

## District Pays Tribute to Retirees, Quarter Century Staffers at Gala

By MICHELLE H. LePOIDEVIN  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — The 12th Annual End-of-the-Year Gala, which honors retirees and 25-year employees in the Westfield School District, was held recently at the Westwood in Garwood.

"It's very flattering to be honored by your peers and the board for your years of service," stated Michael Barba, who is retiring after 38 years as a teacher in Westfield.

Mr. Barba, who taught math at Roosevelt Intermediate School, also matriculated for three years in Ohio.

The retiree, who received a stipend toward the purchase of a gift of his choice, as did other retirees, cited the "cooperation of administration, support of parents and kids who want to learn" as aspects which make Westfield a unique district.

Gaile Boothe, retiree and former algebra and geometry instructor at Westfield High School (WHS), noted that Westfield's "overriding interest in the academics" is a boon to the district.

Mrs. Boothe, who has chaired groups including the Young Republicans Club and the Junior Friends of the Symphony, taught for 30 years and holds previous experience in Silver Springs, Maryland and Newton, Massachusetts.

Fellow retiree, Anthony Libretti, who has taught Latin and Exploring World Languages at the intermediate schools, spent 14 years in Westfield. A teacher for 27 years, Mr. Libretti stated that he is impressed with how quickly students "think on their feet" and "rise to the occasion."

"I had a very supportive group of people with whom to work and had six very rewarding years," stated Connie Odell, retiring principal of Washington Elementary School.

A 29-year veteran educator, Ms. Odell has taught in Vermont, Illinois and New Jersey. She was also employed by the New Jersey State Department of Education for eight years.

Above all things, Ms. Odell said she will remember her students the most.

"They are the reason I've been doing this (teaching) all of these years," she concluded.

WHS English teacher and Chairwoman of the English Department, Paula Roy, revealed that she admires the "opportunity to engage students in thoughtful, reflective ideas and issues through the lens of literature" which is provided by the staff and curriculum in her department.

Ms. Roy noted that she has mixed

feelings about retiring, but will now be pursuing a year of writing. She noted that she is especially proud of having established the Westfield Writing Project in the mid-1980s for faculty who teach kindergarten to grade 12 and for instituting classes for women's studies.

Art teacher and retiree at WHS, Arthur Silveira, has taught at the school since 1981. He stated that he is proud to have fostered creativity in the lives of his students.

Commenting on his retirement, Mr. Silveira, who taught in the Irvington public schools from 1966 to 1968, said, "It's a strange time in your life. I have mixed emotions. There is a certain sadness and interest in what lies ahead for you."

Mr. Silveira will work on restoring old boats, canoes and trucks in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, his new residence. He has commuted from Bucks County to educate his students.

Gregory Bremus stated that he will keep his silver, miniature punchbowl which he and fellow members of the 1998-1999 Quarter Century Club received for their service of 25 years in the district, by his collection of lighthouses.

Mr. Bremus, who has taught environmental science for 25½ years was attending graduate school when he became employed by the district for a new science course.

He noted that one of his former students, the mayor of a town in Indiana, has credited Mr. Bremus with the decisions he has made as mayor. Some students have returned to thank him for the extra time he took with instruction.

Shaun Cherewich, an English teacher at WHS, was honored that the district "recognizes longevity" in its employees. A 32-year veteran teacher, Mr. Cherewich has also taught in the Hackensack school system and in a school outside of Peekskill, New York.

After calling the WHS English Department "outstanding," Mr. Cherewich noted that he has also coached football and lacrosse and helped to write the course of study for a sophomore British Literature class.

Karen Goller, another English teacher at WHS and Quarter Century Club member, revealed that she is proud that she has made an investment in the future by becoming a teacher.

She credited the unique Westfield Writing Project for keeping teachers committed to excellence in teaching and refining their skills. She stated

that she enjoys seeing her students "learn the value of their voice in writing — especially their poetic voice."

Robert Brewster, who was also honored for 25 years of teaching in Westfield, taught for two years at Rumson Fairhaven High School. A graduate of Montclair State University, he came to the district through the Alternate Route plan which allows a teacher to instruct a class before obtaining a formal teaching certificate. He acquired the certificate soon after beginning his new position.

A teacher of science and biology, Mr. Brewster noted that he is proud to be a part of a district that is composed of teachers who are genuinely concerned and "will go the extra yard and give more in-depth material" to their students.

Karin Ninesling, an English teacher at WHS who was also honored for 25 years of service, also taught at Roosevelt.

"I look back on my 25 years with fondness. I appreciate the board for recognizing my accomplishments," she noted.

Bette Tuthill, a fourth grade teacher at McKinley Elementary School, stated, "I have only had wonderful experiences in Westfield."

"Everyone is very interested in what they're doing and very mindful of each other," stated Ms. Tuthill regarding her colleagues in the district.

Next year, she will teach reading, writing and math as part of the Achievement Program at Franklin Elementary School.

Elsa Hahn, Franklin School; Donna Homish, WHS; and Linda Pastir, WHS, were also honored as Quarter Century Club members.

Arlene Borges, Jefferson Elementary School; Joseph Francaviglia, Maintenance; Janet Gibson, Franklin Elementary School; Eileen Kirschner, Substitute; Beverly Landon, Human Resources; John Oshust, WHS; Blanche Perlman, Special Services; John Scafaria, WHS; Walter Buda, Edison and Roosevelt Intermediate Schools and Grace Salomon, McKinley School, were honored as retirees.

Jeanette Brannan, WHS; Janet Buda, Instruction; Jorge Concepcion, Wilson; Salvatore DeSimone, Tamaques Elementary School, and Margaret Longo, Edison School were honored for their 10 years of service to the schools upon their resignations earlier in the year.

## Special Needs Program Resumes As Town Agrees to Pick Up Cost of Bus

By KIM KINTER  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — Westfield's Recreation Department has reversed its planned changes to Westfield's free, seven-week summer recreation program for children with special needs, following dissatisfaction recently voiced by parents.

With the start of this year's program on Monday, June 28, children will continue to be bussed to the program, a service the Recreation Department had proposed eliminating. The 20-year-old program will continue to operate from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays.

The Town of Westfield will absorb the increase in costs associated with busing the students, which could total \$5,000, Town Administrator Edward A. Gottko said.

It is still being explored whether the children can go to the Westfield Memorial Pool an additional day during the week. The children are now scheduled to go to the pool two times a week. In previous years, children participating in the program went to the pool three days a week.

For the parents of the approximately 15 children who attend the program, reinstating the offerings is a relief.

It was just in April that parents of children in the program received a letter from Glenn Burrell, Director of Recreation, informing them of some changes in the program, including the elimination of busing and a requirement that parents pick up their children for lunch from noon to 1 p.m.

Eileen Mitchell of Hort Street has a daughter who has attended the program for the last five years.

"Kids with special needs have a great difficulty moving," she said. "If you take away the transportation,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

## D.O.T. Officials Say T-Shaped Intersection Would Replace Circle

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — New Jersey Department of Transportation (D.O.T.) officials told the Westfield Town Council last week that the department's proposal for a T-shaped intersection is the best means of improving traffic flow and safety at the existing South Avenue traffic circle.

D.O.T. officials, however, said they intend to keep meeting with town officials regarding the matter. The project was first unveiled to the council in 1996. That governing body supported the plan through a resolution.

While the current council has yet to take a formal stand on the project, a letter from Mayor Thomas C. Jardim published in the June 10 issue of *The*

*Westfield Leader* indicated that he wants to preserve the circle.

"A redesign of the intersection, keeping the circle intact, is a much less expensive proposition," he stated.

Mayor Jardim said in his letter that the D.O.T. should have been given the opportunity to look at alternatives rather than simply eliminating the circle. He said due to the cost, the project has yet to be included in state budgets.

The proposed D.O.T. project has met with opposition from both state and local historic preservation groups.

The project calls for replacement of the circle with a T-shaped intersection controlled by signalization. All existing signals on State Route 28, known locally as South Avenue,

will be modified, along with pedestrian crossings.

In March, the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office (NJHPO) said the project, as currently proposed, would have an "adverse effect on historic architectural properties" within the area of the circle, including the United Methodist Church and Monument to World War I Veterans, both of which are eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places along with the Northside Train Station.

The Westfield Fire Department Headquarters has been on the national list since December 8, 1980.

Following the issuance of that report, the Westfield Historic Preservation Commission (WHPC) is now

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

ROBERT A. FUHRMAN, M.D., F.A.C.P.  
AND  
MARY T. HERALD, M.D., F.A.C.P.

ENDOCRINE METABOLIC ASSOCIATES

WELCOME

MICHELE L. BERGER, M.D.

(FORMERLY of HIP-MOUNTAINSIDE)

TO THEIR PRACTICE  
OF INTERNAL MEDICINE

APPOINTMENTS ARE AVAILABLE AFTER  
JULY 1, 1999

552 WESTFIELD AVE • WESTFIELD  
(908) 654-3377

COMCAST @ Home  
High Velocity Internet Service. It's Here.

- No More Dialing
- No More Busy Signals
- No More Phone Lines
- Internet Using TV Cable
- Instantaneous Connection
- 3 E-Mail Addresses



http://westfieldnj.com  
speed@westfieldnj.com 908-654-4100 (24 hrs)

NJBEST COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN

## Putting College Within Your Child's (and Your) Reach

Whether you're a parent of a newborn or a preteen, you're right to be concerned about paying for college. Just like buying a home or financing your retirement, paying for college takes planning. It's a big investment, but one that research shows will allow your children to enjoy a lifetime of higher earnings. 1997 Census Bureau figures show that people with bachelor's degrees earn 76% more than people without them, according to an article in the *Washington Post*, 10 December 1998.

New Jersey offers many excellent student financial aid programs. Although scholarships, loans, parents' current income and students' part-time jobs help, family savings usually are very important in paying costs. Now, there's a revolutionary way for you to save. According to *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine*, February 1999, the best state tuition-savings programs "promise to be a popular—and sensible—way for parents...to save for their children's education." In New Jersey, we're one of the states lucky enough to have our own program: NJBEST.

**How NJBEST Works.** You simply set up an account for your child's future college costs. You can contribute as little as \$25 per month. With over \$75 billion under management, The New Jersey Treasury Department's Division of Investment manages the NJBEST fund. When your child is ready for college, NJBEST makes your savings available to pay for it.

**NJBEST Federal and State Tax Advantages.** Contributions to NJBEST grow tax-deferred until the money is taken out for



Scott B. Freedman has 20 years of experience in college financial aid, is past president of the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs, and is Executive Director of the New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

college costs. When the student uses the money for college, it is federally taxed at his or her lower tax rate, not at yours. And NJBEST earnings are free of state tax when used to pay eligible expenses. Plus, you won't have to pay a capital gains tax.

**NJBEST and Financial Aid: Working Together.** If you qualify, the first \$25,000 saved in NJBEST will be excluded from consideration in the award of state-funded, need-based financial aid. NJBEST is the only state tuition-savings program that offers a \$500 scholarship to students who attend a New Jersey college or university.

**NJBEST: Not Just for College in New Jersey.** NJBEST savings can be used for undergraduate or graduate study anywhere in the United States.

The only requirement to establish an NJBEST account is that either the contributor or the beneficiary is a New Jersey resident. There are no application fees or income and age requirements. You don't even have to be the child's parent. Grandpa or Grandma can start an NJBEST account too. In the May 3, 1999, issue of *Newsweek* magazine, Jane Bryant Quinn recommends NJBEST as her favorite way for grandparents in New Jersey to contribute to their grandchildren's educational future. Thinking

about going back to school? You can even set up an NJBEST account for yourself.

**NJBEST**  
A COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN

1-877-4NJBEST  
www.state.nj.us/treasury/osa/

Studies show that parents are still the primary source in paying for college. The question is how.