

Scotch Plains NJ

WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY

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COMMUNITY CELEBRATES MARY WROBLEWSKI 100TH B-DAY

Borough of Fanwood

Fanwood Police, Fire and Rescue did a drive-by celebration for Mary Wroblewski who turned 100-years-old on May 12th.

Mary is the mother of Bernadette Hoyer of Fanwood, a long-time member of the Fanwood Rescue Squad, as was Bernadette's late husband, Bob Hoyer. Mrs. Wroblewski resides in Scotch Plains, and enjoys reading, gardening, bird watching, and online shopping.

Mary Wroblewski was born in Newark to parents who were immigrants to the United States from Russia (father), and Austria (mother). She left high school to support her family and later earned her GED and working her way through beauty school. She was both a hairdresser and clerical worker in her life, retiring from PSE&G in 1989.



Deputy Mayor Ellen Zimmerman and Councilwoman Elizabeth Stamler delivered a proclamation to celebrate Mary Wroblewski's 100th birthday. Her daughter, Bernadette Hoyer, and granddaughter, Christine Hoyer, also joined in marking the big day for one of Scotch Plains' beloved centenarians.

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(above) Mary Wroblewski and her family with Fanwood Police, Fire and Rescue Squad members.

Courtesy photo

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Scotch Plains NJ

WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY

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FIRST RESPONDERS JERRY HANDSMAN AND JOE FLAMMIA HONORED

Township of Scotch Plains

Township leaders, the Knights of Columbus, and the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad recently honored Jerry Handsman, a 33-year member. Jerry, second from left, was saluted for his volunteer work providing emergency response every Wednesday night for the last 30 years. He

is known for always being the first to volunteer and for being an ongoing resource for other squad members. Firefighter Joe Flammia was also recognized for his 32 years of fire service and going above and beyond with additional jobs around the firehouse.



Courtesy photo

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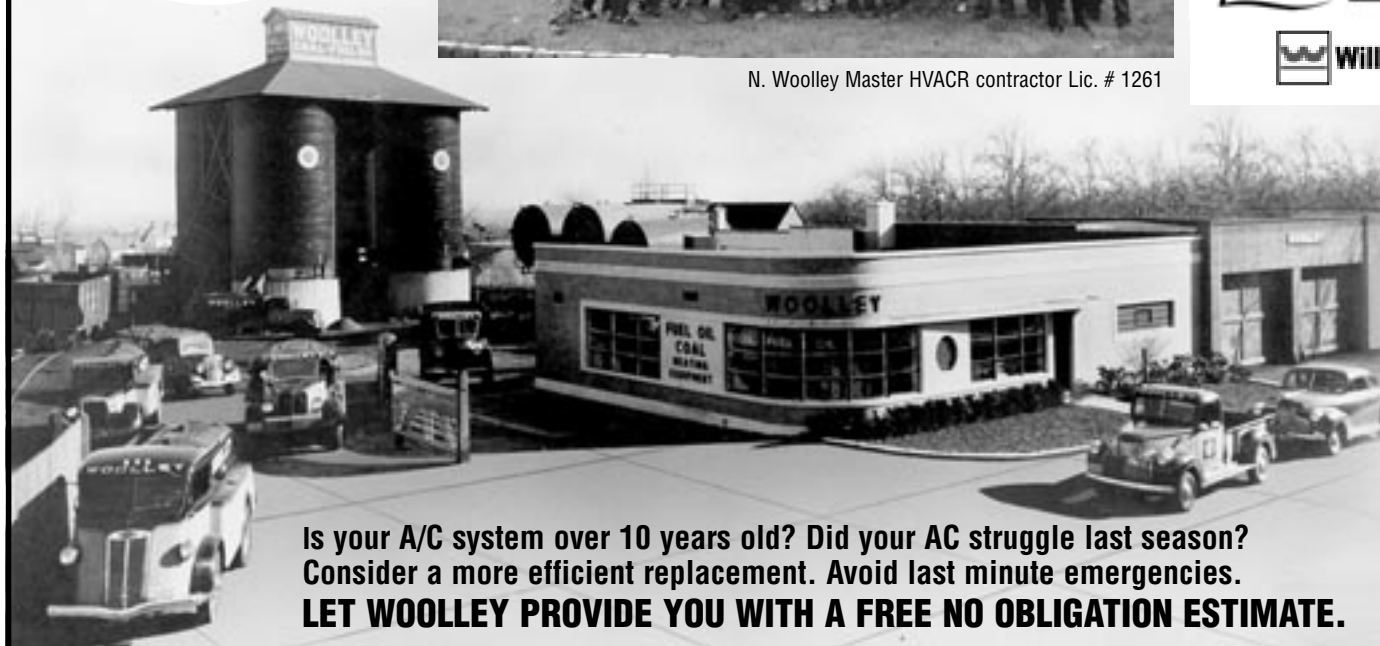
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Wednesday, June 19 - Library Closed

BOOK COLLECTION & SALE

The Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library is thrilled to announce its highly anticipated book sale, a first since 2019, set to take place from June 13th to June 15th, 2024. This event is a beloved tradition within the community, offering a wide selection of books at unbeatable prices.

EVENT DETAILS:

BOOK COLLECTION: JUNE 3RD – 8TH

- June 3rd: 9:30am - 1pm;
- June 5th: 6:30-8:30pm; June 6th 4-7pm
- June 8th: 10am-12pm & 1-3pm

SALE DATES: JUNE 13TH - 15TH

- June 13: 5-8pm Scotch Plains and Fanwood Friends of the Library members
- June 14: 10-4pm;
- June 15: 10-4pm; Bag sale 2-4pm

The Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library invites book enthusiasts to participate in the book collection phase from June 3rd to June 8th. Donations will be accepted with volunteers stationed in the library basement to receive contributions. It's important to note that while the Friends appreciate all donations, they are unable to accept CDs, DVDs, cassettes, textbooks, magazines, out-of-date books, or items in poor condition.

"We are excited to once again host our annual book sale, bringing together book lovers from all walks of life," said Christine Szeluga, Vice President of the Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library. "This event not only provides affordable reading materials but also supports the programs and initiatives such as the summer reading and museum pass programs, for our beloved library."

For more information about the book sale, to inquire about donations or to volunteer to help, please email: spplfriends1@gmail.com

Bring Your Own Book
Monday, June 3 at 10am
 an informal discussion of what participants have recently read and enjoyed.

Registration is required.

Library Only Open for Primary Election

Tuesday, June 4

closed for library business

Balance Awareness with Yasmin Ofek

Fridays at 10am

a gentle but effective approach to moving confidently throughout the lifespan.

Registration is required for this virtual class.

Hypertension Clinic

Friday, June 7, 10am to Noon

in the Adult Room with a public health nurse from Union County. Walk-ins welcome.

Friends of the Library Book Sale

Thursday, June 13, 5-8pm

(Friends members only)

Friends of the Library Book Sale

Friday, June 14, 10am-4pm

(Open to the public)

Friends of the Library Book Sale

Saturday, June 15, 10am-4pm

(Bag Sale 2-4pm)

Introduction to Crochet

Monday, June 17 at 10am

registration is required.

Night Sky with

Morris Museum Astronomical Society

Monday, June 17 at 8:30pm

Drawing with Sandra Cerchio

Tuesday, June 18 at 10am

registration is required.

Afternoon Book Club

Tuesday, June 18 at 1pm

will discuss Women Talking by Miriam Toews.

Gallery Exhibit

Thursday, June 20-Friday, June 28

featuring Sandra Cerchio's young students

Board of Trustees meeting

Thursday, June 20 at 7pm

Evening Book Club

Thursday, June 20 at 7pm

will discuss The Housekeeper and the Professor by Yoko Ogawa.

Ellen LaFurn concert

Saturday, June 22 at 2pm

featuring 20th Century female songwriters.

Photography Basics for Adults

with Danielle Stio

Monday, June 24 at 7pm

Wednesday movie

Wednesday, June 26 at 12pm

in our downstairs meeting room

GARWOOD ROCKS ANNUAL FESTIVAL – JUNE 2

On Sunday, June 2nd from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Garwood celebrates its 10th Anniversary of its 'Garwood Rocks' Festival, sponsored by Vermella at Garwood Station. The event is organized by the Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce [GWACC] and draws over 5,000 people from all surrounding counties and towns in New Jersey. Admission to the festival is free of charge.

"With the 10th Anniversary of Garwood Rocks this year, we have been planning an even more special event than in years' past – especially with our continued partnership with Vermella at Garwood Station" said Lew Kimble, Executive

Director of the GWACC. "All residents from Garwood and the surrounding towns will be able to experience what the whole community has to offer – and after 10 years – it demonstrates our commitment to the region and the success of the event."

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

Center Street will be opened at 11 a.m. with food vendors and trucks lined up along the street, offering everything from classic carnival fare and much more.

The main stage at Center and Willow will feature performances from a variety of musical acts from local bands to bigger and more well-known artists including 4 Flight Rock, Marie & the Blue Rats and Mirrors on the Moon.

The Beer and Wine Garden, sponsored by the Crossroads, will provide adult beverages throughout the event.

Families with young children will be drawn to the kid's area at the Westfield Y location, between Locust Avenue and Beech, where there will be inflatable bounce houses and a carnival ride.

Classic car show which is expected to draw over 150 cars. Merchandise and artist vendors of all kinds will also be displaying their wares for purchase. Several non-profit organizations will also be on display.

For more information about Vermella at Garwood Station's residential rentals, visit www.vermellanj.com.

For more information about the Garwood Rocks event, contact Carol carol@uniquecruiseandtravel.com at 908-233-3021 or Donna Vella at donnavellastreetfairs@yahoo.com.



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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.

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

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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.

INITIATIVE ADVANCES ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH INTO SECOND YEAR

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools is proud to announce the outstanding success of its teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) certification program. This year, 329 high school students completed the program, marking a significant milestone as the initiative enters its second year. This remarkable achievement highlights the district's dedication to prioritizing the mental well-being of its students.

Recognizing the concerning increase in mental health challenges among adolescents across the nation, SPF initiated the program last year with funding from the Mental Health Association of New Jersey and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The district offers the course to its 11th-grade students as an integral component of their health curriculum. This course is designed to provide students with the necessary tools to recognize, comprehend, and respond to indicators of mental health and substance use issues among their peers. The tMHFA certification program, initially developed in Australia and adapted for the United States by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing and Born This Way Foundation, aligns with New Jersey's comprehensive health standards, incorporating mental and emotional health components into the district's curriculum.

"Our commitment to promoting mental wellness extends beyond the classroom," said Kristine Iarussi, Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools' Director of Counseling, Health and Wellness. "With over half of our high school students trained in tMHFA, we've empowered our student community to act proactively to recognize and address mental health concerns."

Participation in the certification program is a school-wide effort with health teachers undergoing training sessions conducted by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing. This comprehensive approach ensures that educators are well-prepared to effectively guide students

through the curriculum.

As students navigate the complexities of modern life, including academic pressures, social dynamics, and familial expectations, initiatives like tMHFA can play a pivotal part in supplying them with the skills to promote resilience and well-being. Student testimonials underscore the program's impact on fostering a supportive environment where individuals feel encouraged to address mental health challenges. Ellie Szopinski, 16, emphasized the importance of approaching mental health discussions with empathy and understanding.

"The course allowed us to approach people from a neutral standpoint where we can help even if we're not close to them," she shared.

"The most notable thing was learning to recognize the behaviors themselves and how to

identify these crises and stop them before they become life-threatening," Ant Butters, 16, added.

Saman Zeb, 17, highlighted the significance of destigmatizing mental health issues and promoting open dialogue.

"Mental health is often overlooked," Zeb said. "It's nice to have a course that allows you to take a deep breath and realize that your mental health and the mental health of others is really important."

Students also said the class encourages self-preservation.

"I feel like it's just as important for people to educate themselves not only to help others but also to help themselves," Cooper Tamase, 16, said, adding that mental health has been a focus of his for years.



(above, l-r) Ant Butters and Cooper Tamase hold up their teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) certificates. The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School students were among the more than 300 Raiders who participated in the national program designed to provide students with the necessary tools to recognize, comprehend and respond to indicators of mental health and substance use issues among their peers.

Courtesy photo

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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-

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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CATHERINE M. DEAPPOLONIO JOINS NJ SHARING NETWORK

NJ Sharing Network, the federally designated non-profit organization focused on saving and enhancing lives through the recovery of donated organs and tissue in the Garden State, has appointed Scotch Plains resident Catherine M. DeAppolonio as General Counsel and Government Affairs. DeAppolonio oversees crucial elements of the organization's legal operations, including the identification, evaluation, and treatment of risk within the organization. She also directs reviews of policies



(above) Catherine M. DeAppolonio

Courtesy photo

and procedures and educates team members on NJ Sharing Network corporate compliance processes.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of NJ Sharing Network's esteemed leadership team to advance our lifesaving mission. Every day brings fresh opportunities to contribute to the powerful impact organ and tissue donation and transplantation has on the lives of donor families, recipients, and our entire community," said DeAppolonio, who resides in Scotch Plains with her husband, Christian Solis, and their son, Michael.

DeAppolonio earned a Juris Doctorate from Albany Law School of Union University and was admitted to the practice of law in New Jersey in 2005 and New York in 2006. For more than 16 years, she served in private practice concentrating in the areas of civil litigation, employment defense, public entity defense, and law enforcement defense. DeAppolonio has appeared in state and federal courts handling cases from the pre-lawsuit phase, to depositions, discovery, motions, mediation and through jury trial and appeal. She was appointed by the New Jersey Supreme Court to the District XII Ethics Committee, 2013-2021, and named to the New Jersey Super Lawyers Rising Stars lists, 2018-2020.

DeAppolonio's role at NJ Sharing Network focuses her legal talents on a cause she is passionate about. Catherine has supported organ

and tissue donation since her best friend and college roommate at the University of New Hampshire suddenly passed away at the age of 20 and saved the lives of others as an organ donor.

"Our NJ Sharing Network team members admire Catherine for her dedication and proven leadership in spearheading best practices for our organization," said Carolyn M. Welsh, President and CEO, NJ Sharing Network. "Her expertise and critical thinking skills will help ensure NJ Sharing Network's continued growth as one of the top performing Organ Procurement Organizations (OPO) in the nation."

NJ Sharing Network, headquartered in New Providence, NJ, partners with an extensive network of 54 local hospitals to provide hope for the nearly 4,000 New Jersey residents currently waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant, and it is part of the national recovery system for the over 100,000 people on the national transplant waiting list. For five consecutive years, NJ Sharing Network has reported organ donation records, and 3.8 million New Jerseyans are registered as organ and tissue donors, according to the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (NJMVC). NJ Sharing Network has also been recognized by NJBIZ for six consecutive years as one of the state's 'Best Places to Work.' To learn more, get involved, and join the National Donate Life Registry as an organ and tissue donor, visit www.NJSharingNetwork.org.



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Pvt. H. L. Siedentop
 A memorial service for the late Pvt. Henry L. Siedentop Jr., 19, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Siedentop of 2067 Newark Ave., Scotch Plains, will be held at 4 p. m. Sunday in St. Peter's Lutheran Church, North Plainfield, with the Rev. J. Edward Gonzalez in charge. Private Siedentop was killed in action Nov. 17 in France. Member of a tank battalion. Private Siedentop was inducted Nov. 20, 1943. He had been in France since July.



U.S. ARMY PRIVATE HENRY L. SIEDENTOP, JR. REMEMBERED

Township of Scotch Plains

Scotch Plains launched its Veterans Advisory Board in May 2022, a key goal was to ensure every local veteran who lost their life in combat or is missing in action would receive special recognition.

Another "Gold Star" family and fallen hero was honored on Monday, May 27 during the township's annual Memorial Day ceremony to remember U.S. Army Private Henry L. Siedentop, Jr., killed in action during World War II.

A street sign "topper" was placed where the fallen hero had lived in Scotch Plains, at the intersections of Newark Avenue and Maple Hill Road & Newark Avenue and Hetfield Avenue. Pvt. Siedentop, born on July 13, 1925, lived at 2067 Newark Ave.

Pvt. Siedentop entered military service on November 20, 1943, and deployed overseas in July 1944 as part of the 737th Tank Battalion. A

Purple Heart recipient, he was tragically killed in action in France on November 17, 1944, at only 19 years of age. He is buried at the Lorraine American Cemetery in Lorraine, France.

The ceremony included participation from Scotch Plains' elected officials and other dignitaries, local veterans, and their families. The American Legion Post 209, coordinated all aspects of the ceremony, providing an honor guard and rifle salute in tribute. Mayor Josh Losardo and the Township Council issued a proclamation, honoring Pvt. Siedentop for his ultimate sacrifice.

Initiated during World War I, the title "Gold Star" distinguishes a family member who lost a loved one in military service. Today, immediate family members (parent, sibling, spouse, or child) receive a Gold Star from the U.S. Department of Defense to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

SP-F HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME INDUCTIONS CORRECTION

Congratulations to Michael Richard Jackson, Scotch Plains- Fanwood High School class of 1965, pioneering medical innovator, for being one of the inductees into the SPFHS Hall of Fame. As one of the authors of a press release on behalf of the SPFHS Alumni Association, I apologize for incorrectly listing his name as

"Michael Richard" in the May, 2024 issue of this publication. More information about Michael Richard Jackson, as well as the other alumni inductees, can be found on the SPFHS Alumni Association's website: spf12.org/alumni

-Michael Loberfeld, a member of the SPFHS Alumni Association

UNICO WELCOMES LYDIA BOCZON

Scotch Plains Fanwood UNICO would like to welcome its newest member, Lydia Boczon, to the chapter.

UNICO is the largest Italian-American service organization in the USA, and the Scotch Plains Fanwood chapter recently celebrated its 50th year. To learn more about becoming a UNICO member or obtain additional information on UNICO events, please visit their official website at unicospf.org or email them at spfunico@gmail.com.



(above, l-r) SPF UNICO First Vice President, Daniela Sellinger swearing in Lydia at a recent chapter meeting. Photo by Christine Hoyer



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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/info-session.

ABOUT CHILD FOCUS:

Child Focus prioritizes the needs and well-being 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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ELKS ASSEMBLE 200 BACKPACKS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

Elks members from across NJ recently gathered at the NJ Elks Veterans Annex in Stirling to assemble 200 backpacks which will be distributed to homeless veterans at Stand Down events in Newark, Atlantic City, and other locations throughout the state. These backpacks help to provide comfort to homeless veterans, offering them a sense of support and care during challenging times.

The backpacks contain clothing, food, personal hygiene, and other care items, including many of the 4,000 pairs of socks

and undergarments that were collected and donated to the Elks through the Middlesex Borough Police sock drive for New Jersey veterans.

The NJ Elks Veterans Annex also serves as a warehouse for Welcome Home kits consisting of furniture and other household items that a formerly homeless veteran would need when moving into their new housing. It is featured in the Youtube video "Givers of Hope".

Elks pledge "So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks

will never forget them." Every night, as many as 40,000 veterans sleep on the streets. In partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission has pledged to help end veteran homelessness and ensure that all veterans have the safe, stable homes they deserve.

Please email njelksnvsc@gmail.com to learn more about what NJ State Elks are doing to help veterans and visit Elks.org for more information about the Elks, including how to become a member.

FANWOOD RECREATION

PARTY IN PARK, FREE SUMMER MOVIE SERIES

Fanwood kicks off its summer season with its annual Party in the Park on Tuesday, June 25th, 6 – 8:30 p.m. in La Grande Park! Join us for food, music, rides, contests and more! Immediately following the party, the first film in Fanwood's free 8-week summer movie series, tentatively scheduled to be Wonka, will be screened on La Grande Park's baseball field. The remaining family-friendly selections for the movie series are still being worked out at the time of this writing.

Please check fanwoodrecreation.org for more details about the Party in the Park and updates on the movie series.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR REC PROGRAMS

Registration is still open for these Fanwood Recreation summer programs for children: TGA Premier Junior Golf Camp, Applause Musical Theater Camp, CreateArt Workshops, Summer Park Program, Babysitting Certification, Junior First Responders Program, Junior Tennis Lessons, SAT Boot Camp, Summer Art Workshop: Monsters & Creatures & Creeps, STEM Python Coding Bootcamp, Daring Detectives Camp, Crazy Chem Works Camp, Secret Agent Lab, Rockin' Rockets Camp, Jr. Reactors Camp, NASA: Academy of Future Space Explorers Camp, Hip Hop Experience Dance Camp, Fashion Design Camp: Caribbean Week, Parent & Me Soccer Squirts, Parent & Me Multi Sports Squirts, Soccer Squirts, Squirts Multi Sports, T-Ball Squirts, Senior T-Ball Squirts, Multi Sports Camp, Basketball Camp, Golf Camp, NFL Football Camp, Skateboarding Camp, Cross Country/Track & Field Camp, Middle School Book Club and Middle School Math Review.

Registration is also open for Pickleball Lessons and Tennis Lessons for adults.

For more info about these programs and to register, please go to fanwoodrecreation.org.



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COLLEGE CLUB SPRING LUNCHEON

JOAN SKUBISH RECEIVES GOOD SCOUT AWARD

Joan Skubis was presented the Good Scout Award from the Boy Scouts Of America – Patriot’s Council for her volunteer spirit and dedication to many organizations. Joan was recognized on May 2nd at a dinner reception at the Westwood in Garwood. Joan is Co-President of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains College Club; members were on hand to congratulate Joan and share in her achievement.

Joan was introduced by Jean Naugle, Co-President of the F-SP College Club and she said of Joan: “We are proud of Joan and grateful for her legacy with the College Club passed onto Joan by her mother who years ago was a member of College Club and chaired the Scholarship Committee.”



(above) Steve Goldberg, F-SP Rotary Club member and emcee of the awards dinner, congratulates Joan Skubish (center) along with Jean Naugle, co-President of the F-SP College Club. Courtesy photo



(above) Gail Iozzi shows off the basket raffle prize that she won at the luncheon. She was one of the afternoon's happy winners that included silent auction winners, table prize winners, 50/50 monetary prize winners and the \$500 Shop Rite gift card winner.

Courtesy Photo

Submitted by Bernadette Hoyer

The Spring Luncheon Fundraiser recently hosted by the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains was the culmination of many months of planning and working together by the college club members to raise funds for the club’s scholarship fund. Since its founding in 1933, the college club remains committed to its mission of supporting young women through scholarships. Sincere thanks are extended to all members of the community who donated raffle items, purchased raffle tickets, silent auction tickets. Attended the event and made direct donations to the scholarship fund in lieu of attending.

The annual spring event is a major fundraiser for the College Club and the “April in Paris” themed luncheon added \$18, 860 to the club’s scholarship fund. The scholarship committee is looking forward to announcing the scholarship recipients for the 2024-2025 academic. The club will be able to award \$31,000 in scholarships due to successful fundraising support. To date the College Club of F-SP has awarded approximately \$780,000 in scholarships to local young women.

The luncheon was held at the Westwood in Garwood and the attractive venue was enjoyed by all attendees along with the attentive wait staff the fine dining luncheon menu.

The delightful musical entertainment provided by the Harmonics quartet added a high note to an enjoyable afternoon and a successful fundraiser.

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ANDREW SMITH ASSUMES PLEBE LEADERSHIP POSITION

U.S. Military Academy

The U.S. Military Academy recently announced the names of the cadets from the Class of 2027 selected to lead the Corps during its annual Plebe Parent Weekend. These fundamental roles are the top positions within the Corps charged with carrying out the responsibilities of leadership of the cadets. Brigade Information Systems Officer: Andrew Smith, from Fanwood, NJ, was among the cadets who assumed their leadership duties on March 22, 2024.

This is a key step in the leadership development of the fourth class as it provides them with their first opportunity to serve in various leadership roles. Additionally, it is a unique time, without upper-class presence, that affords the Plebes a significant bonding experience. Lastly, it is the U.S. Military Academy's and the Class of 2027's opportunity to showcase to parents, family, and friends the extraordinary transformation of these cadets.

"This year's cadet leaders have distinguished themselves amongst their peers, consistently demonstrating academic, military, and physical excellence throughout their time here, more importantly, they have demonstrated the exceptional moral character that leadership demands," said Commandant of Cadets Maj. Gen. Lori Robinson.

ABOUT WEST POINT

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country. Its mission remains constant—to educate, train, and inspire the

Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the U. S. Army. For more information, go to www.westpoint.edu.



(above) Andrew Smith, Fanwood, was among cadets from the Class of 2027 selected to lead the Corps.

Photo by U.S. Military Academy



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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, 290 Plainfield Avenue, Berkeley Heights, NJ. For more information, or to register (required), contact Dan Grossano at 908-464-1585 or email pastoral110.LF@gmail.com.



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SINGER-SONGWRTIERS TO PERFORM - JUNE 8

The Fanwood Performance Series presents the music of singer-songwriters Nicola Vazquez and Ryan Harris Brown on Saturday, June 8, 2024, at the Kuran Cultural Arts Center, a.k.a. the Carriage House, alongside Borough Hall.

Nicola Vazquez has performed her original blend of rock, pop and soul in venues around the New York area, opened for Eve 6 and Edwin McCain, and shared stages with Ricky Martin and other recording artists. An accomplished singer, songwriter, guitarist, keyboardist, actor and dancer, she has performed on Broadway and participated in the MTA's "Music Under New York" program.

Regular patrons may remember Ryan Harris Brown from his 2018 Fanwood Performance Series show. Brown uses his love of intimate storytelling and his expert musicianship to create songs that are both thought provoking and unforgettable. He cites John Mayer, Ben Folds and James Taylor among his musical influences.

Showtime is 7 p.m. at the Carriage House, 135 Watson Road just west of Martine Avenue.

Admission is \$15 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors – cash at the door.

Reservations are strongly recommended. Seating is limited, and recent shows have packed the house. While advance tickets are not available, music fans are urged to RSVP by email to fanwoodperformance@gmail.com to reserve seats. "We want to avoid turning anyone away at the door," said Dan Murphy, the series' volunteer coordinator.

The Fanwood Performance Series is a presentation of Mayor Colleen Mahr and the Fanwood Borough Cultural Arts Council. It is made possible in part by a HEART (History, Education, Arts Reaching Thousands) Grant from the Union County Board of County Commissioners.

After a summer break, the music will continue with shows on Sept. 14, Oct. 19 and Nov. 9. The fall performer lineup will be announced soon.

Music fans can find more information and updates at the series website fanwoodperformanceseries.org.

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(above) Singer-songwriters Nicola Vazquez, Ryan Harris Brown to perform in Fanwood June 8.

Courtesy photos

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PASSAIC COUNTY CASA EXPANDS TO UNION

Submitted by Gretchen Boger-O'Bryan

Passaic County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), a leading child advocacy organization focused on protecting the best interests of abused and neglected youth, has announced the expansion of its service footprint to include Union County. With this expansion, critical volunteer advocacy for child victims removed from home and living under the jurisdiction of the family court will be made available to even more of New Jersey's most vulnerable children. This expansion allows for greater community impact, efficiency in operations, and greater long-term sustainability.

CASA recruits, screens, trains, and supervises community volunteers to advocate for local abused, neglected, and abandoned youth from birth to age 21 involved in the child welfare system through no fault of their own.

Executive Director Erica Fischer-Kaslander, who continues to lead the expanded advocacy organization, said, "There's no doubt this expansion will reap even greater rewards for Union County's vulnerable youth. The synergy created from two experienced programs allows far greater community impact and enhances its agility to withstand today's shifting landscape as a strengthened, multi-county program." Acknowledging the nearly two-decade impact of the previous Union County CASA organization, Fischer-Kaslander adds, "The dedicated advocates in Union County remain focused on fulfilling CASA's mission: quality advocacy, continuity of presence, and increased access to services for local vulnerable youth-victims."

Gretchen Boger-O'Bryan, Content Director for CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, added, "In my 11 years working with CASA in Union County, I have seen the organization pivot to meet unforeseen needs, adapt to changing trends, and persevere through recent challenges faced by all nonprofits, including a global health pandemic. Indeed, passion for and commitment to every child drives us, and this new chapter is simply an opportunity to enjoy greater efficiency, resource allocation, and space for innovation.



Ultimately, the expansion of Passaic County CASA to include Union County breeds a strengthened organization that bolsters CASA's impact throughout the county. For our local youth, that's what matters."

Considered extra "eyes and ears" for judges hearing abuse and neglect cases, CASA volunteers are assigned to a youth or sibling set by court order, granting access to all parties in the youth's life. Advocates use unbiased observations to make fact-based recommendations to judges deciding the future of each youth. Often, CASA volunteers are the only long-term, caring, and informed adult in the corner of a youth awaiting a safe, stable, and permanent placement.

Volunteer advocates need no prior experience in child welfare. All prospective volunteers complete a 36-hour training course, extensive application, and screening process in addition to background checks. Volunteers with the newly expanded CASA of Passaic and Union Counties program are supported by a 26-person professional staff with extensive experience in child welfare. For details on becoming an advocate or other ways to get involved, visit casapassaicunion.org.

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