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## Make The Cranford Development Age-Restricted

Rather than arguing about the potential numbers of Cranford public school children generated by the planned apartments at 750 Walnut Avenue (article, May 16), why not make the development an age 55+ community? This change will also address rush hour traffic concerns because many of the residents will be retirees and some will not own vehicles. There is likely a strong market demand for reasonably priced, "non-luxury" (rent \$1,500 to \$2,000 per month) adult-only apartments in the Cranford area.

**John Cantilli**  
**Cranford**

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<b>LD-21</b> includes Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood, Summit and Cranford.	<b>LD-22</b> includes Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Plainfield, Clark, Rahway and Linden.	<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]

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