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MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY OF SERVICE HELD VIRTUALLY

By Dan DiBella

Members of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood community gathered on January 18th, 2021 for the 12th annual MLK Day of Service. The day was formed as a way to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. Due to the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, this year's ceremony was held virtually on Facebook. It can be viewed on the Scotch Plains Township, and Fanwood, NJ Facebook pages.

Since 2016, the Day of Service Committee has been honoring individuals from the community who exemplify the work of Dr. King.

Organized by Michelle Shapiro Abraham, Amanda Barnett, and Courtney Agnello; the Day of Service is an opportunity for volunteers to celebrate the interwoven and compassionate community they create together. The hourlong presentation featured speeches from town officials, a video tribute to Dr. King, and songs by St. Johns Baptist Church and Congregation Beth Israel.

Among those present were: Scotch Plains Mayor Josh Losardo, Fanwood Council President Anthony Carter, and Rabbi Howard Tilman of Congregation Beth Israel, along with several members of the committee.

The thought provoking video presentation, "Has the Dream Been Fulfilled?" compares Dr. King's fight against inequality and injustice to today's current struggle. The short tribute film was made by members of the MLK Day Service Project and local teens.

The 2021 Day of Service Award recipient is lifelong Scotch Plains resident, Kimberly Hood. Kimberly is an active volunteer at the Manna From Heaven Food Pantry, and also serves as president of the Missionary Ministry of St. John's Baptist Church. This year's award was presented by 2020 recipient Delois Dawson.

The Day of Service Committee also took the opportunity to talk about an exciting black history initiative called, "The Legacy of Kramer Manor." The project sets the precedent of educating and preserving history in the historically black sections of Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

Following the ceremony, hundreds of volunteers gathered at over 25 locations to collect donations, as well as participate in educational and service opportunities. The committee reported afterwards that 550 families volunteered and filled 1.600 volunteer slots.

"Today you helped create the community that we all want to live in." (photos on page 8)



(above, top l-r) Martin Luther King Day of Service Co-Chairs: Amanda Barnett, Michelle Shapiro Abraham. (bottom) Courtney Agnello



(above, l-r) Scotch Plains Mayor Josh Losardo, and Fanwood Council President Anthony Carter.

TOGETHER WE:

- delivered over 100 meals to seniors and vets
- baked 40+ dozen brownies
- collected and knitted 100's of hats and mittens for kids in need
- created hundreds of Valentine's for seniors and veterans
- filled carloads of toiletries for families in need
- covered our towns with over 50 hand-painted kindness rocks
- joined with over 250 others learning about the legacy of Dr. King and how to make our world more whole, just and compassionate.

If you are interested in joining on the Planning Committee for 2022, please email spfdayofservice@gmail.com.

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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

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Reserve space in the next issue. Call Tina today at 908-418-5586 or email info@rennamedia.com

BRINGING HOME BABY: HOW TO BE A UNIFIED PARENTING TEAM

Fanwood-Scotch Plains-Westfield the day before the event. Here2Help Mental Health Coalition is pleased to present Bringing Home Baby: How to be a Unified Parenting Team on Tuesday, February 2 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. via Zoom and Facebook

Sixty-nine percent of new parents experience conflict, disappointment and hurt feelings as they navigate the postpartum weeks and months. Learning to co-parent amid sleeplessness and fluctuating hormones is no easy task. But there are proven ways to weather the transition that are backed by years of research. In this informational session Jennifer Perera, LCSW, will highlight how to restore friendship and intimacy to your relationship, navigate conflict more effectively, foster the development of your child during the postpartum months, and create healthy social, emotional and intellectual development in your children.

To register visit eventbrite.com/o/here-2-hlp-31322635307. This event is free but space is limited. The Zoom access code will be emailed

Jennifer Perera is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with over 10 years of experience. She specializes in working with parents during the prenatal and postpartum periods and those coping with a pregnancy loss or infertility. Her passion is helping new parents find their joy through individual, group and couples counseling. This Here2Help event is ideal for couples planning or expecting a baby soon and couples with a child under the age of 3. Attendees will have an opportunity to ask Ms. Perera questions at the end of the presentation.

Originally organized by the Westfield and Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCAs, the mission of the Here2Help Mental Health Coalition is to improve community awareness understanding of mental health issues through education, basic skills training and resource information and to help break down barriers that prevent people from seeking care. Information about Here2Help can be here2helpnj.org.



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SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION APPLICATIONS

Submitted by Michelle Wyrwa

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Scholarship Foundation is currently accepting applications for high school seniors graduating in 2021 who reside in Scotch Plains or Fanwood, and those residents attending college or other post high school institutions for scholarships.

The numerous scholarships offered by the Foundation range in criteria; some awards are need-based, while others have criteria such as the intent to pursue an education focused on teaching, nursing, mathematics, veterinary science, foreign language, music or fine arts, among many others. The major criterion for eligibility is that the applicant resides in Scotch Plains or Fanwood; an applicant need not be a graduate of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School.

Applications can be found through the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School counseling office and on spfscholarshipfoundation.org. In addition to the application, the Foundation requires a personal essay from the applicant, a letter of reference, and an official high school or college transcript.

The Foundation recognizes that COVID-19 has presented many challenges to students, and wants applicants to know that the unique circumstances of this year will be taken into account when applications are reviewed.

Submissions must be domestically postmarked

by February 13 and mailed to SPF Scholarship Foundation (Attn: Screening Committee) PO Box 123, Fanwood NJ, 07023 in order to be for consideration. Applications postmarked after February 13 will be returned and incomplete or unsigned applications may not be considered. Applications may be completed on Foundation's website, the spfscholarshipfoundation.org, but must be printed and mailed as directed for consideration.

Since its inception in 1966, the Foundation has awarded over \$3,500,000 in scholarships to 3,310 deserving recipients. Scholarships are funded through a community-wide appeal for donations to the Foundation's Dollars for Students program. Other scholarships are administered by the Foundation, but are funded by community organizations; for example, every Parent-Teacher Association in the district funds at least one scholarship.

Given the challenges posed to students amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation recognizes that the need for scholarship assistance is greater than ever, and encourages all eligible students to submit their application.

Applications are reviewed by a Screening Committee consisting of at least four Trustees from the SPF Scholarship Foundation and PTA representatives from the public schools. For information, further please visit spfscholarshipfoundation.org.



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Edward Anthony Somma, MD Internal Medicine

Dr. Somma has special interests in various fields of Internal Medicine, including diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases and arthritis/rheumatology. He has represented to major pharmaceutical companies, such as Schering-Plough and Pfizer, in a consulting and educational role for his peers. Dr. Somma has been a clinical educator for Seton Hall's Physician Assistant Program as an Associate Professor of Medicine for their Internal Medicine program.

After graduating from medical school, Dr Somma served his internship in Internal Medicine at Trinitas Regional Medical Center. He then completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Seton Hall Post Graduate School of Medicine, where he was

Dr. Somma has been in practice in Union and Middlesex counties for over 20 years, with an emphasis on excellence and compassion for his patients. He has served as the physician for the Elizabeth Fire Department, the Board of Health of Hillside and has served the Board of Education for Woodbridge NJ. He was granted the Humanitarian of the Year Award by Trinitas Health Foundation in May 2014, for his dedication to the

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Thrift Shop, 1741 East 2nd. St., Scotch Plains, is open for business on a limited basis. Due to the pandemic, the shop is open Tuesday, Thursday, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

For our volunteers' and customers' safety, all donations must be new or gently used, clean, no missing parts or pieces. Donations are accepted in the rear parking lot, off Willow Ave. If the shop is closed, please hold donations until the shop is open. Under current circumstances, volunteers cannot take donations left outside. It is a burden for volunteers to dispose of these donations.

To keep our customers and volunteers safe, COVID protocols are posted on the front door. The number of persons entering the store is

The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League limited. Masks are required. Children cannot come in, social distancing is required. When shoppers are waiting to come in, only one shopper per party may enter.

The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League is an all-volunteer, non- profit organization that has served the local communities since 1974. Since its founding, the League has donated more than \$1.3 million for local causes.

Anvone interested in learning more about the League or membership is invited to call during business hours. 908-322-5420, visit the League's website scotchplainsthriftshop.weebly.com or speak to any of the volunteers at the Thrift Shop. Checkout the organization's Facebook page, "Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League," and give the League a "Like."

MAINTAIN GARDENS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO

Volunteer Opportunity for Service groups, Scout groups, Work groups, families, Individuals and any Committees or Organizations.

Want to get outside and enjoy the fresh air? Help improve our environment one small space at a time? Get creative using nature?

We are looking for volunteers to help maintain gardens at Borough Hall and other areas around Fanwood. The gardens or areas to be maintained already exist - no new ground will have to be cleared. The Environmental Commission will

provide guidance, advice and know how (and garden tools if needed). If interested, please send us a note at fanwood.ec.1895@gmail.com.

AREAS UP FOR GRABS:

- Flag Pole garden in front of Borough Hall
- Rain garden at the side of Borough Hall
- Carriage House (front and sign areas)
- Area around the Ambulance HQ
- Welcome to Fanwood Signs
- and others...



CHELSEA RESIDENTS AND STAFF RECEIVE COVID VACCINE

second of the two-shot vaccination in three

weeks. Walgreens and CVS are administering the

vaccine at all Chelsea communities through the

Submitted by Tom Kranz

Ten months after the COVID-19 pandemic forced Chelsea Senior Living to lock down its 21 communities, the first residents and staff received vaccinations on January 7 at the Chelsea at Fanwood, 295 South Avenue, Fanwood, NJ.

The Pfizer vaccine was administered by technicians from Walgreens Pharmacies to Chelsea residents and employees. Resident Eileen Marino and employee Lawrence Cirillo were among the first. They will receive the

months of January and February under Phase 1a of the statewide program. "We've come a very long way since those first

weeks of the outbreak last spring," remarked Roger Bernier, President and Chief Operating Officer of Chelsea Senior Living. "All of our buildings have strict screening, testing, visitation and isolation policies to control the spread of



(above) Chelsea employee Lawrence Cirillo receives vaccination from Walgreens technician Anastasia Tolpsintseva.

Photos by Tom Kranz, Chelsea Senior Living

COVID. The vaccinations are a long-awaited and very important part of disease prevention."

While the vaccine is said to prevent illness 95% of the time, it does not prevent spread of the virus itself. Therefore, masking, social distancing and hand washing will continue to be the rule at all 21 Chelsea Senior Living properties well into 2021.



(above) Resident Eileen Marino receives vaccination from Walgreens technician Anastasia Tolpintseva.

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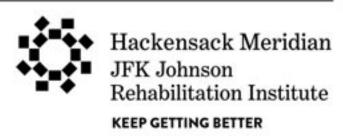
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FANWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT HOLDS PROMOTION CEREMONY

Follow Fanwood Police Department on Facebook

January 4, 2021 - The Fanwood Police Department is pleased to announce the promotion of Officer Kevin Stomber and Officer Daniel

Kranz to the rank of Sergeant. Please join the Fanwood Police Department in congratulating Fanwood's newest Sergeants.



(above) Newly Promoted Sgt. Daniel Kranz and family.



(above) Sgt. Daniel Kranz, Lt. Marc Gottlick and Sgt. Kevin Stomber



(above) Union County Prosecutor's Office Investigator Nick Falcicchio, Fanwood Police Department Lt. Marc Gottlick, Sgt. Daniel Kranz, Sgt. Kevin Stomber, Union County Prosecutor's Office Captain Kevin Grimmer, Fanwood Councilman Anthony Carter.



(above) Newly promoted Sgt. Kevin Stomber accompanied by his family.



(above) Members of the Fanwood Police Department and Councilman Jeff Banks and Councilman Anthony Carter.

HOW TO BE A GRANDPARENT DURING THE PANDEMIC

SAGE Eldercare and Your Decisions Matter will host a live zoom event featuring New York Times bestselling author and Ph.D. Michael Thompson on February 9th at 4:00 p.m. "Grandparents are missing their grandchildren; grandchildren want to see their grandparents, and the parents in the middle are missing the support and connection across the generations," explained Thompson, who himself is a grandparent of three.

While Facetime and Zoom allow for face-to-face communication, the technology can feel awkward and unsatisfying to older adults. Thompson will discuss this and the stress of being separated from families, the yearning to be in touch and the unique difficulties grandparents are experiencing during COVID-19. He will also share alternative modes of connecting that can help.

Thompson is the author or coauthor of nine books, including the New York Times bestseller Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys as well as Best Friends/ Worst Enemies: Understanding the Social Lives of Children, The Pressured Child and Homesick and Happy: How Time Away from Parents Can Help a Child Grow. He also works as a clinical psychologist and school consultant. He is presently the supervising psychologist for the Belmont Hill School in Belmont, MA and has worked in over

700 schools in the U.S., Asia, Africa Europe and Central America.

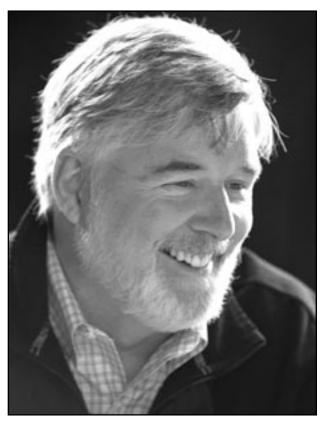
"We are excited for SAGE to offer this very informative program," said Nina Tiger, Coordinator of Your Decisions Matter. "We know the difficulty older adults are facing during this unprecedented time and one of the biggest issues they are voicing is that they miss their grandchildren terribly. We're hopeful this program will offer them helpful solutions."

Register here: bit.ly/SAGEEldercare. For questions, more information or help using ZOOM - email: yourdecisionsmatter@sageeldercare.org or call 908-598-5511.

Your Decisions Matter is a community initiative funded by Atlantic Health's Chilton and Overlook Medical Centers' Community Advisory Boards whose goal is to encourage families to talk with their loved ones about end-of-life care and decision making.

Since 1954, SAGE Eldercare has been helping make the communities it serves amazing places to age. The non-profit organization provides a wide array of information, support, and services designed to help individuals lead the most independent and active lives possible.

For more information, please call 908-273-5550 or visit sageeldercare.org.



(above) SAGE Eldercare and Your Decisions
Matter will host a live zoom event on February
9th at 4:00 p.m. with New York Times
bestselling author and PH.D. Michael
Thompson. The topic will be "How to be a
grandparent during the pandemic". Register
here: http://bit.ly/SAGEEldercare. For
questions, more information or help using
ZOOM - email: yourdecisionsmatter
@sageeldercare.org or call 908-598-5511.



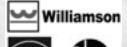
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MLK SERVICE PHOTO ALBUM



(above) St. John's Baptist Church Choir performing, "Walk Together Children"



(above) Leland McGee, inaugural Day of Service Award recipient



(above) Members of the Day of Service Committee



(above) 2021 Martin Luther King Day of Service recipient Kimberly Hood



(above) (above, l-r) Members of the Kramer Park Project Committee and Reunion. Top Row: Jill Jackson Jones, Derek Garrett. Bottom Row: Kevin Elridge



(above) Congregation Beth Israel Rabbi Howard Tilman



(above) Cantor Darcie Sharlein performed the closing song, "We Shall Overcome"

A DREAM COME TRUE WEDDING FOR COUPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Submitted by Erin Jerome, CAU

After six months of physical separation during COVID-19 lockdown, Megan and Maurice Stephens couldn't wait to be together and say their vows.

"COVID-19 wasn't going to stop our wedding," Megan said. It was meant to be, according to Maurice.

From the time they met at a Halloween party held by Community Access Unlimited (CAU), the two instantly connected and took things slowly to make the relationship a lasting one, Megan said. CAU is a Union County-based, statewide nonprofit that strives to integrate people with disabilities and youth at risk into the general community through comprehensive supports.

Maurice proposed to Megan on her birthday in June of 2019 at one of her favorite places to eat, the Rainforest Cafe.

"I was scared and nervous but I knew Megan would be happy no matter what," he said.

A few months into planning their nuptials, the couple realized that their plans to have a large wedding wouldn't be possible due to the pandemic. To make matters worse, they were separated while quarantined at different CAU residential programs.

"We couldn't see each other and it was very hard," Megan said. "It did make our wedding day more special."

Thankfully, their family and support system at CAU stepped up to make their special day possible and find the couple the perfect apartment in Fanwood, where they moved just in time for the wedding. On October 17, the couple were married before their closest family members and friends in a garden at Warinanco Park in Roselle.

"It was important for us to invite CAU members and staff because they really are a second family for both Megan and Maurice - we really wanted to share the day with them," said Marguerite Modero, Megan's mother. Rolando Zorrilla, managing assistant executive director of youth services at the agency, served as the best man

Modero teaches music and theater classes at the CAU Academy of Continuing Education and is the founder and director of the CAU Community Players, an inclusive theatre group made up of performers with and without disabilities.

Maurice has brought his talents in painting and visual arts to CAU productions to share in the family's love of musical theater. He said Megan's passion for the shows convinced him to join in.

"Maurice is a very creative person and he fits in perfectly with our family," Modero said. "It meant so much to have everyone at CAU at the wedding, because without the staff at CAU they would not have made this journey into adulthood and found this love."

Through employment supports at CAU, both Megan and Maurice are working part-time to help finance their independence.

"Maurice is one of a kind - he loves me a lot and he cares for me," Megan said. "We share a lot of happiness and ups and downs. We have a lot of togetherness and we understand each other...We were very excited to move in together. I want to be on my own and independent."

Many people discount that people with disabilities want to find love and companionship, according to Modero.

"I think as advocates of people with disabilities we need to say that they deserve love and a relationship and their happily ever after if it's possible," she said. "I'm grateful to CAU for having an enlightened perspective on marriage. They treated them as two adults with dignity and understood they were in love."

Megan agreed that finding love can mean taking chances to connect with others in your community.

"I would definitely tell people with disabilities to not be afraid to get out there and do things," she said.

Maurice added that they have already started asking other CAU couples when they plan to tie the knot.

To learn more about CAU, visit caunj.org or follow the agency on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Learn more about supporting the agency and become a monthly donor at caunj.org/support-us/.

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 rights. CAU currently serves more than 4,000 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.



(above) Mr. and Mrs. Stephens at their wedding in Warinanco Park.

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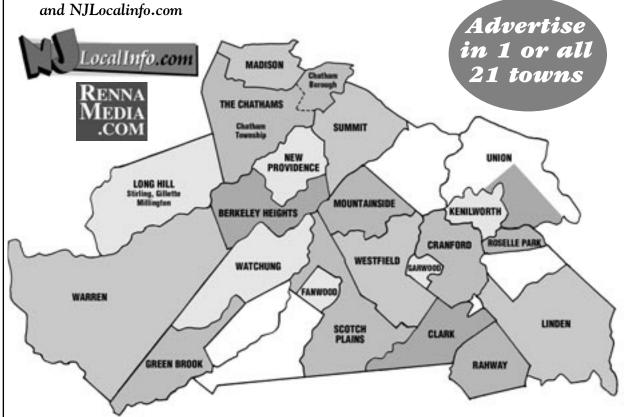
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WEBSITE AUDIT/ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION PLAN

- · See what is working and not working Know where your web traffic is coming from and why.
- Eliminate / avoid costly schemes Evaluate the return you are getting from your online marketing costs.
- Increase online marketing results Recommendations include ways to increase traffic to your website
- No obligation This service is recommended even if you have an existing

web management contract. Use it to tune up your marketing plan.

FLAT FEE **\$250**

ONE TIME

Joe Renna at 908-447-1295 email: JoeRenna@RennaMedia.com

Call for a consultation if you do not have a website or need a new one.

WEBSITE / SEO SERVICES

Starter Website: \$500

Basic static site that can be developed further

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

Call for free a consultation if you need help developing an online marketing plan. Joe Renna at 908-447-1295 email: JoeRenna@RennaMedia.com

\$500







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