



WESTFIELD  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION,  
INC.

# WESTFIELD NEWS

Est. 1981

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July, 2011

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

### *WRA'S SOCIAL HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR IS COMING UP!*

It's our all-you-can eat, meet and learn at our annual picnic meeting in

the pavilion at Smith Memorial Park on

Country Club Road in Middletown

**MONDAY, JULY 11TH**

**START TIME: 6 P.M.**

Hot Dogs, hamburgers, condiments and beverages will be provided. The entrees, salads and desserts are left to attendees creative offerings. If you have a recipe you have been meaning to try, try it on us! We are adventurous eaters and always ready to try something new. It makes for part of the fun and conversation.

Remember, these soirees are rain or shine events. If the weather turns inclement, we move to our usual meeting location, the Fellowship Hall at 3rd Congregational Church, 94 Miner Street, Middletown. The menu doesn't change. So come one, come all and bring a neighbor. Everyone is welcome.

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MEMBERSHIP FORM 4

**Westfield Residents  
Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 373  
Middletown, CT 06457**

**Mail to:**

## NEARLY UNANIMOUS APPROVAL FOR WESTFIELD FIRE BUDGET

With the loss of Aetna except for its Data Center, and Yellow Freight, both on Middle Street, and with the huge Army Reserve Center on Smith Street exempt from local taxes, but our Westfield Fire Department still being obligated to provide fire coverage, on May 9th at our WRD's budget hearing, attendees voted almost unanimously (only four against) to approve the proposed 2011 budget. Rates will go from 1.145 mills to 1.129 mills, about a 2.88 difference. Even with the increase, our rate will still be the lowest rate in the city. How is this possible? Because, unlike the other departments, our Westfield Fire Department has only

four paid firemen all the other men/women are dedicated volunteers. Plus, to keep the budget as low as possible, WFD uses a pick up truck to respond to medical emergencies rather than a big fire truck like the other departments. The purchase of a new pick up truck was put on hold pending money from some federal grants.



## STRAWBERRY SEASON

It has been a good year for strawberries, and nowhere was that more obvious than at the annual Strawberry Shortcake delight at the 3rd Congregational Church on Smith Street. It's held every year on the 2nd Thursday of June.



## IS THERE A CONNECTION BETWEEN "NATURAL GAS" AND DEAD TREES?

The answer is "yes" according to the American Energy Coalition that has been gathering information from such sources as Aegis Insurance, Dept. of Energy, Corrosion Cost Technologies, Environmental Defense Fund, Associated Press, and Boston Globe, to name a few.

The reports say that natural gas, which contains 95% methane, is killing trees. Methane contaminates the soil, causing bacteria to multiply and interrupting the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between the soil

and air—eventually killing the roots and the trees.

Gas utilities are trained to use visual vegetation damage as a keen indicator of gas leaks, but only repair the most hazardous leaks immediately. Other leaks are either scheduled for repair at a later date, or until damage reaches dangerous levels.

To learn more facts about natural gas and our dependence on it, visit [AmericanEnergyCoalition.com](http://AmericanEnergyCoalition.com).

## GOOD NEWS FOR PET OWNERS

The Best Friends Animal Society feels that when your pet needs medical help, cost shouldn't get in the way. If you have thought of buying medical insurance and found it too expensive, Best Friends now has pet insurance policies customized for any pet and any budget. You can get: 80% coverage for medical treatments including surgery, medication, diagnostics, and much more. Comprehensive coverage for accidents and illnesses, including hereditary conditions. No breed-specific exclusions. Coverage for senior pets, too, and a whole lot more! Plus, Best Friends Animal

Society benefits each time a new pet is covered in the program.

Located in Kanab, Utah, Best Friends is a huge sanctuary that takes in homeless, abused and abandoned animals of all kinds from all over the country. When they are rehabilitated, animals that can't be adopted, have forever homes at the sanctuary. So, if you insure your pet, you'll also insure the future for needy animals.

To learn more about the insurance program, or to get a free quote, chat with a live agent. Call 1-877-218-0409 or visit [insurebestfriends.com](http://insurebestfriends.com)

## A DESIGN REVIEW AND PRESERVATION BOARD REPORT

For four months the Design Review and Preservation Board has had on its agenda Galleria owner Gerry Martorelli's application to replace his existing billboard facing I-91 to an LED new one. This despite P & Z Deputy Director Michiel Wackers, staff to the DRPB, having told him and the public that:

1. no sign can be taller than 10 feet from the ground;
2. the existing billboard is non-conforming (ANY construction will require coming into compliance with the code);
3. billboards are NOT allowed by Zoning;
4. flashing lights, moving parts, or animated signs are prohibited;
5. a variance of this issue is not eligible, since the sign is non-conforming and stated financial hardship is not an allowed basis for granting hardship

At the April 27, 2011 DRPB monthly meeting its members told Martorelli that they needed to learn more about the latest lighting technology and that they needed to set up future guide lines, so his application was tabled until May 11th. At that meeting Martorelli discussed in more detail his plan for his proposed new billboard, which

Board members said still meet requirements. Rather than deny his application that night, they suggested that he withdrawn his application and resubmit it at a later date. At the June 8th DRPB meeting, attendees learned that he had withdrawn his application and would resubmit in the future after he has determined his options. What options?! He doesn't seem to want to accept that billboards just are not allowed in the IT Zone!

When his application first started being listed on the DRPB agendas, Arline Rich submitted a letter to the Board members in opposition to his application, because she, and other WRA members, think in addition to Mr. Wackers' five reasons for disqualifying what Mr. Martorelli wants to do, approval of his application would set a precedent and other businesses in the IT Zone with property along I-91 could each have billboards facing the highway-- as could other businesses elsewhere in the state that are comparably located along a state highway. She also expressed her concern that a proliferation of billboards could become a major driving distraction and also create a proliferations of accidents.

### MUNICIPAL DECISIONS

#### Planning and Zoning

643 Atkins. An application for a 2-lot subdivision was withdrawn because it did not include an application for a rear lot. It will be resubmitted this summer.

#### Inland Wetlands

Sawmill Road/Bell Street. The Public Works Department was granted a permit to do street drainage work, under the Public Works General Permit

#### Board of Education

The BoE voted to meet a budget short-fall by eliminating elementary school duty aids, and reducing by 10 the number of teachers.

### MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Westfield celebrated Memorial Day with a parade of fire engines, Girl Scouts, motorcycles, cheerleaders, police officers, politicians, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts surrounded by an appreciative crowd of neighborly friends, puppies, flags, fundraisers for good causes, and even a beloved stuffed animal.



## DO YOU HAVE E-MAIL?

To help keep WRA dues as low as possible, in October at the start of WRA's fiscal year, the Executive Committee members propose to send our quarterly newsletters to members via E-Mail.

Those without E-Mail will continue to receive the newsletters by mail, as will people who have email but prefer to receive theirs by mail, if they email their preference to Arline at akrich@att.net. In addition to cutting cost, this will also reduce the number of volunteer hours needed to send the newsletter the present way.

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**RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP (IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY)!**

**The WRA represents the interests of all who care about of life in Westfield, and all who care about the reasonable development of Middletown. We hope we can count on your continued support. Please use the renewal application below.**

2011 Officers

Chairperson  
Arline Rich

Vice Chair  
Stephen Devoto

Secretary  
Carolann D'Eon

Treasurer  
Ron Goodrich

Committee Members  
Ann Loffredo  
Cathy Branch Stebbins  
Jennifer Mahr

Alternates  
Bill Dougherty  
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<b>WESTFIELD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, INC.</b>	<b>Address: P.O. Box 373 Middletown, CT 06457</b>
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**WRA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**Please Circle One:    NEW                      RENEWAL                      DONATION**

Make checks made payable to **WRA**. Mail to: Treasurer, Westfield Residents Association, Inc., P.O. Box 373, Middletown, CT 06457.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mails: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_                      \_\_\_ \$10.00 per person  
 \_\_\_\_\_                                      \_\_\_ \$15.00 per couple  
 Middletown, CT 06457                      \_\_\_ Amount of Donation

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_