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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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HOME AFTER THE HOLIDAYS SALE

Fanwood-Scotch Plains Thrift Shop

You can't beat being home for the holidays but shopping the "home" event at the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League Thrift shop is a pretty sweet deal, too. After closing for the Christmas holidays, the shop re-opens on Tuesday, January 2, displaying a wide array of new and gently used home goods that are sure to perk up your home décor or update your serving dishes, all at very reasonable prices.

Here you can find kitchen tools and table goods, cookware and cookie jars, pots, potholders, small appliances and more. The January event is a great opportunity to replenish or supplement items in your kitchen, to set up a new living space for first-time home buyers or apartment dwellers, or to purchase items to donate to charities helping families in need.

And, while putting away this year's holiday presents, make room for your new items by sorting through the old. Clean out closets and weed out underused possessions, from clothing to jewelry to purses and toys. Whether it is a garment that no longer fits or a new gift that just doesn't fit your style, unneeded items in good condition can be treasured by another person. Donate them to the Thrift Shop at 1741 East Second Street, Scotch Plains. Store hours are Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Note that all store proceeds outside of

operating expenses are donated by the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League to local non-profit organizations or used for student scholarships. To learn more about the Service League, volunteer opportunities and types of donations accepted call the store during Thrift Shop business hours: 908-322-5420. You can also visit our web site scotchplainsthriftshop.weebly.com, or find the "Fanwood-Scotch Plains Service League" on Facebook.

THRIFT SHOP SEEKING VOLS

The Fanwood Presbyterian Church Thrift Shop is looking for a person or two who think it would be fun to be a shopkeeper for four hours on the third Saturday of each month. No previous experience is necessary. Enjoy all of benefits of being a volunteer. If you are interested in volunteering, please call the church office at 908-889-8891.

If you haven't found this hidden treasure of a shop, come look behind the church's education building. Our entrance is on McDermott Place. The shop is currently open on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for shopping and donations. Fanwood Presbyterian Church is located at 74 South Martine Avenue, Fanwood with side streets Marion Avenue, LaGrande Avenue and McDermott Place. All proceeds from the shop are donated to local charities and non-profit service organizations.

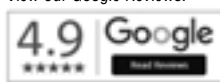
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ATLANTIC FEDERAL GIVES RECOVERY GRANTS TO LOCAL NONPROFITS

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) 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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132 N Euclid Ave	5	3.1	2	\$1,595,000	\$1,595,000	10
435 Sandford Ave	4	3.1	2	\$1,215,000	\$1,470,000	8
900 Talcott Rd	4	3.0	2	\$1,400,000	\$1,350,000	42
423 Saint Marks Ave	4	2.1	0	\$1,075,000	\$1,225,325	11
781 Norgate	4	3.1	2	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	29
751 Crescent Pkwy	4	2.1	0	\$1,075,000	\$1,137,000	8

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THE HISTORY OF THE WESTFIELD AREA YMCA

Submitted by Dr. D. Michael Hart
Marla Itzkin, the Associate Director for Communications and Development of the Westfield Area YMCA, recently spoke to the Rotary Club of Westfield about the history of the YMCA in Westfield over the past 100 years.

The Rotary Club of Westfield was 3 years old when the YMCA Board decided to build the structure on Clark Street. The Rotary Club helped raise the funds to build the YMCA and met there for probably about 80 years. The Rotary Club has a close relationship to the YMCA and provides community grants to them every year.

The service area for the Westfield Area YMCA includes Westfield, Garwood, Mountainside and Cranford. They are currently developing a Cranford YMCA. No one with financial hardship is turned away due to inability to pay. The Y strengthens our community through 3 areas of impact: youth development; healthy living; and social responsibility.

Here are some highlights of the history of the Westfield Area YMCA.

- 1921 Rotary Club of Westfield established
- 1923 Established the YMCA Board of Director and Trustees.
- 1924 Acquired the land on Clark Street for \$18,000.
- 1929 New building is dedicated with a pool and bowling alley
- 1930 YWCA established for women and girls
- 1931 Bowling League is formed
- 1943 Most numbers and staff are serving in the Military, the building relied on part time help of teachers and salesmen
- 1947 Y's Men club first annual Christmas Tree Sale
- 1950 Day Camp begins
- 1960 Wallace Pool opens
- 1965 Bill Bradley dedicates gymnasium
- 1970 Y offers dog obedience classes
- 1973 50th annual Dinner held at Shackamaxon Country Club
- 1975 First woman joins the Board of Directors
- 1982 First preschool opens



(above, l-r) fMarla Itzkin, YMCA Associate Director of Communication & Development, and Rotary Club President Elect Lauren Barr. They are holding historical photos of the Westfield YMCA.

Courtesy photo

- 1985 Consolidation of YMCA and YWCA
- 1989 Major renovations`
- 1990's Single rooms on third floor phased out
- 1991 Child Care at Elm Street begins
- 1993 Weldon Room added
- 2005 Bauer Branch opens in former Christian Science Church
- 2009 Programs begin at Cranford Community Center
- 2010's Capital improvement to upgrade main facility
- 2011 Camp and after school in Mountainside
- 2012 Garwood Family Center opens
- 2020 COVID shuts Y down for 2 ½ months
- 2022 Pioneer Camp begins in Cranford
- 2023 Membership is 8,500 members

The first Y appeared in London in 1844, when a farmer started a place for young men to seek escape from pressing social challenges. The first American Y was established in 1851 at the Old South Church in Boston. Then YMCAs sprang

up all over the country. Now the YMCA serves 2 million people in the United States, and 65 million in 120 countries.

The Y has many firsts: the invention of Basketball in 1891; Volleyball in 1895; Racquetball in 1950; Hallmark cards; the Negro Baseball League; Father's Day; Night School; Adult Education; and Work- Study programs. The YMCA and YWCA helped start the USO in WWII.

In 1946 the Nobl Peace Prize was awarded jointly to John Mott, a leader of the Y movement in America, for increasing global understanding and humanitarian efforts.

The Rotary Club of Westfield meets the first three Tuesdays of each month for lunch at noon, at Limani Seafood Grill on North Ave. Guests are always welcome. For information check out the website westfieldrotary.com or contact club secretary Dr. D. Michael Hart by email at drmhart@yahoo.com.

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Do you have a Cub Scout or Boy Scout uniform hanging in your closet that is not used anymore? Please consider donating it to the uniform exchange maintained by Cub Scout Pack 23 and Boy Scout Troop 23 at St. Genevieve's Church, Elizabeth.

Like everything else, the cost of Scout uniform parts has risen greatly in recent years. Through its uniform exchange, the Scouting program at St. Gen's helps to ease that burden for its member families. Scouts are often able to find a shirt, pants, belt, hat, neckerchief or neckerchief slide that has been donated by a former member, or by a current member who has outgrown the uniform.

Donations can be brought to the church hall almost any Wednesday evening from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., or they can be placed at any time in the American flag retirement box next to Webby's Woodshed, behind the church Rectory, at 822 Livingston Road, Elizabeth.

For more details, please contact Dan Bernier, Scoutmaster, at (908) 451-1948 or webfootroop@gmail.com.



(above) Cub Scout Pack 23 and Boy Scout Troop 23 are looking for old Scout uniforms that can be reused by their members.

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SERVICE LEAGUE VOLUNTEERS WALK RUNWAY FOR CHARITY

Submitted by Ann Ormsby and Sylvia Martinez

Twenty volunteers from the Westfield Service League (WSL) recently put on a fashion show for the residents of Cranford Senior Housing. All the clothing and accessories shown on the models was then available for sale to the residents.

"We started the Fashion Show as a community outreach effort and now it is an annual event that residents look forward to," said Michele Williams, founder and co-chair of the show. "The goal has always been to provide entertainment to the seniors while also giving them an opportunity to shop for inexpensive items in their own environment, since the majority of them lack access to transportation."

Judy Goldman, vice president of the Cranford Senior Housing Tenants Association, praised the fashion show and the shopping experience: "It's wonderful. It gives the residents an opportunity to buy really nice things at very reasonable prices, and it's very entertaining."

CSH resident Don Connola, who attended the fashion show for the first time, said, "I enjoyed it."

Tenants Association President Harriet Pearlman said the residents look forward to the event every year. "It brings everybody out and gets them smiling," she said.

Beyond the fashion show, an additional twenty WSL volunteers set up a boutique on the premises where items such as jewelry, toys, scarves, handbags, hats and gloves, and holiday décor were purchased. Almost all items were \$5.00 or less. Barbara Cantor and Patti Tata co-chair this part of the event and work with the volunteers to sell the merchandise.

"This event is wonderful on so many levels. The seniors have fun, they can buy holiday gifts for their families and something for themselves, and we raise money for the non-profits that the WSL supports," said Barbara Cantor.

"This year, there was a special treat for the seniors. Each senior attendee received a gift — a Swarovski crystal bracelet — courtesy of Martin Jewelers in Cranford," said Patti Tata.

"A huge thank you to Martin Jewelers for the gifts they provided to the residents," said Cindy Rabinowitz, Executive Director, Cranford Senior Housing praised the WSL. "I am so grateful to the Westfield Service League for having their fashion show here for the fourth year. It gives residents a joyous afternoon of camaraderie and seeing beautiful fashion."

The WSL Thrift & Consignment Shop is located at 114 Elmer Street in Westfield. All proceeds from the fashion show, the boutique, and the shops are given out in grants to local non-profits that the WSL supports. Last year, the WSL donated \$70,000 to 29 organizations.

The shop is open Tuesday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information about donations or volunteering, call 908-233-2530 for the Thrift Shop or 908-232-1223 for the Consignment Shop. To learn more, visit

westfieldserviceleague.com.



(above) WSL member Donna Risberg looks fetching in black, white and red.

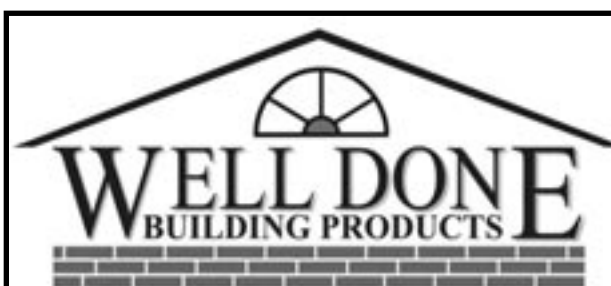


(above) WSL member Nancy Lau shows off a gorgeous blue coat and handbag.



(above) WSL member Myrna Cummings strikes a pose worthy of a silver screen star at the Cranford Senior

Courtesy photos



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SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER

Members of the Garden Club of Westfield decorated and hung holiday wreaths on the town municipal building. The club also made wreaths for the Recreation and Public Works Departments as well as the two fires houses.



(above, l-r) Margaret Allen, Nicole Ozturan, Rosemary Shire, Kathleen Young and Nancy Brandt.

Courtesy photo



Westfield Memorial Library
JANUARY PROGRAMS
FOR ADULTS & TEENS
CLOSED JANUARY 1 FOR NEW YEAR'S
AND JANUARY 15 FOR MLK DAY

Ten Tenacious Invasives (Movie)
with Phil Round of Friends of Brightwood Park
and Westfield's Invasive Strike Force
Wednesday, January 10 7:00pm

Fundamentals of Tai Chi
with Dr. Gang Huang
Fridays, January 12 and 19 2:00 pm

A New Year - A Fresh Start
Meditation with Gerry Gorman
via Zoom
Tuesday, January 16 at 7:00pm

NJ Ecology with Jean Epiphan,
Rutgers (GSWA Series)
Wednesday, January 17
Via Zoom Time TBA

Mid-Term Study Hall at the Library
January 22-29
Check website for all hours

Climate Change and Your Garden
Hazel English, Great Swamp Watershed
Association Director
Wednesday, January 31 7:00pm

Please register online for all programs www.wmlnj.org



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550 East Broad Street 908.789.4090

BOSTON TEA PARTY STORY TIME – JAN. 7TH

From religious ceremonies to political statements, tea has come to symbolize more than just a drink. The presentation includes history, customs, and a display of different tea varieties. There will be a Boston Tea Party story time for the children and docent-led tours of the museum. Admission is \$5 ages 13 and older; \$4 ages 3-12 and free under age 3. No reservations are necessary.

The Miller Cory House Museum is located at 614 Mountain Avenue in Westfield, NJ. Call the museum at 908-232-1776 or email

millercorymuseum@gmail.com for more information.

Since 1968, the 501(c)(3) non-profit Miller Cory House Museum/Westfield Historical Society has worked to preserve, interpret, and encourage interest in history, Westfield, and its residents through educational efforts and community outreach programs.

For more information visit westfieldhistoricalsociety.org and, like us on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram.

CHEESE-MAKING STORY TIME AND CRAFT – JAN. 21

The Miller Cory House Museum, located at 614 Mountain Avenue in Westfield, is presenting The Big Cheese: Cheese-Making in Early America plus Story Time and Craft, January 21st, 2 - 4 p.m.

Did you know that in 1801 President Thomas Jefferson was given a giant wheel of cheddar cheese? Made by town folk from Cheshire,

Massachusetts, the cheese weighed 1,235 pounds. It took a wagon pulled by six horses to deliver it to the White House! Learn more about this historic cheese at a special cheese-y story time with craft, then learn how cheese was made in early America. Admission is \$5.00 for adults and children 13 and older, \$3.00 for children ages 3 to 12 and free under age 3.

OPTIMIST CLUB HOLIDAY FOOD DELIVERY PROJECT

Submitted by Danielle Walsh

Members of the Westfield Optimist Club and Rotary Club demonstrated their commitment to community service by providing holiday food to Westfield area families and local food pantries on December 16, 2023. Due to current health and safety concerns and food restrictions, ShopRite food gift cards were distributed to families and food pantries instead of food baskets.

The Holiday Food distribution program has been an annual community service project for the Optimist Club of Westfield for the past 33 years. This project is made possible through the generosity and funding from the Optimist Club and the Rotary Club of Westfield and contributions from members, friends and local

organizations that sponsor food gift cards.

One hundred \$50 food gift cards were delivered to local families, the Westfield Food Pantry, Mobile Meals, Presbyterian Church Agape Food Program, Union County College Student Assistance Food Pantry and Saint Joseph's Social Service Center Food Pantry.

The involvement of volunteers and local organizations ensures the success of this annual program, which reflects the mission of helping those in need and assisting members of our community. Thank you to members of the Westfield Optimist Club and Rotary Club who attended a holiday breakfast and delivered the gift cards.

For more information about the Optimist Club go to westfieldnj.com/optimist.

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WhartonCommunityPlayers



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
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\$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

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WhartonARTS

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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 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



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

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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?

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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 @
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(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



Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Holiday Event Schedule 2023

- ♥ Saturday December 9: **Memorial Tree Lighting** following 5PM Mass
- ♥ Sunday December 10: **Living Nativity** + Hot Chocolate with Santa and Holiday Gift Market (SPF PAL) starting at 11AM
- ♥ Friday December 15: **Christmas Concert** featuring Choirs from St. Helen's & IHM at 7pm @ St. Helen's Church, Westfield
- ♥ Saturday December 16: **Confessions** at 10AM
Mass of Anointing at 11AM
- ♥ Monday December 18: **Confessions** at 7PM
- ♥ Sunday December 24: **Children's Christmas Pageant** at 3:30PM

Mass Schedule
Mon-Fri: 7am + 8:30am
Sat: 7am, 8:30am, 5pm
Sun: 8am, 10am, 12 noon
Christmas Mass
12/24: 4pm, 6pm, 10:30pm
12/25: 8am, 10am, 12 noon



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CELEBRATING A BLUE RIBBON YEAR OF SERVICE

Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter DAR

A National Blue Ribbon Achievement Award is one of the honors being celebrated by Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) at their 128th Anniversary Luncheon held in Warren on January 27, 2023. The chapter was recognized for outstanding support of the DAR's goals of historic preservation, patriotism, and education.

"We are very honored to receive this award," said Regent Ashley Salsano. "Our members are a dedicated group of women who work hard to honor their heritage by serving our local community and our nation."

Chapter members recorded 1,800 volunteer hours in 2023. Service projects included supporting youth programs and promoting the study of American history; honoring veterans; greeting new citizens at naturalization ceremonies; organizing public genealogy workshops; preserving local historic sites; and

assisting in the creation of a New Jersey Revolutionary War soldier database.

The chapter was also honored for their work with the Children of the American Revolution, American Indians, and Membership committees. Barbara Pollison-Beck, Ruth Ryno, and Holly Dunbar each received committee awards. Ashley Ryno was recognized for serving as a state page and was named Chapter Outstanding Junior.

The DAR is a service organization open to women descended from an individual who aided the cause of independence during the American Revolution. Based in Green Brook, Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter serves areas of Somerset, Middlesex and Union counties.

Prospective members are welcome to attend monthly meetings and events as the DAR prepares to celebrate America's 250th.

Contact the chapter at

ESCchapterDAR@gmail.com.



(above) DAR Chapter members volunteered 1,800 hours of community service in 2023.

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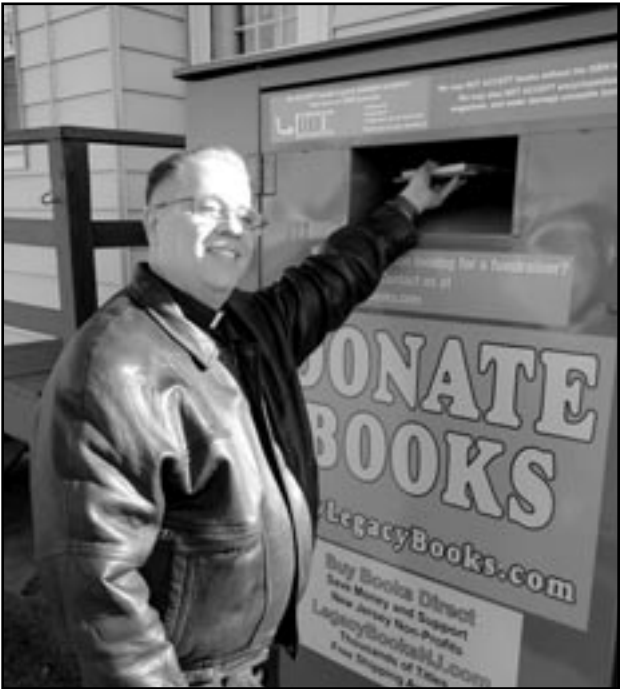


DONATE UNWANTED BOOKS

Looking for a place to donate your unwanted books? Father Paul Prevosto, Pastor of Church of the Assumption in Roselle Park, announces the addition of a book donation bin located in the Church parking lot at 113 Coolidge Place (near the corner of Westfield Ave. and Faitoute Ave.)

All books must have an ISBN barcode on the cover. Hardcover, paperback, and textbooks are all welcome – no encyclopedias, magazines, or water damaged books. Your donation raises funds for the parish.

For more information, or if you wish to purchase books please visit NewLegacyBooks.com.



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RAKE & HOE GARDEN CLUB

As part of its commitment to community service, the Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield visited Jardine Academy recently and decorated the Holiday Tree with one hundred sled ornaments designed by Mary Lou Nolas and made by fellow club members.

The ornaments were inspired by the book “A Sled for Gabo” by Emma Otheguy and illustrated by Anna Ramirez Gonzalez. Club member Irene Greenstein read the book to some of the students. The book tells of Gabo who is new to town and when he wakes up to his first snowy day, he wants to go sledding. He soon realizes that he does not have the right clothes or a sled, but with the help of a loving community he overcomes these obstacles and enjoys his first snowy day. A copy of the book was donated to the school's library.

The Holiday Tree stands in the lobby of the school and is enjoyed by all who pass by.

The Jardine Academy, operated by the Cerebral Palsy League and approved by the New Jersey Department of Education provides a comprehensive educational program designed to meet the cognitive and physical needs of children and young adults, 3-21 with multiple disabilities.

The Rake and Hoe Garden Club is affiliated with the Garden Club of New Jersey and the National Garden Club, Inc. The club meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 12:00 p.m. at the Scotch Hills Country Club. New members are welcome. To learn more about the club and its many activities please Cathy Becker cathymbecker@gmail.com or visit the club's website, rakeandhoegc.org, or Facebook page.



(above, l-r) Faten Mahran, Joan Kylish, Mary Lou Nolas, Jane Christiani, Martha Savage
Seated: Irene Greenstein.

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DJ DREWSKI & FRIENDS CONCERT AT THE UCPAC

Dj Drewski a radio host on Hot 97 fm and TV Personality hosted a Hip Hop concert that concert goers will never forget for years to come.

The Halloween themed concert was a huge success that sold out the UCPAC in Rahway NJ. Majority of its attendees were High School and college students who attend local schools in the New Jersey area. One concert goer said "Shout out to DJ Drewski because this has been the best show I ever seen!"

The attendees got way more than they bargained for when they got to witness some of the hottest hip hop acts hit the stage.

The show featured hip hop stars such as Sleepy Hallow, 41, Ron Suno & Dj Drewski (who is a Elizabeth NJ native.)

"I was extremely happy with the turnout and being able to use my platform to entertain and inspire the youth" said Dj Drewski.

"It was a great opportunity to bring the local youth to an incredible theatre like the UCPAC and show them they do not have to go out of town to see some of their favorite performing artists."

Solar, who is Dj Drewski's 2yr old daughter also joined the stage with him to celebrate such an incredible show. For Drewski, that was a full circle moment because as a child himself DJ

Drewski's father hosted a Rock & Roll concert at the same theatre years prior. Inspired by his upbringing in Elizabeth NJ, Dj Drewski plans to host more events and shows like this in the near future and is glad he was able to give both The City of Rahway and the surrounding communities a taste of what is to come.

Thank You to the Union County Police Department, Rahway Police Department and UCPAC for making sure everyone was safe and had a wonderful time.

To keep up with more of what Dj Drewski is doing follow him on social media at @SoDrewski



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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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WESTFIELD ROTARY CONTINUES LEGACY OF WOMAN'S CLUB

After more than 125 years of service to the community, The Woman's Club of Westfield is passing on their legacy to the Rotary Club of Westfield to continue their longstanding scholarship program.

The Woman's Club of Westfield started in 1895 with 40 women members. Miss Emma Bridges was the first president. In 1896, the Club joined the New Jersey State Federation of Woman's Clubs and the General Federation of Woman's Clubs. They purchased a building in Westfield on Euclid Avenue for their meetings in the 1950's but sold it in the 1990's as membership began to decline.

Financial Advisor Jayson Astel of Edward Jones, and Rotary Club Secretary Dr. D. Michael Hart met with the club members in the Spring of 2023. Michael brought his 97-year-old mother, Dr. Marilyn Hart to the meeting. She had received a scholarship from the Westfield Woman's Club in 1962, which changed her life. Marilyn was valedictorian of her high school class, but back in the 1940's very few people went to college, and even fewer women. Marilyn started night school, while working during the day and raising 3 children, and eventually earned a Ph.D., becoming a college professor at Kean University, teaching

Educational Psychology. This is an illustration of how scholarships can change people's lives for the better.

The Westfield Woman's Club transferred a substantial portion of their assets to the Rotary which will fund six \$5,000 college scholarships to Westfield High School women students every year, in perpetuity. In addition, grants will be offered to five specific charities every year as outlined in the agreement with the Woman's Club. The scholarships and grants will be administered through the Westfield Rotary Club Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization. Westfield High School students apply for scholarships through the Guidance Department.

The Rotary Club of Westfield and its Foundation, which was started in 1921, has awarded \$3.5 million in scholarships to 1,800 students to date. The Club's signature scholarship fundraising event, Breakfast With the Bands is scheduled for Saturday, March 2, 9 a.m. to noon.

The Rotary Club of Westfield meets the first three Tuesdays of each month for lunch at noon, at Limani Seafood Grill on North Ave. Guests are always welcome. For information check out the website westfieldrotary.com or contact club secretary Dr. D. Michael Hart by email at drmhart@yahoo.com.



(above) Dr. Marilyn Hart received a scholarship from the Westfield Woman's Club in 1962, which changed her life. Marilyn started night school, while working during the day and raising 3 children, and eventually earned a Ph.D., becoming a college professor at Kean University, teaching Educational Psychology.

Courtesy photo

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RESCUE SQUAD HOSTS SANTA MEET AND GREET

The Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad held a meet and greet with Santa Clause on Saturday, December 9th at the First Aid Squad. Visitors

were treated to a hot cocoa bar, ambulance tours, and photos with Santa and gifts from EMT Elves.



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Photos from this and other events can be found online at rennamedia.com and on the Westfield Monthly page on facebook.com. Feel free to "Like," "Tag," and "Share."



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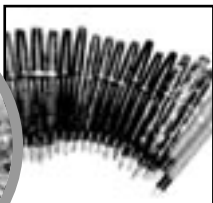
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NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK - HELP US SAVE VETS!

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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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
2-PAGE SPREAD	21" x 14"	\$700								
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(Deadline to Enter is January 24, 2024)

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What's this all about?

A 50-Day results-focused program designed to jumpstart your fitness and health so that you can lose weight, get stronger, and feel younger PLUS maintain the "New You" for as long as you choose.

How do I know if it's for me?

- You're over 40...but you feel 10 or 15 years older than you are
- You've had it with your clothes not fitting
- You've tried before to do it by yourself but to no avail
- You have something big coming up like a wedding, vacation, or reunion and you don't feel good about the way you look
- You've procrastinated long enough and you know things are only going to get worse if you don't take action now.
- You simply want to lose weight, get stronger, and feel younger

What do I get with this?

- ✓ **Kick it Off:** With a pep rally/nutrition seminar (Tuesday, 1/23 @ 7:15 p.m.)
- ✓ **Expert Personal Training:** Up to 21 small group personal training sessions
- ✓ **Melt the Fat Away:** With unlimited fat-melting cardio sessions
- ✓ **Eat to Win:** Easy to Follow, 50-Day Habit Based, Fat-Burning Food Plan
- ✓ **Abs Are Made in the Kitchen:** Simple and delicious recipe guide to make it easy to lose weight
- ✓ **Your Personal Safety Net:** Your very own accountability coach who won't let you slip up
- ✓ **VIP Access:** To the Private 50 Strong Facebook group
- ✓ **Show Me the Money:** A chance to win cool prizes
- ✓ **The ALF Guarantee:** 100% Results Guaranteed, or your money back.

We promise that you'll lose body fat, get stronger, and feel better... if not, we'll refund every penny.

See what others are saying about Active Life Fitness!



"THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS ARE AMAZING!"

Maria: I joined last year for a six-week challenge. I got more benefits from those six weeks than going to a 'big' gym for six years! The coaches are great and easy to talk to, and they know much about fitness! I've met and become good friends with other members. I always look forward to working out because they've made it challenging but fun. The physical and mental health benefits are amazing! Thank you, ALF!



"ALF HAS DONE MORE FOR MY OVERALL HEALTH THAN I COULD HAVE IMAGINED!"

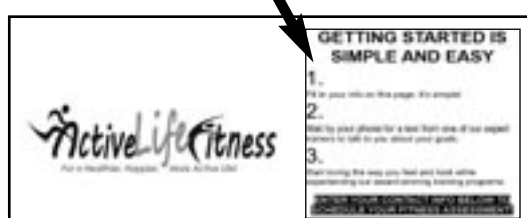
Teresa: I started at Active Life Fitness in March 2022 after a battle with breast cancer, knowing I had to take better care of myself ALF has been a blessing This comes from someone who hasn't been in a gym in over 30 years and hates After a few months, I found my balance was better, I had more stamina, and, most importantly, I could get through the day with clarity! I'm in a better mood and don't suffer from I as much brain fog! ALF has done more for my overall health than I could have imagined! I highly recommend Active Life Fitness!

HERE'S HOW TO GET ALL THE DETAILS

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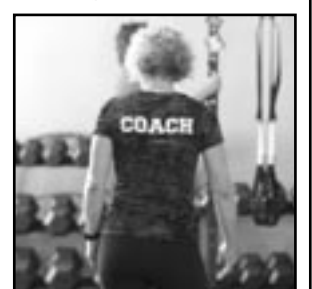


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