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TAP DANCING TWINS WIN FIRST PLACE IN COMPETITION

Township of Union

It was an evening filled with song, dance, and magic as 20 contestants took the stage. Still, the twin tap dancers stole the show. They wowed the panel of prestigious judges on November 19th, at the 2022 Union's Got Talent (UGT) competition held at Enlow Recital Hall at Kean University.

Jaden and Ellis Foreman, both 17 years old and from Union Township, have been tap dancing for ten years. For Union's Got Talent, they performed "War Dance," which served as a tribute to The Condos Brothers. Their first-place win earned them a \$1,000 cash prize, sponsored by Investors Bank.

"I'm absolutely blown away by not just the level of talent but the range of acts that were showcased," said Mayor Manuel Figueiredo. "Everyone did a spectacular job. Congratulations to the winners and everyone who participated!"

Jaden and Ellis Foreman are interviewed by UGT Host Meridoc 'Doc' Burkhardt after being announced as first-place winners.

Finishing in second place and earning \$500, sponsored by the Township of Union Special Improvement District (SID), was pianist Maxwell Kocaj, who performed an excerpt of Liebestraum No. 3 by Franz Liszt.

Ashley Mahaux and Francisco Gonzalez Negron danced their way to third place with their Banda Policia Nacional del Peru performance, winning a \$250 prize sponsored by BCB Bank.

The People's Choice winner, voted by the audience and sponsored by Red Cadillac, was Colette Maynard, who sang "Tomorrow" from "Annie" and also won a \$250 prize. Every year, audience members are asked to participate as the 6th judge, where they can vote for their favorite contestant by donating money into their perspective basket.

"Everyone did such a wonderful job! The judges had such a tough time picking the winners, and I don't envy them at all," said Marie Krueger-Canarelli, Union's Got Talent Founder. "From the bottom of my heart, thank you to everyone who participated and supported Union's Got Talent and the DMK Scholarship Fund. Special thank you to Union TV34 and director Yvonne Lorenzo for everything they've done!"

All proceeds raised from the event benefit the UHSPAC and DMK, two



(above) Jaden and Ellis Foreman, both 17 years old and from Union Township, have been tap dancing for ten years.

Photos by Township of Union

organizations that give back to the students of Union through scholarships and arts education.

For more information on the 2022 Union's Got Talent Show, visit unionsgottalent.org or call 908-851-5096.

(Additional photos on on page 3)

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UNION ELKS LODGE #1583 MAKES DONATION TO COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF NJ

The Union Elks Lodge #1583 presented a donation to the Community Food Bank of New Jersey on Thursday, December 8, 2022. The check, in the amount of \$2,500 from proceeds from the Gratitude Grant, will be used for the

purchase of both perishable and non-perishable food items to be distributed to food kitchens and families in need. The Union Elks Lodge #1583 is located at 281 Chestnut Street, Union, NJ. For more information, call 908-686-1583.



(above) Pictured are Hank Bedlivy, Past Exalted Ruler; Timothy Winn, CFBNJ Schools and Community Outreach Manager; Evelyn Chiu, CFBNJ Special Events Manager; and Vince Ditta, East Central District, District Deputy.

Courtesy photo

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1) Based on the DepositAccounts.com national average for savings accounts as of December 12, 2022. 2) APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Rates current as of December 12, 2022. Rates are subject to change without notice. Fees could reduce earnings on the account. 3) Kickstart Savings is a blended rate tiered account with dividends paid on portions of your balance falling within designated tiers: \$0.00 - \$2,500.00: 4.07% APY; \$2,500.01 - \$5,000.00: 4.07% APY; \$5,000.01 - \$7,500.00: 4.07% APY; \$7,500.01 - \$10,000.00: 4.07% APY; \$10,000.01 and above: 4.07% - 0.05% APY. \$100 minimum balance to open. There is a \$100 minimum daily balance requirement to avoid a \$10 monthly maintenance fee. Limit of one Kickstart Savings account per tax identification number.



(above) Jaden and Ellis Foreman are interviewed by UGT Host Meridoc 'Doc' Burkhardt after being announced as first-place winners.




(above) Ashley Mahaux and Francisco Gonzalez Negrón danced their way to third place with their Banda Policia Nacional del Peru performance, winning a \$250 prize sponsored by BCB Bank.


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Sayaka Ganz

Reclaimed Creations

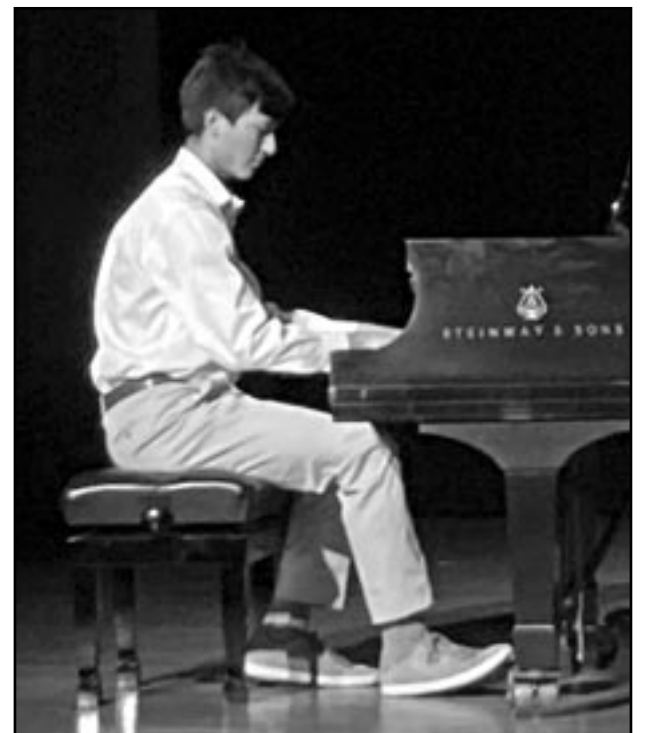
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The Galleries at Kean University present Sayaka Ganz RECLAIMED CREATIONS, an amazing art exhibition featuring sculptures of animals in motion, utilizing reclaimed plastic objects, rich in color and energy.

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(above) Pianist Maxwell Kocaj finished in 2nd place. He performed an excerpt of Liebestraum No. 3 by Franz Liszt.





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CRAIG CLARK CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY OF HIS HEART TRANSPLANT

Craig Clark, 61, is taking time to reflect on the gift of life and the miracle of organ and tissue donation and transplantation as he recently celebrated four years since his life-saving heart transplant. With his health and strength now restored, Craig is living each day to its fullest by enjoying life's precious moments and spending time on his favorite hobbies, including home improvement projects, day trips and travel.

"Each day that I get to travel and spend time with extended family and friends or special events like our children's weddings or the birth of a grandchild, I remember that it was made possible thanks to my organ donor and the care of Susan Pardi, NP, and the amazing transplant team at NYU Langone who kept me alive through heart failure," said Craig.

Now four years post-transplant, Craig is filled with energy and spends as much time as possible with his grandchild. He is also forever mindful of his organ donor who gave him the gift of life. "The only thing that I know about my donor is that he was 51 years old when he passed," said Craig. "My donor or his family's decision to be a donor has essentially given me a new lease on life."

Craig has also made it a priority to advocate for NJ Sharing Network, the nonprofit organization responsible for the recovery and placement of donated organs and tissue in the Garden State. By sharing his story with others, Craig hopes to encourage more people to register as organ and tissue donors. "One organ and tissue donor can save eight lives and enhance the lives of over 75 others," said Craig.

At the age of 17, Craig enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. He earned bachelor's degrees in Criminal Justice and Art History from Seton Hall

University before returning to active military duty as an Artillery Officer. At that time, doctors detected that Craig had a heart murmur, and he was soon diagnosed with cardiomyopathy. Despite his critical health challenges, Craig and his wife, Anna, raised their three children, Adam, Rachel and Nathan, and he enjoyed a successful career in transportation and supply chain management.

As years passed, Craig's heart disease grew progressively worse. He suffered a stroke and his heart stopped beating twice in a two-week period. Craig had a defibrillator implanted, but he was later diagnosed with congestive heart failure (CHF) in 2017. He was added to the heart transplant waiting list. On August 25, 2018, while admitted at NYU Langone, Craig's prayers were answered when he received "the call" from NYU Langone cardiologist Alex Reyentovich, MD that

a heart was available for transplant.

"I remember answering the phone was basically the only thing that I had enough strength to do at the time," said Craig. "The next day, I had my transplant. I recovered quickly in the immediate days and weeks after transplant. I was out of the hospital in just seven days!"

Currently, there are over 100,000 Americans – nearly 4,000 of whom live in New Jersey – waiting for a life-saving transplant, according to United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS). However, the generosity of those in the Garden State is providing hope for the future. Organ and tissue donor registrations in the Garden State continue to increase thanks to strong community education and outreach efforts and simplified ways to register. To learn more, get involved and register as an organ and tissue donor, visit www.NJSharingNetwork.org.



(above) Heart transplant recipient Craig Clark of Scotch Plains recently celebrated the four-year anniversary of his life-saving transplant.

Photo courtesy of NJ Sharing Network



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GIVING THANKS FOR A LIFE WELL LIVED

Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless

Mikaela Santos came into our lives in the summer of 2022. In July, we received an email from Karen Gilmour, a yoga instructor with Alluem Yoga in Cranford, telling us about a young student with a desire to give back to the community, especially homeless children. She wanted to collect backpacks full of all the necessary school supplies to start the year off right. Mikaela, together with her instructor Karen, her sister Vivienne, her mother Yesica, her Aunt Natalie, and her good friend, Marielle, started a giving tree with the backpack needs of nearly 50 children in our housing programs.

A few weeks later at the beginning of the 2022 school year Mikaela passed away. Mikaela was just 11 years old. She lived most of her life in and out of hospitals because she had childhood

cancer. So briefly did we know her yet how profoundly she affected us all. She left everyone she met with a sense of love and light. And it is her story we want to share with you today.

Just days after her death, her mother, sister, aunt, and friend delivered her backpack project to the Elizabeth Coalition. We were amazed at the love and care that went into creating each individual backpack. Mikaela willed her idea into being...she really made it happen!

What made Mikaela so special was her ability to transform her experiences of pain and illness into a project for others. Mikaela was asked what inclined her to helping others when she herself was going through so much. Mikaela answered, matter of fact-ly, "I might have cancer but I also have love, a home, and my family to support me. One thing does not have to do with the other."



(above) Mikaela Santos

Karen remembers Mikaela as someone who always showed up with love...to the studio...to her practice of yoga...to her friendships. "Every moment with Mikaela was a favorite one. I loved her little laugh and her sweet smile. Mikaela was a light in this world...and in my life."

Mikaela's mom, Yesica, recalls how knowing Mikaela made her a different person, "Mikaela was my first-born, she's the reason I became a mother and then when her sister, Vivienne, was born we were complete. Knowing Mikaela makes me feel honored and proud to be her mother." Mikaela's precious spirit burns brightly in memory for those who loved her most but also for those lives she touched so briefly with her creativity, her giving, and her compassion.

The children who received a backpack wrote notes and drew pictures to thank Mikaela. Some notes make mention of an angel, which is how they choose to remember her and her supreme act of bravery in being a force for good in the world. To be so young and yet full of such a wise mind and kind heart, sharing her blessings with others, is a page from her remarkable story that we can all learn and grow from.

Thank you, Mikaela.

It is supporters like Mikaela that are so vital to our work. Donations and volunteers free us to offer premium case management to those who need it, allowing us to offer the care and focus on each client who comes through our door. Dedicated partnerships push our vision that one day, we will eliminate homelessness.

For volunteer opportunities to help our homeless brothers and sisters, and donate, visit theelizabethcoalition.org.



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FIND PASSION AND PURPOSE THIS WINTER

The Gateway Family YMCA

Find your passion and purpose at The Gateway Family YMCA this Winter. At the Y, you'll find more than just a place to work out. With opportunities to connect with new people, develop new skills, explore new interests and support your community, you'll discover new passions and gain a greater sense of purpose. The Gateway Family YMCA is inviting the community to visit the Y and learn more with an Open House from January 11-13 and a YMCA Membership Special through January 15.

"We all need a place to go where we feel supported and where we belong. The Y is that place for many. A place where adults can find life balance; children can reach their full potential; seniors can be active and find community; and families can connect and strengthen relationships," stated Melynda A. Disla, CEO, The Gateway Family YMCA. "Our supportive community of staff and members will inspire you to find your inner strength and expand your health in spirit, mind and body."

To help more people benefit from the Y, The Gateway Family YMCA is hosting a membership special through January 15, providing No Joiner Fee for all new members who join using the code NY23 at tgfymca.org/join-the-Y or in person at the Y. Flexible membership opportunities are available, including short-term memberships, virtual memberships, and a free community membership for all to belong to the Y. In addition, The Gateway Family YMCA will be opening their doors to the community January 11-13 for a YMCA Open House at four locations in Elizabeth, Rahway and Union. For more information, visit tgfymca.org/events

At the Y, individuals and families have the opportunity to improve their health and well-being and connect with the community, all while participating in their favorite program or activities at the Y, or virtually from home. "To be our best selves, we need to take care of our wholes selves, and our goal is to provide that

seamless opportunity to make healthy living easy for all, whether they travel to the Y or join their favorite class from home," stated Rodger D. Koerber, Chief Operating Officer. "Here, neighbors from all backgrounds and walks of life can discover common ground, broaden their perspectives and support one another. At the Y, there are no strangers, only friends you haven't yet met."

The Gateway Family YMCA is a non-profit charitable organization serving Eastern Union County and Northern Middlesex County since 1900. As a leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community by connecting all people to their potential, purpose and each other, the Y focuses on empowering young people, improving health and well-being and inspiring action in and across communities. By bringing together people from different backgrounds, perspectives and generations, the Y ensures that all have access to the opportunities, relationships and resources necessary to learn, grow and thrive. Through the Annual Support Campaign, Membership For All Financial Assistance is available to those who qualify.

The Gateway Family YMCA offers a variety of programs to help achieve greater health and well-being, nurture youth and inspire individuals to give back to better their community. Winter 2023 program registration is available online at www.tgfymca.org for programs including swimming lessons, youth sports, active older adult fitness, dance, gymnastics, virtual WISE adult services and chronic disease self-management programs. Through the 7th Grade Initiative, youth are supported with a complimentary membership, leadership opportunities and special events.

To learn more about The Gateway Family YMCA, visit 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 Branch and WISE Center Branch 908-349-9622 for more information.

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SOCKTOBER DRIVE COLECTS 1,665 DONATIONS



(above) The Union High School Interact Club, along with the Rotary Club of Union, Hillmann Consulting, and the Union YMCA, held a successful Socktober Drive, collecting 1,665 pairs of socks for donation.

Courtesy photo

The Rotary Club of Union

More than 830 people will be touched by the goodness of some Union High School students.

The Union High School Interact Club, directed by Dr. Ed Boffa, performed a tremendous act of giving. In conjunction with the Rotary Club of Union, Hillmann Consulting, and the Union YMCA, they held a Socktober Drive. Last year, the Interact Club collected 1,099 pairs of new socks. This year, the members of the Rotary Club and Hillmann, along with caring citizens, donated 492 pairs. Students and families at Livingston School collected 261 pairs. Union High School students donated 912 pairs. These groups joined forces and collected a total of 1,665 pairs of new socks! These socks will be donated to the Gateway Family YMCA Elizabeth branch where they participate in Code Blue in Elizabeth as well as supportive and transitional housing for men, women, and families.

The students in the Interact Club and Dr. Boffa are dedicated to making their community a better place. Rotary and Interact members take action to make their communities better. They contribute their time, energy, and passion to carry out meaningful and sustainable projects that promote peace, fight disease, provide clean water, support education, help mothers, children and the needy, and grow local economies. 1,665 socks for those in need certainly make the community better.

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CENTER FOR HOPE'S AUXILIARY YEAR-END DONATION

The Center for Hope Hospice & Palliative Care, a community-based non-profit hospice organization in Union County, New Jersey, celebrated the season with their Auxiliary on Monday, December 5. At the party, the Center received a very generous gift: a check for \$100,000 representing the funds raised from the Auxiliary over the past year.

Marge Hussey, the Auxiliary's president, was pleased to be able to present the check to the Center. "Each year," she said, "with our many events and the Hope Chest Thrift Store, we work tirelessly to not only educate the community about the Center, but to help the Center in its mission: providing only the finest in hospice care to all those who need it regardless of an inability to pay. As I present the fruits of that work to the Center tonight, I hope you all can share the pride I feel in knowing that we're making a difference in the lives of so many each and every year."

Tom Kasper, the Chairman of the Center's Board of Trustees, was on hand to accept the gracious donation. "This is incredible," he said. "While each and every one of us, alone, do what we can, it pales in comparison to the work that can be done when we come together as a group and work toward a goal. You all have shown that here tonight. There's simply no way the Center can properly state the gratitude we feel for the Auxiliary throughout the year."

Marge concluded by saying, "As we come together this holiday season, I want to again thank everyone for their hard work...and remind everyone that our work is not done! Next year, those in need in our community will still remain and will still need our support." She reminded the group that "we still need new members to help us do even more next year."

The Center for Hope offers hospice and palliative care in its two residences in Scotch Plains and Elizabeth, and provides hospice care to patients in the wider community where they live. For more information on the Center or the Auxiliary, visit cfhh.org.

ABOUT CENTER FOR HOPE HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE, INC.

Center for Hope Hospice & Palliative Care (Center for Hope) is a non-profit, community-based organization that provides terminally ill patients with hospice care, and their families or loved ones with physical, emotional, and spiritual support during their time of need. The Center actively supports the individual's right to live out the remainder of their life with dignity and in comfort, surrounded by the love of family and friends, and eased from the burdens of

physical, emotional, spiritual, financial or social distress. Center for Hope welcomes all terminally ill patients, their families and loved ones without concern for race, ethnicity, religious affiliation or ability to pay. It also offers pain and symptom management for chronically ill and seriously ill patients through its palliative care program. Center for Hope operates two facilities in Scotch Plains and Elizabeth; the latter provides nearly \$3.5 million a year in charity care. For more information, visit cfhh.org.



(above, l-r) The officers of the Center for Hope Auxiliary present a \$100,000 check to the Center for Hope's Board of Trustees Chairman. Pictured are Marge Hussey, Dolores Paruta, Ginny Comer, Thomas Kasper, Dolores Hynes, and Rosemary Burke.

Courtesy photo

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ROTARY HOLDS FOOD DRIVE

The Rotary Club of Union held a food drive to benefit members of the Township of Union. The club donated \$500 to purchase food and individual members donated bags of food and ShopRite gift cards. Twenty bags of food were donated to the Connecticut Farms Church Food Pantry and to the Union Township Food Pantry as well as a total of \$600 in gift cards. The motto of Rotary is "Service Above Self" and the members were happy to share in that service.

The Rotary Club of Union meets at Suburban Golf Club, Morris Avenue usually on the first and

third Thursdays of the month at noon. Rotary provides service to others, contributes to community, and world goodwill and charities, through fellowship of business, professional and community leaders. The motto is "Do good in the world. Service above self." As Covid is waning, we are residents or business owners in Union who are dedicated to helping our community as we continue to grow and thrive. Our activities include speakers who make us aware of needs in the town, state and world and involvement in charities and services.



(above) Pictured are members of Rotary and Hillmann employees with bags of food delivered to the food pantry.

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Short Hills MILLBURN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 8,200 Zips: 07041, 07078	Summit NJ Times Qty: 9,600 Zip: 07901	Spirit of UNION NJ Qty: 6,800 Zip: 07083 (partial)	WARREN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,200 Zip: 07059	Watchung Post NJ Qty: 2,700 Zip: 07069	Westfield NJ MONTHLY Qty: 11,800 Zip: 07090

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4 Units	3.25" x 8" or 6.5" x 4"	\$180	\$450	\$700	\$900	\$1100	\$1300	\$1500	\$1700	\$1900
6 Units	6.5" x 6.25" or 10" x 4"	\$240	\$600	\$900	\$1200	\$1400	\$1600	\$1800	\$2000	\$2200
9 HALF PAGE	6.5" x 9" or 10" x 7"	\$320	\$800	\$1000	\$1300	\$1600	\$1900	\$2200	\$2400	\$2700
12 Units	10" x 8"	\$360	\$900	\$1200	\$1500	\$1800	\$2100	\$2400	\$2700	\$3000
18 FULL PAGE	10" x 14"	\$400	\$1000	\$1400	\$1800	\$2200	\$2500	\$2800	\$3000	\$3400
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JANUARY IS A SOUPER TIME TO VISIT RAHWAY

Rahway is your winter destination in 2023! Looking for something to do to fight off those winter blues? Bundle up and take the train, rideshare, or drive to Rahway to experience all that the city has to offer. Rahway is home to a diverse small business community with unique retail shops and dining experiences. You can start your day in Rahway with a hot cup of coffee and some shopping, get the kids out of the house for lunch and some family game time at the arcade, and plan a date night with drinks and dinner at any one of our many delicious restaurants. No matter what cuisine you are craving, you will find it in Rahway! Watch a show at the Union County Performing Arts Center, view an exhibit at one of our art galleries, or listen to local musicians who can help you rock and sway your way through the winter months.

Looking to warm up this winter? Our annual Soup Stroll, presented by our Special Improvement District (SID), will return every Saturday in January (Jan 7, 14, 21, 28) from 1-4 p.m. Mayor Raymond Giacobbe and the Rahway City Council encourage everyone to attend this free event as a great way to get together with friends, get out of the house, and sample some delicious soups while strolling through the City.

Restaurants will be stirring up their finest soups for you to try, so be sure to follow @Rahwayishappening on Facebook and Instagram or visit RahwayisHappening.com/soupstroll for participating eateries and more information. Snap a photo of you and your Soup Stroll Squad enjoying your samples and share it with @rahwayishappening on Instagram to enter our Soup Stroll Selfie contest for a chance to win a \$25 Gift Card to your favorite participating restaurant.

After you're done sampling soups, grab a drink, watch the game, or sit down for a bite to eat at one of your favorite Rahway bars or restaurants. January is a Souper time to visit Rahway!

Visit Rahwayishappening.com for information on parking, lists of shops and restaurants and details about all of our upcoming events!

MAYOR RAYMOND A. GIACOBBE AND THE RAHWAY CITY COUNCIL PRESENT

Rahway is SOUPER!

Enjoy the Rahway Soup Stroll!
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FROM 1-4pm

JAN 7 JAN 14 JAN 21 JAN 28

FREE EVENT!
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Warm up this winter with some FREE delicious soups!
Visit participating Rahway restaurants on Saturdays in January from 1-4pm and ask for a sample of their featured Soup Stroll soup!

Scan the QR code for a full list of participating restaurants or visit RahwayIsHappening.com/soupstroll

Please note: While supplies last. Establishments will not be able to accommodate food allergies or restrictions. Not all restaurants are open the entire 1-4pm. Please check individual hours of operation.

cityofrahway
MAYOR RAYMOND A. GIACOBBE

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