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CONCERT COMMEMORATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Wharton Arts

Nearly 1,000 elementary and middle school students attended a free educational concert held at the Union County Performing Arts Center (UCPAC) on February 21, 2024. The event was presented by the New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS).

Nearly 600 students from Union County public schools and 350 students from Paterson Public Schools were bussed to UCPAC for this special event celebrating Black History Month featuring music selections by all-Black composers including Duke Ellington and William Grant Still. Led by Conductor Helen H. Cha-Pyo, the NJYS Youth Symphony was joined by guest artist and tenor saxophonist Lance Bryant for the performance.

Said Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Helen H. Cha-Pyo, "As we celebrate our 45th anniversary season, the New Jersey Youth Symphony remains dedicated to encouraging its young musicians to use music to serve and inspire others. Our NJYS Youth Symphony musicians, predominantly high school students who serve as positive role models, are committed to helping build inclusive communities and aim to ignite a passion for the arts in our younger audience members. Hosting this educational concert is central to our mission, as it celebrates the legacies of Black composers while offering an immersive experience for the children in the audience. Through creative and engaging introductions to each section of the orchestra, we hope this concert was both memorable and educational. Opening with the singing of the Black National Anthem, Lift Every Voice and Sing, underscores our dedication to celebrating the contributions of Black artists to our cultural heritage. We are honored to share this musical experience with our community, fostering a deeper appreciation for diversity and inclusion in the arts."

Wharton Arts' mission is to offer accessible, high quality performing arts education that sparks personal growth and builds inclusive communities. Its vision is for a transformative performing arts education in an inclusive community to be accessible for everyone.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center serving over 2,000 students through a range of classes and ensembles. The 5 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Chorus, an auditioned choral ensemble program for students in grades 3–12, encourage a love and appreciation of choral music while nurturing personal growth and creative development. The 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony, which serve nearly 600 students in grades 3–12 by audition, inspire young people to achieve musical excellence through high-level ensemble training and performance opportunities. Based in Paterson, the Paterson Music Project is an El Sistema-inspired program of Wharton Arts that uses music education as a vehicle for social action by empowering and inspiring young people to achieve their full potential through the



community experience of ensemble learning and playing. From Pathways classes for young children to Lifelong Learning programs for adults, the Wharton Performing Arts School has a robust musical theater and drama program and offers both private and group classes for instruments and voice for all ages and all abilities. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable our students to achieve their personal best.

Visit WhartonArts.org, or call 908-790-0700.

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**SPRING GROVE NAMED
AMONG NATION’S BEST NURSING HOMES**

Spring Grove Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center in New Providence has been named among the nation’s 2024 Best Nursing Homes by U.S. News & World Report, marking the fourth consecutive year it has been recognized for at least one program. The 106-bed skilled nursing facility, located at 144 Gales Drive, provides post-hospital care, short-term rehab and long-term residential care.

“Spring Grove’s year-after-year recognition as one of the nation’s top centers speaks to the tireless efforts of its team in providing exceptional skilled nursing care each and every day,” said Kani Burgos, regional director of market development at Marquis Health Consulting Services, which supports Spring Grove. “For well over a decade, U.S. News’ annual Best Nursing Homes rating has served as a credible resource for consumers, their families and caregivers. We congratulate Spring Grove on this notable achievement and are proud to support their team.”

Spring Grove received its U.S. News high performance rating for long-term care. For its 2024 list, U.S. News, a global authority in health care rankings and consumer advice, evaluated more than 15,000 nursing homes. Ratings were determined by nurse staffing, patient and resident outcomes, and safety measures, among other indicators of quality.

Spring Grove’s reputation for quality care and

services is well established. The facility maintains a five-star rating for quality measures from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). More information on Spring Grove can be found at springgroverehab.com.

Brick, N.J.-based Marquis Health Consulting Services provides administrative and consulting services to skilled nursing facilities and senior housing communities along the Eastern Seaboard. The organization’s operational guidance enables its client facilities to overachieve their quality and customer service goals by embracing a progressive, multi-specialty approach to healthcare.



(above) Spring Grove Named Among Nation’s Best Nursing Homes for Fourth Consecutive Year. The 106-Bed Center in New Providence, N.J., earned a 2024 High Performance Rating for Long-Term Care.

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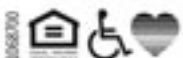


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HELP US RAISE \$50,000 FOR LITTELL-LORD BY APRIL 10

Township of Berkeley Heights
The Township is working with the Berkeley Heights Historical Preservation Committee to preserve and restore portions of the historic Littell-Lord Farmstead. Several grants from Union County and the State of New Jersey have been received but more funds are needed and we can't do it without your help! The Township is asking for the community to gather together to raise \$50,000 by April 10, in time for us to apply for this year's New Jersey Historic Preservation Trust grant. The grant is a matching grant, which means the Township can only apply for an amount it can match with money on hand in the Trust, from donations.

To put the \$50,000 goal in perspective: If 2,500 people in a town of over 13,000 gave just \$20, we would hit our goal!!! Or, if every household in BH donates just \$20, we would far



surpass our goal and reach \$80,000 - which means even MORE restoration work can be done!

The Littell-Lord Farmstead, located in Berkeley Heights, is a pastoral site reminiscent of Union County's agricultural past. It was built in approximately 1760 and added to the National Register of Historic Places on March 7, 1979. It currently serves as the home and public museum of the Berkeley Heights Historical Society. The historical architectural firm, Connelly & Hickey is overseeing the restoration work. The work is beginning with stabilization - first phase of which

should be done by the second week of April - and will continue with a carpentry phase, which includes repairing the historic windows. These efforts are 100% paid for with donations and grants the Township and volunteers have obtained, but more financial assistance is needed in order to continue the progress.

Be a part of the Farmstead! Donate today to the Littell-Lord Farmstead Preservation Project GoFundMe page. For those who prefer to donate with a check, please make checks payable to "Littell-Lord Trust".

Donations can be dropped off to Liza Viana, Administrator, at Town Hall, or mailed to: Township of Berkeley Heights, Administrator Liza Viana, 29 Park Avenue, Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922

It is the Township's goal to restore the property so that school-aged children and visitors from near and far can tour it and learn about Berkeley Heights history firsthand. We are also striving to open the beautiful grounds to the public for tours, educational programs, and private events. The Berkeley Heights PBA Local 144 Fishing Derby is held here every year, and the Community Garden is on the grounds. Please help us preserve this vital piece of Berkeley Heights history.

Thank you.

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IMAGINE SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss has been offering free peer support groups to children, youth and adults who are grieving for more than 10 years. The volunteers who facilitate these groups create safe spaces where the pain of grief can be acknowledged and shared, and where group members feel felt. Imagine's volunteers are the heart of Imagine's programs, and many find their volunteer work with Imagine so fulfilling that they continue for many years, some having stayed since the program began. Here's what some of Imagine's volunteer facilitators have to say about their experience:

"People outside of Imagine are always supportive when they hear that I volunteer at a grief support center. But I know it can be a little confusing to hear that volunteering at a grief support center is the best night of my week. And that's the magic. That as a volunteer, the joy is not in what we bring, but what we take home from our participants." Rob-5+ years as Imagine Facilitator

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. Volunteers must be 18 years or older and 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.

This Spring, Imagine will offer two facilitator training classes for those who would like to join this amazing group of volunteers. The first will be held at their location at 570 Broad Street in Newark from May 3-5 from 9 am-5 pm each day. The second option will take place at Imagine's location at 244 Sheffield Street in Mountainside from June 7-9, also from 9am-5pm each day. Imagine staff ask those participating in the training to plan to attend all three days.

If you'd like to join one of the upcoming trainings, please visit imagineinj.org and complete the interest form found on the website or scan the QR code below. When completing the form, you'll be asked to choose a convenient date to attend an information session where you'll learn more about volunteering with Imagine. We hope you'll consider joining this wonderful team of volunteers who support Imagine's efforts to ensure that no one grieves alone.

Imagine is a 501c3 that offers grief and loss education and training to the community and 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. For more information please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imagineinj.org or visit our website at www.imagineinj.org.

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Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization and is committed
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ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST EXTRAVAGANZA

The Berkeley Heights Rotary Club is thrilled to announce the eagerly awaited return of its annual Pancake Breakfast, scheduled to take place on Saturday, April 20, 2024, from 8:00 am until noon. The event will be held at the picturesque Mount Carmel Hall, located at 56 River Road, Berkeley Heights.

Prepare your taste buds for a morning of delectable delights, as the menu features a scrumptious array of fluffy pancakes, sizzling sausage, refreshing juice, and the finest blends of coffee and tea. This community-oriented event promises a delightful culinary experience for attendees of all ages.

"We're excited to bring the community together once again for our beloved Pancake Breakfast," said Mike Higgins, Pancake Breakfast Chair. "This event has become a cherished tradition, providing not only a fantastic


meal but also an opportunity for friends, families, and neighbors to connect in a warm and welcoming atmosphere."

In the spirit of fostering community spirit, the Berkeley Heights Rotary Club has set a suggested donation of \$10 per person or \$25 per family. All proceeds from the event will directly support the club's charitable initiatives, which include local community projects, scholarships, and international humanitarian efforts.

The Pancake Breakfast is not only a culinary delight but also a chance for the community to come together, share stories, and build lasting connections. The Berkeley Heights Rotary Club encourages everyone to mark their calendars, gather their loved ones, and join in the festivities on April 20th.

For more information, contact:
the Berkeley Heights Rotary Club
at berkeleyheightsrotaryclub@gmail.com
or the Rotary Club website:bhrotary.com.

ABOUT BERKELEY HEIGHTS ROTARY CLUB
The Berkeley Heights Rotary Club is a dedicated group of community leaders, professionals, and volunteers committed to making a positive impact on the local community and beyond. Through various initiatives, the club strives to promote goodwill, foster connections, and support charitable causes that enhance the well-being of individuals and communities. New members are always welcome.



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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

Five-year-old Jennifer is diagnosed with autism and almost completely nonverbal. Due to excessive violence in the family home, a concerned neighbor called for help and, after investigation, Jennifer was placed in foster care. The two phrases Jennifer can say graphically depict violence witnessed at home and confirm trauma she's endured. Since entering care and being enrolled in school, it's evident Jennifer has also experienced educational neglect. At age three, she was entitled to an Individualized Education Plan from the Department of Education to provide such intervention services as in-home speech and behavioral therapies, both helpful for future enrollment in a half-day educational program. Unfortunately, Jennifer's parents neglected to utilize these services and she is now more than two years behind her peers.

Jennifer is just one of the more than 500 children removed from home in Passaic and Union counties each year due to abuse and neglect. These children are separated from all they've ever known: parents, siblings, friends, teachers, and their belongings. For Jennifer, the road ahead is long, and she needs a caring, consistent adult in her corner to protect her best interests while in foster care. That's where Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers come in.

A CASA volunteer is trained on the ins and outs of advocating for child-victims and fully supported by CASA staff for the duration of the case. No special background in child welfare is necessary; successful CASA volunteers are dedicated community members with varied life experiences who believe abuse and neglect are non-negotiable. CASA volunteers visit the children, make unbiased observations, interview others in the child's life, and make recommendations to the judge. They often are the only consistent adult in the life of a child involved in the child welfare system, as caseworkers, professionals, and even placements can be ever-changing. A CASA volunteer



(above) There are currently hundreds of Union County children in need of a CASA volunteer!

provides continuity during a time of chaos and unknowns.

There are currently hundreds of Union County children in need of a CASA volunteer! Plans are underway for an advocate training class.

To learn more, attend an information session

either Monday, April 22, at 5:30 p.m. at the Clark Public Library, 303 Westfield Avenue in Clark, or Tuesday, April 30, at 10 am at the CASA office, 1143 East Jersey Street, Second Floor in Elizabeth. Register now at

casapassaicunion.org/info-session.

ABOUT CASA OF PASSAIC AND UNION COUNTIES:

The nonprofit is court-empowered to recruit, train and support volunteer advocates to speak up for the best interests of children in foster care. Assigned by a court order that grants access to the child and all those in their lives, the CASA volunteer gathers information and makes informed recommendations to the judge deciding the child's future. Often, the CASA volunteer is the only consistent person in the child's life. For more information about CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, call 973-832-4002, e-mail info@casapassaicunion.org or log on to www.casapassaicunion.org.

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8:45 a.m. Education Hour

Passion/Palm Sunday - March 24
8:00 a.m. Spoken Liturgy with Eucharist
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
8:00 and 10:00 a.m. Liturgies with Eucharist

Visit our website or Facebook at
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We practice an open Communion table. All are welcome!

Faith Lutheran Church supports many outreach ministries, but did you know that one ministry touches almost all of them? Handmade knitted/crochet scarves, hats, lap robes, prayer shawls, pocket hearts, baby hats, blankets, and happy octopuses are all made by our Knit, Purl & Pray group and shared with St. John's Soup Kitchen, Family Promise of Union County, University Hospital in Newark, Broadway House for Continuing Care, Imagine – A Center for Coping with Loss, and St. Stephan's Grace Community – ELCA in Newark's Ironbound.

Knit, Purl & Pray knitters work independently, using patterns and yarn that are provided. There are no regularly scheduled

40TH ANNUAL QUILT SHOW – APRIL 20TH

Harvest Quilters of Central NJ will present their 40th annual quilt show on Saturday, April 20, 2024. The 40th Sharing the Quilts will be held at the Willow Grove Presbyterian Church, 1961 Raritan Road, Scotch Plains, NJ from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$8 for adults, and \$3 for children under twelve.

At 10:30 a.m., fiber artist Karen Hochman of Plainfield will show her creations and speak on "Everything Old is New Again, What Inspires You?" The award-winning hand-quilter is a former antique dealer and collector of vintage textiles. A Harvest Quilter since 1990, her quilts are influenced by and connected to women artists and makers of the past and present.

Kathy Anderson Lee of Plainfield will be recognized as 2024's Featured Quilter with a special display of 17 colorful modern bed sized quilts. The chemical engineer and active STEM education volunteer began quilting in the 1980's while living in North Carolina. After a hiatus from the craft to raise 2 children and work in oil research, she rediscovered her talent in 2018.

"It was a revelation returning to quilting given all the advancements in technology, dyes, digital printing along with the new availability of international fabrics," Lee said.

Baby quilts made by members will be displayed and later donated to a local women's shelter. Several additional local charities will benefit from the sale of fabric and drawings for a queen-sized quilt and sewing themed gift baskets.

In addition to viewing a full array of modern, traditional, art and wall-hanging quilts, attendees can participate in viewer's choice awards, kid's crafting table and vendor sales area.

A tearoom offering lunch, snacks, homemade

meetings, though we do have a very dedicated volunteer coordinator. Completed projects can be dropped off at the church whenever they are finished, year-round.

If you are a knitter who would enjoy helping with some of our knitting projects, please contact the Church Office at 908-464-5177 or famfaith@verizon.net. Share your creative gifts and make someone else feel special with a beautiful handmade symbol of love and care.

To learn more about Faith Lutheran Church, visit famfaith.org. Our phone is 908-464-5177 and our address is 524 South Street, New Providence, NJ, 07974. The pastor of Faith is Rev. Jane McCready.

baked goods, and beverages will benefit Willow Grove Church's youth activities.

For additional information, please contact harvestquilters.com or with questions email: harvestquiltersnj@gmail.com.



(above) Fiber artist Karen Hochman of Plainfield will show her creations and speak on "Everything Old is New Again, What Inspires You?" The award-winning hand-quilter is a former antique dealer and collector of vintage textiles. A Harvest Quilter since 1990, her quilts are influenced by and connected to women artists and makers of the past and present.

Courtesy photos

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LIBRARY APRIL PROGRAMS

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Monday - Thursday: 9 AM - 9 PM; Friday, Saturday: 9 AM - 5 PM; Sunday: 2 - 5 PM

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS:

Story Time with Grandma Pauline for ages 3 - 5
Tuesdays, April 2 - 30 at 9:30 am
Fun with Friends: Stories & Play for ages 1 - 3
Thursdays, April 4 - 25 at 9:30 am
LEGO Play for ages 3 - 8
Wednesday, April 3, 3-4 pm
Good Tyme String Band
Tuesday, April 9 at 10:30 am
Tinker Tuesdays: Make a Wind Sock
Tuesday, April 9 at 11:15 am
for toddlers/preschoolers
Sing & Sign Story Time with Danielle Neri
Sunday, April 14 at 3 pm for ages 2 - 6
Yoga Story Time with Pam Nixon for ages 3 - 5
Thursday, April 16 at 10:30 am
Read to Morrigan the Dog
Wednesday, April 24 at 3:30 pm
Teen Programs (for individuals ages 12-19 /
grades 6-12 unless otherwise specified):
Interactive Movie Night:
Finding Nemo (grades 5-12)
Tuesday, April 2, 6:30-8:30 pm
registration required
Silent Book Club
Wednesday, April 3, 6-8 pm
bring your own book and read for the first hour;
stay and discuss what you're reading the
second hour
Teen Library Council
Thursday, April 4 at 7 pm
receive volunteer hours and make suggestions
for the library - registration suggested
Take and Make Craft
"Sticker by Number Mosaics"
starting Thursday, April 11 at 3pm
while supplies last
Diamond Painting Key Chains
Thursday, April 18, 7-8:30 pm
registration required
Teen Book Club discussion
Tuesday, April 30 at 6:30 pm
If You Could See the Sun. Please call Ann-
Marie Sieczka at 908-608-8603 x1
for more information

ADULT PROGRAMS:

Tinker Tuesdays: Make Paper Pen Flowers
Tuesday, April 2 at 7 pm
Film Fridays: Poor Things
Friday, April 26 at 11:30 am
Silent Book Club
Monday, April 8, 11 am-12:30 pm
Wednesday, April 10, 7-8:30 pm
Saturday, April 13, 10-11:30 am
bring your own book and read for the first hour;
stay and talk about what you're reading for the
last 1/2 hour
The Morning Book Group
Friday, April 5 at 10:30 am
will discuss Honor: a novel
The Evening Book Group
Tuesday, April 9 at 7:15 pm
will discuss Tomorrow, and Tomorrow,
and Tomorrow
Books Speak Volumes Book Group
Thursday, April 18 at 7:00 pm
will discuss Midnight in Chernobyl

MENTAL ILLNESS
SUPPORT PRESENTATION
APRIL 23

The Union County Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI UC) is hosting a free presentation on April 23, 2024. Christine Backiel of Bridgeway Crisis Intervention Services (BCIS) of Union County will speak about their services. There will be free resources for adults. The meeting will be held from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., at the RWJ Fitness Center, 2120 Lamberts Mill Road, in Scotch Plains. No advance registration is required. Audience participation is encouraged and free literature will be provided. Visit namiunioncountynj.org to learn more about NAMI's free resources on mental illness.



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April 7 at 2:30 pm: David Maiocco's Rhapsody In Red, White & Blue, a dazzling tribute by the acclaimed pianist and actor, brings Liberace's legacy to life with a performance that sparkles with the maestro's signature style. Maiocco's uncanny resemblance and incredible talent capture the heart, spirit, and charisma of the man who became "Mr. Showmanship!"

April 13 at 2:30 pm: Mentalist Joshua Kane's Borders of the Mind is an extraordinary journey into the realm of mental marvels and telepathic wonders. This family event beckons those with a curiosity for the mystical, providing a chance to delve into the depths of intuition and unearth hidden psychic talents. Embrace the adventure and unlock the secrets of your mind and discover your inner superhero!

May 4 at 2:30 pm and 7:30 pm: Lisa McClowry's The Beat Goes On is a nostalgic and vibrant odyssey through Cher's discography that will leave you feeling like you've just witnessed a Goddess of Pop concert! With eight costume changes and mesmerizing video projections, the storytelling is perfectly enhanced and promises an experience like no other.

May 12 at 2:30pm: Kimberly Faye Greenberg's Fabulous Fanny: The Songs & Stories of Fanny Brice is a delightful tribute to the life and humor of the Broadway legend. This acclaimed show revives the spirit of "Funny Girl," Fanny Brice and is a must-see for anyone who loves the golden age of Broadway and the enduring wit of Brice.

June 1 at 2:30 & 7:30pm: Frankie Cirell's The Magic Of Tony Bennett is a heartfelt tribute that captures the emotional depth and elegance of Bennett's iconic songs. Accompanied by a full

orchestra, audiences will be treated to a musical journey, from the touching "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" to the soaring melody of "Fly Me to the Moon."

June 9th at 2:30: Tea for Three: Lady Bird, Pat & Betty is a one-woman show that intimately portrays the lives of Lady Bird Johnson, Pat Nixon, and Betty Ford. Elaine Bromka's heartwarming play takes place in three scenes, each focusing on one of the women as they share their hopes, fears, and loves.

June 15 at 7:30 pm Dancing Dream: An ABBA Tribute is a nostalgic trip to the era of disco and dazzle! The timeless music beckons fans to sway to hits like "Mamma Mia," and "Dancing Queen" Embrace the 70s' flair with platform shoes and sequins and prepare for an unforgettable night of harmonious vocals, vibrant costumes, and lively dance routines.

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Bringing a professional performing arts venue with a diverse lineup of entertainment to Basking Ridge and the surrounding communities makes the Sieminski Theater and Somerset County an artistic and cultural destination. We enjoy a newly expanded performance schedule from the American Theater Group, Light Opera of New Jersey, New Jersey Festival Orchestra, Trilogy Repertory, and countless national touring groups. Our intimate, award-winning non-profit venue features technical amenities that rival any Broadway theater.

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