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Issue 6 • March 2016

SUBURBAN CHAMBER BERKELEY HEIGHTS BREAKFAST WITH THE MAYOR & TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

FRIDAY MARCH 18TH
8:00 to 9:00 am
BERKELEY HEIGHTS
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“OPERATION: WE REMEMBER” SALUTES BERKELEY HEIGHTS VETERANS AND MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS

Last September the Veterans Memorial Park Renewal Committee embarked not only its efforts to raise funds to restore Memorial Park, but upon its educational mission to raise awareness and appreciation of the United States Military and the sacrifices made for our freedom. They named this mission "Operation: We Remember." The goal of the program was to educate the community on the importance of honoring and thanking our Veterans and those currently serving in the United States Military. A critical part of this mission was the education of our youngest citizens. Embraced by Superintendent of Schools, Judith Rattner, the Berkeley Heights School district became a proud partner in this endeavor. Principal of Woodruff Elementary School, Patricia Gasparini, shared with QUEST teacher, Andrea Masri, the goals of the program. QUEST is an enrichment program of the gifted and talented program and has some fifty students in fourth and fifth grades at Woodruff, Mountain Park, and Hughes Elementary schools.

The QUEST vision of "Operation: We Remember" came to life at an assembly held on February 25th. Under the

leadership of Principal Gasparini and Mrs. Masri, students have worked throughout the year learning about the importance of honoring Veterans and service members and the history of monuments and memorials ho them. They took a virtual tour of the monuments and memorials in Washington DC and learned the significance of each: how their designs reflected the group being honored, the importance of Arlington National Cemetery and the vigilant watch over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the meaning behind the flag and medal of each branch of service. The students were then taught interview skills in preparation for their most important challenge: meeting local Veterans and service members and asking them to share their stories. These interviews would be presented as a slide show and made into a book through a grant from the Berkeley Heights Education Foundation. The book will be made available to all schools and the local library. The Veterans featured were invited to attend the Assembly where the slide show would be presented. QUEST students would also design a fundraiser at their individual

(Continued on page 8)

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(above, top, l-r) QUEST teacher Andrea Masri and students honor Local Veterans, Sgt. Steve Falk, Lt. Jerry Barter, Sgt. Trent Fettes, Cecile Neri (mother of Crp. Timothy Neri) Sgt. Tom Lombardi, Captain Frank Bolden.

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GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON HIGH SCHOOL WELCOMES MARLON SMITH

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Governor Livingston High School recently welcomed noted motivational speaker Marlon Smith, thanks to the efforts and support of the Berkeley Heights PTO and Berkeley Heights Education Foundation.

Mr. Smith provided two daytime presentations for all Berkeley Heights School District students in Grades 8 through 12. In addition, he invited 40 students to a lunch session held in the GL IMC to discuss "Living with Purpose."

As a world-renowned motivational speaker, Marlon engaged the audience with a powerful presentation on leadership, accountability, and

how to critically think your way through challenges. His humorous, welcoming, and direct approach was well-received by students and staff alike.

In addition to the day programs, the Consortium of the Berkeley Heights, Chatham, Millburn, New Providence, and Summit School Districts held an evening program for area students and parents titled Marlon Smith: Empowering Youth Leadership.

Thank you to the BHEF and PTO for this fantastic opportunity afforded to our students and community.



MLK HONORED AT THOMAS P. HUGHES SCHOOL

The memory of Martin Luther King Jr. was honored at Thomas P. Hughes School during the month of January.

Some classes at Hughes focused on reading articles and stories about Dr. King's life, and others wrote about spreading kindness and remembering to include others. Teachers helped students define the terms compassion, self-discipline, cooperation, and persistence in relation to Dr. King as well as within today's culture. These messages are important ones for all of us!

Additionally, Hughes School hosted a special celebration on Martin Luther King Day brought to us by The Seventh Principle - a troupe that brings together traditional African and modern African-American dance while teaching about



respecting cultures from opposite sides of the world.

This unique and exciting Cultural Arts program allowed students to honor the day and encouraged the students (and teachers!) to participate according to traditional custom with call-and-response singing and movement.



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MEET RITA JENSEN OF WOMEN'S ENEWS

The League of Women Voters of Berkeley Heights, New Providence and Summit invite you to meet

RITA H. JENSEN

Founder and Editor in Chief of Women's eNews (womensenews.org),
MARCH 15TH, 2016, 7:30PM

Women's eNews and its writers have received over 35 awards since the organization's launch in 2000, including "Best Internet Site" in 2005 from the National Federation of Press Women.

The New York Daily News named Ms Jensen one of the 100 most influential women in New York. She has received numerous awards including an alumni award from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. This innovator survived domestic violence, raised a family on her own, earned college degrees and now is a proud grandmother.

This event will be held

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to enjoy light refreshments!*

BERKELEY HEIGHTS RESIDENTS SOUGHT AS ADVOCATES

Nearly 600 Union County kids need your voice

Meet foster youth Michael, age 8: Ever since I can remember, me and my siblings lived in our parents' car or motels. We ate lots of fast food but after a while we just wanted real food like a normal family. One day the police stopped my dad and said my little sister was really thin. They took her to the hospital and then came back for me and my siblings and put us in foster care. I'm really sad because we are in three different homes and don't see each other much. We now go to school but had never been to one before! There's so much to learn that other kids already know. We really miss mom but dad scares us. We saw mom again on weekend visits at grandma's and were excited because we thought we would get to live there. But one day, mom snatched us from the visit to bring us to dad, who the judge said she can't see. Mom and dad took us out of New Jersey and we drove through a bunch of states. We didn't have money and dad made us stand with him outside and told us to look sad while he begged for money. When the police found us we were so excited to come back to New Jersey. They arrested my mom and dad. Even though we're glad to be back, my brother and I have nightmares and miss our siblings who are in other foster homes. I feel terrible — I'm the oldest and should have protected them. Why can't we all just be together and have a regular life?

Michael is one of many children that CASA serves and hopes to serve, as its referral book continues to grow. CASA of Union County is seeking Berkeley Heights residents interested in

being the voice for one of the nearly 600 Union County youth, ages 0-21, in foster care through no fault of their own. Trained CASAs are sworn in by a judge and court-empowered to speak to foster parents, teachers, doctors, lawyers, tutors, therapists and more. CASAs visit the youth regularly and incorporate all findings into a report for the judge. CASAs attend court hearings quarterly, working to ensure a youth's time in care is as short as possible and their best interests remain the top priority for all parties. Although not required, there is an additional need for advocates who speak Spanish.

CASA's Spring training kicks off Thursday, April 14, 2016 and includes 10 sessions over several weeks, ending May 10, 2016 and soon followed by a swearing in at the courthouse. Training is 6 to 9 p.m. at the County Clerk's Building, 300 North Avenue East in Westfield, Second Floor, across from the Westfield Diner and a light dinner is provided.

Attend an information session in Westfield or Elizabeth. Evening sessions are 6 pm, Thursday, March 17; Tuesday, March 29; Monday, April 4; and Monday, April 11 at the County Clerk's Building in Westfield; Morning sessions are 10 a.m. Fridays, March 18, April 1 and April 8 at CASA, 1143-45 East Jersey Street, in Elizabeth.

Berkeley Heights residents are encouraged to contact Lisa at (908) 527-7048 or lporis@casaoofunioncounty.org with questions, to RSVP for an information session or for details on the April training.

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Kids 7-10.....\$5.99	Kids 7-10.....\$6.99
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REPTILE GUY VISITS FIRST GRADERS

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER EMBARKS ON BOOK STUDY



A number of staff members from Mary Kay McMillin Early Childhood Center are embarking on a professional book study of Johann Christoph Arnold's work, *Their Name is Today: Reclaiming Childhood in a Hostile World*.

The book explores the drastic changes in the lives of children and calls on everyone who loves children to combat these threats to childhood and find creative ways to help children flourish.

The underlying premise of the book is that every parent, teacher, and childcare provider has the power to make a difference, by giving children time to play, access to nature, personal attention and, most of all, by defending their right to remain children.

The goal of the Early Childhood Center staff members, after a comprehensive review of the book, is to perhaps create small book study groups among parents.

Michael Shwedick, Reptile Guy, visited the Mary Kay McMillin Early Childhood Center and introduced our First Graders to the fascinating world of reptiles.

One of America's leading reptile wildlife educators, Michael returned to our school for the second year thanks to funding provided by the Berkeley Heights Education Foundation.

The Reptile World program provided children with the opportunity to meet an interesting selection of live, large, colorful, and gentle reptiles from all over the world. The children enjoyed discovering what reptiles are, what makes them different from birds and mammals, and how important they are in our environment.

Banana Split, an albino snake, was a highlight of the program for both children and adults!



DAN GUTMAN'S FANS EXCITED BY HIS VISIT

Noted children's author Dan Gutman visited William Woodruff School earlier this month, thanks to the hard work and support of the Woodruff PTO.

Mr. Gutman is the author of numerous series of books for students. To the delight of our students, Mr. Gutman announced that he will be continuing his "My Weird School" series, as two new titles are to be published this year: *Mrs. Meyer is on Fire!* and *Miss Daisy is still Crazy*. Mr. Gutman graciously read the first chapter of *Mrs. Meyer is on Fire!* to a very enthusiastic audience. A book for younger audiences, *Rappy the Raptor*, about a rapping dinosaur, was also read by Mr. Gutman to the enjoyment of all of the students.

The *Genius Files*, a very popular series, was the focus of how an author can begin to develop and write a story. Writing tips - used by Mr. Gutman - were shared with the students. Here was his advice:

"Here's a simple six-step system to write a



story even if your mind is a total blank...

1. Choose a setting, anyplace in the world.
2. Pick a main character. Not a name, but a type of individual.
3. Give that character a problem or goal.
4. Think of a few other characters your main character is likely to encounter.
5. Get your main character into trouble somehow.
6. Let your imagination go wild, writing all the thoughts down before you forget them. You're on your way to writing a story!"

Thrilled students left the library knowing that Mr. Gutman has more wonderful stories and adventures to share!

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band schedule

Sunday, March 6

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"Bloody Callan" at Gillette

Three Seatings Available:
3:30, 5:30 & 7:30 pm



Sunday, March 13

"Bloody Callan" at Bridgewater
"The Fair Trade" at Gillette

Three Seatings Available:
3:30, 5:30 & 7:30 pm

Thursday, March 10

"The Fair Trade" at Bridgewater
"The Snakes" at Gillette

Two Seatings Available:
5:45 & 7:15 pm

Tuesday, March 15

"Hooley Shooters" at Bridgewater
"Bloody Callan" at Gillette

Two Seatings Available:
5:45 & 7:15 pm

ST. PATRICK'S DAY Thursday, March 17

"Lagans Love" at Bridgewater
"Hooley Shooters" at Gillette 12-3 pm
"Courtney Colletti" at Gillette 5-9 pm

Performance Times: 12-3 pm & 5-9 pm

*Not accepting reservations for this day
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OPERATION: WE REMEMBER

(Continued from page 1)

school with proceeds going toward the renovation of Veterans Memorial Park.

The hard work and efforts grew to include all grades at Woodruff School. Art and Music teachers would work with students on scenery and banners and practice many hours singing and instrument playing. Each grade would sing a patriotic song, Cub Scout Pack #468 would present the colors, and all grades would sing and salute the Veterans and service members and their families being honored, all against a backdrop of red, white, and blue proudly sharing the name Operation: We Remember. QUEST students presented the biographies of those interviewed and presented each with a Certificate of Appreciation. Veterans included: Sgt. Edward Mueller, Crpl. Timothy Neri, Fireman Richard Quant, Electrician Mate Stephen Schmidt, Captain Frank Bolden, Crpl. Raymond DiGiambattista, Sgt. Trent Fettes, Sgt. Thomas Lombardi, Fireman Thomas McLaughlin, Sgt. Daniel Mondelli, Lt. Jerry Barter, Sgt. Stephen Falk, and the recently deceased Crpl. Vito

Mondelli, a member of the Veterans Park Renewal Committee. Two Woodruff Elementary School alumni currently serving were also honored, Lt. John Manganiello and Lt. Matthew Tansey. The entire program was filmed by former Woodruff teacher Peg Whiting. The beautiful photo taken by Officer Trent Fettes of the statue entitled "Fallen Soldier," which was donated by Vito Mondelli, was on display.

This was truly a special moment for the large crowd in attendance which included: Berkeley Heights Mayor Robert Woodruff, Town Council President Jeanne Kingsley, Board of Education member John Sincaglia, Veterans Memorial Park Renewal Committee Members: Ted Romankow, Gay Hollowell, Midge Vicendese, Police Officer Trent Fettes, and Police Chief John DiPasquale.

Find out how you can help or for information about the Veterans Memorial Park Renewal Project, please visit www.bhmemorialpark.com. Tax-deductible donations are most welcome and can be made online or by check sent to:

Veterans Memorial Park Renewal Project,
29 Park Ave., Berkeley Heights., NJ 07922.



(above, left, l-r) Honored Mothers of current Military members Colleen Manganiello, mother of Lt. John Manganiello and Debbie Tansey, mother of Lt. Matthew Tansey.

(above, right) Woodruff School Principal Patricia Gasparini.



(above l-r) Mayor Cobert Woodruff, Council President Jeanne Kingsley, QUEST teacher Andrea Masri, and Renewal Committee Chairman Ted Romankow

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9 AM - Traditional & Contemporary Services
11 AM - Contemporary Service

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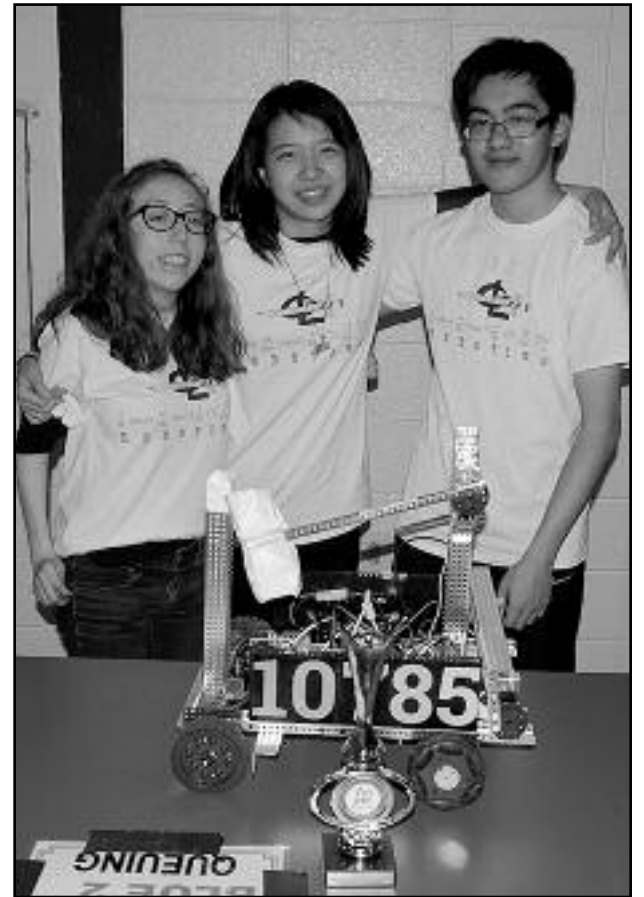
On January 31st, Governor Livingston attended their second FIRST Tech robotics competition this season hosted by Hightstown High School. The Snow Day Showdown tournament consisted of 35 teams from around New Jersey and served as a qualifying match for the State tournament, which will be held at the end of February.

These tournaments begin with a qualifying phase, where schools compete in five matches. During these matches schools are randomly paired and work together as a team (or alliance) against other schools. At the end of the five qualification matches, the Governor Livingston Robotics Team, known as the Highlanders, had won 4 out of their 5 matches. This was due, in large part, to an extremely well written autonomous code that consistently secured them an initial lead in most of their matches. Based on their performance in the qualification matches, the Governor Livingston Team was ranked 3rd overall.

The top four teams then advance to the

elimination phase and serve as alliance captains during this round of play. The captains get to build their team by choosing two other schools to compete as part of their alliance. G.L. secured two early victories during this round of play, and moved onto the Finals. The Governor Livingston Alliance finished 2nd overall earning them the Finalist Alliance Trophy. This is an impressive achievement for any team, but especially so considering their rookie status.

The Highlander robotics team consists of many members that contribute to the design, building, and programming of the robot but the team was represented in this tournament by Michael Wu, Anna Song, and Beatriz Medeiros and coaches Nicole Manganelli and Kathleen Agnostak. Due to their stellar performance in the tournament, the team will now advance to the State Tournament hosted at NJIT on February 28th. The robotics team would like to extend their thanks to their supporters, which include the BHEF and the Berkeley Heights Board of Education.



(above r-l) The team represented in the tournament, Michael Wu, Anna Song, and Beatriz Medeiros.



(above) Excitement built during qualifying rounds.

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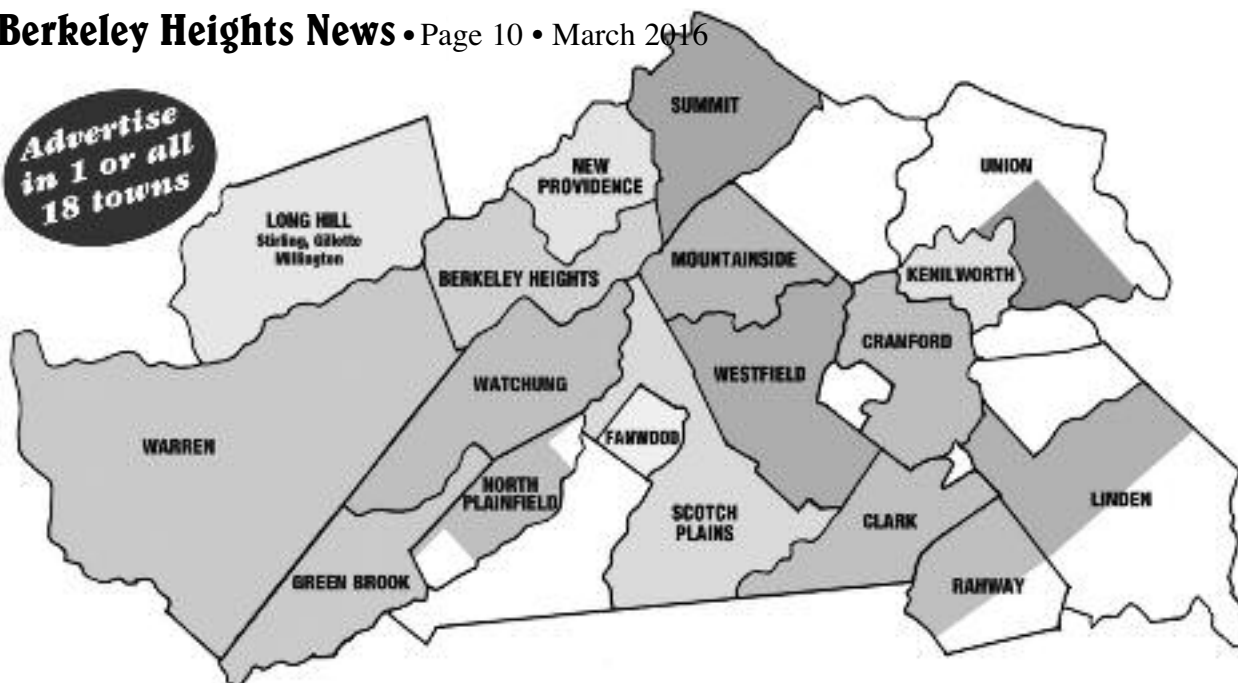
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PHIL SAPIENZA CELEBRATES 100TH MCBIRTHDAY

In a corner of the Springfield Avenue McDonald's in New Providence, one could see the tops of the mylar birthday balloons floating in the air above the booths. It was Phil Sapienza's 100th birthday celebration for his special group of McD's friends. You see, Phil has made it his choice to go to this particular McDonald's every day for the last 10 years. Sometimes just for a coffee, sometimes for a meal (and if you knew Phil – you would say it was a "happy meal"), but always to run into a friend and/or acquaintance he's made over the years. He is an active, totally with-it 100 year old man who is still completely independent. Phil's family gene pool is one worth having because he looks not a day past 60 yrs old.

Phil's close friend and neighbor, Pat Pallante, planned the McDonald's celebration. There were balloons, a sheetcake with custom candles, and Phil was even wearing "that-all-important-I-am-100-years-old button pin." Pat has known Phil

since the late 60's. They have been friends and neighbors in Berkeley Heights ever since Pat moved into the neighborhood.

Several people were in attendance. Wayne Pigna, a resident of Gillette and friend of Phil's for many years; Ed Mueller, a resident of Warren Township; Ed DuCasse, a fellow resident of Berkeley Heights; and David Ingerman, a friend from the Summit area.

Phil knows many guys from the Warren American Legion and the Berkeley Heights VFW as well as other associations. Phil is a proud WWII Vet having served time in Europe for three years. It was so nice to witness the respect and admiration these men had for each other, and Phil was just tickled pink that everyone showed up for his party.

As we were cleaning up, I asked Phil how he intended to get home. He simply answered, "I'm going to drive."



(above) Phil & Pat – close friends and neighbors for years.



(above) David Ingerman drops by to give his good wishes.



(above, top, l-r) Wayne Pigna, Ed Mueller
(bottom, l-r) Phil Sapienza, Pat Pallante and Ed DuCasse

LIEUTENANT CHRIS HETHERINGTON GIVES BACK TO STUDENTS

Columbia Middle School Seventh Graders recently welcomed a special guest during their lunch period: Lieutenant Chris Hetherington of the United States Navy.

Lt. Hetherington stopped by CMS that day for a quick lunch and to thank the students for being so kind to him. It was last year as Sixth Graders - after hearing about Lt. Hetherington's tour of duty on a battleship – that the students made cards and wrote letters to him, wishing him well and thanking him for his service. Lt. Hetherington came back this year to tell the students about the impact that those letters had as he shared them with his entire crew.

It did not take long for many students to come forward and join the officer at his table. Lt. Hetherington could only share that he was due to ship-out soon, but could not say where.



(above) 7th Graders with Lt. Hetherington of the United States Navy.

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COUPON

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