

# Union County

WORRALL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1998 - SECTION B

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## Some retirees just fade from the politics'

Election night at L'Affaire restaurant in Mountainside found Democrats jubilant over their string of victories. L' was intrigued with the young men in blue jeans and work shirts walking around. Presumably, this attire demonstrated they were new on the scene and unlike the casual, well-dressed observers, they were working to the end, and their time was now.

I got thinking about election

## Left Out

By Frank Capice

nights past, some good and some not so hot. While the scene may be the same, the games have changed. Some officials burst on the scene, assuming almost re-election; others a degree of power. As time goes by, they leave the light of county politics and are seemingly forgotten.

"My mission was to seek some of these people." They were all cooperative, thankfully doing well, and with a little prodding, still willing to give their views on the passing of political politicians. So, as a pre-holiday column, I present you with my version of "Whatever happened to?"

Republican William Erdman was a much-loved veteran mayor of Berkeley Heights, and served four years as the chairman of the Election Law Enforcement Commission.

After politics, he said, "I kept a low profile. I worked to become a full professor of business law at Kent University."

"Additionally," he has written three books, his most recent about business and political ethics.

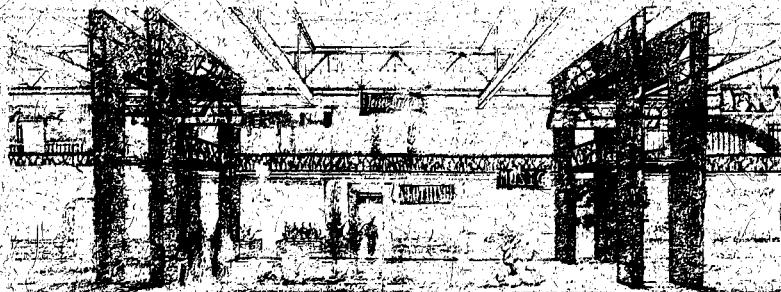
Commenting on the current scene, he said, "I know the moment we Republicans fail to graduate against popular Mayor Ralph Giordano, it was a bad decision, and our county ticket was destroyed. Erdman, still alive, Berkeley Heights with the same wife of 26 years."

Meanwhile in Elizabeth, Democratic former Freeholder Director and Roselle Park Councilman John Mollicci continues his successful law practice. Even the old West Horse, he freely blames the Republican losses for not talking about the things that matter in people's lives such as school funding, Social Security, and rock-bottom issues. He still chafes at the election last year, questioning how "people could vote for Whitman."

Mollicci moved to Bernards Township in 1988, drives an antique Rolls Royce, has three married daughters and will be a grandfather this spring. "Hey, I am 56 years old and getting older every day, but I still have a full head of hair, even though it's thinning."

Rosemarie Silliman served on the Board of Freeholders for eight years before being appointed to the

SEN. SOME, Page B7



The Jersey Gardens Value Megamall in Elizabeth is expected to draw residents from the entire county.

## Megamall expecting draw from entire county

By Michelle Runge  
Staff Writer

When the Jersey Gardens Value Megamall in Elizabeth finished this time next year, it will be the first in the state to combine large discount retailers with manufacturers' outlet stores along with all the amenities a mall offers — plus entertainment.

Disney-style.

A recent tour of the site revealed 700 construction workers laboring to lay pavers, putting up one-and-one-half-ton slabs of insulated concrete for the fast corner of the complex — with two wide oval tracks where states like "Annie, See, Bed, Bath & Beyond," Disney's Foot Locker Super Store, Group USA, Jeeper's Family Fun Center, Jewelers On Fifth, Johnny Rockets, Kidz Town, Mandeville, Marshalls, Mikasa, Off 5th Satys, Fifth Avenue Outlet, Oshman's Superstore, USA, and Record Town Superstore will be located.

Jeweler's On Fifth, which opened last year, will feature one of the country's widest selections of value-oriented retailers under one roof. This initial group of major tenants includes many of today's most popular stores," said Daniel E. Devine, Glimcher's vice president of development and leasing at the company, noting that nearly 65 percent of the space at

unique mix of shopping experiences that will create and expand over many more tenants over the coming months.

One of the major components that will attract many of Union County's residents is the proposed Loew's movie complex which will boast 22 separate theaters including box-seats for patrons who want the luxury of being served food while viewing the latest films after having their meal catered by a valet. The parking lot alone will service some 6,000 anticipated shoppers.

The Loew's Cineplex Entertainment, created in May by the merger of Sony/Lowes Theaters and the Cineplex Odeon Corporation, has resulted in this new theater format, a 108,000-square-foot, 24-screen theater with 5,000 seats as well as a lounge area with special reserved seats for people who prefer to pay a premium price for some of life's little luxuries like service during a movie and a nearby area where liquor and light snacks can be bought.

"It's one of life few areas in the state that has a dense population and no theaters," said Michael Glimcher, senior vice president of development and leasing at the company, noting that nearly 65 percent of the space at

the mall had been preleased.

Besides the flagship cinema location for Loew's 22 and an atrium food court operated by First Marion services, Glimcher has recruited leases for signature and signed leases for more than 60 percent of the property's 4.1 million square feet of gross leasable area.

So far, restaurants have signed including Jeeper's, a 25,000-square-foot family recreation center which features rides for children 12 years old and younger. Another feature includes "family-based shopping," where customers will be able to visit their purchases.

The mall site is set in an old industrial section of Elizabeth that covered a landfill for many years and will soon be home to the state's eighth largest center and, city officials predict, will become one of the state's major tourist attractions.

Elizabeth Mayor J. Christian Bolt said Elizabeth will receive as much as \$4 million to \$5 million in anticipated annual tax revenue because of the malls' tenants residing in a state Urban Enterprise Zone. In a state Urban Enterprise Zone, a zone's businesses are offered tax breaks and retailers can charge a 3-percent sales tax instead of the normal 6 percent.

The mall has been talked about for years and now it is finally becoming a reality," said Bolt. "Everyone is excited about what we developed. Now it's our turn."

Glimcher Realty Trust, known as

the New York Stock Exchange as GRT, is a premier real estate investment bank and on-site representatives like John M. Tresen are happy with the Jersey Gardens Value Megamall's progress to date, including meeting required Department of Environmental Protection standards.

This commercial marsh is replaced with planted wetlands that provide more wetland space," he said during a tour in his truck. "Another project under consideration, that would decrease pollution is a filter from the waterfront parcel to the World Trade Center which would be able to connect to New York's LaGuardia Airport and, ultimately, Kennedy, as well."

Since the site is adjacent to the New Jersey Turnpike, it offers exposure to an average of 180,000 cars per day, as well as access to all major transportation hubs in the metropolitan New York region. A total of 21 million people live within a 70-mile radius of the Megamall with an average household income of approximately \$70,000.

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## E'town's employees on strike

By Sean Daily

Staff Writer

A joint workers' strike at NJB Elizabethtown Gas has not been averted.

About 100 utility workers — all members of Local 424 of Utility Workers Union of America — decided to walk off the job after four years contracts expired at midnight Nov. 20. Contract negotiations failed in securing a new contract for the workers.

The strike was called by the union's negotiating team when the union's contract expired.

The company presented its with what it considered an inappropriate last package on Friday," said Jeff Sylvester, president of Local 424. "The company and union are arguing over four main points, including increased use of subcontractors, a restructuring, which will affect a lot of my people's jobs," said Sylvester, a pay system that would make raises dependent on performance, instead of granting them on a regular schedule, and elimination of benefits, which Sylvester said included overtime pay.

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We'll be here," he replied. "We don't want to be on strike forever. We can negotiate a deal and forth with this. But there's not one or two things that will get us back. The company has to address all of the issues."

According to company spokesman Chris Reardon, though, Local 424 agreed to be interviewed in a Nov. 19

press conference.

Its approval did come with strings attached.

It resulted in favor of a study of county government provided it extrapolated beyond its initial proposal to save.

Bassano appreciated the support from Rock.

"I just think that the guy had good credentials," said Bassano. "He's been on the job a long time, and I feel confident in having him on my side."

Rock said there should be a study of local functions that can be given to county government as well as what county functions can be given to town. "It's a job both ways."

New Jersey county governments actually have a mid-range level of power when compared with county governments across America.

According to Rock, New Jersey's county governments generally have more power than county governments in New England states — they are not much more than judicial areas running the courts, and Connecticut has all that goes away with county governments.

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