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 Horace R. Corbin
 PUBLISHER
 Suzette F. Stalker
 ASSISTANT EDITOR
 Joanna B. Marsh
 MARKETING DIRECTOR
 Gail S. Corbin
 GENERAL MANAGER
 Jeanne Whitney
 REPORTER
 Richard P. Murray
 MARKETING REPRESENTATIVE
 Paul J. Peyton
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 David B. Corbin
 SPORTS
 Karen M. Hinds
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POPCORN™
One True Thing: No Doubt About It
 By Michael S. Goldberger
 One Popcorn, Poor • Two Popcorns, Fair • Three Popcorns, Good • Four Popcorns, Excellent
 3 & 1/2 popcorns
 Perhaps just one viewer will be stirred enough to leave his or her fortune to cancer research. Or maybe a gifted medical student will be swayed to choose oncology as their specialty after viewing *One True Thing*.
 That's the type of noble reaction you hope results from this searing tale of a valiant woman's personal battle with cancer. It would seem justified...all that terrible suffering.
 Yet while this film is certainly more than a clarion call to vanquish the dread disease, as entertainment this is no casual night at the Bijou. But rather, a sensitive, intelligent movie of moments, both large and small moments, philosophical and mundane moments.
 So prepare for documentary-strength honesty if you venture forth to see Karen Croner's no-holds-barred adaptation of writer Anna Quindlen's novel. The sophisticated tearjerker isn't for everyone. With solid direction by Carl Franklin, excellent production standards, and a fine cast led by the inimitable Meryl Streep, the dramatic consequences are haunting.
One True Thing's contemporary version of cinema verite puts us as close to fatal illness as the movie experience will allow. Certainly no major film in recent memory details the progressive decline of a terminally-ill protagonist with such unremitting, unsentimental pitch. Miss Streep in the swan song role is sure to score an Academy Award nomination, with a similar nod likely for makeup.
 While the trite outline of a loving family reaching greater understanding through one member's mortal illness is certainly familiar, Director Franklin's artistically subtle handling of this and several other profound issues rarely feels manipulative.
 Of primary focus is the mother-daughter tension portrayed when Ellen Gulden (Renee Zellweger) returns home from her Big Apple career to care for Mom.
 There is a hint of cynicism as comedy relief to the crucial doings. For example, when Ellen informs her editor at *New York Magazine* that she needs a hiatus in order to nursemaid her cancer-stricken Mom, he offers her a raise.
 Ellen asks incredulously, "You mean you think I would say my mother had cancer to get a raise?" More dry than defensive, he reminds her, "This is New York."
 Partial to Pop (William Hurt), daughter Ellen has always idolized her diletantish dad. A Harvard grad like her father, she seeks only his approval, taking bubbly Mom's ever-present support for granted. Later, as Ellen's odyssey of rediscovery evolves, what mother actually knows will surprise her.
 The Misses Streep and Zellweger are impressive in their superb rendition of the archetypal, toe-to-toe relationship.
 Dad, George Gulden, enjoys chairmanship of his university literature department and the adulation of nearly every co-ed on campus.
 In a full-tilt swing of the emotional pendulum, this latter item isn't lost on the revisiting daughter. Suddenly, her heroic father is a wenching ogre, an obnoxious, self-important boob whose selfish schedule hasn't been compromised in the least since his wife was diagnosed with cancer.
 But the author isn't as tough on George

THE word™
 HISTORIES
 SLEUTHS
 BY
 JO & JOHN JACOBSON
INDEMNIFY
 Most people who serve as board directors of profit and nonprofit organizations do not want trouble for their troubles, and so they ask to be indemnified, "protected against damage, loss or injury." In order to protect such people from harm, the institution will purchase an indemnity insurance policy.
 The word indemnify was derived from the following combination of Latin elements and affixes: in- meaning "not" plus damnum, "harm" plus the connective suffix -fy, which comes from facere, "to make." When combined, the word literally means "to make not hurt."
 The damnum element is related to the Latin verb damnare, "to fine, penalize, condemn, and is also the source of one of the English language's most popular four-letter words, damn. And so we are absolutely correct when we say that we'll be damned if we will serve on any board unless we are properly indemnified.

Manipulative Campaign Strategies Are Disservice to the Voting Public

Every fall, our communities encounter what come to be known as "silly season" — the political frenzy of campaigning before elections. Most of the time, it's a vibrant and essential element of our democracy. This year, local campaigning has started earlier and with greater vigor. Unfortunately, there's a stench in the air, as evidenced by the manipulative polling going on, designed to misdirect voters and discredit opponents.
 We are particularly appalled by the recent poll conducted by Westfield Mayor Thomas C. Jardim's staff, and partially funded by the State Democratic Committee, for these sinister purposes. The public is also incensed, as evidenced by the numerous telephone calls we received, along with several "Letters to the Editor" which have been published in this edition of the newspaper.
 Sure, it's stressful for those running for office, and it shows in the rhetoric. But that's no excuse. Remember, if these individuals act this way during a campaign, what can one expect of their actions when in office, while making determinations for our community, while spending your money, while serving as role models for our children? And, it's not

good enough to say "it wasn't me, it was one of my staff." You are known by the company you keep.
 We don't want this kind of behavior in Westfield. And let's not lose perspective of what it's really all about: friends and neighbors working together for better local government.
 This newspaper receives criticism, too, from time to time. Note the letter on this page from Francis X. Quinn of the Westfield Republican Club. Some of it we deserve, as we are not perfect. Fortunately, the public is a lot smarter than many realize, and they sort it out at the voting booth.
 This newspaper is independent — one of the few remaining in the State of New Jersey. We are committed to our obligations to the community, to our readers, and to our advertisers. As part of this, we report events and publish commentary on the political process. We endeavor to work with everyone fairly, professionally, and to the best of our ability.
 We commend all with a good heart who seek public office. To others, we suggest: "Shoot the messenger if you wish, but you'd better trust the people."

Letters to the Editor

Gail Vernick Releases Statement On Telephone Poll by Democrats

It's very disheartening to see, especially on the local level, this extremely negative campaign tactic authorized by Mayor Thomas C. Jardim.
 This was a completely unethical telephone survey, with its sole purpose being to discredit my record on Town Council, and to disparage my husband, in an attempt to convince Westfield citizens not to vote for me in the upcoming Mayoral election.
 Westfield residents have never been subjected to this type of political campaign, consisting of lies and innuendo. Mr. Jardim should bear re-

sponsibility, and accountability for his actions, and apologize to the citizens of Westfield.
 I put a great deal of importance on integrity, honesty and personal ethics. I feel the voters of Westfield deserve and expect to have a Mayor with these qualities.
 Candidates should run on their own accomplishments, and what they hope to bring to the office if elected.
Gail S. Vernick
 Republican Mayoral Candidate
 Westfield

We Cannot Allow Sleaze at State, National Level to Get Foothold Here

As a 20-year resident of Westfield, I have never had an occasion to write a "Letter to the Editor." Now, I feel compelled to do just that. On Tuesday, September 15, I received a call claiming to be a survey on local issues.
 The first few questions were balanced and evenhanded, but when I responded that if the Westfield mayoral election were held today, I would vote for Gail Vernick (as I will do in November), the questions took on a decided pro-(Mayor Thomas C.)

Jardim, anti-Vernick slant.
 Statements that were positive for Mayor Jardim were followed by statements that were obviously intended to be derogatory to Mrs. Vernick - such as "Gail Vernick voted for tax increases, stating that people in this area are used to paying high taxes anyway." After completing this "survey," I took my turn to question my "surveyor."
 She indicated that she works for a polling group that works for the Democratic Party (and only the Democratic Party) and that she was calling from Washington, D. C. I am offended and alarmed that a local mayoral contest would use these underhanded tactics — especially if, as my questioner said, they are in Washington, D.C. I must assume she was telling me the truth about her affiliation, otherwise someone else is trying to muddy the waters of this election.
 Up to this point, I have tried to be supportive of Mayor Jardim, but if this information proves to be true, I am appalled at this unethical campaign ploy. I'm sure other residents are smart enough to see through this tactic as well, but we should let it be known that this kind of "campaigning" should have no place in our town.
 We cannot allow the sleaze we've all grown accustomed to seeing on a state and national level to get a foothold in our local elections. It is a terrible disservice to our lovely town.
Sherry Rogers
 Westfield

Pulse Survey Criticized For 'Unscientific' Data

I am writing to express my dismay over the Pulse Survey (September 17 issue) which was conducted by *The Westfield Leader*. I cannot help but notice the disclaimer which follows the highly unscientific results. I have asked myself the question "Why print the information at all?"
 Without informing us, the readers, as to who conducted the survey, how many people were surveyed, and what time of day the survey took place, it is impossible for us to derive any significance from the dribble printed.
 I was hoping the new publisher of *The Westfield Leader* would print unbiased, straight forward facts. But it seems the newspaper will be used as a self-serving political avenue for the Democratic party. What a shame that the citizens of Westfield can't be offered facts for them to make their own informed decision.
Francis X. Quinn
 Former Vice President of the Westfield Republican Club

Mr. Greco Sets Record Straight on his Position

Due to two misleading headlines in your newspaper regarding my position on a proposed parking deck, I am directly responding to a letter that was printed in last week's newspaper. To clear up any misconceptions, my position is as follows.
 · I am neither in favor nor against a parking deck in town.
 · I am in favor of a town referendum to decide once and for all if the residents of Westfield want a parking deck.
 · If the residents vote in favor of a parking deck, I recommend it be located at the corners of North and Central Avenues due to the least amount of negative impact to homeowners. I remain open minded to the residents decision in this matter.
Norman N. Greco
 Mayoral Candidate
 Westfield

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 General News - Friday 4pm
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How To Reach Us
 E-Mail - press@goleader.com
 Phone - (908) 232-4407
 Mail-PO Box 250, Westfield 07091
 PO Box 368, Scotch Plains 07076
 In Person - 50 Elm St., Westfield
Drop-Box - at Nuts n' Plenty
 407 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains
Submittal Formats
 Photos - B/W and Color
 No Panoramic or Polaroid
 Typed, not handwritten
 Upper and lower case
 Need name & daytime phone
 For our complete editorial policies request a copy of our Policy Guide

How Can Town Justify Cost of Officer at Wilson?

The following is an open letter to Mayor Thomas C. Jardim and the Westfield Town Council.
 It has recently come to my attention that you have approved the placement of a police officer at the intersection of Mountain Avenue and North Chestnut Street for the sole purpose of assisting children crossing this street to attend Wilson Elementary School.
 The police officers who will be assigned here will have no additional police duties such as patrolling the neighborhood or answering emergency calls during non-crossing hours. They will be paid overtime at a cost to all the taxpayers of Westfield of approximately \$60,000 per year.
 The residents of the northside who demanded a police officer to cross their children refused the offer from the town of a special crossing guard who is a former police officer but would be paid a lower wage. I would like to know from all of you how you can justify such an outrageous waste of taxpayer money, especially when the rest of the town is serviced by perfectly capable crossing guards and other intersections are far more dangerous.
 I did try to confirm this information by contacting Mayor Jardim to no avail. I am greatly disappointed in him as well as the entire Town Council. November 3rd is not far away.
Lynn Feldman
 Westfield

HUNG UPII

Son Must Be Told of Dad's 'Unacceptable' Behavior

By Milt Faith, Executive Director
 Youth and Family Counseling Service



Here are some questions that I was unable to answer recently and I would like to address:
A daughter-in-law writes:
 My husband is blind to the fact that his father is a lush and that he flirts with me whenever he drinks. My father-in-law is also critical of my husband. He is now talking about staying with us for weeks at a time whenever he comes East. I can't permit this. What should I do?
Answer: I don't know what your husband knows, but I would make him aware of everything. He must talk to his dad about this unacceptable behavior and I would encourage the two of you to discourage your father-in-law to remain too long at any point. I would also see to it that someone else is home whenever he visits. If everything else fails, have him stay at a local motel.
A mother writes: I think my son has gay leanings. He doesn't date (he is 17 years old), isn't interested in sports, likes to watch movies alone and seems effeminate. My husband and I want him to play football in his senior year and hope he will feel more like a man.
 Also, girls like football players and he may become attracted to them by the attention they give him. Are we being realistic?
Answer: No. Absolutely not. You don't "make" a gay person into a straight person. I don't even know if your son is gay. He may be depressed, withdrawn, insecure, fearful of rejection by girls. I suggest you talk to him about his possible depression and encourage him to talk about anything that concerns him.
 Do not judge, criticize or "force" him into anything that will make him uncomfortable. If your concern continues, recommend he see a therapist, at least once. Again, do not push him into anything he would resist, it would only increase possible depression and anxiety.
A senior citizen writes:
 I do my laundry at a local laundromat every Tuesday morning before I go to my part-time job. Unfortunately, I always meet a woman who never stops talking and insists that I listen to her and her problems. I can't stand it. Should I walk

away from her, bring letters to write, or say something to her?
Answer: Why bother? Do your laundry on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday mornings.
An anxious mother writes: My daughter married recently. She and her husband will be moving to Oregon. I had always envisioned that she would always live near me in New Jersey. My husband has a business and asked my son-in-law to become a partner.
 He refused saying he had a wonderful job in a construction business in Oregon, and both he and my daughter loved the outdoors (mountain climbing, etc). I'll miss her sorely and I am trying to figure out how to keep her here.
Answer: I don't think your daughter wants to be a "kept" woman. I appreciate your feelings regarding your expectations and desires to have your daughter and son-in-law live near you but we do live in modern times where-in many adult children live all over the country.
 They seem set to move and I could support their decision. You want to keep the contacts — avenues of communication open. Phones, Fax machines, E-mail, airplanes — all of these can help bridge the geographical distance. Be loving and refrain from establishing an emotional distance.
A senior writes: I write a small column in our nursing home's newsletter. I thought your readers would enjoy two of my favorite "sayings" which I printed. It brought a lot of chuckles to my fellow residents. They are: "At my age the happy hour is a nap." And the second is: "Wine is my favorite four-letter word."
Answer: They are great. I'm getting worried; even I can identify with these sayings.
A reader writes: With the influx of so many new TV shows, can you recommend some of your favorites?
Answer: I could list the shows I successfully avoid since there are so many. The two shows I try to catch and enjoy and recommend highly are "Frasier," the best TV comedy, and "The Practice." Try to catch them.

WESTFIELD GIRLS SCOUTS
Westfield Girl Scouts Announce Assortment of October Events
 Written by Girl Scouts for Girl Scouts

With school beginning early this year, so have the activities. The Westfield Girl Scouts are happy to bring to you our exciting variety of October events.
 On Tuesday, October 6, all Senior Girl Scout troops will meet from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Westminster Hall in The Presbyterian Church in Westfield. We welcome all of our new Senior troops to the meeting. For additional information, please call Anne Frontling at (908) 654-8237.
 The Westfield Girl Scout Service Team will meet at the Washington Rock Girl Scout Council on Wednesday, October 14, from 9:15 to 11:30 a.m. All members are urged to be present.
 The Westfield Girl Scouts' celebration of 80 years in Girl Scouting, combined with founder Juliette Low's birthday, will be held on Saturday, October 31, at Westminster Hall in The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, from 1 to 3 p.m.
 This celebration will feature a cake decorating contest. Prizes for each level of scouting (Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette and Senior), will be awarded within each of the following three categories:
 1. Best "New" Girl Scout cookie.
 2. Most Original Girl Scout cupcake.
 3. Best Girl Scout Law theme cake.
 All cookies, cupcakes and cakes must be dropped off at Westminster Hall at 11

a.m. on October 31 for judging.
 An admission charge of \$3.50 per person includes a Founder's Day patch, cake, cookies, beverages, dancing, and the opportunity to participate in a service project, the result of which will be distributed to a local community organization. In addition, many door prizes will be awarded.
 Birthday celebration registration forms must be returned to Mary Bannworth, 43 Unami Terrace in Westfield, by Monday, October 12. Registration forms were provided to each leader in the troop registration packets. For further information, please call Mrs. Bannworth at (908) 317-9291.
 The annual Girl Scout Hayride will be held on Sunday, November 22, at the Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside. Registration forms for this event must be returned to Malissa Cass, 826 Summit Avenue in Westfield, by Friday, October 16. Please call Mrs. Cass at (908) 233-6226 for more information.
 We welcome all new Girl Scouts and their leaders into our community. A special welcome to our new troop established at the Redeemer Lutheran School under the leadership of Laurie Concanon. Welcome all!
 This column is prepared monthly by Westfield Girl Scouts for the Westfield Girl Scout community and for the public.

Letters to the Editor

Mr. Goldman Responds To Poll Controversy

As a member of the Town Council and Chairman of the Westfield Democratic Committee, I distaste negative campaigning of any kind. I ran a positive issues-oriented campaign for Town Council in 1996 and intend to run for re-election in the same manner, on a positive note, emphasizing issues and my ideas.
 I am disturbed that the valuable time of the Town Council at this week's meeting was on a matter not involving town business.
 Mayor Thomas C. Jardim, Third Ward Councilman John J. Walsh and I have a lot to be proud about in terms of accomplishments over the past two years, and that is what we will talk about in the campaign.
 Others may want to turn the Town Council meetings into a political forum. We will not. Let's get on with the business of the town.
Lawrence A. Goldman
 Fourth Ward Councilman
 Westfield

Please See More Letters On Page 5

Hopefully Issue Of Changing Street Remains Open Question

Hopefully, the matter of the renaming of the "Clifford Street" to "Shalom Way" remains an open question before the Scotch Plains Township Council. The 4-1 vote to approve the name change still leaves pending the 100-name petition, opposing the name change, which Councilman William F. McClintock stated has not been rejected.
 Councilman Robert Johnston needlessly equivocates when he suggests that the solution may be "to leave both names there..." thereby ducking the question.
 Though I do not live in the affected area, I do live in Scotch Plains. On the merits, this case involves a religious question, as to which the township should not have involved itself under the first amendment.
Alan R. Howe
 Scotch Plains

