# **MAILED FREE** Berkeley Heights TO EVERY HOME **IN BERKELEY HEIGHTS**

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#### MARIA DIPASQUALE & SOFIA MACIEJEWSKI EARN EAGLE RANK

Submitted by Joseph Basralian, BSA Troop 280 Berkeley Heights officially has its first two female BSA Eagle Scouts.

In February 2019, when the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) officially allowed girls to form BSA Troops, Berkeley Heights residents Maria DiPasquale and Sofia Maciejewski jumped at the opportunity. They were 13 and 11 at the time.

"We both saw our older brothers having so much fun in Scouting, and we really looked up to them," said Maciejewski. "When Troop 280 formed in Chatham, we joined right away and became founding members of the troop," added DiPasquale. The two have been friends since childhood, and now enjoy an even stronger bond through Scouting.

They've hiked 100 miles at the BSA Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, braved river rapids for a week in West Virginia, helped lead a marine science live-aboard sailboat trip in the Florida Keys, and together spent well over 100 nights camping around our region.

"The adventures pulled us together with so many new friends," said Maciejewski, "And we've each grown in so many ways, in our abilities, confidence and leadership."

Their Troop started with just eight girls, but has grown to 48 registered girls today, ages 11-17. "It grew really quickly because we had so much fun doing all the different things we did together. And we laugh a lot," noted DiPasquale.

For their Eagle Projects, each built a hefty bridge to help hikers complete a 1.3 mile loop at the Green Village Conservation Trail in Chatham Township, noted by a sign and kiosk at 328 Green Village Road, Green Village. They fundraised to purchase the materials and led teams of Scouts to cut the lumber, construct the bridges and boardwalks, and move the bridges into place over a half-mile from the street. They also led volunteers to transport woodchips to enhance the trails.

"Signing up for a volunteer day is one thing," said Maciejewski, "but leading a big project and volunteers from start-to-finish is another, and really satisfying."

Both live busy lives outside of scouting.



(above) Maria DiPasquale and Sofia Maciejewski

Courtesy photo

DiPasquale, a senior at Governor Livingston High School, will attend Kean University in the fall and play on the basketball and lacrosse teams. Maciejewski, a sophomore at Mount Saint Mary Academy, is pursuing her pilot's license. And they remain active in scouting. "Once an Eagle Scout, always an Eagle Scout," they concur.

about To learn more BSA Troop 280, troop280chatham@gmail.com, visit their Facebook Page "Troop 280 Chatham" or website bsatroop280chathamnj.com. Meetings are most Thursday nights and outdoor adventures are one or more times per month.



# Berkeley Heights

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#### **MOUNTAIN PARK AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH**

Berkeley Heights Public Schools

In honor of Autism Acceptance Month, students and staff at Mountain Park School came together to celebrate, honor, and learn about Autism and people with neurodiversity.

During an educational and fun Spirit Week, students learned about autism and neurodiversity

and were invited to dress up in accordance with a daily theme such as 'Better Together Blue' and wear blue shirts to show the inclusive and supportive nature of Mountain Parkers and were invited to bring in \$1.00 to donate to Autism, NJ. Nearly \$125 was raised and donated to Autism NJ on behalf of Mountain Park School.





# Attention Parents of Kids Ages 6-18 **SUMMER ATHLETE PERFORMANCE CAMP IN BERKELEY HEIGHTS**

We'll have your kid stronger, faster, and more confident...guaranteed.

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- They will get stronger which means when they show up to their sport they'll be able to perform better than ever.
- They will run faster and jump higher so they can show up to their next season and people will start asking what the heck have they been doing.
- 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.

# HAPPY PARENTS TALKING ABOUT THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TRANSFORMATION OF THEIR KIDS...

- "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)**







Warning: Our summer season begins June 17th and we tend to sell out early. Please respond promptly so we can give you the best chance to grab a spot. Scan the QR code and enter your information to see if there are any spots left in your age group.

#### **LIONS CLUB EXPO STARTS JUNE 12 & ENDS WITH FIREWORKS ON JUN 15**

As the spring flowers bloom all across the beautiful Township of Warren, and we get excited about the much awaited warmer days, the Warren Lions Club announces the fast approaching EXPO 2024. It is the single biggest social and commercial event, held every year around mid-

Welcome to the Warren Lions Club 6:00 pm to 10:00 the Warren Township Municipal Grounds 46 Mountain Blvd FREE Sponsored by 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm ENDOR SPACE AVAILABLE Please call Anthony Franchini at 908-334-9304

June, at the Warren Township municipal field (46 Mountain Boulevard). The gathering is a classic carnival for all ages, family and friends, 6-10 p.m. from Wednesday to Saturday. This year's EXPO, in its 56th occurrence, will be hosted from June 12-15th, 2024. There will be amusement rides, games of chance, fireworks, food vendors, and an exposition of local businesses, and non-profit organizations.

Our Event sponsor is NextHome Premier. The Corporate sponsors are Lightbridge Academy, The Orchard Academy and Temple Har Shalom. We will also have a spectacular fireworks show, which concludes the EXPO on Saturday at 10 p.m.

The Lions EXPO attracts more than 10,000 people over the four days and has become the premier family & friends' melting pot, in the Warren Township and the neighboring communities.

In addition to the daily tickets, the EXPO has the pay-one-price wristbands every night. And don't forget the Giant 50/50 cash raffle with the drawing on Saturday June 15th, resulting in thousands of dollars payout to a single winner. The winner need not be present at the drawing. Tickets will be available for purchase at the Expo, every night, for \$5 each.

#### **LOCAL BUSINESS EXPOSITION**

The EXPO is an excellent platform for local businesses to showcase their services and connect directly with customers through the purchase of a \$500 Exclusive Game sponsor sign or a \$150 non-exclusive ride sponsor sign, displayed at the Expo for the 4 days.

"Interacting with potential customers at a high profile community event can greatly boost a company's image and customer base," noted Anthony Franchini, the Warren Lions Club Treasurer. "Community members deeply appreciate those businesses that demonstrate their local support through events like this."

We are still accepting applications for tent vendors to sell or promote their businesses to the thousands of people in attendance at the gathering. For information on becoming a tent

vendor at the 2024 Warren Lions EXPO, please contact Anthony Franchini at 908-334-9304.

All proceed from the Lions EXPO are donated back to the community organizations and sight and hearing foundations throughout New Jersey. **ABOUT THE LIONS CLUB OF WARREN TOWNSHIP** 

When caring people come together, roll up their sleeves and take actions to make their community better, it's a beautiful thing and an incredible feeling for everyone involved. That's Lions. Being a Lion is about leading by example, building relationships and improving the world through kindness.

Lions Clubs International is made up of 1.4 million members in 49,000 clubs who bring hands and hearts to the communities we serve in nearly every country on earth. Our Lions and Leos help hundreds of millions of people every year.

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) provides grants that empower the service of our members. Since its inception in 1968, LCIF has awarded more than US\$1.2 billion in grant funding.

The Warren Lions Club currently has more than 100 active members from the Township as well as surrounding communities. Members include business and professional leaders who provide humanitarian services, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and bonding in the communities.

All funds raised by the Lions Club of Warren Township are used to support a wide variety of community service organizations and projects. The Club holds dinner meetings every second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from September through June and occasionally feature speakers, donation recipients and special guests that inform and entertain. The Club encourages all members to help set the direction of our Club, participate in leadership roles, and identify causes to support and the Club's priorities, while fostering camaraderie and advancing our mission.

To learn more, please visit Warren Lions Club website warrenlionsclub.org, and social media page facebook.com/warrenlionsclub.org.

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#### **ASIAN AMERICAN AND** PACIFIC ISLANDER MO.

Berkeley Heights Public Schools

Students at Thomas P. Hughes School recently enjoyed an assembly sponsored by the TPH PTO as a kickoff to Asian American and Pacific Islander month.

Performers from the New York Chinese cultural center presented the lion dance for good luck, taught the students a few Chinese words, and did a martial arts demonstration, a handkerchief dance, and a ribbon dance.



#### **CALLING ALL VETERANS**

VFW Post 6259 in Berkeley Heights is looking for new members to join our ranks and to continue your service. Not a veteran of a foreign war? Come join us anyway for camaraderie and help us start an auxiliary group at the Post. Call Steve Mondragon at 908-403-1902 for more information, or visit: vfwberkeleyheights.com.



#### **ELKS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARD**

Summit Elks Lodge #1246 received the Community Partnership Award At the Summit Area YMCA's annual celebration held on April 25th, 2024, to recognize their efforts in joining the YMCA to host the Extra Special Prom - an event for special-needs students aged 13-25, their parents, and other volunteers.

During the award presentation, a highlight video of the Extra Special Prom was played. The footage demonstrated the utter joy emanating from the young adults who attended the prom, which was a milestone they might otherwise miss out on if not for the Elks partnership with the Y.

Summit Elks Exalted Ruler Fred Honold and fellow members then continued to detail the synergies between the two organizations in their commitment to serving the community and to

enriching the lives of youth with special needs.

The Summit Area YMCA serves more than 15.000 individuals with their free and fee-based programs and services in an area spanning the New Jersey communities of Berkeley Heights, Gillette, Millburn, New Providence, Short Hills, Springfield, Stirling and Summit.

The Summit Elks and Elks Lodges throughout NJ and the United States work with compassion and dedication to provide programs and services for special-needs children and adults. Local events such as the Extra Special Prom, scholarships, sports programs, and NJ Elks Camp Moore are made possible through donations, fundraising events, and grants from the Elks National Foundation. Please visit Elks.org for more information about the Elks and how to join.



(above) Summit Elks Exalted Ruler Fred Honold receives the YMCA Community Partnership Award from Summit Area YMCA Presidend & CEO Paul Kieltyka.

Courtesy photo



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#### FIRST RESPONDERS MASS

The Church of the Little Flower in Berkeley Heights honored our first responders who serve in Berkeley Heights as well as live in town and serve in other communities on Sunday, May 5 at our 11:30 a.m. Mass. We had

close to 30 first responders present from the Berkeley Heights Rescue Squad, Berkeley Heights Fire Department, Union County Dispatch, Orange Fire Department and Port Authority Police, plus over 20 family members.



Courtesy photo



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Chief Russo, the Township's first full-time employee, dedicated 22 years of service as the

The Berkeley Heights Police Department is sole full-time police officer until 1946. Additional officers were hired in 1946 and Russo would continue to serve a total of 32 years with BHPD. Today, the department consists of 28 full-time officers and civilian support staff, all committed to upholding the department's rich history and serving the community with excellence.

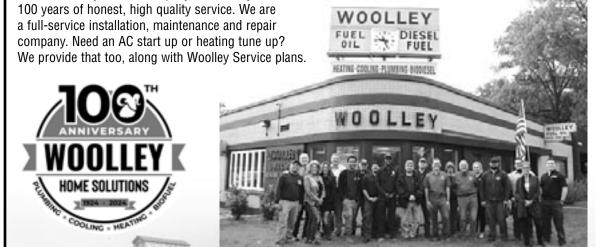
Captain William Ives expressed his excitement for the department's centennial milestone, highlighting the significance of the department's legacy and the dedication of its current officers. To commemorate this special occasion, this year's Memorial Day parade will feature the officers marching proudly behind a banner celebrating 100 years of service. In addition, an open house and celebratory dinner will be held to honor both former and current members of the department.

Furthermore, Captain Ives announced that the officers would be unveiling a new police patch later this year, specially designed to commemorate the 100th Anniversary.

Ives continued, as we celebrate this momentous occasion, we reflect on the dedication and commitment of all those who have served in the Berkeley Heights Police Department over the past century. We look forward to upholding the values of integrity, service, and community as we embark on the next chapter in our department's history.

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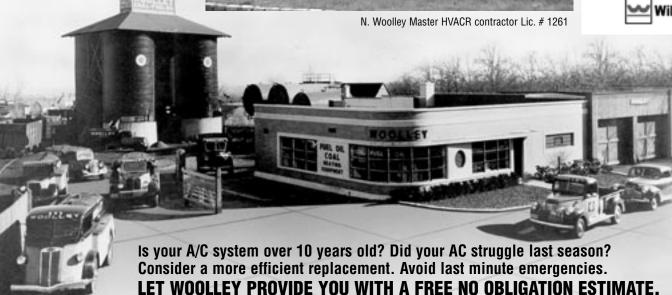
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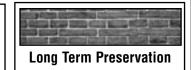
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#### **Summer Playground Camp**

June 17 – August 9 | 8:30-3:30 PM Learn More:

berkeleyheights.gov/1532/Playground-Camp

#### **Summer Table Tennis**

June 12, 19, July 10, 17, 24, 31 Learn More: berkeleyheights.gov/1534/ Other-Programs

#### **FREE SENIOR PROGRAMS:**

**Weekly Programs** 

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#### **PICKLEBALL INFORMATION:**

Pickleball Open Play in Berkeley Heights & 2024 Spring Pickleball Bash

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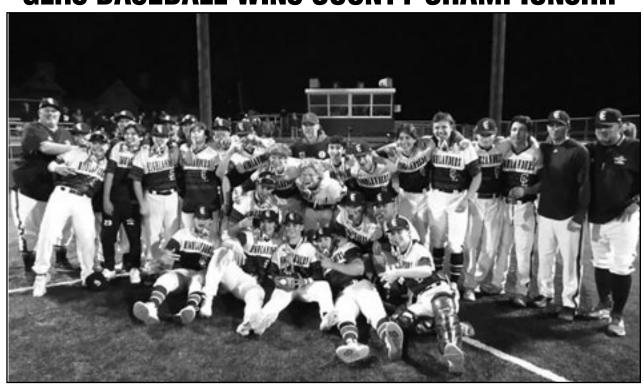
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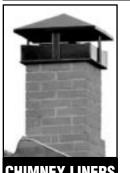
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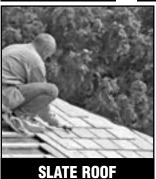




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#### PIONEERING "STUDENT GRANT-A-WISH" PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW

Berkeley Heights Education Foundation

Now in its second year, the Student Grant-A-Wish Program of the Berkeley Heights Education Foundation (BHEF) continues to enable students throughout the Berkeley Heights school district from kindergarten to 12th grade to submit a request to have their "wish" granted by the BHEF. Each student was able apply for funds to support anything they can think of that would enhance their educational experience. One student's wish was selected from each Berkeley Heights public school with the winner's school receiving up to \$500 to put towards making that student's wish a reality during the current school year.

"That's awesome! I never thought my wish would get picked" said Mason Kraut, 5th grade student at Thomas P. Hughes Elementary School when he found out his wish was being granted. "It's a super fun game, so I hope everyone at my school enjoys it!"

Each year, the BHEF offers teachers and administrators the opportunity to apply for grants that support innovative and creative educational programs, as well as supplement technology and equipment in our public schools. Through April 2024, the BHEF has already awarded over \$10,000 in grants to district schools for the current school year. We are very excited to have this opened up again to our students this school year!

"We want to support the educational experience of all district students in any way possible, which includes more than just academics," said Daniela McDonnell, President,





(above) A Tetherball set for use during gym and recess (Mason Kraut, 5th grade, Thomas P. Hughes Elementary School)

BHEF. "This program allows them to actively engage in this process and have a direct impact on their school."

The 2023/2024 school year winning student wishes are as follows:

- Clean out and refresh the school's butterfly garden (Avery Agro & Louisse Karras, 1st grade, Mary Kay McMillin Preschool)
- Purchase chess tables and accessories for indoor/outdoor use, a well as an Introduction to Chess program for students (Will McGrady, 2nd grade, William Woodruff Elementary School)
- Tetherball set for use during gym and recess (Mason Kraut, 5th grade, Thomas P. Hughes Elementary School)

- Audio speaker for Dance Club and other school events/parties (Vivianne Brosen, 3rd grade, Mountain Park Elementary School)
- Podcast equipment for the creation and distribution of teacher and student content (Leo Kraut, 7th grade, Columbia Middle School)
- Outdoor learning space, including benches, plantings, and educational signage for use during lunch and as a classroom alternative (Kayleigh Carlos, 11th grade, Governor Livingston High School)

For more information about the student and teacher educational wishes granted by the Berkeley Heights Education Foundation, please visit bhedfoundation.org/help/#intheschool.



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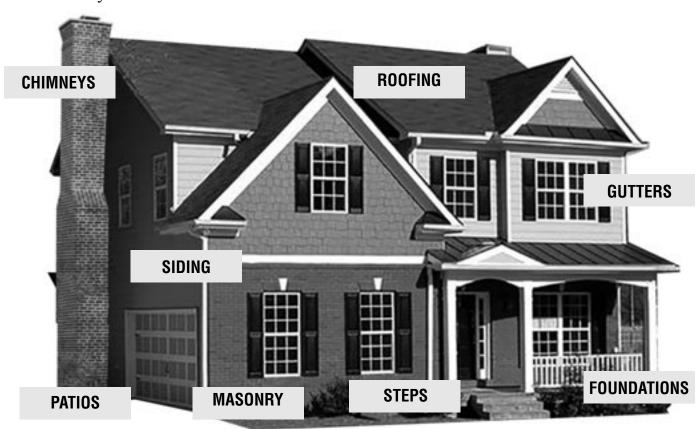
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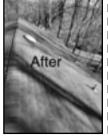
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American Red Cross Community Blood Drive Co-Sponsored by the Woman's Club BH & the BH Volunteer Rescue



Saturday, June 15, 2024, 9AM-2PM. Scan the QR Code to sign-up, or call 1-800 Red Cross and/or visit: redcrossblood.org

#### **GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP**

The Church of the Little Flower Bereavement Support Group will be held on Mondays beginning June 17, 2024, 10- 11:30 a.m. for 8 weeks. This is a free and open to the public. Meetings are held in the Bernauer Parish Center Upper-Level Multi-Purpose Room, Plainfield Avenue, Berkeley Heights, NJ. For info, or to register (required), contact Dan Grossano at 908-464-1585 or email pastoral110.LF@gmail.com.

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#### **WOMAN'S CLUB OF BERKELEY HEIGHTS**

Members of the Woman's Club of Berkeley Olympics. Heights participated in Senior Information Day at the Municipal Building on Saturday, May 4th. Member Chris Bjornstad organized the event through the mayor's office. Our table displayed a banner, tri-folds that told our 2023-24 story, bookmarks, information sheets, and membership forms. Members in the pho shared information about the Club with all those who stopped by.

The Club will finish its year with a May Luncheon at La Pastaria in Summit and a picnic in the park in June, where members will don their favorite sportswear and compete in our gentle

Continuing with its civic engagement, the WCBH and the Berkeley Heights Rescue Squad will co-sponsor an American Red Cross Blood Drive on Saturday, June 15th from 9AM-2PM. It will be held at the Rescue Squad Building, 378 Synder Ave., Berkeley Heights, NJ. New Jersey continues to have a critical shortage of life saving blood. Every drop counts.

If you would like to find out more about the Woman's Club of Berkeley Heights, contact President Phyllis McEnroe at 908-578-6809 or phyllis468@icloud.com



(above, frone, l-r) Front row: Chris Bjornstad, Kathy Ennis, Phyllis McEnroe, WCBH President, Magdalen Wu (back, l-r) Susan Doyle, Diana Wilfrid Courtesy photos



(above) A recent Women's Club of Berkeley Heights fundraiser was held recently featuring games, lunch of homemade quiches, salads, and desserts made by Club members, and wonderful prizes. President Phyllis McEnroe explained that these events raise funds for the Club's philanthropy throughout the year. Our benevolence includes two scholarships for graduating young ladies from Governor Livingston High School, NJSFWC Special State Project- Emmanuel Cancer Fund, BH Public Library, Berkeley Heights Volunteer Rescue Squad, St. Joseph's Social Services, Our House, YWCA of Union County Domestic Violence "Project to Protect."





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### **SUMMER CONCERT SERIES 2024**

Berkeley Heights Recreation

#### **NJ Youth Symphony**

Wednesday, June 26 | 7:00-8:30 PM Where: The Grove (200 Connell Dr, Berkeley Heights)

#### 7th Realm

Wednesday, July 3 | 7:00-8:30 PM Where: Veteran's Memorial Park (113-205 Plainfield Ave, Berkeley Heights)

#### The Nines

Wednesday, July 10 | 7:00-8:30 PM Where: Veteran's Memorial Park (113-205 Plainfield Ave, Berkeley Heights) Steppin Out

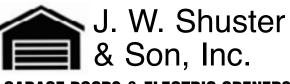
Wednesday, July 17 | 7:00-8:30 PM Where: Veteran's Memorial Park (113-205 Plainfield Ave, Berkeley Heights)

#### **Audio Riot**

Wednesday, July 24 | 7:00-8:30 PM Where: The Grove (200 Connell Dr, Berkeley Heights)

#### **First Responders Night Super Trans Am**

Wednesday, July 31 | 7:00-8:30 PM Where: The Grove (200 Connell Dr, Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922)



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#### **ALL AGES PROGRAMS**

**Summer Reading Program " Adventure Begins at Your Library**"

Begins Saturday, June 8 with: 10 am - Storytime; 11 am - Crafts/games; 12 pm - FOAM party at Memorial Park **Tinker Tuesday Favorites** 

Tuesday, June 11, 11am - 8 pm

**Family Fun Friday "Patriotic Poppers"** 

Friday, June 21 at 3:30 pm Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange

Saturday, June 22, 10 am - 12 pm

**Family Movie Night** "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids"

Friday, June, 27 at 6:30 pm

#### **CHILDREN'S STORY TIMES AND PROGRAMS**

**Children's Drop-in Crafts** 

Saturdays, June 1, 15, & 29 from 10 am - 12 pm

Sing & Sign with Danielle Neri

Sunday, June 2 at 3 pm

**Yoga Storytime with Pam Nixon** 

Thursday, June 4 at 10:30 am

**Rainbow Noise Makers Craft** 

Thursday, June 6 at 4:30 pm **Pre-K Storvtime** 

Mondays, June 10, 17 & 24 at 10 am **Science Discoverers** 

Tuesdays, June 11, 18 & 25 at 10 am **Good Tyme String Band** 

Tuesday, June 11 at 10:30 am

**Storytime at Memorial Park** 

Wednesdays, June 12 & 26 at 10 am **Toddler Drive In Movie** 

Wednesday, June 12 at 6:30 pm "Block" Party

Thursdays, June 13, 20 & 27 at 10 am **Science Explorers** 

Thursdays, June 13, 20 & 27 at 3 pm

#### **Read to Morrigan the Dog**

Thursday, June 13 at 3:30 pm

Safari Adventure with Muscle Man Mike Tuesday, June 18 at 3:30 pm

**PJ Storytime** 

Tuesday, June 18 at 6:30 pm

**Dance Party** 

Thursday, June 27 at 3:30 pm **LEGO Play** 

Friday, June 28, 3 - 4 pm

#### TEEN PROGRAMS

**Teen Book Club** 

Tuesday, June 4 at 6:30 pm A Scatter of Light

#### **Teen Volunteer Training**

Wednesday, June 5 at 3:30 pm & Monday, June 17 at 3 pm mandatory for teens interested in volunteering at the library

**Teen Quiet Study** 

Thursday, June 6 at 3 pm **Interactive Teen Movie "Princess Diaries"** 

Tuesday, June 25 at 6:30 pm

#### ADULT PROGRAMS

Tinker Tuesday "Rainbow Wall Hanging" Tuesday, June 4 at 7:30 pm

Pins & Needles Knitting & Needlework Group

Sunday, June 9 at 2:30 pm

**Coffee & Conversation Group** 

Wednesdays, June 12 & 26 at 1:30 pm

**Armchair Traveler "France"** 

Tuesday, June 25 at 7 pm

Friday Movie Matinee "Arthur the King"

Friday, June 28 at 11:30 am

**Virtual Author Series** 

(register at libraryc.org/bhplnj/):

Monday, June 3 at 2 pm (Matthew Shindell) Thursday, June 13 at 8 pm (Freida McFadden)

Thursday, June 20 at 2 pm (Tiffany Jewell)

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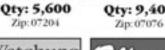
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#### URGENT NEED FOR VOLUNTEER ADVOCATES FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Information sessions to be held in June in Clark and Elizabeth

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 one of more than 500 children removed from home in Passaic and Union counties each year due to abuse and neglect. Currently, there is an urgent need for advocates to serve Union County children, as there are more than 250 children in the foster care system, with just 72 children being served. 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 Child Focus comes in. Specifically, its Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program.

Said Executive Director Erica Fischer-Kaslander, "We are committed to recruiting, screening, and training advocates for every child in Union County who needs one, just as we've done in Passaic County. It is difficult to overstate the difference a CASA volunteer can make in the life of a child removed from home through no fault of their own, often due to abuse or neglect." She added, "Children with volunteer advocates are more likely to have needed services ordered on their behalf, spend less time in the foster system, and experience significantly better outcomes than those who go without. Becoming a CASA volunteer requires a significant time commitment and training, but volunteers often find the work as life-changing for themselves as it is for the children they help."

CASA volunteers are trained on the ins and outs of advocating for child-victims and fully supported by CASA staff. 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 placements are ever-changing. A CASA volunteer provides continuity during a time of chaos and unknowns.

The first step to training is to attend an information session. Choose from Thursday, June 6 at 5:30 p.m., and Thursday, June 27 at 5:30 p.m., at the Clark Public Library, 303 Westfield Avenue in Clark; Monday, June 10 at noon, at the Child Focus office at 1143 East Jersey Street, 2nd Floor, Elizabeth, NJ 07201; or Wednesday, June 5 at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 12 at noon, or Monday, June 17 at 5:30 p.m. at the Wayne Child Focus office, 415 Hamburg Turnpike, Suite D2. Register now at casapassaicunion.org/infosession.

#### **ABOUT CHILD FOCUS:**

Child Focus prioritizes the needs and wellbeing of infants, children and teens impacted by, or at risk of, abuse or neglect by amplifying their voices and working toward lasting, permanent solutions that address their unique situations and provide support needed to thrive. This critical work is accomplished through three distinct but complementary programs: CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, NJ Safe Babies Court Team, and the Open Door Store. For more information about Child Focus, log on to childfocusnj.org.



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