

# The PRIDE of North Plainfield


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North Plainfield's Hometown Newspaper

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## ANDREA PAZMINO RECIEVES DIPLOMA AT TRINITAS SCHOOL OF NURSING 161ST CONVOCATION CEREMONY

One hundred and nine students received their nursing diplomas at the Trinitas School of Nursing 161st Convocation Ceremony held recently at St. Michael's Church in Cranford. Including Andrea E. Pazmino of North Plainfield.

Surrounded by family, friends, and staff that supported their efforts every step of the way, 99 women and 10 men proudly accepted their pins and became eligible to sit for the registered nurse licensing exam.

"The Trinitas School of Nursing is so proud of the 109 graduates- the first graduating class of the new decade, the Class of January 2020," said Dr. Rose Santee, Dean of the Trinitas School of Nursing, a collaborative nursing program with Union County College. "The graduates receive a diploma in nursing from Trinitas School of Nursing that will authorize them to sit for the RN licensing exam and Union County College awards the graduates with the Associate in Science degree. Their determination and hard work has paid off. It's exciting for the administration, faculty, staff members, and their families when our students graduate. We will miss them, but more, we are full of the satisfaction that we have guided yet another group of capable nurses who are now ready to join the nursing workforce."

Trinitas School of Nursing, operated jointly by Trinitas

Regional Medical Center and Union County College, currently holds full accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), and the New Jersey State Board of Nursing. The National League for Nursing has awarded the School of Nursing a third designation as a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education status for the years 2015 - 2020 for Creating Environments that Enhance Student Learning and Professional Development. The School also holds a 20-year, 40-class national licensing examination (NCLEX) passage rate of 86.30% on first writing.

### ABOUT TRINITAS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER:

Trinitas Regional Medical Center (TRMC), a major center for comprehensive health services for those who live and work in Central New Jersey, is a Catholic teaching medical center sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth in partnership with Elizabethtown Healthcare Foundation. With 12 Centers of Excellence across the continuum of care, Trinitas has distinguished itself in cardiology, cancer care, behavioral health, renal care, nursing education, diabetes management, maternity, wound healing and sleep medicine. For more information on Trinitas Regional Medical Center, visit: [www.TrinitasRMC.org](http://www.TrinitasRMC.org) or call (908) 994-5138.



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# The PRIDE of North Plainfield

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## FREE HOMEBUYER GROUP PROGRAM - MARCH 4

Somerset County Department of Human Services

Want To Purchase a Home in 2020? Central Jersey Housing Resource Center's (CJHRC) homebuyer education program can help ... CJHRC's next free homebuyer group program, Step By Step, will held on March 4, 2020 (in case of inclement weather it will be held on March 11, 2020). The program will take place at CJHRC's office located at 600 1st Avenue, Raritan. Many people feel the home buying process is confusing and overwhelming and this program will have expert speakers to cover the important topics and answer questions.

Participants will hear about the mortgage process, how to determine how much home you can afford, what a debt to income ratio is, the importance of credit, the difference between a low interest rate and an APR rate, and much more.

The program is scheduled for 5:30 pm and

ends at 9:30 pm. A light dinner will be provided. Another reason to attend - A certificate of completion, that is valid for 1 year, will be issued to all attendees who complete the program and paperwork. This certificate is a pre-requisite for down payment grant programs, Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity and is required by many lenders offering special mortgage products. Call CJHRC at 908-446-0037, press #3 to register.

If for any reason you cannot attend the March 4, 2020 program but want to receive prepurchase counseling, you can always schedule one-on-one counseling with a CJHRC counselor or participate in a combination of face to face and online pre-purchase program - all programs are FREE.

If homeownership is your dream - CJHRC is here to help! Call 908-446-0037.

## NORTH PLAINFIELD CITIZENS FOR COMMUNITY RIGHTS MEETING

*Submitted by Frank D'Amore*

The next meeting of the North Plainfield Citizens for Community Rights (NPCCR) will be held Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the North Plainfield Community Center, 614 Greenbrook Rd.

A seminar on "How to File for a Property Assessment Reduction" will be conducted by Robert Graham. Mr. Graham has been very

helpful in giving people the information they need to do this in the past.

This seminar is open to all residents of New Jersey.

Bring the card you get from your municipality showing your annual property tax, a calculator and something to write on.

Any questions call 908-757-6353 or email [frankdsr@comcast.net](mailto:frankdsr@comcast.net).

## CRISIS HOTLINE SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Are you looking for a flexible, rewarding volunteer opportunity? Have you ever been told you are a good listener? This volunteer opportunity may be for you. The nonprofit organization Caring Contact is seeking new volunteers to support its crisis hotline and listening community.

Volunteers receive 54 hours of comprehensive training in active listening, mental health first aid and applied suicide intervention skills

training. New volunteers are also supported by seasoned listeners during 24 hours of internship before answering calls independently. Ongoing support and training opportunities are also provided.

The next volunteer training program will begin on March 17, 2020, at Temple Shalom in Scotch Plains, NJ. To learn more and apply, please visit [caringcontact.org/volunteer-listener-application](http://caringcontact.org/volunteer-listener-application) or call (908) 301.1899.

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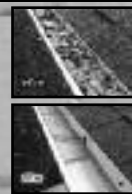
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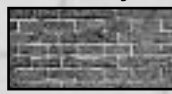
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# DON'T FALL FOR SCAM CALLS AND EMAILS IMPERSONATING IRS

The IRS is urging the public to be aware of suspicious individuals claiming to be from the IRS.

Thousands of people have lost millions of dollars and their personal information to tax scams. Scammers use the regular mail, telephone, or email to set up individuals, businesses, payroll, and tax professionals.

Scammers and cyberthieves continue to use

the IRS as bait. The most common tax scams are phone calls and emails from thieves who pretend to be from the IRS. Scammers use the IRS name, logo, fake employee names and badge numbers to try to steal money and identities from taxpayers.

Taxpayers need to be wary of phone calls or automated messages from someone who claims to be from the IRS. Often, these criminals will say taxpayers owe money and demand payment right away. Other times, scammers will lie to taxpayers and say they're due a refund. The thieves ask for bank account information over the phone. The IRS warns taxpayers not to fall for these scams.

Below are several tips that will help filers avoid becoming a scam victim.

## IRS EMPLOYEES WILL NOT:

- Call demanding an immediate payment. The IRS won't call taxpayers if they owe taxes without first sending a bill in the mail.
- Demand payment without allowing taxpayers to question or appeal the amount owed.
- Demand that taxpayers pay their taxes in a specific way, such as with a prepaid debit card.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to contact local police or similar agencies to arrest taxpayers for non-payment of taxes.

- Threaten legal action, such as a lawsuit.

If taxpayers don't owe or don't think they owe any tax, and they receive an inquiry like this, they should:

- Contact the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. Use TIGTA's "IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting" web page to report the incident.
- Report the incident to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the "FTC Complaint Assistant" on FTC.gov. Add "IRS Telephone Scam" to the comments of your report.

In most cases, an IRS phishing scam is an unsolicited, fake email that claims to come from the IRS. Some emails link to sham websites that look real. The scammers' goal is to lure victims to give up their personal and financial information. If the thieves get what they're after, they use it to steal a victim's money and identity.

For those taxpayers who get a phishing email, the IRS offers this advice:

- Don't reply to the message.
- Don't give out your personal or financial information.
- Forward the email to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov). Then delete it.
- Don't open any attachments or click on any links. They may have malicious code that will infect your computer.

For more info visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or call your local police department non-emergency number.

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## LIBRARY SYSTEM INTRODUCES TRANSLATOR DEVICES TO CONNECT WITH CUSTOMERS

Submitted by Tracy Carney

According to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 30.5 percent of Somerset County residents speak a language other than English at home. As a result, the Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) offers translation devices at all 10 Library branches to ensure that all customers are able to communicate with Library staff.

"We are excited by how well these inexpensive devices enable us to bridge the language divide," said Brian Auger, county Library administrator.

The Google minis can translate to and from 44 different languages including Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. The U.S. Census survey shows that approximately 11 percent of residents in the County speak Spanish at home, while 9.5 percent speak a European based language, and 8.3 percent speak an Asian or

Pacific Island based language.

"We deployed these devices to serve as on-demand language translators in our communities," said Lauren Ryan, manager of branch services, strategic initiatives and special projects. "While we aim to have bilingual staff present in our branches, these devices can supplement communication when a bilingual staff member is not present. This initiative is in alignment with our Strategic Priority of addressing the needs of shifting demographics and our Core Service of providing technology access and expertise that meet the needs of the community."

In addition to these devices, the Library System offers hundreds of titles in Spanish; foreign language learning resources including Mango Languages and Rosetta Stone; and English Conversation classes in partnership with Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County.

## COMMUNITY TRAINING TO BE OFFERED AT IMAGINE, A CENTER FOR COPING WITH LOSS

Submitted by Val Stierhoff

Sadly, children, teens and adults will experience different losses in life: divorce, moving, friendships ending, sports injuries or the death of a friend or family member. Despite these losses, children, teens and adults can learn how to cope with loss, and even grow after loss, if given the right support. How can we best support grieving people in their homes, communities and schools? Those who attend this training will learn: definitions of loss, grief, and mourning; how children and adults grieve differently; how grief affects behavior; and ways to support grieving children, teens and adults.

Imagine's "Supporting Children, Teens and Adults Coping with Loss" is for anyone who wants to learn how to support someone who is grieving. While loss due to death will be the primary focus of this seminar, the concepts that will be presented are applicable to all types of loss. It is especially important for parents and grandparents, teachers, members of community organizations, coaches, therapists, counselors and social workers to attend this program.

Imagine's Executive Director and Founder, Mary Robinson says, "The most important thing a grieving child needs is the active presence of at

least one, preferably more, caring, healthy, and functional adults in their lives who understand that when a child has a loss they need support." This program will teach you how to be that presence in the life of grieving youth.

This program will be held from 6:30 to 8:00 on Thursday, March 12 at 244 Sheffield Street in Mountainside. CEUs are available for social workers. A \$20 donation is appreciated. Pizza dinner will be provided at 6:15 and the program will begin at 6:30.

Please register by Tuesday, March 10. To register for the training, please visit [imagineNJ.org](http://imagineNJ.org). For further information contact Connie Palmer at [connie@imagineNJ.org](mailto:connie@imagineNJ.org) or call 908-264-3100

Imagine is a free grief support center for children age 3-18, young adults 18-30, coping with loss due to the death of a parent or sibling, or coping with a family member living with an illness. Concurrent support is provided for the parents and guardians of the youth. Imagine is located in Mountainside, serving all of Union County and beyond, and in Newark's South Ward serving Newark and surrounding towns. For more information call 908-264-3100 or visit our website at [imagineNJ.org](http://imagineNJ.org).

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# NORTH PLAINFIELD MEMORIAL LIBRARY BRANCH

The Somerset County Library System New Jersey North Plainfield Branch is located at  
6 Rockview Avenue, North Plainfield. For more information call 908-458-8435 or visit [SCLSNJ.org](http://SCLSNJ.org).  
All programs listed are free. Registration is required unless otherwise indicated and programs are subject to change  
Please note the Library will be closed on February 17.

## SCLSNJ TO CONNECT LIBRARY CUSTOMERS TO INTERNET ON THE GO

According to a recent survey from the American Community Survey, conducted through the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 7,500 Somerset County residents do not have access to the internet in their homes. In an effort to lessen the digital divide, the Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) will connect residents with internet access on the go by circulating free mobile hotspots for checkout across all 10 branches.

“When an individual needs access to resources, technology, and/or the internet, they often turn to their local library,” said Cathy DeBerry, adult services supervisor. “This is because public libraries have long been trusted with the delivery of services designed to support the information literacy needs of the communities they serve. As librarians we understand the digital divide—the separation between individuals who have access to modern technology and those who do not—and they know it’s far more complicated than having or not having the internet.”

According to the Digital Divide Council, the digital divide affects education, society, and the economy. Offering mobile hotspots has a number of community benefits including: lessening the homework gap for children who don’t have internet access at home; providing connectivity to financially disadvantaged patrons; providing access to health information for individuals with mobility issues and individuals living with

disabilities within the comfort of their own home.

Mobile hotspots are small devices that allow internet access via Wi-Fi through cell phone towers. They enable users to connect their personal devices such as tablets and laptops to the internet.

“SCLSNJ is excited to offer Internet On the Go as a technology resource to our patrons,” said Lauren Ryan, manager of branch services, strategic initiatives and special projects. “Circulating hotspots is in direct alignment with our Strategic Plan’s Core Service of providing technology access and expertise that meet the needs of the community. We anticipate that hotspots will be popular with our patrons who lack internet service at home and to people who want to access Wi-Fi on the go.”

SCLSNJ customers will be able to checkout a mobile hotspot for a loan period of three weeks;

customers may also find (non-reservable) hotspots on the Lucky Day shelf.

For more information, email [InternetOnTheGo@sclibnj.org](mailto:InternetOnTheGo@sclibnj.org).

### 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](http://SCLSNJ.org).

## MARCH EVENTS

### CHILDREN, TWEEN, AND TEEN PROGRAMS

#### Tea Time Social Hour (grades 5-12)

March 3, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

#### Toddler/Preschool Storytime - Rhyme and Play (ages 18 months - 5 years)

March 4, 11, 18; 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

#### Teen Tech Drop-In (grades 5-12)

March 4, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

#### Baby/Toddler Storytime - Discover Stories (ages birth - 3 years)

March 5, 12, 19; 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

#### Demystifying Financial Aid Letters (grades 9-12 and parents)

March 5, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

#### LEGO® Club (grades 2-5)

March 9, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

March 12, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

#### Homework Help (grades 2-5)

March 9, 23; 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

#### Culinary Creators (grades 5-12)

March 10, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

#### Teen Movie Screenings -

#### “The Sun Is Also a Star” (grades 7-12)

March 11, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

#### Friday DIY (grades 3-6)

#### Bird Feeder

March 13, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

#### String Art

March 27, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

### FAMILY STORYTIME (FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN)

#### Fables and Tables

March 14, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

#### Pajamarama

March 18, 24; 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

#### Game Time (grades 5-12)

March 18, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

#### Learning Lab - Magnets (grades K-5)

March 19, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

#### Teen Volunteer Opportunity - Homework Helpers (grades 9-12)

March 23, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

#### Family Night - Bead Night (families with children)

March 26, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

#### Baking and Books - Zucchini Bread (grades 2-5)

March 30, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

### ADULT PROGRAMS

#### Writer's Group

March 3, 17, 31; 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

#### English Conversation Group

March 2, 9; 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

#### U.S. Citizenship Course

March 5, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

#### Jam Making Session

March 10, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

#### Book Discussion - “Crazy Rich Asians” by Kevin Kwan

March 12, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

March 19, 7:15 - 8:30 p.m.

#### Scent, Style, and Culture -

#### Five Iconic Fragrances of the 20th Century

March 21, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

#### Fraud Watch Basics

March 26, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

#### Special Needs Social Hour

March 27, 11:00 a.m. - Noon

#### Creative Crafts - Seed Bombs

March 28, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

#### Voices of Courage

March 28, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.



(above) According to a recent study from the American Community Survey conducted through the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 7,500 Somerset County residents do not have access to the internet in their home. In an effort to lessen the digital divide, the Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) will connect residents with internet access on the go by circulating mobile hotspots for checkout across all 10 branches. For more information, email [InternetOnTheGo@sclibnj.org](mailto:InternetOnTheGo@sclibnj.org).



## HOME SAFETY REPAIR PROGRAM DESIGNED TO HELP PEOPLE IN-NEED

For many low-to-moderate income homeowners in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, resolving critical home safety repairs is financially impossible. There are a significant number of residents who are living with water leaks and cold drafts due to failing roofs, doors and windows. Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity (RVHFH) has developed a new Home Safety and Repair Program with these residents in mind. RVHFH is actively seeking qualified Somerset and Hunterdon County homeowners in need of home safety repairs to apply for this program.

This program focuses on helping local homeowners to continue to live independently, safely and comfortably in their homes. RVHFH's Home Safety and Repair Program serves low-to-moderate income homeowners of any age including veterans, people with disabilities and seniors. The program also assists non-profit organizations that offer permanent or temporary shelter.

Program projects have included: leaky roof repairs, weatherizing and increasing security of aging doors and windows, and home modifications and ramp installations for people with disabilities. One homeowner served by the program in Somerset says, "A volunteer installed a screen door and fixed the lock on my front door. Now my home is secure and water no longer comes in. I am so grateful and finally warm in my home."

Ramp installations are a crucial part of what RVHFH does for the safety of those in

wheelchairs. A recent program recipient was a local non-profit organization that needed a ramp built for the people they serve. The Executive Director there commented, "We truly appreciate the professional work of Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity. They built a beautiful ramp to make our building accessible for all clients."

Other program services help senior residents "age in place." Most seniors want to stay in their homes but many need to make costly repairs or improvements in order to do this. According to a family served by our program, "The Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity team who came out to install grab bars for my mom were like angels sent from heaven."

"We truly appreciate the support we've received for this important program from volunteers and donors in our community, particularly Provident Bank Foundation and NJM Insurance Group, and look forward to expanding our impact in helping more people to have a decent place to live in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties," says Jan Holmstrup, Executive Director of RVHFH.

If you or someone you know is low-to-moderate income and in need of home safety repairs, RVHFH's website has specific income qualification criteria to review and a program application to fill out, at the following link: [rvhabitat.org/projects-programs/home-safety-repair/](http://rvhabitat.org/projects-programs/home-safety-repair/). Interested program applicants can also leave a message at 908-704-0016, ext. 12 and a trained program volunteer will return the call.

This program and others like it could not exist

without the support of people in the community. To make a donation to RVHFH, please visit [rvhabitat.org](http://rvhabitat.org) or write a check payable to Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity and send to P.O. Box 6275, Bridgewater, NJ 08807.

Seeking to put God's love into action, Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity (RVHFH) brings people together to build homes, communities and hope. In 29 years, RVHFH has built 53 homes in Hunterdon and Somerset counties. The affiliate also operates a Habitat ReStore in Manville, which is a store that sells gently used household goods to benefit the building and repair of more homes in our community. To learn more, visit [rvhabitat.org](http://rvhabitat.org) or call 908-704-0016.



(above) Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity announced a new program to help low-to-moderate income homeowners in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties resolve critical home safety repairs.

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# CAR DONATION PROGRAM GIVES WHEELS TO REAL PEOPLE

What does it mean to have your own car? For longtime Community Access Unlimited (CAU) member Brian Shapiro, it means both stability and freedom. Before he had a car, Brian had to get a ride from a friend or take an Uber to his job driving a cab in Bloomfield.

“It’s a lot easier,” Brian said, thanks to the Volvo he received as a donation through Community Access Unlimited this fall. “I go to work and take my son places.”

CAU started the vehicle donation program as a way to aid youth and individuals with disabilities who wished to complete their drivers test and gain the independence that comes with owning a vehicle. Now Brian can easily travel to the job he has had for nearly 20 years. Many have already benefited from the donation of reliable cars to get them where they need to go- from work and school to social functions.

“I’ve known about it for a while and it finally worked out,” Brian said.

Unlike other car donation programs, CAU does not sell or scrap donated cars, receiving only a percentage of their value. By donating a vehicle to CAU, 100% of your donation will go to a person with transportation needs.

Those interested in donating a car should contact Mercedes Pagan, fundraising and event director, at 908-354-3040 x4376 or mpagan@caunj.org.

Vehicles that may qualify for donation include those that are new, gently used, or vehicles needing minor body or mechanical work. The owner of the car must have the title at the time of donation. Car donors will receive a donation letter which can serve as a charitable donation, which is tax deductible.

Learn more about donating to or volunteering with CAU at [caunj.org/support-us](http://caunj.org/support-us).



(above) Brian Shapiro shows off his Volvo Cross Country.

## ABOUT COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

Community Access Unlimited (CAU), celebrating its 40th year in 2019, supports people with special needs in achieving real lives in the community. CAU gives a voice to adults and youth who traditionally have little power in society, assisting its members with housing, life skills, employment, money management, socialization and civic activities. CAU also

supports opportunities for advocacy through training in assertiveness, decision-making and civil rights. Currently serving more than 5,000 individuals and families, CAU continues to grow each year.

For more information about CAU and its services, contact us by phone at 908-354-3040, [info@caunj.org](mailto:info@caunj.org) or by mail at 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

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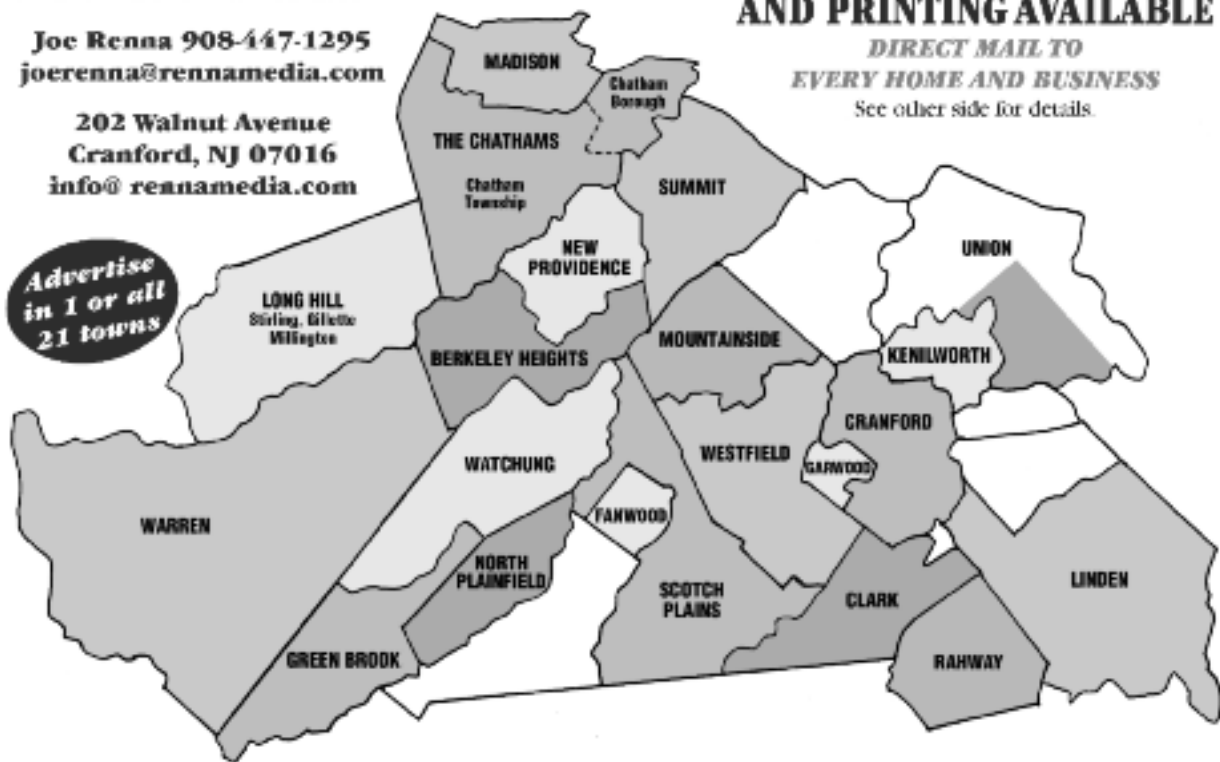
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## ANNUAL BASKET AUCTION - MARCH 21

The West End School PTA will hold its annual basket auction, "Beth's Baskets" for the ninth consecutive year on Saturday, March 21, 2020. A community tradition originally named "Basket-Palooza," "Beth's Baskets" was renamed four years ago after the sudden passing of the school's beloved principal, Beth Sobel.

This adult-only, tricky tray-style event is the West End PTA's annual fundraiser with profits to help sponsor many events and activities for the students, as well as the purchase of additional educational supplies and opportunities.

There are well over 200 prizes including: 20 Disney Park Hopper passes, designer handbags, a Cricut bundle, Xbox bundle, tickets to theatre and sporting events, themed baskets, gym memberships, gift cards to local and regional eating establishments, and so much more! There

are four prize levels with prize tickets sold in sheets of 25 for the first three (white, pink, and blue), and top tier (gold) sold individually. Ticket packages will also be available for purchase as well as 50/50 tickets.

Doors open at 6 p.m. with the first ticket to be pulled at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$15/person (includes one sheet of level one tickets). Pre-sale admission tickets as well as reserve tables for 10 people (\$140) are available at: [squareup.com/store/WestEndPTA](https://squareup.com/store/WestEndPTA).

Cash and credit cards will be accepted at the event for admission and ticket purchases.

"Beth's Baskets" will be held at West End School, 477 Greenbrook Rd., North Plainfield, NJ. On-site parking available.

For more information, visit: [tinyurl.com/weptabasketauktion](https://tinyurl.com/weptabasketauktion).

## TAX COUNSELORS OFFER FREE TAX PREPARATION

Need help preparing your taxes? The county Office of Volunteer Services and AARP have teamed up again this year to provide free tax-counseling assistance for residents who need help preparing their federal and New Jersey income tax returns. Appointments are required through April 15, 2020.

Tax-Aide is a volunteer program designed to help residents prepare their tax returns. The program is specifically open to seniors, residents with disabilities, and lower-income residents but is available to everybody. In 2019, almost 3,000 taxpayers used this free service in Somerset County.

About 65 tax-preparation volunteers provide direct support to residents at six sites within Somerset County including Montgomery, Martinsville, Manville, Bridgewater, Franklin and Green Brook. Tax returns are filed electronically, enabling taxpayers to obtain a more rapid refund if they are eligible. Volunteers also can assist with preparing Property Tax Reimbursement (PTR) forms for homeowners 65 years or older who meet certain eligibility requirements.

At your scheduled appointment, bring your W-2 forms, bank, broker and social security statements, medical and other expenses, a copy of your last year's returns, and any other relevant information. The tax counselor will review your tax documents, prepare this year's federal and New Jersey income tax returns, and file them electronically. It is a no-fuss, no-muss, free service.

If you are interested in making an appointment to consult with a tax counselor, call the Somerset County Office of Volunteer Services at 908-541-5710. The program runs through April 15, 2020 and is by appointment only.

To stay up to date with Somerset County events and information, sign up for free email alerts at [co.somerset.nj.us/subscribe](https://co.somerset.nj.us/subscribe) or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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