

4/22/04

## LETTERS TO

### Arts center needs help to survive

To the Editor:

If anything else, your recent editorial about the Union County Arts Center proves those who run Worrall Community Newspapers are hard at work doing what they do best — misrepresenting the facts about county government in a very partisan manner to a dwindling subscription base.

The Union County Arts Center — which is one of the last large-scale cultural gems in our county — needs help to survive and to reach its full potential. Despite what the editors from Worrall think, it has not been coming from the private sector.

The theatre is the centerpiece of the recently established Arts District in the City of Rahway and a key to Rahway's redevelopment. The downtown area is undergoing a \$100 million redevelopment project that will create new jobs and business, increase ratables, and create new housing for all Union County residents.

Part of the purpose of our government is to spur economic development for Union County residents. That's what we are doing with the revitalization of the Union County Arts Center. The editors of Worrall apparently prefer that we do nothing in this regard, and stand idly by, allowing another opportunity to slip away.

As part of the freeholder board's initiatives for 2004, the investment in the arts was included as a way of bringing new energy to our communities and our families. The revitalization of this historic landmark by Union County is also to further elevate and establish the Union County Arts Center as a premier northern New Jersey performing arts establishment.

One only needs to look at the success of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark to see how beneficial such an endeavor can be. NJPAC has been credited with helping to spur an unprecedented revitalization of Newark, drawing developers and tenants back to that city and leading to a true renaissance. Other communities in New Jersey such as Red Bank and New Brunswick have also seen their downtowns turned around because of public sector investment in the arts.

Rather than writing misleading editorials with impunity, we welcome the editors of Worrall to join us in our vision for a brighter future with new jobs and increased ratables for Union County.

Freeholder Daniel Sullivan, chairman  
Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Trust Fund Committee

Thanks for meeting someone's needs