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OPERATION REBOUND SPOTLIGHT ON MARK OTTO

Submitted by Michael D. Boll, New Jersey Veterans Network

A few years back, I had the honor of meeting Westfield resident and Marine Corps veteran Mark Otto at our Operation Rebound Racing Team's Atlantic City 22-hour ruck march.

At the event this motivated Marine strapped on a weighted backpack and walked with us for the entire time. After the ruck march, Mark joined Operation Rebound and we have been working on some amazing team projects to help at-risk veterans and first responders to live a better life.

During his service as a Marine, Mark served on five-man ground intelligence gathering teams under the 2nd Surveillance Reconnaissance and Intelligence Group during the Panama invasion, and throughout Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

Mark has had a successful career as a New York Stock Exchange trader. He became a senior trader and a leader within the trading floor community. He has managed portfolios with combined market capitals of over a half-trillion dollars throughout several global financial crisis situations. Mark has served as co-chair of two NYSE committees and as a Senior Floor Official on the NYSE's Self-governing Committee.

Mark Otto is also the Executive Director of the United War Veterans Council. He is responsible for its day-to-day workings including: Planning and producing the New York City Veterans Day Parade; Coordination and support for other veterans' service organizations such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Team Red, White, and Blue, and Operation Beachhead; He also coordinated a national network of Veterans Day commemorations in 2019, and the 100th anniversary of the first Veterans Day Parade in 2019, 100th anniversary of the end of WWI in 2018, and other commemorations, such as Vietnam Veterans



(above, l-r) Mark Otto with Michael Boll at a veteran picnic at Watchung Reservation.

Remembrance Day.

Recognizing his efforts to increase coordination with other veterans service organizations, the Veterans of Foreign Wars named Mark Otto National Aide de Camp to Commander-in-Chief Keith E. Harman.

Mark created the UWVC Health & Wellness Program, which offers a holistic, therapeutic approach to healing combat veterans dealing with the hidden wounds of war. In its first year under his direction, the program served hundreds of veterans through equine therapy with Serenity Stables, sailing outings with Sail Ahead, camping with the Sierra Club, art therapy with Ani Art Academies, and ruck marches with GORUCK.

Mark also conducted a 1,000-mile ruck march to generate support for the Headstrong Project, which addresses posttraumatic stress disorder and veterans' suicide in post-9/11 military veterans.

Operation Rebound is one of the outreach programs of the New Jersey Veterans Network. It is a mobile outreach team of mentors who help at-risk veterans and first responders to live a

(continued on page 2)



(above) Mark Otto joined with other veterans for a 22-hour ruck march held during a VFW Convention.

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OPERATION REBOUND (continued from page 1)

better life. The team has made huge strides with suicide prevention simply by building trust and cementing friendships with people in need. It's most important to be honest with each person in crisis and follow up with ways to help them regain purpose in life. Setting goals motivates them to stay on a positive track.

If you are interested with joining the Operation Rebound Racing Team as a mentor, or as a team member, please feel free to contact Michael Boll at mdbollio@optonline.net or call 973-332-1556

ABOUT NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK

We are a group of veterans and volunteers dedicated to helping our veterans and their

families live better lives. Our team is raising awareness of our veterans needs by organizing public speaking engagements, meeting with business and political leaders across the state and sponsoring fundraising events. Our mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs. To ensure that EVERY single one of our veterans, who have sacrificed so much for this great country, receives the resources that they require and deserve. If you are interested in joining our team, would like us to speak at your event, or contributing to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email mdbollio@optonline.net. To learn more visit njvn.org.



(above) Mark Otto hosted a veteran charity meeting at the NYC Stock Exchange.

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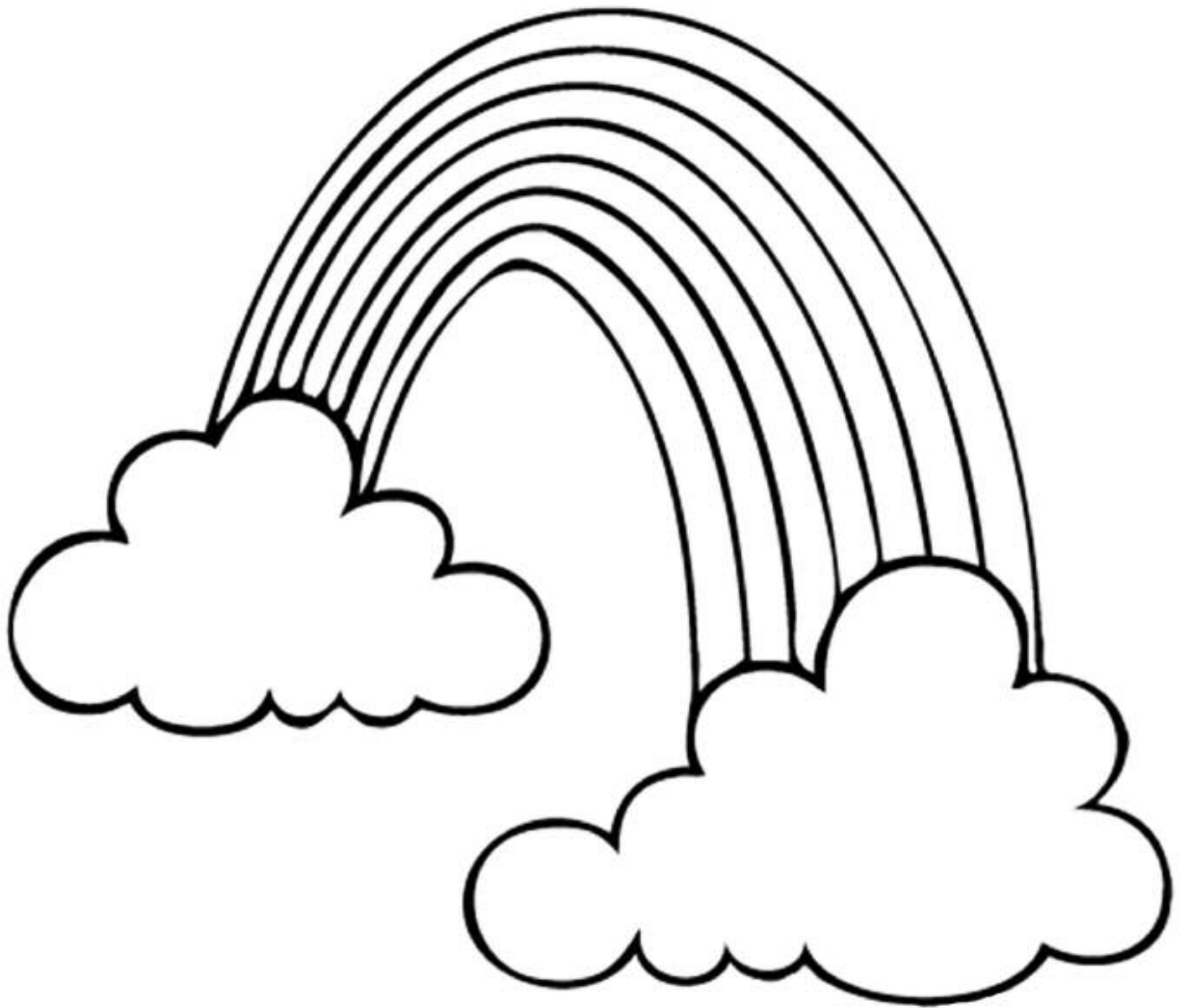
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RETIRED SCOUTERS MAKE PINEWOOD DERBY CARS FOR BOY SCOUTS

The Flintlocks recently obtained a grant, purchased, cut and sanded pinewood derby cars, and donated them directly to Scout Reach and schools with special needs children. A grant was obtained from the Westfield Service League last summer. The Flintlocks purchased 240 Pinewood Derby car kits and began processing them.

This is a good example of how the Flintlocks work with the Council to provide outstanding services to the community.

"Scout Reach" is a Boy Scout program for disadvantaged families, or kids without fathers. Since the Scout Reach children do not have fathers, and Special Needs children cannot use power tools, the Flintlocks cut the cars into shapes, sand them, and repackage them. The children paint and decorate the cars, and the teachers put the wheels on. The Boy Scout Council provides the Pinewood Derby Track to the schools.

This event is the highlight of the year for the kids in these schools, and is usually done at the end of the school year or in the summer as a special event. The cars are donated to Scout Reach through the Council, and donated directly to three schools with special needs children: The West Lake School in Scotch Plains, the Crossroads School in Westfield, and the Developmental Learning center in New Providence.

The Flintlocks are a separate 501c3 but work closely with the Patriot's Path Council, Boy Scouts of America. They are 27 retired scouters who meet at Camp Winnebago every Thursday to help maintain the camps, build new structures,

volunteer with Council programs, and make craft kits in the shop. They are in the first building on the right, and guests are always welcome. For information contact Flintlocks Secretary Dr. D. Michael Hart, drmhart@yahoo.com.



(above) Peter Aviary, Chris Szymczak, and Russ Jenkins unpacking the Pinewood Cars.



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SPORTS BANNERS HONOR WHS SENIOR SPRING ATHLETES

There's a special tribute at Gary Kehler Stadium to Westfield High School seniors who play spring sports. With the spring season on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions, more than 70 banners representing each senior and the sport he/she plays are displayed along the fence on Rahway Avenue.

"The boys lacrosse team had ordered the banners to be hung on the inside of the fence for their season before the pandemic. When the season got disrupted, we decided to get a banner for all senior spring athletes to represent the season they are missing," explains Meg Freer, who with fellow parents Carolyn Buoscio, Nancy Csorba, and Paula McCauley organized the banner project. "We would love to see them be able to get back on the field at some point this spring!"

Freer says when the project is complete, 78 banners will hang outside the stadium.

"Hanging the banners at Kehler has added excitement and given hope to athletes and residents passing by," adds Buoscio. "It's a fantastic visual and a nice way to celebrate these athletes who are staying fit and are ready to compete."

Buoscio says it took the four parents two hours to hang the banners, observing proper physical distancing and wearing masks and gloves. "We have sincere appreciation for health care workers who wear them all day, every day," she says.

The vinyl banners, created by Go Ballistic Sports, represent boys and girls lacrosse, boys and girls track and field, baseball, softball, boys tennis, boys golf and boys volleyball.

"We are all hopeful that there will be some type of modified spring schedule and the student athletes are working hard to be ready for any

competition," says Supervisor of Athletics Sandra Mamary who says she is impressed with the ability of the athletes and coaches to maintain a positive outlook. "Our coaches are reaching out to our teams, working on their skills, watching team videos, participating in team yoga and team mindfulness classes. We are all in this together."

Photo by Westfield Public Schools



Banners adorn the Rahway Avenue fence of Gary Kehler Stadium, a special tribute to Westfield High School student athletes whose spring season is on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions.

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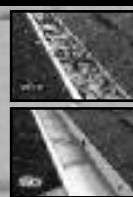
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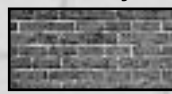
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The Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library is your local link to culture this Spring. You can tour a museum, pick out a new book, join a book discussion group and appreciate the performances of the Metropolitan Opera from wherever you are. On our website, fwmlnj.org, we provide sources to the programs that the Friends support, host and sponsor. While some programs and events are not offered at this time or are postponed until a later date we do have a few that you can take advantage of right now. As updates occur please check the website for current information.

Do you enjoy a daily walk? Would you like to get a new read while you are out stretching your legs? The Little Free Libraries is your place to "Take a Book, Leave a Book". You can visit the Friends sponsored libraries located on Walnut Street by the Elm Street Soccer Field, Clark Street across from the Y, Palsted Avenue, by the Westfield Community Center and at the South Side train station next to the kiosk. The libraries at Mindowaskin and Tamaques Parks are unavailable while the parks are closed. Visits to the little libraries should be in compliance with Stay-at-Home restrictions.

While Museums are closed to foot traffic, many of our Museum Pass partners offer virtual

tours and educational resources to spark your interest. For children, visit the

Children's Museum of Manhattan at <https://cmom.org/learn/cmom-at-home/>. History buffs may want to view the Intrepid at <https://www.intrepidmuseum.org/digital-resources>. Art aficionados will appreciate a tour of the Guggenheim at <https://www.guggenheim.org/plan-your-visit/guggenheim-from-home>, MOMA at <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5075> or Cooper Hewitt at <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/cooper-hewitt-national-design-museum>. When available, please check back with the library and visit these museums and more via the Museum Pass Program.

To stay in the loop on what's happening with Friends follow our website. You will learn about what books we are reading in our book discussion, when we are crafting again with the Sharing the Warmth group and what's in store for the Met Opera '20-21 season. Working with the town we are planning for future Hale Speaker Series, Books on Wheels deliveries and of course the Children's Book Sale in the Fall. To learn more about the Friends or to become a member please visit fwmlnj.org.



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(above) Regional US Bands competition held in Old Bridge, NJ in November 2019.

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WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND RECRUITING FOR 2020-2021 SEASON

The Westfield High School Marching Band is recruiting now for the 2020-2021 season. Typically during spring, the band directors visit the intermediate schools and mail home interest brochures to 8th graders. This year, our approach will include an email and a follow up interest meeting via WebEx on Thursday May 14th at 7:30 pm. We encourage both 8th graders and parents to attend the May 14 meeting. Please register at westfieldhsbands.org in order to receive an invitation to the WebEx meeting.

The Marching Blue Devils is a great way to get involved at the High School. The band is composed of 130 or so students with an interest in music and performance. To compliment the musicians, the Marching Band also includes the Color Guard. Those with a background or interest in dance will love the combination of dance, flags and theatrical performance that truly brings our marching band show to life. Marching Band members rehearse 3-4 days a week after school and perform at all home football games as well as local and regional marching contests, the

Westfield Optimist Club Halloween Parade and the Westfield Memorial Day Parade.

In addition to playing 'in the band' there are some incentives to Marching Band. Participating students receive 1.5 academic credit as a 10th period class that meets after school, a varsity letter, and students are eligible for gym exemptions beginning in 10th grade. (Marching Band is treated as a fall sport, which is where the benefit of the gym exemption applies.) Attending the Vo-Tech? You can participate and this could be your way of staying involved in music next year!

To learn more about the Marching Blue Devils follow us on Instagram:

@whsbandsfriendsfamilyandalumni,

Facebook:

@WHS-Bands-Friends-Family-and-Alumni

and our website @ www.westfieldhsbands.org.

For questions or more information please contact the band directors, Chris Vitale (cvitale@westfieldnj12.org) and Trevor Sindorf (tsindorf@westfieldnj12.org).



This Week in Westfield Rotary

Rotarians have been collecting sandwiches and food for families in need in Elizabeth during this time of quarantine. We are also raising funds to help with Feed The Frontlines. Visit <https://westfieldrotary.com> for more information if you can help out!



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SCHOOLS RECEIVE NATIONAL MUSIC RECOGNITION FOR A 3RD YEAR

For a third consecutive year, the Westfield Public School District has been named one of the “Best Communities for Music Education” in the nation for its outstanding commitment to music education.

The 2020 Best Communities for Music Education designation was awarded by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation to districts that demonstrate “outstanding efforts by teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community leaders who have made music

education part of a well-rounded education.”

“Music education is an essential component of the Pre-K-12 curriculum,” says Thomas Weber, Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts for Westfield Public Schools. “Because of the support of our community, administrators, and the Board of Education, our dedicated teachers are empowered to guide their talented students to their fullest potential. This award is confirmation of the superb musical experiences that are happening in our music classrooms and programs throughout the

district.”

Research into music education continues to demonstrate educational/cognitive and social skill benefits for children who make music.

“Each year, many of our talented students are recognized for musical honors which is a testament to the hard work of both our student musicians and our dedicated music staff,” says Superintendent of Schools Dr. Margaret Dolan. “I congratulate Mr. Weber and all of our music directors and student musicians for this prestigious recognition.”



(above) High school and intermediate school student musicians rehearse together during District Music Day on January 8, 2020 as Westfield High School orchestra director Craig Stanton conducts.



(above) Tamaques band director Marisa Minogue accompanies on piano as choral director Benjamin Norkus conducts students in a winter concert in December.

Photo by Westfield Public Schools

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WESTFIELD RESIDENTS AMONG THOSE WHO JOIN LITERACY NEW JERSEY'S VOLUNTEER TUTOR PROGRAM

Submitted by Nancy Lama

Westfield residents Leah Brown, Carolyn Daurio, Sherry Krakauer and Ken Mirsky are among the ten recent trainees who completed Literacy New Jersey's winter tutor training and are now teaching English as a Second Language classes throughout Union County.

The 15-hour training prepares tutors to work

with adults who struggle with reading, writing and speaking English. Literacy New Jersey tutors work in libraries, schools, and church centers within the county helping adults improve their skills in order to find better jobs, help their children in school, and become more involved in the community.

Literacy New Jersey runs tutor training twice

a year, in January and September. Training provides a hands on approach to working with adults, and includes ideas for materials and activities as well as strategies for lesson planning. Teaching experience is not required.

For more information on training and other opportunities at Literacy New Jersey, please call 908-486-1777 or email bbagger@literacynj.org.



(above) Ten new volunteer tutors from Union County have completed their training and joined Literacy New Jersey as English as a Second Language tutors.

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WESTFIELD MEMORIAL LIBRARY HOSTS ARRAY OF FUN AT-HOME SERVICES

During the Covid 19 outbreak, the Westfield Memorial Library will remain closed. All programs have been postponed.

Online access will continue and if Westfield residents do not have a card, they can request one on the library's website wmlnj.org. A number will be emailed to them.

During this period, no fines or DVD fees will accrue. The library will continue to work with the town to ensure the safety of all patrons.

The library's Facebook page is filled with new activities and ideas to keep parents, teens and children busy while they are at home.

Children who are missing Storytime, can listen to Miss Molly, head of Youth Services, read her favorite books on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

On Tuesdays there will be a Virtual LEGO Club and on Thursdays, there'll be a craft program. Teens can watch author Kelly Yang,

who is hosting daily writing classes through Instagram live.

Popular authors such as Mo Willems, Gene Luen Yang and Annie Kaufman are also reading their work online and offering drawing tutorials.

Middle schoolers can listen to a new webcast series from the author of *Free Lunch*, while adults can listen to Sir Patrick Stewart reading some of English language's greatest sonnets, or author Ann Patchett talking about great books to read at home.

Audible is offering free streams on a select number of children's stories from "Littlest Listeners" to "Folk and Fairy Tales for All."

Patrons as always can access movies, books and music through the library's digital services such as Overdrive, Freeding and Hoopla.

Visit <https://www.facebook.com/wmlnj> to see even more ways to entertain and educate yourself through the library.

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"WE LOVE LOCAL" CAMPAIGN SUPPORTS LOCAL BUSINESSES

The Westfield United Fund, in partnership with the Town of Westfield, kicked off the We Love Local campaign in support of Westfield's independently owned retail businesses on March 20th, launching it with a mini-concert by John Rzeknik, the lead singer of the Goo Goo Dolls, playing and singing from his front porch in Westfield. The goal of the campaign is to raise funds from local residents to distribute to independent retail businesses in Westfield that are being severely impacted by the Covid-19 crisis.

We Love Local got off to a quick start by collecting over \$40,000 in the first two days, which earned the campaign an additional \$15,000 in matching funds from the Westfield United Fund. Once the campaign crossed the \$50,000 mark, the Westfield Foundation agreed to match the next \$30,000 in donations. As of April 21st, the campaign had raised more than \$220,000 in generous donations from 750 local residents and associations, including the Chinese American Association, the Westfield Baseball League, the Westfield Basketball Association and the Westfield Service League.

Some local businesses have also gotten into the act, donating a portion of their sales, including the Dream Factory, which is putting up colorful balloon installations all over town, and J.McLaughlin. Some high school students organized a Fortnite competition, which raised almost \$1,000 and was so popular that another one has been planned to handle the demand. Joe Mindak, a Westfield resident and Rotary member, has been selling pallet signs with patriotic designs and messages like "Westfield Strong" which have

racked up sales of \$7,000 so far.

The We Love Local campaign started accepting applications for funds from local retail businesses on March 25th and more than 170 businesses have applied for grants to date. The application can be found on the Westfield United Fund website, westfieldunitedfund.org. A committee composed of representatives from the Westfield United Fund, the Westfield Foundation and the Town of Westfield is processing applications as quickly as possible. The first round of 85 checks went out on April 1st,



(above) Westfield United Fund Board President, Jon Walker and Executive Director Deirdre M. Gelinne. To contribute to the fund visit

ranging from \$500 to \$2,250, based on the number of paid employee hours that each business has in a typical work week. Another 70 checks have been paid out in April, for a total of \$197,000. The campaign will continue to accept applications for grants through April 30. We Love Local encourages all Westfield residents to consider a donation to the fund, and to continue to patronize the local businesses that are still able to operate on a limited basis. By working together we can ensure that downtown Westfield will emerge from this crisis as strong as ever.

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS AND GIRL SCOUTS JOINED TOGETHER FOR “VOTER GIRL”

On March 7, 2020 the League of Women Voters (LWV) and Girl Scouts worked together to present Voter Girl. Four of these events were held at the same time in four different New Jersey locations including Plainfield, Woodland Park, Brick Township and Pitman NJ.

Over 100 League of Women Volunteers from New Jersey and 50 elected officials participated as well. Numerous volunteers from the Girl Scouts and troop leaders rounded out the group that helped to bring this event alive for the over 500 Girl Scouts who participated.

This collaborative program between the LWV and the Girl Scouts provided a one-day class for Girl Scouts of all levels to earn citizenship badges through learning about civic engagement and advocacy. League of Women volunteer

workshop leaders and a variety of elected officials who volunteered to participate empowered Girl Scouts to act on their right to vote, engage in civil debate and learn to be counted in the 2020 census.

An introduction piece to the event was provided, questions were asked of a variety of elected officials who volunteered to appear for the event.

Each age level then attended a workshop where the Girl Scouts completed a Citizenship badge including Behind the Ballot, Celebrating Community, Finding Common Ground and Inside Government.

Girl Scouts cast ballots on the actual voting machines used in Union County. The girls voted (depending on their level) on issues dealing with

the most important constitutional amendment, how to increase participation on election day, the best way to arrive at a decision, and the most important branch of government. All groups voted on whether to ban single use plastic bags in grocery stores.

A variety of community service groups also set up and distributed information for general knowledge including the US Census Bureau, local historical groups and the local Board of Health.

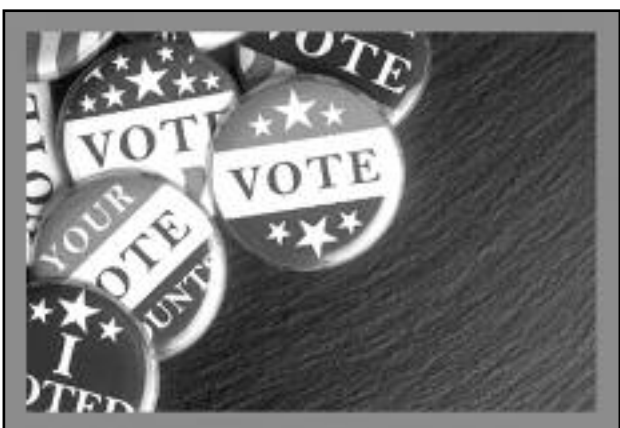
This was a wonderful opportunity for girls and women of all ages to see women who are actively engaged in making democracy work. This coincided with the 100th Anniversary of both the League of Women Voters and the passage of the 19th Amendment.



(above) Girls Scouts earned badges, met local elected officials, and learned about civic engagement and advocacy

NJ PRIMARY ELECTIONS MOVED TO TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2020

Executive Order 120 postpones primary elections on Tuesday, June 2 to Tuesday, July 7 in response to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Includes primaries for President, US Senate, US House of Rep, 25th District NJ Legislature, county and municipal elections.



Union County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi advised voters at risk to plan ahead and use a Vote-by-Mail ballot to participate in the upcoming Primary Election, in accordance with guidance from health officials regarding the coronavirus COVID-19.

“Persons at risk are being advised to avoid crowded situations and maintain social distance,” said Ms. Rajoppi. “With the outbreak of COVID-19, there is all the more reason to use a Vote-by-Mail ballot and ensure your voice is heard on Election Day.”

Under New Jersey state law, any eligible voter can use a Vote-by-Mail ballot. There is no requirement to provide a reason.

“Every Vote-by-Mail ballot is counted in every election, the same as for in-person voting,” Ms. Rajoppi said.

Voters are advised to use Vote-by-Mail as a

matter of routine, to avoid any unforeseen circumstances that could prevent them from voting in person on Election Day.

Voters who have never used a Vote-by-Mail ballot can apply for one now, by visiting the County Clerk’s elections website at unioncountyvotes.com for a downloadable version. To have an application sent by mail, call the County Clerk’s Elections Division at 908-527-4996.

After the Vote-by-Mail application is approved, the voter will receive their ballot prior to Election Day. This year, the Primary Election will be held on Tuesday, June 2 in New Jersey. The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 3.

For more information about all County Clerk programs and services, visit online at ucnj.org/county-clerk or call 908-527-4787.

ANNUAL PADRES DINNER

The 20th Annual Padres Dinner sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Henry J Watterson Council #1711 Westfield was held on February

7th. Area Priests from Holy Trinity, St. Helen, and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Churches joined brother Knights for an evening of song,

prayer and dinner at the Spanish Tavern in Mountainside in appreciation for the clergy's service to our local parishes.





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CALLING ALL GEEKS, NERDS, AND GAWKERS

Renna Media is putting a call out to the Geeks among us to appear on their podcast Mind Your Own Local Business. The show will showcase local businesses and people who are starting or growing a business, especially those in creative fields or doing something they have a passion for. Owner, Joe Renna, started his business in 1984 as a graphic designer that grew his studio into a marketing and advertising company. Now, along with his wife Tina, publishes 21 community monthly newspapers mailing out 135,000 to every home and business.

Joe says "I started my business right out of college and thought I would get a job if it didn't work out. It's been thirty five years and I never looked back. I thank all those who mentored me along the way, experienced business owners who were generous with their time and taught me best practices in running a businesses and the pitfalls to look out for."

As a way of paying it forward, Joe offers business and advertising advice to local business. This service is the focus of a new YouTube show. Joe Renna's Hyper Local Network is the YouTube Channel of Renna Media. Mind Your Own Local Business is the prime show. Its first episode will feature Katya Stec of Clark, New Jersey who launched her production company All Ages of Geek. Katya has teamed up with Renna Media made her platform, with over 100,000 subscribers, available to Renna Media advertisers and organizations.

Renna Media is recruiting businesses to participate. If you're a Geek or just Geek curious, a variety of advertising opportunities exist, from product placement to fully customized shows. All online advertisers will also be featured in the Mind Your Own Local Business column in 135,000 newspapers!

To learn more call Joe Renna at 908-447-1295 or email him at joerenna@rennamedia.com.



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Featured on Renna Media's YouTube Channel: Joe Renna's

HYPER
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NETWORK

KATYA STEC LAUNCHES ALL AGES OF GEEK

Geek culture knows no bounds. It crosses every social barrier and unites an eclectic group of people who share specific interests. The label, which usually is thrust upon a person, is now worn with pride. Geeks who historically existed at the fringes of the pop culture are now mainstream. Their ranks are filled with regular folks. And the nerds of the baby boomer generation have joined the ranks.

The internet has given rise to a secret society. The image of a nerd playing video games in his parents' basement has been shattered. Geeks are among the masses, living, working, and playing next to regular folk. All Ages of Geek is a multimedia production company that speaks to them.

Katya Stec is a self-proclaimed geek from Clark, New Jersey who formed All Ages of Geek in 2019, with the core focus of producing content in tandem with the geek culture. She has been creating videos for eight years and has over 700 episodes posted on her website and on YouTube. She now has over 100,000 subscribers clocking over 20 million views!

Katya, who is a talented voice over artist and writer, is a product of home schooling where she was able to cultivate her interests. Now, at 26 years old, she has a career, doing what she loves.

Throughout 2020 All Ages of Geek will be traveling to several geek culture events, conventions, and expos. They aim at making some of the best high-quality content. At the same time, mass awareness and promotion campaigns would be in swing to set the base for their big launch in January 2021.

Katya has built a team of talented, creative fans who work together in producing podcasts and shows. All Ages of Geek has an article section on their website titled "This Just In." Their writers, who are from all parts of the world, submit weekly articles covering geek

culture events, topics and all forms of creativity.

Currently, they are also producing several video series and podcasts. The company is hopeful of churning out some of the best content and gathering a good base of loyal fans that would engage with the whole community and keep sharing their content to help them amass even more views, exposure, and popularity.

Katya says "Geek culture is what brings the world together. Despite our differences in race, religion, sexuality, and background. One thing is certain about geek culture, it unites us. All Ages of Geek's mission isn't just to entertain; it's to unite the geeks of all ages as part of an interactive community."

The company has a strong interactive community on YouTube and Twitch. The sense of community is both important and powerful and it does wonders when it comes to promoting the firm in the long run.

Their content spans different genres and caters to kids and adults alike. No doubt, if their vision manages to take the due shape, they are likely to become a massive hit among people, especially anime, video games and Dungeons and Dragons fans alike who would finally feel like they too truly belong.

All Ages of Geek has plenty of free content but viewers can access a lot more features by becoming paid members on Patreon or Twitch. They have over 300 members to date with a goal of 1,000 by 2021. They offer advertising opportunities, and their production team can produce original content for businesses and organizations.

To learn more about All Ages of Geek visit: allagesofgeek.com/

Email-id: pr@allagesofgeek.com

Website: <https://allagesofgeek.com>



(above) Katya Stec on set in her home studio in Clark, New Jersey, where she produces shows for her All Ages of Geek broadcasts. Photo by Tatiana Szewczuk.

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TWO WESTFIELD RESIDENTS GRADUATE TRINITAS NURSING SCHOOL

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 Westfield residents Jessica C. Alvarez, and Tatiane Carvalho Dos Santos.

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 or call (908) 994-5138.



CARING CONTACT CONTINUES TO ANSWER CALLS DURING COVID-19 CRISIS

With residents of New Jersey being asked to stay home to fight the spread of Covid-19, many people find themselves feeling isolated and experiencing high levels of anxiety. Caring Contact, a local listening and crisis hotline, continues to help individuals during this difficult time. As a member agency of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Caring Contact cares for those who are in crisis in central and northern New Jersey and acts as a backup to other Lifeline agencies throughout the country. Additionally, they operate a local "warm" line to assist individuals who may not be in crisis but are experiencing stress themselves, with a family member, friend or co-worker.

Approximately 90 volunteers answer the phone lines at Caring Contact. "It has been a challenge during this time to ensure that volunteers are kept safe", stated Executive Director Janet Sarkos. "All business operations were moved remotely in early March. We've

altered our hotline operations so that only one listener at any a time is in each of our phone rooms. We are working together as an organization to ensure each phone station and other "common touch areas" are cleaned thoroughly between listeners, to further protect against contamination. It is vital that we continue to answer calls during this time of heightened anxiety".

But even with these office precautions, Caring Contact has updated their telephone and IT systems so they can now transition many of their volunteers to answer both the Lifeline and the local warm line from remote locations. Call volume is up. We took 2,986 calls in the first quarter last year as compared to 4,012 this year. We've been tracking COVID-related calls. In the middle of March 20% of our calls were COVID-related. From 3/29 - 4/12, it had risen to 32%.

If you are interested in learning more about Caring Contact please visit their website at

caringcontact.org. If you, or someone you know, is in crisis please call 800.273.8255, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. If you are feeling isolated and need to talk to someone please call 908.232.2880, 7 days a week from 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. (based on volunteer availability). We are here to listen.

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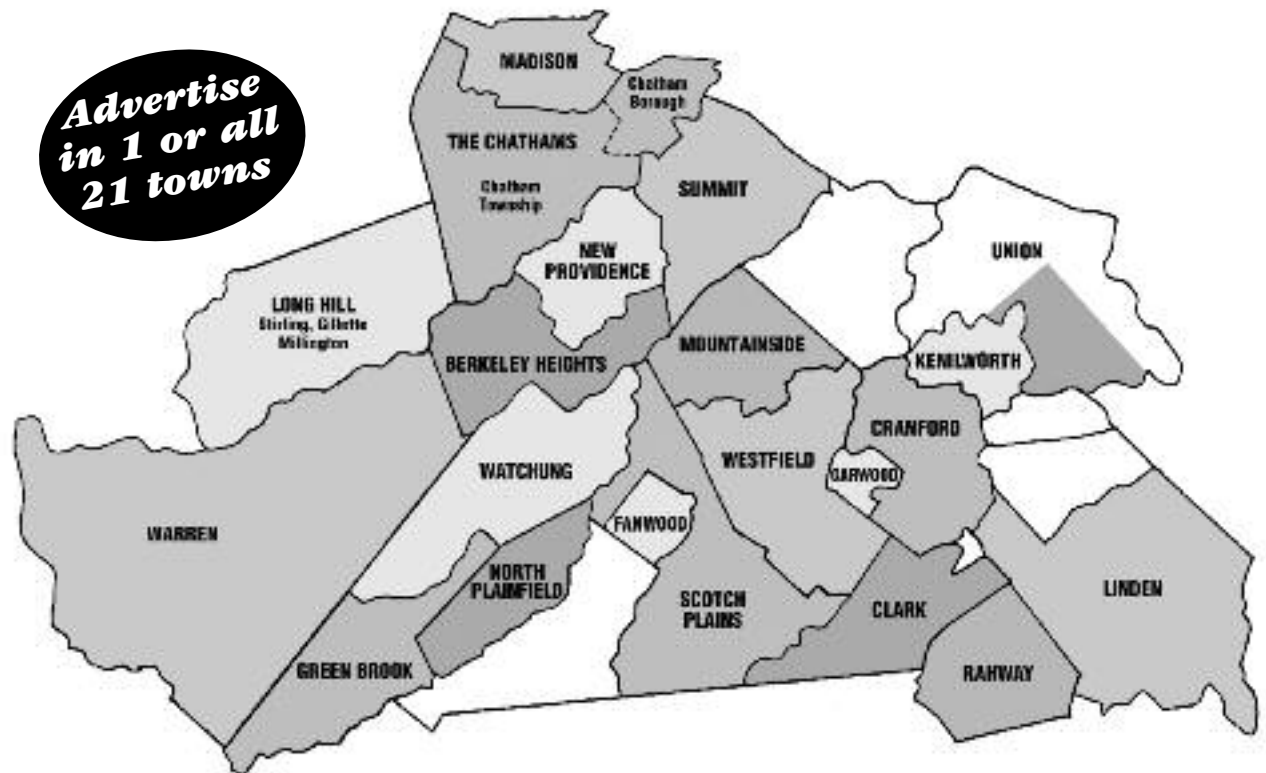
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9	HALF PAGE	6.5" x 9" or 10" x 7"		\$320	\$800	\$1000	\$1300	\$1600	\$1900	\$2200	\$2400
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LATEST "MIND YOUR OWN LOCAL BUSINESS" SHOWS

on Joe Renna's Hyper Local Network on YouTube



See how businesses and organizations are getting by during the COVID-19 crisis on Joe Renna's Hyper Local Network on YouTube.

RENNA MEDIA COLLABORATES WITH ALL AGES OF GEEK

Katya Stec reached out to Joe Renna of Renna Media when she was a teen exploring opportunities to express her creativity in his newspapers. Renna Media publishes twenty-one community newspapers and has an active web presence and social media network. Through the years, Katya has developed her own online media production platform and made her service available to Renna Media's readership and advertisers.

Renna Media has been in business since 1984. The focus of its publications is to promote community service organizations to a hyper-local market. Joe and his wife Tina deliver marketing, advertising and publishing services to local businesses and organizations, in-print and on line. They have joined forces with NJlocalinfo.com to offer website, SEO and social media services. By collaborating with All Ages of Geek they are able to offer video production and hosting.

Joe admits he has Geeky tendencies and shared "I have many Geeks among the folks I deal with on a day to day basis. The Geek culture is prevalent and is revealed when you get to know colleagues on a personal level. It would be fun to showcase businesses and people in my newspaper and in video. It is a great marketing tool and an ice breaker to connect businesses to like-minded customers."

Renna Media and All Ages of Geek has developed a simple inexpensive menu of production services for businesses to make a foray into online marketing. The all inclusive packages are:

- Product placement \$250
- 30 second commercial \$500
- 3 minute spot \$1,000
- 30 minute show \$1,500
- 3 hour shoot - \$2,000

All videos will also be blasted through the extensive social media network and the business will be featured in the newspapers, driving readers to the websites. The approach follows the model of Renna Media's newspapers: Delivering hometown community service news to a hyper-local audience, at affordable rates.

Businesses or organizations who would like more information or help with their marketing plans can call Joe Renna at 908-447-1295.

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- Links to YouTube videos and other websites
- Choose from dozens of search classifications.
- Add Google Maps link

Live Tracking!

Each ad has a live view counter showing daily and total visits.



INCREASED VISIBILITY.

We help people find your ad by cross-posting to several social media sites and by indexing in search engines.
facebook.com/NJLocalinfo • facebook.com/RennaMedia

WEBSITE / SEO SERVICES

- Website Audit/Analysis and recommendation plan: \$250
- Website creation/update: \$2,400 (Cost for average website: 12 pages, contact form, SEO friendly, responsive design)
- Website Hosting: \$300 per year
Includes website hosting, software updates, monthly website content updates
- SEO Services - average cost \$1,000 - \$2,000 per month
Custom tailored solutions: Google Ranking, Local SEO, Social Marketing
- Blast your online ad or press release to a targeted market \$100
- National Press Release Distribution to 300 to 500 news outlets.
Budget choice from \$300 to \$500.

CONTACT JOE FOR DETAILS 908-447-1295

joerenna@rennamedia.com

Visit RennaMedia.com or NJLocalInfo.com

JERSEY LANDSCAPE & GARDEN SUPPLY

Hours:

Monday - Saturday: 7:30 am - 5 pm

Sundays: 8:30 am - 3 pm

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528 N. Michigan Ave. Kenilworth, NJ

**We accommodate the trade as well as the
do-it-yourselfers! We are always ready to assist.**

FREE
Same Day Delivery
5-Yards or more

LAWN & GARDEN



Grass – Seed
Fertilizers
Peat Moss



Polymeric Sand
Paver Sealer
Paver Cleaner

HARDSCAPE

- Cement
- Concrete Block
- Belgium Block
- Curbing
- Limestone Treads
- Diamond Blades

TOOLS

- Mason Tools
- Shovels
- Rakes

DRAINAGE

- Catch Basins
- Pipe

Bon Tool Co.

SOIL

Prices
per yard

Black Topsoil\$36

MULCH

Black Dyed.....\$30

Brown Dyed.....\$30

Red Dyed.....\$32

Hardwood.....\$24

QUARRY BASE MATERIALS

Concrete Sand.....\$50

3/4 Clean Stone.....\$40

Stone Dust.....\$34

QP\$36

DECORATIVE STONE

3/8 Red Stone\$74

3/4 Red Stone\$70

3/4 Goose Egg\$94

1 1/2-3 Goose Egg.....\$98

3/4 Arctic White.....\$94

3/8 Riverbed / Pea Gravel.....\$60

1 Riverbed\$68

1 1/2-3 Riverbed.....\$76

Prices subject to change without notice.

**Largest Display
of Pavers in Union County**

Waterfalls • Fireplaces • Fire Pits • Walls • Walkways • Patios • Curbs