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8TH ANNUAL WINTER WALK STEPS OFF THE HOLIDAY SEASON

The joy of the holiday season was on full display on Saturday, December 2nd, when mild temperatures brought out thousands of people from Berkeley Heights and surrounding towns to gather downtown for the Eighth Annual Winter Walk.

Children of all ages strolled Springfield Avenue to enjoy a winter wonderland, and a steady stream of entertainment including cast characters, a DJ, and performances, inflatables, a train ride, and more!

Berkeley Heights businesses and organizations were on hand to provide free food and holiday experiences, such as holiday photo shoots, spin-to-win contests, and an array of giveaways and samples.

The event culminated with the Berkeley Heights Recreation Department's annual tree lighting and firework show.

The Winter Walk is free to all comers due to the generosity of the Berkeley Heights business community, which uses this occasion to give back to those people who support their businesses all year long. To see the complete list of sponsors, go to berkeleyheightsdowntown.com.



More photos on page 19.

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Photos from this and other events can be found online at rennamedia.com and on Berkeley Heights Community News page on facebook.com Feel free to “Like,” “Tag,” and “Share.”



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*We wish you a Happy
& Healthy New Year!*

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Berkeley Heights
COMMUNITY NEWS NJ

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**SOUP KITCHEN MINISTRY'S
DEDICATED WORK RECOGNIZED**

The Soup Kitchen Ministry at the Church of the Little Flower in Berkeley Heights was honored by St. Joseph's Social Service Center, located in Elizabeth, at their annual fundraising dinner held in October.

They were recognized for serving for 225 Saturdays, dating back to 1986 when this parish ministry began. The ministry cooks, serves and cleans up meals every other month on the 2nd Saturday.



(above) Some members of Soup Kitchen Ministry at The Church of the Little Flower, along with Rev. Matthew Dooley, Parochial Vicar.

Courtesy photo

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36 Brambling Rd	4	4.1	2	\$1,457,118	\$1,435,578	43
88 Sutton Dr	5	3.0	2	\$899,000	\$920,000	7
105 Sutton Dr	4	3.1	2	\$799,000	\$890,000	16
107 Oakland St	3	2.0	2	\$779,000	\$815,000	20
36 Harwood Ave	3	2.0	1	\$639,000	\$730,000	15

Happy *New Year*

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Wishing you a beautiful holiday season and a new year brimming with love, prosperity, and the comforts of home. We look forward to serving you in 2024.

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Sources: GSMLS, select properties sold 11/8/2023-12/8/2023. 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.



5TH ANNUAL IN-HOUSE ROBOTICS COMPETITION

Berkeley Heights Public Schools
Columbia Middle School recently held its 5th annual in-house robotics competition to determine the teams that would go on to represent the middle school at the regional qualifier event in mid-November. Five teams from CMS competed: The Tech Team, The Motor-Vators, The I Don't Knows, The Cyber Tigers and the Odd Ones Out. Chatham Middle School and Deerfield Middle School also joined the event in order to learn from one another and practice in a competitive setting prior to regionals.

Each team had to present a project to a panel of judges in which they identified a problem and designed a solution related to this year's theme, "using the arts and technology to communicate your passions to a wide audience". Teams also faced off during 3 rounds of robotics games in which they had to code their robot to autonomously navigate as many board challenges

as possible during the 2:30 rounds. Students from the GL Robotics team were also in attendance to act as judges and referees. Coach Michael Maresca of the GL team took time to speak with the middle school students about the high school program and encouraged them to continue to participate in robotics in the future.

Earlier in the school year former CMS Science Teacher Tommy Clayton coordinated an event

between the 5th graders and the GL team. In his new role as K-5 STEAM teacher he is very excited to help build a robotics program that extends over all the BHPS schools. CMS Coaches Tommy Clayton and Christina Froehlich were proud to see the Motor-Vators, The Cyber Tigers and The Odd Ones Out move on to represent the middle school in the regional qualifier.



(above) 5th annual in-house\ robotics competition

Photo by Berkeley Heights Public Schools



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LOOK BACK FROM THE FUTURE

Ronald Weinger, HSofBH

Have you ever wondered what the house your parents grew up in looked like? What about the house where your grandparents lived? Was it a private house, an apartment in a city housing project, or an apartment above a store. Did they own or rent? Did they have a yard to play in or have a playground? Maybe there was an empty lot next door, or they played in the street. Was the building new or already old when they lived in it. Have you ever wondered? Do you think your children would wonder when they grow up, and would their children wonder?

The Historical Society of Berkeley Heights is starting off 2024 with a Look Back From The Future campaign to photograph every building in the Township as it looks today so your children and grandchildren, and people who will live in the town a century from now, will be able to see Berkeley Heights as you see it.

History does not stand still. Very little of Springfield Avenue looks today as it did at the turn of the century, only one generation ago. How many remember what the Kings Supermarket, the Berkeley Cinema and the Berkeley Plaza looked like? Or the Pizza Hut where the CVS now stands? How many remember the Auberge Swiss Restaurant? History starts anew every second, and if it is not recorded it is lost, one second at a time.

The Look Back From The Future campaign is intended to record Berkeley Heights of today, before too many seconds go by. All that is requested is just one house photograph from each household. It can be a stark B&W documentary or colorful holiday decorated picture of your house. How would you want your grandchildren to see it? Of course, additional town photographs would be appreciated, but, if we received just one of each home by the end of the year, we would

have the most thoroughly documented collection in Union County. We already have 200 photographs; only about 13,000 more are needed.

The Society is not requesting any personal information, only the house street and number. Submitters do not even need to identify themselves. No information will be sold or distributed or used for commercial purposes. The photographs will be indexed numerically by street and digitally stored in the Society's archive. No other information will be maintained. All photographs will become the property of the Historical Society of Berkeley Heights. No compensation, either monetary or in any other form is offered. Photographs should be sent as a .jpg attachment to HSofBH@comcast.net.

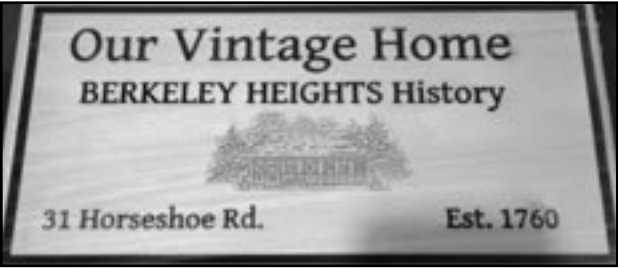
The Historical Society of Berkeley Heights is a non-profit 501c-3 corporation. It is not affiliated with the Berkeley Heights Historic Preservation Committee, a Township government agency.

IS YOUR HOME 100 YEARS OR OLDER?

The Berkeley Heights Historic Preservation Committee Vintage Home Project is looking for homes around Berkeley Heights that are one hundred years or older and maintain at least part of its architectural integrity. Taken into account is the historical significance of the house, the surrounding property, location, outbuildings or cultural aspects. If qualified, the homeowner will be presented with an engraved sign with the year built and their address. Please note: This is not part of the National Historical Registry and will not be subject to any type of regulation.

Applications can be obtained and submitted to the Berkeley Heights Historic Preservation Committee via email to hpcfbh@gmail.com or mail to:

Berkeley Heights Township - Administration
29 Park Ave
Berkeley Heights NJ 07922;
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MOUNTAIN PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DANCE CLUB

Berkeley Heights Public Schools
The Mountain Park Dance Club recently held their first meeting of the year and attracted a lot of interest from students. The club meets every “D” day (D for dance!) at 7:50 a.m. in the MP gym. Led by staff advisor and Fourth Grade Teacher Ms. Michele Guerriero, the Dance Club is open to all third, fourth and fifth grade students. The group worked hard to learn a routine in preparation for their first performance held in November at the Berkeley Heights Education Foundation's faculty and community stars basketball game fundraising event. According to Ms. Guerriero, "I am so excited to be leading the Dance Club at Mountain Park. We are working on our routine for the BHEF basketball event right now, but I hope to have two routines taught by the end of the year so we can put on a performance in front of Mountain Park classmates and staff. This is the largest group I ever had sign up for the club with 60 students participating! As I like to say, life is better when you're dancing!"

Photo by Berkeley Heights Public Schools





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STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THANKSGIVING TRADITION

Berkeley Heights Public Schools
Students at William Woodruff School enjoyed an annual tradition in advance of the Thanksgiving holiday. The second grade "Woodruff's Thanksgiving Day Parade" was started at Woodruff in November of 2019. The activity begins with a read aloud of the book, 'Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of The Puppeteer of Macy's Parade'. The students learn about Tony Sarg and the history and evolution of his role in designing puppets - then balloons - in the very first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Students then take a virtual tour of the workshop where the Macy's Parade balloons, floats, and balloonicles are created and

assembled. They then explore the balloon line-up for the current year's Macy's parade. Then the real fun begins! Students design their own double-sided "balloon". "Balloons" are made from paper and are then stuffed with crumbled up newspaper so that they appear to be inflated. On the Wednesday before Thanksgiving the kindergarten and first grade classes line the sides of the hallways and the second graders parade past them; proudly displaying their balloons above their heads. The parade spectators cheer and clap while marching band music plays over the school loudspeaker. The activity continues to be a favorite amongst the second-grade students!

Photos by Berkeley Heights Public Schools



(above) Students designed their own double-sided “balloon” made from paper, and then stuffed with crumbled up newspaper so that they appear to be inflated.



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Midweek Advent Services with Eucharist
December 6, 13 and 20 at 12 noon
Organ Recitals After Services on December 6 and 20

Christmas Eve
Sunday, December 24
Family Service with Eucharist at 4:00 p.m.
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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Much Ado About Nothing

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

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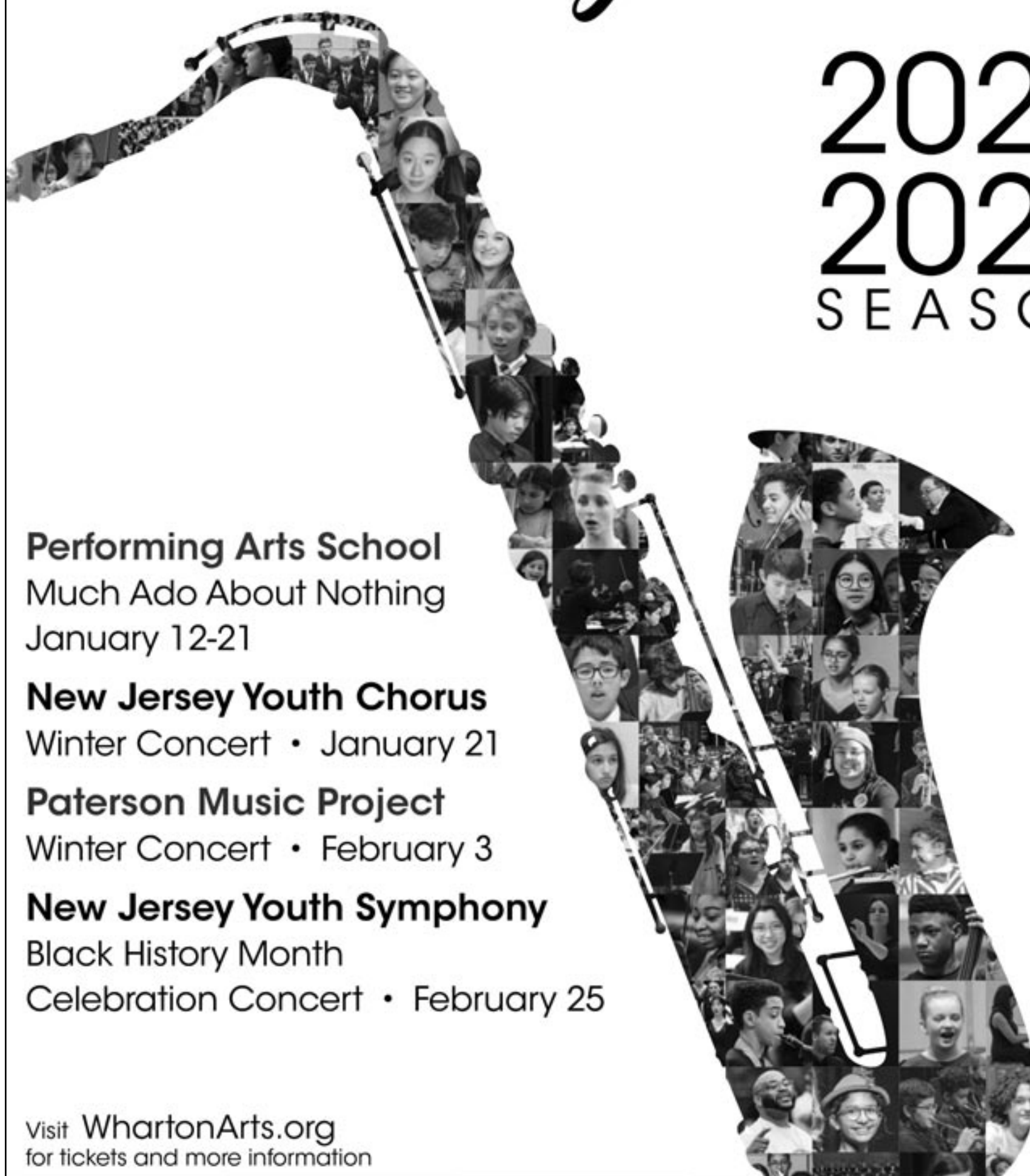
Performing Arts School
Much Ado About Nothing
January 12-21

New Jersey Youth Chorus
Winter Concert • January 21

Paterson Music Project
Winter Concert • February 3

New Jersey Youth Symphony
Black History Month
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17TH ANNUAL INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

The New Providence - Berkeley Heights Interfaith Council hosted their 17th annual Thanksgiving Service at Faith Lutheran Church in New Providence. The Interfaith Thanksgiving

Service is a community tradition held the Monday before Thanksgiving bringing together different faiths and community in prayer and in thanks.



Photo by Alex Kogan

UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

Berkeley Heights Recreation

Winter Recreation Programs

Berkeley Heights Recreation's Winter Programs will run through Saturday, March 2.

Programs have started! Registration is still open – Register today!

FREE Senior Citizens New Year Luncheon

Friday, January 5, 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

29 Park Avenue, Berkeley Heights,

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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!

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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)!

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and to register visit:

berkeleyheights.gov/1512/Program-




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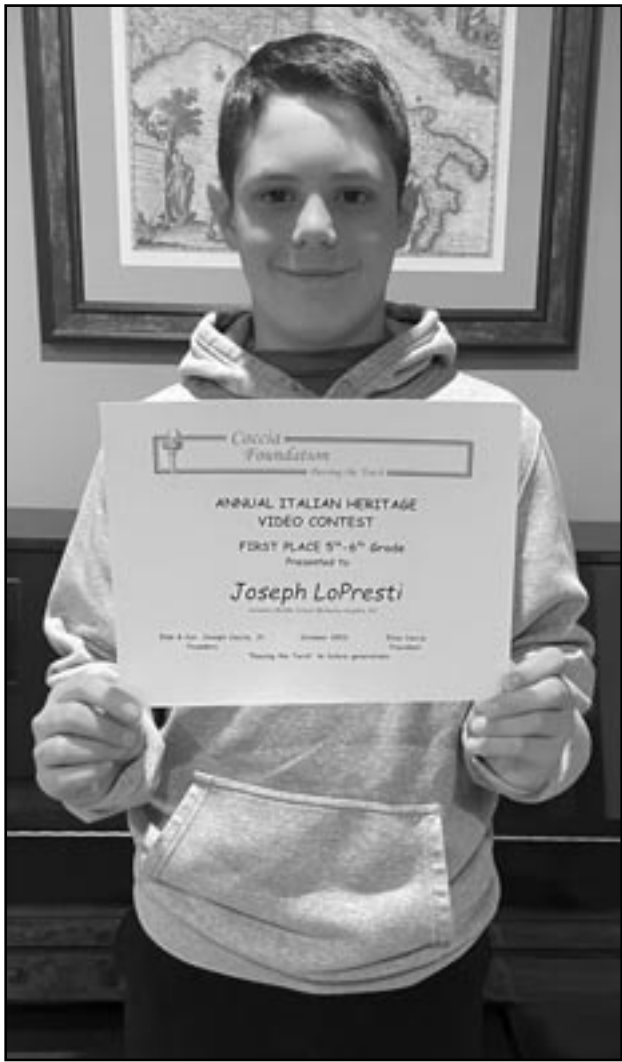


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(above) Joseph LoPresti won first place in the 5th-6th grade category in the 2023 Fall Italian Heritage Video Contest in celebration of Italian Heritage month through the Coccia Foundation.

Photo by Berkeley Heights Public Schools

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The Column

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Celebrating Our 39th Year!

Berkeley Heights Public Schools

Recently, sixth grade Columbia Middle School student Joseph LoPresti won first place in the 5th-6th grade category in the 2023 Fall Italian Heritage Video Contest in celebration of Italian Heritage month through the Coccia Foundation.

The Coccia Foundation offers many opportunities to students and professionals of Italian Language and Cultural Studies. This annual contest aims to identify the achievements and impact of any one Italian or Italian American who has had a rich influence, nationally or locally, in any field.

According to Ms. Emilia Nuvola, Italian Teacher at CMS, "Italian students at CMS were encouraged to choose an individual that personally interested them and to exercise creative license (costumes, visuals, video editing, delivering the performance from first POV, etc.) for a compelling and engaging presentation."

In their announcement of Joe's successful first

place win, the Board of Trustees of The Coccia Foundation stated, "The Board of Trustees was very impressed with his video presentation on Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. There is something to be learned. Thank you for encouraging Joseph to submit a video and enter our Italian Heritage Contest."

Joe shared, "The assignment was to research a famous Italian or Italian American figure who influenced American Culture. The person I chose was Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. He was a first generation Italian and is remembered as one of the most influential Supreme Court Justices of all time. My father is a first generation Italian, and both my grandparents and Antonin Scalia's parents were from Sicily."

Joe's teacher, Emilia Nuvola added, "I am so very proud of Joe's hard work and the enthusiasm with which he approaches his language and cultural studies. This award is a testament to that hard work!"

SPIRITUAL? CURIOUS? SEEKING?

Do you consider yourself Spiritual? Are you Curious about what people are talking about when they speak of having faith or being spiritual? Are you Seeking peace of mind, of heart of soul?

Come and see for yourself. Come and explore the Christian faith. Come and discuss with other seekers what is on your mind, what you cannot talk about except with other seekers. Come to an Alpha gathering.

Alpha is for everybody that wants to discuss seeking answers to life's big questions. Why are we here? Is this all there is to life? Where are we going? How do I attain peace of mind, heart, and soul? Whether you are young or old, have faith or are atheist or agnostic, Alpha provides a safe environment for exploring our big questions about life.

We begin by sharing a meal together and getting to know each other. We watch a video

together then break into small groups for uninhibited discussion about what is on our minds.

There is no cost to participate. The series runs for 12 weeks on Monday nights beginning at 7:30 p.m. and ending at 9:00 p.m. It will begin February 5th, 2024, and end May 6th, 2024. Three of the sessions are live in person and the remainder are on Zoom. You will need a desire for frank discussion, a willingness to participate and a commitment to attend. You will also need a computer or smartphone capable of Zoom sessions.

The live in person sessions will be held at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 1571 S. Martine Ave., Scotch Plains, NJ 07076.

If you have any questions, please call (908) 889-2100.

To register go onto IHMParish.net/alpha.

Meet new people & explore faith together.

Alpha is a place to connect with other people who are open to exploring life, faith, and meaning. Each session includes a time to connect with others (often over a free meal), hear a short talk on an element of the Christian faith, and then a chance for each person to share their own questions with the group. We'd love to hear your perspective!

Alpha Winter/Spring 2024
Season begins **LIVE**
Monday February 5th
7:00 pm @
The Nazareth Center
(Followed by weekly sessions hosted on Zoom)

Scan the QR Code with your phone or smart device to access our sign up page at www.ihmparish.net/alpha

If you have questions about Alpha, please contact the Nazareth Center Office at 908-889-2100 or send an email to office@ihmparish.net



(above) The Senior Center of the Chathams hosted Holiday Parties on two days – November 30th and December 7th. Lunch was served, including deserts and mocktails.

SENIOR CENTER WELCOMES AREA RESIDENTS

The Senior Center of the Chathams hosted holiday parties on two days this season – November 30th and December 7th. Lunch was served, including deserts and mocktails. The performers for the November 30th party were Eleanor and Peter "Maestro" Jackson. The entertainer for the December 7th party was Bob Marino.

The Senior Center of the Chathams is committed to offering its programs and services to a wide range of people and draws members from six counties and 70 towns, including Chatham, Madison, Berkeley Heights, Long Hill, New Providence, Florham Park, and Summit to name a few. All are welcome (55+) at the Senior Center of the Chathams. There is no membership fee to join. Many programs are offered free of charge, while others involve only a minimal fee thanks to individual donations, fundraising

events, and grants.

For 35 years, the mission of the non-profit Senior Center of the Chathams has been to protect the independence and dignity of a growing, aging population by providing a wide array of programs and services that educate, empower, and connect participants to one another. The Center enables older adults to age in place and to remain active, engaged, and contributing members of their communities while increasing their access to programs and services in the areas of wellness and fitness; enrichment; support and connection; and information and referral. All of this helps to improve their physical and emotional well-being.

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. For more information about the Senior Center of the Chathams, call 973-635-4565 or visit chathamseiorcenter.org.



(above) The performers for the November 30th party were Eleanor and Peter "Maestro" Jackson.



(above) Madison residents Susan Mennella, Joanne Whitney, and Chris.



(above) Dancing in your seats or on the dance floor



(above) New Providence resident Bette Schmitt



(above) Sue Nixon of Long Hill & Tersa Conte of Florham Park enjoy playing picket ball together at the Center.



(above) Berkeley Heights residents Ken & Josephine.



(above) Chatham residents Elenor & Peggy



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DOCUMENTING NJ'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR VETERANS

Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter DAR

Two local women are helping create a new database of New Jersey Revolutionary War Soldiers. A project of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the database will be the most comprehensive produced to date utilizing a wide variety of sources.

"The hope is that this database will not only allow us to recognize and honor these veterans, but also help their descendants and researchers to learn about them," said DAR volunteer Holly Dunbar. Working on Somerset County, Dunbar has compiled information on more than 1,700 individuals to date.

Project volunteers aim to find and record as much information about each patriot as possible. This includes dates and locations of birth, enlistment, death and burial; service record with rank and unit, battles, if wounded, taken prisoner or killed; family with names of spouses, parents and children; and the sources of this information. A special effort is being made to include women, African Americans and Native Americans.

"We are starting with the current DAR database, but also using church records, county and local histories, surviving military and pension records, newspapers, and more," said Dunbar, who is a member of Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter in Green Brook.

Another chapter member, Ruth Ryno, is working on Essex County, which also includes present-day Union and part of Passaic County. "I look forward to helping prepare this database in honor of our New Jersey patriots as our country prepares to celebrate America's 250th anniversary in 2026." When the project is completed, the database will cover all of New Jersey and will be made available to the public.

DAR is a nonprofit nonpolitical service organization open to women 18 and older who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution. Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter is based in Green Brook and serves areas in Somerset, Middlesex and Union counties. New members are welcome. Contact ESCchapterDAR@gmail.com or learn more at DAR.org.



(above) Holly Dunbar, New Jersey
DAR State Chairman

THE JANUARY SPEAKERS PROGRAM FOR THE SUMMIT AREA OLD GUARD

The Summit Area 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."

January speakers include Kathleen Bassiacos, Melanie Hazim, Joe Kane, Iveth Gonzales, and Charles Clarkson. Please join us. Our programs are free to the public, and we welcome you!

On January 2nd, Kathleen Bassiacos, a nurse at Unicity Healthcare, with over three decades of experience in oncology, geriatrics, assisted living and at-home care, will discuss how she focuses on her patients' health by managing emergencies mixed with adaptability. Her presentation will include not only nursing, but also treating the myths surrounding aging and nutrition.

On January 9th, Melanie Hazim, Director of Outreach at the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs, will discuss her responsibilities for educating and promoting awareness of scams targeting New Jersey residents, and implementing the Division's mission and goal to protect New Jersey's residents from becoming victims of these frauds.

On January 16th, Joe Kane, a prevention specialist with The Council on Compulsive Gambling of NJ, will help us understand compulsive gambling and the need to support

those suffering from this addiction. The Council focuses on educating the public, training professionals, referring gamblers and their families to treatment, and advocating for increased treatment services.


On January 23rd, Iveth Gonzales, a team leader with the New Jersey Sharing Network, will discuss organ donation, its benefits and how the acquisition and distribution system is organized. Iveth will also speak from her experience after her father was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis and why registering as an organ donor, you may change of even save someone's life.

On January 30th, our speaker will be Charles Clarkson, an attorney, and a project director for the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) under the auspices of Jewish Family Services of Middlesex County. Medicare is for seniors, it expends many billions of dollars, and it must deal with the hazards of fraud. Charles will explain how to detect and how to report Medicare fraud and related healthcare scams.

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 AM most Tuesdays. "Come for the Speakers. Stay for the Friends." We look forward to meeting you.



(above, l-r) Ms. Bassiacos, Ms. Hazim, Joe Kane, Ms. Gonzales, Charles Clarkson



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SZABO AND GORKER EARN SILVER AWARDS

Berkeley Heights Girl Scout Troop 40950

Girl Scouts are dedicated to making a lasting difference in their communities and strengthening their leadership skills. Girl Scouting's highest awards—the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards—are a scout's chance to make a lasting difference in the world. Cecelia Szabo and Emerson Gorker, Berkeley Heights Girl Scouts from Troop 40950, recently earned the Girl Scout Silver Award, the highest recognition for achievement in Girl Scouting for Cadette level scouts. To earn this award, they individually dedicated over 50 hours to their projects.

For Cecelia's Silver Award project, she created Children's Activity Theater Kits (CAT KITS) to provide a free and flexible option for younger children to explore the performing arts. Each CAT Kit includes a story book, color coded scripts that adapt the story book to a play, props to help put on a play, a parent letter to guide parents on how they can use the kit with their child(ren), and an activity card with warm ups and additional theater games/activities. The kits provide structure for parents who might not be used to or comfortable with dramatic arts but also allow for flexibility so they can be used in various ways for those who want the freedom to be creative. The kits are available to check out from the Berkeley Heights Library.

When asked about what she learned from doing the project, Cecelia stated, "One of the great things I learned is that kids do not need to be involved in a full show or acting class to experience the fun and benefits of acting. The kids who have used the kits had a positive experience and expressed interest in doing more acting. Working on my Silver Award also helped me improve my time management, flexibility, planning, and problem solving skills." She went on to say, "I hope the kits are enjoyed by children for years to come and give young kids the chance to experience some of the benefits of performing arts."

For their Silver Award project, Emerson chose to address the mistreatment of small mammal

pets and misinformation about what caring for small mammal pets really requires. To broadly share accurate information to people caring for or considering getting a small mammal pet, Emerson conducted in-depth research and then created a comprehensive but easy to navigate website on how to care for hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits, and rats. In addition to educating pet store employees about the website and care guidance, flyers advertising the website and with a QR code to easily access it were hung in multiple pet stores so people looking to purchase small mammal pets could access the resource.

In reflecting on the experience, Emerson noted, "I learned how to build a website, how to make a brand attractive with an interesting name so people would be inclined to actually use the site, how to research projects, how to talk to management and have the confidence to do that, and how small mammal pets need to be cared for." When asked about their hope for the website, Emerson responded, "Many people want to treat small pets right, but do not know how to,

so I hope that my website makes small pet care easier to learn and leads to many more happy pets." To check out the Care 4 Your Critters website, visit:

care4yourcritters.wixsite.com/c4yc

Both projects hope to have a lasting impact on the community. Congratulations to Cecelia and Emerson for their hard work and accomplishments!



(above) Emerson Gorker chose to address the mistreatment of small mammal pets and misinformation about what caring for small mammal pets really requires for their Silver Award project.

Courtesy photos



(above) Cecelia Szabo created Children's Activity Theater Kits (CAT KITS) for her Silver Award project.

SENIOR DAY TRIP – JAN. 15

The Berkeley Heights seniors are sponsoring a trip to Resorts Casino in Atlantic City on Monday, January 15. 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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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
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