# **AND BUSINESS IN WESTFIELD** field Monthlyn,

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# **SCHOLARS RECEIVE NATIONAL, STATE & LOCAL RECOGNITION**

Three Westfield High School students received praise from the Board of Education for earning state and national recognitions. Board President Gretchan Ohlig presented Benjamin Kevelson, Kathryn Armstrong and Justin O'Boyle with congratulatory certificates during a recent public meeting.

Benjamin Kevelson, a senior at Westfield High School, was recognized for being named a 2018 National Merit Semi-Finalist. Approximately 1.1 percent of 1,500,000 juniors who took the PSAT qualify as National Merit Semi-Finalists. Ben is among the highest scoring entrants and is eligible to apply for a National Merit scholarship. The program honors students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. A Westfield High School senior this year, he leads the Blue Devils Marching Band as a Drum Major and is an accomplished musician who plays the harp and the saxophone. Ben is a member of the Westfield High School Wind Ensemble and volunteers at senior citizen homes, a food shelter, and an after-school program for homeless and at-risk children.

Eleventh graders Justin O'Boyle and Kathryn Armstrong were honored for being selected 2017 Governor's STEM Scholars. The STEM Scholars program received 600 applications throughout the State and selected 85 students using very rigorous criteria, including character, leadership ability, and STEM aptitude. They will be participating in a series of conferences, field trips, a research project, and professional and mentoring opportunities. The director of the program, David Hodges, explains, "The purpose of the Governor's STEM Scholars is to take New Jersey's best and brightest STEM students and introduce them to what New Jersey has to offer." Senator Cory Booker told the scholars that "we need to empower more young people



(above) Westfield Board of Education President Gretchan Ohlig presented Benjamin Kevelson (at right), 2018 National Merit Semi-Finalist, and 2017 Governor's STEM Scholars Kathryn Armstrong and Justin O'Boyle with congratulatory certificates. Photo by Westfield Public Schools.

to explore, to discover, to innovate." The first meeting of the program took place a few weeks ago at Rutgers.

Kathryn's s interest in STEM has included her attendance at a two-week Engineering Camp at Brown University during the summer between 9th and 10th grade. A distinguished honor roll student, she participates in Model United Nations, Westfield Plainfield Connections, and is a member of the Blue Devils Soccer team.

Justin has been described by his counselor, Christine Hough, as having a true passion for computer science. He is an active member of the Westfield High School's "Coding with a Cause Club," where he travels to two Westfield elementary schools each week to teach younger students about computer science. He is an honor roll student who is interested in history, politics, and enjoys reading in his spare time.



# estfield Montheyn,

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## **MEET MARYANNE CHRISTIANO-MISTRETTA** YOUR CONTACT FOR NEWSPAPER CONTENT



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 threetime 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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1/5	1:30 pm	TGIF! October Sky (video)
1/10	2:00 pm	Make a Scarf from a T-Shirt
1/12	1:30 pm	TGIF! Hitchcock (video)
1/19	1:30 pm	TGIF! The Story of Pippin (video)
1/20	2:00 pm	Afternoon of Music w/Ellen LaFurn
1/26	1:30 pm	Classic Movie: Ladies in Lavender
1/30	2:00 pm	Digital Downloading-Ebooks & audio

#### PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN CHECK WEBSITE FOR SIGN UP INFO MID-TERM STUDY HALL NIGHTS: JANUARY 21-28 CHECK WWW.WMLNJ.ORG FOR DATES AND TIMES

1/5	3:45 pm	Chess Club for Kids-No age limit, but players must know how to move the pieces
1/19, 26	10:00 am	Playgroup for Babies 0-23 months
1/13	10:00 am	Paws to Read. Beginning readers read to library dogs for ten- minute segments
1/9, 16, 23	3:45 pm	Afternoon LEGO Club 5+yrs
1/16, 23, 30	10:30 am	2's on Thursday Storytime
1/16, 23, 30	1:00 pm	Crafternoon Storytime 3½-5 yrs
1/18, 25	10:30 am	3's on Thursday Storytime
1/29	7:00 pm	Build a Bristol Bot!

grades 4, 5, 6

## **WOMAN'S CLUB OF WESTFIELD WELCOMES RAPHAEL'S LIFE HOUSE**

Submitted by: Anne Magnotti

Westfield held recently, it was the pleasure of the members to welcome Edie Coogan and Lori Ruzich who represented Raphael's Life House in Elizabeth.

This wonderful sanctuary began in 1953 and has offered ever since a safe housing for homeless, pregnant young women who have nowhere else to turn. The moms learn how to be good mothers and are schooled to learn the ability to support themselves. This is a place where

At a general meeting of the Woman's Club of young mothers are given a chance to rebuild their lives with their babies, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, or economic status.

> All are welcomed at Raphael's Life House and are offered the help that they need to begin new lives with their new babies.

> The ladies of The Woman's Club of Westfield were thrilled to fill large bags to the brim with all that babies, and mothers too, require -- from diapers to clothing to manicure sets and so much



(above l-r) Ruth Positan, WCW Treasurer; Lori Ruzich, Raphael Life House Volunteer Manager; Edie Coogan, Raphael Life House Co-Founder; and WCW President, Pat D'Angelo.



# NJYS JAZZ PROGRAM AWARDS FULL SCHOLARSHIPS TO SIX STUDENTS

The New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS) recently announced that it has awarded full scholarships to six Westfield students. Jack Garrow, tenor saxophone; Ben Mizrach, alto saxophone; Lucy Riter, drums; Josh Markowitz, bass guitar; Catherine Moore, piano; and Ben

Kevelson, baritone saxophone, all received year at a variety of events including the Wharton scholarships after auditioning for the NJYS Jazz Quorum, an ensemble for advanced players focusing on improvisation, ensemble interplay, and live performances.

The Jazz Quorum will perform throughout the High School.

Institute for the Performing Arts' "Making Music Count" Gala on February 23, 2018 at the Madison Hotel in Morristown, NJ.

All six scholarship recipients attend Westfield



(above l-r) Jack Garrow, tenor saxophone; Ben Mizrach, alto saxophone; Lucy Riter, drums; Josh Markowitz, bass guitar; Catherine Moore, piano; and Ben Kevelson, baritone saxophone.

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# 11 WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EARN TOP SCORES IN SAT & ACT





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(above) Eleven Westfield High School students achieved the highest score possible on the SAT and ACT standardized tests according to recent reports received by the school. Westfield High School Principal, Derrick Nelson (far right), congratulated the students on November 14 citing their outstanding achievement on the tests which are widely used for college admission criteria. "It speaks volumes about your abilities and your commitment to your education," stated Dr. Nelson. Top scorers include (first row l-r) Elisha Israel – Math 2; Sarah Ward- Math 2; Abby Rothenberg – Math; Mary-Joy Sidhom – Math; and Julia Friss – ACT English; and (second row l-r) Matthew Cafiero – Math; Colby Chen – Math; Alex Pinkowski – Math 2; Stefan Sujanthakumar – Math 2; and Yallen Bai – Math.

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# ROOSEVELT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL BREAKS DOWN SOCIAL BARRIERS ON MIX IT UP DAY

Students at Roosevelt Intermediate School (RIS) in Westfield took part in the national Mix It Up Day event, joining more than three million other students across the country to help break down social barriers. Roosevelt's event was held on November 3 with the entire school community participating.

"Mix It Up is a positive step that schools can take to help create inclusive school communities and learning environments," explained RIS Guidance Counselor Kim Schumacher. Along with counselors Cristina Caprara and Christine Trottere, Mrs. Schumacher advised the student-run event hosted by several of the school's 8th graders who are peer leaders in the RIS Character Education program.

The event began to take shape weeks earlier with the counselors presenting lessons to all the students on the importance of being an Upstander – someone who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. The preparations culminated on November 3rd when all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students were asked to move out of their comfort zone during lunch periods and sit with someone new.

Each table displayed a large photograph of a person whom the students designated as an Upstander role model. In addition to having serious discussions about that individual, students played fun games like sharing what their favorite movie or color is and answering questions pulled from a box such as: "If you wrote a book, what would it be about" and "A time a friend helped me out was. . ."

Eighth grader Emma Riley, one of the peer leaders directing ice breaker activities during the 6th grade lunch period explained, "We are trying to get them out of their comfort zone to sit with new people and play games with them." Sixth grader Michael Marshall, reacting positively to the idea, said, "I got to meet new people and I'll get to be friends with them."

Caroline Donnelly, another 8th grade member of Character Education at RIS, added, "It's good to be a peer leader. Several times a month we meet with the counselors to be of help to other students." Cate Korins agreed, "Being part of the Character Education group, at the end of the school year, we host fifth grade students who will be entering Roosevelt and if someone wants to talk any time of the year, we are there for them in a peer relationship."

Reflecting on the event, Principal Mary Asfendis, stated, "I think the idea that the event is being led by the 8th grade Character Education group is an effective way for peers to take charge of fostering inclusiveness and the importance of being an Upstander."

According to the Teaching Tolerance organization – which encourages Mix It Up Day, "Studies have shown that interactions across group lines can help reduce prejudice. When students interact with those who are different from them, biases and misperceptions can fall away."



(above) Students at Westfield's Roosevelt Intermediate School moved out of their comfort zone to sit with someone new during lunch during the school's celebration of Mix It Up Day. Student activities included pulling questions from a box and sharing answers with their new friends. Displaying some of the questions are sixth graders (l-r counterclockwise) Lauren Fuccillo, Lola Geoghan, Michael Marshall, 8th grade peer leader Caroline Donnelly, Beckett Calder, Julia Damashek, and Sophia Hynes.



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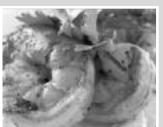
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## KIMBERLY LEEGAN HONORED AT NATIONAL EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

Westfield High School Social Studies teacher, Kimberly Leegan, was presented with the Christa McAuliffe Reach for the Stars Award during the National Social Studies (NCSS) Conference in San Francisco held November 16 through 19, 2017. The NCSS established the award and selects one teacher in the United States each year. In addition to the prestigious recognition and a trophy presented at the annual conference, Ms. Leegan received a \$2,500 grant, which the NCSS provides to help classroom teachers "reach for the stars" and achieve a dream that under ordinary circumstances would not be fulfilled. The purpose of the fund is to support research and classroom application projects which improve social studies education, foster enlightened citizenship, and promote civic competence.

Although the award ceremony was held this November, the NCSS provided Ms. Leegan with the grant monies earlier in the year to enable the purchase of virtual reality goggles for her Adopt a Country Project in Westfield High School.

"The Adopt a Country Project enables students to learn about culture, history and current events of adopted countries; showcase research by designing a website; teach students; and

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(above) Kimberly Leegan, social studies teacher at Westfield High School and recipient of the Christa McAuliffe Reach for the Stars Award, was presented with a trophy during the National Social Studies (NCSS) Conference in San Francisco held in November.

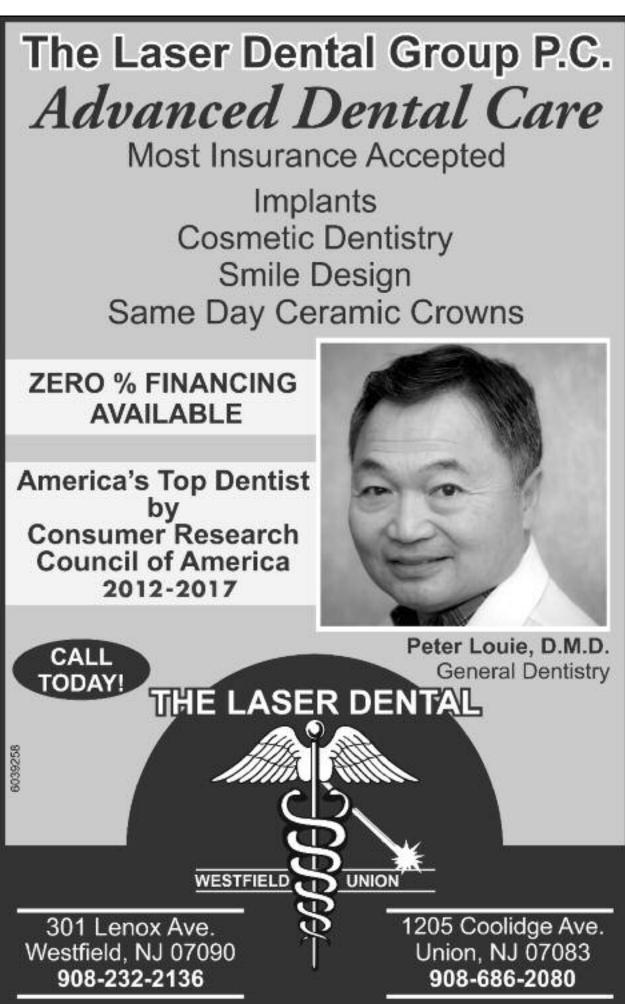


virtual reality goggles," Ms. Leegan stated. "Students also identify and address a social issue action on their path to global citizenship."

Convention, Ms. Leegan remarked, "I am incredibly honored to receive the Christa extremely thankful to the National Council for the Social Studies and the Fund for the

experience life in adopted countries by utilizing Advancement of Social Studies Education for providing the grant, which allowed us to purchase virtual reality goggles for Westfield High School. faced by their adopted country and take informed I firmly believe that enhancing student engagement in the classroom helps develop Upon receiving the trophy at the NCSS lifelong learners, and grants like this one help teachers do that."

In addition to the ceremony, Ms. Leegan gave McAuliffe Reach for the Stars Award and two presentations, including one in connection with her award-winning classroom project entitled "Adopt a Country."



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# **CDC THEATRE CONTINUES WINNING SEASON** WITH CRIMES OF THE HEART

Rehearsals are underway for Beth Henley's tender, yet humorous, story of three sisters who "Crimes of the Heart" at CDC theatre in Cranford, New Jersey. Warm-hearted, irreverent, zany and brilliantly imaginative, the play teems with humanity and humor as it examines the plight of three young Mississippi sisters betrayed by their passions. "Crimes of the Heart" won Best Play from the NY Drama Critics Circle, was nominated for a Tony Award, and Beth Henley won the Pulitzer Prize in 1981. The 1986 film version was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Screenplay.

"The Pulitzer Prize is given to honor a distinguished play that deals in an original way with American life. It is no wonder Beth Henley was given this honor at the age of twenty-five for her very first professionally-produced play," stated Director Maurice Moran "The show is a

help each other cope with loss and fear, those "crimes of the heart," overcoming the problems they face through the love they have for one another. We have put together a very talented cast who will touch your heart and make you smile as they enact this beautiful tale of family love."

The cast is made up of Maeve Brady, Rebecca Dolan and Katherine Brown as the three Magrath sisters, Lenny, Meg and Babe, with Danielle Mastropiero as Chick, Joe Leo as Doc, and Zach Mazout as Barnette. The production will run from February 16 through 24 and details and tickets can be found by visiting cdctheatre.org. CDC Theatre, New Jersey's oldest continuously producing community theatre, is located at 78 Winans Avenue in Cranford.







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(above l-r) Gilda Rogers and Roger Mumford.

## **HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS:** T. THOMAS FORTUNE HOUSE PRESERVATION

Gilda Rogers and Roger Mumford will visit amazing story of how a group of determined Red Bank citizens, and a generous developer, preserved the T. Thomas Fortune House, a national historic landmark devoted to African-American heritage.

Their presentation, "From Failure to Fortune: The Battle to Save and Develop a National Historic Landmark," is part of the Westfield Historical Society's Weekend Speakers Series. The talk will take place on Sunday, January 21, at 2:30 p.m. at the Reeve House in Westfield, New Jersey.

The Thomas Fortune House is one of the most historically significant properties in the United States. It is one of only two National Historic Landmarks in New Jersey that is significant because of its role in African American History. The stately 1870s house was home to T. Thomas Fortune, an activist newspaper editor and crusader for social justice, from 1901-1915. There are only 57 National Historic Landmarks in New Jersey, and only around 2,500 in the entire United States.

Ms. Rogers, a journalist, teacher, historian, the Westfield Historical Society to tell the and playwright, who lives in Red Bank, was instrumental in forming a group of concerned citizens who fought to preserve the home. Mr. Mumford, a homebuilder, played an equally vital role in this historic preservation project. He worked closely with the Red Bank zoning board to find a creative solution. Mumford's solution, which was approved by the Red Bank zoning board, was to restore and donate the home as a cultural center, and create 31 apartments on its one-acre property.

> The painstaking renovation of the T. Thomas Fortune House is currently underway, and the cultural center is expected to open in the spring of 2018.

> Space is limited, and prior registration is required, so to make a reservation email westfieldhistoricalsociety@gmail.com or call 908-654-1794. There is a suggested donation of \$5 to help offset costs and to support the Society.

> For more information about the Westfield Historical Society and the Reeve House, which is located at 314 Mountain Avenue in Westfield. NJ, visit http://westfieldhistoricalsociety.org







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# THIRD GRADERS CONNECT WITH NASA SCIENTIST VIA CYBERSPACE

Third graders at Franklin Elementary School, Westfield, New Jersey, connected via cyberspace with NASA Scientist Kristen Weaver recently to ask questions prompted by their classroom activities. Through videoconferencing in the Franklin auditorium, students spoke face-to-face in real time with Ms. Weaver who is with the National Aeronautics Space Administration's Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland. The five Franklin third grade classes selected two questions each for the

scientist, who first presented them with information and visuals including satellite maps and imagery.

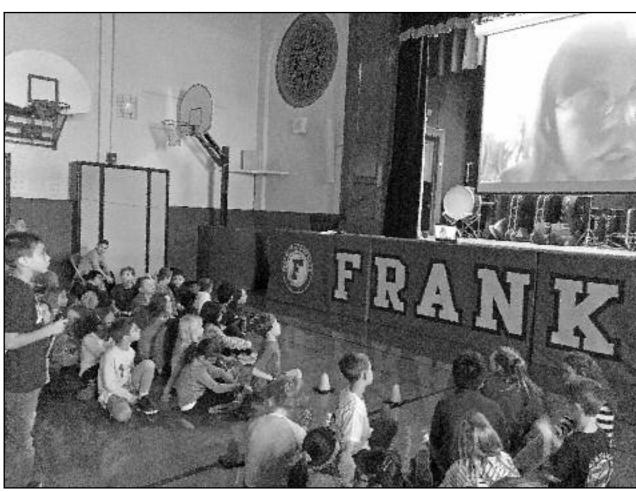
Matthew Fisher asked, "What can trees tell us about climate change?"

Ms. Weaver responded that regarding the life of a tree, climate is an important factor. Depending on if the tree is growing in New Jersey or in sub-tropical temperatures in Florida, for example, will make a difference.

Weaver displayed NASA satellites on the

screen, explaining their purpose. One student observed, "I liked learning how waves formed. One of the satellites showed the mountains and why the oceans are colder or hotter."

Ms. Tara Romano, third grade teacher at Franklin School who helped organize the videoconference, explained, "I contacted NASA this summer and was successful in setting up this great addition to our new science curriculum. This experience has solidified what the students have learned so far."



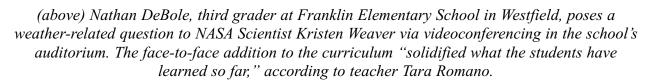


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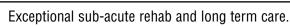


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# **YOUTH POETRY AND SHORT STORY CONTEST**

The Woman's Club of Westfield (WCW) invites all aspiring student poets and authors from kindergarten through high school to enter its 2018 Youth Poetry and Short Story Contest.

Poetry entries may be any style with a minimum length of eight lines and a maximum of thirty lines. Short stories are limited to 2,000 words. Entries must be typewritten, double spaced, with a minimum of one inch margins, on one side of of an 8x10 inch paper.

A student may enter one short story and/or poem.

The author's name, address, email address, if available, telephone number, student's grade and school, title of piece must be entered in the top right hand corner of each page.

All entries are judged on content, organization and form. Decision of the judges is final. Please submit material in duplicate to Woman's Club of Westfield, 314 Orenda Circle, Westfield, NJ 07090, post marked before Monday, January 29, 2018. Writing must be the original, unpublished work of the author, written during the last year.

Authors must be amateurs with earnings from writings not to exceed \$500. annually. Writers may want to keep a copy of their work as entries cannot be returned.

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## THE HEARING SOCIETY OFFERS WEEKLY CLASSES

beginning on Thursday, January 11, 2018, at 10:30 a.m., at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm St., Westfield, NJ.

Under the direction of Morgan Orlowski, speech pathologist, the informal classes provide instruction in strategies for coping with hearing loss as well as techniques for improved

The Hearing Society will offer weekly classes communication. Any person who is interested in improving his or her word recognition skills is welcome to join the society and participate in the

> More information about The Hearing Society and the classes may be obtained by contacting Knecht 908-688-8241 Alice at alirobkn@aol.com.





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## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CELEBRATES RESTORED HALL

First Congregational Church of Westfield is celebrating the new year with a newly restored parish house. Hidden from view for over 40 years, the hall's window wall and skylight are once again exposed, filling the room with natural light. The soaring space, warmed by dark wood trim, forms the heart of the church's social events.

Built in 1912 and named for an early minister, Patton Hall was modified over the years to accommodate the needs of a growing

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congregation. A portion was walled off to create fitted with Edison-era bulbs. Doors and an infant nursery and a drop ceiling was added during the 1970s energy crisis, sealing off the balcony and skylight above.

With the completion of the restoration, the most dramatic architectural elements are once again visible, namely the exposed rafters, arched windows and wood trimmed skylight in the early 20th century Craftsman style. The original Gothic-style chandeliers were refurbished and

woodwork were salvaged and the painted trim returned to its original chestnut finish.

To satisfy 21st century standards, the project included central air conditioning, a new service kitchen and handicapped-accessible bathroom, and a 75-inch "smart" TV. The hall can seat 120 people and is available for rental for meetings and celebrations.

"Among the many blessings of a thriving congregation are members who are willing to contribute so generously to complete a project like this for future generations," said Rev. Dr. Mark Boyea, FCC Senior Minister. "We welcome the community to experience both the room and the generosity of spirit that restored it over coffee following our weekly worship celebrations."

First Congregational Church is located at 125 Elmer Street in downtown Westfield. For more information on rentals or church programs, please visit fccofwestfield.org or call (908) 233-2494.



(above) First Congregational Church's Patton Hall has been restored to its turn-of-thecentury splendor. The historic hall is home to the church's social events and may be rented for meetings and celebrations.



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