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LETTER CARRIERS' STAMP OUT HUNGER FOOD DRIVE – MAY 11

The 27th annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive is on Saturday, May 11, 2019.

The Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive is happening on Saturday, May 11, 2019. On this day, you can set out your non-perishable food before your letter carrier's regular pick up time. The top requested non-perishable food items are: cereal, pasta, pasta sauce, rice, canned fruits and vegetables, canned meals (such as soups, chili, and/or pasta), 100 percent juice, peanut butter, macaroni & cheese, canned protein (tuna, chicken, and/or turkey), beans (canned or dry). You can also donate healthy, low-sodium, low-sugar items such as beans, oatmeal, and other whole grains, and canola or olive oil.

Please do not donate frozen food, homemade food, or home-canned items. Please do not donate items that have expired or are in glass containers. In keeping with good food-handling and food-safety procedures, food that is opened, damaged, out of code or does not have the official ingredients will be discarded by the food bank in the sorting process.

The Food Drive is primarily a people food drive, but if you also want to give pet food in addition to your regular donation, food banks may be able to distribute or direct it to pet shelters and organizations in the area that have a need.

Please do not donate any form of individual baby food products, including formula, jarred vegetables and fruits, meals, snacks, infant cereal. Baby food may be donated by the case or pallet, but single item donations present potential contamination risks and special handling requirements.

The Food Drive is primarily a food drive, but if you also want to give personal care items (such as diapers, laundry detergent, soap, toilet paper, and household cleaning items) in addition to your regular donation, food banks may be able to distribute or put them to good use with organizations that also provide help to those in need. Please note that not all food banks will be able to accept these items.

If you would like to volunteer with food distribution and sorting, or in any other capacity, call your local post office and ask to speak to the local food drive person there. Many food banks have a great need for volunteers on Food Drive Day, as well as all throughout the year.

All donations to the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive are tax-deductible because all the food collected on Food Drive Day is given directly to non-profit charity food agencies in the community the food was

**LETTER CARRIERS'
FOOD DRIVE
SAT., MAY 11, 2019**

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collected. Though the National Association of Letter Carriers plans the Food Drive's logistics and letter carriers provide the transportation for each donor's generous donation, the National Association of Letter Carriers is not the agency that gets listed on tax forms for claiming deductions. There are more than 10,000 food agencies throughout the country that receive these donations, so if you itemize your taxes and want to provide proper credit for your Food Drive donations, you will need to determine the name of the agency (food pantry or other charity) that received your food, as well as the agency's address and tax I.D. number for proper reporting on your tax-filing forms. The Food Drive Coordinator at your local post office should be able to give you the name of the receiving agency, and that agency will likely have tax information handy.

For more information, visit: nalc.org.

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Although great care has been taken to ensure the information contained within is accurate, Renna Media assumes no liability for errors or omissions.

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ROTARY CLUB WELCOMES THREE NEW MEMBERS

Submitted by Michael Townley

Spring has been busy for the local Rotary Club of the Plainfields, with three new members recently inducted into the oldest service club of the three Plainfields.

Anyone wishing to learn more about Rotary

and the opportunities for service to others can learn more at the club's website, rotarypnp.org. Membership in Rotary is available to people who live or work in any of the three Plainfields and surrounding area. Contact the club via email at PNPRotary@gmail.com or call 908-822-1441.



(above) Club members gather around Gina Solis, second from right, as she is inducted into the Rotary Club of the Plainfields. New members Rebecca Perkins and Jennifer Popper are pictured at left, with members Timothy Priano, Vicky Giswold, Roberta Smith, Rev. Joyce Scheyer, Valerie Jackson, and Michael Townley. The induction took place at the Club's Social Hour at The Coffee Box, an event that is held the first Wednesday morning of each month. The public is welcome to

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ALL AGE PROGRAMS

FIRST LEGO League Jr. Expo

May 4, 1-3 p.m.

Family Night - Movie: "Ralph Breaks the Internet"

May 30, 7-8 p.m.

(families with children)

CHILDREN, TWEEN, AND TEEN PROGRAMS

What's in the Box Challenge

May 1, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (grades 5-12)

Toddler/Preschool Storytime - Rhyme and Play

May 1, 8, 15; 10-11 a.m. (18-60 months)

Baby/Toddler Storytime - Discover Stories

May 2, 9, 16, 23; 10-11 a.m. (birth - 36 months)

Storycrafters

May 7, 3:30-5 p.m. (grades 5-12)

Minecraft Club

May 8, 3:30-5 p.m. (grades 4-7)

Kids in the Kitchen

May 9, 3:30-5 p.m. (grades 3-5)

LEGO® Club

May 13, 3:30-4:30 p.m. (grades 2-5)

Culinary Creators

May 14, 3:30-5:30 p.m. (grades 5-12)

Young Adult Advisory Council

May 15, 3:30-5 p.m. (grades 5-12)

Kid and Tween Yoga with the Bendy Bookworm

May 16, 3:30-4:30 p.m. (grades 3-6)

Learning Lab - Light Science

May 21, 3:30-4:30 p.m. (grades K-5)

Plot Twist Yoga for Teens and Tweens

with the Bendy Bookworm

May 23, 4-5 p.m. (grades 5-12)

Knittflix

May 28, 3:30-5:30 p.m. (grades 4-12)

Game Time

May 29, 3:30-5 p.m. (grades 5-12)

ADULT PROGRAMS

Computer Help

May 1, 11 a.m. - noon

Book Discussion: "Love and Other Consolation Prizes"

by Jamie Ford

May 2, 1-2 p.m.

U.S. Citizenship Course

May 2, 6-8 p.m.

English Conversation Group

May 6, 13, 20; 7-8:30 p.m.

Knit and Crochet

May 7, 21; 10 a.m. - noon

Writers' Group

May 7, 21; 6-8 p.m.

Mental and Physical Clutter Connection

May 8, 7-8:45 p.m.

The ABCs of Dog Adoption

May 11, 1-3 p.m.

Book Discussion: "The Last Time I Lied" by Riley Sager

May 16, 7:15-8:30 p.m.

Edible Wonders, Edible Petals

May 18, 3-4:30 p.m.

Book Turned Movie Film Discussion: "The Hours,"

May 25, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Healthy Avenues Van

May 28, 1-3 p.m.

DEADLINE FOR YOUTH POLICE ACADEMY MAY 31

Submitted by William G. Parenti, Chief of Police

Chief William Parenti announced that the North Plainfield Police Department will hold its 5th annual Youth Academy. The program is free and intended to provide the youth of North Plainfield the opportunity to gain an understanding of the role of the police officer. Cadets will undergo physical training, lectures and hands on practical activities that have been designed to provide them with a working knowledge of law enforcement. Cadets will learn valuable skills too, including communication, team building, problem solving and taking pride in appearance.

"We truly believe a police department should match the community they serve. It is our hope that this program leads some of the graduates to want a career in law enforcement and remain a part of our community," Chief Parenti said.

The applicant must be 12 to 16 years-old, and

because of limited space we can only accept twenty students. The selection process is on a first come first serve basis. Get your application in fast! The one-week program will be held July 8-12, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the West End Elementary School, 447 Greenbrook Road. Applications will be accepted until May 31.

Applications may be mailed to the North Plainfield Police Department, Attn: Youth Academy, 263 Somerset Street, North Plainfield, NJ, 07060; or hand delivered to the police desk located in the lobby of Borough Hall. The application requests or completed applications may be emailed to Detective Albert Domizi at adomizi@npmail.org. Each Cadet will receive a t-shirt and cap to wear throughout the program. Upon successful completion of the program, the Cadets will be presented with a certificate of completion by Chief Parenti.

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STUDENTS SHARE PIZZA WITH THE POLICE

Submitted by Pam Hughes

The Harrison School is an alternative education program for students enrolled in North Plainfield Middle and High School in grades 7-12. We offer various services to meet the needs of our students. An empathetic and positive relationship building approach is utilized by the staff in order to equip our students with the skills that they need to be successful when they leave our doors.

We seek to initiate programs whereby our

students will be able to interact and build relationships with the community. With this initiative in mind, we have created the "Pizza with the Police" program. On a designated Friday each month, our students invite officers from the North Plainfield Police Department to the Harrison School for the last 45 minutes of their school day.

During this time, pizza and refreshments are provided in the multi-purpose room. Students, officers and staff are able to utilize the

recreational resources of the multi-purpose room to facilitate positive interactions.

Casey McKeen, the administrator of this program, hopes that the relationships built between students and officers will transition to life outside of school; not only benefiting the students and the North Plainfield Police Department, but the community as a whole. The pizzas for this program have been graciously donated by Pizza Brothers, 34 US Highway Route 22W in Greenbrook, NJ.



(above) "Pizza with the Police" takes place one Friday every month, where students from the Harrison School can eat pizza with officers from the North Plainfield Police Department.

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WATCHUNG HILLS ELKS SUPPORTS "SENSORY GARDEN" AT THE SOMERSET CHILDREN'S CENTER

Submitted by Michael Ryder

In March the Watchung Hills Elks Lodge #885 presented the Somerset Children's Center with a \$4,000 donation to be put towards the replacement of their outdated playground with a "Sensory Garden." The garden is an area where children with multiple handicaps (Autism, Asperger Syndrome, and other communicative disorders) can find an environment that is conducive to rehabilitation and treatment. The funds were coordinated from a number of different sources. ENF Chair Joann Bataille secured an ENF Anniversary Grant in the amount of \$1,500. The Lodge 885 English Trust Fund matched the Anniversary Grant for another \$1,500, and our Special Children's Committee fund donated \$1,000.

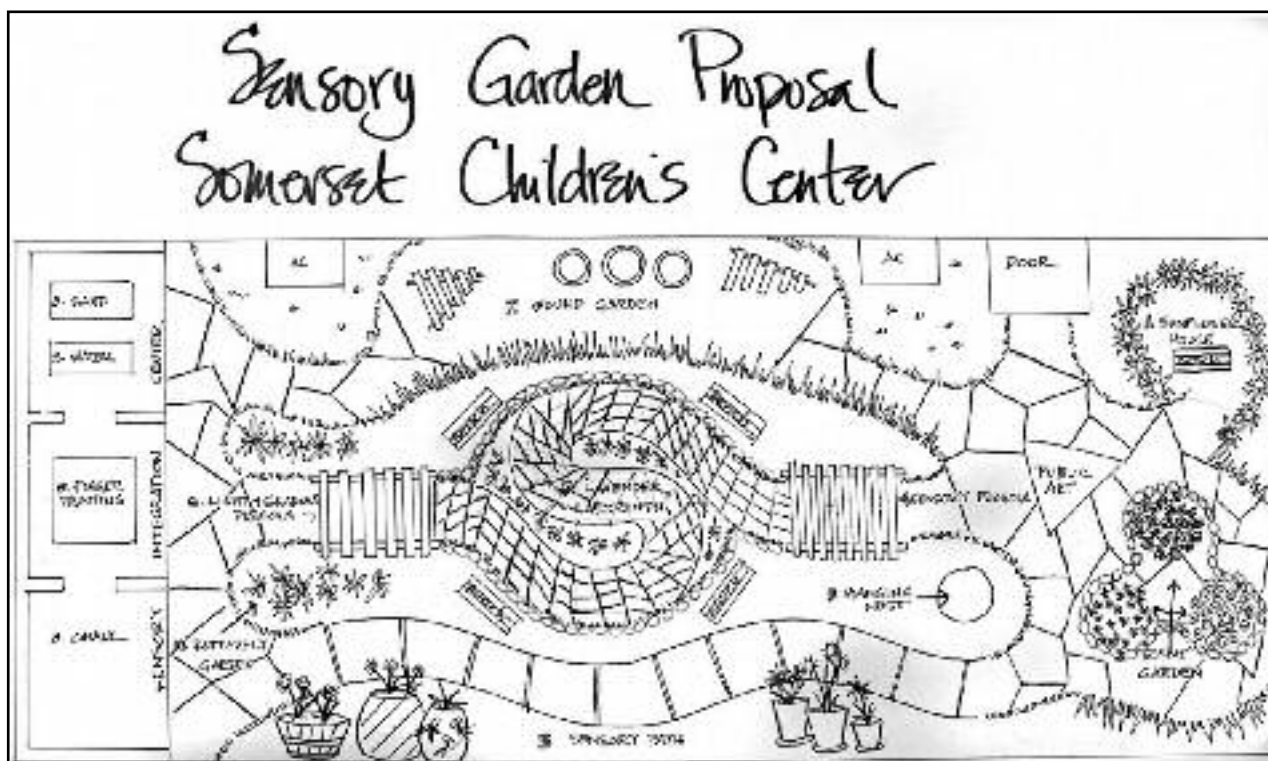
The following people were involved in working on this opportunity: Danny Larsen, Lodge 885 ER; Joann Bataille, Lodge 885 ENF

Chair; Marc Steinberg, Somerset Children's Center BOD Chairman; Michelle Waiser, Lodge 885 member and Trustee at the Somerset Children's Center; Mindy Hoppe, Director of the Somerset Children's Center; Kim Devizio, Lodge 885 member and English Trust Fund BOD member; Stephanie Zitsch, Lodge 885 PER and English Trust Fund BOD member; Pia Grant, Lodge 885 member and English Trust Fund BOD member; and Betty Volker, Lodge 885 PDDGER and Special Children's Committee Chairperson.

Not yet a member? Are you interested in making new friends, providing direct service to veterans, special children or making a difference in your community? Consider joining the Elks – We have 7 acres of property, a members-only lodge/bar, swimming pool and other facilities. Start by contacting us at membership@elkslodge885.org or visiting our website at elkslodge885.org.



(above, l-r) Danny Larsen, Joann Bataille, Marc Steinberg, Michelle Waiser, Mindy Hoppe, Kim DeVizio, Stephanie Zitsch and Betty Volker.



(above) "A sensory garden is a garden environment that is designed with the purpose of stimulating the senses. This stimulation occurs courtesy of plants and the use of materials that engage one's senses of sight, smell, touch, taste, and sound. It may be used as a calming place and as a gentle way to stimulate the senses."

REPORT SHOWS 678 LIFE-SAVING TRANSPLANTS TOOK PLACE IN 2018

NJ Sharing Network, the non-profit, federally designated organ procurement organization responsible for the recovery of organs and tissue in the state, has released statistics regarding donation in New Jersey during 2018. Last year, a total of 678 life-saving transplants were made possible, 537 from deceased donors and an additional 141 from living donors.

More hearts (79) were transplanted than ever before, representing an 18 percent increase over 2017. Additionally, an unprecedented number of eye donors (826) gave the gift of sight, a nine percent increase from the prior year.

These record-breaking numbers are against the backdrop of significant growth in organ transplantation in New Jersey, which has increased 35 percent over the last six years. In fact, 2018 marks the fourth year of over 500 organs transplanted in the state. Over that same timeframe, heart donation saw an enormous increase of 132 percent.

Transplants saw an upswing nationally, as well, with over 36,500 organ transplants performed in 2018. This sets an annual record for the sixth straight year, according to preliminary data from United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS).

Vernell Williams of Paterson, NJ, says that he is eternally grateful to a man named Victor Startek of Toms River, NJ, who passed away at age 27 and donated his heart and kidney. Startek had registered as an organ donor when he first got his New Jersey driver's license. His mother, Deborah Martinez, and twin sister, Ashley Startek, said that knowing Victor had already made the decision was an enormous relief for them. Williams, 50, who suffered from congestive heart failure, had waited months to receive a heart transplant and had nearly given up hope.

"The months that I spent in the hospital waiting for a new heart were the most challenging of my life. I'm an optimistic person, but I'd begun to think I was facing the end. That's when I got the call – and Victor literally saved my life."

Like Victor, nearly 40 percent of those who gave the gift of life in 2018 previously registered as an organ donor and made their wishes known to family and friends, and this number continues to grow.

Today, there are nearly 4,000 New Jersey residents awaiting a life-saving transplant. Every day, approximately three people are added to the New Jersey waiting list, and one person dies every three days while waiting for a transplant. One organ donor can save eight lives and one tissue donor can restore health to over 75 people. New Jersey residents can help save lives by registering as organ and tissue donors, having a conversation with family and friends and getting involved at NJSharingNetwork.org.

LIBRARY AND ROLLING THUNDER TO HELP PRESERVE VETERAN MEMORIES

The Somerset County Library System of New Jersey partnered with Rolling Thunder®, Inc., an organization that focuses on advocacy for prisoners of war and persons missing in action, to help preserve the collective memories of veterans and their families through a digitization event made possible through a grant from National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

“We have been honored to work with Artie and Elaine Muller to preserve the history of Rolling Thunder®, Inc., the organization, and of the members of their community,” said Rebecca Sandoval Sloat, grant coordinator and SCLSNJ technical services manager. “In preserving the history of our veterans we are bringing honor to

their memories and paving a way for their stories to live on for future generations.”

Thirty-two items were digitized or photographed during the meeting including: an award from the French president, an oversized group shot of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. members in front of the Lincoln Memorial, and the Taekwondo gi (uniform) of a veteran who was awarded for his skill in the martial art. The digitized items will be integrated into SCLSNJ’s common heritage initiative which will make the contributed items available for research and use by future generations by adding these items to Rutgers University’s New Jersey Digital Highway, by making them available in our

Library’s online catalog, and by submitting them to the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA).

In addition to partnering with Rolling Thunder®, Inc. for this special event, the Library will continue to host monthly digitization days. During the digitization days Somerset County residents are encouraged to add their family’s most prized possessions to the Library System’s catalog including: historic photographs, letters, or documents; sketches, paintings, or other artwork; family heirlooms including recipes; jewelry or decorative arts; textiles such as quilts, samplers, flags, or uniforms; antique toys; or something uniquely your own.



(above) Pictured is Zabohonski (second from the left) in 1968/1969 in Bình Định Province, Vietnam alongside fellow military comrades.



(above) Pictured is a side-by-side photograph of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. member Ted Zabohonski in 1968/69 in Bình Định Province, Vietnam (left) and Zabohonski on February 17, 2019 at the Rolling Thunder®, Inc. meeting.

YOUTH SPORTS ASSOC. HOSTS THE 13TH ANNUAL RALPH CAMMAROTA MEMORIAL GOLF OUTING

Submitted by Joe Pisaniello

North Plainfield Youth Sports Association (NPYSA) will be hosting its annual Ralph Cammarota Memorial Golf Outing on June 26, 2019 at Royce Brook Country Club to benefit the youth organization, which serves as a booster group for North Plainfield’s travel baseball, travel softball and travel boys/girls basketball teams. The money raised from the event is used for league entry fees, uniforms, equipment, officiating, tournament entry fees and a recognition dinner for each team. NPYSA also funds baseball and softball clinics that take place in the gyms of North Plainfield schools during the winter months which has proven to be very successful.

It is the 30th year that NPYSA has hosted the annual golf outing. In 2006 the outing name was changed to honor and remember the late Ralph Cammarota, a longtime resident and dedicated volunteer who passed away suddenly in 2005. Ralph was probably one of the best volunteers we

have had in the organization.

The cost of this year’s outing remains the same as always \$150 per person/\$600 per foursome which includes 18 holes of golf in a four-person scramble format with cart as well as a continental breakfast and an Italian buffet lunch in the Royce Brook Country Club Pavilion; there will be a cash and carry beverage cart on the course for the entire round and a cash bar during lunch. The event will also include awards as well as a 50/50 drawing and prizes. Registration and breakfast will begin at 7:00 a.m. followed by an 8:30 a.m. shot gun start. Hole sponsorships are also available for \$75.

The entry commitment date for the 13th Annual Ralph Cammarota Memorial Golf Outing is June 21, 2019.

Royce Brook Country Club is located at 201 Hamilton Road, Hillsborough Township. For additional information, contact Joe Pisaniello, tournament director, at 908-295-7489 or joepisaniello@hotmail.com.

2018
MAY 31 - JUNE 2

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NORTH PLAINFIELD HIGH SCHOOL NJROTC DRILL TEAM

Submitted by Brian Yumiguano, Drill Officer

I've met some of the most amazing people in NJROTC and I've had some of the most amazing experiences here, more than I could ever ask for. It's a great place and I can't wait to start my senior year in NJROTC.

On Saturday, November 3rd the NJROTC Drill Team prepared and practiced at the NPHS high school at 5:00 a.m. for their first competition of the year. Cadets prepared themselves early in the morning so they would have time to do their hair and uniforms, and to study for the competition. Members of the drill team are expected to arrive at practice every morning before school at 6:45 a.m.

Seeing each other every morning and often spending time outside of school makes the cadets very close which helps contribute to their overall success in competitions. "NJROTC is like my second family at school. We all get along with

each other very well. Being in my second year of NJROTC, I can tell that everyone in the program is a hard worker and we all put in our very best to make this program the finest that it can be. Our drill team is close-knit too. We love competing in drill competitions against other schools and bringing home trophies," said sophomore Christina Aguilar, who was recently promoted to Chief.

There are many different events in NJROTC competitions that the cadets participate in which require each member's movements to be sharply executed and in sync. In events such as Unarmed and Armed Platoon, cadets march in a platoon of twelve and follow the commands their commander gives them. Armed platoon members carry rifles and perform more complex drill movements using rifles. In Colorguard, there is a team of four consisting of one American flag, one Navy flag, and two rifles who perform different



and more complex movements compared to the platoons. In Physical Training, a team of at least four people compete against other schools in situps, pushups, and a one-mile run. In events such as the Inspection Team and Academic Team, cadets are required to study NJROTC material and current news for inspection. The appearance of a cadet plays a crucial part during an inspection. The cadets must have clean uniforms free from any stains or wrinkles. Factors such as messy hair and poor knowledge can impact the overall score of the team. Additionally, the varsity teams are made up of cadets who have been in the drill team for more than a year, the Drill Team has a separate team of New Cadets consisting of first-year members.

Commanding Officer Christopher Monrroy, a senior, said, "Without all of the cadets' hard work and their involvement in the program, the unit would not exist. I appreciate all the work the cadets put into drill and essentially learning how to become better citizens of society."

The Drill Teams first competition took place at Pottstown High School and NPHS placed first in New Cadet Colorguard commanded by Raquel Kruszczyński, second in Armed Platoon commanded by Daisy Cifuentes, third in Varsity Colorguard commanded by Christina Aguilar, and placed third in overall performance.

Now at the end of their drill season, the cadets have just finished their last competition, which took place on March 23, 2019, at Rancocas Valley Regional High School. For their last competition, NPHS placed first in Academic team commanded by Maria Gonzalez, second in New Cadet Squad commanded by Jason Melendez, third in Unarmed Platoon commanded by Jenifer Hidalgo, third in Varsity Colorguard commanded by Christina Aguilar, and third in Inspection Team commanded by Abdel Rady. In total, they received third place in overall performance.

The cadets have now completed their drill season and are now teaching the New Cadets to be in the Varsity team. From now to the end of the school year, cadets will continue with teaching drill and raising money for the program.



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LIBRARY TO OFFER ENHANCED SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS

Submitted by Carolann DeMatos

The Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ), a nationally ranked four star library, has been working to create a new strategic plan which launched in early January 2019 resulting in enhanced services, resources, and more.

“Our process involved gathering data to get a sense of what our communities’ biggest concerns are,” said Lynn Hoffman, SCLSNJ’s director of operations. “We held a series of over two dozen facilitated small-group conversations to learn what kind of community people want to live in, so that we could look for ways the Library can help make that a reality. We received nearly 900 responses to a community survey that told us about the community at large and library use in particular. We reviewed demographic data and projections to see how our communities are changing.”

The strategic plan survey and conversations, as well as demographic research, highlighted where SCLSNJ has the potential to make meaningful changes for Somerset County’s communities and residents.

CORE SERVICES THAT EMERGED FROM RESEARCH ARE:

- Making personalized connections between patrons and materials;
- Presenting programs that help community members connect, explore, share, and discover;
- Serving as a community gathering space;
- Promoting and supporting lifelong learning;
- Providing technology access and expertise that meet the needs of the community; and
- Creating opportunities that build Somerset County’s economic and workforce development.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES THAT EMERGED FROM THE RESEARCH ARE:

- Promoting the Library as an impartial platform for creating meaningful interactions and connections;

- Exploring new ways to shape our spaces to meet community needs;
- Welcoming new residents; and
- Addressing the needs of shifting demographics.

“In my position of manager of branch services: special projects and strategic initiatives, I work on projects that are in alignment with our newly defined core services and strategic priorities,” said Lauren Ryan. “As noted above, one component of our core services is providing technology access and expertise that meets the needs of the community. An example of a relevant upcoming project within this sphere is the circulation of Wi-Fi hotspots. Providing Wi-Fi through mobile hotspots brings the internet into the homes of Somerset County residents, to small business owners at an outreach event, or even to your car with your family on a long

drive.

Continued Ryan, “additionally, one component within our strategic priorities is promoting the library as an impartial platform for creating meaningful interactions and connections. In response to this community need we’re coordinating National Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day for our employees. This nationally recognized day provides a way for children to make a connection between what they learn at school with the working world.”

“Moving forward, we will be continuing to define exactly what kind of impact we think the Library can have in these areas, and then designing programs and services that will help us have an impact,” said Hoffman.

To learn more about the strategic planning process and to follow process progress, visit sclsnj.org/about/strategic-plan.

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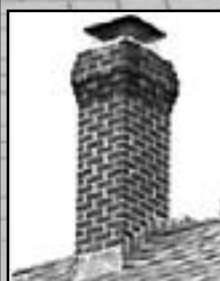
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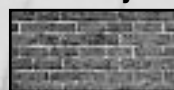
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