Berkeley Heights COMMUNITY NEWS NJ

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407 PARTICIPANT IN RELAY FOR LIFE ON JUNE 2ND 2018

53 teams and 407 people participated in the American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Berkeley Heights event on Saturday, June 2nd, 2018 at Governor Livingston High School. The effort also included participation from the towns of New Providence, Mountainside, and Summit.

Over \$130,000 was raised to support the American Cancer Society's mission of saving lives from cancer. Funds raised help the American Cancer Society provide free information and support for people facing the disease today, and fund cancer research that will help protect future generations.

"It was inspirational to see people from all parts of our community come out to support us and help save lives from cancer," said Patti Broccoli. "Together, we celebrated those surviving cancer, remembered loved ones lost, and took tangible action to make a difference."

The following top 3 teams were recognized for their extraordinary efforts: The Harwood Gang – raising \$15,390; The Pearly Girls -raising \$14,195; and NP (New Providence) Peer Leaders Green Team – raising \$8,165.

Founded by Dr. Gordy Klatt in Washington in 1985, the Relay For Life movement is the world's largest fundraising event to save lives from cancer. Uniting communities across the globe, we celebrate people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and take action for lifesaving change. During Relay For Life events, members of each team take turns walking or running around the track or path. Teams participate in fundraising in the months leading up to the event.

Donations can still be made by visiting: RelayForLife.org/BerkeleyHeightsNJ

(Additional photos on pages 12 and 13)



(above) Team 'Rei9n Conquering Cancer' from Berkeley Heights

Photos from this and other events can be found online at rennamedia.com and on the Berkeley Heights Community News page on facebook.com. Feel free to "Like," "Tag," and "Share."



(above) Team 'Cancer Crushers' from Berkeley Heights

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COLLEGE CLUB AWARDS ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Submitted by Marylou Motto

The Summit College Club (SCC), a branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), awarded \$20,000 to five outstanding area high school girls at a reception and program held on June 3, 2018.

The annual celebratory ceremony at Lile Hall of Christ Church in Summit began with two speakers who were helped toward their Ph.D.'s by AAUW fellowships: Lois Rockson, a scientist working in public health, and Tamara Issak, who studies language and discrimination. Also on hand was Meryl Schaffer, a 2017 SCC scholarship recipient, who spoke on some of the surprises of her college freshman year.

Then it was on to the business of the day, this year's exceedingly impressive award winners:

- From Summit High School, Victoria Harvey, who was awarded the Tilla Thomas Merit Scholarship. Victoria will attend the University of Virginia next year.
- From Millburn High School, Summer Bushman, who won the Kathi C. Madison M.D. Scholarship. Summer plans to attend Emory University next year.
- From Governor Livingston High School, Sarah Lalevee, who was awarded the Mary K. Tennant Scholarship. Sarah will attend Georgetown University next year.
- From Summit High School, Emily Kostolansky, who won a Summit College

- Club Merit Scholarship. Emily will be a student at Tufts University next fall.
- From Chatham High School, Emily Boyland, who was awarded a Summit College Club Foundation Scholarship. Emily will attend Villanova University next year.

All five young women had outstanding grades, demonstrated leadership abilities, and many sports, service, and social activities to their credit. The SCC Scholarship Committee introduced each girl with enthusiasm, outlining her many accomplishments as she was presented with her scholarship check, certificate, and flowers.

The program concluded with a cornucopia of refreshments and informal conversations between the happy recipients, proud parents, and satisfied SCC members.

Funding for the scholarships comes from the massive, week-long annual used book sale held by SCC each spring. Marilynn MacLean, a Scholarship Committee member, noted that the organization ran its first book sale in 1935! Since then, the club has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars to worthy young women in the area.

The Summit College Club is a branch of the American Association for University Women, which promotes equity for all women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Membership is open to all women and men holding the associate degree or higher.



(above l-r) Meryl Schaffer (student speaker), Sarah Lalevee, Emily Boyland, Lois Rockson (speaker), Tamara Issak (speaker), Summer Bushman, Victoria Harvey. The fifth recipient, Emily Kostolansky, was unable to attend.

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VALERIE DIAMOND WINS STATE ADOPT-A-BEACH AWARD



(above) Valerie Diamond of Berkeley Heights with the state-wide Adopt-A-Beach Award presented to her at the 15th Annual Clean Communities Conference.



(above) Valerie Diamond at the Adopt-A-Beach Clean Water Challenge in 2017.



Submitted by Kimbery Diamond

The New Jersey Clean Communities Council presented Valerie Diamond of Berkeley Heights with the state-wide Adopt-A-Beach Award at the 15th Annual Clean Communities Conference held in Lambertville, New Jersey on May 24, 2018.

A distinguished crowd was present at this well-attended event, as various towns, counties, groups, and individuals were recognized through assorted awards for their efforts regarding environmental conservation and public lands stewardship. While certain other awards shared multiple winners, Ms. Diamond, a sophomore at Governor Livingston High School, was the sole winner in the Adopt-A-Beach award category and the only non-adult award winner.

Ms. Diamond, who began participating in the state-wide Adopt-A-Beach Clean Water Challenge last year, elevated her level of participation in this effort this year. Through her group, Val's Valiants, she led one clean up event in 2017, collecting approximately 75 pounds of litter. This year, she continued her campaign to keep Berkeley Heights clean and to inspire others to do so as well. During March and April 2018, Val's Valiants was involved in leading 6 clean up events, collecting a total of over 550 pounds of litter.

Proving that one person can, in fact, make a big difference, Ms. Diamond was the spark that ignited her community to action. She sought and received the sponsorship and support for these clean ups from the Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission. The clean ups were open to the public, received press coverage, and attracted participation from a broad cross section of the community. In addition to Environmental Commission members and their families participating in one or more of these clean ups, children, parents, and other adults - including elected officials - all pitched in to clean up.

Ms. Diamond also educated her community about the dangers of Whip-Its and nitrous oxide usage, having found a bag containing approximately 30 Whip-Its just a few feet from the roadway during one of her clean ups. After conducting independent research, Ms. Diamond learned that nitrous oxide, more commonly known as laughing gas, is the most common inhalant of choice among middle school students nationally. In effort to raise local awareness about this issue that community members may not have known existed, she submitted a Letter to the Editor detailing the results of this particular clean up as well as the dangers associated with Whip-Its.

"I appreciated the opportunity to join Valerie and her mom and dad at this great event," said Mayor Robert Woodruff who attended the Conference, representing Berkeley Heights in support of Ms. Diamond's accomplishment. "Another example of our volunteerism on display. We are all proud of this exceptional young lady!"

CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES CELEBRATES ITS VOLUNTEERS

Children's Aid and Family Services recently honored several of its volunteers for their dedication to helping the children and families that the agency serves. The honorees included James Shea of Berkley Heights, who is a mentor with the agency. He provides guidance and encouragement to a teenage boy in foster care. This young man is interested in social media and technology and James is helping him to expand his knowledge in this field. James also spends time teaching the young man life skills during recreational activities, such as sporting events and visits to restaurants for meals.

About Children's Aid and Family Services

Children's Aid and Family Services is a leading nonprofit human services organization serving northern New Jersey. The agency is fully accredited and has served the community for more than 115 years. Its mission is to preserve, protect, and when needed, provide for families. Motivated by compassion and in partnership with the community, we make positive lasting differences in the lives of those we serve. We provide high quality, innovative services to children and their families that advance social, educational and emotional development and wellbeing. For more information on Children's Aid and Family Services, call 201-261-2800 or visit www.cafsnj.org.



(above) Berkley Heights resident James Shea was recognized for his volunteer work as a mentor with the Children's Aid and Family Services organization.

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(above) Rachael Phelps is new pastor of the Union Village United Methodist Church

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UNION VILLAGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Bishop John R. Schol of the greater New Jersey Conference, announces the appointment of Rachael Phelps as the new pastor of the Union Village United Methodist Church, 1130 Mountain Avenue, Berkeley Heights, New Jersey. She will begin her new responsibilities on July 1st of this year.

Rachael was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, moving to New Jersey in 2015. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Central Washington University and received her Master of Divinity at Drew Theological School this past May. Discerning a call to ministry while serving as a Peer Minister in college, Rachael then worked in local church ministry in both

Washington and New Jersey. Rachael is passionate about creating community, worship, and engaging scripture in everyday life. She believes that the church is called to be Christ's body in the world through service, witness, and love.

While Pastor Rachael comes to us as a seminary graduate, she is in process towards licensing and ordination. To partner with Rachael, the Rev. Dr. Tanya Linn Bennett, the associate dean at Drew University Theological School, will serve as a coordinating pastor and will lead the sacraments of baptism and holy communion and support Rachael's ministry in our midst.

REBEKAH STROMBOM - FOSTER CHILD ADVOCATE

Submitted by Gretchen M. Boger-O'Bryan

Eleven Union County residents from New Providence, Berkeley Heights, Cranford, Fanwood, Scotch Plains, Elizabeth, and Westfield Family and friends, and CASA staff and board — and three from out-of-county locales Bloomfield, Irvington and South Orange recently took their oath before Union County Superior Court Judge James Hely to serve as CASA volunteers. This class proves no matter where one calls home, it's the heart for helping others that leads the way. Each new advocate ranging from age 21 to 69 — will serve a Union County foster youth or sibling set in need of a constant in their lives, and a voice in court and the community.

Volunteers with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Union County serve as extra eyes and ears for family law judges hearing cases involving the county's abused, neglected or abandoned children removed from home and placed in foster care.

Successful advocates have varied backgrounds and diverse experiences, and this class is no exception: it included parents and non-parents, medical professionals, attorneys, homemakers, students and retirees, and most had no prior

knowledge of the foster system. In addition, four volunteers were raised outside the United States. members looked on as Judge Hely performed the swearing-in and commemorative pins and certificates were presented. During a celebratory luncheon, advocates were matched to their case, a foster youth or sibling set.

CASA volunteers have court-ordered access to all parties in a foster child's life, including foster parents, doctors, caseworkers, therapists and teachers, and incorporate into court reports findings from these contacts as well as from their own time spent with the youth. Advocates ensure a youth's needs are met and their time in care is as short as possible.

It is CASA of Union County's goal that every Union County foster child have an advocate, yet half of the more than 500 such youth still await one. Could you be their voice? The next training begins July 11, 2018 and two additional trainings are slated for the fall.

For details, contact Courtney at 908-293-8136 or cgreen@casaofunioncounty.org, or log on to casaofunioncounty.org.



(above) With Superior Court Judge James Hely are, from left, new CASA volunteers Felicia Davis of Irvington, Robin Karp of Scotch Plains, Aslam Chaudry and Carolina Bravo Sanchez of Elizabeth, Stacey Huggins of Bloomfield, Margaret Smith of Westfield, Alyssa Seiden of Scotch Plains, Rebekah Strombom of Berkeley Heights, Kristen Kim and Lisa Ripperger of Westfield, Francine Quinn of Cranford, Jessica Maier of Fanwood, Andrew Pugliese of South Orange, Katie Romano of New Providence and Executive Director Marla Higginbotham.







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(above, r-l) Lovebay Michael Okafor from Nigeria is a student of theology. He is staying with George Koutjafies, a resident of Berkeley Heights, during his internship at Overlook Medical center in Summit, New Jersey. Holy Trinity's faithful come from throughout Union County as well as many other counties.



HOLY TRINITY GREEK CHURCH GREEKFEST 2018

Submitted by Lia Lewis

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church located at 250 Gallows Hill Rd, Westfield, New Jersey, celebrated its tenth annual Greek festival 'NJ GreekFest 2018' over 4 days beginning May 31 thru June 3, 2018.

The church, which is part of the Metropolis District of New Jersey, was established in 1966, and has been an active member in the Westfield community for over 52 years. Some of Holy Trinity's faithful come from throughout Union County as well as many other New Jersey counties. Holy Trinity provides liturgical services, religious education, ethnic Greek education, adult and youth ministries, fellowship events, and charitable giving opportunities.

Holy Trinity began hosting their cultural festival to the surrounding communities to express fellowship and outreach. All of Westfield becomes Greek for four days experiencing authentic appetizers, meals, desserts, and wine. A live band plays modern Greek music, and youth dance troupes perform 100+ year old dances in

traditional costumes. Parishioners and restauranteurs demonstrated Greek cooking at 'YiaYia's Kouzina.' Holy Trinity donates a portion of its festival proceeds to various non-profit organizations such as the Westfield Rescue Squad and Children's Specialized Hospital located in nearby Mountainside, NJ.

The Holy Trinity volunteers (a true family) work together to make this cultural event possible. We are grateful to both the many event leaders who worked months in advance to plan the event and the even larger number of parishioner who worked tirelessly over the four-day event to provide festival patrons a true Greek experience.

Lastly, we are grateful to the real attraction at this year's NJ GreekFest which, in addition to the tasty food, wine, beer, coffee, pastries, is all of you who came out and supported NJ GreekFest 2018.

For more information about Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church please visit holytrinitywestfield.org.



Photos from this and other events can be found online at rennamedia.com and on the Westfield Monthly page on facebook.com.

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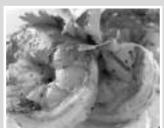
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EVENTS AT BERKELEY HEIGHTS LIBRARY

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The Library will offer the following children's programs in July:

Weekly Story Times for children

Tuesdays at 10:30 am for ages 2 years and up Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. for ages 0 - 24 months

The Good Tymes String Band

Tuesday, July 10 at 10:30 a.m. for children of all ages

Preschool of Rock

(interactive music program)

Thursday, July 12 at 3:00 p.m.

for ages 2 - 6

Big Feet

(dinosaur show)
Friday, July 20 at 1:00 p.m.
for ages 2 - 7

Sew It at the Library

Monday, July 23 at 6:30 p.m.

for ages 9 - 12; advance sign-up required.

It's summer reading time at the library:

Summer Reading Club for children through 8th grade. Sign-ups are in the Children's Room - read to earn prizes!

"FUN", an Adult Summer Reading Challenge for anyone of high school age and up. Sign-up at the Circulation Desk, complete the challenge, earn a prize and an entry in a grand prize drawing.

Shakespeare in the Parking Lot

Friday, July 27 from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in the library's parking lot at 110 Roosevelt Avenue. Something Shakespeare This Way Comes will be performed - please bring your own lawn chairs. The Berkeley Heights Public Library has two book groups for adults:

Morning Book Group: No meeting in July

Evening Book Group:

Tuesday, July 10 at 7:30 pm will discuss The Yellow-Lighted Bookshop by Lewis Buzbee

ARC OF UC ENJOYS OUR HISTORY 'BACK IN TIME'

The Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs partnered with The Arc of Union County to hold their first "Back in Time" history event for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The event was held at the Deserted Village in Berkeley Heights. The afternoon program featured three historical sites in Union County, and the presenters gave an interpretation of the period of time each site represents.

Arlene Soong from the Historic Miller-Cory House Museum, located in Westfield, gave an interactive presentation while dressed in period clothes from the Colonial Period. She provided samples of herbs and fresh food that were grown in the gardens during that time period. Participants had a chance to see, feel and smell the fresh ingredients and cooking tools that people used to prepare meals in the past.

Kathy Arminio and David Arminio from the Caldwell Parsonage, located in Union Township, shared some background about local historical icon Reverend James Caldwell and his role in the American Revolution. There was also time for fun and games as participants played period games such as hopscotch with a stone, pickup sticks and 9-pin bowling. They rounded up the event with a visit to the museum at the Deserted Village, located in Berkeley Heights, where participants explored the artifacts and historical documents that help us to understand our local history.

Many thanks to organizer John Prescott, History Programs Coordinator of the Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, for providing this event free of charge to the participants and making it accessible to people with special needs. Prescott shared that he hopes to continue more events like this throughout the year. "I believe that this is a great opportunity to expand the diversity of our audience, and to share the interesting and great history our County has to offer."

The "Back in Time" History event was sponsored by the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.

About The Arc of Union County

The Arc of Union County, Inc. is a non-profit, 501c(3) organization headquartered in Springfield, NJ, dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Arc serves more than 1,000 adults and children each month from the 21 towns in Union County, as well as the greater Northern and Central NJ counties. For more information about The Arc of Union County, please contact Ellen de Havilland at 973-315-0055. Visit www.arcunion.org to learn more.







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2018 BERKELEY HEIGHTS FREE SUMMER CONCERTS IN THE PARK

The 2018 Berkeley Heights Free Summer Concerts in the Park season is set to begin at Memorial Field with the first of 4 free family friendly concerts on July 18th featuring crowd favorite, The Infernos with their special horns section. The Free summer concerts in the Park are presented by Berkeley Heights Recreation Commission with major sponsorship for the local Business Community. Season sponsors for 2018 are: Berkeley Aquatic Club, Berkeley Heights Rotary Club, Grain & Cane/Embassy Suites Berkelev Heights, Smith Chiropractic Foundation, and Taylor Rental.

A record attendance enjoyed last season and you can expect plenty of amenities this season with free bottled water and popcorn, free drawings for local restaurant gift cards, Tapinto.net family photo contest, food truck dinners, free hotdog nights and more, at each

show

This season we have a very special concert scheduled on Tuesday August 7th as the season finally will coincide with National Night Out, a nation-wide opportunity for locals to meet and greet local police, fire and rescue personnel.

Dr. Patrick Smith who represents the local business community said, "Recreation Director Tom Barton and I are very excited to partner with BH Police Chief DiPasquale to present our first 'National Night Out free summer concert in the park festival,' featuring Beatlemania Again who will perform 2 sets in full costume. Come out and sing along to all the favorites while meeting our local heroes, while enjoying sponsored free activities, including a 'Celebrity Dunk Tank', food, cool gear and much more!"

2018 BH Free summer concerts in the Park schedule @ Memorial field:

Wed July 18th: Infernos w special Horn section (Autumn Lake night)

Wed July 25th: Jersey Four back by popular demand (Valairco Night)

Wed August 1st: 52nd Street Billy Joel without the trip to MSG (Pearly Whites night)

Tue August 7th: Beatlemania Again - Special National Night Out Festival

All shows start at 7:30 p.m. and conclude at 9 p.m.

Please call weather hot line @ 908-464-0550 after 11 a.m. on the day of each event to check for rain cancellation (rain dates in late August if needed).

Please join your neighbors for another season of great entertainment under the stars on Memorial field @ the BH Free Summer concert Series!

FREE WORKSHOP HOW to GET YOUR CHILD INTO COLLEGE and NOT OVERPAY!!!

Wednesday July 18, 2018 • 7:00PM - 8:30PM The First Presbyterian Church of Stirling, NJ 158 Central Avenue, Stirling, NJ 07980

Due to the popularity of our free workshops, seats fill up quickly. Reservations are required.

Register online at websites: www.eventbrite.com/
e/free-workshop-how-to-get-your-child-into-college-and-not-overpay-tickets-46937602633

If you have questions or wish to reserve your spot,
Contact Linda at (973) 462-2829 or Mike at (908) 758-1322

- How to pick the colleges that will give you the most amount of money
- Latest strategies and steps you can take to triple your eligibility for financial and merit aid
- How to send your kids to the school of their dreams without going broke
- A common mistake you must know when applying for scholarships
- How to send your child to a private college for less than a state one
- How to find scholarships and grants you've never even heard of
- Overview of the college application process
- Review of terminology and types of decision plans
- Timeline for college planning
- Strategies for positioning students to be strong applicants
- The importance of the Common App and Supplemental essays
 Mike Velasco, a noted college financial planning expert, will share the latest strategies
 and steps you can do to get the maximum amount of funding for your child's education.
 Based on Mike's years of experience helping hundreds of families to get into their dream
 colleges at a price they can afford, he'll cover these important topics during this seminar.
 Linda Kern, a Certified College Counselor, helps position students for success through
 strategic college planning and winning essays.

Is your child heading to college soon? Don't miss this FREE workshop!





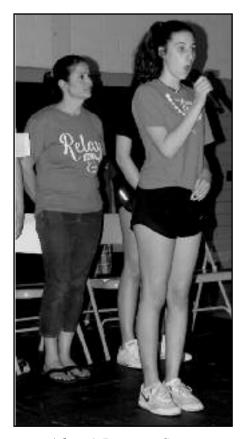
successcollegecounseling.com



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Photos from this and other events can be found online at rennamedia.com and on the Berkeley Heights News page on facebook.com. Feel free to "Like," "Tag," and "Share."



(above) Brianna Cagan sang the National Anthem.





(above) Leonard Lance, U.S. Representative for New Jersey's
7th congressional district shared that he and his twin brother lost
their mother at the age of 12 to cancer. Sitting behind Lance are
(l-r) Summit Mayor Nora Radest, Berkeley Heights Mayor Robert
Woodruff, New Providence Mayor Al Morgan, and Mountainside
Mayor Paul N. Mirabelli.









(above) Boy Scout Troup 368 served as Color Guard.



(above) The Hickory Tree Chorus chapter of Sweet Adelines International performed the Beatles tune 'In My Life.'

RELAY FOR LIFE PHOTO ALBUM

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(above) Team 'Soleful' from Berkeley Heights



(above) Team 'Pearly Girls' from Berkeley Heights & Mountainside



(above) Team 'Spencer' from Berkeley Heights



(above) Team 'Wash Out Cancer' from Berkeley Heights & Mountainside



YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING OFFERED JULY 17TH & 24TH

Caring Contact, a crisis hotline that serves Northern and Central New Jersey, will be offering Youth Mental Health First Aid Training in Westfield on July 17th and 24th, 2018. Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human service workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addiction issue or is in crisis.

Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders.

The eight-hour course is being offered in two four-hour sessions, on July 17th and 24th from 6:00 pm to 10 pm at the Westfield Presbyterian Church, located at 140 Mountain Ave, Westfield, NJ. Youth Mental Health First Aid is listed on the National Suicide Prevention Registry of Evidence-Based Programs. Successful completion of the course includes a three-year Youth Mental Health First Aid certification.

Caring Contact is offering the training for \$75. learn more or register, http://caringcontact.org/training-registration/ or call 908-301-1899.

"Too often we think mental illness applies only to those with serious issues, for example someone who is exhibiting easily recognizable symptoms or someone under a physician's care," said Janet Sarkos, Caring Contact executive director. "But people experiencing mental health issues are all

around us, perhaps among our friends and neighbors, co-workers, classmates or even within our own family. Yet too many of us are not trained to recognize the signs and offer help. This training enables you to do that."

About Caring Contact

Caring Contact is an award-winning, volunteer-staffed caring and crisis hotline providing active listening support and best-inclass education to the Central and Northern New Jersey community. We attentively and compassionately serve those in emotional distress and educate our communities about the power of personal connection. We are affiliated with CONTACT USA, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the American Association of Suicidology. If you are in crisis and need someone to listen, call us at 908-232-2880. To learn more, visit caringcontact.org.

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ALL INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN PLASTICS RECYCLING CHALLENGE

Submitted By Kim Diamond

How do you turn 500 pounds of thin film plastic garbage into a high-performance park bench for one of our schools or parks? By participating in the Trex Thin Film Plastics Recycling Challenge ("Trex Challenge"). The Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission invites all residents to participate in this Trex Challenge, which began on June 2 and will run until December 1, 2018.

"Thin film plastics" are everyday items that generally fall into the following three categories:

(1) From the Grocery Store

- Produce bags
- Bread bags
- Grocery bags
- Cereal box bags
- Ice bags

(2) From Your Pantry

- Ziploc and other re-sealable bags
- Plastic wrap
- Case overwrap (e.g., the plastic covering over a case of soup cans, toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, water bottles, etc.)

(3) From Your Front Door (and Other Stores)

- Newspaper sleeves
- Dry cleaning bags/plastic wrap
- Plastic bags from clothing or other stores
- Bubble wrap
- Clear plastic wrapping around stationary boxes or other boxes

All of these items are acceptable for Trex Challenge purposes. Trex, a company specializing in composite decking, furniture, and other eco-friendly products, will aggregate the thin film plastics collected and repurpose them to

create an outdoor bench.

Trex Challenge Bins such as the one pictured are being stationed at various locations around town, including the police station on Park Avenue (outside the courtroom) and the library at its 110 Roosevelt Avenue location. If you have any of the above items, please drop them off in one of these bins. All items must be clean, dry, and free of food residue.

As background, plastic bags are problematic for the environment. Because they are made from ethylene, a byproduct of petroleum, plastic bags are very inexpensive. According to the Sierra Club, for every 430,000 gallons of oil, 100 million plastic bags can be produced. This is why the U.S. uses approximately 380 billion plastic bags annually, why cashiers often give customers plastic bags freely, and why consumers have individual stockpiles of plastic bags at home. Given their light weight, those plastic bags that don't wind up in landfills often end up in storm drains and make their way out to sea, becoming marine debris and contributing to plastic waste in the world's oceans. In fact, just recently, scientists discovered a plastic bag in the Mariana Trench in the Pacific Ocean, the deepest ocean trench on the planet - approximately 36,000 feet below sea level. Simply put, donating your thin film plastics will be a step forward in helping to keep our environment clean.

So, if you're walking to the train station on your way to work, swing by the police station and drop off your plastic newspaper sleeve and plastic wrap from your freshly dry cleaned clothes. If you're having a cookout, providing cases of bottled water at a sports event, or participating in

an another event where thin film plastics are used, please collect them and drop them off in a Trex Challenge Bin. And, if you consume any groceries that came in a plastic bag – whether they are fruits, vegetables, breads, or cereals – please drop off your plastic bags at the library as you swing by to select your (or your kids') summer reading materials. Help preserve the environment, and help our town to win this challenge!

For additional information about the Trex Challenge, please visit the Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission's Facebook page. or the Trex website at trex.com/recycling/recycling-programs/.



(above) Be on the lookout for Trex Challenge bins around town, where you can deposit your thin film plastics to be made into a park bench.

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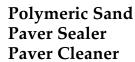
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