



Peyton's Peek at the Week In Politics

By Paul Peyton of The Leader/Times

Ex-Sen. Pres. Lynch Gets 39 Months In Jail

Former State Senate President John Lynch, 68, was sentenced Tuesday in federal court in Newark to 39 months in prison for taking bribes from a developer. U.S. District Court Judge Stanley Chesler said during sentencing that he hoped New Jersey public officials "will get the message." Mr. Lynch was also fined \$50,000, according to *The Star-Ledger's* website.

Menendez-Kean Race Topped \$35 Million

The Robert Menendez-Tom Kean, Jr. U.S. Senate race was the second-most expensive in New Jersey history, costing nearly \$35 million, according to federal campaign finance reports and as reported in *The Star-Ledger*.

Mr. Menendez spent \$12.8 million to Mr. Kean's \$7.1 million. In addition, national parties contributed \$15 million - \$9.7 million from Democrats versus \$5.1 million from Republicans.

In 2000, current Governor Jon Corzine spent \$62 million of his own money on his U.S. Senate campaign. Total spending by all candidates that year was \$81 million. In 2002, New Jersey U.S. Senate candidates spent \$20.1 million.

Lonegan Upset Over Complaint Dropping

Bogota Mayor Steven Lonegan has said he is disappointed the state's Joint Committee on Ethical Standards rejected 24 of 35 ethics complaints without deeper investigation.

"Ultimately, this ethics board is completely useless," he told *The Courier-News*.

Mr. Lonegan filed the ethics complaints.

Pallone Said to Be Next Energy, Comm. Chair

According to njpolitics.com, *Congress Daily* reports that Rep. Frank Pallone will be the next chairman of the House Energy, Commerce and Health Subcommittee, considered one of the most powerful posts in Congress. The panel has jurisdiction over Medicaid, some parts of Medicare, the FDA and the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control.

Warren County Names Freeholder's Son Clerk

Chad Chamberlain, the son of Warren County Freeholder Director Everett Chamberlain, a Republican, was named this week to the vacated county clerk position over longtime Deputy Clerk Pat Kolb, according to *The Express-Times*. Ms. Kolb has indicated she would challenge Chad Chamberlain in the June GOP Primary Election.

Gov. Jon Corzine must approve Mr. Chamberlain's appointment.

Today's Tongue Twister

The "Triple Dipper Pension Ripper" tongue twister has appeared on blogs in reference to N.J. State Senator Fred Madden (D-Washington Township).

Mr. Madden receives \$49,000 per year as a state senator, \$79,200 in retirement pay as a former state police superintendent and is in line for an additional state job as dean of Gloucester County College's Division of Public Safety and Security, which currently pays \$76,128 per year.

Latest Financial Cents

TRENTON - Senator Ray Lesniak (D-Elizabeth) has announced that he will introduce a bill to sell the New Jersey Turnpike and other major toll roads in hopes of garnering \$10 billion for the state coffers.

"It's not rocket science, it's how you are going to generate resources," said Gov. Jon Corzine.

Garwood Dog Licenses Due January

GARWOOD - Garwood dog licenses are due during the month of January. To obtain or renew a license, visit the municipal clerk's office at 403 South Avenue in Garwood Monday through Friday, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Proof of rabies vaccination covering the entire licensing year is necessary.

The annual mayor and council re-organization meeting for 2007 will be held on Monday, January 1 at 3 p.m. in the council chambers of the municipal building, located at 403 South Avenue in Garwood. The public is encouraged to attend.

For information, please call (908) 789-0710.

Internet Lounge in Fanwood to Close

FANWOOD - The Fanwood Business and Professional Association has reported that the Internet Lounge located at 256 South Avenue in Fanwood will close its business at the end of this month.

Everything in the premises is on sale, including commercial kitchen appliances, office furniture, computers and posters, among other items. For more information, call (908) 884-8688.

DuHaime to Head NJ Campaign for Giuliani

Njpolitics.com reported last week that New Jersey Michael DuHaime, 32, would run former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani's campaign for New Jersey for the 2008 Republican presidential nomination. Mr. DuHaime will become the executive director of Mr. Giuliani's exploratory committee, to be named later this month. He would join the campaign if the former mayor formally enters the race.

Mr. DuHaime has been the Republican National Committee political director since 2005 and was the regional political director of the 2004 Bush/Cheney campaign. He has held posts with the New Jersey Republican State Committee and Bob Franks' 2000 U.S. Senate campaign.



MERRY CHRISTMAS, IRAQ...Members of the U.S. Army's Third Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the Second Infantry Division serving in Iraq will receive special protective eyewear in time for Christmas, thanks to Westfield Rotarians. When hearing of the soldiers' wish, a Rotarian fundraising committee, led by Joseph Biren, contacted Wiley X Eyewear in California to buy the equipment. Learning of the mission, the company generously donated the eyewear for the soldiers. Pictured above, Staff Sgt. James Ferrer in Iraq wishes everyone in Westfield a Merry Christmas and thank you.

Garwood BOE Advised by Prosecutor To Review Closed Session Practices

By DEBBIE HOFFMAN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

GARWOOD - Board attorney John Geppert reported at Tuesday's meeting that the Garwood Board of Education (BOE) did not violate the Open Public Meetings Act, as asserted by the Libertarian Party of Central New Jersey (LPCNJ). However, the BOE was advised in a letter from the Union County Prosecutor's Office to "review its practices" regarding entering into closed sessions.

On November 29, the LPCNJ sent a letter to Ann Rubin of the Union County Prosecutor's Offices, stating that the BOE had violated the act and asking that her office investigate the matter. The complaint was based on minutes of the executive sessions of October 18, 2005, April 6, 2006 and June 20, 2006. The LPCNJ letter can be obtained at lpsmc.org/OGTF/GarwoodBOEWready.pdf.

In a December 13 letter to the LPCNJ, Ms. Rubin concluded that the BOE did not commit any wrongdoings but should "review its practices regarding resolutions for closed sessions and minutes of those sessions where official action is taken to provide more details in the appropriate case."

The board's monthly meeting Tuesday night began with the handing out of certificates to the district's honor society members for the first marking period. Dozens of children and their families were in attendance.

Monty Brown, chairman of the building and grounds committee, reported that necessary repairs to the school's heating and cooling system would cost \$18,000 to \$21,000. The board said it would look into ways to offset those costs, including the possibility of utilizing grant money.

The board approved the use of the gym by the Garwood Recreation Department for basketball games on Saturdays in January and February. The board is "working with the administration to come up with a plan" to handle custodial overtime, board member Christine Guerriero said.

Board President Adele Lewis reported that the Education Foundation of Garwood is increasing their scholarship to two Garwood seniors from \$250 each to \$500.

The after-school program of Lincoln/Franklin School with the YMCA of Westfield awaits approval from the state. The district will bus students to the Y in Westfield while the agency waits for the state license.

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