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Issue 119 • October 2020

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KEAN STUDENT-VETERAN RECEIVES K-9 SERVICE DOG

A special ceremony was held on Kean University's Union campus as senior Jason Pryor, a U.S. Army veteran, introduced the K-9 service dog that he received through an on-campus fundraiser.

Pryor, a senior from Elizabeth majoring in exercise science, did tours in Iraq and Honduras and suffers from PTSD. He received the K-9, named Keen, at the start of the Fall semester as a gift from the Kean Office of Student Government.

"Being with Keen has taught me to be more patient," said Pryor, whose dog accompanies him to class. "Keen is used as a measure to help prevent me from going through the symptoms and effects of spiraling down, by me tending to his needs and having him tend to me."

Kean is ranked first in the nation among large public schools for its programs supporting student-veterans, according to the Military Friendly Schools survey.

Student Government raised nearly \$20,000 to support service dogs through Rebuilding Warriors, a volunteer non-profit organization whose mission is to provide trained service dogs to veterans. The bulk of the funds raised went toward training Pryor's dog, and the rest was donated to Rebuilding Warriors to help train other K-9 dogs.

At the ceremony held outside Miron Student Center, Vito Zajda, director of Veteran Student Services at Kean and a U.S. Coast Guard veteran, called Pryor a remarkable student.

"He has been a big support and influential person in our program," Zajda said. "He has helped open our eyes about how the University can best support its vets."

Vice President of Rebuilding Warriors Jeff Mullins, also a veteran, said post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a condition that can't be seen by others. "It's invisible, stays with you your entire life, and it's not easy sometimes," he said. "Our goal is to provide veterans and first responders with a service dog to help them achieve their new normal."

The University's Veterans Day event included a color guard, a performance of the national anthem by the Kean Gospel Choir, and the presentation of other honors.

Juan Leon Torres, a senior from Spotswood also studying exercise science and a U.S. Navy veteran, received the 2019 Kean Veteran's Award for Outstanding Mentor. He develops transition opportunities and initiatives, and mentors a student-veteran each semester.

"Being a veteran and going back to school is super hard because you go from one community to a different lifestyle," Torres said.

Zajda noted that it is important to support veterans at all times. "The importance of Veterans Day is to recognize that it's 365 days a year, as veterans go through different highs and lows in their lives," he said.



(above) Jason Pryor, a U.S. Army veteran who did tours in Iraq and Honduras and suffers from PTSD, received the K-9, named Keen, as a gift from the Kean Office of Student Government through an on-campus fundraiser.

Photo by Kean University



ABOUT REBUILDING WARRIORS

A 501(c)3 Non-Profit Providing Service Dogs to Veterans

Rebuilding Warriors provides highly trained and socialized Service/Companion Dogs to Veterans diagnosed as Amputees as well as those with PTSD, (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury). Most of our dogs are bred especially for this mission and have a highly sought after demeanor. We provide these dogs to Honorably Discharged Veterans from any branch of the Armed Forces or from any service era meeting our eligibility standards as well as First Responders. For more information, or to support our mission, please visit www.rebuildingwarriors.com.

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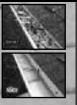
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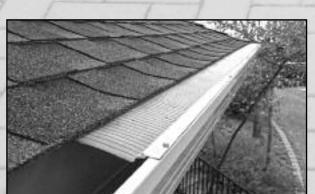
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Submitted by Barbara La Mort

On Friday, October 16, at 8 p.m. an investigation of the Caldwell Parsonage will be conducted live on the New Jersey Paranormal Facebook page. The popular in-person investigation fundraiser will return next year.

On Saturday, October 17, and Sunday, October 18, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. the Union Township Historical Society will host open houses at the Parsonage, 909 Caldwell Avenue, Union.

Although Four Centuries in a Weekend will not be coordinated by Union County this year, the UTHS board decided to continue the decadeslong tradition of opening to the public for free. This year's event will feature a new exhibit of ten historic Union documents archivally preserved, partially through a grant from the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.

The following guidelines will be observed: masks required; social distancing outside on walkway and lawn; social distancing inside; sign in with email address; temperature checks; portable UV sanitizing wand for surfaces; and hand-sanitizer available.

The UTHS had to cancel tours in March, July, and August and programs in April, May, and September. Each of those would have produced much needed revenue for the centuries-old house. It's hoped that members of the community would consider an in-person contribution or an on-line donation at unionnjhistory.org.

For more information, call please 908-591-4377.



(above) The Caldwell Parsonage

POSTMASTERS TIPS FOR PET OWNERSHIP

Last year 169 letter carriers were victimized by dogs in New Jersey, including 16 in Union County. The 15 postmasters serving the 21 municipalities in Union County are therefore raising public awareness of the importance of responsible pet ownership in helping prevent dog bites.

To prevent dog bites, Union County Postmasters recommend the following responsible pet ownership tips:

- Obedience training can teach dogs proper behavior and help owners control their dog in any situation.
- When the letter carrier comes to your home, keep your dog inside, away from the door, in another room, or on a leash.
- Dogs can be protective of their territory and may interpret the actions of letter carriers as a

threat. Please take precautions when accepting mail in the presence of your pet.

• Dogs that haven't been properly socialized, receive little attention or handling, or are left tied-up for long periods of time frequently turn into biters.

By following these few simple tips, pet owners can significantly improve neighborhood safety for everyone.

The Postal Service has a short animated dog bite video available on its YouTube site, USPS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpqmrNBJ Aos&feature=youtu.be.

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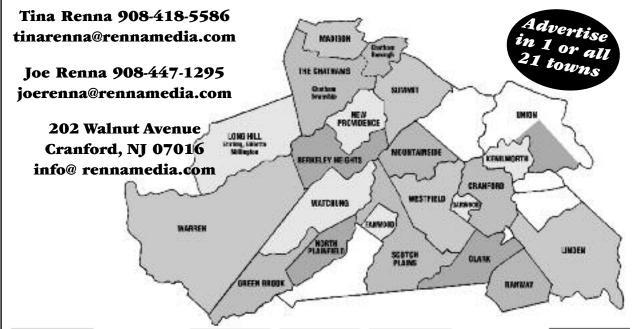
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This year, more than ever, we could harness the support and participation of the community in our annual fundraiser. Because we want to make sure that everyone stays safe and healthy, we've modified the format, from an in-person dinner to a "Virtual Fundraiser."

Here's How to Support Our Virtual Fundraiser Online: To purchase Virtual Dinner tickets, sponsorships, or to donate online, please visit eventbrite.com and search for St. Joseph Social

St. Joseph's serves the materially poor and Service Center-2020 Virtual Annual Fundraising Dinner. A link can also be found on our website, sjeliz.org.

> Mail: To purchase raffle tickets, Virtual Dinner tickets, sponsorships, or to donate by mail, please download the form, which can be found on sjeliz.org.

> In Person: To purchase Grand Raffle Tickets in person, here are the locations:

> St. Joseph Social Service Center, 118 Division Street, Elizabeth, NJ 07201 - Emy Cruz, 908-354-5456 x3

> St. Helen's Parish Center, 1600 Rahway Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090 - Marilyn Ryan, 908-232-1214 x113

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