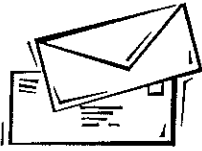


TOPIC OF
THE DAY

*South Belmar
police memo*



**Sensitivity
required**

All communities need the support and protection of their local law enforcement agencies. Strong leadership helps a police department to function with a high level of trust.

New Jersey is one of the most diverse states in our nation and Monmouth County reflects our state. We need police leadership to have an awareness of this diversity. We need police leadership to respect all people, regardless of their culture, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Our Human Relations Commission is receiving more and more complaints from citizens who live in a community that has an "acting administrator" instead of a full-time chief of police. Could this be contributing to a more serious problem?

Perhaps we should take a long look at the South Belmar "Memo of Instruction" and attempt to figure out what good can come out of a bad situation. ("Outrage over police memo: Angry Italian-Americans, NAACP get apology from mayor," Sept. 13.) At best, it was insensitive. At its worse, it demonstrates once again the need for ongoing training in the areas of sensitivity and diversity for all police officers. Police officers with seniority, who are in positions of supervision and administration, should receive special attention and training.

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HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
FREEHOLD

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OPINION