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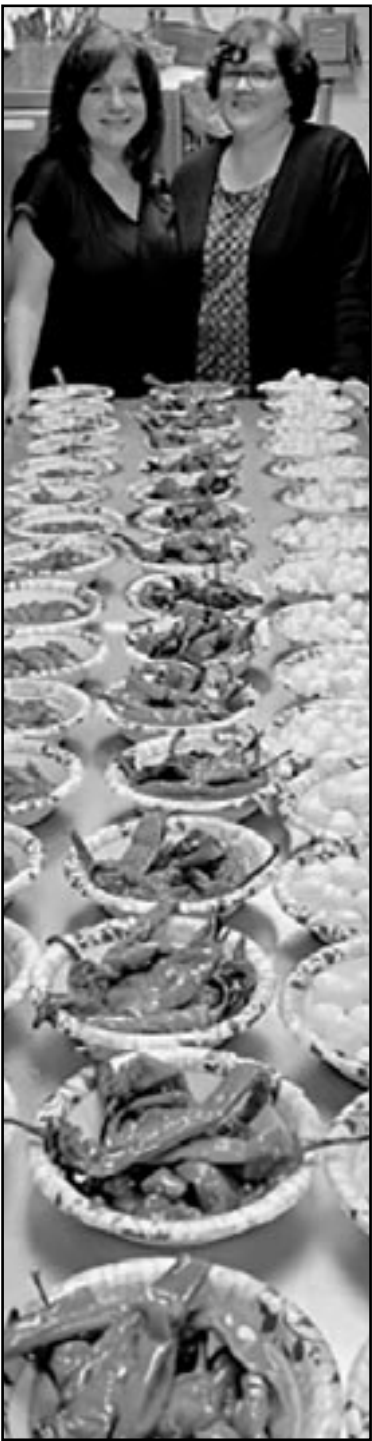
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29TH ANNUAL EVENT RAISES MONEY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

The Greater Westfield UNICO is so pleased to share the news about the success of our 29th annual pig roast, which historically provides scholarship funding for Westfield High School students. The event took place on January 27th at the Garwood Knights of Columbus, with attendees sharing a wonderful evening of fine food and drink. The scholarship funding comes from tickets sales and was enhanced by raffles

of numerous gift baskets and donations from various local stores and companies.
UNICO is an Italian-American organization that strives to incorporate our unique Italian heritage and culture into the lives of our members and surrounding communities. For more information visit: unicowestfield.wixsite.com/greater-westfield-un.



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"HUG IN A MUG" CAMPAIGN HITS 240

Westfield Girl Scouts

Senior and Ambassador Scouts from Service Unit #52 successfully hosted the fourth annual Westfield Girl Scouts “Hug in a Mug” campaign. To connect with local seniors and individuals who may be homebound, these high school students collected mugs and filled them with coffee, hot chocolate, breakfast items, and sweets. 240 mugs were distributed to area residents through partnerships with Lifelong Westfield, First United Methodist Church, St. Helen's Church, Holy Trinity Church, and Sunrise Living.

This project was undertaken in honor of the

late William Kessinger. Mr. Kessinger, a paratrooper during the Korean War, was a grandfather figure to many in the Westfield/Scotch Plains area. Nicknamed the “Candyman”, he was famous for giving out sweets to local children. Each mug is assembled with several of his favorite treats.

This campaign, the largest to date, was made possible through the wonderful generosity of the Westfield community. Westfield Girl Scouts wishes to thank the many troops, local donors, and the Westfield Memorial Library for supporting this effort.



(above) Westfield Girl Scouts Scouts from Service Unit #52

Courtesy photo





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STUDENT MUSICIANS TO PERFORM WITH STATE AND REGIONAL

Westfield Public Schools

Three Westfield High School student musicians will perform this month with the All-State Band, while 16 intermediate students were accepted into Region II ensembles.

Twelfth graders Nolan Daly (Trumpet), Charlie Hu (Oboe), and Sarah Lincoln (Contrabass Clarinet) performed with the New Jersey Music Educators Association (NJMEA) All-State Band on February 23 in Atlantic City, followed by a performance on February 24 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.

Performing in early March with Central Jersey Music Educators Association (CJMEA) Region II band, orchestra, and percussion ensembles at the intermediate school level are:

- Arboria Abrams, Grade 8, Bassoon
 - Olivia Albano, Grade 7, Bassoon
 - Ajay Bastianpillai, Grade 8, Trumpet
 - Ethan Co, Grade 8, Violin
 - Arianna Desai, Grade 8, Violin
 - Lilia Duval, Grade 8, Violin
 - Alejandro Phillips Vazquez, Grade 8, Tuba
 - John Pranke, Grade 7, Tuba
- Sarah Reed, Grade 8, Oboe
 - Riya Satwalekar, Grade 7, Violin
 - Arav Sheth, Grade 7, Clarinet
 - Serena Shih, Grade 8, Flute
 - Andrew Song, Grade 8, Viola
 - Annabelle Tao, Grade 7, French Horn
 - Emma Wang, Grade 6, Violin
 - Elizabeth Williamson, Grade 8, Clarinet



(above) Twelfth graders Nolan Daly (Trumpet), Charlie Hu (Oboe), and Sarah Lincoln (Contrabass Clarinet) performed with the NJ Music Educators Association All-State Band in Atlantic City, followed by a performance at the NJ Performing Arts Center in Newark.

Photos by Trevor Sindorf



(above, l-r) Sixteen Westfield Public Schools student musicians will perform with Region II intermediate school ensembles in March including the following students from Edison Intermediate School: Arboria Abrams, Olivia Alvaro, Serena Shih, Arianna Desai, Ethan Co, Alejandro Phillips Vazquez, Ajay Bastianpillai, Lilia Duval, Andrew Song, Emma Wang, and Arav Sheth.

Photo by Westfield Public Schools



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(above, l-r) Lantern Hill Business Office Manager Debra Vlahakis, Director of General Services Ed Zappile, and Housekeeping Manager, recently volunteered at the Community FoodBank of New Jersey in Hillside.

GIRL SCOUTS HAVE A WEEKEND OF CANS, CREATIVITY, AND COMMUNITY

Submitted by Lucia Triolo WGS
Westfield Girl Scouts successfully hosted its first Canstruction Jr. event on Saturday, Feb. 10. Seven teams of Junior, Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador Scouts took on the challenge of using canned goods to build various structures. The 4th-12th graders had up to six hours to complete the designs, with the goal of bringing attention to food insecurity in our area.

On Sunday, the same teams returned to the Presbyterian Church in Westfield to sort and distribute the near 2,500 shelf-stable items. Recipient organizations included:

- Presbyterian Church in Westfield, Westfield
- Church of the Immaculate Heart Food Pantry, Scotch Plains
- Valerie's Soup Kitchen, Plainfield
- Little Flower Church Food Pantry, Berkeley Heights
- David Brearley High School Care Closet, Kenilworth
- St. Anne's Food Pantry, Garwood
- St. Joseph's Social Services, Elizabeth
- Osceola Presbyterian Church Food Pantry, Clark
- El Centro Hispano Americano, Plainfield

Canstruction® is an international campaign that raises awareness about hunger while facilitating the donation of thousands of pounds of canned food to those in need. Participants incorporate engineering, visual arts, mathematics, project management, and 3D rendering principles

all while learning the importance of community service.

Congratulations to the participating Girl Scouts on their hard work and creative approach to the design challenge.





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CULT CLASSIC HEATHERS THE MUSICAL: TEEN EDITION - MARCH 14, 15, 16

The Westfield High School Theatre Department is proud to present Heathers the Musical: Teen Edition, March 14, 15, and 16. All performances are at 7:30 p.m. at Westfield High School and tickets may be purchased online only at whstd.booktix.com.

Adapted from the 1988 cult classic film Heathers by Daniel Waters with music, lyrics and book by Laurence O'Keefe and Kevin Murphy, this darkly funny and edgy rock musical follows Veronica Sawyer (Rachel Klemm), a brainy "misfit" who struggles to survive teenage life at Westerberg High, where a hellish social hierarchy is ruled by the powerful and ruthless clique, the Heathers (Kelsey Dix, Lily Erneta, Alexa Marquet). When Veronica hustles her way into the trio, her dreams of popularity finally start to come true, until the Heathers play a cruel trick on Veronica's best friend Martha Dunnstock (Nadia Rego). Enter the dark and mysterious rebel J.D. (Skyler Lipkind) who resolves to rid Westerberg of the Heathers and the rest of the popular elite forever.

"While it is a "dark comedy," Heathers addresses myriad issues that our students still struggle with, including bullying, peer pressure, self-acceptance and, for many kids, just trying to figure out who they truly are," said Director, Daniel Devlin. "It's a very honest, unashamed look into the mirror and reveals just how rough things can be in a high school. The story resonates with our students, and they are extremely excited to share it with our audiences."

Other members of the cast include Cara Cogan, Ben Dickerson, Jordan Mirrione, Ethan

Young, Garrett Gao, Annabel Barker, Charlotte Cotroneo, Madeleine Smith, Alexandra Haar, Kiran Patel, Parker Ebert, Keaton Shepherd, Luella Mockbee, Valentina Ciucci, Ella Oberstein, Natalie Gonzalez, Francesca Hamrah, Owen Ing, Taylor Johnson, Caroline Morrelli, Mia Nuzzo, Mia Saco, Anna Salvato, Sophia Schwartz, Tessa Srebnik, Gabriella Zerafa, Maddy Cortes, Hana Forbes and Chloe McAuliffe.

In addition to the on-stage talent, WHS students play a large role behind the scenes, working on the show's costumes, makeup, props, lighting and sound, and designing and building the set. The award-winning Westfield High School Theatre Department is an inclusive community offering outstanding opportunities for all students to develop their skills in acting, technical theatre, and live performance. Its mission is to help every student reach their

highest potential as an artist and as an individual.

The Westfield High School Theatre Department is proud to be partnering with Caring Contact, an organization devoted to promoting emotional wellbeing and preventing emotional crises by providing opportunities for people to express themselves to compassionate listeners in a safe environment. Caring Contact will have information available at all performances of Heathers the Musical: Teen Edition.

Tickets for Heathers the Musical: Teen Edition are \$15 each and are on sale at whstd.booktix.com. Advance purchases are required as tickets will NOT be available at the door. Tickets are reserved seating. Performances are in the auditorium of Westfield High School, located at 550 Dorian Road.

Heathers the Musical: Teen Edition is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals. Concordtheatricals.com.



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VETERANS BANNER PROGRAM

The Westfield Veterans Banner Program is now accepting submissions for its third round of banners to recognize our veterans and active duty military personnel. These banners will be displayed from Memorial Day through Veterans Day in a partnership between the Town and the Westfield Veterans Fund, a locally established 501(c)(3) organization. They will be placed on poles adjacent to Monument Circle, along East Broad Street, North Avenue, and South Avenue. The submission deadline for new banners to be included in this next round is March 31. For submission details and an application, or to make a donation, visit westfieldnj.gov/veterans-banner-program.



RAKE AND HOE GARDEN CLUB OF WESTFIELD

Nineteen members of Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield met at the First Baptist Church of Westfield on February 6th and made sixty small floral arrangements to accompany the Mobile Meals delivered that day. The club supplies the flowers and prepares the arrangements in laundry detergent caps. The clients very much appreciate receiving the colorful arrangements. Gayle Lechner coordinated the event.

The Rake and Hoe Garden Club meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 12:00 p.m. at the Scotch Hills Country Club. Each meeting includes a guest speaker to educate members in the art and science of gardening, horticulture, floral design, and nature photography.

Club members perform many community service projects throughout the year. We plant and maintain gardens in Westfield and fund local elementary school projects relating to gardening. We also have a junior section where school-age

members work on projects at their own meetings. If the activities described above interest you and you want to connect with fellow gardening enthusiasts and make enduring friendships along the way, join our club.

For more information, contact Cathy Becker cathymbecker@gmail.com, or visit the club's website rakeandhoegc.org, or Facebook page.



Club Members Making Floral arrangements for Mobile Meals.
Courtesy photo

NOW HIRING SUMMER PLAYGROUND STAFF

Calling all summer job seekers! The Recreation Department is now hiring for its Summer Playground Program. Available positions include Site Supervisor, Assistant Site Supervisor, and Counselor. This six-week program operates from June 24 - August 2 (closed on July 4 & 5), from 9:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m., and hosts participants entering first

through sixth grade. Don't miss out on an opportunity to spend your summer playing games in the sun and making a difference in our community. For more information, visit the Recreation website.

And for those looking to sign their children up for this year's Summer Playground Program, registration is now open.



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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 on the Miller Cory House Museum/Westfield Historical Society and their events, millercoryhouse.com or westfieldhistoricalsociety.org and , like us on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram.

SUMMIT'S REPAIR CAFÉ EVENT – MARCH 16

Join us at Summit's Repair Cafe event, where we breathe new life into your beloved but broken items, for free. Diverting an average of 421 pounds of items from landfills per event by simply repairing them, this initiative contributes significantly to both the community and the environment.

On Saturday, March 16 we invite you to Barnwell Hall at Christ Church from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., located at 561 Springfield Avenue, Summit, NJ. Please note that the final items for repair will be accepted at 2:30 p.m.

Our repair services for this event encompass a wide range, including new repair services of sewing machines and watch battery and band replacement as well as sewing/textiles, clocks, woodworking, PC computers, knife sharpening, lamps, electronics, and bicycles. To ensure equal opportunities for everyone, each person may bring a maximum of 2 items for repair.

For lamps, clocks and watch batteries, replacement parts will be available at a nominal, at-cost fee. Please ensure you can carry your items unassisted when bringing them to the event. No appointments are necessary, although wait times may vary as this event is not a drop-off service.

This impacting event is co-sponsored by the Summit Area Green Faith Circle and Repair Cafe Garden State. For a comprehensive schedule of upcoming Repair Cafe events across New Jersey during the ongoing 2024 repair season, visit

www.repaircafe.org.

Repair and event volunteers are always welcome at this event, as well as all future repair events. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to us via email at summit@repaircafegs.org.

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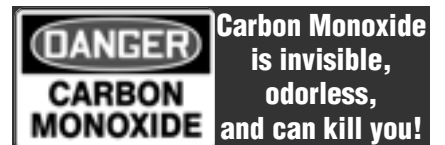
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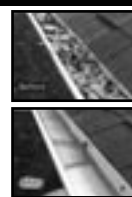
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STUDENT PUBLICATION RECEIVES TOP HONORS

WESTFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The American Scholastic Press Association has awarded Westfield High School's Optic Magazine "First Place with Special Merit" for its reporting during the 2022-2023 school year. This category recognizes the top-scoring high school and college student magazines nationally for the organization's Scholastic Newspaper Awards.

The student-run Optics also was recognized in the category of "Most Outstanding High School Literary-Art Magazine for 2023."

"The students work very hard to put out magazines of this caliber four times a year. Each magazine takes hard work, passion, talent, and teamwork to complete," says WHS journalism teacher and Hi's Eye/Optic Adviser Shawn McDonald. "We are honored that, in Optic's third year of publication, we were able to win such prestigious and respectable awards. These awards truly showcase the talented students who make up our robust journalism program at Westfield High School."



(above) Westfield High School's Optic Magazine earned top honors from the American Scholastic Press Association for its reporting during the 2022-2023 school year.

Photo by Westfield Public Schools



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MARCH 11 @ 7pm	Banned Book Discussion: Maus by Art Spiegelman
MARCH 14 @ 1pm	Adult Craft with Marge - Make a Bunny Wreath
MARCH 19 @ 7pm	Maggie Wordsdale sings Sinatra-Come Fly with Me
MARCH 21 @ 2pm	Book Discussion: Family Lore- Lifelong Westfield
MARCH 21 @ 7pm	Pollinators in Peril; Native Plants to the Rescue
MARCH 23 @ 2pm	Educators for Equity: LGBTQ Author Panel and Book Signing
MARCH 26 @7pm	Remember the Ladies: Women in Revolutionary War Times by Joel Farkas
MARCH 30 @2pm	Carol Selick performs "Women in Song"

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11TH ANNUAL PALOOZA STUDENT FINALISTS

Westfield Public Schools
The Westfield High School Dream Team, in partnership with The Albert Anthony Kayal Foundation and The Matthew Thomas Toriello Memorial Fund, recently recognized student finalists in the 11th Annual WHS Dream Team Palooza Contest for their submissions of posters, poetry, and public service announcements depicting the theme, "Be Kind To Your Mind, Live Drug-Free."

Finalists in Grades 1-12 from the Westfield Public Schools and Holy Trinity School were recognized on January 30 at a ceremony at Westfield High School.

- This year's finalists from the Westfield Public Schools are:
- ELEMENTARY POSTER PALOOZA**
- Juliet Blumenfeld, Grade 4, McKinley Elementary School - Honorable Mention
 - Sydney Lupkin, Grade 5, Jefferson Elementary School - Honorable Mention
- INTERMEDIATE POETRY PALOOZA**
- Natalie Gapp, Grade 7, Roosevelt Intermediate School - 1st Place

- Tyler Jacobowitz, Grade 8, Edison Intermediate School - 2nd Place
 - Josephine Troup, Grade 6, Edison Intermediate School - 3rd Place
 - Maxim Machat, Grade 8, Edison Intermediate School - Honorable Mention
- HIGH SCHOOL PSA PALOOZA**
- Keri Kapuscinski and Lily Topilow, Westfield High School, Grade 9 - 1st Place
 - Francesca Castellano, Westfield High School, Grade 9 - 2nd Place
 - Catalina Garcia-Lopez, Westfield High School, Grade 9 - 3rd Place
- The Palooza Contest begins each year in October during National Red Ribbon Week and entries are submitted by early December. The finalists are announced and celebrated during a ceremony each January to which family and other members of the community are invited.
- On February 2, members of the Dream Team also attended the New Jersey State Elks Association's Peer Leadership Conference which, like the Dream Team, focuses on substance abuse prevention and awareness.



(above) The Westfield High School Dream Team recently recognized student finalists in the 11th Annual Palooza Contest for their submissions of posters, poetry, and public service announcements depicting the theme, "Be Kind To Your Mind, Live Drug-Free."

Photo by WHS Dream Team



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The Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield (JLEP) is pleased to announce that in 2024 we will be awarding three \$4,000 scholarships to college bound women who reside in Union County and demonstrate a passion for volunteerism.

The JLEP believes that volunteerism is a vital force in our community, and we support young women who share our passion by awarding scholarships to college-bound high school seniors who have demonstrated a commitment

to volunteer activities. The scholarships will be awarded in May 2024.

To be considered for a scholarship, applicants are asked to complete the application form, write a 300-to-400-word essay about their volunteer experiences, and provide two letters of recommendation.

The application form is available on our website, jlepnj.org, or can also be obtained by sending a request via email to scholarship@jlepnj.org or by leaving a message

with your address and/or email address at 908-709-1177.

The deadline for submitting applications is April 5, 2024. There will be a formal presentation of the scholarships to the recipients at the JLEP's Annual Dinner on May 22, 2024.

To find out more about the League's scholarship program or about how to join as a member, please contact the League at 908-709-1177, via email at scholarship@jlepnj.org, or visit our website at jlepnj.org.



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10:00 a.m. Festival Liturgy with Eucharist

Holy Thursday - March 28
12 noon Spoken Liturgy with Eucharist
7:30 p.m. Liturgy with Rite of First Holy Communion

Good Friday - March 29
12 noon Ecumenical Community Service
7:30 p.m. Service of Tenebrae

Holy Saturday - March 30
A Day of Silence, Prayer & Reflection

Easter Celebration - March 31
7:00 a.m. Memorial Garden Liturgy
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THE DOMINICAN NUNS CLOISTER SHOPPE

For Westfielder Pat Colbert, volunteering at the Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary in Summit “brings me peace no matter how my day is going.”

She began volunteering at the Cloister Shoppe more than four years ago after another Westfield resident, Marge Roeck, told her about it.

The well-stocked gift shop is operated by the Dominican nuns who reside on the Rosary Shrine grounds that include a large chapel that is open to the public. Several years ago, the cloistered nuns began making a number of products to sell, including candles, soaps, face and foot crème, etc. Those items are available, along with a host of religious goods, at the gift shop and online at cloistershoppe.com. Proceeds provide funds needed to support the 20 nuns who live at the monastery.

Many people come to the shop to secure perpetual enrollments that provide prayers for individuals.

“These are beautiful cards that people usually buy to give to families of recently deceased individuals or for any living person who might need prayers,” says Tina Leshner, of Westfield, who along with her husband, John, volunteers at

the shop. “We print out these lovely enrollments and include a special holy card.”

Morris Township resident Kathy Sette has been a dedicated volunteer for 20 years.

“We’re more blessed being here,” says Sette. “There’s just a feeling about it.”

Her feelings are echoed by decades-long volunteer Dorothy Shanahan of Summit.

“Curiosity led me as a young woman to investigate that big church on the hill...Simply put, God’s grace and love began a lifelong association with the monastery...this journey has been a very special privilege and gift to my life and my family.”

Many of the volunteers are members of the Rosary Guild, an auxiliary that assists the nuns in such undertakings as raising funds, driving the nuns to appointments, shopping with the sisters, etc. The current president is Joan Brinkerhoff of Summit. She argues that working in the shop “can give me and all the volunteers an Evangelizing ministry---a time to care for others emotionally in a loving, Christian way. We reach out to our shoppers to help them find a special gift for a new grandchild, a sick friend or help

them with a loss of a friend, child, parent or even a life-altering illness...we are the lay hands and voices of the nuns.”

While handling the shop duties, volunteers also answer calls coming into the Rosary Shrine and relay the messages to the nuns.

“Many of the callers are seeking the nuns’ prayers for a variety of reasons, often because of illness or loneliness or depression. As I listen to the pleas, I feel so lucky,” says Tina Leshner.

The Summit monastery was founded in 1919 when a group of sisters from a Union City monastery moved to the current site. As contemplatives, the nuns use prayer and penance to spread the Kingdom of God. The average age of the current 20 sisters in Summit is in the 50s.

The monastery chapel houses the only copy of the Shroud of Turin. The 400-year-old shroud copy can be viewed during the open chapel hours from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Mass for the public is celebrated daily at 7:30 a.m and Sundays at 8 a.m. The Cloister Shoppe is open Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Monastery is located at the corner of Springfield and Morris Avenues in Summit.



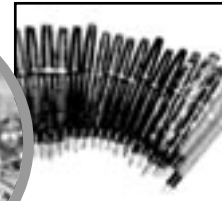
(above) Volunteer Tina Leshner from Westfield

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JOE SCHOTT'S 102ND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED

The Flintlocks, BSA

The Flintlocks celebrated one member's birthday on Thursday, Feb 15, 2024. Joe Schott is 102 years old. Joe jokes that all five of his kids are now senior citizens. He is a veteran of the Navy in WW II, installing secret equipment in the ships to prepare for the Normandy Invasion. He was Grand Marshall of the Fanwood Memorial Day Parade in 2019. Joe spent his career at Bell Labs and worked for 5 Nobel Prize winning scientists. He has won many awards in his hobby of oil painting. The Scouts have awarded Joe the Trailblazer Award, the Silver Service Award, the Silver Beaver Award, and the Camping Hall of Fame. He has been coming up to the scout camps every Thursday, all year

round for 36 years.

The Flintlocks BSA, Inc. is a 501c3 consisting of a group of retired scouts who support the Patriot's Path Council (PPC) of the Boy Scouts of America. The PPC serves 10,500 scouts in five counties of northern New Jersey. The Flintlocks maintain the 3 camps, two scout shops, have built new structures, renovated older structures, and provide volunteer manpower for PPC activities. They are not associated with firearms. The name comes from an old device which is still useful, implying that they are old guys who are still useful.

The Flintlocks meet on Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Camp Winnebago, Rockaway, NJ, all year round. Guests are always welcome.



(above) Joe Schott's 102nd birthday was recently celebrated by The Flintlocks. Joe is sitting behind the cake.

Courtesy photo

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We often struggle to find the words to talk to kids about life changing diagnoses, illness and death. Sometimes, we feel so unsure of what to say that we don’t say anything at all. But our kids need to be given the opportunity to engage in honest conversations about these life changing events.

The staff at Imagine are offering a free webinar to help community members navigate these difficult conversations. On Thursday, March 14th from 7-8:30 p.m., Imagine will offer a webinar on Talking to Kids about Death and Dying. Those attending the webinar will learn to:

- Recognize that grief begins at diagnosis
- Describe how children grieve at different developmental stages
- Develop tools for creating a safe space where children can share their feelings
- Discover ways to navigate conversations

about diagnosis, illness and death

If you’d like to join us for this webinar, please visit our website at imagine-nj.org or scan the QR code below to register. Once you register, you’ll receive a zoom link to join us on March 14th. Please contact Imagine’s Training and Education Director, Veronica C Ortiz, LPC at veronica@imagine-nj.org with any questions.

Because loss is inevitable, it’s so important that we have open conversations with our kids in these difficult moments. We hope that you can join us as we work to create a world where no child grieves alone.



LOSS OF A CHILD PRAYER SERVICE

Parents who have lost a child at any age, under any circumstances, are invited to a time of prayer and remembrance to be held on Sunday, March 10th at 2 p.m., at Church of the Little Flower, 310 Plainfield Avenue, Berkeley Heights, NJ. The

program will also be livestreamed at littleflowerbh.org. For any questions contact Dan Grossano, Pastoral Associate for Outreach and Ministries at 908-464-1585, pastoral110.lf@gmail.com.



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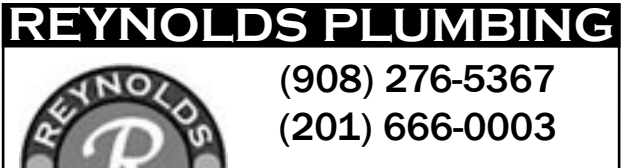


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BLUE ENVELOPE PROGRAM OPINION

Submitted by Simone Palermo

The Blue Envelope Program's purpose is to raise Union County's police departments' awareness of special needs (such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, dementia, and anxiety) and how to best communicate with a special needs driver. One point of interest for me in this news article is how all police officers in Union County's twenty-one municipalities will go through a specialized training course on special needs, as well as learning the best methods in engaging with special needs drivers during a traffic stop. These specialized training courses will be vital in not only developing a deeper understanding of special needs, but also on how to best approach special needs drivers to minimize potential misunderstandings and escalations in conflict when pulled over. They will also better communication to special needs drivers that are non-verbal to provide a safer, unprejudiced community that can ensure trust in its police force.

According to one source within the Clark Township's Police Department, the process of getting a blue envelope is very easy, as the special needs driver can simply call their local police department, press the number for their helpdesk, and ask to receive a blue envelope either directly from the local police station or having it delivered to them in their mailbox. A copy of their driver's license and vehicle registration, insurance details, and (if necessary) emergency contact card are placed inside the envelope, which is then placed onto the dashboard of their vehicle so that officers do not make the driver even more

nervous than normal under a traffic stop. However, it does concern me deeply how easily accessible these blue envelopes can be as there is a possibility of individuals not in the spectrum to abuse them for their own benefit.

According to the same source, there are other towns in Union County that have implemented the Blue Envelope Program in their police departments; said source however does not know if it has currently spread throughout the entire state of New Jersey. Regardless, my source said that the Clark Police Department has managed to hand out several of these blue envelopes to special needs drivers, which is a promising start for the program's progress. Upon further research, I have discovered on various websites – such as Crimewatch and the Montgomery County website – that it is being employed in police departments in California, Pennsylvania, Connecticut.

Overall, my opinion on the Blue Envelope Program is incredibly positive. I am advocating for the Blue Envelope Program for Union County's police departments and hope that it spreads beyond just Union County and the state of New Jersey.

Having lived most of my life with Autism Spectrum Disorder – specifically Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) – I was personally intrigued when I came across the Clark Monthly's "Blue Envelopes for Drivers with Autism" newspaper article. As someone who has lived with autism for years, I feel as though I have a voice in this matter, and I would like to let

it be heard.

If you or a loved one are a special needs driver looking for more information regarding the Blue Envelope Program, contact your local police department and ask them how you can get started with your blue envelope today.



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Renna Media offers a full range of marketing services, in print and online, hyper-local to regional, for every budget and market size.

NEWSPAPER ADVERTS

We mail 160,000 newspapers to every home and business in 24 towns. You can advertise in any number of towns. Ads start at \$60.

FULL COLOR PRINTING

We print flyers and menus, full color, two sided, on coated stock for only \$45 per thousand.

DIRECT MAIL

Insert your flyer into the newspapers and get it mailed to every home and business for \$60 per thousand and as low as \$30 per thousand for higher quantities.

ONLINE MARKETING

Online ads and press releases designed and placed to drive traffic to your website and get your phone ringing.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We can design and/or manage your social media campaign from passive to aggressive plans customized to work within your budget.

WEBSITE AND SEO SERVICES

Start with an audit/analysis of your website giving you a report and recommendations for \$250.

It is highly recommended to have a marketing plan and budget before spending.

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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

NEWSPAPER AD RATES

Units	Size	1 TOWN	3 TOWNS	6 TOWNS	9 TOWNS	12 TOWNS	15 TOWNS	18 TOWNS	21 TOWNS	24 TOWNS
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								
BACK PAGE	10" x 14"	\$500								
FRONT PAGE BANNER	8.25" x 2"	\$320								
FRONT PAGE BOX	1.5" x 4.5"	\$240								

PREPAY 6 MONTHS AND GET 1 MORE FREE
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Back cover, front page banner and front box reserved on first-come, first-served basis. Current advertiser has right of first refusal.

Make Checks payable to Renna Media, 202 Walnut Avenue, Cranford, NJ 07016

THE WONDER BAND TO PLAY MARCH 9

The Salem Roadhouse Café presents The Wonder Band – a Tribute to Stevie Wonder’s Music, Saturday, March 9, 2024. The doors open at 7:15 p.m., the show starts at 8 p.m. Admission is \$20 and includes show, snacks, non-alcoholic beverages, and dessert. The venue is located in the basement of Townley Presbyterian Church, 829 Salem Rd, Union, NJ. The Roadhouse operates as a non-profit that raises funds for several carefully chosen local charities.

The Wonder Band is made up of three extremely talented performers who are well known to the Metro NY/NJ area music scene. Ed Alstrom, leader, is the organist for Yankee Stadium, as well as keyboard player for many famous performers such as Bette Midler, Chuck Berry, Leonard Bernstein, Herbie Hancock and others. The list goes on and on.

Accompanying Ed will be guitarist Al Orlo. Al has recorded with the legendary Ben E. King and was his musical director for 25 years. Al also held the #1 chair at Broadway shows, such as Kinky Boots, Carol King Musical, Hairspray and Smokey Joe’s Café, to name a few.

Bobby Deitch on drums rounds out the trio. Bobby has performed on several recordings such as Richard Sorce’s Latin album “A Place I’ve Never Been” and Richie Hart’s “33 1/3” album.

States Ed Alstrom, “Obviously, Stevie’s music is even more fun to play than it is to listen to. This group does a mix of the hits and some lesser-

known things, without the vocals, and it doesn’t hurt the music one bit not to have them, because they’ll be playing in your mind!

Original artwork by local artist James Spath will be on display at the Roadhouse Gallery of Fine Art for all to enjoy before, during and after the show.

As always, the Salem Roadhouse Café is live, intimate, up front, and personal. All ages are welcome.

ABOUT SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ

It’s not “church music.” It’s music music. Folks who’ve come to the Salem Roadhouse Café know that it’s a clean, safe place for people who enjoy listening to live music — in a world otherwise filled with clubs and bars. The Roadhouse has always offered its stage to local and independent mainstream musicians. Jazz, rock, folk, and other groups have performed.

The Salem Roadhouse Café has raised funds for many carefully chosen charities. They include: The Presbytery of Elizabeth E-port Center, Center For Hope Hospice, Community Food Bank, Monarch Housing, Angel Paws Animal Rescue, National MS Society, Haiti Disaster Relief, Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief, The Union County YWCA Domestic Violence Program, Making It Possible To End Homelessness, Camp Johnsonburg, The Music Institute, and others. Many thousands of dollars have been raised for these deserving charities.



RENNA MEDIA LAUNCHES YOUTUBE PODCAST

Joe Renna

Renna Media has posted its first episode of “Mind Your Own Local Business,” a podcast that gives advice on how to run a successful local business.

This is my 40th year in business and I draw from my experience and expertise to give advice. I have received so much help in my career from mentors and seasoned business owners, and this is a way to pay it forward.

I already offer free one-on-one consultation on putting together business plans and marketing plans. The show would be a way to reach many more people.

I started in business in 1984 as a graphic designer and grew into a full-service marketing and advertising company. Now, along with my wife Tina, we publish twenty-four community newspapers mailing out 160,000 to homes and businesses monthly.

Like the newspapers, the show will serve as a venue to support local community service organizations and events and production costs will be covered by advertisers. There are several marketing and advertising opportunities for businesses to be included with the freedom to be unique and creative.

I am looking forward to having a lot of fun doing the show. It is another application of my Do-What-You-Love mentality. The show is a free-form magazine format production that is flexible. I welcome business owners to join in the fun.

To learn more call me, 908-447-1295, or email joerenna@rennamedia.com.

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Minimum order \$400

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**FLYERS
\$45
PER 1,000**

**MENUS
\$85
PER 1,000**

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Basic static site that can be developed further

• **WEBSITE CREATION/UPDATE: \$2,400**

Cost for average website: 12 pages, contact form, SEO friendly, responsive design

• **WEBSITE HOSTING: \$300 PER YEAR**

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• **SEO SERVICES: AVERAGE COST \$1,000 - \$2,000 PER MONTH**

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