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## ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE OKTOBERFEST CELEBRATION

St. John The Apostle Church had a parish Oktoberfest on Sunday, Sept. 25th, 2022 at the Deutscher Club, located in Clark, NJ. Live music was provided by the German band The Adlers. German and American food and beverages were

available to purchase.

St. John The Apostle is located at 1805 Penbrook Terrace in Linden, NJ. The Parish serves the communities of Linden, Clark, Cranford, Rahway and Winfield.

*Photos from this and other events can be found online at [rennamedia.com](http://rennamedia.com) and on the Our Town Rahway page on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com). Feel free to "Like," "Tag," and "Share."*



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Our Town Rahway

## RAHWAY RWJ BARNABAS HEALTH BOOKBAG GIVEAWAY

RWJ Barnabas Health provided 150 bookbags filled with school supplies for children in the community. The bags were recently distributed to the clientele of Rahway Food For Friends.



Photo by Rahway Food for Friends

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## NORTHERN NEW JERSEY'S MOST INTIMATE COFFEEHOUSE

The Salem Roadhouse Café presents Zuko, Philips, Cohn & Starr, on Saturday, October 8, 2022. The doors open at 7:30 p.m.

Zuko, Philips, Cohn & Starr have carved themselves a unique niche within the realm of rock classic tunes. Focused mostly on vocals and light accompaniment with a pair of guitars and a djembe for rhythm, this group of very talented and familiar Roadhouse performers has taken classic rock tunes we all know and love and put a lighter spin on them. The usual trappings of rock with its requisite "wall of sound" is avoided, making the lyrics and tunes able to be heard clearly. Focused on rich harmonies, their sound is catching on like wildfire. Come and hear songs as you've never heard them before!

The Salem Roadhouse Café is live, intimate, upfront, and personal. All ages are welcome. Located in the Townley Presbyterian Church, 829 Salem Rd., Union, NJ. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., show starts at 8:00 p.m. Admission is \$20. Admission includes show, snacks, non-alcoholic beverages, and dessert.

Plan now for an evening of great music in Northern New Jersey's Most Intimate Coffeehouse™.

### ABOUT SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ

It's not "church music." It's music music.

Folks who've come to the Salem Roadhouse Café know that it's a clean, safe place for people who enjoy listening to live music — in a world

otherwise filled with clubs and bars. The Roadhouse has always offered its stage to local and independent mainstream musicians. Jazz, rock, folk, and other groups have performed. What's the common thread? They're all great musicians playing the kind of music people like to hear. There's no message, just music.

The Roadhouse started in 2008 by members of Townley Presbyterian Church with a grant from the Presbytery of Elizabeth. Hey — that's why we're located where we are. The Roadhouse operates as a non-profit that raises funds for several carefully chosen local charities. That's its social mission.

But the many musicians who've played the Salem Roadhouse Café see it as a solid performance venue. They love it because of its

special intimacy and great audiences. They say people here "really listen." Ask any of the musicians you meet here — they love to play the Roadhouse, and they want to come back often.

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT


The Salem Roadhouse Café has raised funds for many carefully chosen charities. They include: The Presbytery of Elizabeth E-port Center, Center For Hope Hospice, Community Food Bank, Monarch Housing, Angel Paws Animal Rescue, National MS Society, Haiti Disaster Relief, Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief, The Union County YWCA Domestic Violence Programs, Making It Possible To End Homelessness, Camp Johnsonburg, The Music Institute, and others. Thousands of dollars have been raised for these deserving charities.

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Photo by Marko Korosec, near Julesburg, Colorado


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## YMCA SUPPORTS COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

The Gateway Family YMCA is encouraging community members to join, and continue, the conversation about mental health.

Mental health is how we think, feel and act. “At the Y, we recognize that we all have mental health, and mental health is an important part of our physical health and social-emotional well-being, as well as a core component of our identity,” stated Krystal R. Canady, CEO, The Gateway Family YMCA.

“We can all play a role in supporting each other’s mental health – at the Y and in our communities,” said Melynda A. Mileski, EVP/COO, The Gateway Family YMCA. “The first step is to start talking in our communities about what mental health really is.”

Help the Y get the conversation going about mental health by sharing these facts with friends and family:

**FACT:** We all have mental health, not just those who live with a mental illness. Everyone faces challenges in their life that can impact our mental health.

**FACT:** There are many things we can do each day to positively impact our mental health. A few examples include: moving, fueling and resting our bodies; being mindful of how we’re feeling and what’s going on around us; connecting with others; and asking for help when needed.

**FACT:** In addition to biological and environmental factors, mental health is influenced by health inequities that can be attributed to systemic racism, the social determinants of health and exposure to trauma. Ys and community organizations can support mental health by addressing barriers that prevent marginalized communities from having access to the support they need.

**FACT:** Mental health and physical health are interconnected, and both can impact your overall well-being. For example, research shows that exercise can alleviate long-term depression.

**FACT:** Positive mental health can be supported in community settings, like the Y, in addition to traditional clinical settings. The Y supports the mental health of individuals and communities in all of the work we do to help people reach their full potential—whether that’s The Gateway Family YMCA supporting youth in our summer camps, helping people achieve their best physical health or providing newcomer immigrants access to housing and community services.

**FACT:** We all can support the mental health of our community through bringing empathy, compassion and kindness to our interactions with others. Something as simple as intentionally asking “how are you?” and encouraging honest answers can provide us an opportunity to normalize mental health and help others when they need it.



Help is available for those struggling with their mental health. For a list of resources visit the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

For immediate help 24-hours a day, call 800-273-8255 or text TALK to 741741.

The YMCA offers programs to assist with mindfulness, meditation and mental health. Join the conversation, and connect with your community. Learn more at [tgfymca.org](https://tgfymca.org)

The Gateway Family YMCA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, health and community service organization of caring staff and volunteers dedicated to strengthening community through Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility. The Gateway Family YMCA impacts the community by providing quality services for all. The Y doesn’t just strengthen bodies – it strengthens people, families and communities.

For more information visit [tgfymca.org](https://tgfymca.org) or contact the Elizabeth Branch 908-355-9622, Five Points Branch 908-688-9622, Rahway Branch 732-388-0057 or the Wellness Center and WISE Center Branch at 908-349-9622.

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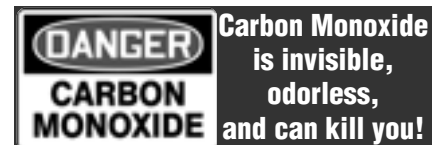
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## ST. JOSEPH SOCIAL SERVICE CENTER FUNDRAISING DINNER

St. Joseph's serves the materially poor and homeless community of greater Elizabeth. The economic fallout from the pandemic has created an unanticipated increase in the demand for basic human needs such as food and medications.

Now, more than ever, we could use the support and participation of the community at our Annual Fundraising Dinner, which will be held on October 20, at 6 p.m., at the Westwood in Garwood, NJ.

### HERE'S HOW TO SUPPORT OUR FUNDRAISER:

Online: To purchase Dinner Tickets, Sponsorships, or to Donate online, please go to [sjeliz.org/special-events.html](http://sjeliz.org/special-events.html)

Mail: To purchase Raffle tickets, Dinner Tickets, Sponsorships, or to Donate by mail, please click to download the order form from [sjeliz.org/special-events.html](http://sjeliz.org/special-events.html)

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

We hope you'll support us with ticket purchases, sponsorships, and donations and join us at our dinner on October 20.



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## MOM AND DAUGHTER RAISE AWARENESS OF ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

### *New Jersey Sharing Network*

Jane Fischer and her daughter, Suzy, understand what it takes to overcome some of life's greatest challenges. As they celebrated Suzy's 48th birthday on July 18, they both took time to reflect on the gift of life and the miracle of organ and tissue donation.

On the day Suzy was born, doctors told Jane and her husband, Al, that their daughter would never be able to talk or walk or play like other children. While Suzy's special needs were great, Jane and Al kept hope alive that they would be able to persevere on the difficult journey ahead.

"Suzy proved them all wrong," said Jane. "Over the years, she has kept defying all the odds through her tenacity, courage, and strength. She surprised some of the best pediatricians and neurologists in our area by constantly working hard to develop and learn to do all the things they said she could never do."

While Suzy's life seemed to be filled with endless obstacles, she began to develop critical health issues shortly after turning 24 years old. Her kidneys began to fail, and she was soon placed on dialysis.

"It seemed like there were complications in nearly every one of her dialysis sessions," said Jane. "It took its emotional toll on Suzy and all of us, but she always did her best to keep her smile and the staff at the dialysis center loved her."

In December 2000, the Fischer family was in an airport in Jacksonville, Florida, when Jane's pager kept beeping and buzzing. "At the time, I mistakenly thought it was due to air traffic signals creating interference," said Jane. "But when we arrived home in New Jersey after our flight, we received an urgent phone call from our transplant coordinator at Saint Barnabas (Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center). They had a donated kidney for Suzy!"

Suzy received a successful kidney transplant, and the family is forever grateful to the 64-year-old woman who gave the gift of life. For 13 years, Suzy's transplanted kidney restored her health and she continued to fight through other serious health issues, including thyroid cancer that forced her to undergo a thyroidectomy.

In 2013, Suzy's transplanted kidney began to fail, and she faced another uphill struggle as dialysis loomed as the only treatment option. However, Suzy received encouraging news when another donated kidney became available for transplant. This time, her donor hero was a 24-year-old man who passed away in a tragic motorcycle accident.

"Suzy definitely had a lot of survivor's guilt," said Jane. "It helped ease her pain when I explained to her that the young man would have wanted his kidney to go to her to keep his memory alive."

Today, Suzy continues to thrive and enjoy

life's most precious moments thanks to her organ donor heroes. Suzy and Jane have made it a priority to support NJ Sharing Network, the nonprofit organization responsible for the recovery and placement of donated organs and tissue in the Garden State. By sharing their story with others, Suzy and Jane hope to encourage more people to register as organ and tissue donors.

"The most important thing is to get others to understand the need for organ and tissue donation and how it saves and enhances the lives of others," said Jane. "We also want to keep hope alive for those waiting for a life-saving transplant. We want to encourage them to never give up. I do not know why Suzy's life has been so hard, but I have always believed it has been to help others and make a difference in someone else's life."

According to United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), there are over 100,000 Americans – nearly 4,000 of whom live in New Jersey – waiting for a life-saving transplant. One organ and tissue donor can save eight lives and enhance the lives of over 75 others.

"We forever honor our donor heroes, as well as their supportive families, for their selfless decision to save and enhance the lives of others. Because of them, Suzy and all transplant recipients now have more birthdays, holidays, and special moments to share with their loved ones," said Joseph S. Roth, President and CEO of NJ Sharing Network.

To learn more, get involved and register as an organ and tissue donor, visit [NJSharingNetwork.org](http://NJSharingNetwork.org).



(above, l-r) Jane and Suzy Fischer.

Photo courtesy of NJ Sharing Network

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# 5TH ANNUAL BENEFIT CONCERT FOR THE HOMELESS

On Sunday, October 9, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark will host its 5th Annual Benefit Concert for the Homeless at St. Philomena Church in Livingston. All proceeds from the event will help to fund the homeless programs and services of the agency that provides assistance to thousands of individuals and families in need.

The Drive-In Concert will offer a variety of

family/kid friendly activities (face painting, magicians, balloon artists, etc.) along with a full concert by New Jersey's own "The Nerds" – a widely acclaimed rock and roll band. Food trucks will be available but folks are encouraged to tailgate as well.

Registered participants get a parking space with an adjoining space to set –up chairs, etc. Each car can carry up to 6 occupants and parking

spaces are priced at \$300, \$175 & \$125 based on their proximity to the stage.

For event details, please visit [ccanconcert22.GiveSmart.com](http://ccanconcert22.GiveSmart.com) or call Peter Ruccione, Catholic Charities Director of Development, at 973-818-4060.

Last year Catholic Charities provided over 71,000 nights of Shelter, food, and clothing for over 1,171 people, individuals and families.

For more information on Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark, visit [ccannj.org](http://ccannj.org).

### ABOUT CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark has been in operation since 1903 serving adults, children, families, seniors, veterans, and those suffering from HIV with compassionate care and services that provide help and hope. Our 84 programs serve close to 50,000 individuals in Bergen, Essex, Hudson and Union Counties annually. Our programs include counseling and support services for at-risk youth and their families; psychological and psychiatric help for those with mental illness; job training for those who are cognitively disabled; childhood education for preschoolers in Newark, Bloomfield and Elizabeth; emergency shelter for the homeless and for those who are HIV-positive; affordable housing for low-income families; immigration legal services; refugee resettlement; and adoption services.



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# A GHOST STORY IN TIME FOR HALLOWEEN

Submitted by Al Shipley, City Historian and Rahway Library Research Consultant

A secluded Victorian styled mansion in a remote part of town, a mysterious fire, shadowy apparitions, and eerie noises in the night, create the ideal scenario for this Halloween offering.

To fully understand this story, one needs to know something about the peculiarities of the area where it takes place. Early on in Rahway's history, the town was settled and developed into four sections, mainly due to the branches of the river quartering the city. The smallest section and the farthest removed from the other more populous and prosperous sections, was Milton which was located on the west side of St. Georges Avenue between Central Avenue and Lake Avenue. The few, scattered homes were on Jefferson, Maple and West Hazelwood Avenues. Everything west of Jefferson was open fields and woodland. The Milton section did not have a good reputation. Residents of the more genteel sections of the city viewed the neighborhood as a rough place inhabited by any number of unsavory characters. This was the section that had been the scene of the infamous unknown woman murder in 1887 and several suicides. It was not unusual for strange things to happen in Milton.

After the Civil War, Charles B. Pratt, a successful New York broker, constructed a large two-and-a-half story, 20 room mansion in a secluded wooded area on the outskirts of the Milton section. The house, one of the largest in

the city, stood alone approximately 200 yards from the Maple Avenue Bridge and even further from its nearest neighbor. The only entrance to the estate was a long, narrow, gravel drive that meandered through the thick woods until opening to a beautifully landscaped expanse with a scenic view of Milton Lake.

Pratt, his wife and four sons lived in the elegant home for several decades and were active in the life of the city. Pratt died in 1891 and by the 1920s the mansion was showing signs of disrepair and neglect caused by the ravages of time. As family members passed away or moved to other places, it became more and more difficult to maintain the property. One son, Charles E. Pratt, a bachelor, remained the sole occupant, his only companion, his pet bulldog.

In February, 1923 Charles hired a young couple from New York to oversee the estate as he was often away and feared vandals would do damage to the property. Less than a month after the caretakers arrived, disaster struck. In the early morning hours of Friday, March 9, with Charles off the premises, the couple was awakened by the frantic barking of the bulldog coming from a room at the other end of the house. They quickly rushed into the hallway only to be overcome by the smoke and heat of a raging fire. Unable to make their way to save the pet, whose barking had stopped, they ran out of the house to safety.

When the firemen arrived, the mansion was a roaring furnace. To make matters worse, because hydrants had never been installed in the Milton section, fire hoses had to be dropped into the river so water could be pumped to the site. Water pressure covering the long distance to the inferno was so low the hoses were rendered almost useless. When the fire was finally extinguished and the firemen gone from the scene, only the walls of the once proud Pratt mansion were left standing. The cause of the blaze was never officially confirmed, but it was believed that sparks from a stove in the room

where the dog was kept ignited a stack of wood.

Unusual sights and sounds around the charred ruins began to be reported by residents of Milton shortly after the conflagration. The mild weather of spring brought the curious out at night and those who were brave-hearted enough began to venture closer to the grim remains despite the "No Trespassing" signs posted along the driveway. It didn't take long for the residents of Milton to believe the place was haunted. The police were called to the neighborhood numerous times and given descriptions of phantoms and gray apparitions flitting about the place. Young boys were known to run wildly back to their homes claiming to have heard the barking of Pratt's bulldog. Reports were given that ghosts had fired a gun in the air. Organized searches were planned, but never set off. There were those who swore they would never go near the place and warned others to stay away.

The authorities reasoned that the curious were being frightened off by any number of individuals who might be hiding on the property on any given night. The Pratt's were a wealthy family and there were those who went to the site with hopes of discovering valuables in the ashes. Their shadows and noises might have frightened people off. Bootleggers would find the location to be a good place to hide and would probably take pleasure in scaring any intruders. Tramps would find the ruins a good place to spend a night. The secluded area was also a magnet for young couples who when startled might easily have been mistaken for ghosts as they ran off and melted into the night. Some discounted the stories as just a product of the imagination.

The legend of the haunted area began to die down in the late 1930s when the property was finally cleared and 12 homes were built on Midwood Drive. Lakeside Drive and Crescent Drive would not be developed until the 1950s.

This writer is not aware of any reports having been made over the past 80 plus years concerning strange or unusual occurrences in the area. But then again... Happy Halloween!



(above) A portion of an 1884 map shows the Milton section of Rahway, NJ. The Pratt mansion is shown west of Madison Avenue between Hazelwood and Milton. All three roadways were paper streets at the time (appeared on a map, but not yet built). Adams Street from the railroad west to Madison would be renamed Maple Avenue in 1897.

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# AUTUMN

Many folks consider fall their favorite season. The cooler evenings are welcome after a blistering hot summer like we had this year. The changing tree colors we enjoy in the northeast are famous worldwide and my reason is the end of mosquito season.

Now that autumn is officially here many people will begin the annual ritual of decorating their homes with Indian corn and pumpkins. For gardeners fall is the second planting season. Shrubs, trees and spring flowering bulbs are planted now. Perennials can also be divided now and most have an advantage in the spring when root growth gets an early start. Check your plants requirements before digging them up.

Autumnal leaves in vibrant hues are a beautiful part of the season, but those leaves are also a vital part of keeping trees alive

Trees that have leaves that change color in fall are deciduous. (Evergreens are trees with needles, which stay green to continue the photosynthesis process through the winter, are coniferous.) Deciduous trees usually have large, broad leaves.

Most of the year, these leaves are green because of the chlorophyll they use to absorb energy from sunlight during photosynthesis. The leaves convert the energy into sugars to feed the tree.

As the season changes, temperatures drop and days get shorter. Trees get less direct sunlight, and the chlorophyll in the leaves breaks down.

The lack of chlorophyll reveals yellow and orange pigments that were already in the leaves but masked during the warmer months. Darker red leaves are the result of a chemical change: Sugars that can get trapped in the leaves produce new pigments (called anthocyanins) that weren't part of the leaf in the growing season. Some trees, like oaks and dogwoods, are likely to produce red leaves.

How much and how fast leaves transform varies by location on the globe. The best colors are produced when the weather is dry, sunny and cool. Places that are cloudy, damp or warm won't see the same degree of changing color.

Then, of course, the leaves fall. Trees start building a protective seal between leaves and their branches as the weather turns. They take in as many nutrients as possible from the leaves, but leaves wouldn't survive the winter and would make trees vulnerable to damage if they remained. When the leaves are cut off from the fluid in the branches, they separate and drop to the ground.

As the leaves decay on the forest floor, they release nutrients into soil which will feed the trees and micro-organisms in the following spring.

One of the best things we can do for our garden soil is add chopped oak leaves in the fall and allow it to decompose. Your earthworms will do the rest.

## RESEEDING LAWNS

No matter how beautiful your lawn is it will greatly benefit from reseeding. All plants including grass have a certain life span. As the older grass dies away it leaves spots where weeds can take hold next spring. The best way to avoid that is with thick lush growth. Since we cut our lawns often, they are not able to reseed themselves.

September and early October is the perfect time to reseed your lawn. As the summer heat fades weeds and wildflowers begin to wane, dying back in the fields and on our lawns. This will give your grass seed plenty of space to germinate and grow without competition for sunlight, water and nutrients. The cooler weather and increased rain and even the morning dew will keep your seedlings moist until they become established.

Grass seeds do like to be kept moist so a light water when it is dry will be appreciated. Lawns do best with one inch of water a week. More that is harmful rather than helpful, producing weak root systems and encouraging fungus and diseases.

September seeding will also give your young grass a few weeks to sprout before the leaves fall, blocking the greatly needed sunlight.

In order for the seed to germinate it must make contact with the soil for the roots to take hold. Thatching, raking and aerating will greatly improve your success level.

There is far too much information to give in this one article, from how and when to thatch to seed selection.

Luckily for us Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Union County will supply this information free of cost.

The Helpline office also sells Soil Test Kits. This \$20 kit will give you valuable information on your soil and how to improve it.

You can call the Garden Helpline at 908-654-9852, or write to them at [Mastergardeners@ucnj.org](mailto:Mastergardeners@ucnj.org)



(above) Pumpkins are native to North America but the tradition of pumpkin carving originated in Ireland. Happy Halloween!



(above) Past President of The Rahway Garden Club, James Keane, has been researching and answering garden questions since 1995.

Visit 'Keane Gardener' blog at: [keanegardener.blogspot.com](http://keanegardener.blogspot.com)

## DEER RUTTING OR MATING SEASON

Deer rutting season begins in October and last until December. During these months bucks round up their females into herds. While scurrying around deer run without caution, darting in front of vehicles without a moment's notice. Therefore, more deer are hit by cars now than any other time of year. Please keep your eyes on the road and drive with extra caution, especially at night.

Happy Autumn,

*James*

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## TRINITAS EARNS NATIONAL AWARD FOR PROMOTING ORGAN DONATION

### NJ Sharing Network

Trinitas Regional Medical Center has been honored with the 2022 Workplace Partnership for Life Platinum Award for its organ and tissue donation awareness program from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Platinum Award is the highest accolade granted by HRSA to hospitals who promote organ and tissue donation among their community and hospital. Trinitas coordinates its outreach efforts with NJ Sharing Network, the nonprofit organization responsible for the recovery and placement of donated organs and tissue in the Garden State.

The recognition is part of HRSA's Workplace Partnership for Life initiative, launched in August 2014, which connects organ and tissue donation organizations with hospitals to create ongoing awareness and registry campaigns to educate team members, patients, visitors and community members.

"We are proud to be recognized by HRSA for our ongoing partnership with NJ Sharing Network to save and enhance lives through organ donation and transplantation," said Gary S. Horan, FACHE, President/CEO of Trinitas. "There are nearly 4,000 New Jersey residents currently waiting for a life-saving transplant. We must continue to raise awareness of this critical issue and remind our community that registering as an organ and tissue donor can help bring the gift of life to others."

Throughout the past year, Trinitas conducted multiple awareness and registry activities to encourage new donor registrations. Activities included both in-person and online campaigns to reach internal and external audiences, such as Proclamation Day with Mayor J. Christian Bollwage of Elizabeth and the annual donor memorial service including a flag display in honor of the donors in the Trinitas lobby. Donor Registration Day made it possible for 50 people to become registered organ donors.

"Trinitas and our hospital partners are vital to

our life-saving mission," said Alyssa D'Addio, Vice President of Hospital and Community Services, NJ Sharing Network. "We have been fortunate to work with Trinitas' dedicated team members. They are great advocates and have shown passion and energy in educating others about the power of donation and transplantation."

According to United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), there are over 100,000 Americans waiting for a life-saving transplant. One organ and tissue donor can save eight lives and enhance the lives of over 75 others. To learn more, get involved and register as an organ and tissue donor, visit [NJSharingNetwork.org](http://NJSharingNetwork.org).

### ABOUT TRINITAS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Trinitas Regional Medical Center, an RWJBarnabas Health facility, was established in 2000 following the consolidation of Elizabeth

General Medical Center and St. Elizabeth Hospital. Previously in 1990, Elizabeth General acquired the Alexian Brothers Hospital, also in Elizabeth. The spirit of the three Elizabeth hospitals lives on in Trinitas, a major center for comprehensive health services for those who live and work in Central New Jersey. Trinitas is a Catholic teaching medical center with Catholic oversight provided by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. 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, wound healing, breast health, senior's healthcare, women's healthcare, and sleep medicine. For more information, visit [rwjbh.org/trinitas-regional-medical-center/](http://rwjbh.org/trinitas-regional-medical-center/), or follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter.



(above) Staff members of Trinitas Regional Medical Center and heart transplant recipient Craig Clark gather around Gary S. Horan, FACHE, President/CEO of Trinitas and Ireabdaly Segovia-Conrad, Hospital Services Manager, NJ Sharing Network, to celebrate their efforts in earning the 2022 Workplace Partnership for Life Platinum Award.

Courtesy photo

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### 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. Addictions 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?

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- 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.'"

- Quenton L.

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# MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT WEBINARS

SAGE Eldercare's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselors are available at no charge to discuss Medicare plans and options for 2023 Open Enrollment, October 15 – December 7.

SAGE is hosting a free Zoom webinar every Wednesday morning, from 10 – 11:00 a.m., and Thursday evening, from 6 – 7:30 p.m. Attendees are asked to come with a prepared list of questions.

To register and receive the ZOOM link, please visit [eventbrite.com/e/preparing-for-medicare-open-enrollment-tickets-416847029687](https://eventbrite.com/e/preparing-for-medicare-open-enrollment-tickets-416847029687).

SAGE Eldercare serves as the SHIP representative for Union County. Staff and volunteers are available for free, personalized, confidential, and objective Medicare counseling regarding program options, claims, billing, appeals and information about programs for people with limited income and resources. The counselors receive ongoing training from the Division of Aging Services, New Jersey Department of Human Services.

If you are a Medicare beneficiary and resident of Union County with questions about Medicare, call 908-273-6999 or email the SHIP office at [sageeldercare@ship@sageeldercare.org](mailto:sageeldercare@ship@sageeldercare.org) for free, objective, and confidential services. Anyone residing outside Union County can visit [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) or call 1-800-MEDICARE to get the phone numbers of SHIP representatives in other NJ counties or in other U.S. states.

SHIP is a state-wide program, administered by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Senior Affairs, with major funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. SAGE is the sponsoring organization for the program in Union County.

SHIP counselors do not provide legal advice, sell, recommend, or endorse any specific insurance product, agency, insurance company or HMO. They provide information and assistance so that clients can make their own decisions.

### ABOUT SAGE ELDERCARE

SAGE Eldercare is one of only a few providers in the nation — and the only one in New Jersey — to provide a full range of eldercare services under one roof. For 67 years, SAGE's mission has been to help older adults remain living in their own homes. Whether it is assisting with a Home Health Aide, helping with food insecurity or offering a stimulating adult day medical program, SAGE is here. Our team provides referrals, caregiver support groups and free and confidential Medicare counseling. And as the unique challenges of older adults and caregivers evolve, we offer educational programming every step of the way to keep you informed of best practices.

Learn more at [sageeldercare.org](https://www.sageeldercare.org).  
Follow us at @SAGEeldercare



## SPOTLIGHT ON VETERANS DOING YOGA PROJECT

*Submitted by Laura Meola and Alyssa Duclos*

The Veterans Yoga Project Video filming was a free event sponsored by the New Jersey Veterans Network for their web series, Local Legends. This web series is a talk show that showcases real stories from extraordinary people including gold medalists, army veterans, athletes and many more. With its strong veteran influence, Local Legends is produced, directed, hosted and filmed by veterans and their supporters. They provide a great deal of informational resources to help the community.

The Veterans Yoga Project event featured Maggie Stoddard, a yoga instructor trained to work specifically with veterans. Her work with these heroes has greatly benefited their everyday lives. During filming, Maggie showed the participants three sets of poses. This included the warrior 2, peaceful warrior, and seated cat/cow. Aside from this filming, Maggie runs yoga events weekly for all veterans and their families who

wish to participate. She had this to say about the program, "We lead a class with some breath work, stretching and mindfulness. Veterans Yoga Project promotes resilience and recovery."

America's Hot Dog pup, Shadow, also made an appearance to provide support for all who participated in the filming process. He also did some yoga of his own which included the side crow pose. He is often a part of these veteran events and brings joy and love to all.

This production was directed and produced by Doc Schupp with Michael Boll as co-producer. Credit also goes to Shaun Crafton, director of cinematography, and camera-man Diddy.

If you know of an inspiring or helpful resource for veterans that would make a great Local Legends Video please call Doc Schupp at 551-293-3049. The Local Legends Videos can be viewed on the NJVN website at njvn.org/local-legends.

Thank you to all volunteers who helped put

this event together: Doc Schupp and Michael Boll who run the NJVN; Rochelle Park American Legion Post; all the cast and crew who participated in the Local Legends production; Alyssa Duclos, owner of Alyssa's Critter Sitters LLC, and official dog handler of Shadow, America's pup; and assistant dog handler Joe Astarita.

### 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 mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs.

If you are a veteran or family member that is in need of assistance, or are interested in joining our team, would like us to speak at your event, or contribute to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email mdbollio@optonline.net. To learn more visit njvn.org.



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(above) The Veterans Yoga Project Video was filmed at a free event by the New Jersey Veterans Network for their web series, Local Legends.

Photos by Shaun Crafton and Diego Diazand



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# FLINTLOCKS READY FOR ACTION

*Submitted by Dr. Michael Hart*

The Flintlocks, BSA, Inc. are a group of retired scouters who dedicate their time and talents to helping the Boy Scout Camps in northern New Jersey. They annually donate approximately 5,000 hours of skilled labor to the scouts. The group includes many tradesmen, but also volunteers of every background. Most are retired, but some still work full time, and occasionally

people volunteer to help for a day here and there. It is a very friendly group with a good sense of humor. When one member reached age 100, they designated a parking spot reserved for all Flintlocks over 100 years old.

The Flintlocks meet every Thursday at Camp Winnebago, Rockaway, NJ, all year round. They are organized as a 501c3 non profit corporation. All of the members are registered with the BSA.

They provide a variety of skilled services to the Council. They have built cabins, picnic tables, painted the dining hall, built the archery range, built all the structures at the waterfront, financed, built and equipped the STEM Lab at Allamuchy Scout Reservation, repaired damage to camp structures, etc. In addition to building structures and doing repairs and maintenance, they also volunteer at many Council activities throughout the year. More than half of the Flintlocks have been awarded the Silver Beaver or have received other Council and National Awards. They typically provide approximately 5,000 hours of volunteer skilled labor every year. Previous years were interrupted by COVID shutdowns, and the camps were not operational some summers, but now the Flintlocks are all vaccinated and have been back to work. The Council most recently opened the summer Scout camps again, and the Flintlocks have brought them up to code to receive campers.

The Officers and Trustees elected for the coming year are as follows: John Koneski, President; George Van Dyke, Vice President; Michael Hart, Secretary; Russ Jenkins, Treasurer; Bob Pysher, Chair of the Trustees; Ted Marquardt, Trustee; Bob Germinder, Trustee; and Frank Wallace, Trustee.

Visit the Facebook Page "Flintlocks". Guests are always welcome. For more information contact Secretary Dr. Michael Hart at [drmhart@yahoo.com](mailto:drmhart@yahoo.com).



*(above) Flintlocks pictured during their Annual meeting.*

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# IMAGINE WELCOMES NEW VOLUNTEERS

The staff at Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss was so pleased to be able to offer our first in-person volunteer training since 2020 at our Mountainside Center this summer! Pictured are the participants in our 2022 Imagine Summer Training Class, who have joined our wonderful community of volunteers - facilitating grief support groups for children, teens, young adults and their parents/guardians. Our new volunteers participated in a three-day training program that prepared them to be present for the children and families that participate at Imagine, gave them tools to help support those in their family and community who are grieving, and provided an opportunity for them to receive support for losses they've experienced themselves.

Another big milestone is coming up for

Imagine! Our grief support groups will be returning to the city of Newark through a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Newark (BCGN).

This is an experience like none other; the experiential nature of the training will prepare you to facilitate support groups in a way that a lecture-style training could never do. Previously trained volunteers have said this training is "life-changing" and "inspiring," and we hope you can be a part of it!

If you're interested in making a difference in the lives of grieving families and would like to participate in Imagine's volunteer facilitator training, please visit our website at [imagine.nj.org/become-grief-support-facilitator](http://imagine.nj.org/become-grief-support-facilitator). If you have questions, please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100.

Courtesy photo



(above, top row, l-r) Debbie Berez, Mountainside; Stacey Glickstein, Scotch Plains; Vernita Bostick, Belleville, Carrie Greenberg, Springfield; Sonia Nunez, Imagine's Newark Program Manager; Joan Castellano, West Orange; Abigail Preece, Imagine's Interim Program Manager and John Hutchinson, Glen Ridge; (middle row, l-r) Deborah Ojeda, Imagine's Graduate Intern, Dan Vorhaus, Summit; (bottom row, l-r) Diane H. Tracey, Jersey City; Gen Belfiglio, Union; Anna Fishman, Short Hills; Gregory D. Edgell, Nutley; and Zakeyah Harris, Newark.

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
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# MEET FERNANDO PORRAS OF CLARK

OUR TOWN *Rahway* • Page 23 • October 2022

By Jahi McDonald, CASA of Union County

By the time this goes to press, my three-month internship will have ended. What will endure, is getting to know and work alongside my fellow intern Fernando Porras. In addition to stepping up to serve as an intern a year ago — and working some 20+ hours a week since in that capacity — he is an active CASA volunteer, well into his second case as a child advocate.

From processing donor thank yous, navigating excel spreadsheets, seeking community involvement amid a virtual fundraising campaign, to shooting videos for social media, sorting and hauling holiday wish list toys, and even donning superhero costumes for Adoption Day, Fernando has been a patient, committed role model for CASA's critical work. His mantra, "Anything for the kids," is one I've heard him say countless times but seen him put into action even more.

While being an advocate and yearlong intern is plenty for a CASA of Union County highlight, it's his personal journey, and all he's made of it, that shines even brighter. After his first CASA case — a 13-year-old boy — closed, he immediately began his current case, advocating for 5- and 10-year-old brothers. His visits, he says, often include intense Beyblades battles. "I remember playing with Beyblades at that age, so it's even more memorable to bond over something I'm familiar with. Also, superheroes! Maybe I'm still a kid at heart," he quips, adding, "As an advocate, you read about their life in stacks of paperwork, but being able to spend time with them as they enjoy the little things? It gives me such a different perspective on life." When he sees their smiles, he says, he's overcome with joy.

And joy is something — like every CASA youth — that Fernando deserves. In April 2018, a month before his college graduation, he was diagnosed with leukemia. He says, "Though I was told the diagnosis was just a matter of 'bad luck' ... my life turned upside down." Sparing the details of hospitalizations, procedures and finishing the tail-end of college amid unknowns and medical crises, let's take Fernando's lead and focus on the positive: August marked three years

in remission. Continued monitoring from his medical team as well as navigating other lifelong health challenges resulting from the very treatments that saved his life are now his norm.

Fernando continues, "In summer 2019, I started trying to piece my life back together. I was discussing the future with a hospital social worker and she told me CASA would be a perfect fit. I'm so glad I took her words to heart; I did my research, went to an information session, and the rest is history."

In addition to advocating for three youth, the 25-year-old cancer survivor used the yearlong intern assignment as a sabbatical of sorts, undergoing an intensive and thorough LSAT study period and he's now amid the nerve-racking law school admissions process. I asked him how he juggles it all, when each ball carries great weight: "I've always been a 'yes' person. If something needs to be done, I'll do it. Some may not see that as a positive as I do ... but there's always time to do more."

In addition to enduring love and respect for his close-knit family, Fernando's fondness for travel also keeps him on his toes. Before he embeds himself in a law school lecture hall, there are plans to travel as much as possible, amid Covid-restraints and minding his health, of course. He recently visited family in Ecuador and soon will share his unwavering support for his beloved Atletico de Madrid soccer team with a jaunt to Spain.

When life was suddenly outside his firm grasp, Fernando reached wider and gripped harder, there's no question. Still, he's always sure to make time for the betterment of others' lives. He fondly quotes an uncle, "Never say you 'can't' do something, because what it really means is that you 'won't.' It's stuck with me and allowed me to work outside my comfort zone ... comfortably."

While experiences make you who you are — and in Fernando's case that certainly proves true — he also reminds me that people make those experiences. For us at CASA, that's Fernando. For Fernando, that's his family, including grandparents who modeled resiliency and hard



(above) Fernando Porras

work, lessons for which he is grateful. When, during the last weeks of his internship, Fernando unexpectedly lost his beloved grandfather, colleagues at services saw firsthand his tightly woven net that is family, and that his commitment to life and bettering it comes from a deep well of connection, generations old.

Asked to look back on recent years, when best-laid plans didn't happen and an unexpected diagnosis did, he offers: "I truly think everything happens for a reason. I'll always have an endless number of unanswered questions — but at the same time, I'll always be grateful that I found CASA of Union County."

In addition to serving as a fall marketing intern for CASA of Union County, Jahi McDonald is a 2020 graduate of Rutgers University-New Brunswick, with plans to begin a career in public relations and marketing.

## ABOUT CASA OF UNION COUNTY

Volunteers with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Union County serve as extra eyes and ears for family law judges hearing cases involving the county's abused, neglected or abandoned children removed from home and placed in foster care.

CASA volunteers have court-ordered access to all parties in a foster child's life, including foster parents, doctors, caseworkers, therapists and teachers, and incorporate into court reports findings from these contacts as well as from their own time spent with the youth. Advocates ensure a youth's needs are met and their time in care is as short as possible.

It is CASA of Union County's goal that every Union County foster child have an advocate, yet half of the more than 500 such youth still await one. Could you be their voice? Contact Lucia to learn more [lfield@casaoofunioncounty.org](mailto:lfield@casaoofunioncounty.org) or visit [casaoofunioncounty.org](http://casaoofunioncounty.org).

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