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AREA ELKS RECEIVE VETERANS WELCOME HOME KITS



(above) Area Elks and volunteers - Elks Care and Elks Share.

Courtesy photo

Recently, twenty-five area Elks and volunteers helped to restock the shelves at the NJ State Elks Veterans Annex in Stirling. The items that were received will be assembled into Welcome Home Kits and delivered free of charge to previously homeless Veterans who are moving into a new residence.

Welcome Home Kits include a bed, night stand, dresser, sofa, dining table and chairs, lamps, bedding, linens, appliances, cleaning supplies, a shower curtain, mats, pots and pans, flatware, glassware, and more. All items are brand new.

Enough items to assemble 20 Welcome Home Kits were purchased by the NJ Elks East Central District, with Lodges in Stirling, Summit, Springfield, Mountainside, Union, Cranford, and Rahway, at a cost of approximately \$10,000 which was provided through grants, donations, and fundraising events.

The NJ State Elks National Veterans Service Commission

has helped over 2,300 veterans since 2016 and makes 25–30 deliveries each month throughout the state. The NJ State Veterans Annex was recently featured in "Givers of Hope" view on YouTube: youtu.be/Qvndf_3l0Y4

Every night, as many as 40,000 veterans are sleeping on the streets. In partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission has pledged to help end veteran homelessness, and ensure that every veteran has the safe, stable home they deserve. In New Jersey, Elks volunteers provide direct service to over 1,000 veterans in multiple VA homes and connect with veterans and military members in their communities, providing them with services where they live.

Please email njelksnpsc@gmail.com to learn more about what NJ State Elks do to help veterans and visit Elks.org for more information about the Elks and how to join.

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INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN TOPIC OF MEETING

Retired Policemen and Firemen's Association, Local 3

New Jersey State Police Detective Daniel Rafanan gave a 45-minute presentation on Internet Crimes Against Children, at the Retired Policemen and Firemen's Association, Local 3 meeting recently held at the Kenilworth VFW.

Detective Rafanan covered many of the issues with the Internet that lead to texting, bullying, depression, and suicide in our teens today. Detective Rafanan also covered sextortion which is an increasingly common online crime in which people are enticed into sending sexually explicit photos. Once the photos are sent, the receiver of the images threatens to share them online or with family or friends unless the victim sends money.

Detective Rafanan also explained what parents can do including, Establish rules and expectations for online behavior early on; Review your child's

social media account periodically, look at comments and photos; Explain consequences for inappropriate online behavior; Review your child's friends accounts as well; and Talk about what their friends are posting.

The Internet Crimes Against Children Unit is responsible for conducting investigations of offenders that utilize computers and computer technology for the purpose of exploiting children. The unit conducts proactive and reactive investigations into endangerment of children.

This was a powerful and educational presentation that all parents and teenagers should see and hear. If anyone would like more information on this program, you can email Retired Chief Grady at rprflocal3@gmail.com for contact information.



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YMCA FREE WELL-BEING INITIATIVE FOR CANCER SURVIVORS

The Gateway Family YMCA recently celebrated a heartwarming graduation ceremony for members of the LiveSTRONG® at the YMCA program, held at The Gateway Family YMCA – Wellness Center Branch. LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA is a research-based physical activity and well-being initiative that helps people affected by cancer reach their holistic health goals.

The LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA program is offered free to cancer survivors to provide support and assistance in a small community format. Registration is available for the next program session, held at The Gateway Family YMCA - Wellness Center Branch, 1000 Galloping Hill Rd, Union. The program will be held March 5th – May 23rd, on Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:00 p.m. Interested participants can contact Jodi Pelano at 908-349-9622 or livestrong@tgfymca.org to register or to express interest in a future program.

“LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA offers those who have been diagnosed with cancer the support they need to build both physical and emotional strength,” stated Melynda A. Disla, President/CEO, The Gateway Family YMCA. “With a mission centered on equity for all, we strive to be a leading voice on health and well-being for our community, providing resources and guidance so that all people, no matter what their circumstance, can achieve their goals and feel supported in spirit, mind and body.” Through YMCA Financial Assistance supported by the Annual Campaign and grant funding, there is no fee for individuals to attend LiveSTRONG® at the YMCA.

“Research shows exercise is the simplest way for cancer survivors to reduce fatigue, improve their mood and bounce back from the debilitating effects of cancer treatment more quickly,” said Dr. Ruth Rechis, LIVESTRONG® Foundation Vice President of Programs. “But there weren’t



(above) The Gateway Family YMCA celebrated LIVESTRONG® AT THE YMCA Graduation

enough programs to help people affected by cancer reach their health and well-being goals, so LIVESTRONG® and the Y joined forces to create LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA. The Y is the perfect collaborator because of its national reach, commitment to meeting the needs of all community members and history of program innovation in support of health and wellness.”

As part of LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA, the Y engages cancer survivors through an approach that focuses on the whole person. Participants work with specially trained staff to build muscle mass and strength, increase flexibility and endurance, and improve functional ability. In addition to physical benefits, the program also focuses on the emotional well-being of survivors by providing a supportive community environment where people affected by cancer can connect during treatment and beyond.

For more information on The Gateway Family YMCA, visit tgfymca.org. For more information on LIVESTRONG® at the YMCA, contact Jodi Pelano, Wellness Center Branch Executive Director at 908-349-9622 or livestrong@tgfymca.org.

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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."

February speakers include Scott Hough, Ed Oatman or Amy Wagner, Dr. Yaron Moshel, and Amy Behr-Shields. Please join us. Our programs are free to the public, and we welcome you!

Our speaker on **Tuesday, February 6th** will be Scott Hough, Superintendent of Schools, Summit, NJ. Scott will give us an overview of the school system and describe the impact covid had and how he dealt with it (he was appointed to his position in June 2020!). Scott will also discuss critical issues facing all school administrators, such as bullying, security and student safety. Roughly one half of Summit's annual budget goes to support the public schools, and the appeal of Summit as a great place to live is supported by its excellent schools.

Our speaker on **Tuesday, February 13th** will be either the manager or deputy manager of Union County, NJ. Union County has a diverse population equivalent in size to that of Wyoming and a budget of a half billion dollars. Most people are quite familiar with their own city or town, but usually know much less about their county. Ed Oatman, manager, or Amy Wagner, deputy manager, will hopefully change that for you. County operations include areas such as law enforcement/courts, parks & recreation, public

works -roads and infrastructure, health care, economic development, and a lot more.

On **Tuesday, February 20th**, Dr. Yaron Moshel, co-director of the Gerald J. Glasser Brain Tumor Center at Atlantic Health System's Overlook Medical Center, will be our speaker. He is one of a select few surgeons who specialize in removing deep-seated brain tumors using technology that includes computer-guided navigation, awake intraoperative brain mapping, endoscopy, and microsurgery. Dr. Moshel will explain how the convergence of precision medicine, advanced robotics, and specialized imaging are fostering new breakthroughs in the treatment of brain and spine tumors.

Finally, on **Tuesday, February 27th**, we ask the question, 'with so much information accessible online, is a public library still relevant?' Amy Behr-Shields, the Director of the Summit Free Library, will explain how the library is needed to curate reliable sources of information, and to manage the complexities of digital and non-digital media, while serving as a community center and a welcoming environment. You will also be surprised to learn how many varied programs and services the library offers.

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

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“MEET THE MAYOR” NETWORKING EVENT

The Greater Union Township Chamber of Commerce’s annual “Meet the Mayor” networking event is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 29, 2024, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at ConnectOne Bank, 2455 Morris Avenue, Union.

The program will feature a time for chamber business owners to meet Union Township Mayor Manuel Figueiredo, who will share his vision for the Township in the coming year, and update

attendees on current projects and programs affecting the economic vitality of the community. In addition, various township officials and department heads will be in attendance to address issues and concerns from local businesses and organizations.

Admission for the event is \$10 for members and \$15 for guests. Preregistration is required and can be done at unionchamber.com or by

contacting the Chamber at 908-688-2777, or by emailing executivedirector@unionchamber.com.

The Greater Union Township Chamber of Commerce is a professional association dedicated to strengthening, uniting, promoting and representing member businesses located in Union and the surrounding area. It encompasses the chambers of Union, Roselle Park, Kenilworth, and Hillside.



(above) Union Township Mayor
Manuel Figueiredo

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GET READY FOR OUR COUNTRY'S SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL!

Union Township Historical Society

Visit the Caldwell Parsonage and Tool Museum, 909 Caldwell Avenue, Union, on Sunday, February 4, and Sunday, February 25, from 2 to 5 p.m.

- Play colonial games at the new Colonial Children's Exhibit.
- Check out the museum's latest acquisition—an Edison gramophone.
- Learn about the Veterans of Vauxhall from Jonny Rosser of the Vauxhall Historical Society, Inc.
- Marvel at the athletic feats of Eulace Peacock, UHS Class of 1933, who competed with Olympic champion, Jesse Owens.
- Admission is free. Souvenirs, books, and postcards are available for purchase.

IMAGINE VOLUNTEER FEBRUARY TRAINING

A recent participant in Imagine's last volunteer facilitator training shared this about her experience: "The training was truly amazing and inspiring. I am so honored to have had the opportunity to participate in it." Another shared: "The Imagine Staff are amazing. I so appreciate all the knowledge they shared and the encouragement they gave to me and the other participants."

Participants in Imagine's training programs often describe the experience as "life-changing". In addition to story sharing and the opportunity to support one another, training participants gain knowledge and skills regarding Alan Wolfelt's Companioning Model for grief support that's practiced at Imagine. Participants often walk away with a new understanding of themselves, and a new capacity for supporting the people in their lives. They bring this understanding to their role as facilitators in Imagine's peer support group program where children, youth, young adults and adults come together to share their grief experiences and receive and give support.

Imagine's volunteer facilitators come from all walks of life and no special background is required other than a willingness to listen, a heart inclined to serve, and the ability to be with children and adults in grief without trying to fix, solve or give advice. No prior experience is necessary. Volunteers must be 18 years or older. Bilingual (Spanish speaking) volunteers are needed as well. Volunteers serve as companions and loving listeners for those who are grieving and help create a space where participants can share tears and embrace the joys of life.

If you'd like to join us for Imagine's next facilitator training, it will be held Saturday, Feb. 17th through Monday, February 19th from 9 am-5 pm each day at Imagine's Newark Center at 570 Broad Street in Newark, and we ask that our new volunteers attend the entire training. Our new Newark center is located downtown in the Chase building with parking available directly behind the building. It's also close to public transportation. We're hoping those completing the training will be able to facilitate groups held every other week at our Newark center. We have

Imagine
a world where no
child grieves alone



so many children and families currently in need of support that we're planning to launch a new Night of Support in Newark. We're also looking for a few new facilitators for our Mountainside location.

If you're interested in making a difference in the lives of grieving families and would like to participate in this transformative training experience, please visit Imagine's website at imaginej.org or scan the bar code below to let us know of your interest. Please reach out to Imagine's Program Supervisor, Abigail Preece, LPC at abigail@imaginej.org with any questions.

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



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REGISTER FOR FAMILY COURSE ON COPING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

The Union County Chapter of The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI Union County) is offering its free annual 9-week course targeted towards families coping with mental illness. The course will start on Thursday, March 7, 2024 and meet weekly from 7:00pm – 9:30pm over a consecutive 9-week period. All necessary materials are furnished at no cost. This course is offered specifically to the parents, siblings, spouses, teenage and adult children, and significant others of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. The program is not appropriate for individuals who, themselves, suffer from one of the major mental disorders.

The course is taught by NAMI members who

have completed intensive training. Curriculum topics include schizophrenia, bipolar disorders (manic depression), clinical depression, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, etc., the clinical treatment of these illnesses and how caregivers can learn to copy more effectively. Attendees will learn about new research, medications, skills needed to successfully communicate with a relative, and how to deal with critical periods. Capacity is limited.

To register, or if you have questions, please contact Pat Roman at (732) 397-8123 or email at patroman2@aol.com. Please include "F2F Course" in the subject line. A F2F teacher will contact you with the details.

SENIOR FITNESS CLASSES FOR UNION COUNTY RESIDENTS

The Kenilworth Senior Center is open on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday for free senior fitness classes. The classes are open to all Union County residents. Please bring your sneakers and a water bottle to stay hydrated. Lots of fun and you'll meet some great people! The Kenilworth Senior Center is located at 526 Boulevard Kenilworth, NJ. There is parking in the front and back of the building. An elevator is located in the back entrance for those who need a lift. Wheel chairs are provided if need be.

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.

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1 Unit (Business card)	3.25" x 2"	\$60	\$150	\$250	\$350	\$400	\$450	\$500	\$550	\$600
2 Units	6.5" x 2" or 3.25" x 4"	\$100	\$250	\$400	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$800	\$900	\$1000
4 Units	3.25" x 8" or 6.5" x 4"	\$180	\$450	\$700	\$900	\$1100	\$1300	\$1500	\$1700	\$1900
6 Units	6.5" x 6.25" or 10" x 4"	\$240	\$600	\$900	\$1200	\$1400	\$1600	\$1800	\$2000	\$2200
9 HALF PAGE	6.5" x 9" or 10" x 7"	\$320	\$800	\$1000	\$1300	\$1600	\$1900	\$2200	\$2400	\$2700
12 Units	10" x 8"	\$360	\$900	\$1200	\$1500	\$1800	\$2100	\$2400	\$2700	\$3000
18 FULL PAGE	10" x 14"	\$400	\$1000	\$1400	\$1800	\$2200	\$2500	\$2800	\$3000	\$3400
2-PAGE SPREAD	21" x 14"	\$700								
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Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter DAR

At the 128th Anniversary luncheon of Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) held in January, the chapter reported on their first U.S. Semiquincentennial observance.



(above) Outstanding Junior Ashley Salsano (r.) pictured with DAR President General Pamela Wright at the 2023 Spring State Conference.

Members celebrated the fact that some tea supplied by the chapter was used in the 250th anniversary re-enactment of the Boston Tea Party in December. The chapter contributed a limited edition King’s Coronation Tea. “It seemed appropriate,” said Chapter Treasurer Barbara Pollison-Beck who donated the tea.

During the luncheon, Ashley Salsano was honored as the chapter’s Outstanding Junior member. Four new chapter members were officially welcomed and Beth Kavanaugh of Oldwick was sworn in. Women observing milestone membership anniversaries were also recognized: Carol DeFilippis, Warren, 55 years; Margaret Shilay, North Plainfield, 50 years; Catherine Strohmeier, Watchung, 40 years; Patricia Sullivan, Bridgewater, 10 years.

Monthly meetings will resume on March 12 with a program on Betty Bradbury Vail and planning for a spring service project to clean and help preserve historic headstones in the area. Also on the agenda is the NJDAR State Conference in April.

The DAR is a nonprofit service organization open to women descended from an individual who aided the cause of independence during the American Revolution. New members are welcome. Contact the chapter at ESCchapterDAR@gmail.com.

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