

The PRIDE of North Plainfield



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NPBA ANNOUNCES BUSINESSES OF THE YEAR

The First North Plainfield Business of the Year Awards were announced and presented by the North Plainfield Business Association (NPBA) holiday party held on November 28, 2017 at La Ronda Restaurant, 27 Greenbrook Road, North Plainfield. There were over 30 attendees. The party included a buffet and portions of the proceeds went to the NPBA Treasury.

The winners were chosen by a panel of members of the business association board of directors. Criteria included how long companies were in business, sales, and community service.

The 2017 NPBA Business of the Year Awards were presented to: Johanna Salvemini of Johanna’s Creations for Business of the Year (under 10 employees); Dan Battista of Bold Electric for Business of the Year (over 10 employees); and Jacqueline Mitchell, Four Square Staging, Business of the Year Runner-Up (under 10 employees).

NPBA has been around since 1938 and is open to businesses in town or businesses that do business in town. The purpose of the group is networking and to help businesses succeed and be more profitable.

NPBA meetings are held monthly and all are welcome, whether you are a local resident, local business, or out of town business. The NBPA meets the last Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. Next meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 30 at 7 p.m. at the International Sports Club, 403 Somerset St. North Plainfield. For info, call President Bruce Heyman at 908-755-4700.



(above, l-r) Business of the Year Winners, Bruce Heyman, NPBA President; Mayor Michael Giordano; Johanna Salvemini of Johanna's Creations, Business of the Year (under 10 employees); Dan Battista, Bold Electric, Business of the Year over 10 employees; and Jacqueline Mitchell, Four Square Staging, Business of the Year Runner-Up (under 10 employees).

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The PRIDE of North Plainfield

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Maryanne
Christiano-Mistretta

Hello Readers!

I'm ecstatic to introduce myself as the new editor for Renna Media. It's such an honor working with Joe and Tina Renna; they are awesome!

Joe has asked me to write a little bit about myself for our readership, which is probably a great idea since I'll often be out

and about in the community.

Residing in Union County with my husband, Dennis, and our beloved cat Nicholas, my interests, besides writing and editing, include animals, music, and living a healthy lifestyle.

Writing professionally since 1995, I'm an award-winning journalist. I received my award from The NJ Society of Professional Journalists for investigative journalism. I'm also an author, public speaker, and poet (recently selected to read at the All About Eve Arts Festival at the West End Theatre in Long Branch, New Jersey).

Having a great passion for music, I've developed a unique library program called "The Learn & Listen Series" which pays homage to legendary musicians.

The two-fold presentation begins as I host, sharing a musician's biography – which I wrote – followed by actual live music from local New Jersey and New York talent. Librarians can choose from a variety of singers such as Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole, Sammy Davis Jr., John Lennon, Freddie Mercury, Johnny Cash, Janis Joplin, and David Bowie.

I'm blessed to be able to work with performers like indie recording artist Keith Beck; jazz sensation Stephen Fuller (front man for Amani);

singer/performance artist, Anna Oh; and three-time Grammy winning producer, Rob Fusari.

"Learn & Listen" also includes Jayne DiGregorio and Rich Timberlake, who work behind-the-scenes filming for an upcoming documentary.

In addition to the "Learn & Listen" series, I also lecture on "History of the Newspaper Industry," "Going, Going, Gone: What the Next Generation Won't Remember" (seniors love that one!), and there's also a healthy foodies series, which includes sampling.

Now, if you've read this far, you may be asking yourself – how can this woman work so much and still have time to edit 21 newspapers? As Joe Renna himself says – "It's not work, it's a lifestyle." I somehow get everything done ... and with a big smile on my face.

When you have a grand passion for what you do, it doesn't matter what day it is. It could be a Monday, or a Friday, and you're equally as happy. Sometimes I'm home all day working in my pajamas; other times I'm having a blast taking photos at a Winter Walk. Whether I sleep in or get up super early to attend a town meeting, it's all good. In this line of work, every day is different, and every day is exciting.

In just one month of working for Renna Media, I've attended many fun affairs and met incredible people. It brings a tear to my eye when a child cheers, "I'm gonna be in the newspaper!" after I take his or her photograph. That's what it's all about – the essence of presenting a good story to the community.

So, don't hesitate to send me your community news. We call on the arts, fundraisers, nonprofits, new businesses – anything positive that should be in your local newspaper.

Reach me at 908-858-4012, or email me at: Editor@RennaMedia.com

I look forward to hearing from you!

Maryanne Christiano-Mistretta

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NORTH PLAINFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

Recently Prudential visited North Plainfield High School to meet with students interested in exploring a career in the Actuarial Sciences. A job in the Actuarial Sciences is one of the top-ranked professions and are in extremely high demand. Prudential has launched an Early Awareness Program to inform high school students about the many possibilities that exist in the field.

The Prudential team, led by Sherrice Massiah, created an engaging mini-lesson where students learned about pensions and investment verses longevity risk. Students worked together on a case study to experience real world math that is used by an actuary. Senior, Zachary Conroy

commented, "I thought the Prudential presentation was very interesting. I didn't realize that a simple version of math, such as algebra, could completely run an organization based on investments and money."

Prudential is involved in several internship programs offered to college students interested in perusing a career in the Actuarial Sciences. Students were exposed to the necessary steps to pursue a career in the field.

North Plainfield is truly grateful to Prudential for their continued partnership, guidance, and support for students interested in the Actuarial Sciences.



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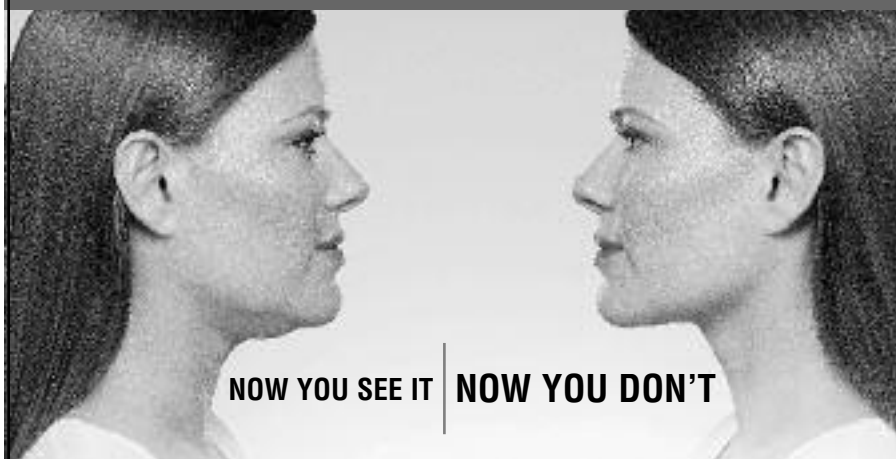
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INTERNATIONAL LOVE SONGS CONCERT FEATURING JESSE RIVERA AT VERMEULE



The Friends of Vermeule Mansion, Inc. (FOVM) will present their popular Music at the Mansion concert series on Sunday, Feb 11th, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. in the Vermeule Mansion at the corner of 614 Greenbrook Road and Clinton Avenue, in North Plainfield. Come hear a wonderful program just in time for Valentine's Day featuring love songs from North, Central and South America, the Caribbean and Europe with talented, 8-time award winning guitarist-singer-songwriter Jesse Rivera.

Jesse has performed live to audiences in 19 countries, playing guitar and singing beautiful melodies for both public and private events alike. In this program, Jesse Rivera takes you around the world to enjoy long songs from different countries. Songs featured will be Volare (Italy), Cielito Lindo and Besame Mucho (Kiss Me a Lot) (Mexico), and Quizas, Quizas, Quizas (Cuba) to name a few. Mr. Rivera encourages audience participation and an opportunity to ask questions about his experience in other countries. It's a great experience for all ages.

Light refreshments representing the countries in the program will be offered and admission is free. Donations are gratefully accepted. The Friends of Vermeule Mansion Inc. (FOVM) is a non-profit organization promoting the history of North Plainfield and arts and culture in the community.

For more information, contact Johanna Salvemini at 908-755-8098.

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SCLSNJ AWARDED FOUR-STAR NATIONAL LIBRARY RATING

The Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) was once again named a four-star Library by the Library Journal Index. This is the fifth consecutive year, and eighth time in ten years, that SCLSNJ has been named a Star Library. Of the over 250 libraries in the state, SCLSNJ is one of six Libraries to receive this honor.

"Our Library System continues to excel year after year delivering innovative and necessary services, resources, and staff excellence, as well as evolving with today's changing technology," said Somerset County Freeholder Deputy Director Patrick Scaglione, library liaison. "I visit our county Libraries on a regular basis and I can personally attest to the strength and superior quality of our collections and Library services."

The Library Journal Index is a measurement tool that compares United States public libraries with their spending peers based on four per capita output measures: circulation, library visits, program attendance, and public Internet computer use. Scores on the Library Journal Index are produced by measuring the relationships between each library's statistics and the averages for its expenditure category.

"New Jersey has more than 250 public

libraries; we're so proud to be one of the six that were named Star Libraries. It's a great testament to the quality of services the public here enjoys. And yes, we are shooting for five stars next year!" said SCLSNJ's County Library Administrator Brian Auger.

"Our patrons are great library users, and that's part of why we're a Star Library again this year. Having made the transition to our new catalog system, we're hoping that patrons will have an even easier time finding and checking out what they're looking for," said SCLSNJ's Director of Operations Lynn Hoffman.

About Somerset County Library System of New Jersey

Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) partners with you to connect, to explore, to share and to discover. Together we enrich lives, expand knowledge and strengthen communities. SCLSNJ branches can be found in Bridgewater, Bound Brook, Hillsborough, Manville, North Plainfield, Peapack & Gladstone, Rocky Hill at Mary Jacobs Memorial Library, Somerville, Warren Township, and Watchung. Additionally, there are two SCLSNJ reading stations in Branchburg and Washington Valley. Visit SCLSNJ.org.

THREE-DIMENSIONAL WALL MURAL INSPIRES CHILDREN

Over a dozen children recently decorated their own fairy houses from recycled materials with twigs, leaves, and pinecones at SCLSNJ's North Plainfield Memorial Library branch..



(above) Grace Klikus, 10, of North Plainfield, proudly displays her fairy house.

DESIGNING GINGERBREAD HOUSES AT THE LIBRARY

On December 14, 2017, families gathered at SCLSNJ's North Plainfield Memorial Library branch to build gingerbread houses out of Graham crackers and colorful candies.



(above) Naomi Tucker, 11, of North Plainfield, joyously displays her gingerbread creation.

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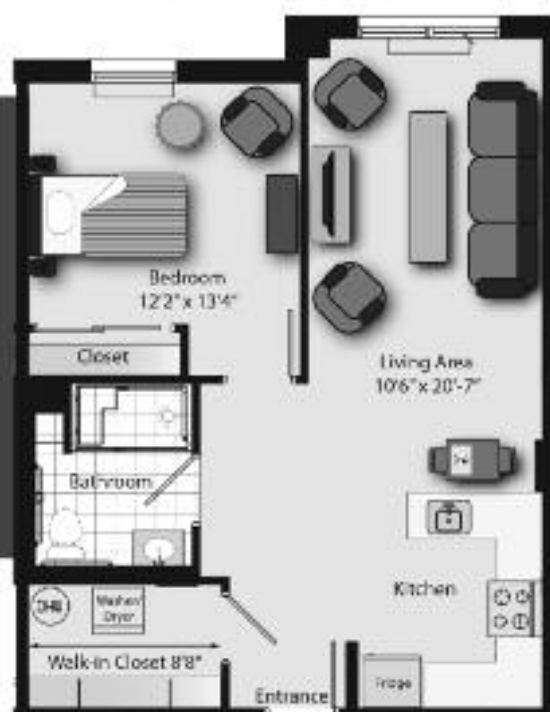
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NORTH PLAINFIELD UTILIZES LOCAL RADIO STATION TO CONNECT STUDENTS, PARENTS, COMMUNITY

Submitted by Salma Abraham, senior at North Plainfield High School

The North Plainfield School District partnered with local radio station 1630-AM, located at the Municipal Building of North Plainfield, to provide information to the community about local school and borough events.

Rich Phoenix, Borough Clerk and Chief Operator of the radio station, facilitated two recent broadcasts made by North Plainfield High School students. The broadcasts aired for multiple days prior to Thanksgiving.

Seniors Ayah Elsais, Anne Joseph, and Frankie Dox were the first group of students selected by high school principal, Dr. Jerard Stephenson to deliver information in English, Spanish, and French, about events such as the Thanksgiving Day Football Game, a ceremony honoring military veterans, and the promotion of a weekend film festival.

Elsais, who delivered the message in English, said, "It was definitely a new experience. We were all pretty excited since it was our first time taking part in a broadcast. We wanted to do our best to reach out to not only English speakers, but to people of different backgrounds, especially

since North Plainfield has a high Hispanic population. At first, it was definitely a bit nerve-racking, but once we settled down, it was pretty easy to execute over the recording system. We think this is definitely an opportunity for our school to reach out to the community."

Anyone in North Plainfield is able to access the broadcast. It will provide regular updates about school and community related events that will allow for students and families to get involved.

Joseph, who delivered the message in French said, "I thought it was a cool experience because I have never done something like that before. I've been taking French since seventh grade, and I speak it very fluently. I thought it was a cool way to show off what I have learned over the years as well. I also came to learn that this was an accomplishment for North Plainfield because it was the first time we used the radio to air a football game advertising in different languages."

This new partnership hopes to reach larger audiences by incorporating foreign language messages in the broadcast.

Dox, who delivered the message in Spanish said, "At first, I didn't really give it much thought. I was just going to say something in Spanish and that was it. But as time went on, I began to realize the true value of it. We were one of the first schools in the nation to actually accomplish this. That's when it hit me. I didn't feel any pressure when speaking and I think I did pretty well. It was truly an honor. I'm glad I was able to speak on the radio and represent North Plainfield High School."

North Plainfield High School juniors, Laura Amancha and Demetrius Acevedo delivered a second broadcast in both English and Spanish.

"This endeavor highlights the close partnership between our schools and municipality, and the knowledge that contributions to education and community go hand in hand. It's another strong example of what makes North Plainfield a special place. We also hope that our community tunes into 1630-AM, and we promise to continue a steady stream of broadcasts for the listening public," said district superintendent Dr. James McLaughlin.

NORTH PLAINFIELD UTILIZA LA ESTACIÓN DE RADIO LOCAL PARA CONECTAR A ESTUDIANTES, PADRES Y LA COMUNIDAD

Presentatdo por: Salma Abraham, estudiante de Escuela Secundaria de North Plainfield.

El Distrito Escolar de North Plainfield se asoció con la estación de radio local 1630-AM, ubicada en el Edificio Municipal de North Plainfield, para proporcionar información a la comunidad sobre la escuela local y los eventos del municipio.

Rich Phoenix, empleado del municipio y operador principal de la estación de radio, facilitó dos transmisiones recientes hechas por estudiantes de la Escuela Secundaria de North

Plainfield. Las transmisiones salieron al aire durante varios días antes del Día de Acción de Gracias.

Ayah Elsais, Anne Joseph y Frankie Dox fueron el primer grupo de estudiantes seleccionados por el director de la escuela secundaria, el Dr. Jerard Stephenson, para ofrecer información en inglés, español y francés sobre eventos como el Día de Acción de Gracias, la ceremonia de honor veteranos militares, y la promoción de un festival de cine durante un fin de semana.

Elsais, quien llevó el mensaje en inglés, dijo: "Definitivamente fue una nueva experiencia. Todos estábamos muy emocionados ya que era la primera vez que participamos en una transmisión radial. Queríamos hacer todo lo posible para acercarnos no solo a personas de habla inglesa, sino también a personas de diferentes orígenes, especialmente porque North Plainfield tiene una gran población hispana. Al principio, fue definitivamente un poco estresante, pero una vez que nos acomodamos, fue muy fácil de ejecutar a través del sistema de grabación. Creemos que esta es definitivamente una gran oportunidad para que nuestra escuela se acerque a la comunidad".

Cualquiera en North Plainfield puede acceder a la transmisión. Esta transmisión proporcionará actualizaciones regulares sobre eventos relacionados con la escuela y la comunidad que permitirán involucrarse a los estudiantes y sus familias.

Joseph, quien llevó el mensaje en francés, dijo: "Pensé que fue una experiencia genial porque nunca antes había hecho algo así. He estado tomando francés desde séptimo grado, y lo hablo

con mucha fluidez. Pensé que era una forma genial de mostrar lo que aprendí a lo largo de los años. También aprendí que esto fue un logro para North Plainfield porque era la primera vez que usábamos la radio para emitir publicidad de un juego de fútbol en diferentes idiomas".

Esta nueva asociación espera llegar a audiencias más grandes mediante la incorporación de mensajes en diferentes idiomas en la transmisión.

Dox, que llevó el mensaje en español, dijo: "Al principio, realmente no lo pensé mucho. Solo iba a decir algo en español y nada más. Pero a medida que pasaba el tiempo, comencé a darme cuenta del verdadero valor de ello. Fuimos una de las primeras escuelas en la nación en lograr esto. Ahí es cuando me di cuenta. No sentí ninguna presión al hablar y creo que lo hice bastante bien. Fue un verdadero honor. Me alegró poder hablar en la radio y representar a la Escuela Secundaria North Plainfield".

Los estudiantes de penúltimo año de la Escuela Superior de North Plainfield, Laura Amancha y Demetrius Acevedo, dieron una segunda transmisión en inglés y español.

"Este esfuerzo pone de relieve la estrecha relación entre nuestras escuelas y el municipio, y el conocimiento de que las contribuciones a la educación y la comunidad van de la mano. Es otro gran ejemplo de lo que hace que North Plainfield sea un lugar especial. También esperamos que nuestra comunidad se sintonice en 1630-AM, y prometemos continuar un constante flujo de transmisiones para el público que escucha," dijo el superintendente de distrito Dr. James McLaughlin.

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NORTH PLAINFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Message from William G. Parenti, Chief of North Plainfield Police

I wish you all a Happy New Year. Sadly, this time of year also brings with it many scams. Below are some that have taken place in North Plainfield this past year. Please beware and do not fall victim. One should always remember if an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Many legitimate companies sell their products or services through telemarketing by either calling consumers or advertising a number for consumers to call. Charities also use telemarketing techniques; unfortunately, fraudulent telemarketers rob people every day, using phones as their weapons. The following are tips to help protect yourself from Telemarketing scams.

Know who you're dealing with. If the company or charity is unfamiliar, check it out with your state or local consumer protection agency and the Better Business Bureau. Call the North Plainfield Police Department if the charity involves law enforcement 908-769-2937. If you use the internet, make sure you do a search on the company and not click on a link provided in an email. Never click on a link if you were not expecting it. They are usually scams of malware and they will harm your computer or seek payment to fix it.

Be aware that "no complaint" is no guarantee. Fraudulent operators open and close quickly, so the fact that no one has made a complaint yet doesn't mean that the company or charity is legitimate. You still need to look for other danger signs of fraud.

Don't believe promises of easy money. If someone claims that you can earn money with

little or no work, get a loan or credit card even if you have bad credit, or make money on an investment with little or no risk, it's probably a scam.

Think twice before entering contests operated by unfamiliar companies. Fraudulent marketers sometimes use contest entry forms to identify potential victims.

Resist pressure. Legitimate companies will be happy to send you detailed information and give you time to make a decision. It is probably a scam if the marketer demands that you act immediately or will not take "No" for an answer.

Guard your personal information. Only provide your credit card or bank account number when you are actually paying for something. Do not give your social security number to a telemarketer.

Senior citizens are particularly vulnerable to scams that take advantage of people who live alone. Seniors need to be wary when dealing with salespersons, particularly over the phone.

The lottery scam. The potential victims are contacted over the phone or approached in person on the street or parking lot. They are told that either they have won several million dollars or that they need their help to cash the lottery ticket. However, in order to receive the winning money, the victims are told that they need to pay taxes on the winning money or pay some other fee, usually several thousand dollars. The victims are instructed to send cashiers checks to a Post Office box, send bitcoin or they go to the bank with the victim and withdraw cash. The lottery ticket is always fake.

APPLICATIONS DUE FOR DELEEUEW SCHOLARSHIP

High school seniors wishing to apply for the Adele DeLeeuw Scholarship should obtain applications now from their school guidance office. The scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Deadline for submission of applications is Wednesday, March 7th, 2018.

Previous DeLeeuw scholarship recipients already in college are eligible to re-apply. They must submit complete official transcripts of college grades with a new application.

This is the twenty-third year the scholarships have been offered. To date, the Adele DeLeeuw Scholarship Fund, which is a fund of the Plainfield Foundation, has awarded over one million dollars. The awards are made in accordance with the terms of a bequest from Ms. DeLeeuw, author of 75 books, journalist and arts activist.

The Plainfield Rotary Scholarship Foundation, headed by Michael R. Townley, acts as selector for the scholarships. Area Rotary Clubs assist in the selection process. Only

students attending high schools in Plainfield, North Plainfield, South Plainfield, Warren, Watchung, Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Edison are eligible. Location of high school, not student's residence, is the qualifying factor. The student must also be accepted to an accredited college or university.

Applicants must plan to major in one of the following areas of study: art, poetry, writing, journalism or engineering. They must demonstrate the scholastic aptitude and interest to pursue study in one of these specified areas. They must also prove financial need.

Interested students should consult their guidance counselors to obtain the necessary application information or go to the Plainfield/North Plainfield Rotary Club website at www.rotarypnp.org/cs-adele-deleeuw-scholarship.php.

Questions may be directed to Johanna Salvemini, Scholarship Administrator, at (908) 755-8098.

BEST HOLIDAY DECORATED HOME

Congratulations to the winning home at 381 Brook Avenue, North Plainfield, who earned a \$100 gift card! (Note: At the home owners request, their name is being withheld).

Last month the North Plainfield Recreation Department had their second annual house decorating contest. Two Girl Scouts and one Boy Scout judged several beautifully registered homes over a two-day judging period. The contest was open to all North Plainfield residents who registered.

A \$75 gift card was awarded to second place winners, The Molina Family, located at 464 Warfield Road. And a \$50 gift card was awarded to third place winners, The Belyo Family, located at 206 Sanford Avenue.

The top three winners were announced on Facebook before Christmas.

The contest was free and open to all North Plainfield residents who registered for the contest. The Department of Parks and Recreation looks forward to their third annual event next December.



(above) Winning home for Best Holiday Decorated Home in North Plainfield.

CHRISTMAS TREE DISPOSAL

A message from the mayor regarding disposal of live Christmas trees:

The Department of Public Works will be picking up your discarded trees at the curb through the end of January.

Please note, all ornaments, lights, tinsel, and any other decorations must be removed from the trees prior to placing them at the curb. Do not place your tree in a bag. Bagged trees will not be picked up. Thank you for your cooperation.

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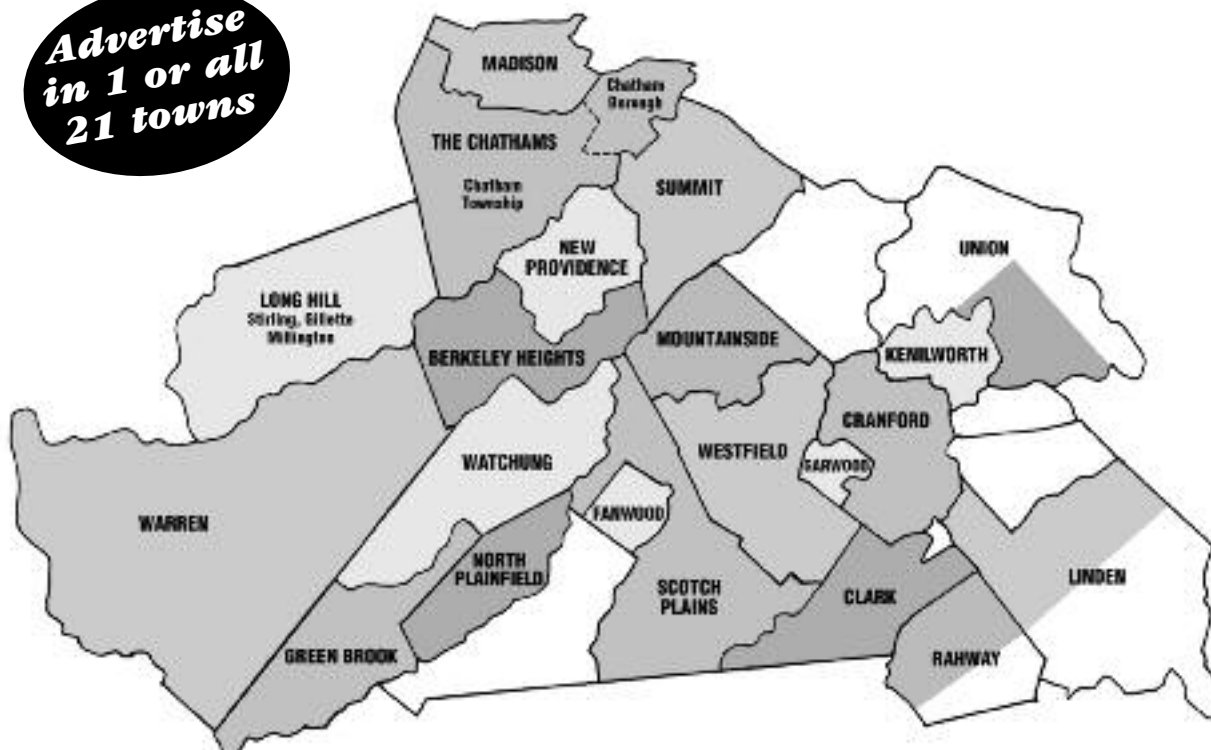
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9 HALF PAGE	6.5" x 9" or 10" x 7"	\$320	\$800	\$1000	\$1300	\$1600	\$1900	\$2200	\$2400
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