

Scotch Plains NJ

WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY

Published by Renna Media

Issue 60 • September 2020



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SERVING THE COMMUNITY DURING GLOBAL PANDEMIC

Submitted by C/2d Lt Niyati Shah

Even when all weekly meetings are virtual and contact among members is limited, Captain "Bud" Jackson Composite Squadron (NJ-102), a local Civil Air Patrol (C.A.P.) squadron, continues to fulfill one of the organization's main Core Values: Volunteer Service. Many Cadets and Senior members from across New Jersey Wing Civil Air Patrol have been active in C.A.P.'s COVID-19 disaster relief efforts following appropriate social distancing procedures and precautions. They are working tirelessly to package food at the local food banks, make PPE (hospital gowns) from Tyvek material, sew masks and collect medical supply donations for hospitals, veteran homes, first responders and others in need. Meanwhile, the NJ-102 squadron continues its highly engaged operations online, moving forward with a change in both Squadron Commander and Cadet Commander.

Scotch Plains residents, C/1st Lt Manali Shah (Senior at UCVTS), C/2nd Lt Niyati Shah (Freshman at SPFHS) and 2nd Lt Suman Dahiya-Shah are actively engaged in Operation TOGA (Tyvek Operational Gown Assembly), at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad and River Road Rescue Squad (Piscataway) to help create disposable,



(above) Members of the "Bud" Jackson Squadron volunteered with the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad and River Road Rescue Squad (Piscataway) to help create disposable, impervious gowns for healthcare personnel.

impervious gowns for healthcare personnel. Several members of the "Bud" Jackson squadron spend their weekend mornings cutting out Tyvek material (donated by Home Depot Foundation) and assembling 60-100 plus protective gowns in 3 hour shifts. Since April 1, 1,646 disposable protective gowns have been assembled for front line workers in NJ. The "Bud" Jackson squadron is proud to be leading this effort at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad with 2nd Lt Joseline Pinto as Officer In Charge and Incident Commander Major Mathew Hooper, NJ Wing Group 223 Commander. Thank you to the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad for opening up your facility and supporting our mission!

Since April 1, the start of these missions, C.A.P members have volunteered for a total of 1,083 days. The Hillside Food Bank and Egg Harbor Food Bank have enlisted the assistance of C.A.P. in packaging food, now totaling over 806,560 meals packaged. New Jersey C.A.P. has helped feed one per ten people in the state of NJ and package about 30% of all food packaged by C.A.P. across the country. Cadets and Senior members are sewing cloth masks at home to donate to hospitals in need across the state in partnership with the NYC Mask Initiative. As of May 18, a total of 3,310 reusable masks have been created.

The Captain "Bud" Jackson squadron shines in its inspiring involvement in volunteer service, while balancing as-normal-as-possible virtual operations. On 27 April 2020, Captain Jose Vergara, from Scotch Plains, NJ, became the new Squadron Commander, succeeding Captain

(continued on page 2)



(above) The Captain "Bud" Jackson Composite Squadron continues in their volunteer efforts during the pandemic.

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SERVING THE COMMUNITY (continued from page 1)

Sachin Adbe and taking leadership at the most tumultuous time in this squadron's history. Captain Vergara has been an integral part of the squadron for 4 plus years serving as Deputy Commander of the Squadron and Aerospace Officer. He has spearheaded excellence among the cadets engaged in STEM and Aerospace, helping Squadron earn the Aerospace Education Excellence Award and Quality Cadet Unit Award.

Additionally, on May 7, 2020, Cadet 1st Lt Manali Shah, also from Scotch Plains, became the new Cadet Commander of the squadron leading 119 cadets. C/1st Lt M. Shah has served in a multitude of leadership positions before rising to the position of Cadet Executive Officer in September 2019 and now Cadet Commander. She is a member of the NJ Wing Cadet Advisory Council. She is certified in different aspects of

emergency services, including Ground Team and Mission Base Staff. C/1st Lt Shah is actively volunteering with Operation TOGA located at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, where she also serves as a NJ certified EMT cadet volunteer. In February 2020, she was part of the cadet delegation selected to travel to Washington D.C. for C.A.P.'s annual Legislative Day, to meet and speak with the Congressional leaders. Cadet 1st Lt Shah was awarded the prestigious 2019 New Jersey Wing Cadet of the Year Phase 3 award in March 2020. As a graduating senior in high school, Shah attends the UCVTS-Academy for Allied Health Sciences.

The Civil Air Patrol (C.A.P.) Cadet Program is open to all Middle School and High School students from ages 12 to 18. For more information about the C.A.P., please contact Captain Jose Vergara at jose.vergara@njwg.cap.gov. Visit the CAP webpage at gocivilairpatrol.com or the NJ-102 squadron website at nj102.cap.gov. Also be sure to check out the NJ-102 Squadron's Facebook page at [facebook.com/NJ102/](https://www.facebook.com/NJ102/).

The Captain "Bud" Jackson Composite Squadron wishes everyone good health and is eager to lend a helping hand to the community during this time of uncertainty. We hope everyone is staying healthy and safe!



(above) C.A.P members have volunteered with the Hillside Food Bank and Egg Harbor Food Bank, packaging food for people in need.



(above) Cadet 1st Lt Manali Shah, from Scotch Plains, became the new Cadet Commander of the squadron leading 119 cadets.

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ETHAN KRAMER JOINS IMAGINE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ethan Kramer of Scotch Plains joined the Board of Trustees at Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss in Mountainside. Ethan is a co-founder of Paramount Hotel Group and has served as President since its inception in 1999. He is also a veteran of Prime Hospitality Corp, having coordinated the expansion of two national brands managing the investment of over \$800



million in new hotel development. As Senior Vice President of Development and Construction during the period 1995 through mid-1999, he grew the AmeriSuites (now Hyatt Place) chain to 100 hotels.

When asked why he chose to join Imagine's Board, Ethan said "Having been a Circle of Hope donor to Imagine, my inspiration for joining the Imagine team lies within the example set by my mother. After battling breast cancer and lymphoma, she returned to school and obtained a Masters in Social Work and dedicated the remainder of her life, to age 57, counseling terminally ill women. Imagine embodies the beliefs instilled in me to help others coping with loss."

Ethan lives in Scotch Plains with his wife Debby Hall, a nursing home administrator and health care hero.


Imagine offers grief and loss education and training to the community and free year-round grief support groups for children age 3-18 who have had a parent or brother or sister die, and for families caring for a family member living with a life-altering physical illness. Concurrent groups are available for parents and guardians, and young adults 18-30. For more information please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imaginej.org.



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SCOTCH PLAINS RESCUE SQUAD PROMOTES STAYING ACTIVE

Submitted by Susan Baldani

Lately, between COVID-19 restrictions and the hot, humid weather, many of us have been spending way too much time indoors. People are working from home, taking classes at home, and binge watching their favorite television shows for hours at a time. But, it's still important to get out, stay active, and breathe in some fresh air. In order to stay fit and healthy, our bodies need to move. One way to do this is to walk.

We're fortunate to live in an area with an abundance of beautiful outdoor spaces. There are tree-lined streets with sidewalks all over town, plus municipal and county parks nearby. If you would rather hike than walk, trails can be found all throughout the Watchung Reservation. The only equipment you need is a good pair of sneakers or hiking boots.

Walking is a great way to enjoy nature either alone or with family, while easily staying socially distant. If you have a pedometer, even better. Set goals to ensure you get those steps in, and increase those goals as often as you can.

Whether you're taking a short walk around a park or a longer trek through the mountains, there are some important items to bring along. Water, of course, is number one on the list. It's critical to stay hydrated while doing any form of

exercise. Sunscreen, bug spray, and/or some kind of tick repellent are necessary as well. For longer walks, it's also a good idea to bring along some healthy snacks.

Your heart will benefit from the activity, while your mind will appreciate the change of scenery. And, you can save that binge watching for rainy days.

The Scotch Plains Rescue Squad is a volunteer organization of Neighbors Helping Neighbors. With over 90 volunteers, we answer calls not only in Scotch Plains but in surrounding towns as well when needed. Besides answering calls, you will see our ambulances at many special events held in town. For more information, or to join our organization, please email scotchplainsrescuesquad@gmail.com or call 908-322-2103 (non-emergencies only).

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The twin crisis of the COVID pandemic, coupled with the resultant economic downturn have put many residents at risk. Behind the neat lawns and picket fences, we are home to many who have lost their income, who see no promise of further federal support and are spending down their savings to maintain their households. The food banks at St. Bart's and IHM report a 500% increase in demand, and it is up to all of us to fill that gap. Donate to help our food bank continue doing what we do best – Feed people in need.

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CHRISTINE HOLLOWAY TO ADVOCATE FOR LOCAL FOSTER YOUTH

Submitted by Gretchen Boger-O'Bryan



Christine Holloway
of Scotch Plains

Shortly before Covid-19 emerged, took hold and shelter-in-place orders were ordered, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Union County trained 18 volunteers to serve as child advocates for youth removed from home due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. It is the only organization serving as extra eyes and ears for family law judges in an effort to protect best interests of youth in foster care.

While gathered inside a courtroom at Union County's Family Courthouse, class members simultaneously raised their right hand as Judge Thomas K. Isenhour administered their oath before thanking them for committing to our community's vulnerable youth and emphasizing the value of volunteerism.

Among the new advocates is Christine Holloway of Scotch Plains. "I wanted a volunteer experience that would be rewarding and helpful to others in my community. Helping a child's voice be heard in the court system is so

important, and I knew I wanted to be part of it," she explained.

After a final step of court observation, advocates are assigned to foster youth by court order, which provides access to the youth, foster parents, doctors, caseworkers, therapists and teachers to determine outstanding needs or concerns. Advocates regularly report and make recommendations to the judge.

Volunteers with varied backgrounds make successful advocates and this class, ranging from their 20s to 70s, is no exception. Each brings

diverse experiences, including having been a foster youth themselves, immigrants, nonparents and parents, retirees, homemakers, full- and part-time employees. Professional backgrounds include education, business owners, law and academia. Most had no prior knowledge of the foster system.

There are approximately 500 Union County youth from birth to age 21 in foster care, and more than 200 still need a CASA volunteer. Is that you? Contact Courtney at cgreen@casaoofunioncounty.org to learn more.



(above, l-r) Joining Judge Thomas K. Isenhour, center, are Union County's newest child advocates. They are, front row, Jade McEvoy of Elizabeth, Mollie Yang of Mountainside, Karen Lange of Westfield, Mike Loeloff of Summit, Fernando Porras of Cranford, Judge Isenhour, Teresa Pupo of Elizabeth, Martin and Susan Shulman of Cranford, and Angela Williams of Roselle; back row, Lisa Kalichman of South Orange, Christine Holloway of Scotch Plains, Towanna Garba of Roselle, Renee Finan of Clark, Christine Carroll of Warren, Suzanne Carreno-Powers of New Providence, Bob Bridgeman of Westfield, Meg Berry of Rahway and Janice Beckmen of Summit.

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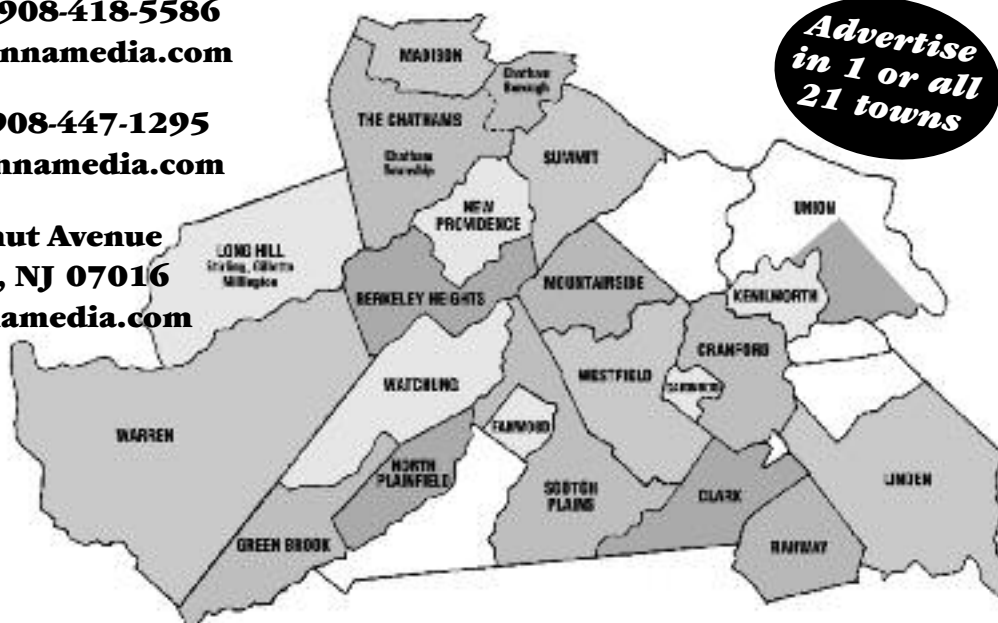
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COLLEGE CLUB 2020 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Submitted by Bernadette Hoyer

Celebrating its 87th Anniversary, the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains continues its tradition since its inception in 1933: to support the pursuit of a college education for young women in the Scotch Plains and Fanwood communities by providing scholarships. To date the College Club has awarded approximately \$690,000.00 in scholarships to about 552 young women

This past May, the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains awarded a total of \$20,500.00 in scholarships to 10 students, 5 of whom are high school seniors who graduated this June and 5 of whom are currently attending college. These awards included a special education award donated in honor of a current College Club Member, Elaine Carmen.

Among the 2020 College recipients for academic year 2020-2021 are: Aubrey Bagdonas, daughter of John and Jean Bagdonas who will be a sophomore at Villanova; Olivia Barcia, daughter of Vincent and Michele Barcia, who will be a junior at Lafayette College; Vanessa Handy, daughter of Russell Handy Jr. and Marcel Vaughn Handy, who will be a sophomore at NYU; Isabella Hurtado, daughter of Jim and Ann Marie Hurtado, who will be junior at the Fashion Institute of Technology; Alexis Marta, daughter of Melissa Stryker, who will be a senior at The College of New Jersey.

The 2020 High School recipients for academic year 2020-2021 are: Catherine Buren, daughter of Kenneth and Susan Corrigan Buren, who will

be attending The University of Pennsylvania in the fall; Antoinette Chango, daughter of David and Lisa Chango, who will be attending Gettysburg College in the fall, Emma Hastrup, daughter of Herbert and Laura Hastrup, who will be attending Bloomsburg University in the fall, and Isabella Richardson, daughter of Donna Richardson, who will be attending the University of Vermont in the fall.

The annual award for academic achievement was presented to Carina Del Core, daughter of Angelo Del Core, who will be attending George Washington University in the fall.

This is the 84th year that female students,

seeking financial assistance to pursue a four-year college degree, have been helped by the club's fundraising efforts.

The High School awards were presented at the SPFHS virtual annual awards assembly.

The College Club hosts monthly informative programs presented by guest speakers on the third Monday of every month, September through May, free and open to the public, and is looking forward to being able to resume holding meetings. Anyone interested in more information about the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains or would like to become a member please visit the club's website at fspcollegeclub.org

COLLEGE CLUB SEEKS SUPPORT FOR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains' \$500 ShopRite Gift Card Raffle tickets and 50-50 Raffle Drawing tickets are available for the new drawing date: Sunday, October 4, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. Both raffles normally would have been drawn at the Annual Spring event on April 19, 2020. In order to accommodate the Covid-19 regulations, College Club made arrangements to reschedule the drawing.

Since there are only 500 \$500 ShopRite tickets available at a cost of \$5.00 per ticket, the odds of winning are only 1 in 500! The 50-50 Raffle tickets are \$2.00 per ticket or a book of 10 for \$20.00 and will award a 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners based on one half of the collected proceeds.

All proceeds are directly used for our Scholarship Fund. College Club has been awarding scholarships to young women for over 80 years. Last year \$20,000 was awarded to deserving young women for the upcoming 2020-21 school year. Please consider supporting this very worthy cause as, due to Covid-19, the Raffle Tickets Sales are even more crucial than ever to provide funds for our Scholarship Awards as this will most likely be our only fundraiser for the 2020 fiscal year.

If you are interested in purchasing ShopRite tickets contact: Dorothy Lusk at 908-230-4917 or dorothyculleylusk@gmail.com; and 50-50 Drawing tickets contact: Sue Spirko at 908-472-8515 or sslkt@verizon.net.

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