

Westfield MONTHLY NJ

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NEW FOOD PANTRY AND CLOTHING BUILDINGS CELEBRATED

St. Joseph Social Service Center

The St. Joseph's community, encompassing residents from Elizabeth and volunteers and supporters from five counties in New Jersey, came together on February 24, 2024, to celebrate the opening of two new buildings on its campus. The new food pantry building is already in use, and the second building will ultimately be used for clothing distribution.

The cold weather was no match for the warm spirit of compassion and caring that animated the event and has guided the agency for the past 38 years. All in attendance toured the new buildings and participated in a moving dedication ceremony that concluded with an uplifting blessing offered by Father Anthony Randazzo of Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church in Westfield.

The two new buildings represent the first phase of an ambitious capital improvement plan to improve and expand services to families and children in need in Elizabeth and to fulfill St. Joseph's vision to serve those experiencing homelessness and poverty with dignity. The new food pantry building will allow St. Joseph's to offer a better food pantry model – an individual choice food pantry. With this model, clients will come at an appointed time and will be able to choose their food based on their personal and cultural preferences. The new clothing building will be used as temporary program space during the next wave of renovations and ultimately will be used to offer clothing and home goods in a more dignified environment.

"Dignity has been a core value of the agency since our founding in 1986," noted Bernadette Murphy, Executive Director. "Our goal is to help people acquire the material items they need to live with dignity. We believe that it is vital for our clients to receive food, clothing, supplies and support services in an environment that fosters dignity, where individuals experiencing poverty and homelessness are truly welcomed as sisters and brothers."

Daisy Trocan, a member of the Board of Trustees, spoke at the dedication event about what these new buildings will mean to Elizabeth residents. As a child her family relied on support from the agency during difficult times. "The love and support my family received from St. Joseph's meant so much to us," Trocan reflected.

Harold "Kess" Kessler, who has overseen the capital improvement plan from its inception several years ago, remarked that work has already begun on the second phase of the construction plan. Over the next year, the main hall on campus will be transformed into a multipurpose space with private offices for mental health counseling and case management services, new facilities for the soup kitchen program, spaces for the Adult Learning Center and health and nutrition workshops and diagnostic testing, and a reception area where residents can obtain information about agency programs and community services. Karen Maher, President of the Board of Trustees, noted that these new spaces will "allow the agency to expand



(above) A moving dedication ceremony concluded with an uplifting blessing offered by Father Anthony Randazzo of Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church in Westfield.



services to the community, particularly in the areas of physical and behavioral health."

Six days a week a dedicated team of 6,000 volunteers from Elizabeth, Union, Westfield, Cranford, Mountainside, and dozens of other communities, make sandwiches for the hungry in their kitchens, bring food, clothing and home goods, serve meals at the soup kitchen and help with the operations of the agency. St. Joseph's serves over 3,500 individuals annually. The organization helps Elizabeth residents access food, medicine, mental health counseling, adult education, clothing and a myriad of additional healthcare and support services.

To learn more about St. Joseph's please visit sjeliz.org.

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

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Westfield High School 12th graders Jacob Blaustein, Yenjay Hu, Kathryn Kengeri, Tage Mehta, and Nathan Reynders have advanced as finalists in the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program, having met academic and other standards to become eligible for scholarships.

The selection of 7,100 Merit Scholarship winners from the group of more than 15,000 finalists nationwide is now in progress with scholarship winners and National Merit Scholars to be announced over the next few months.



(above, l-r) Five Westfield High School 12th graders have been named 2024 National Merit Finalists. Jacob Blaustein, Nathan Reynders, Tage Mehta, Yenjay Hu, Kathryn Kengeri, and WHS principal Mary Asfendis. Pictured in Fall 2023 as Merit Semifinalists.

Photo by Westfield Public Schools

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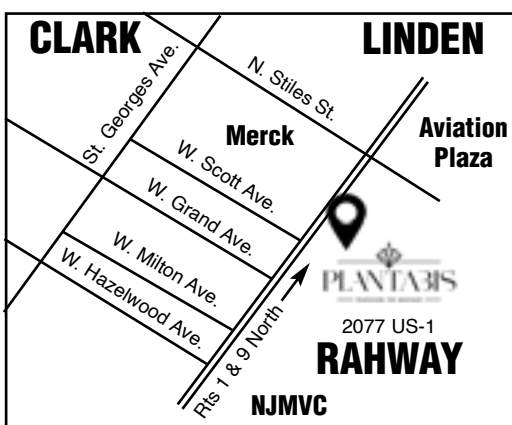
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NATIONAL SPECIAL NEEDS REGISTRY

Town of Westfield

The Westfield Police Department is proud to partner with the Union County Prosecutor's Office to participate in the National Special Needs Registry, a comprehensive resource available to support all law enforcement agencies in Union County. This program aims to enhance communication and understanding between law enforcement officers and individuals with disabilities and special health needs, including those with autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, deafness and hearing loss, blindness and vision loss, physical disabilities, Alzheimer's disease, and dementia.

The registry allows individuals or an authorized family member or caregiver to voluntarily register, providing details such as name, contact information, nature of the person's needs, communication preferences, triggers or potential challenges during interactions with law enforcement, and emergency contact information. This information is securely stored and accessible only to authorized law enforcement personnel when responding to a call for service involving a registered individual.

For additional details on the registry, visit ucpo.org/special-needs-registry.

ROTARY GRANT DEADLINE - APRIL 15TH

Rotary Club of Westfield

Blake Width, Rotary Club of Westfield Community Service Grants Chairperson, has announced that Rotary Grant Applications are now being accepted for consideration. Non-profit organizations may receive a copy of the official application directly from the Rotary website at westfieldrotary.com, or by e-mail to blakewidth@gmail.com.

To be considered for a Westfield Rotary Club Community Service Grant, local non-profit organizations must complete and submit the official grant application. Grant applications will be reviewed in the Spring, and must be submitted before the respective April 15th deadline to be considered. The Rotary Club, in accordance with its goal of Community Service, is most interested in providing grants

for programs and projects that directly serve the people in the community. As part of the decision process, the Grants Committee reviews the simple one-page application form to receive a clear understanding of the way in which the funds are used. Grants will not be awarded for capital improvements or operating funds. An organization may only apply for one grant per year.

Rotary is a community service organization comprised of business and professional men and women who live or work in the Westfield area. The Rotary Club of Westfield meets Tuesdays at 12 p.m. Prospective members and guests are welcome to join any of the weekly meetings. For additional information, please e-mail info@westfieldrotary.com or visit our website westfieldrotary.com.



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8:00 and 10:00 a.m. Liturgies with Eucharist
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

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- They'll become **more coordinated and improve agility** which means they'll pick up new skills their coaches teach them faster.
- **Your children will start to eat better** because we'll be educating them daily on what's good and what they should avoid ...don't be surprised if they start asking you to buy more vegetables.
- **Confidence will skyrocket.** When kids get stronger, faster and more fit...their confidence will rise...so will their self-esteem which means their performance in every aspect of life will get better.
- **Their mindset will improve.** We're going equip your child with very specific mindset skills that'll help them learn how to transform how they think about mistakes and failures.

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- “My son learned a ton and was highly motivated, he wanted to go, I never had to push him. Honestly, GRIT helped me accomplish precisely what I wanted to do; build confidence and a great mindset as a foundation for a lifetime of healthier living for my son.”
- Morgan GRIT Athlete Parent
- “My son has been talking about it since the summer program ended. After he attended the summer program we have seen a tremendous improvement with Mason in sports. He is much more aggressive and focused now.”
- Robert, GRIT Athlete Parent
- “My son is more disciplined and confident in himself”
- Steve Hughes, Grit Athlete Parent
- “I have watched my children become more confident and vocal.”
- Christine Stramandinoli, Grit Athlete Parent
- “His confidence has shot up in the last few months...and has carried forward to the way he approaches other activities like sports and schoolwork. My son is now making his bed daily and exercising every day.”
- Catherine Solfaro, Grit Athlete Parent
- “We saw a noticeable difference in his throwing - he could throw it further and faster! The training definitely paid off!”
- Dara, GRIT Athlete Parent

GET MORE INFORMATION (STARTS JUNE 17TH)

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STEP 2

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STEP 3

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Westfield based M&R Landscape & Design Inc. is a leader in designing, installing, and caring for Westfield and the surrounding community's landscaping needs.

M&R Landscaping was founded by Manny and Rose Carlino who were both raised in Westfield and their families have roots in Westfield now for over 125 years. It has been a family owned and operated business based in Westfield since 1989. It has grown from a small 2-person company in its inception to a leading landscape company in the Westfield area. Their mission has always been to provide high quality landscape services at a reasonable price.

M&R Landscaping has provided many contributions to the town of Westfield over its 35 years in business, most notably its donation of services to Foundation Park, plantings for 9/11 victims, design services for St. Helens Church, donating materials and services to McKinley, Washington, Tamaques, and Lincoln schools, and the Westfield Board of Education.

M&R Landscaping has been a participant for over 20 years in GreenCare for Troops and has provided free landscape and snow plowing services to all Westfield armed forces members' families when their spouse has been deployed.

Manny and Rose have always treated their employees like family, treating them the way they wanted to be treated. Some employees have been with the company for 30 years. Owner Manny Carlino is proud of the fact that they



(above, l-r) M&R Landscaping & Design Inc. Supervisor Raul Casquera, Manager Edgar Jimenez, and owner Manny Carlino.

have never had an employee quit their job in 35 years. Manny explains "Treating employees like family has given our employee's confidence and empowered them to want to excel and better themselves and provide a quality service to our clients."

Manny Carlino would like to announce the celebration of employee Raul Casquera who is in his 30th year with the company this season, and that M&R Landscaping still has over 70% of their over three hundred clients with them now for over 25 years because of employees like Raul Casquera.

For additional information regarding M&R Landscaping & Design Inc. call 908-233-0822, or email m.rlandscape@yahoo.com or visit us at www.m-rlandscape.com.

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Used clothing drop-off is Sponsored by the Garwood First Aid Squad with the help of Turnkey Enterprises. The clothing collected is used as clothing, not cut into rags.

Items accepted

All clothing, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, drapes, pillowcases, and stuffed animals. Help us keep your donations clean & dry. If possible, please put clothing in plastic bags.

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“SUBURBAN MODERN:” HOMES OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

The Westfield Historic Preservation Commission will present a special program titled “Suburban Modern:” Homes of the Early 20th Century, on Thursday, April 18, at 7:30 pm in the Community Room, 425 E. Broad St. in Westfield, NJ. Presented by Janet W. Foster, an authority on New Jersey historic architecture, the illustrated talk will discuss how these homes

were built, what physical and social attributes they shared, and how they continue to create pleasant, livable neighborhoods. The program is free and open to the public.

Westfield’s tremendous population growth in the first third of the 20th century created a housing boom that remains evident in many of its historic neighborhoods. Hundreds of homes ranging in size from cottages to mansions -- including Foursquares, Capes, Craftsman bungalows, and popular revival styles such as Tudor, Dutch Colonial, and Spanish Mission -- were built between 1900 and 1930. This housing stock was “modern” in every sense of the word, from the exterior design to the interior amenities, including bathrooms, kitchen, heating system, and often a garage to meet the latest requirements of a middle-class homeowner.

Janet W. Foster is an architectural historian and historic preservation consultant with over 30 years of experience with New Jersey’s buildings.

She is a graduate of the Columbia University Historic Preservation Program, where she currently serves as adjunct professor. She is the author of numerous articles and books, including *Building By the Book: Pattern-book Architecture in New Jersey* (1992, Rutgers University Press), the definitive history of NJ’s early 20th century plan book and kit homes. A resident of Madison, Ms. Foster serves on the New Jersey State Review Board for Historic Site and the New Jersey Historic Trust.

Recognizing the cultural significance of Westfield’s rich historic and architectural heritage, the Historic Preservation Commission was established by municipal ordinance in 1984. The HPC is charged with preserving historical sites and structures while fostering an appreciation for these landmarks as an essential element of the town’s unique character. For additional information, please visit westfieldnj.gov/historicpreservation.



(above) Learn about the wide variety of homes built during the early 20th century using kits and pattern books, such as this 1920s example.



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- Group 2 (Grades 7-12) : Mondays, May 6–June 17, at La Grande Park building

STEM Python Coding for Intermediates: 6:30–7:30PM

- Group 1 (Grades 3-6) : Wednesdays, May 8–June 12, at Forest Road Park
- Group 2 (Grades 7-12) : Mondays, May 6–June 17, at La Grande Park building

*No class Memorial Day Monday May 27th

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For more information and to register, go to
fanwoodrecreation.org/stem-python-coding.htm



ANNUAL DINNER DANCE AND INSTALLATION

The Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad held its annual dinner dance and installation of 2024 officers in February. The event, celebrating the

all-volunteer rescue squad's 72nd year of services was held at the Westwood in Garwood. The 2024 officers were sworn into office by

Congressman Tom Kean Jr. The congressman, a Westfield resident, is a former member of the squad.



(above, l-r) Congressman Tom Kean Jr. with rescue squad officers Jonathan Delano, Trey Ellis, Jessica Romero, Mason Carneiro, Paola Giacometti, Katerina Houbanova, Habiba Ahmed, Giovanna Silva and Krish Raval.

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2024 Union County St. Patrick's Day parade

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(above) Former long-time Cranford and Roselle resident Bob Wade (third from left) served as Grand Marshal of the 2024 Union County St. Patrick's Day parade. Others celebrating at the parade include (from left) Rob and Ellen Ushay, (back row) Jack and Joanne Ryan, Mary Wade, (front row) Gretchen Korn, Maura Campbell, Joann Sweeney, Don Sweeney.

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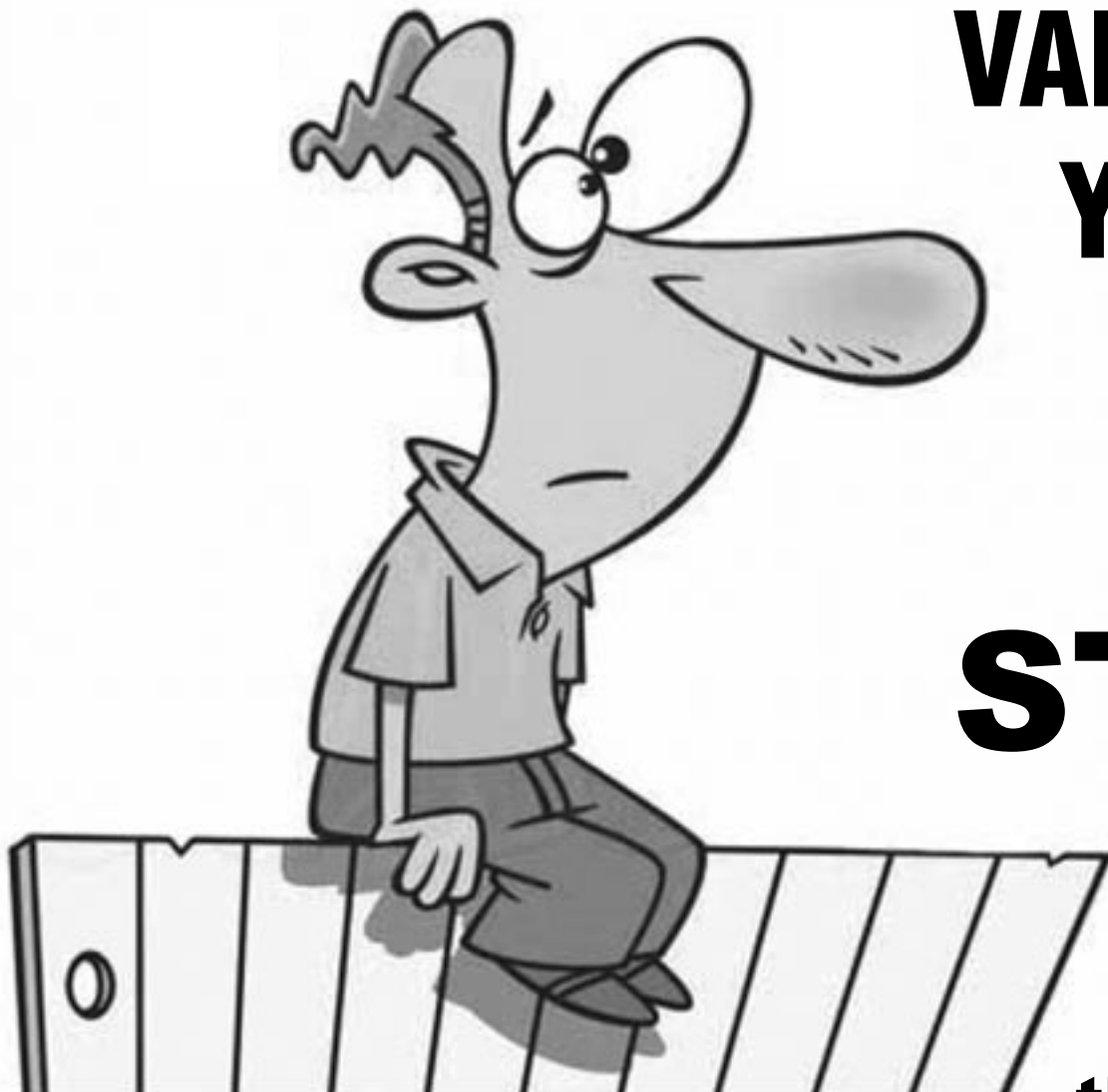
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Westfield Community Concert Band

The Westfield Community Concert Band will present its annual Spring Concert on Friday, April 12 at 7:30 p.m. at Roosevelt Intermediate School, 301 Clark Street in Westfield. Dr. Thomas Connors, conductor and music director of the band, has prepared a program which is highlighted by popular, traditional and contemporary selections for wind band. Admission is free and open to the public.

The program will feature the band's performance of the complete Candide Suite, written by Leonard Bernstein and adapted by Clare Grundman for wind band. Composed in 1956 as operetta based upon a Voltaire's novella of the same name, the music from this selection is widely featured in Maestro, the recent film



(above) The Westfield Community Concert Band, under the direction of Dr. Thomas Connors, Music Director, will present its annual Spring Concert on Friday, April 12 at 7:30 p.m. at Roosevelt Intermediate School, 301 Clark Street, Westfield.

about Bernstein.

The program will also feature the music of Gilbert and Sullivan, renowned composers of British operettas, with a performance of the music from the ballet, Pineapple Poll. This 1951 composition includes music from the most popular Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, including H.M.S. Pinafore, Pirates of Penzance and The Mikado. This arrangement has been performed leading wind bands, including the United States Marine Band, "The President's Own".

The band also performs Epic March, by John Ireland, Savannah River Holiday, by Ron Nelson, and Music for a Festival, by popular contemporary composer, Philip Sparke.

The band, in its 112th concert season, will also be presenting its annual Summer Concert Series on Thursdays, June 20, June 27, July 4 and July 11 in Westfield's Mindowaskin Park.

Experienced area musicians may inquire about joining the band by contacting Barry Rosenberg, band president, at 908-337-9073 or by email at info@westfieldcommunityband.com. The band rehearses each Wednesday evening from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the community room located in the Westfield Municipal Building, 425 East Broad Street, and performs throughout the year.

The band is sponsored in part by the Westfield Recreation Department, Megan Schaffer, Director. The band's concerts are made possible by funds from the Union County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

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It's spring, and the sheep are due for their haircuts! The process of sheep shearing will be performed by a master shearer, using hand shears as was done in early America. Museum docents in period costume will also be demonstrating wool-related period crafts including carding, spinning, weaving, and knitting. 18th century farm tasks such as wash day and soap making will also be demonstrated and our cooks will showcase eighteenth-century colonial cuisine over an open hearth. Children can enjoy story time and a craft. Admission is \$5 ages 13 and

(left) Please join us for our Annual Sheep to Shawl event. Live sheep will be shorn by a professional sheep shearer using colonial hand shears. Many other handicrafts like weaving, spinning and lace making will be showcased.

older, \$4 ages 3-12, and free age 2 and younger. 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 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.

VENDOR POP-UP FESTIVAL – APRIL 28

The Spring Vendor Pop-Up Festival will return to the Fanwood Train Station on Sunday, April 28th. You will be pleasantly surprised when you see the array of top-notch exhibitors selling quality items, arts and crafts, and collectibles. All exhibitors are hand-picked and chosen for their unique items, hand-made creations, start-ups, and well-groomed businesses, and together they create this posh marketplace.

Stop by...shop a little, relax, and enjoy the good food, great music, and 60+ exhibitors.

Held in the south side Fanwood Train Station Parking Lot, this event is open 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and will feature gourmet food trucks, and live music throughout the day.

Parking is available at the North side train station then just walk over the bridge. Use this address for your GPS: 238 North Avenue, Fanwood, NJ.

This event is hosted by the Borough of Fanwood NJ. For more info visit: JCPromotions.Info

2ND ANNUAL BRIGHTWOOD PARK DAY - MAY 4TH

Friends of Brightwood Park

“May the 4th Be With You”! in all things nature this year, as Friends of Brightwood Park pull out all the stops once again to showcase this 44-acre hidden gem on our doorsteps and you're invited!

Friends of Brightwood Park (FOBP), in conjunction with the Westfield Recreation Department and the Westfield Green Team, will host a bevy of all-day activities to showcase the park's beauty and unique value to our town as a natural respite.

Planned Events begin at 8 a.m. and continue through the day until midafternoon. Whether a

frequent visitor to Brightwood or new to the park, a fan of solitude or communal activities, there will be something to discover for all ages that day.

A sampling of events include early morning birding, photography, forest bathing and yoga, history walks, a fairy house scavenger hunt, nature classes for the young ones and more.

For a full listing of the event and registration, please visit the website at FriendsOfBrightwood.org or the Westfield Recreation Department website: secure.rec1.com/NJ/westfield-nj/catalog

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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:

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 imaginejnj.org and complete the interest form found on the website or scan the QR code below. We hope you'll consider joining this wonderful team of volunteers who support Imagine's efforts to ensure that no one grieves alone.

For more information please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imaginejnj.org or visit our website at www.imaginejnj.org.



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ACCEPTING PETITIONS FOR CANDIDACY IN APRIL SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

The Board Secretary of the Westfield Board of Education is accepting completed petitions for candidacy in the April 16, 2024 School Board Election.

Petitions are due to Business Administrator/Board Secretary Patricia Ramos by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, February 26. Candidates may email petitions to pramos@westfieldnj12.org, with a copy to mestevez@westfieldnj12.org, or submit by mail to Patricia Ramos, 302 Elm Street, Westfield, NJ 07090.

The drawing of names for position on the April 16 ballot will be done by Mrs. Ramos on Wednesday, March 6 at 2 p.m. at 302 Elm Street.

The nominating petition and additional information are posted under the Board tab at westfieldnj12.org.

WESTFIELD FIREFIGHTERS COMPETE AT COOKED AND UNCORKED FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

On Monday, February 26, 2024, Westfield firefighters joined together with firefighters from around New Jersey to compete in The Ultimate Fire Department Cook-off, part of the Cooked and Uncorked Food and Wine Festival. The Westfield team took home 3rd place in the Dessert category.

The event benefited the New Jersey State

Firefighter's Mutual Benevolent Association and The Burn Center at Saint Barnabas Medical Center.

The Fire Department Cook-off is part of a culinary extravaganza where participants were able to experience the tastes and flavors of some of New Jersey's finest restaurants, caterers and dessert shops all in one location.



(above) Westfield Firefighters took home 3rd place in the Dessert category of the competition.

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."


Westfield Memorial Library
APRIL EVENTS

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APR 2 & 9 @ 2PM Two Virtual Author Events

APR 5 & 12 @ 3PM The Fundamentals of Tai Chi

APR 7 & 21 @ 2PM Visual Arts for Seniors

APR 7 @ 7PM Bradford Hayes Jazz Trio

APR 9 & 11 @ 1:30 - 2:30PM One-on-One Tech Help in 30 minute sessions

APR 13 @ 11AM Learn Local! Brassy Buddha Yoga Studio

APR 16 @ 7PM College Funding Workshop on Zoom

APR 17 @ 6:30PM "Blue Vinyl" The World's First Toxic Comedy

APR 17 @ 8PM Virtual Author Event

APR 30 @ 8PM Actor Ken Serfass: Grant's Friendship with Lincoln

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO ADVOCATE FOR UNION COUNTY 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



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

can be ever-changing. 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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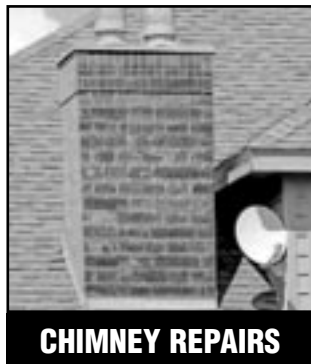
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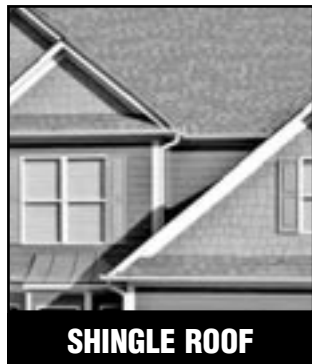
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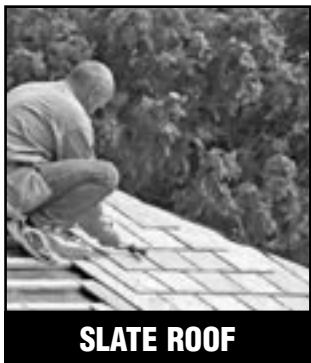
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NJIO SPRING CONCERT – APRIL 21, 2024

New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra (NJIO) will present its Spring Concert on Sunday, April 21st, 2024 at 3 pm at Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church in Plainfield. This Concert celebrates NJIO's 30th Anniversary and is free and open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted. The Concert will be

followed by a ticketed Gala at the same location.

NJIO's 30th Anniversary Concert will feature a spectacular young opera star, soprano Sydney Dardis. Ms. Dardis will perform with NJIO what is known as "Four Last Songs" by Richard Strauss, completed in 1948 when the composer was 84. According to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, they are "songs of farewell – to life, to art, to a vanished world. There is nothing like them in music for the sheer intensity of their concentrated, gentle heartache. It is music so bewitchingly sensuous, so achingly nostalgic, so subtle in its interweaving of vocal and instrumental textures as to defy description."

Ms. Dardis will also perform Lehar's "Einer Wird Kommen" (Someone Will Come) from the operetta Der Zarewitsch (The Tsarevich). Ms. Dardis, a native of Laguna Niguel, California, received her Master of Music degree in Vocal Arts from The Juilliard School, where she studied with Darrell Babidge. Ms. Dardis completed her undergraduate degree from The Juilliard School as well. In 2023 Ms. Dardis was named a winner of the New York Regional District in the Metropolitan Opera National

Council Auditions. NJIO Symphony will also play the popular Overture to Die Fledermaus by Johann Strauss II.

NJIO's Intermezzo Orchestra, conducted by Oliver Hagen, will perform music by John Williams, a movement of Brahms' Symphony no. 3, and selections from Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty. The Prelude Ensemble, NJIO's entry-level group, is conducted by Elizabeth Maliszewski. Prelude will be performing an arrangement of Haydn's Surprise Symphony, Gauntlet, and Lucy Farr's Barn Dance, as arranged by our own Graham Cohen.

A celebration of NJIO's 30th season will immediately follow the 30th Anniversary Concert. Guests will be entertained by NJIO musicians, a silent auction and a tricky tray, and a delicious dinner. For more information about the gala, please see: njio.org/gala

Concert Details: Sunday, April 21st, 2024, at 3 pm (doors open at 2:40 pm)

Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church
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Admission is free; donations are gratefully accepted.

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ROTARY HEARS ABOUT PLANS FOR LIBRARY

Submitted by Dr. D. Michael Hart

Library Director Allen McGinley spoke to the Rotary Club about the future plans of the Westfield Memorial Library during a club meeting held on January 16, 2024. Mr. McGinley commented that use of the library has significantly increased over the past year, with more books being borrowed, more electronic books downloaded, increase of the WIFI use at the library, and increased use of the reference library resources.

The library recently joined a consortium of 40 libraries to increase the ability to share books and materials. This also allows Westfield residents to go directly to other libraries such as the Cranford or Scotch Plains/Fanwood libraries and peruse their collections. Middlesex County College is part of the consortium. Mr. McGinley commented that sharing services is beneficial to Westfield residents and is the latest trend in local Governments.

The library upgraded its bandwidth to 1 Gig for better technology use. Many students and researchers bring their own laptops to the library.

During the pandemic, it was noted that people liked using outdoor spaces, so the library created a small patio outside for patrons' use. The patio includes WIFI and electrical outlets for charging devices.

The library has created a seed library, which will be of special interest to gardeners.

An important facility upgrade will be to convert the scanning of library books at checkout to Radio Frequency ID. This will increase ease and speed of checking out. Also, there will be an outdoor 24 hour pickup locker planned for times the library is not open. The Library is currently open Monday through Friday 9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Mr. McGinley is looking into additional locations for pickup lockers, such as the train station or the police station, to make it easier to access library materials.

The library received a grant of \$200,000 from the Women's Club of Westfield to purchase an electric vehicle to serve as a book mobile in order to bring materials to schools. It can also be used to provide power or WIFI remotely in emergencies.

The study carols are usually full with high school students and researchers, so they plan to increase their number.

The Local History Room is being converted into a conference room which would be available for rent to local organizations. The demand for the main conference room is at maximum, so a second room would be put to good use.

The summer reading program is very popular with children and parents.

The Rotary Club has supported the Westfield Library with grants over the years. The Rotary Club is holding their annual fundraiser for scholarships and grants called Breakfast with the Bands. Tickets are \$10 at the door. The event will be on Saturday, March 2nd from 9 a.m. to noon, at the Westfield High School cafeteria.

The Rotary Club of Westfield Foundation gave \$117,000 in college scholarships and \$29,978 in community grants, last year, in 2023. Recently, the Women's Club of Westfield closed, but turned their assets over to the Rotary Club Foundation to continue their legacy, which will add another \$30,000 in annual scholarships for women students, and \$9,500 in community grants. Since 1967, Westfield Rotary has awarded \$3.5 million of scholarships to 1800 students, and approximately \$875,000 in community grants. Scholarship applications for Westfield students are accepted through the Westfield High School guidance department.

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, l-r) Westfield Memorial Library Director Allen McGinley, Rotary Club President Barbara Frantz, Esq.

Courtesy photo

MENTAL ILLNESS SUPPORT TALK 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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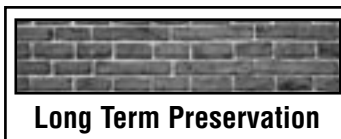
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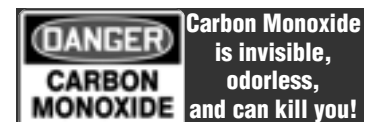


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Harvest Quilters of Central NJ will present their 40th annual quilt show on Saturday, April 20, 2024. The 40th Sharing the Quilts will be held at the Willow Grove Presbyterian Church, 1961 Raritan Road, Scotch Plains, NJ from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission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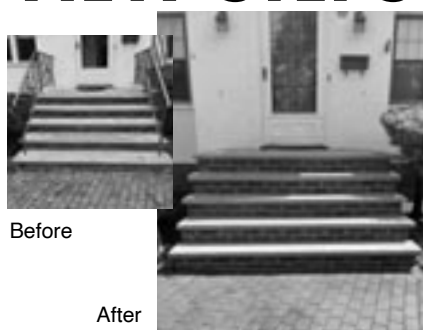
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