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WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY

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BRIGADIER GENERAL EDWARD CHRYSTAL PRESENTED UNICO AMERICANISM AWARD

Submitted by Richard Esposito

The Greater Westfield Chapter of UNICO National was honored to present the Americanism Award to Brigadier General Edward Chrystal. The award was presented by Chapter President Richard Esposito and District X Governor Anthony Bengivenga at the 2020 UNICO District X awards dinner at the Somerville Elks. General Chrystal, a resident of Scotch Plains, was one of six recipients to receive this award from chapters in the district.

Brigadier General Crystal currently serves as the land component commander, New Jersey Army National Guard. General Crystal is responsible for the welfare, training and readiness of over 5,000 soldiers assigned throughout the 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 42nd Regional Support Command and the 57th Troop Command.

General Crystal enlisted in the Army National Guard in 1985 and received his commission through the Seton Hall University Reserve Officer Training Corps program. He

earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice and a Master of Arts in Education from Seton Hall University. He also holds a Masters of Science Degree in Strategic Studies from the Army War College.

General Crystal has commanded at all levels to include platoon, company, battalion and brigade.

A veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, General Chrystal's awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Global War on Terror Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal and the Basic Paratrooper Badge.

In his civilian life, Brigadier General Crystal retired at the rank of Lieutenant from the New Jersey State Police after 25 years. He currently serves as the Superintendent of Veterans Haven North, a transitional home for homeless veterans in Glen Gardner, NJ.

General Crystal lives with his wife, Georgette, and their three children in Scotch Plains, NJ.

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(above, l-r) UNICO National President, Dr. Frank DeFrank; NJ District X Governor, Anthony Bengivenga; Chapter President, Richard Esposito; Brigadier General, Edward Chrystal; Foundation Trustee, Robert Tarte; and Second Vice President, Ralph Contini

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Scotch Plains Monthly is published by Renna Media. 9,500 newspapers are printed monthly and mailed to every business and resident in Scotch Plains.

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PROMOTE YOUR COMMUNITY EVENT

Community service organizations, schools and sports teams are encouraged to submit news of upcoming events or highlights and photos from recent events.

Organizations who are interested in submitting content, please email editor@rennamedia.com or call 908-858-4012

Scotch Plains Monthly is online at www.rennamedia.com like us on [facebook.com/Scotch Plains Monthly](https://www.facebook.com/ScotchPlainsMonthly)

TOWNSHIP OF SCOTCH PLAINS TO HOST 2020 CENSUS DAY EVENT ON APRIL 1, 2020

Submitted by Thomas Strowe

The Township of Scotch Plains and the U.S. Census Bureau will co-host a 2020 Census Day event on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Scotch Plains Public Library (1927 Bartle Avenue) to provide information and assistance on completing the 2020 Census.

In mid to late March, Census questionnaires will be mailed to residents inviting them to complete their 2020 Census questionnaire either online or by phone. This year, the questionnaire will be available in English plus an additional 12 non-English languages. Residents who have questions about completing their form will be able to attend the Scotch Plains 2020 Census Day event on April 1 and receive help directly from Census Bureau employees.

Anyone who has not completed their Census questionnaire by mid-April will receive a paper questionnaire. Lastly, Census employees will visit any housing unit that has not completed their Census questionnaire by mid-May.

When responding to the 2020 Census everyone living in your home as of April 1, 2020 should be included. Parents, children, aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, roommates – every person living with you on April 1, 2020 are all considered members of your household.

The U.S. Constitution mandates a full count, every ten years, of all persons living in the United States. The 2020 Census will provide a snapshot of everyone living in Scotch Plains and across the country on April 1.

Census results are important as they determine how many seats each state is apportioned in the U.S. House of Representatives as well as how over \$675 billion in federal funds are distributed annually to states and communities on services ranging from roads, infrastructure, schools, libraries, and emergency services.

All responses are protected by federal law and kept confidential for life. They can never be shared with any other federal, state, or local government, court, or law enforcement agency. Responses are only used to produce statistics.

In 2010, Scotch Plains had an 87 percent response rate. While this is an excellent response rate, that 13 percent non-response rate could mean the difference between more or less funding for our community. The Mayor and Township Council are committed to obtaining a complete and accurate count in 2020.




For more information about the 2020 Census visit, 2020census.gov or scotchplainsnj.gov/departments/2020-census or contact Tom Strowe, Township Census Coordinator at 908-322-6700 ext. 317 or tstrowe@scotchplainsnj.com.

Census Day 2020
 Wednesday, April 1, 2020
 From 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 Scotch Plains Public Library
 1927 Bartle Avenue

For more information and assistance completing the census, come to Census Day 2020.

Funding for our community's public resources and our voice in government are all at stake in our census count. Let's get a complete count!

2020census.gov #Census2020

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CASA INVITES PUBLIC TO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON MARCH 11

Submitted by Gretchen Boger-O'Bryan

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Union County will host its second annual Women's Leadership Luncheon on Wednesday, March 11 — the heart of Women's History Month — to highlight two Union County women whose contributions positively impact their community.

Among them is Tina Renna, Cranford resident and owner of Renna Media, publisher of 21 community newspapers including the Scotch Plains Monthly.

Renna, who coordinates content for more than 135,000-issues circulated to towns in Union, Somerset and Morris counties, uses her writing, editing and photography, she says, "to tell the stories of ordinary people who do extraordinary things, big or small, that inspire others and their communities.



(above) Tina Renna, owner of Renna Media, publisher of 21 community newspapers including Scotch Plains Monthly, will be recognized by CASA at their Women's Leadership Luncheon.



(above) Sue Adler, Summit resident and CEO of The Sue Adler Team of Keller Williams in Chatham, will be recognized by CASA at their Women's Leadership Luncheon on Wednesday, March 11.

Whether reporting news from town departments, schools and libraries, giving voice to local organizations raising awareness, or highlighting accomplishments of businesses, residents and all those who share a community — no matter strength or size — I strive to make a positive impact on each town's well-being and economic development."

Also being honored is Summit's Sue Adler, CEO of The Sue Adler Team of Keller Williams in Chatham. Currently ranked 10 worldwide out of 175,000 Keller Williams agents, Adler focuses on the community's train line towns and incorporates an in-house, team-treatment approach for clients.

Ilyse DiChiara, owner of Green Healthy Living and certified integrative nutrition, health and wellness coach, will provide the keynote address. Prior to switching professional course, DiChiara ran her nationwide trial consulting business, Litigation Support Solutions, for more than 20 years. Other participants include Summit Mayor Nora Radest and Westfield Councilwoman Joann Neylan.

Tickets are available now for the luncheon, which begins at 11:30 a.m. at the Grand Summit Hotel. Seats are \$65; tables of 10 and sponsorships are available.

To purchase, log on to casaleadershipluncheon.eventbrite.com. For luncheon details, contact Alexis at aslade@casaoofunioncounty.org.

CASA of Union County recruits, trains, supervises and supports community volunteers to advocate for abused, neglected and abandoned children placed in foster homes or residential facilities. There are more than 500 Union County youth, from birth to age 21, in foster care. With court-ordered access to a foster child and all parties in their life, volunteer advocates report findings to the judge so as to ensure best interests remain a priority, needs are met, and already experienced trauma is not exacerbated.

Contact Courtney at cgreen@casaoofunioncounty.org or 908-293-8136 to learn more about CASA of Union County.

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The College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains will host a presentation by Dr. Paul Christianson.

Dr. Paul Christianson, P.D, is Associate Professor of Music at Seton Hall University. His work has focused on Czech music, Haydn, popular music and music in political advertisements. His presentation will give insights into the role music can play in political advertisements.

This informative program will be held on March 23 at The Fanwood Presbyterian Church, 74 Martine Avenue, Fanwood (around the back at the McDermott Street entrance). The program, which is free and open to the public, will begin at 7:30 pm.

Dr. Christianson's work has appeared in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Journal of Musicological Research, Notes, ECHO: a music-centered journal, Plainsong and Medieval Music, Journal of the Society of American Music, MedieKultur: Journal of Media and Communication Research, Music and Politics, and 19th-Century Music. His book Orchestrating Public Opinion: How Music Persuades in Television Political Ads for US Presidential Campaigns, 1952-2016 was published in 2018 by Amsterdam University Press.

Additional information about the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains can be found on the club's website at fspcollegeclub.org.



(above) Paul Christiansen, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Music at Seton Hall University, will reflect on the role of music in political advertising on March 23.

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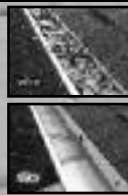
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JCC GOES RED FOR WOMEN'S HEART HEALTH

Submitted by Thomas Kranz

The JCC in Scotch Plains hosted what is becoming an annual event for women's heart health awareness, coinciding with the national Go Red Campaign originated by the American Heart Association.

The event is staged each year by Melissa Padulsky, owner of Little Hearts Big World CPR and First Aid Instruction, a Fanwood-based business, and by the JCC.

The event featured a CPR demo, healthy snacks, blood pressure checks, guest speakers on the subject of women's heart health and regional vendors. Mayor Al Smith spoke of heart disease, the number 1 killer of men and women, and his own experience as a cardiac bypass patient.



(above) CPR demonstration that was held Saturday, February 8, 2020.



(above) Event founder Melissa Padulsky and Mayor Al Smith



(above) Scotch Plains and Fanwood Rescue Squad members

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SCOUTS BSA OPEN HOUSE - MARCH 9TH

Submitted by Rob Sheppard, Troop 72/772 Committee Chair

Does your daughter enjoy activities like camping, hiking and other exciting adventures? We have just the opportunity for her, join Scouts BSA! Scouts BSA is a program which gives young girls ages 11 to 18 (6th to 12th grade) an opportunity to experience these activities and more. The program is based on the same principles that have guided Boy Scouts of America for over 100 years. While the program gives young girls these unique opportunities, most importantly it encourages them to become

responsible, caring young adults in their communities by giving back to those communities.

Since February 1st, 2019 across the country tens of thousands of girls 6 to 18 years old have joined the program including in New Jersey. Scouts BSA Troop 72 in Westfield, who has been chartered since 1914, helped form Scouts BSA Girls Troop 772 during the inaugural year of the program. This Troop serves girls 11 to 18 years old in the greater Westfield area (Cranford, Garwood, Fanwood, Scotch Plains and Plainfield). The girls have been thriving in the BSA program and are enjoying all their new experiences.

Diana, a second class scout in the Troop, commented: "It's cool being in this Troop because there aren't any other Troops to join in the area. I like that you get the opportunity to do things you wouldn't normally be able to do anywhere else like go camping, hiking and earning Merit

Badges (lots of fun and different Merit Badges!). In the Troop you feel accepted and included by all, and what's really cool is I will have the opportunity to someday earn the rank of Eagle and can't wait to see the reactions on people's faces."

Ily, a first class scout in Troop 772, states: "I like the fact you get to earn achievements at your own pace with no one breathing down your neck, it's totally up to you what you accomplish. Getting to earn the right to use a knife or start a fire on a camping trip is really cool! I'm proud when younger girls come up to me while I'm in my uniform and say, "I want to be a scout too someday."

We would love for you to come to our recruiting night on Monday March 9th at 7:30 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield. For event details, please email jasurist72@wstfldnjscouts.org and let us know that you will be attending.

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SPF HS STUDENTS DANCE DURING NY FASHION WEEK

Submitted by iDance Ministry

Scotch Plains Fanwood High School students Aliyah Daniel (12th grader), Abigail Earp (10th grader), Valdón Daniel, III (11th grader) and Ananda Daniel (9th grader) performed 3 dances during NY Fashion Week.

Their performances on February 8 at "Pozitive VibeZ on the Runway" included an African Contemporary dance called "The

Prayer" and 2 high energy competition level Hip Hop dances. They received rave reviews after their dances at the Skyline Hotel (Penthouse Level) in New York, NY. They even brought many to their feet. The fashion show was adjusted and they were given the finale spot for the event. Their Hip Hop Dance ended the Fashion Show.

Many streamed the event (and their dances)

live. These hard working Honor Roll student athletes deserve a round of applause.

All trained under María Daniel of iDance Ministry for this event and spent months preparing for this unique opportunity in New York. Upcoming dance performances include Times Square, NY, National Dance Week and a halftime performance at a semi-professional basketball game.



Mary DePaola, ABR, SRES

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SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD HIGH SCHOOL REPERTORY THEATRE PRESENTS CHICAGO: HIGH SCHOOL EDITION

The SPFHS Repertory Theatre is proud to present this year's musical production Chicago: High School Edition. The students of Scotch - Plains Fanwood are thrilled to bring this legendary Broadway production to our stage. This raucous, jazzy, irreverent musical is sure to dazzle and dazzle! Performances will be held on Friday, March 6, Saturday, March 7, Thursday, March 12, Friday, March 13, and Saturday, March 14 at 7:30 p.m. There will also be a matinee on Sunday, March 8 at 2:00 p.m. All performances will take place in the Manya Unger Auditorium at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, located at 667 Westfield Road, in Scotch Plains.

This production of Chicago involves over 100 students, including the crew and live pit orchestra. The cast is under the artful direction and creative supervision of Mr. Morgan Knight (Director), Mrs. Jan Allen (Producer and Music Director), Ms. Courtney Nemec (Assistant Director), Ms. Kara Drake (Choreographer), Mr. Trey Shore (Pit Orchestra Conductor), Mr. Jeff Allen (Set Designer), Mr. Gary Moore (Stage Crew Supervisor), Mr. Thomas Rowe (Lighting Designer), and Mrs. Joanne Sprague (Costume Designer). When asked about the upcoming shows, Mr. Knight replied, "One of the best things about Chicago is the incredible choreography; it combines the best of 1920's dance with the unique style of Bob Fosse. The

students have thrown themselves wholeheartedly into meeting the challenges the choreography presents."

Tickets for Chicago: High School Edition are on sale now! They may be purchased in advance using the following link: <https://chicagospfhs.brownpapertickets.com> and are \$13 for students and senior citizens, \$15 for adults. All tickets for the performance on Thursday, March 8 are only \$10. Senior citizens with "Gold Cards" may contact Victoria Fortna, via email vfortna@gmail.com or phone (908) 787-7492, to make arrangements for discounted tickets. Tickets may also be purchased at the door, but please be advised that many of our shows in the past have completely sold out in advance of the performance night.

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Repertory Theatre strives to make its performances and facilities enjoyable and accessible to our audiences. Accessible seating is available for those with mobility challenges and those who use wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, or other assistive devices. Please contact Victoria Fortna at vfortna@gmail.com to request special seating. Handicap parking spaces are located near Door 1 and are available on a first come, first-served basis to those displaying official license plates or placards.

Based on individual need, efforts will be made to provide early seating prior to admission.

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High School Repertory Theatre
presents
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RAKE & HOE JUNIORS PREPARE FOR REGIONAL FLOWER SHOW

Junior members of the Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield met recently to make collages using dried flowers, seed pods and other plant materials for submission to the regional flower show to be held on April 25, 2020 at the Scotch Hills Country Club.

The Rake and Hoe Garden Club is affiliated with the Garden Club of New Jersey and the National Garden Club, Inc. The club meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 12:00 p.m. at the Scotch Hills Country Club. Membership is open to residents of Westfield and surrounding towns. The Juniors, ranging from kindergarten through high school students, meet monthly, after school during the school year to work on projects focused on flower design, gardening and community service.

For more information about the club, call Beth Siano 908-233-4150 or visit the club's website, rakeandhoe.org, or Facebook page.



(above, l-r) Junior members of the Rake & Hoe Garden Club CJ Strauss, Malissa Morabito, Riley Dupuis, Sophia Poeschl, Arline Bound, Arabella Morabito, Lila Spadaro, Alissa Stumpf, Lexi Strauss, and Emma Sylvester gather to make collages.

FANWOOD RECREATION SPRING PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

Fanwood Recreation announces its spring program schedule for Fanwood seniors. Programs begin the week of March 30 and run weekly through the week of June 22. Classes include Aerobics, Yoga, Zumba, Aqua Jam (water exercise), Meditation and Tai Chi.

All classes will be held in the recreation building at Forest Road Park with the exception of Aqua Jam, which will be held at the JCC of Central NJ Wilf Jewish Community Campus indoor pool. The fee is \$15 per program for Fanwood and Scotch Plains residents, \$30 for all others.

To register online and pay by credit card, please go to fanwoodrecreation.org. Or, if you prefer to pick up a registration form and pay by check, please go to Fanwood Borough Hall, 75 North Martine Avenue.

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F-SP SERVICE LEAGUE THRIFT SHOP READY FOR SPRING

On Tuesday, March 10, the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League Thrift Shop, 1741 East 2nd St., Scotch Plains, will welcome spring with clothing, housewares and accessories for milder sunnier days. The Thrift Shop windows are dressed in the colors and styles of the season. Inside the shop, look through the collection of new items with original price tags. Other items are gently used and a good value.

Tuesday, March 17 is St. Patrick's Day. From clothing to housewares, green will be found throughout the shop. Easter Sunday is April 12. The shop's best selections are now available.

The Shop Hours are Tuesday thru Friday 10:00 am to 2:30 pm and Saturday, 10 am to 1:00 pm.

The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization that has served our communities since 1974. Since its founding, the League has donated over \$1.2million for local causes.

Anyone interested in learning more about the League or League membership is invited to call 908-322-5420, visit our website at scotchplainsthiftshop.weebly.com or speak to any of our volunteers at the shop.

Check out our Facebook page "Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League" and give us a "Like." Gently-used donations are always welcome during open hours. Free parking on the street and in the rear of the building (enter parking lot via Willow Ave.).

ANNUAL BOOK SALE TO BENEFIT SCOTCH PLAINS PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library will hold their annual Book Sale to benefit the library this month.

This year's sale will comprise a children's book sale, as well as DVDs and compact discs for all ages.

The sale will begin Thursday, March 12 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. It will continue Friday, March 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and conclude on

Saturday, March 14 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Donations of clean, salable items for the sale will be accepted during normal library hours from February 29 to March 11.

The Friends are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization devoted to supporting the programming and development of the library, and have contributed more than \$195,000 to the library since its inception in 1998.

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ACADEMY OF CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES ENROLLING FOR MARCH-APRIL CLASSES

The Academy of Continuing Education (ACE), located in Cranford, NJ, is accepting applications for its March 2-April 24 semester. ACE offers adults with developmental or physical disabilities the opportunity to pursue continuing education as an alternative to traditional day programs.

"Adults with disabilities who have graduated from the public school system or specialized schools often have limited choices when planning their future," said Robin Morris-Marano, ACE director of educational services. "Their options often are limited to generic day programs that do not offer the intellectual stimulation and growth provided by our academy. Our program also is ideal for older adults with disabilities who wish to sharpen previously learned skills."



(above) Sebastian Ruiz shows off some of the jewelry being made in his jewelry design and merchandising class at the Academy of Continuing Education for adults with disabilities.

ACE's course offerings for the upcoming semester include math, reading and creative writing, explore your world through science, jewelry design and merchandising, visual arts and crafts, musical expression, theatre and performance, time traveler (history), career and financial literacy, media production, card-making and self-understanding/peer leadership.

Based on their interests, students may take as many or as few classes as they choose.

"ACE differs from a traditional day program, where the attendee's day is planned for them," Morris-Marano said. "We work with our students and their families to help them select the classes that will bring them the most enjoyment and from which they will get the most benefit."

Sebastian Ruiz has been attending ACE for four years, steadily increasing his classes each semester. He works six days a week at Nautica at the Jersey Gardens Mall but was bored at home when not working. He said he enjoys attending ACE because it keeps his mind active.

"I like to learn and I like to meet new people," he said.

Last semester Ruiz switched from math and reading into jewelry and merchandising and card-making, and now has added career and financial literacy, theater and self-understanding, bringing his classes to six spread over five days.

"Math and reading are so quiet and calm," he said. "Jewelry and card-making are fun and they make money."

Ruiz also aspires for a more challenging job and hopes self-understanding will help him get a new position somewhere.

"(Career class) helps people get jobs, like what to wear and what not to do in an interview," he said.

"Sebastian is a perfect example of the flexibility of our program and the ability for our students to tailor their classes to their personal interests," Morris-Marano said.

Whenever possible, ACE curricula are developed in accordance with the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) guidelines, implementing Core Curriculum Content Standards and aligned with the most current information offered by the NJDOE, according to Morris-Marano. The ACE Program is approved by the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities for Day Habilitation through the department's Supports Program.

For more information, Morris-Marano can be reached at 908-354-3040, ext. 4671. Due to growth, ACE now has an additional director of educational services, Stacy Marshall, who can be reached at ext. 4315.

For a course catalog, visit the ACE website at caunj.org/what-we-do/day-program/academy-for-continuing-education.

The Academy of Continuing Education is a program of Community Access Unlimited (CAU), a Union County-based, statewide nonprofit that strives to integrate people with disabilities and at-risk youth into the general community through comprehensive supports.

ABOUT COMMUNITY ACCESS UNLIMITED

Community Access Unlimited (CAU), celebrating more than 40 years in 2020, supports people with special needs in achieving real lives in the community. CAU provides support and gives voice to adults and youth who traditionally have little support and no voice in society. CAU helps people 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 right. CAU currently serves more than 6,000 individuals and families, with the number served growing each year. For more information about CAU and its services, contact us by phone at 908-354-3040, online at caunj.org or by mail at 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

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CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL AND ISRAEL BONDS CO-HOST PROGRAM ON ISRAELI ELECTIONS

Submitted by Laura Queller

Congregation Beth Israel in Scotch Plains and Development Corporation for Israel/Israel Bonds will jointly present “Analysis of the Israeli Elections” on Thursday, March 5, at 7:30 p.m.

The lecture is free and open to the community, with refreshments following the discussion.

Dr. Ralph Nurnberger, an expert in Middle East government and foreign policy, will be the guest lecturer. An acclaimed speaker, Dr. Nurnberger weaves humor, current political insights and historical background into his presentations.

This timely program will be held three days after the State of Israel holds a third national election on March 2, following two close races in which incumbent Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and opposition leader Benny Gantz were unable to create coalitions necessary to form the country’s next government. Dr. Nurnberger will discuss the results and implications of Israel’s unprecedented third election.

Following Dr. Nurnberger’s lecture, David Brown, Registered Representative of Israel Bonds, will present an overview of Israel Bonds and explain how they can be used to diversify one’s asset portfolio.

“Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, but its election process is somewhat foreign

to Americans,” said Jess Geller, chair of the Israel Bond Committee at Congregation Beth Israel. “This is a great opportunity for Americans to understand how Israelis choose their leaders. It is also a great way for Americans to learn how Israel Bonds helps support the State of Israel, regardless of which political party is in power.”

While the event is free to attend, RSVPs by March 2 are encouraged. To RSVP or for more information, contact David Brown at David.Brown@Israelbonds.com or 973-712-1404.

Congregation Beth Israel is located at 18 Shalom Way (corner of Martine Avenue), Scotch Plains, NJ.

Development Corporation for Israel/Israel Bonds ranks among Israel’s most valued economic and strategic resources, with a record of proven success spanning nearly 70 years. Praised for its dependability, the Bonds organization has helped build every sector of Israel’s economy.


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(above) Dr. Ralph Nurnberger

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MUSICIANS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES STRIKE PERFECT CHORD AT COLLABORATIVE CONCERT

Submitted by Christopher Reardon

There was a steady bustle back stage at the Eugene G. Wilkins Theatre for the Performing Arts at Kean University a half-hour before the curtain was set to rise. Musicians tuned their instruments while singers stretched their vocal cords and performers dabbed on make-up in bathroom mirrors.

Yet what was unique about this production was the performers were a mix of musicians and singers both with and without disabilities. All were ready when the curtain rose and lights went on, shining brightly on the 5th annual collaborative concert staged by Community Access Unlimited (CAU), its Academy for Continuing Education (ACE) and Kean's Music Conservatory program. CAU is a Union County-based, statewide nonprofit that strives to integrate people with disabilities and at-risk youth into the general community through comprehensive supports.

The musicians and singers comprised members of CAU and ACE, adults with disabilities, and students of Kean's Music Conservatory program. Kean music majors have been working with CAU members and ACE students for several years, helping them learn and appreciate music and teaching them how to play instruments. Five years ago they teamed for their first collaborative concert and the production has become an annual event.

This year the audience was treated to a delightful mixture of choral selections, rock tunes and music from Disney productions. Students from middle schools in Elizabeth and Roselle Park also performed.

"We perform songs that relate to our situation in life so we can advocate for greater community integration and how we have abilities that many people might not think are there," said Marguerite Modero, music director at ACE. "We focus on our abilities, not our disabilities."

For Maurice Stephens, a member of CAU for 11 years, this was his first chance to play bass

guitar on stage in front of a live audience. He used to play trumpet but took up guitar for the collaborative concert as a new challenge.

"I wanted to do something more with music," Stephens said. "I see a lot of people playing an instrument. I said, 'Why not play two?' I'm thinking of learning piano next. It makes me feel good. I feel like I accomplished something and that's pleasurable."

Jessie Gaeta, a CAU member for two years, also performed for the first time on stage at this year's concert. She has been taking singing lessons at ACE but never took the stage until Friday.

"It made me feel really good," she said. "I'd been singing with my lessons but this was new for me. I was really excited."

Gaeta's favorite song of the evening was Blitzkrieg Bob by the Ramones, with its catchy repeated chorus of, "Hey ho, let's go! Hey ho, let's go!"

"I really like singing it," Gaeta said.

According to Lynn Schraer-Joiner, Kean's music education coordinator, music is the great

unifier and equalizer. This evening the audience at Wilkins Theater saw this first-hand. While the back stage bustle was commonplace, what took place on stage was very special.

To learn more about CAU, visit caunj.org or follow the agency on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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 or by mail at 80 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07202.



(above) Performers from Community Access Unlimited gather backstage before joining music students from Kean University for their annual collaborative concert.



(above) Maurice Stephens and Jessie Gaeta (center), members of Community Access Unlimited, pose with Lynn Schraer-Joiner (left) of Kean University's Music Conservatory program and CAU's Marguerite Modero.

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UNION COUNTY COLLEGE TEAM CHOSEN FOR PRESTIGIOUS NASA CHALLENGE

Submitted by Nicole Torella

Union County College is proud to announce that a team of four engineering students have been chosen to participate in NASA's Micro-G Next Challenge Artemis Program. Union's team is one of only two community colleges selected to compete in this category, which has a total of 20 teams, and includes teams from universities such as Cornell, Columbia, University of Texas, Ohio State, University of Alabama, University of Nebraska, and Arizona State.

Union's team is comprised of four students: Michael Kirkland of Westfield, Bruce Aranda of Elizabeth, Dmytro Govdan of Summit, and Antonio Mena of Cranford. Our students submitted a proposal for the Lunar Sample Coring Drill competition which if chosen, will be used on the Artemis mission to drill samples from the moon's surface.

The young men on our team are now in the process of building their drill which will be tested at NASA's Neutral Buoyancy Lab (NBL) at the

Sonny Carter Training Facility near the Johnson Space Center in Houston, TX. The NBL is the large pool where astronauts train for future missions.

"For engineering students interested in working for NASA, this is the experience of a lifetime, and we are so proud of our students for being chosen for this competition," stated Union County College President Dr. Margaret M. McMenamin. "I thank the leadership in our engineering faculty for the guidance and instruction they've provided to assist our students with achieving their goal of building an effective coring drill."

Union County College Associate Professor of Physics/Engineering Nicholas Gilbert is serving as the Head Coach to the team. Associate Professor of Engineering Jennifer Ebert serves as the research and technical advisor to the team.

Please consider supporting the fundraising campaign to send Union County College's team to NASA this spring: ucc.edu/ucc2nasa.



(above, l-r) Union County College students Antonio Mena, Bruce Aranda, Dmytro Govdan, and Michael Kirkland in a lab at the College's Cranford campus.

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Do you have 1.5 hours a week, every other week, or once a month, to be a volunteer driver for Mobile Meals of Westfield, delivering meals to our neighbors? Hot and cold meals prepared by our chef are delivered fresh to our clients Monday through Friday mornings starting at 10:45 a.m. Please contact us at 908-233-6146 if you can help, and for more information. We serve the residents of 7 towns: Clark, Cranford, Fanwood, Garwood, Mountainside, Scotch Plains, and Westfield.

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CARRIE JACKSON & THE JAZZIN' ALL STARS TO PERFORM AT NORTHERN NEW JERSEY'S MOST INTIMATE COFFEEHOUSE

The Salem Roadhouse Café proudly presents Carrie Jackson, performing on Saturday, March 14, 2020.

Ms. Jackson is a New York/New Jersey based jazz vocal stylist who performs worldwide for festivals, clubs, concert tours and clinics, both as a soloist or with her Jazzin' All Star Band. It's been said of their work, "A true ensemble performance...every tune is a musical collaboration...effortless, natural and unscripted." Carrie is considered one of the most consistently interesting singers in the metropolitan area, and is one of the top jazz artists around today providing classical performances in jazz favorites, soulful sultry pop, blues and poignant mellow gospel. She combines jazz originals, standards, pop/blues tunes, and open improvisation in an adventurous, genre-bending style that's inspirational and original; a singer with a Sound! Carrie Jackson & Her Jazzin' All Star Ensemble swing and perform the music of "Duke" Ellington, Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Dizzy Gillespie, and musical selections songs from the Great American Song Book. Carrie has performed often at the Salem

Roadhouse Café, bringing a loyal, appreciative audience with her every time.

Original artwork will be on display for all to enjoy and purchase. Fans won't want to miss this live, up front and personal show. All ages are welcome. It's a wholesome show, so bring the entire family! Doors open 7:30 p.m. The show starts at 8:00 p.m. Admission is \$20.00

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ABOUT SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ

Dedication best defines the Salem Roadhouse Café: dedication to excellent music and dedication to the community. Now in its twelfth year, The Salem Roadhouse Café reaffirms its commitment to both.

Started in 2008 by members of Townley Presbyterian Church with a grant from the Presbytery of Elizabeth, the Roadhouse Café continues to operate as a non-profit that raises funds for several carefully chosen local charities. That may be its social mission... but the Roadhouse Café is and has been a solid performance venue beloved by the musicians who play there because of its special intimacy with the audience.

CHURCH MUSIC, IT'S NOT

The Roadhouse Café has always offered its stage to local and independent main stream musicians. It's a clean, safe place for people who enjoy listening to live music, in a world of clubs and bars. Jazz, rock, folk and other groups have performed. During the past eleven years well

over 120 different entertainers have appeared. Local fine artists also display their works.

COMMUNITY ORIENTATION

The Salem Roadhouse Café has raised funds for many carefully chosen charities. They include: The Presbytery of Elizabeth E-port Center, Center For Hope Hospice, Community Food Bank, Monarch Housing, Angel Paws Animal Rescue, National MS Society, Haiti Disaster Relief, Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief, The Union County YWCA Domestic Violence Program, Making It Possible To End Homelessness, Camp Johnsonburg, The Music Institute, and others. Thousands of dollars have been raised for these deserving charities.

The musicians who play the Roadhouse often ask to return as soon as possible. The Roadhouse has given them a place with a beautiful stage, good acoustics, a live, attentive audience, and a sound system that is first class. Live, active stage lighting enhances the shows.

The Salem Roadhouse Café often features many of the performers who have graced the stage in the past, as well as brings talent that is new to the Café stage. The current season is benefitting Family Promise Union County – Building Communities-Strengthening Lives.

Admission includes the show, snacks, beverages and dessert.

Union 34TV records the shows for broadcast — so check out past shows on cable TV34. See the Roadhouse on Union TV Channel 34's "Union After Dark" nightly music series.

The Salem Roadhouse Café is located at 829 Salem Road, Union, NJ. Visit online at roadhousecafe.org or [facebook.com/roadhousecafe](https://www.facebook.com/roadhousecafe).

Phone: 1-908-687-1028 (leave a message and a return number).

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FB: Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary
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Contact: Carmela at 908-499-4782



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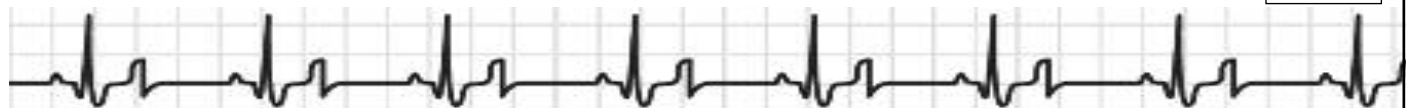
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TREX THIN FILM PLASTICS RECYCLING PROGRAM

Submitted by Margaret Heisey

How do you turn 500 pounds of thin film plastic into a high-performance park bench for Fanwood and Scotch Plains?

By participating in the Trex Thin Film Plastics Recycling Challenge!

The Fanwood and Scotch Plains Green Teams are joining forces to reduce these plastics in the waste stream and invite all residents to participate in the Trex Challenge, which will run from February 1 – August 15, 2020.

Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr commented, “I’m thrilled that our local Green Teams are taking on this task – these plastics are a real threat to the environment and reducing this waste is something I know we can achieve if we work together.”

Scotch Plains Councilwoman Elizabeth Stamler is also excited to be a part of the project, “We are taking recycling one step further and upcycling these plastics; turning them into benches for our towns.” She added, “Engaging residents from both towns, students in our schools and our community partners makes this a true SPF collaboration.”

Mayor Al Smith added, “This program is another example of how we can come together to improve health and wellness in our community. The Mayors Wellness Campaign has declared that one of the pillars of health is creating community wellbeing; making sure your municipality preserves open space, recycles, is walkable, reduces waste, and promotes a healthy environment that supports the health and

prosperity of your residents. By reducing and recycling these plastics, we are addressing that pillar.”

A total of 10 Trex Challenge Bins are being stationed at various locations around the towns, including the Fanwood Borough Hall, the Fanwood Library, the Fanwood Train Station, the Scotch Plains Municipal Building, Scotch Plains Police Department, Scotch Plains DPW (Plainfield Ave), Scotch Plains Library, the Shady Rest Clubhouse, the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA & the JCC of Central Jersey, and the Fanwood Larder.

“Thin film plastics” are everyday items that generally fall into the following three categories: from the grocery store: produce bags, bread bags, grocery bags, cereal box bags, ice bags; from your pantry: Ziploc and other resealable bags, plastic wrap, case over-wrap (the plastic covering over a case of soup cans, toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, water bottles, etc.); from your front door: 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.

When you accumulate thin film plastics, please drop them off in one of the TREX bins. All plastics must be clean, dry, and free of food residue. Only items placed in TREX bins will count toward the Trex Challenge.

By participating in this effort, you not only help to keep thousands of pounds of waste out of

landfills, but you’re also helping to create beautiful and environmentally responsible outdoor products.

If you are interested in joining the Scotch Plains Green Team, please contact Carla Kelly at scotchplainsgreenteam@gmail.com. For the Fanwood Green Team, please contact Pat Hoynes at 908-322-8236 x 121.

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 or call (908) 301.1899.

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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. 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 or call your local police department non-emergency number.

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YMCA KICKS OFF ANNUAL CAMPAIGN TO HELP THOSE IN NEED

Submitted by Andrea Ganzman

The Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA (FSPY) kicked off its Annual Campaign on Thursday, January 30, 2020, with an event at the Scotch Hills Country Club. Around 75 people attended and learned about the YMCA's Annual Campaign through stories of those who have been helped by it.

The Annual Campaign is the YMCA's yearly fundraising initiative that helps to support their financial assistance program. Last year, FSPY gave out almost \$400,000 to support a number of programs and services, including: membership; 7th Grade Initiative program; chronic disease prevention programs; child care; day camp; aquatics, and more.

"The financial assistance is an extraordinary

help to my family," said Jessica, one of the night's speakers, whose son has participated in the Y's Preschool, Camp and School Age Child Care programs. "The Y has such a nice environment. The people are really kind. At the Y, I feel like you can trust people. They really work with love, with kindness."

This year, FSPY's goal is to raise at least \$125,000 so they can help more people in our community like Jessica and her family. With the Y's services and support, Jessica knows her son is in a safe, supportive environment, while she is at work. Jessica spoke of a few hardships she's had over the years that has impacted her family financially and how, with the Y's support, her son is thriving.

"Now that he's in Kindergarten, he attends

morning care at his school through the YMCA, which allows me to work early shifts at my job. He also goes to Vacation Days at the Y, which also allows me to work. Without the financial assistance, I would not be able to afford camp or vacation days. I hope one day, I can pay it forward and help others," Jessica told the crowd gathered at Scotch Hills.

This year's FSPY Annual Campaign theme is "Our community is better when we all join together" and is illustrated through puzzle pieces. At the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA, we believe when we work together, we can put the pieces in place to help those in need in our community. The campaign is led by FSPY Fundraising Chair Julie Stiffler, and Board Chair Andy Calamaras.

"At the Y, our goal is to help people develop to their full potential, regardless of financial circumstances," said Kim Decker, FSPY Chief Executive Officer. "This could be a single parent who needs child care so they can work, an older adult looking to form connections and stay active or a cancer survivor looking to build back their strength. This could be anyone in our community who needs a helping hand."

To learn more about the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA's Annual Campaign, please visit fspymca.org/giving. All funds raised stay in our community to help those facing financial hardship. Those in need of financial assistance can visit fspymca.org/financial-assistance to view the application.

ABOUT THE FANWOOD-SCOTCH PLAINS YMCA

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. For information on membership or programs, or to request a schedule of classes, please call the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA at 908-889-8880 or visit fspymca.org. Financial assistance is available for those who qualify. The Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA is located at 1340 Martine Avenue in Scotch Plains.



(above, l-r) Andy Calamaras, Board Chair; Kim Decker, Chief Executive Officer of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA; and Julie Stiffler, Board Fundraising Chair, at the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Y's 2020 Annual Campaign Kick Off on January 30.

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