

Summit NJ Times

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FOSTER YOUTH JOIN FOREVER FAMILIES AT ADOPTION DAY

CASA of Passaic and Union Counties

On a recent fall morning, five youth ranging from three to 10 years old entered the courtrooms of Superior Court Judges Gavin Handwerker, Paul Nieves and Chanel Hudson as foster youth and, shortly after, emerged as official members of their new families.

Adoption Day is eagerly anticipated by many at Union County's Family Court, as ample smiles fill the courthouse – a juxtaposition to the daily navigation of complex issues fraught with loss or discord. This year, county dignitaries presented families with proclamations and certificates, and festivities included performances by 30 high school students from Elizabeth's Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy A Cappella Choir; a former foster youth sharing her personal journey and adoption story; a roaming balloon artist; sheriff's officers dressed as superheroes and a Batmobile outside for visiting; furry greetings from Kenilworth's David Brearley Middle High School mascot bear; personalized cupcakes; and ice cream, face painting, and friendship-bracelet making stations.

CASA of Passaic and Union Counties presented family fun-themed gift baskets made possible in part from donations by David Brearley Bears That Care program and the Union County Bar Association. Baskets were given to all those finalizing on Adoption Day, as well as several families who adopted earlier in the year.

Cynthia Evans of Scotch Plains was among the CASA volunteers to attend the ceremonies for their assigned children. "The day was a long



(above) Sheriff's officers dressed as superheroes, and maned a Batmobile outside the courthouse.



(above) Festivities included a balloon artist; personalized cupcakes; and ice cream, face painting, and friendship-bracelet making stations.



(left) Each family received a basket made possible by CASA of Passaic and Union Counties & the David Brearley Middle High School Bears That Care Program.

time coming for these sisters, and it was amazing," she said. "I've been their advocate since 2020. Between their adoptive families and all involved, embraces and cheers were aplenty. My time as their CASA volunteer was both rewarding and challenging. I'm thankful I could help ensure their needs were met and services were provided while in care."

Adoption Day is a national movement to raise awareness of children in foster care. Since its inception 23 years ago, nearly 60,000 children have found permanency. More than 437,000 youth in the United States are currently in the child welfare system awaiting a permanent home, and the average wait is four years. For more than 23,000 youth, that doesn't happen, and they age out of the system, facing life on their own.

For details on CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, becoming an advocate for foster children or other opportunities to support the organization's work, log on to www.casapassaicunion.org.

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Summit NJ Times

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SUMMIT FREE MARKET EVENTS ANNOUNCED

The City of Summit is announcing the 2024 event dates for the Summit Free Market.

Summit Free Market events will continue to be held on the second Saturday of each month from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Municipal Transfer Station on 40 New Providence Avenue. The Summit Free Market will also be open for one additional weekday event each month on the following Fridays from 12 to 2 p.m., excluding the month of December. Dates are as follows: January 26, February 23, March 22, April 26, May 24, June 21, July 26, August 23, September 27, October 25, and November 22

The Summit Free Market Committee is a student-led, volunteer-run initiative that hosts monthly events at the Transfer Station located at 40 New Providence Avenue. Residents can bring reusable, yard-sale quality items to share, and take whatever they may want or need at no charge. Since its inception in 2008, the Summit Free Market has served more than 5000 residents and has kept over 175 tons of reusable material from the waste stream.

Residents must have a permit to access the Transfer Station to attend. Permits can be purchased online through the City of Summit Parking Services Agency.

The City of Summit implemented the following guidelines for the Summit Free Market in September 2023:



- **60-Minute Time Limit:** Visitors are limited to 60 minutes per Summit Free Market event. This helps ensure that all community members have an opportunity to participate and benefit.
- **No Resellers Allowed:** The Summit Free Market is intended to serve as a space for community sharing and exchange. In line with these core values, reselling items collected from the event is not permitted.

Signs are posted to inform visitors of the new policies. Any observed violations may result in immediate expulsion from the event and future Summit Free Market events.

Residents are asked to follow guidelines from the Summit Free Market Committee when donating items. Visit the Summit Free Market website for more information: Summitfreemarket.org.

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THE SUMMIT FOUNDATION AWARDS \$333,754 IN GRANTS



(above) The Mabie Playground, located in the Village Green, received a \$60,000 grant to go towards creating the City of Summit's first fully ADA accessible and sensory-friendly playground.

VOLUNTEER ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The City of Summit is actively seeking volunteers from the community to serve on several of its boards and commissions.

Each November, the Mayor and Common Council begin the annual process of reviewing volunteer applications and appointing new members. Terms vary from one to five years of service with an opportunity for re-appointment. The city keeps applications active for two years.

The deadline to apply is November 15, 2023. A complete list of boards and commissions can be found on the city website at cityofsummit.org/volunteer. Residents can apply now using the online portal. Please contact the City Clerk's Office at 908-273-6400 with any questions.

The Summit Foundation awarded \$333,754 in grants to 23 local nonprofit organizations. Through biannual grant cycles, The Summit Foundation strategically directs funds to make an enduring impact on the community. Focus areas include civic and community resources, healthcare, arts and culture, people with special needs, older adults, and education.

"Our grantmaking is aimed at supporting organizations dedicated to providing essential, innovative, and life-enriching resources and services to the Summit area," said Dana Turk, president of The Summit Foundation.

The awards were approved by the board of trustees at its December meeting. Grant amounts and recipients include:

- \$60,000 toward the rebuilding of Mabie Playground in Village Green to create City of Summit's first fully ADA accessible and sensory-friendly playground
- \$37,500 for Phase III of the Summit Park Line, including an entrance on Broad Street, landscaping, and fortifying bridges
- \$40,000 to Community FoodBank of NJ to provide nutritious food and fresh produce for food insecure Summit residents
- \$35,000 to Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation for the Pediatric Developmental Behavioral Program
- \$25,000 to Center for Hope Hospice for patient-centered, palliative care for Union County seniors so they can remain

independent in their own homes

- \$25,000 to the Summit Interfaith Council to provide care coordination with network partners for housing insecure individuals in Summit
- \$5,000 for free tickets to performances at New Jersey Festival Orchestra for senior citizens at SAGE Eldercare, Sunrise Assisted Living, and Summit Senior Housing
- \$5,000 for renovations and improvements to Summit Playhouse
- \$4,000 to Vivid Stage for a NJ premiere production of Kodachrome

Also receiving grants are NJ Jazz Society, NJ Intergenerational Orchestra, Family Promise, Girl Scout Troop 45827, One World One Love, Imagine, Paper Mill Playhouse, Second Street Youth Center, St. Joseph Social Service Center, The Midland School, Empowering Kids Organization, United Way of Greater Union County, Senior Center of the Chathams, and Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts (Wharton Arts).

The Summit Foundation fosters philanthropy by identifying local needs and offering donors flexible ways to make a difference in the lives of their neighbors. In the past decade, The Summit Foundation's has invested \$10.3 million in the community through strategic grants, scholarships, donor-advised distributions, and pass-through funds.

Visit summitforever.org.

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SUMMIT

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14 Essex Rd	6	6.1	3	\$6,000,000	\$5,700,000	0
14 Edgewood Dr	4	6.0	2	\$2,375,000	\$2,345,000	23
23 Garden Rd	4	3.0	2	\$1,499,000	\$1,900,000	15
78 Blackburn Rd	5	3.1	2	\$1,750,000	\$1,800,000	12
5 Primrose Pl	4	3.0	1	\$1,549,000	\$1,740,000	8
18 Eggers Ct	4	3.1	2	\$925,000	\$995,000	14
83 W End Ave	4	3.0	1	\$899,000	\$970,000	16

Happy New Year

As we near the close of another year, we want to thank our clients and supporters who make our job so fulfilling. Your trust in our team when buying and selling a home is everything.

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Source: 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.



SHS COUNTY CHAMPS GIRLS SOCCER TEAM HELPS ELKS HELP HOMELESS

The Summit High School (SHS) Girls Soccer Team not only won the Union County Championship this Fall (a first for SHS), but they also excelled off the field. Members of the team - led by their three Captains: Bridget Grennon, Joelle Ma, and Valentina Moretti - worked to make a difference by creating an online apparel store to raise funds for the benefit of homeless veterans. Through their generous efforts, they not only promoted the cause and widened support, they also generated a donation of \$1,000, presented to the Summit Elks, which will go directly to help homeless veterans.

Assistance for homeless veterans is an extremely worthy cause. There are over 38,000 homeless veterans nationally. Throughout the State of New Jersey, Elks help veterans who are homeless in a variety of ways including; furnishing their new home, paying for hotel rooms and storage units while they await housing, and helping with food, clothes and other essentials. In the past year alone, New Jersey Elks have assisted more than 180 veterans in need.

If you're interested in donating to the cause, please email apolloh99@yahoo.com and visit Elks.org for more information about The Elks and how to join.



(above) Anthony Moretti (Captain's parent), Rick Wolffe (Elks), Coach Matthew Carder, Captains: Valentina Moretti, Joella Ma, Bridget Grennon, and Apollo Hrehorovich, and Lou DeSocio (Elks).

Courtesy photo

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HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

Summit Fire Department

The City of Summit Fire Department is sharing some safety tips for an enjoyable and safe holiday season.

Inspect lights before installation and dispose of light strands with frayed or pinched wires. Read manufacturer instructions for the maximum number of light strands that can be connected.

Consider using battery-operated flameless candles. When using lit candles, ensure they are stable and place them where they cannot be knocked down easily. Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything flammable. Candle fires occur most often on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day.

Ensure trees are at least three feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, candles, and heat vents.

Water Christmas trees daily and dispose of trees when they become dry. This video from the National Institute of Standards and Technology shows how quickly a dry tree can catch fire.

For more information on the Summit Fire Department, please visit cityofsummit.org/fire.

FREE HOLIDAY PARKING THRU DEC. 30

The City of Summit Parking Services Agency is announcing free holiday parking in certain areas of downtown Summit. Beginning on Saturday, December 9, and continuing through Saturday, December 30, there are no fees required for parking at 90-minute on-street spaces, the Bank Street lot, and the first level of the Tier garage (for up to two hours). Time limits will be strictly enforced. Fees are still required in the Park and Shop lots on Deforest Avenue and in the YMCA/Library parking lot.

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Summit Police Department is sharing safety tips to ensure a safe and happy holiday season for everyone.

When possible, use online tracking to know when packages are being delivered and try to remove them from your porch or front steps as soon as possible.

After unwrapping packages, do not put boxes for large, expensive equipment, such as computers or televisions, at the curb. It could be an invitation for thieves to potentially target your home. Instead, bring large boxes and containers to the Transfer Station for disposal, or break them down and place them in a covered container for curbside recycling or trash pickup.

Take photos of all items of value in your home and make a list with their make, model, and serial number.

Always lock doors and windows and remember to lock your cars when they are not in use. Always remove key fobs and valuables from vehicles when not in use. If you must leave

valuables in your car, put them in the trunk out of plain sight. Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.

Notify credit card companies immediately if a credit card is lost, stolen, or misused. Keep a record of all your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.

When leaving for an extended period of time, have a neighbor or family member watch your house and pick up your newspaper, mail, and packages. If possible, set indoor and outdoor lights on automatic timers.

Use caution anytime there's a stranger at your door. Be suspicious of unexpected sales calls or deliveries. Don't be afraid to ask these individuals for identification.

There is a lot to celebrate this holiday season, so if you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, please do not operate a motor vehicle. Arrange for a designated driver who will not drink at all.

For more information on the Summit Police Department, visit cityofsummit.org/police.

1ST AID SQUAD CARBON MONOXIDE ALERT

The Summit Volunteer First Aid Squad was dispatched to a business on Union Place for a person who was unconscious on September 28th. On arrival, Squad EMTs and Summit Police officers and firefighters found an unconscious male employee in the kitchen. The Squad carries a Carbon Monoxide (CO) detector attached to each of their primary medical bags and that detector activated almost immediately upon entering the building. Police and EMTs quickly evacuated the patient and all occupants to the sidewalk while firefighters ventilated and checked the building and adjoining business for CO levels. The unconscious patient was treated by the Squad and Paramedics from Atlantic Health and transported to Overlook by the Squad. Additional ambulances were requested and off duty Summit EMS volunteers responded with a 2nd Summit ambulance, their first responder vehicle and ambulances from Millburn-Short Hills and Springfield. An engine company from the Millburn Fire Department also responded to assist. Two additional employees, two Summit

police officers and three Summit firefighters were also evaluated on scene for CO exposure and 1 employee was transported to Overlook for further evaluation.

Carbon Monoxide is odorless, colorless and tasteless and can be released by malfunctioning gas appliances as well as gasoline engines. Exposure can be fatal. It's not uncommon for an exposed person not to realize they have been poisoned until they lose consciousness. Headache and dizziness are early symptoms. It is strongly recommended that every home and business have working CO detectors. The portable unit carried by the First Aid Squad may have saved several lives that morning.

The all-volunteer First Aid Squad, responds to emergency calls 24/7, is entirely funded through private donations and does not bill for service. The Squad is always looking for new volunteers to join its ranks. All needed training, uniforms and equipment is provided.

For information on becoming a volunteer, or donating to the squad please call 908-277-9479, or visit their web site at summitems.org.

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SUMMIT EMS RESPONSES – NOVEMBER 2023

During the month of November, Summit's EMS volunteers responded to 218 emergency calls.

Responses included 128 medical emergencies; 13 falls; 28 motor vehicle accidents; 18 traumatic injuries; one allergic reaction; 16 cases of overdose or poisoning; four responses to a medical alarm; four pedestrians struck by a vehicle, and two responses to a fire scene. Squad Volunteers also provided three "lift assists" to

patients who did not require transport to a hospital.

16 emergency calls were answered by an off-duty "back-up crew" of volunteers responding from home or work when the on-duty crew was busy. Summit volunteers also provided mutual aid assistance to neighboring towns 16 times. 16 patients transported to a hospital by Squad members also received advanced life support care from hospital-based paramedics who

accompanied the Squad's ambulance. During November, Squad volunteers transported 168 patients to 4 different hospitals.

The Squad also provided ambulance coverage at two community events in Summit as well as much of the manpower for the Summit Frozen Turkey Drive on 11/19.

The Squad answers calls for help 24 hours a day and at a variety of locations. August responses included 55 to a patient's home or apartment; 43 for accidents or medical emergencies on streets or highways; two in a public park or athletic field; one in a recreation facility; two in public buildings; seven at a local business; five at a bar or restaurant, and 10 to a health care professional's office. There were also 27 medical incidents at Summit's train station; 16 at a local behavioral health facility; one on the grounds of Overlook Medical Center; 16 to an assisted living facility, seven in a house of worship; 11 on a sidewalk or parking lot, three in a public building, one at Summit's Public Library, two at a school, one on an athletic field, six at a recreation facility, and one in a hotel.

The all-volunteer First Aid Squad, responds to emergency calls 24/7, is entirely funded through private donations and does not bill for service. The Squad is always looking for new volunteers to join its ranks. All needed training, uniforms and equipment is provided. For information on becoming a volunteer, or donating to the squad please call 908-277-9479, or visit their web site at: summitems.org.



(above) The Squad provided ambulance coverage at two community events in Summit as well as much of the manpower for the Summit Frozen Turkey Drive held in November.




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Much Ado About Nothing

January 12, 13, 19 & 20, 2024 at 8:00 p.m.
January 14 & 21, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Wharton Black Box Theater
60 Locust Avenue, Berkeley Heights
\$25/Adults, \$20/Students & Seniors

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

Tickets available at **WhartonArts.org**

WhartonARTS

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NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK - HELP US SAVE VETS!

Michael D. Boll, Director NJVN

Everyday 22 veterans take their own lives, unfortunately this number hasn't changed over the years. Several groups and organizations have worked tirelessly to combat this horrible epidemic. The New Jersey Veterans Network (NJVN) is one of those groups that strives to help veterans daily to live a better way of life.

NJVN is a mobile outreach team, that aggressively seeks out veterans in need and provides them life changing and saving resources. The NJVN is a 501c3 created in 2017 and has focused its mission by always putting our veterans first. Since the NJVN started thousands of veterans and National Guardsmen have been fed, clothed, and provided with various personal items. Also, we were able to get 30 veterans newer refurbished vehicles through the Recycled Rides program. However, the NJVN most important mission is that we save lives, just in the past first years alone our team has saved over a dozen lives.

Being a network, the NJVN works with other military, veteran, and first responder groups that share the same mission. We would never have succeeded without having the support and commitment from our partners and sponsors. This is vital for the NJVN to be able to help veterans in need throughout New Jersey.

Most recently, the NJVN has stepped up recreational events and programs such as camping, hiking, movie nights, BBQs, and field trips. We are fortunate to have amazing partners and volunteers that will help transport our

veterans to and from the hospitals and shelters. These events allow our veterans to feel like they are part of a unit again and are not forgotten or abandoned.

What makes the NJVN unique is its willingness to try different things and think outside the box. By asking the veterans what they want most, and how we can help them, has really made our program a huge success.

Our next initiative will be the launch of our veteran peer support/ mentoring program the "Uniformed Heroes Project". This initiative is a collaboration between the military-veteran-first responders groups and organizations. Also, it is backed by legislators and numerous charitable organizations. The NJVN is currently looking for volunteers and groups willing to help us provide our veterans with the best help possible. If you are interested in filing the team, or would like to

volunteer, please send us an email at NJVNM1775@gmail.com or call directly (973)332-1556.

ABOUT NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK

We are a group of veterans and volunteers dedicated to helping our veterans and their families live better lives. Our mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs. Help us save Vets! We are always looking for volunteers, with various skills, to join the team. If you are a veteran or family member that's in need of assistance; or are interested in volunteering, would like us to speak at your event, or contribute to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email njvn1775@gmail.com To learn more about the team please check out our website njvn.org (accomplishments). Help us save Vets!

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COME SING WITH US AT OUR OPEN HOUSE AT SHRINE OF ST JOSEPH

Hickory Tree chorus

Put some music in your life in 2024! Join the Hickory Tree Chorus for an Open House at Shrine of St Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Road, Stirling, NJ, which will include a meet-and-greet, movement warm-ups and, of course, some wonderful singing. Dates are January 10 and 17, 2024, from 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. The chorus sings a

variety of music, including old-fashioned love songs, Broadway, Disney, Beatles, and more in a fun, supportive community. Come sing with us and share the joy of music together! Stay for the friendship and fun!

Hickory Tree is an award-winning women's chorus singing four-part a cappella harmony in the barbershop style. We are passionate about

music, performance, fun & friendship. We believe every voice counts and encourage women singers of all ages, colors, ethnicities, and orientations to visit us and share our joy of music.

Please contact the Chorus for the Open House by email at info@hickorytreechorus.org.

Find more information at hickorytreechorus.org.



(above) The Hickory Tree Chorus invites the public to sing with them at an Open House, on January 10 and 17, from 6:45 to 9:30 p.m.

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(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 & Tersi Conte of Florham Park enjoy playing picket ball together at the Center.



(above) Berkeley Heights residents Ken & Josephine.



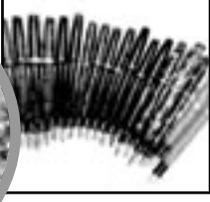
(above) Chatham residents Elenor & Peggy

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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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ATLANTIC FEDERAL GIVES RECOVERY GRANTS TO LOCAL NONPROFITS

The Atlantic Federal Credit Union (“The Atlantic”) distributed \$50,000 in grant funding to five local nonprofit organizations through the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York Small Business Recovery Grant Program (“SBRG”). The SBRG is designed to support the financial security and health of organizations that have faced economic challenges due to the rate environment, inflation, supply-chain constraints, and/or rising energy costs.

The SBRG began in 2017 in response to hurricanes in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Program relaunched in 2020 and was made available again in 2021 to aid small businesses and nonprofit organizations facing challenges due to the Coronavirus pandemic. By participating in the SBRG this year, The Atlantic was able to grant \$10,000 each to Bianca F.L.O.W.E.R.S. Inc. in Plainfield, Jewish Family Service of Central New Jersey, Mobile Meals of Westfield, St. Joseph Social Service Center in Elizabeth, and The SHARE Alliance in Springfield.

“Thank you to the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York for their partnership and the opportunity to extend recovery grants within the communities we serve,” shared The Atlantic Federal Credit Union Chief Executive Officer Anthony Mero. “The SBRG funding will help our deserving recipients continue their selfless

work throughout Essex and Union counties – ensuring community members in need have access to food, clothing, social services and other crucial resources through the holiday season and beyond.”

ABOUT THE ATLANTIC FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

The Atlantic Federal Credit Union was founded in 1935 as a not-for-profit financial

cooperative to meet the savings and borrowing needs of Members. Today, The Atlantic Federal Credit Union exclusively serves Essex and Union counties in New Jersey with financial wellness resources, competitive rates and technology-driven solutions for personal and business banking. For full eligibility criteria and more information, visit TheAtlanticFCU.com.



(above, l-r) Rev. Reginald Harris, member of the Board of Directors of SHARE Alliance and Associate Pastor at Antioch Baptist Church in Springfield; Carla White-Garrett, Community Engagement Representative at The Atlantic; Rev. Dr. Roberto Fois, Associated Pastor of Outreach & Community Engagement at the Presbyterian Church and Acting Executive Director of the SHARE Alliance; Natasha Newsom, Branch Supervisor at The Atlantic; and Anthony Mero, Chief Executive Officer at The Atlantic.



(above, l-r) Adam Cadmus, Chief Experience Officer at The Atlantic; Carla White-Garrett, Community Engagement Representative at The Atlantic; Peter Jacob, Director of Housing Services at Jewish Family Service of Central NJ; Anthony Mero, Chief Executive Officer at The Atlantic; Tom Beck, Executive Director at Jewish Family Service of Central NJ; and Janine Grieco, Director of Member Engagement and Delivery at The Atlantic.



(above, l-r) Check presentation Mobile Meals of Westfield - Adam Cadmus, Chief Experience Officer at The Atlantic; Josephine Walsh, Operations Manager at Mobile Meals of Westfield; Carla White-Garrett, Community Engagement Representative at The Atlantic; and Anthony Mero, Chief Executive Officer at The Atlantic.

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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
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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

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY DAY OF SERVICE

Submitted by Stefanie Faris

The Christ Child Society of Summit, NJ (CCS) celebrated their National Day of Service on November 14, 2023. Over 25 members of the organization came together to knit hats, cut and sew fleece blankets, and de-tag hundreds of articles of baby clothing. These items were assembled into 77 layette packages which were delivered the next day to the Health Start clinics at Overlook and Morristown hospitals.

Also collected were food items that were donated to Loaves and Fishes, as well as diapers, baby wipes, and new and gently used books to be distributed to Area Baby Center (ABC).

If you would like to purchase a book for the families of ABC, you can do so with the link below for the Amazon wish list of books. If you purchase an item online, you can have it sent directly to the organization by selecting the address for Christine Murray/Christ Child Society of Summit Gift Registry.

Donations and volunteers are always greatly appreciated. Opportunities for both can be found on our website: christchildsummit.org

CCS is a group of dedicated volunteers from all faiths and background that are joined together with the purpose of helping under-resourced children and their families.



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 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.

Livestream available
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 Facebook at Faith Lutheran, New Providence
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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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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
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CAR DONATIONS HELP VETERANS

Submitted by Michael Boll, Director New Jersey Veterans Network

The New Jersey Veterans Network (NJVN) has received countless donations and other awesome support from Renna Media News readers. We are extremely fortunate to have so many readers that love helping our veterans live a better way of life. To date articles in Renna Media publications have resulted in 4 car donations. Veteran "Sarge" is the most recent recipient of a car donation after the donor read an article in a March publication. We are blessed to have such a generous following, donations like this will help our veterans get to work, and their medical appointments.

member that's in need of assistance; or are interested in volunteering, would like us to speak at your event, or contribute to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email mdbollio@optonline.net. To learn more visit njvn.org.



(above) Diane R. recently donated a car to the NJVN. She handed the keys over to "Sarge".

ABOUT NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK

We are a group of veterans and volunteers dedicated to helping our veterans and their families live better lives. Our mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs. Help us save Vets! We are always looking for volunteers, with various skills, to join the team. If you are a veteran or family



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Recommendations include ways to increase traffic to your website
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