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Issue 99 • December 2023

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3RD ANNUAL LIGHT UP THE HEIGHTS LUMINARY PROJECT

The Rotary Club of Berkeley Heights

The much-anticipated 3rd Annual Light Up the Heights Luminary Project is set to ignite the holiday season with a warm glow of community spirit and charity. This cherished project, dedicated to benefitting a conglomerate of local organizations, including the Berkeley Heights Gardeners, Boy Scout Troops 68 & 368, the Berkeley Heights Rescue Squad, Church of the Little Flower, the Heights Kindness Team, Girl Scouts 55, and the Rotary Club of Berkeley Heights, promises to bring joy and support to the heart of the town.

Beginning around Thanksgiving, dedicated neighborhood captains have been tirelessly distributing flyers and order forms door-to-door, galvanizing the local community to participate in this heartwarming initiative. The response thus far has been overwhelming, showcasing the town's enthusiasm and dedication to nurturing a sense of togetherness during this special time of the year.

Orders for the enchanting luminary kits, each comprising 10 white paper bags, candles, and sand, have been pouring in, reaffirming the town's commitment to contributing to a meaningful cause. Each luminary package is reasonably priced at \$25, making it a wonderful opportunity for residents to extend their support and bring the festive cheer to their homes.

For added convenience, residents can also place their orders online at BHRotaryLuminaries.com until December 20. All luminaries ordered will be promptly delivered to each resident's home in Berkeley Heights, ensuring that they are in possession no later than December 23, just in time to light up the town in preparation for the special evening of December 24.

In the spirit of fostering a unified celebration, residents are encouraged to place their luminaries at the curb in front of their houses at dusk on December 24. Together, let us transform Berkeley Heights into a breathtaking winter wonderland, radiating warmth, hope, and unity that epitomize the holiday season.

Chairman - Mike Del Duca
(908) 803-5747
mickydel@gmail.com

3rd Annual Berkeley Heights Rotary Luminary Project

Light Up Berkeley Heights!

December 24th at Dusk
Creating a Night of Light

Luminaries should be placed at the curb and lit on December 24th at dusk - creating a night of light!*

10

LUMINARIES FOR \$25

Includes bags, candles & sand delivered to your home.

Orders for luminaries can be placed online at BHRotaryLuminaries.com

If assistance is needed, please call **908-803-5747**. Luminary orders will be taken until **December 20th**. Luminaries will be delivered to your home in Berkeley Heights by **December 23th**.

Proceeds to Benefit the Following Local Organizations:
Berkeley Heights Rescue Squad, Boy Scout Troops 68 & 368, Girl Scouts SU 55, Berkeley Heights Community Garden, Church of the Little Flower, the Heights Kindness Team.

Thank for Your Support Happy Holidays!

* Important Reminder: Luminaries Should be Placed Outside Only. On Curbs or Walkways - Away from Anything Flammable.

If assistance is needed for purchasing please contact berkeleyheightsrotaryclub@gmail.com, or call 908-803-5747.

Join us in making this holiday season a truly magical and joyous experience for all in Berkeley Heights!

ABOUT THE LIGHT UP THE HEIGHTS LUMINARY PROJECT

The Light Up the Heights Luminary Project is an annual community initiative designed to foster unity and support for several local organizations in Berkeley Heights, NJ. With the mission of spreading joy and warmth during the holiday season, the project aims to illuminate the town with the spirit of giving and togetherness.

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Berkeley Heights
COMMUNITY NEWS NJ

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**GLHS VOLLEYBALL TEAM
WINS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP!**

Congratulations to the Governor. Livingston Varsity Volleyball Team on their back-to-back Group 2 Central State Sectional Championship - they won in straight sets over Raritan!! Way to go ladies!!!



Photo Credit: Staci Toporek

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Berkeley Heights *Recent Sales*

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265 Killarney Dr	5	3.0	2	\$975,000	\$1,040,000	12
280 Killarney Dr	4	2.1	2	\$975,000	\$997,000	74
473 Plainfield Ave	5	3.0	1	\$949,900	\$920,000	14
36 Harwood Ave	3	2.0	1	\$639,000	\$730,000	15
1 Clover Ct	3	2.1	1	\$675,000	\$725,000	16

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Sources: GSIMLS, select properties sold 10/13-11/13/2023. If your property is currently listed with another Realtor, this is not intended as a solicitation of that listing. Information deemed reliable, but not guaranteed. Each office independently owned and operated. Equal housing opportunity. Some homes may be sold and listed by other brokers.



NEW BOARD MEMBERS TO HELP GUIDE LIFE-SAVING MISSION



(above) Bobby Ring is the President of Meyer & Depew, a HVAC company that has been serving Central and Northern New Jersey since 1953. Ring’s commitment to the Sharing Network Foundation is evident in his pledge to donate \$100 for every HVAC unit sold, already resulting in a generous contribution of \$29,400 to the Foundation. In addition to his corporate leadership, Ring exemplifies the spirit of giving as he donated a kidney to his sister, Kathleen, in 1984, extending her life.

Photo courtesy of NJ Sharing Network

The Sharing Network Foundation is pleased to announce the election of three outstanding individuals to its Board of Trustees - Bobby Ring of Berkeley Heights, JP Bartolomeo of Colts Neck, and Lorie Rodimer of East Stroudsburg, PA.

The new board members will play a pivotal role in guiding the Foundation’s strategic efforts to increase the number of lives saved and enhanced through clinical advancement, family support, public awareness and education about the benefits of organ and tissue donation and transplantation. The Sharing Network Foundation’s Board of Trustees is comprised of a diverse group of individuals from both public and private sectors, many of whom have been touched by donation, including donor families and transplant recipients.

“We are thrilled to welcome JP, Bobby, and Lorie to our Board of Trustees,” said Amanda Tibok, Executive Director, Sharing Network Foundation. “Each of them brings unique perspectives, experiences, and a shared dedication to our mission. Their diverse talents and passion will undoubtedly strengthen our ability to save and enhance lives through organ and tissue donation and transplantation.”

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. However, the generosity of those in the Garden State is providing hope for the future. In 2022, the number of organ donors and organs transplanted in a single year reached all-time highs. This marked the fourth consecutive year NJ Sharing Network has reported new records in the number of organ donors, underscoring the clear trend of increased support for organ donation.

“With the ongoing support of the Sharing Network Foundation and the outstanding additions to its Board, we are forging a path to save and enhance more lives than ever before,” said Carolyn M. Welsh, President and CEO, NJ Sharing Network, the non-profit organization responsible for the recovery and placement of donated organs and tissue for the Garden State. “Together, we will ensure caring and compassionate support is always there for our organ and tissue donor families and give our transplant recipients more holidays, birthdays, and special moments to share with their loved ones.”

One organ and tissue donor can save eight lives and enhance the lives of over 75 others. To learn more, get involved, and join the National Donate Life Registry as an organ and tissue donor, visit www.NJSharingNetwork.org.

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BERKELEY HEIGHTS RECREATION

FREE Santa Visit

Saturday, December 2

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

29 Park Avenue, Berkeley Heights
Lower Level, Multipurpose Room

FREE Christmas Tree Lighting

Saturday, December 2

6:15 PM (following the Winter Walk)

Peppertown Park
Plainfield Ave & Sherman Ave,
Berkeley Heights

Pickleball Open Play

Monday: 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM;

Wednesday: 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM;

Saturday: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM;

Sunday: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Looking to play some Pickleball in a fun and competitive environment? Join your fellow community members at Pickleball Open Play in Berkeley Heights (Tom Barton Courts: 411 Plainfield Ave, Berkeley Heights)!

Winter Recreation Programs

Berkeley Heights Recreation's Winter Programs will run:

Tuesday, December 5 through
Saturday, March 2.

Registration is open – register at
berkeleyheights.gov/1529/Winter-Programs

Berkeley Heights Recreation's FREE Senior Citizens Programs

The Berkeley Heights Recreation offers many free programs for our wonderful seniors! These include: Bingo, Mahjong, Chair Stretch, Exercise, Acrylics, and Free Luncheons!

For more information visit
berkeleyheights.gov/352/Senior-Information
Start practicing for Table Tennis Tournament

Join the Berkeley Heights Recreation Commission for another fun filled Table Tennis Tournament!

Saturday, March 2, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Recreation Center Multipurpose Room
(29 Park Avenue, Lower Level)

\$35.00 - LINK: [berkeleyheights.gov/1564/](https://berkeleyheights.gov/1564/Table-Tennis-Tournaments)
Table-Tennis-Tournaments

Winter Walk Committee

Families from Berkeley Heights and surrounding communities will eagerly head downtown on Saturday, December 2nd, for the eighth annual Berkeley Heights Winter Walk. A winter wonderland of fun, this free annual event runs from 3 to 6 p.m. Thousands stroll downtown Berkeley Heights to enjoy family-friendly activities, food, and entertainment.

Set along Springfield Avenue, this year's Walk features 80 attractions, snacks, activities, and performances to enjoy, courtesy of Berkeley Heights businesses, civic groups, and performance groups.

A popular activity is the artificial ice rink in the Total Health parking lot. Skaters borrow ice skates to skate around the rink with the aid of current Governor Livingston ice hockey team members. Other attractions include horse and carriage rides, life-size snow globes, a trackless train, and visits with the Grinch, Olaf and a Snow Queen. Enjoy live music, dance performances, strolling characters, and a deejay. You'll also find holiday-themed photo stations; a chance for children to visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus and pass on their wish lists; free hot chocolate,

cookies, popcorn, cotton candy, and other snacks; balloon and character artists; game trucks; a football goal challenge and basketball throw; and more! To see the full roster of activities and entertainment, visit the Winter Walk website at berkeleyheightsdowntown.com.

There will be performances throughout the afternoon. Our emcee, Thoro Entertainment, will introduce performances by Pure Movement Dance Center, Columbia Middle School Jazz Band, Performing Arts 5678, Wharton Arts, GL Vocal Ensemble, GL Jazz Band, GL Brass and Sax, and the Governor Livingston Highlander Band.

The Berkeley Heights Recreation Department's annual tree lighting and firework show at Peppertown Park immediately follow the Winter Walk at 6 p.m. Garden State Fireworks is donating the fireworks.

For a full list of sponsors for the 2023 Winter Walk visit berkeleyheightsdowntown.com.

Parking for the Winter Walk and the Tree Lighting is at Upper and Lower Columbia Park, 76 Columbia Ave, Berkeley Heights. A trolley will transport visitors between the parking lots and Peppertown Park.

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HOLIDAY EVENTS DEC. 2ND

Berkeley Heights Recreation Santa Visit

Saturday, December 2

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

29 Park Avenue, Berkeley Heights

Lower Level, Multipurpose Room - FREE

LINK: <https://berkeleyheights.gov/1558/Santa-Visit>

Christmas Tree Lighting

Saturday, December 2

6:15 PM (following the Winter Walk)

Peppertown Park - FREE

Plainfield Ave & Sherman Ave,

Berkeley Heights

LINK:

<https://berkeleyheights.gov/1559/Christmas-Tree-Lighting>



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GLHS HOSTS 52ND ANNUAL PAGEANT OF CHAMPIONS MARCHING BAND TOURNAMENT

Follow Berkeley Heights Public Schools on Facebook

Governor Livingston High School hosted the 52nd Annual Pageant of Champions Marching Band Tournament in October.

Seven marching bands, including Governor Livingston, were in attendance. GLHS was scored in a judged exhibition with a 90.2, their highest

score this season. The GLHS marching band, led by Band Director Nicholas O'Sullivan, performed a show that was themed 'Moments in the Park' and featured Eleanor Rigby by Cody Fry, Come Together by The Beatles/Gary Clark Jr., I Hear a Symphony by Cody Fry,

To Build a Home by The Cinematic

Orchestra, arranged by Jeff Chambers.

According to the event program, the 2023 Field Show, "Moments in the Park", tells a story through music and dance of a tranquil afternoon,

the rain slowly starting to subside, when strangers convene in a park, finding themselves drawn to the same weathered benches. As the day goes on strangers find their paths intersecting in the serene park. As strangers meet, momentary awkwardness dissolves

into conversation, laughter, and sharing tales of interests and dreams. As the sun dipped below the horizon, the park transformed into their unexpected rendezvous, reminding them that sometimes, beautiful connections bloom when strangers cross paths.

In addition, this past summer the Highlander Marching Band returned to international performance touring for the first time since 2018. The band performed in a "static parade" with other bands from around the world as a part of the Royal International Tattoo Pre-Show on Canada Day near the Citadel in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Read more about this exciting trip in this article from the student newspaper

The Highlander: bit.ly/46UOKvj



Photos courtesy of the Dy Family

SENIOR TRIP - DEC. 18

The Berkeley Heights seniors are sponsoring a trip to Resorts Casino in Atlantic City on Monday, December 18. The bus leaves the parking lot at Town Hall, 29 Park Avenue, at 8:30 a.m. and returns at approximately 7:15 p.m. The cost is \$35 which includes bus transportation and a \$20 voucher for slot play. For further information or reservations, call Ramona at 908-647-3295.

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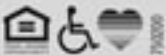
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NJ INTERGENERATIONAL ORCHESTRA PRESENTS FREE FAMILY HOLIDAY CONCERT IN - DEC 10

New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra will be entertaining families on Sunday, December 10, 2023 with a free concert of seasonal holiday favorites. The concert will be from 2pm to 3pm at the Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School, 272 Morris Avenue, Summit, NJ. Families with children of all ages are invited to come and join in the fun!

NJIO's three orchestral ensembles will combine to perform music by Strauss, Mozart, Brahms, and more! The concert concludes with Leroy Anderson's exciting Sleigh Ride, with percussion accompaniment provided by the youngest members of the audience!

The concert is free and open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted.

Following the concert, the famous NJIO Instrument Petting Zoo returns! Experienced NJIO musicians will guide young audience members and assist them in safely trying out the instrument of their dreams. Instruments are loaned by Elefante Music of New Providence and Scotch Plains.

Concert Details:

Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 2 pm
Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School
272 Morris Avenue
Summit, NJ 07901

Admission is free;
donations are gratefully accepted.

This concert is made possible by funds from: the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts; Frank and Lydia Bergen Foundation; The Lillian Schenck Foundation; The Henry S. and Agnes M. Truzack Foundation; Investors Foundation; Standish Foundation; and many other generous supporters. NJIO is a proud participating organization in the Families First Discovery Pass Program, a program of the NJ Departments of Health and Human Services.

NJIO is committed to ensuring that its programs and concerts are accessible. For more



(above) Young audience members get to try out orchestra instruments at NJIO's Holiday Concert Instrument Petting Zoo. Instruments are loaned by Elefante Music.

information regarding the concert or to inquire about patron services, please contact NJIO at info@njio.org, or visit NJIO's website njio.org.

New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra, now in its 30th season, has been nationally recognized as a leader in intergenerational excellence through its unique approach to teaching musical performance and as a model for intergenerational orchestras across the country. Depending on space availability, NJIO welcomes new members of all ages and abilities each concert period to one of its several orchestras - no auditions needed!

NJIO's 30th anniversary season will continue with two more concerts:

NJIO'S WINTER CONCERT

Sunday, February 25, 2024, 3 pm
Dolan Performance Hall,
Saint Elizabeth University,
Morristown, NJ

NJIO'S SPRING CONCERT

followed by 30th Anniversary Celebration!
Sunday, April 21, 2024, 3 pm
Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church,
Plainfield, NJ

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COPING WITH LOSS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

There is so much pressure to be happy in our culture, especially at the holidays. We are supposed to have a Happy Thanksgiving, a "merry little Christmas" or a Happy Hanukkah. But grief doesn't take a holiday.

Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss would like to offer support to those navigating the challenges of grieving during the holiday season and offer some coping strategies as well. On Thursday December 14th from 6:30-8 pm, Imagine will offer a workshop on Coping with Loss During the Holidays. The free workshop will be held at their center at 244 Sheffield Street in Mountainside and is open to adults and children grades 3 and older.

Imagine's Grief Educator, Connie Palmer, LCSW will present the workshop in English and Training and Education Director, Veronica Ortiz, LPC and Bilingual Program Manager, Sonia Nuñez will present the workshop at the same time in Spanish. Pizza dinner is available prior to the session beginning at 6:15 for those who sign up. Hot cocoa and cookies will be served as well.

If you are looking for support as you cope with a loss this holiday season, the staff at Imagine would like to help, and hope to see you at the workshop on the 14th.

Imagine is a 501c3 nonprofit that offers free year-round grief support groups for children ages 3-18 and young adults 19-30 who are coping with a loss due to death. Concurrently, support groups are available for the parents and guardians of the children in the groups and offered in English and Spanish. Imagine also offers grief and loss education and training to the community. For more information please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imagineenj.org.



(above) If you're interested in attending the workshop presented in English, please scan the QR code or visit Imagine's website at imagineenj.org/education-training/community-webinars/ to register. Registration is not required for the workshop presented in Spanish.



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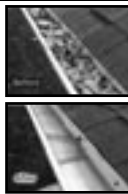
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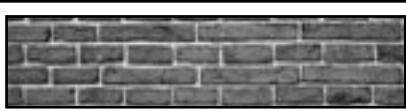
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TICKETS NOW ON SALE FOR 24TH ANNUAL PIPES OF CHRISTMAS

The Pipes of Christmas will celebrate its 24th joyous season with performances in New Jersey and New York this December. The holiday favorite opens on Saturday, December 17 at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, located at 921 Madison Avenue (at 73rd Street) for two performances at 2 and 7PM. The concert moves across the Hudson River on Sunday, December 18 to Central Presbyterian Church located at 70 Maple Street in Summit, NJ also with performances at 2 and 7PM.

For those weary of the ceaseless stream of secular seasonal music from department stores to TV, the Pipes of Christmas offers a spiritual and traditional take on the season that connects concertgoers to the holiday in a fresh, meaningful way. The show features tunes such as, "Highland Cathedral," "Joy to the World", and "Amazing Grace", all performed live on pipes and drums, harp and fiddle, and organ and brass and more. Not only does the performance define Christmas cheer, but also it inspires those of Celtic descent to retrace and reconnect to their ancestry.

According to producer Robert Currie, "We are absolutely delighted to be bringing our concert back to full force after two devastating years weathering the Covid pandemic. Supporting our GoFundMe campaign will continue to make these concerts possible."

The 2022 production marks the NYC solo debut of soprano Sharon Lyons originally from Dublin, Ireland.

The concert presents the music of Christmas accompanied by readings taken from the Celtic literature of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. In addition to Ms. Lyons, featured performers include James Robinson from the film "Braveheart," New England fiddle champion Paul Woodiel, champion harpist Rachel Clemente, and the Pipe Major Kevin Ray Blandford Memorial Pipe Band from Redlands, CA among many more.

PROCEEDS SUPPORT SCHOLARSHIPS AND MORE

Proceeds from the concert support an extensive music scholarship program, which include annual gifts to the National Piping Centre and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (both located in Glasgow, Scotland) the Gaelic College of Nova Scotia and the Carol Hassert Memorial Fine Arts Scholarship at Summit (NJ) High School.

Proceeds also support the annual Tartan Day on Ellis Island celebration and the Society's sponsorship of the US National Scottish Harp Championship, the Gaelic Literature Competition at Scotland's Royal National Mod, and an academic research prize at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Scotland's Gaelic college on the Isle of Skye.

Each year, concert highlights are webcast in hi-definition over the Christmas holiday to a global audience in cooperation with HomeTowne Television. In addition to winning multiple Telly Awards for broadcast production excellence, the 2020 virtual concert was a finalist for the coveted

MG Alba Trad Music Award presented annually in Scotland.

The concert is still accepting Title Sponsors as well as Program Ads. These gifts help offset production expenses and add help fund our scholarships.

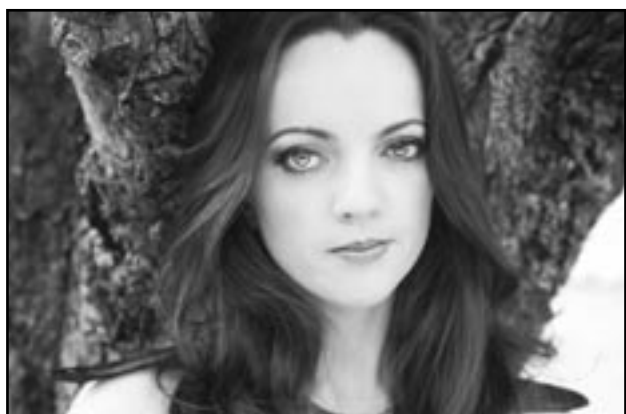
TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

Tickets may be purchased online exclusively through ShowTix4U at www.showtix4u.com (be certain you select the event name and date in the search engine). Reserved patron seats are available at both venues.

ABOUT "THE PIPES OF CHRISTMAS"

Since making its debut in 1999, The Pipes of Christmas has played to standing room only audiences. Now a cherished holiday event, the concert provides audiences with a stirring and reverent celebration of the Christmas season and the Celtic spirit. Audience-goers return year after year to experience the program, many reporting that the Pipes of Christmas has become part of their family's annual Christmas tradition.

The concert has been lavished with critical acclaim. In his review for Classical New Jersey Magazine, Paul Somers wrote, "The whole evening was constructed to introduce gem after gem and still have a finale which raised the roof. In short, it was like a well-constructed fireworks show on the Glorious Fourth. The Westfield Leader described the concert as "a unique sound of power and glory nowhere else to be found."



(above) Soprano Sharon Lyons originally from Dublin, Ireland, made her NYC solo debut at the 2022 Pipes of Christmas concerts NJ.



(above) Pipers from the Kevin Ray Blandford Memorial Pipe Band are returning



THE PIPES OF CHRISTMAS
24TH ANNUAL PRODUCTION

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Full details at pipesofchristmas.com. Brought to you by the Learned Kindred of Currie.

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Sunday, December 24

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Candlelight Eucharist with Special Music at 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Day

Monday, December 25

Nativity of Our Lord Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

Service of Lessons, Carols and Eucharist

Sunday, December 31 at 10:00 a.m.

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SUMMIT OLD GUARD THE DECEMBER SPEAKERS PROGRAM

The Summit Old Guard was founded in 1930 and meets most Tuesdays at the New Providence Presbyterian Church located at 1307 Springfield Ave. Our motto is “Come for the Programs. Stay for the Friends.” Please join us. Our programs are free to the public, and we welcome you!

December speakers include Bill Freund, Mitch Erickson, and a special event featuring Joe Regan.

On December 5th, Summit Old Guard member, Bill Freund, will tell us about fleeing Nazi Germany with his family in 1936 at age 11. A refugee doesn’t look for happiness, only survival. He was a shoe-shine boy, learned English, and attended school. He eventually earned a PhD from Columbia and became Chief Economist at the New York Stock Exchange. He wrote several professional books and later, two children’s stories, including one about a cookie that played a central role in his life. We’ll hear the remarkable life story of one of our most notable members.

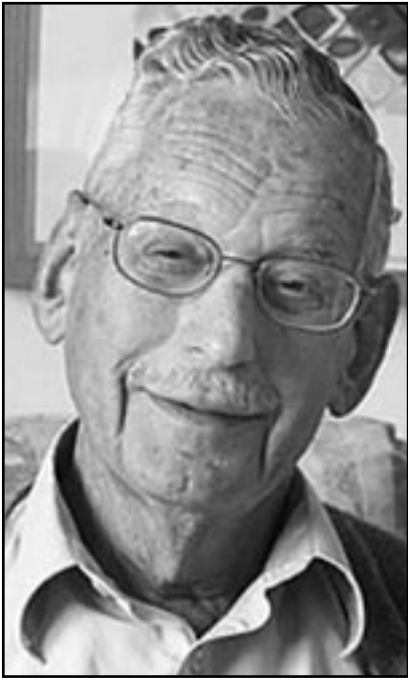
On December 12th, another distinguished Old Guard member, Mitch Erickson will review the science, biology, and environmental and social uses of water as a parable of the intersection of science, environment, policy, recreation, safety, climate change, and social justice that affects all 8 billion of us. It is important to be informed about the fundamental properties of H2O to participate in societal discussions. Mitch is an

environmental chemist with a lifetime of professional experience with water. He also enjoys a variety of beverages comprised largely of water.

December 19th will be our last meeting of the year. We always try to make it a little special and a little festive. This year we will feature Joe Regan, a well-known cabaret singer and pianist we have always enjoyed, and he’ll appear with a repertoire of popular standards and holiday

songs. There will be special refreshments and decorations, and the bigger the turnout the better it will be. Join us for the music, snacks, and SOG bonhomie.

Past speakers and much more can be viewed at SummitOldGuard.org but we encourage people to drop in on our meetings which take place at the church at 10:00 a.m. most Tuesdays. “Come for the Speakers. Stay for the Friends.” We look forward to meeting you.



(above, l-r) Bill Freund, Mitch Erickson, and Joe Regan



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(above) The Summit Old Guard has 19 activity and interest groups. During a Nov. 3rd fishing outing Bob Eng, along with Joe Geist, Joe Corona, and Marv Gersten all landed some sizeable striped bass for dinner and the freezer. Besides fishing, members golf weekly, play bocce followed by lunch, discuss the latest technology issues, and much more.

Courtesy photo

CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH NJ FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA!

From traditional to pops, renowned tenor fare and Broadway favorites, New Jersey Festival Orchestra's (NJFO) holiday concerts promise to fill the entire family with warmth and cheer.

They're back! Under the baton of Maestro David Wroe, the orchestra will kick off the festive season with a bang and plenty of bling as The Three Holiday Tenors join NJFO to present a family festival of traditional and contemporary holiday songs and music.

"We cannot wait to return to The Presbyterian Church at this special time of year and are thrilled to welcome back The Three Holiday Tenors – each more talented than the next – to help us celebrate the Holiday season," said Wroe.

The concert features Metropolitan Opera's internationally acclaimed tenor Errin Brooks and award winning tenors Jeremy Brauner and Mackenzie Whitney to celebrate and captivate with a dazzling selection of renowned tenor arias. Traditional carols, signature versions of familiar fare and a host of wintertime curiosities are also sure to delight.

"We believe there is something for everyone in this performance. Our holiday concert is a vessel for children, parents, grandparents and friends – indeed the entire community – come together through festive music at this unique time of the year."

The concert will take place on Saturday, December 9th at 7pm at the Presbyterian Church, 140 Mountain Ave in Westfield.

RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH NJFO!

NJFO's quintessential New Year's celebration is also back on Sunday, December 31 in Westfield with "The Great American Songbook," a superb revue of American song and dance showstoppers.

Audiences are invited celebrate the New Year and revel in the musical genius of America's great composers, outstanding vocal performers, dazzling dance numbers and a world-class professional orchestra led by Maestro David Wroe.

A cabaret style event for the whole family, the concert promises a superb review of musical theatre classics presented in glorious symphonic splendor. The concert features renowned guest singers direct from the Broadway stage and dancers from Dance Theatre of Harlem who join NJFO to swing to favorites from Broadway and beyond.

The performance will take place on Sunday, December 31 at 7pm at Westfield High School, 550 Dorian Road, Westfield.

"There is much to celebrate this holiday season," continued Wroe. "So gather your friends and family for a series of merry musical programs of song and dance for audiences of all ages!"

This seasonal stroll of timeless classics and sentimental favorites, sure to bring us together with joy, smiles, and distinctive holiday memories, has been made possible in part by support from The Westfield Foundation, a Union County H.E.A.R.T grant and The NJ State Council on the Arts.

For tickets and further information for both events go to www.njfestivalorchestra.org or call 908 232 9400. –

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NJFO NEW JERSEY FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA


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THE THREE HOLIDAY TENORS

Return of THE HOLIDAY TENORS

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David Wroe conductor Holiday Choruses	Jeremy Bauner tenor Errin Brooks tenor Mackenzie Whitney tenor


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Sunday, December 31, 2023 at 7pm
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SHINING STARS CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR – DEC. 2ND

With cast members from all over Union County and beyond, the Shining Stars Network has been producing live programming for the special needs community for eleven years.

Celebrate the holiday season when the Shining Stars take the stage for their 2023 Christmas Spectacular" set for Saturday, December 2nd, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

The show will take place on the main stage at the historic Union County Performing Arts Center in Rahway as this talented cast sings and dances to your holiday favorites.

This year's Christmas Spectacular marks the return of the Shining Stars to one of the most beautiful theaters in New Jersey and will feature 35 special needs cast members and their volunteer buddies from local high schools, who

serve as mentors to the cast during rehearsals.

Two previous Shining Stars shows at UCPAC drew more than 1,000 audience members for each performance, and already, the buzz is building in the community.

"We're so excited to ring in the holiday season," noted Shining Stars Network founder and President Mike Curci. "Our stars are ready to share their smiles, energy and amazing talents with everyone. This will be a great way to cap off our 11th year."

"We strongly believe in creating an inclusive environment for our cast, and our buddies are an integral part of the Shining Stars experience," noted Shining Stars founder and show director Sally Curci. "We are so excited to bring a new show to the stage and cannot wait to connect with

our incredible audience again to celebrate the holiday season."

Shining Stars Network is wrapping up their biggest year yet, which included their annual "Evening of Shining Stars" Spring Show, their Broadway debut at the Gershwin Theatre, and their impressive main stage debut at the iconic Paper Mill Playhouse.

The Shining Stars performed "This Is Me" on Broadway as part of the Arts for Autism concert and soon after, took the Paper Mill stage to present The Greatest Show, a history-making performance which was the first full production of performers with special needs in Paper Mill history.

"Shining Stars Network is not only about performing, but more importantly we're about building self-confidence and self-esteem," said Shining Stars co-director Nicole Greene. "Our cast members are not only talented, but inspire us every day, and we are all very excited about seeing our cast take the stage again to share another magical night with the audience."

Tickets are on sale now at UCPAC.org. For groups of 10 or more, email shiningstarsnetwork@gmail.com.

The night will also feature a Tricky Tray and 50/50 raffle. Doors will open at 6:00 p.m.

Shining Stars Network is a 501(c)3 not for profit organization based in Cranford, N.J. that offers opportunities in the performing arts for the special needs community.

For more information on Shining Stars Network or to make a donation, please visit shiningstarsnetwork.org.



A RIVETING CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE: EARTH MAMA SCREENING!

CASA of Essex County is thrilled to announce the upcoming screening of "Earth Mama." Prepare for a thought-provoking cinematic journey that delves into the complexities of the foster care system. The film unravels the heartache and resilience within the foster care system, focusing on the life of a pregnant single mother who seeks solace and strength in her Bay Area community. As she navigates the daunting challenges before her, she must make life-altering decisions that will shape the destiny of her family.

Following the screening, we are delighted to present an exclusive Q&A session with the brilliant Director and Writer, Savannah Leaf. The

discussion will be expertly moderated by Michelle Miller, distinguished CBS Anchor and New York Times Best-Selling Author of "Belonging."

Screening Details: Date: December 6th; Time: 7:00 p.m.; Venue: The Clairidge, Montclair, NJ

Rating: R (Some Drug Use|Language|Sexual References|Nudity)

For more information and to secure your complimentary tickets, please visit

casaeearthmama.eventbrite.com.

For nearly four decades, CASA of Essex County has been dedicated to a singular mission: providing unwavering support to the young individuals placed in foster care, who, through no fault of their own, bear the weight of repeated traumas and uncertainties. Our commitment is to offer them the advocacy, guidance, and care they so desperately need to rise above adversity and carve out brighter futures.

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A FILM WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

SAVANAH LEAF

Q&A with the director after screening will be moderated by

MICHELLE MILLER
 CBS ANCHOR AND
 NEW YORK TIMES
 BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
 OF "BELONGING"

EARTH MAMA

BLUE ENVELOPE POLICE PROGRAM FOR RESIDENTS ON SPECTRUM

The Blue Envelope Program is accessible to all Union County residents on the Autism Spectrum. Residents can obtain a Blue Envelope at their local police departments throughout the county.

The Blue Envelope Program introduces a simple yet effective tool that contains essential information for drivers with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This includes a copy of their driver's license, vehicle registration, insurance details, and an emergency contact card. Additionally, the envelope provides clear instructions to drivers on how to navigate a traffic stop and interact with law enforcement officers in a manner that promotes clarity and safety.

Key features of the Blue Envelope Program include:

- **Specialized Training:** Every officer in Union County, including local officers in all 21 municipalities, will undergo specialized training to develop a deeper understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder and the best practices for engaging with individuals during

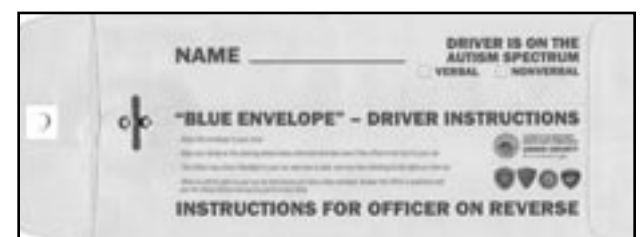
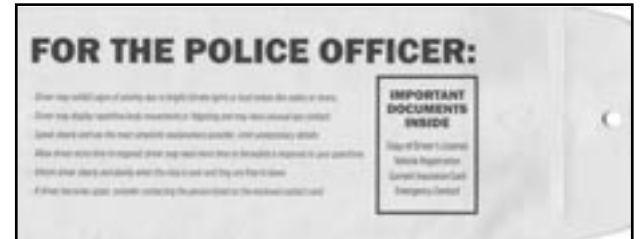
traffic stops.

- **Communication Facilitation:** Drivers with Autism Spectrum Disorder can present the blue envelope to the officer upon being stopped, allowing officers to quickly recognize the situation and adapt their approach accordingly.
- **Essential Information:** The envelope includes guidance for officers to simplify requests and minimize the risk of misunderstandings or potential escalation. Additionally, officers are advised to contact the person listed on the emergency contact card for assistance if needed.
- **Verbal or Nonverbal Indication:** A checked-off box on the envelope indicates whether the driver is verbal or nonverbal, which aids officers in communicating effectively.

"Every single police department in Union County is proud to be a part of this initiative," said Elizabeth Police Chief Giacomo Sacca and President of the Union County Police Chief's

Association. "Our officers have undergone thorough briefings and trainings to ensure they are well-versed in the proper protocols, and they are eager to put their training into action."

For information on this program in your town, contact your local Police Department's Community Outreach Unit.



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BLUE CHRISTMAS PRAYER SERVICE

The Church of the Little Flower will be hosting a Blue Christmas prayer service on Sunday, December 10 at 3 p.m. The service will be held in the Bernauer Parish Center, 290 Plainfield Avenue in Berkeley Heights.

Many of us feel down or depressed this time of year, whether due to stress, financial issues, broken relationships, death of a loved one, or may be looking for a brief respite from the hustle and bustle of the season.

The Bereavement Ministry of the Church of the Little Flower invites anyone from the parish or any faith community to attend our service where we can pray for renewed strength and hope and experience the presence of the Lord.

Light refreshments will be served afterward. For further information, you may call the parish center at 908-464-1585 and ask for Dan Grossano or email bereavement.lf@gmail.com.

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1 Unit (Business card)	3.25" x 2"	\$60	\$150	\$250	\$350	\$400	\$450	\$500	\$550	\$600
2 Units	6.5" x 2" or 3.25" x 4"	\$100	\$250	\$400	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$800	\$900	\$1000
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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December 15**

WhartonCommunityPlayers



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January 14 & 21, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Wharton Black Box Theater

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Wharton Community Players kick off their second season with the classical farce, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Join us to see who ends up with whom!

Written by William Shakespeare

Directed by Jenna Burke

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