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THREE FAMILIES MADE OFFICIAL ON ADOPTION DAY

Multi-town parade includes superheroes, gift baskets and more

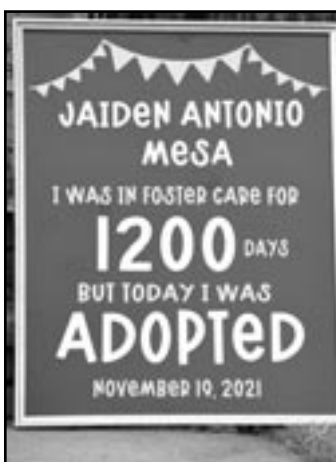
CASA of Union County

The frosty morning of Nov. 19 may have been any other Friday for many, but for three Union County foster youth in Rahway, Roselle and Roselle Park, all under age three, their lives changed forever, as Union County Superior Court Judge Lara DiFabrizio granted each the consistency and stability deserved by all children, finalizing their adoptions and ending their time in the child welfare system. Each family had their own CASA volunteer working the case.

The annual event is held the Saturday before Thanksgiving and courts nationwide often celebrate National Adoption Day the business day before, or even open on Saturday, to hold adoption hearings. Here in Union County, all hearings were performed via Zoom due to Covid-19, and Judge DiFabrizio made official what each child likely already felt: they were finally home.

Despite the virtual component, those involved ensured the excitement was palpable. Upon completion of each adoption, the homes were visited by a caravan of fire trucks, police cars, court staff, law guardians and other case stakeholders, CASA of Union County staff and two of its interns suited up as Captain America and Mr. Incredible, and the bear mascot from Kenilworth's David Brearley Middle and High School. All cheered for the family, where each took their first official photo together, and the children spent time with the superheroes and school mascot.

Families received a hot breakfast donated by Urban Griddle in Elizabeth; a flower bouquet provided by Jane Phillips who, until her recent retirement, headed the Adoption Day Committee for the judiciary; and a gift basket from CASA of Union County made possible by collections of board and card games, puzzles and movie night fixings from the Kenilworth school and Summit's Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child. The latter collection was spearheaded by Desiree Mitchell, daughter of CASA volunteer Hope Mitchell, and included fleece blankets made with classmates. In addition, each child and all siblings received their own superhero dress-up costume and books



(above) Captain America and Mr. Incredible, and Kenilworth's School bear mascot visited homes of each adoption.

hand selected by the Phi Eta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha. Each family received a WalMart gift card funded by the Union County Bar Association. Costumes for CASA's interns were loaned by generous members of the Facebook Buy Nothing Group in Cranford and Garwood.

Today, more than 120,000 youth nationwide need a permanent home, with an average wait in foster care of four years. Each year, 23,000 youth age out of the system without a family or safety net in place. For details on CASA of Union County's mission, the need for volunteer advocates and how to become one, contact Lucia at lfield@casaoofunioncounty.org or log on to casaoofunioncounty.org.

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Wesfield Monthly

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Seven Westfield High School students earned perfect scores on their Fall ACT and SAT standardized tests.

Pictured are the students with WHS Principal, Mary Asfendis. Mattia Butera (November SAT — Math), Julian Hamilton (October ACT — English and Reading), Jason Yang (September

ACT — Reading), Cameron Linenberg (September and October ACTs — Reading), Emily Cheng (September ACT — Reading), Andrew Matus (November SAT — Evidence-Based Reading and Writing), Sophia Xing (November SAT — Math), and Principal Mary Asfendis

Photo by Westfield Public Schools



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CAMP AND CHILD CARE OPEN HOUSES - JAN. 8

WESTFIELD AREA YMCA

The Westfield Area YMCA will hold Summer Day Camp and Child Care Open Houses on Saturday, January 8 from 10 a.m. - noon.

Summer Day Camp Open Houses will be held at the Main Y Facility, 220 Clark Street and the Garwood Family Center Y, 500 East Street. All Westfield Area YMCA camps are ACA-accredited. Traditional, sports, S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) and leadership development camps are available for children and youth ages 3-15. The Y offers full-day and half-day camps by the week or all summer long. Camp Early Bird registration begins January 3 and ends on January 31.

Child Care Open Houses will be held at the Bauer Branch, 422 East Broad Street; Early Learning Center, 170 Elm Street; Main Y Facility, 220 Clark Street; and Garwood Family Center Y, 500 East Street. Registration for the 2022-23 school year for full-day child care, half-day and full-day preschool, full-day Kindergarten, Kindergarten Wraparound and Garwood after school care will be available. Registration for Westfield after school care will begin in March.

For information on all Westfield Area YMCA programs and services, visit westfieldynj.org or call the Welcome Center at 908-301-YMCA (9622). The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit

committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Financial assistance is available for those who qualify.



(above) Westfield Area YMCA Blue Sky Camp



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WESTFIELD AREA YMCA • 220 Clark St., Westfield • 908-301-YMCA (9622) • westfieldynj.org  

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Financial assistance is available for YMCA programs and memberships.

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EMS VOLUNTEER APPOINTED TO CRANFORD PATROLMAN

Cranford Police Department

At a ceremony held in the Cranford Municipal Chambers on December 15th, 2021, the Cranford Police Department appointed Gianna Ricerca as a Probationary Patrolman. Patrolman Ricerca is currently a volunteer for both the Mountainside and Westfield Rescue Squads. She is a certified Emergency Medical Technician, an Emergency Medical Dispatcher, and 911 Basic-Telecommunicator certified. Ms. Ricerca is currently enrolled as a full-time student at Kean University majoring in Communications with a minor in Criminal Justice. She anticipates graduating in December of 2021. Ms. Ricerca has been employed as a Communications Officer with the Cranford Police Department since July of 2021 before her appointment as a probationary patrolman.



(above) Cranford Police Chief Ryan J. Greco appoints Patrolman Gianna Ricerca. Patrolman Ricerca is a volunteer for both the Mountainside and Westfield Rescue Squads.

Photo by Cranford Police Department

HELP! I FOUND A WILD BIRD

The Raptor Trust is a 501(c)3 organization that provides free medical care to thousands of injured and orphaned wild birds each year.

Located at 1390 White Bridge Road, Millington, NJ, The Raptor Trust's outdoor aviary trail is open to the public daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is no charge and no reservation necessary for general admission. Donations are always appreciated.

The Raptor Trust is also offering private guided tours, virtual school programs, and outdoor field trips and scout programs through the winter months.

You can email education@theraptortrust.org with any booking questions or find more information on our website at TheRaptorTrust.org.

THE RAPTOR TRUST

RELIEF FROM CHRONIC KNEE PAIN FDA Approved Treatment to Avoid Surgery

DON'T BLAME THE ARROW FOR MISSING THE TARGET

Just like tens of millions of other Americans, you were looking for relief from your chronic knee pain. You thought Viscosupplementation injections might be the answer, but the results were disappointing and painful. Don't assume the treatment wasn't right. That could very well be like blaming the arrow for its path to the target when the problem might be the archer. If you didn't get the pain relief you were hoping for, chances are your injection treatment was off target. Unlike blind injections or even ultrasound targeted treatments found elsewhere,

Northeast Spine & Wellness Center uses diagnostic fluoroscopy to make sure the area that needs treated is the exact area where the injection goes. This is the most advanced method of delivering this pain relieving treatment with 95% accuracy to give you the results you're looking for. The use of Fluoroscopy guided injections sets **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** apart. The end result is you living pain free from your chronic knee pain. You can avoid the lengthy and painful road of knee replacement surgery. You can avoid the endless trial and error assortment of potentially addictive prescription medications. This treatment, using fluoroscopy guided injections has seen a success rate of above 85% in those suffering from knee pain related to osteoarthritis, and that includes people with bone on bone involvement. You've suffered from chronic knee pain long enough. Call **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** now for a RISK FREE consultation.



If Knee Surgery Sounds Scary, It Should

Have you have been told you are facing knee replacement surgery? Have you been told about all the downsides you could be facing? First and foremost, there are NO guarantees that knee replacement surgery will be the answer to your pain, but let's look further:

- Surgery is costly, regardless of the percentage of services covered by insurance.
- Surgery requires lost time from work and typically requires a regimen of rehabilitation and medications.
- With surgery, there is always a risk for unwelcomed complications. And you could be back to where you started, or worse.
- Medications will be required for relief from surgery and you have been down that road before. Additions to these pain medications can cause potential side effects, something you do not want to experience.
- Rehabilitation can take years.

Consider This Alternative To Surgery

Northeast Spine & Wellness Center offers you a real opportunity and a painless way to say goodbye to your knee pain without any surgery. Here are just a few of the important benefits you should consider?

- Diagnostic fluoroscopy accurately targets the pain, unlike blind injections.
- Guided fluoroscopic injections are virtually pain free, unlike blind injections.
- No lost time from work or family.
- No expensive or time consuming rehabilitation.
- No potentially addictive prescription medications.
- Recovery time is almost instant, not months or years.

How Does This New Treatment Work?

Relief begins almost as fast as it takes to pronounce the treatment. It's called Viscosupplementation Therapy. To begin with, it starts with **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** investing in the use of diagnostic fluoroscopy. This enables them to target the exact location of your knee pain with pinpoint accuracy. What follows is a simple injection that causes little to no pain, especially when compared to what you may be living with daily. That explains what you will see on the surface of this revolutionary treatment. What's taking place below the surface is how and where the natural healing process takes place. The injection of a Hyaluronic acid called Hyalgan. This gel-like substance was approved by the FDA in 1996. Hyalgan is a natural substance that mimics the synovial fluid that is already produced by your body in your joints. Osteoarthritis sufferers in particular see a reduction in this much needed synovial fluid in their knee joints. Without that cushioning layer of protection, the cartilage in your knee can begin to wear away leading to the rubbing of bone on bone. Through Viscosupplementation Therapy, this natural substance immediately goes to work reducing the swelling and inflammation in the joint and adding a coating layer of protection. Think about Dorothy taking the oil can to The Tin Man. You'll begin to feel that same kind of relief and quite possibly feel like you're ready for a dance down the yellow brick road to recovery yourself. And with a success rate of over 85% in alleviating pain associated with osteoarthritis, it's easy to see why this treatment is so readily covered by Medicare and by most major insurance providers. Diagnostic fluoroscopy to target the pain, Viscosupplementation Therapy to relieve the pain. Simple, fast and no surgery!

Do you Suffer from any of these Symptoms?

There are a number of reasons why you developed Osteoarthritis pain. It can develop with age or because of heredity. It could be from repetitive stress from a job or some glory days in athletics. Of course your concern is with the symptoms you face daily and how to make them end, hopefully without surgery or the use of potentially addictive medications. **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** understands the symptoms you have been living with and can help. If you have any of the symptoms below, please call us today. Relief is a phone call away.

- **Pain** - Whether it's a sharp aching or maybe a burning sensation, the pain can range from irritating to debilitating.
- **Swelling** - This can cause tenderness and soreness to the entire knee area, making walking or going up and down stairs painful, getting in and out of bed or bathtubs difficult and dangerous just name a few activities affected by swelling.
- **Stiffness** - Getting up out of bed or after sitting for a period of time gets more and more difficult. This loss of mobility can be more than a hindrance. It can be dangerous if you need to move quickly.
- **Loss of muscle strength** - This can lead to balance issues and the strong possibility of falling.
- **Joint deformity** - Not just unsightly, but painful as well.
- **Creaking Joints** - Can be painful and a sign of more discomfort to come.
- **Sleepless nights** - Losing sleep over your suffering is not just irritating, but potentially dangerous because of so many other health concerns that can be affected by loss of sound sleep.

Let Me Show You Targeted Relief From Your Knee Pain

Every day, I see patients suffering from knee pain due to arthritis, osteoarthritis, sports injuries or other conditions. Many have been told that they are in need of knee replacement surgery. Other patients say they have been prescribed various prescription medications to deal with the pain.

Something else I see almost every day, are patients that have tried viscosupplementation knee injections elsewhere and found it to be a painful and ineffective experience because the injections were not administered using fluoroscopic guidance. Instead of using the incredibly accurate diagnostic fluoroscopy we use at **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** these patients experienced a blind injection technique, which can be as inaccurate as playing pin the tail on the donkey.

Once I am able to explain to my patients about the pin point accuracy of using diagnostic fluoroscopy and the amazing results viscosupplementation can provide, they are thrilled to get started. They are even more thrilled when they feel the relief. Please contact **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** today to schedule your RISK FREE consultation. Call 732-827-0800

Scot Paris MD, FACS



Here's what our patients have to say

"I'm dancing without pain. I can move with no problem whatsoever. I can go up and down steps with no pain."

- Patricia G.

"Over 85% relief for the first time in 15 years, suffering with knee pain. My life is getting back to normal."

- Perry O.

"After only four visits, I have absolutely no pain! The staff is "top-notch."

- Quentin L.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY LUNCHEON - FEB 2ND

Westfield Historical Society

For the Westfield Historical Society's First Wednesday Luncheon series in February, guests are welcome to the in-person luncheon at Ferraro's Restaurant on Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 11:45 a.m. Joel Farkas will present a program on "The Pilgrims and the Mayflower — from Sea to Shining Sea".

An expert on our founding fathers and mothers, Joel Farkas will weave the tale of why and how the Pilgrims set sail on the Mayflower and its legacy. Beginning with the Ancient Greeks through a history of explorers, he will connect the voyage of the Mayflower to the wives of Henry VIII. Farkas' talk proves to be a

voyage to remember.

Mr. Farkas has lectured extensively on the American Revolution, including insights on George Washington, the founding fathers, the war in New Jersey, the lesser-known heroes of the Revolution, as well as the role and impact of women during the war. He is a lecturer at the Lifelong Learning Institute at Fairleigh Dickinson University and a volunteer docent at Washington's headquarters in Morristown, NJ. He received the National Park Service Centennial Volunteer Challenge Award. A collector of original historical autographs, Mr. Farkas is a graduate of Ohio State University and served as an officer in the United States Army.

Those wishing to attend the luncheon may make a reservation by email to westfieldhistoricalsociety@gmail.com; or by calling 908-654-1794, before Wednesday, January 26th. Please advise if there are special dietary needs. The luncheon fee of \$35 (WHS members) or \$40 (non-members) includes a three-course meal, coffee/tea, and gratuity. Depending on COVID transmission levels, tables will be spaced out and mask wearing is recommended, except when actively eating or drinking. The luncheon fee should be paid in advance (check payable to Westfield Historical Society) by mailing to Westfield Historical Society, P.O. Box 613, Westfield, NJ, 07091; by Venmo to @Westfield-HistoricalSociety; or online at westfieldhistoricalsociety.org/registration. Payments should be received by the Friday prior

to the luncheon, January 28, 2022.

Since 1968, the 501(c)(3) non-profit Westfield Historical Society has worked to preserve, interpret, and encourage interest in history, Westfield, and its residents through educational efforts and community outreach programs.

For more information on the Westfield Historical Society and their events, visit westfieldhistoricalsociety.org, like them on Facebook, and follow them on Instagram.



(above) Joel Farkas will present a program entitled "The Pilgrims and the Mayflower — from Sea to Shining Sea" for the Westfield Historical Society's First Wednesday Luncheon Program to be held on February 2nd at Ferraro's Restaurant. Reservations required.

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Irene Rossmer, MD, FACS, is a fellowship trained, Board-Certified surgical oncologist skilled in the surgical treatment of cancers of the gastrointestinal tract, liver and pancreas, skin and soft tissue, and breast. Now she's brought her extensive expertise to Clark. After receiving her medical degree from the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, she returned to her alma mater Columbia University and completed her surgical residency at the New York Presbyterian Columbia Campus. She then went on to complete a highly competitive 2-year fellowship in surgical oncology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Following her training, she built a robust surgical oncology practice at NYU-Long Island, and we have been extremely fortunate to recruit her to join our world-class surgical oncology team. The recipient of multiple awards and honors for her clinical work and research, Dr. Rossmer is now treating cancer patients right here in our own backyard.

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IS IT REALLY POSSIBLE FOR A KID TO LEARN HOW TO RUN FASTER?

Retired San Francisco 49ers QB Joe Montana, is arguably one of the greatest NFL players that has ever played football...when his son started playing football it would have made sense for him to help his son learn how to play Quarterback.

But that's not how it went. Joe Montana had to hire a quarterback coach to help his son be a better football player. Here's possibly the greatest NFL QB of all time, needing to hire someone else to help his son. It was not that Joe Montana was not equipped for the job...it was that his son needed a second voice to help him get to the next level.

Many parents who have much less knowledge, experience, and skills than Joe Montana are in the same boat in regards to helping their kids get stronger, faster, and more confident.

Most parents we've come across want their kids to eat healthier, be more active, and have a stronger mindset. But many have told us they need help.

Even with the constant reminders of telling their kids to eat more vegetables, get outside instead of watching TV, practice their sport more, get to bed earlier...they find that sometimes the message falls on deaf ears...and some backup would be helpful toward their vision of helping their kid be the best they can be.

Parents have told us that having us(the Grit Athlete Performance Coaches) as a second voice to help reinforce the habits they want for their kids...is changing the game.

Further...Our Grit Athlete Founder has over 20 years experience with training athletes himself...and certainly knows a LOT more about getting stronger and faster than the average parent...But has all 3 of his children(9, 8 and 6) enrolled in Grit year round....because he knows the power of that second voice.

And after they come through our program, parents tell how it's turbocharging their parenting. Here are some real-life examples that have been reported...

Before, parents struggled with getting kids to eat vegetables...now their kids are asking for more.

Before, parents struggled with getting their kids to get enough sleep....now their kids are getting to bed earlier on their own.

Before, parents struggled with getting their kids to watch less TV or play video games...now they are limiting these activities because they've learned they don't really help them become better athletes.

Before, parents struggled with helping their kids have more confidence...now their kids are doing things out of their comfort zone more often which is helping them believe in themselves which further improves self-esteem.

Before, parents had no clue how to help their kid get faster...now they are faster because they've learned that speed is a skill, and a few simple tweaks can make a kid faster immediately.

Before, parents could not get their kids to make their beds...now their kid makes their

bed each morning on their own because they learned that making their bed in the morning helps them have a better day.

Before, parents struggled with getting their kids to do even one good push-up...now they catch them in their room practicing on their own.

Before, parents wanted their kids to have more determination and grit when training new things...now they are staying calm under pressure and seeking out challenges instead of avoiding them.

Many times it's not about telling your kid to eat more vegetables or stop watching TV...but rather finding the right environment for them to be more successful.

Right in your backyard, there's a team of great coaches waiting to be second voices for your kids...so that all the things you're teaching as parents will be reinforced. But most importantly, the results you're after for your kids will actually become a reality. The Grit Athlete winter Sports Performance session starts on January 3rd in Berkeley Heights NJ, visit www.gritathletes.com to fill out an application for your child.

Grit Athlete Performance is a Sports Performance Training Company located in Berkeley Heights that helps kids ages 6-18 get strong, fast, and confident so they can have a bigger and better future. They have just released the dates for their winter program that starts on January 3rd. Visit www.gritathletes.com to register for their winter session...or see below for more details...

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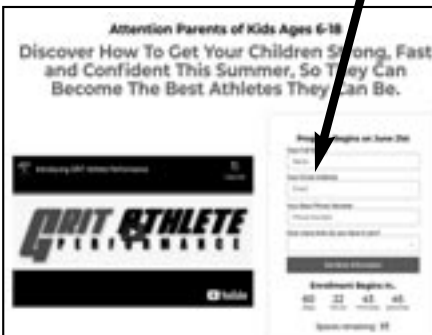
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Attention Parents of Kids Ages 6-18

UPDATE: THE GRIT ATHLETE PERFORMANCE WINTER PROGRAM HAS ONLY 9 SPACES REMAINING

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- They'll become **more coordinated and improve agility** which means they'll pick up new skills their coaches teach them faster.
- **Your children will start to eat better** because we'll be educating them daily on what's good and what they should avoid ...don't be surprised if they start asking you to buy more vegetables.
- **Confidence will skyrocket.** When kids get stronger, faster and more fit...their confidence will rise...so will their self-esteem which means their performance in every aspect of life will get better.
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- “I have watched my children become more confident and vocal.”
- Christine Stramandinoli, Grit Athlete Parent
- “His confidence has shot up in the last few months...and has carried forward to the way he approaches other activities like sports and schoolwork. My son is now making his bed daily and exercising every day.”
- Catherine Solfaro, Grit Athlete Parent

STARTS JANUARY 3rd (Only 9 Spaces Remaining)

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A BIRTHDAY WISH HELPS FOSTER CARE CHILDREN CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS

Submitted by Colby Sheppard

Westfield resident Jane Hoffman of A Birthday Wish was selected in early 2021 as an honoree of the New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Awards.

The New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Awards are the state's official recognition for community service and are in partnership with the Governor's Council on volunteerism.

"At A Birthday Wish, we believe that all children in foster care deserve to know that their life matters and that they are truly special. We exist to give children in foster care a birthday gift and card selected specifically for them. In the process, we work to raise awareness about the issues surrounding foster care and advocate for better ways to serve these wonderful children. Through the money we raise, we are able to reach children on their birthday with a message of hope, in celebration of their life."

In 2011, Jane and Christian Hoffman became adoptive parents and it forever opened their hearts to vulnerable children around the world. They were immediately struck by the human capacity to love, the transformative power of

family, and each person's ability to make a difference in the lives of others.

In 2014, Jane Hoffman founded A Birthday Wish in partnership with CASA of Union County, New Jersey. Born from a simple conversation with her three daughters about how to help children in foster care, A Birthday Wish has become an opportunity to acknowledge the birthdays of foster children in New Jersey and to celebrate each child's inherent worth.

Currently, Jane brings her message of inclusion, empathy, and kindness to Middle School students in New Jersey through a network of A Birthday Wish school clubs, focusing on

celebrating children in foster care on their birthday and raising awareness about the challenges that children in care face on a daily basis. Through these student-led clubs, participants learn leadership skills and the ability to create change in their local communities.

The 2020 ceremony was postponed until early 2021 and we are so happy to have Jane Hoffman and A Birthday Wish supporting so many in the foster care system and teaching local children the importance of helping others in our community and beyond!

For more information about A Birthday Wish, visit abirthdaywish.org.



(above) Jane Hoffman was an honoree of the New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Awards for her creating A Birthday Wish.

Photo courtesy of New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Awards



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WESTFIELD STUDENTS PAY TRIBUTE TO OUR NATION'S VETERANS

Westfield Public Schools

Whether writing letters and handmade cards, reading books about patriotism and heroes, holding assemblies, or learning how Veterans Day was established, students in the Westfield Public Schools paid tribute on November 11th to the nation's men and women in uniform, past and present, to thank them for their service and sacrifice.

Seventh graders in Brian Vieth's social studies class at Roosevelt Intermediate School utilized visual literacy skills to conduct a historical analysis of a painting by Childe Hassam entitled, "Allies Day, May 1917", which depicts New York City's 5th Avenue decorated with the flags of the United States, Britain, and France one month after the U.S. had officially entered the First World War. In the classroom next door, eighth graders wrote letters to veterans and current members of the armed forces while teacher, Kira Brady, reviewed the history of Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day, to mark the end of World War I.

"If you know someone in your life who is a veteran, remember to thank them for their service," Brady told her students.

Organized by vocal music instructor, Kenneth Horn, and emceed by fellow vocal music instructor, Stephen Markowski, an assembly at Edison Intermediate School included the

presentation of colors and flag salute by Emma Blaustein and Flynn Martin, members of Scout Troops 72/772, patriotic medleys by the eighth grade band and chorus, and a video presentation honoring family members of Edison staff who are veterans and active members of the military.

Keynote speaker and EIS social studies teacher, Robert Maver, who served in the U.S. Army from 1996–1999 and in the New Jersey National Guard from 1999–2004, talked about his military service in Bosnia. He spoke about educating local children there to stay away from landmines as well as a young girl who, when offered a gift as part of a U.S. holiday outreach, asked for chalk and school supplies. He encouraged students gathered for the assembly to never "pass up an opportunity to talk to a family member about his or her service."

Students at Franklin wore t-shirts representing the Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship) while collecting candy and writing handmade cards for U.S. troops. Many listened to a video recording of "The Impossible Patriotism Project" by Linda Skeers, narrated by several Franklin educators.

There were other educational and heartfelt commemorations across the district, as teachers read books and led discussions on the importance of Veterans Day. Jefferson's first graders created

handmade pictures and notes, which teacher, Wendy Hahn, arranged with a local restaurant to be delivered to each veteran who arrived for lunch or dinner.

"It was a wonderful experience for the students and really seemed to mean a great deal to the veterans I spoke to," said Hahn, who hand-delivered some of the notes.



Retired U.S. Army veteran and social studies teacher, Robert Maver, talked about his military service in Bosnia during a Veterans Day assembly at Edison Intermediate School on November 11th

Photos by Westfield Public Schools



(above) Jefferson's first graders created pictures and notes for U.S. troops.



(above, left) Roosevelt's eighth grader, Giuseppe DiPietro, thanks U.S. service members while learning about the history of Veterans Day. (right) Jefferson's first grade teacher, Wendy Hahn, delivers handmade notes and letters to veterans at an Applebee's in Clark

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Optimist Club and Rotary Club

On Saturday, December 18, members of the Westfield Optimist Club and Rotary Club demonstrated their commitment to community service by providing holiday food to Westfield area families and local food pantries. Due to current health and safety concerns and food restrictions, ShopRite and Stop & Shop food gift cards were distributed to families instead of food baskets.

The Holiday Food delivery program has been an annual community service project for the Optimist Club of Westfield for the past 31 years.

This project is made possible through the generosity and funding from the Optimist Club and the Rotary Club of Westfield and contributions from members, friends and local organizations that sponsor gift cards. A special thank you to The Westfield Foundation, Rotary Foundation, Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Northfield Bank Foundation and the Westfield Y Men's Club for their contributions and support.

One hundred holiday food gift cards were delivered to local families, the Westfield Food

Pantry, Presbyterian Church Agape Food Program, Union County College Student Assistance Food Pantry and the Saint Joseph's Social Service Center Food Pantry. Thank you to members of both organizations who attended the breakfast and delivered the gift cards.

The involvement of volunteers and local organizations ensures the success of this annual program, which reflects the mission of helping those in need and assisting members of our community.



(above) Members of the Westfield Optimist Club and Rotary Club delivered over one hundred holiday food gift cards this holiday season.

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Westfield Public Schools

A fifth-grade science unit on space took on special significance in fall of 2021 as fifth graders at Wilson Elementary School in Westfield, NJ wrote letters to a famous Wilson alumnus as part of the unit.

Billionaire and entrepreneur, Jared Isaacman, orbited the Earth in September 2021 as part of the all-civilian crew of the SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule dubbed Resilience. In a space.com article, Isaacman recalls enjoying picture books of the Space Shuttle as a student at Wilson, telling his kindergarten teacher that he would go into space someday.

"He walked these hallways," Wilson fifth grade teacher, Coral Venturino, told her students as they prepared in November 2021 to write letters to Isaacman. "He lived in an ordinary town but went on to do extraordinary things."

The Wilson fifth grade team of Venturino, Katherine Brown, and Alexander Schmidt included Isaacman's trip into space as part of the traditional science unit, with students writing fictional dispatches from the moon and brainstorming ideas of how Isaacman has inspired them. The fifth graders illustrated cards and wrote letters with questions about space for

Isaacman.

The classes also created a bulletin board titled "Our Future is Limitless."

"The bulletin board title is the idea for the letters. Basically, Jared had big dreams," said Venturino. "We are not only allowed to have 'out of this world' aspirations, but we are also encouraged to have them. We are inspired by those who shoot for the stars and make it happen like Jared Isaacman, who most certainly stood right where we stand in our hall at Wilson School. Our future is truly limitless."



(above) Wilson fifth graders in Coral Venturino's class learn about Wilson alumnus, Jared Isaacman, as part of a science unit on space.



(above, l-r) Wilson fifth graders, Sophie Fernandez, illustrates a card for Wilson alumnus, Jared Isaacman; Alexandra Benke, illustrates a card for alumnus, Jared Isaacman; Rocco Dufkis, stands in front of a bulletin board as part of a science unit on space inspired by billionaire space traveler, Jared Isaacman.

Photos by Westfield Public Schools

SOPHIA'S BOOK STAND


Westfield Public Schools

Eager to help other children during the pandemic, Franklin second grader, Sophia Parekh, established an organization called Sophia's Book Stand, which uses donations to help provide books to underprivileged families and classrooms. To date, she has given out 2,300 books. "I am making sure that all children have books to read and will love reading forever," Sophia said during a segment that aired on the Drew Barrymore Show. Sophia appeared as a guest on the show on November 16th in recognition of her charitable efforts.



(above) Sophia Parekh has already given out 2,300 books as a result of her organization, Sophia's Book Stand!

Photo by Westfield Public Schools

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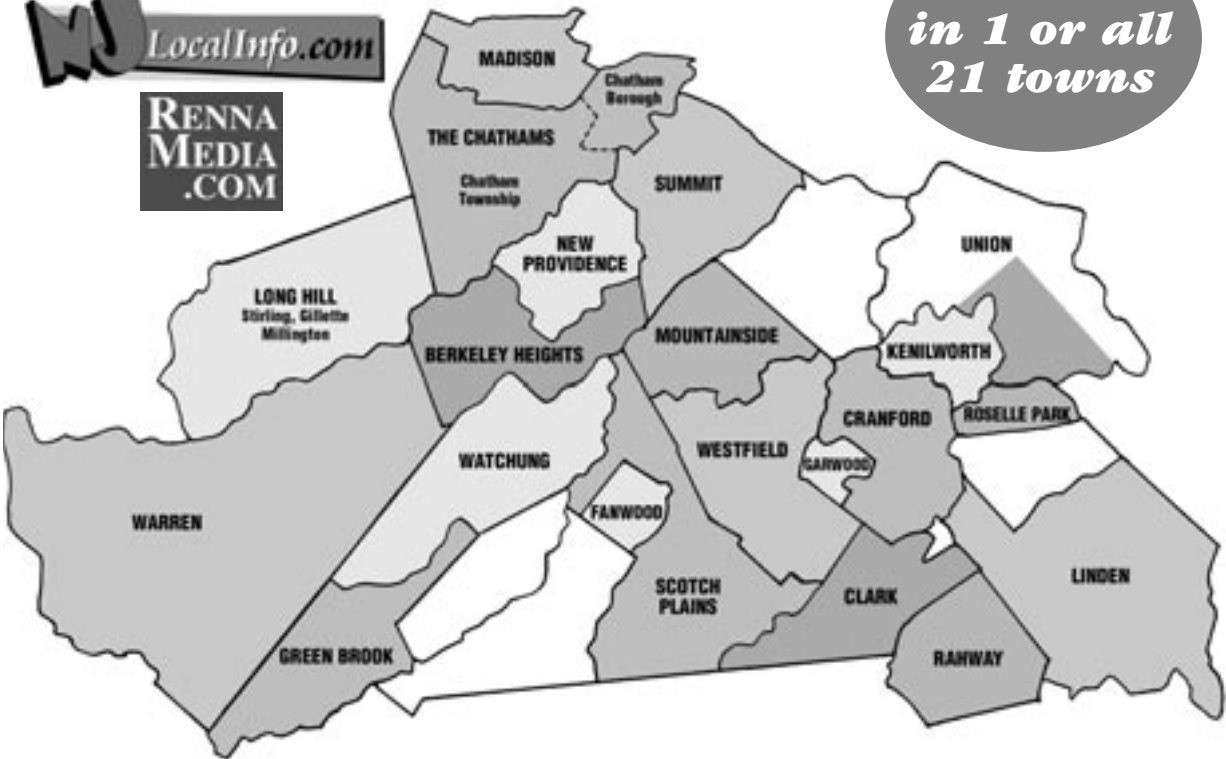
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KENILWORTH CHESS CLUB IS BACK ON BOARD

Westfield MONTHLY • Page 19 • January 2022

The Kenilworth Chess Club resumed meeting on November 11, 2021, after twenty months of being closed due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

Club President Jack McCorkell of Cranford held a "Welcome Back Tournament" to celebrate. The casual unrated tournament excited members, and even some new arrivals, who were itching to play "over the board" again. The three-week tournament ended in a tie for first place between Hanna Malko of Clark and Joe Renna of Cranford.

The club was formed in 1972 amid the chess craze in America spearheaded by Bobby Fischer's march to the world championship. For 45 years the club was a force to be reckoned with as its member roster included many Master level players, including state champions.

The club has a reputation for being friendly and accommodating. It welcomes non-members with no obligation or cost. It's a place where beginners can learn in a casual setting without being intimidated. Strong players are generous with their time in analyzing and giving instruction.

The club's website, kenilworthchessclub.org, is well read and features an award-winning blog by Michael Goeller and other instructional features.

Players are welcome to just pop into the Kenilworth Chess Club with no formalities every Thursday evening at 8 p.m. at the Kenilworth Community Center located next to Kenilworth Borough Hall on the Boulevard and the corner of 24th Street.



(above, l-r) Brandon Verno of Kenilworth, John Moldovan of Garwood, Hannah Malko of Clark, Jack McCorkell of Cranford, Mark Shoengold and Louis Leiggi of Colonia analyze a critical position during the post mortem of Welcome Back Tournament game between Verno and Leiggi held at the Kenilworth Chess Club.

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Call to visit our two Garwood Locations:

SUV & Trucks
507-13 South Avenue
Garwood, NJ 07027
908-789-1551
Fax 908-789-2744

Cars & Specialty Vehicles
150 South Avenue
Garwood, NJ 07027
908-789-0555
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