

# Scotch Plains NJ

## WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY

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Issue 27 • December 2017

### INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

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International Walk to School Day was celebrated on Wednesday, October 4th. To join in the festivities, School One students, staff, and community dignitaries gathered at the Fanwood Borough Hall to prepare for a group walk to school.

Thank you to the Scotch Plains Police Department for taking the lead and the Fanwood Volunteer Fire Department

and their fire truck as everyone was escorted safely to School One. Also, a special thank you to the School One PTA for providing a healthy snack of orange slices, clementine oranges, and water to our participants as they arrived to school.

It was a fun and great experience for all.

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ECRWSS

### SCOTCH PLAINS PUBLIC LIBRARY FOOD DRIVE

Help check out hunger this holiday season with donations to a Food Drive being sponsored by the Libraries of Union County Consortium (LUCC). From November 27 - December 18, your local public library will be accepting donations of non-perishable food items to benefit the New Jersey Community Food Bank and other local food pantries. Collection bins will be conveniently located at the public libraries and library staff will then route 100% of the donations to designated food banks.

Even though experts say our economy is in recovery, many people in New Jersey have been left behind: low income families, struggling single parents, the elderly on a fixed income, and the unemployed. The New Jersey Community

Food Bank assists by distributing food to more than 1,500 non-profit charities in 19 counties, including soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, local food banks, after school programs, and senior centers. Local food pantries such as SHIP in Summit serve food to the homeless and low-income individuals on a daily basis. These donations will help to fill shopping carts and bellies.

To make this holiday season hunger free, simply visit your local library with a donation of non-perishable items. Groceries most urgently needed are canned meat and fish, canned soups and stews, peanut butter (in plastic jars), boxed pasta and rice, powdered milk, infant formula, and canned vegetables and fruits.

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## HOLIDAY CELEBRATION AND TREE TRIMMING CONTEST

Scotch Plains Monthly is published by Renna Media. 9,500 newspapers are printed monthly and mailed to every business and resident in Scotch Plains.

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On Sunday, December 3, Scotch Plains invites residents to a hometown holiday celebration featuring a community tree decorating contest, horse drawn carriage rides, visit and photos with Santa, hot chocolate and donuts, cookie decorating, face painting and more! Santa arrives at 3:00 p.m. and goes back to the North Pole at 5 p.m. after he lights the town tree. This event is sponsored by the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Organization and the Cultural Arts

Committee.

Admission is free. Join us in supporting our local food banks by donating nonperishable food items to our Food Collection Van.

There are a limited number of trees available to decorate.

Please contact Margaret Heisey at 908-322-6700 ext 314

or download registration forms from the Township's website: [www.scotchplainsnj.gov](http://www.scotchplainsnj.gov).

## PROMOTE YOUR COMMUNITY EVENT

*Community service organizations, schools and sports teams are encouraged to submit news of upcoming events or highlights and photos from recent events.*

**Organizations who are interested in submitting content, please email [tinarena@rennamedia.com](mailto:tinarena@rennamedia.com)**

Scotch Plains Monthly is online at [www.rennamedia.com](http://www.rennamedia.com) like us on [facebook.com/Scotch Plains Monthly](https://www.facebook.com/ScotchPlainsMonthly)

# HOLIDAY LUMINARY SALE

Light up your home, your street, your town



December 9-10, 16-17, 23 – 9am to 3pm  
December 24 - 9am to 12pm  
Fanwood Municipal Garage - 270 North Ave, Fanwood  
Please bring canned food to support our Holiday Food Drive

 Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club

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## JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT HEROES PROGRAM COMES TO MCGINN



Over forty high school students from the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) program at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School came to teach McGinn students in grades 1 to 4 about financial literacy, public responsibility and our community. They came through the Junior Achievement Heroes Program, which focuses on three pillars of success: financial literacy, workforce readiness and entrepreneurship. Students serve as role models to young learners

and present five interactive lessons that are grade level specific. All of the content the high school students taught our elementary students addresses New Jersey Learning Standards for Social Studies and Language Arts.

For more information on these standards see [www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss](http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss).

For information about the Junior Achievement Heroes Program, visit [juniorachievement.com/programs/high-school/ja-high-school-heroes](http://juniorachievement.com/programs/high-school/ja-high-school-heroes).



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Kids 7-10.....\$5.99	Kids 7-10.....\$7.49
Kids 3-6.....\$3.99	Kids 3-6.....\$5.99
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# SPF HS INDUCTS 89 STUDENTS INTO NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

On October 24, 2017, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Chapter of the National Honor Society inducted 89 new members.

The criteria for membership is rigorous. Students with a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.75 and above, and students who are

in grades 11 and 12 are eligible to apply for membership.

Students must also be able to demonstrate excellence in the areas of leadership, service and character. The National Honor Society is the nation's premier organization established to

recognize outstanding high school students. The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School students will be working around the community this year conducting a variety of individual service projects, as well as a group service project schedule for later in the academic year.





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## TERRILL MIDDLE SCHOOL EMBARKS ON KINDNESS INITIATIVE

This year, Terrill Middle School has embarked on a year-long, school-wide Kindness Initiative. Throughout the school year, Terrill students and staff will engage in activities that support kindness, caring, empathy, and compassion for others.

The year began with three student leadership groups planning, implementing, and facilitating a project around the picture book, *Each Kindness*. Under the leadership of their peers, students, students in grades 5-8 discussed the meaning of using every opportunity to be proactive about reaching out to offer a word of encouragement, a helping hand, or a smile. Also, as part of this project, all participants, through small group sessions, developed scenarios and related suggestions regarding how to handle challenging social situations.

This event ignited the mantra of paying it forward. For this phase of the Kindness Campaign, all students were given a locker tag with an act of kindness printed on it. Students had the option to perform the act of kindness on the tag or one of their choosing. From there, recipients of kind acts were encouraged to report the acts done for them.

As one of many related extensions of the *Each Kindness* kick-off activity, a lesson was designed for the 7th grade TMS students to examine the scientifically proven benefits of being kind. After a rationale of the lesson was shared, students watched a short video to learn about the biological response to kindness — specifically, the release of certain neurotransmitters, “the natural ‘feel good’ brain chemicals,” that affect

our mood, and lower our levels of stress.

Students were provided several research-based articles that identified the personal, biological, social, and emotional effects of receiving, witnessing, or participating in a kind act. Students discussed an article, “Getting the right D.O.S.E., (dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins) to naturally boost our level of happiness,” which explains the chemistry of the brain’s reward system and its connections to kindness. In another article, students examined the kindness-reward chain, also known as the “psychological

feedback loop”, which is responsible for making people more altruistic; and, an altruistic lifestyle attributes to happiness. Being kind is linked to prosocial behaviors and helps reduce social anxiety. Students identified the medial prefrontal cortex of the brain as an area that deals with empathy, which is proven to be a learned skill.

Using these facts and many more, students collaborated with their group members to design a “scientific based kindness” poster to be displayed in the school to share their findings with their peers. Now, that’s kindness for ya’!



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## SPF HIGH SCHOOL DONATES TO VICTIMS OF HURRICANE MARIA

Members of Scotch Plains-Fanwood's High School Salsa Club ran a successful drive and collected from both students and staff, personal hygiene products and non-perishable food for the victims of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. As a

result, 23 boxes were filled with toothpaste, toothbrushes, dental floss, soaps, shampoo, hand sanitizers, Kleenex, towels, washcloths, socks, deodorant, baby wipes, diapers, Band-Aids and first aid items, as well as non-perishable foods.



(above) Salsa Club officers Shane Hernandez and Michael Dieu are shown with items to be donated to victims of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico

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## CASA GALA LAUDS EFFORTS FOR FOSTER KIDS

*Still, 'urgent need' for more volunteers*

More than 300 community members, movers and shakers, advocate volunteers and other supporters of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Union County gathered recently for its fifth annual Foster the Dream gala to celebrate the volunteer-based nonprofit's success in

protecting the best interests of local youth placed in foster care due to abuse, neglect or abandonment — and highlight in particular the exemplary work of two.

Long-time Westfield resident Barbara Bagger received the Dream-Keeper Award for Outstanding Volunteerism. An adoptive and biological mother, and wife to former state Sen. Richard Bagger, Barbara advocates for four foster youth with histories of substance abuse, homelessness, medical and educational needs, sexual and physical abuse, and neglect. Through 15 court appearances, the judge has accepted 60 of her 76 recommendations. Long-time Summit resident Marité Robinson, previously a CASA volunteer out-of-county who then volunteered 10 years as a board member for CASA of Union County, received the Honorable Jo-Anne B. Spatola Dream-Maker Award.

As dinner guests celebrated with cocktails, dancing, auctions, raffles, wine pulls, ice cream bar, fresh popcorn takeaways, and a gif-photo booth that stole the social-media show, there was another more serious message of the evening: there continues to be a dire need for additional community volunteers to serve as advocates.

Said Executive Director Marla Higginbotham,

“Barbara and Marité are shining examples of the power of passionately preserving the welfare of others. Each have busy lives and other responsibilities yet they choose to serve and change the course for children without a safety net. They are that safety net. It’s CASA of Union County’s privilege to have them. Despite these great strides and all the work of our dedicated advocates, nearly half the local youth in foster care still need their own Barbara or Marité, their voice in the system. As the only organization in the county providing this service to the judiciary, it’s our duty to trumpet the urgent need for more volunteers to step up, speak up and lift up a fragile child. The power to change the trajectory of a life is there for the taking.”

CASA volunteers are court-empowered to speak to all parties in the child’s life and serve as eyes and ears for the judge. Nearly half of the more than 500 Union County youth in care still need a CASA volunteer to protect their best interests. Two advocate training sessions are forming now that incorporate six in-person classes with online coursework: Saturday mornings starting Feb. 24 and Tuesday evenings starting April 3. For details, contact Lisa Poris at 908-293-8135.

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(above, standing, l-r) Among the 300-plus guests at CASA of Union County's Foster the Dream Gala were Scotch Plains residents, Linda and Bob Grimm, CASA volunteer Christie Rothenberg, Wes Chase, Chris and Chuck Quesada, and Ellen Chase; (seated, l-r), Adam Rothenberg and Ed and Jean Fiedler.

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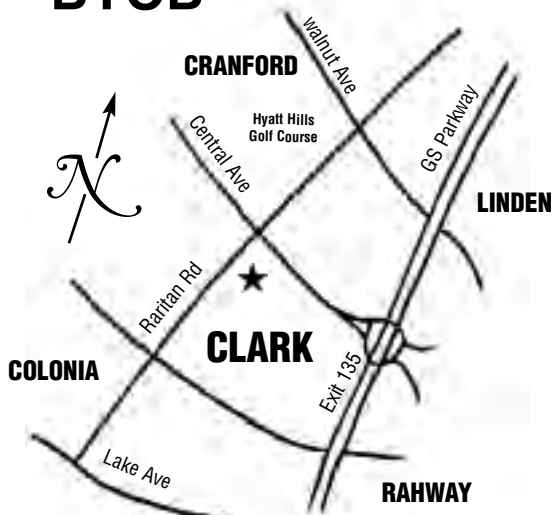
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*(above) Mayor Colleen Mahr, whose sons Dan and Colin play in the league, presented a proclamation to League president Andrew Bonderowicz and a number of players who came to the meeting. The SP-Fanwood Soccer Association has more than 2,000 players with 40% of school aged kids playing soccer.*

**Breakfast with Santa**  
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# ILLUMINATE YOUR HOLIDAYS AT THE KEAN UNIVERSITY PLANETARIUM

The Kean University Planetarium invites all members of the community to experience Seasons of Light, a spectacular light show that combines astronomy with the spirit of the winter season. Admission is free.

Seasons of Light will be featured from 3:30-4:15 p.m. on Monday and Thursday, December 4 and 7. The Planetarium is located in Kean's Science Building (C330), at 1000 Morris Ave. in Union, N.J. Admission is free.

"From constellations to mythology, galactic fly-bys, and the exploration of the planets and our home solar system, Kean's Planetarium brings space... close!" said William Heyniger, lecturer in Kean's School of Environmental and Sustainability Sciences. "Our digitized dome simplifies complex subject matter and makes observing and learning about the stars, planets, motion and the vastness of space astronomy really fun. Seasons of Light takes viewers on a unique and exciting journey through the holiday season."

Seasons of Light, produced by Loch Ness Productions, explores the brightest and warmest traditions celebrated in the coldest and darkest of seasons. The show features holiday music and teaches audiences about the importance of illumination during the time of year when natural light is at its shortest. Celebrations of light are explored—from the burning Yule Log of Winter Solstice, and sparkling Christmas tree lights, to the lighting of luminarias in the Southwest and the Hanukkah Menorah. The show recounts

historical, religious and cultural rituals practiced during the winter months in Christian, Jewish, Celtic, Nordic, Roman, Irish, Mexican and Hopi traditions.

The program also explores the reasons behind the seasons and the constellations, as well as astronomical phenomena including comets, meteors, novas, supernovas and planetary conjunctions.

The Kean University Planetarium is a 30-foot hemispheric dome with a 180-degree sky view that utilizes Starlab®, a state-of-the-art digital projection system, for an immersive and educational experience of topics ranging from astronomy, astrophysics, earth science, interstellar distances, math, earth and space geology, and meteorological and spatial applications.



For more information, or to schedule a group visit to the Planetarium at any time of the year, email planetarium@kean.edu or call (908) 737-3660.



The Kean University Planetarium Seasons of Light will be featured from 3:30-4:15 p.m. on Monday and Thursday, December 4 and 7. The Planetarium is located in Kean's Science Building (C330), at 1000 Morris Ave. in Union, N.J. Admission is free.



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**Dessert**

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- Pasta (Your Choice of 1 Full Tray)**
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**Dessert**

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## STORY OF PERSONAL COMEBACK KEYS 2017 UNION COUNTY CONFERENCE

Marion Simmons spent 19 years in foster care, experiencing emotional, physical and sexual abuse at every stop until coming to Community Access Unlimited (CAU) at age 16. In time Simmons went to college, worked within New Jersey's child welfare system and recently started a business teaching at-risk youth the skills they need to be successful in life.

Simmons served as the keynote speaker at the Fifth Annual Union County Youth Services Networking Conference held in November at CAU in Elizabeth. The conference drew more than 175 child services professionals from more than 50 government agencies and nonprofits from throughout Union County.

CAU is a statewide Elizabeth-based nonprofit providing support programs and services to adults with disabilities as well as youth served under the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enable them to live independently in the community, providing supports in areas including housing, vocational skills and life-skills training, education, advocacy and recreation.

Simmons told the audience she believes everyone in life deserves the opportunity to turn a setback into a comeback. Her story outlined her own.

She entered foster care at age 4 because of her mother's substance abuse. Due partly to her rebellious nature and partly to the abuse she experienced at various locations, Simmons was referred to what she was told was her last chance, Community Access Unlimited.

"Before I came to CAU I was lashing out but they didn't give up on me," she said. "They told me, 'We'll let you cry and be mad, but you're still going to work on your goals, your driver's license, getting a job, graduating.' I thrived here. CAU truly is the key that opens the door."

Simmons became a leader at CAU, then earned a bachelor's degree in human services and sociology from Lincoln (PA) University before going to work for the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency. While there she was instrumental in changing the practice of having youth in foster care carry

their belongings in black trash bags when moving to now being given luggage.

Simmons now works as a project coordinator at JBS International, Inc. in Bethesda, MD., and recently started HOTEPE (Holding Onto Exceptional People), LLC to help other at-risk youth succeed in life as she has.

"If I had not gone through the things I went through in those 19 years in foster care, I wouldn't have the passion to be in child welfare and the courage to start my own business," she said. "If I had not suffered, I would not have had the ability to rebound."

Attendees of at the conference also heard presentations by Jessica Trombetta, director of the Office of Adolescent Services; Alice Hunnicutt, state director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; and Gordon MacInness, president and chief executive of New Jersey Policy Perspective. In addition, they participated in roundtable discussions on a variety of topics impacting the youth they support, including transitioning to adulthood, behavioral health and substance abuse, and employment training and life skills education.

The annual conference is produced each year by the Union County Youth Services Steering Committee, 16 leaders from the county's

nonprofit and government sectors working in youth services.

"It is important for us to bring all the various providers and mental health professionals, anyone working with young people, together to learn and network," said Jim Kimberly, director of development at the Cooperative Counseling Services and a member of the committee. "We also try to get speakers who are relevant to the issues we are working with."

About Community Access Unlimited  
Community Access Unlimited (CAU), celebrating its 38th year in 2017, supports people with special needs in achieving real lives in the community. CAU provides support and gives voice to adults and youth who traditionally have little support and no voice in society. CAU helps people with housing, life skills, employment, money management, socialization and civic activities. CAU also supports opportunities for advocacy through training in assertiveness, decision-making and civil right. CAU currently serves more than 6,000 individuals and families, with the number served growing each year. For more information about CAU and its services, contact us by phone at 908.354.3040, online at [www.caunj.org](http://www.caunj.org) or by mail at 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202.



(above) Members of the Union County Youth Services Steering Committee gather before the Fifth Annual Union County Youth Services Networking Conference.



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## SCHOOL ONE PTA HOSTS “WEAR THE CAPE”

School One PTA hosted a “Wear the Cape” assembly for all staff and students. Everyone was encouraged to wear a superhero t-shirt to show their support. The “Wear the Cape” assembly

focused on character building and addressed all grade levels from Pre-K to Grade 4. Everyone left with a positive attitude and with the message of helping others and “wearing the cape”.



(above) Cayden Benoit and Fiona Ashe are proudly “Wearing the Cape”

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# SPF HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCES 2018 COMMENDED STUDENTS

Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Principal, Dr. David Heisey, announced that nine seniors have been named Commended Students in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program.

The following students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success.

They represent a valuable national resource. Nimit P. Damania, Emily O. Gonyou, Nina I Halberstadter, Scott Kaiser, Andrew T. Kriney, Andrew Lomuscio, Trent P. Paulovits, Kevin M. Rohman, and Karl B. Wirth.



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# HUNDREDS GATHER FOR FOURTH ANNUAL UNION COUNTY DAY OF PRAYER

At a time when the country is being torn apart by hate rhetoric and fear of those unlike oneself, more than 650 members from Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist communities came together October 24 in a show of unity at the Fourth Annual Union County Day of Prayer in Westfield.

"It is great to be together with leaders of other faiths," said Rev. Michael Saporito, pastor of The Parish Community of St. Helen, which hosted the event. "This is such a year of turmoil for people in the country. It is great to bring different people of faiths together, and what faith doesn't want love, peace and unity and want to treat other people with the dignity they deserve?"

The annual Union County Day of Prayer, whose theme this year was Unifying Our Community Through Prayer, is hosted each year by the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council, comprising more than 40 interfaith congregations and community-based nonprofits, including founding member Community Access Unlimited (CAU). The evening featured prayers, songs and meditations from religious leaders of various faiths from throughout Union County.

"Martin Luther King once said that the most segregated time in this country is 11 a.m. on Sunday when everyone goes to their segregated church," said Sid Blanchard, CAU's executive director. "People with disabilities can't go because they are excluded, they are unwelcome. By bringing the community together and meeting each other, we are seeing that all people have value. People with disabilities and young people who have been abused and neglected will be welcomed in the faith community of their choice."

Unity and togetherness was the theme that carried through the evening.

"It is important to come together to offer prayers for our community and country at large," said Deacon Timothy Williams of the First Baptist Church in Kenilworth and chairman of the council's steering committee.

Added Pastor Carl Brewer of the Metropolitan Seventh Day Adventist Church in Plainfield, "It is something to build our community and we should always do what we can to bring us together."

The Venerable Klint Kevalin of the

Dhammakaya Meditation Center in Fanwood described the event as "Something that the world really needs. It is something that we as a community need to show, that peace can happen. We come from different faiths joining together to bring light to the world."

That light has never been more needed than now. Rev. Dr. L.L. DuBreuil, pastor of Faith United Church of Christ in Union, said, "We are living in a time of suspicion and ignorance. It is important that we get to know each other, pray together and shine the light."

Imam Khalil Abdul Aziz of Plainfield's Mosque Masjidullah, agreed, saying, "Here in 2017, I think we haven't made the effort to get to know each other. We live next to synagogues, churches and mosques, but we don't really know each other. Interfaith efforts are very productive in bridging that gap."

Cantor Matt Axelrod of Congregation Beth Israel in Scotch Plains spoke of the advantage of building that bridge, saying, "Anything that brings us together and shows us what we have in common makes us a stronger community."

That was a belief shared among the other religious leaders and reflected their denomination's teachings. Said Rev. Ann Marie Alderman of the First Unitarian Society of Plainfield, "Part of our faith is the interconnected web of all beings. We believe that all the various ways to reach the holy are legitimate and it is important for us to work together so the beloved community arrives."

Rabbi Cecelia Beyer of Temple Beth AhmYisrael in Springfield described Shema, a prayer that is the central tenet of Jewish worship, explaining, "What that says is that God is one. It is important that we find those things that unite us under one God. It is why events like this are important."

The Interfaith Coordinating Council was created by Community Access Unlimited CAU, a statewide Elizabeth-based nonprofit providing support programs and services to adults with disabilities as well as youth served under the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to enable them to live independently in the community, providing supports in areas including housing, vocational skills and life-skills training, education, advocacy and recreation.

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(above) Union County Day of Prayer 2017: Members of the Union County Interfaith Coordinating Council and other invited speakers gather before the Fourth Annual Union County Day of Prayer, held Oct. 24 at The Parish Community of Saint Helen.

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# PIPES OF CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

*Commemorating John Curry and the 1879 Vision at Knock, Ireland*



*(above) Pipers from the Kevin Ray Blandford Memorial Pipe Band are returning to the East Coast this December to join the company of the 19th annual "Pipes of Christmas" concerts. Photo by Warren Westura.*

The Pipes of Christmas will celebrate its nineteenth season with performances in New Jersey and New York this December. The holiday favorite opens on Saturday, December 16 at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, located at 921 Madison Avenue (at 73rd Street) for a 2PM performance. The concert moves across the Hudson River on Sunday, December 17 to Central Presbyterian Church located at 70 Maple Street in Summit, NJ with performances at 2 and 7PM.

The 2017 production will mark the world premiere of "Beautiful Things," an original composition by acclaimed Celtic harper Cormac De Barra of Dublin, Ireland. The piece commemorates the vision of the Virgin Mary at Knock Cathedral in Ireland in 1879.

Earlier this year, the remains of the last remaining witness to the vision were reinterred at Old St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City from the pauper's grave where he was laid to rest in 1934. His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York, supervised the service.

For those weary of the ceaseless stream of secular seasonal music from department stores to TV, the Pipes of Christmas offers a spiritual and traditional take on the season that connects concertgoers to the holiday in a fresh, meaningful way. The show features tunes such as O Come, O Come Emmanuel, Joy to the World, and Amazing Grace, all performed live on pipes and drums, harp and fiddle, and organ and brass. Not only does the performance define Christmas cheer, but also it inspires those of Celtic descent to retrace and reconnect to their ancestry.

The concert presents the music of Christmas accompanied by readings taken from the Celtic literature of Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Featured performers include James Robinson from the film "Braveheart," New England fiddle champion Paul Woodiel, "Riverdance" Irish uilleann piper and flutist Christopher Layer, Gaelic Mod champion harpist Jennifer Port of Golspie, Scotland, and the Pipe Major Kevin Ray Blandford Memorial Pipe Band from Redlands, CA.

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**CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE**  
**December 24-Christmas Eve**  
 4:00 p.m. Children's Service and Pageant  
 6:00 p.m. Candlelight Eucharist with Soloists  
 8:00 p.m. Candlelight Eucharist with Sanctuary Choir,  
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# CHRISTMAS CONCERTS PROCEEDS SUPPORT SCHOLARSHIPS AND MORE

Proceeds from the concert support an extensive music scholarship program, which includes the Carol Hassert Memorial Fine Arts Scholarship at Summit High School in Summit, NJ as well as annual gifts to the National Piping Centre and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (both located in Glasgow, Scotland) the Gaelic College of Nova Scotia and Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas.

Proceeds also support the Society's sponsorship of the US National Celtic Harp Championship, the Gaelic Literature Competition at Scotland's Royal National Mod and an annual academic research prize at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the acclaimed Gaelic college on the Isle of Skye.

Named one of New York City's "Top Ten" holiday events, the concert is made possible by a generous gift from the Grand Summit Hotel in Summit, NJ.

Each year, concert highlights are webcast in hi-definition over the Christmas holiday to a global audience. The 2016 production was the recipient of the prestigious Telly Award for broadcast excellence.

## TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

Tickets may be purchased online exclusively through SmartTix at [www.smarttix.com](http://www.smarttix.com) or by phone at (212) 868-4444. Reserved patron seats are available at both venues.



(above) Cormac de Barra. The acclaimed Irish composer and performer will debut his new composition on the 1879 miracle at Knock Cathedral, Ireland.

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## PUBLIC INPUT SOUGHT ON LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECTS

The Scotch Plains Downtown Redevelopment Committee (SPDRC) recently launched a new survey aimed to gather input from the community on both a new, expanded library and a community center facility. The need for this has been identified through Downtown Redevelopment Committee member comments and public input at several meetings.

As part of the planning for both a new, expanded library and a community center facility, this survey was developed by the Social Recreation Study Group of the SPDRC. Participation in the survey will help guide the SPDRC and the Planning Board as they formulate and discuss plans for both projects. The SPDRC asks that participants please take the time to answer each question, including the open-ended questions, as your input will greatly help with planning. Any plans will be reviewed, approved, and adopted by the Township Council.

The online survey can be found at the following websites:

- [www.surveymonkey.com/r/sp-library-community-center](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sp-library-community-center)
- [www.scotchplainsnj.gov/departments/downtown-redevelopment-committee/library-community-center-survey](http://www.scotchplainsnj.gov/departments/downtown-redevelopment-committee/library-community-center-survey)
- Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/ScotchPlainsTwp](http://www.facebook.com/ScotchPlainsTwp)
- Twitter page: [www.twitter.com/scotchplainstwp?lang=en](http://www.twitter.com/scotchplainstwp?lang=en)

Hard copies of the survey can be found at Scotch Plains Town Hall, located at 430 Park Avenue, in Room 205 and the Scotch Plains Library, located at 1927 Bartle Avenue. After completion, hard copy surveys can be submitted at a dropbox in Town Hall Room 205 or the Library or mailed to the Township of Scotch Plains, Attn: Thomas Stowe, 430 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076.

The online version is set to only allow one submission per IP address. For those who are filling out the hard copy survey, we ask that you please adhere to the honor system and fill out only one survey.

“Participation in this survey will be very important to our redevelopment plans,” said Mayor Al Smith, who is Chairman of the SPDRC. “The SPDRC has been discussing including both a new, expanded library and a community center as part of a redevelopment plan for some time now, and results from this survey will help us understand the needs of our residents.”

For more information on the Downtown Redevelopment Initiative, please visit our website: [www.scotchplainsnj.gov/departments/downtown-redevelopment-committee](http://www.scotchplainsnj.gov/departments/downtown-redevelopment-committee)

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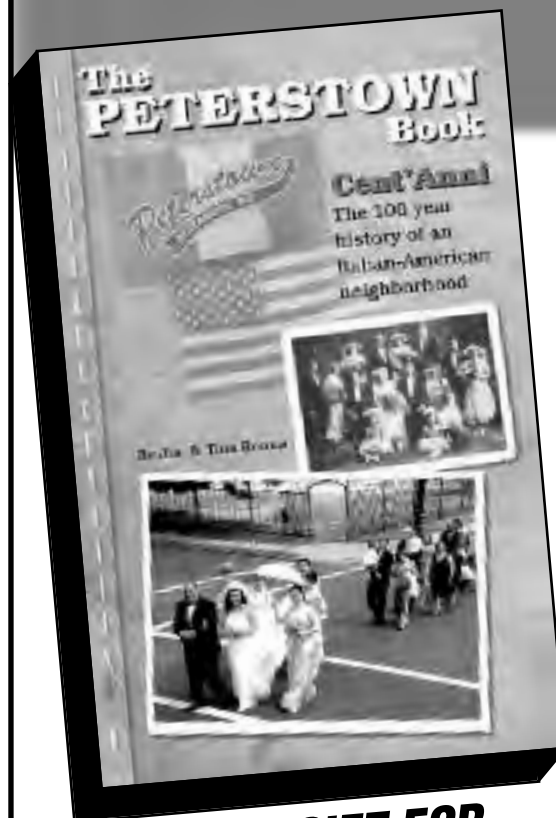
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# DECEMBER EVENTS AT THE SCOTCH PLAINS PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Library is located at 1927 Bartle Avenue, Scotch Plains, NJ 908-322-5007 • [www.scotlib.org](http://www.scotlib.org)

## Afternoon Book Club to Discuss Mansfield Park

Tuesday, December 19 at 1:00 p.m.,

the Afternoon Book Club will be meeting to discuss Mansfield Park by Jane Austen. Scotlib's book clubs are free and open to interested members of the public.

## Learn to Make a Felt Coffee Cozy

Friday, December 15 at 10 a.m.

at the Scotch Plains Public Library, learn a simple blanket stitch while you create an adorable felt sleeve for your coffee cup. Advanced registration is required.

## Hypertension Clinic Scheduled for December 12

The township nurse will be available at the Scotch Plains Public Library for blood pressure checks on Tuesday, December 12 from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

No registration is required.

## Scotch Plains Public Library to Host After-School Club for Middle School Students

Mondays and Wednesdays in December

Grades 5-8 are invited to relax, socialize, and have fun every Monday and Wednesday from 3:30-4:30.

Students can complete homework, play games, have snacks, and explore maker activities with friends.

No registration is required.

Please note that the after school club will not meet on Monday, December 25

because the library will be closed. In lieu of the after-school club (and in celebration of Winter Break), on Wednesday, December 27

the teen librarian, Dana, will host a Harry Potter movie marathon beginning at noon.

These events are free for students in grades 5-8.

## Youth Chess Club

On Wednesday, December 13 from 6:00-7:30 p.m., Scotch Plains and Fanwood cardholders ages 7-16 are invited to participate in the library's very popular chess club led by instructor Errol Singh.

Pre-registration is required for the chess club and is limited to Scotch Plains and Fanwood cardholders. Space is limited. Online registration will open one week prior to the event.

## DECEMBER MOVIES

Join community members at the Scotch Plains Public Library on *Fridays at noon* for "New Comedies."

### CHIPS (R, 100 min)

Friday, December 8

Jon Baker (Dax Shepard) and Frank "Ponch" Poncherello (Michael Pena) have just joined the California Highway Patrol (CHP) in Los Angeles, but for very different reasons.

### The Wedding Plan (PG, 110 min)

Friday, December 15

When her fiancé leaves her just days before their wedding, Michal (Noa Koler), an Orthodox Jewish woman, decides to continue with her plans believing she will meet the love of her life in time for the nuptials.

### Going in Style (PG-13, 96 min)

Friday, December 22

Lifelong buddies Willie, Joe, and Al decide to buck retirement and step off the straight and narrow for the first time in their lives when their pension fund becomes a corporate casualty.

No film will be shown on

Friday, December 29.

## HARRY POTTER EVENTS FOR TEENS

December is an exciting month for Harry Potter fans at Scotch Plains Public Library.

Teens in grades 5-12 are invited to YA Chat Club to discuss all things Harry Potter.

On Wednesday, December 6 at 6 p.m.,

Talk about favorite books, movies, characters, and houses with Scotlib's new teen librarian, Dana.

Do you long to be a student at Hogwarts?

Then come out on

Wednesday, December 20 at 6 p.m.

to compete in Harry Potter trivia.

Test your knowledge of the wizarding world and challenge your friends.

On Wednesday, December 27,

stop by the library for the conclusion to Harry Potter Month! Starting at noon, Dana will be showing the first three movies back to back. Feel free to come and go as you please; you don't have to stay all day

(unless you want to!)

Just sit back, relax, and enjoy the magic.

These events are free for students in grades 5-12.

## SCOTCH PLAINS PUBLIC LIBRARY TO CELEBRATE NOON YEAR'S EVE

On Friday, December 29 at 11:15 a.m., the library will once again celebrate a new year with a Count Down to Noon party! Open to families with children of all ages, this year's event will include crafts, live music, and another attempt at a successful balloon drop!

Registration is required and will open on Monday, December 4, 2017.

For more information, please call 908-322-5007 x 209, email [kids@scotlib.org](mailto:kids@scotlib.org), or stop by the Children's Room. For more information about other upcoming activities, check out our website [www.scotlib.org](http://www.scotlib.org).

Scotch Plains Public Library is located at 1927 Bartle Avenue, one block from Park Avenue in the center of town.

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# RENNA MEDIA LAUNCHES THREE NEW NEWSPAPERS NOW MAILING 125,000 NEWSPAPERS BRINGING TOTAL TO 21 TOWNS

Renna Media will be launching three new newspapers in January 2018. *Garwood Times*, *The Chathams*, and *Madison Monthly* will join Renna Media's family of newspapers, bringing the number of publications to 21 with a total of 125,000 newspapers mailed to homes and businesses monthly.

The publications are "hyper-local" in nature in that they contain information focused on each individual town and are direct mailed within those towns.

The hyper-local design gives businesses the highest value for their advertising dollars. The newspapers are designed (black ink on newsprint) to keep the cost of advertising as low as \$60 for a business card size ad. Regional

businesses can take advantage of one low rate for being in multiple publications. Inserts are also available.

Joe and Tina Renna, owners of Renna Media, LLC, have been publishing community newspapers since 1998.

For info about Renna Media publications, please contact [info@rennamedia.com](mailto:info@rennamedia.com); or call 908-418-5586.



(above, l-r) Joe and Tina Renna, owners of Renna Media, LLC, have been publishing community newspapers since 1998.

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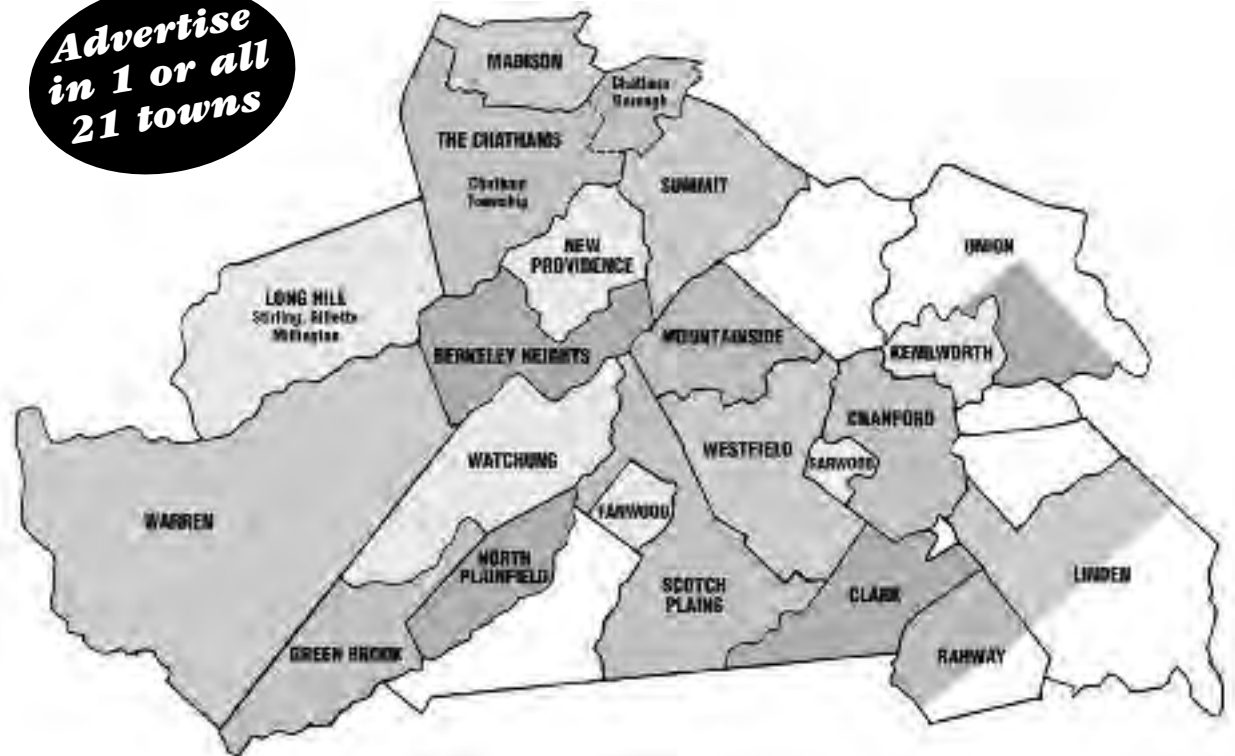
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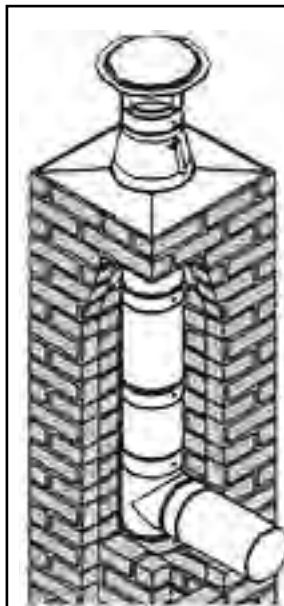
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