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The Aliver Foundation

In conjunction with CPR & AED Awareness Week, The Aliver Foundation held a family friendly community event with The Borough of Garwood on Monday to not only unveil the town's second all weather, climate controlled, tamper proof outdoor automated external defibrillator (AED) enclosure and device but to bring together local first responders from the Garwood First Aid Squad, Garwood Fire Department, Garwood Police Department, and residents.

The evening celebrated Garwood's commitment to helping hearts and saving lives by recognizing the importance of having AEDs accessible to the public 24/7/365. "We are extremely proud of this community's first responders and really wanted to showcase them, while also educating residents on the importance of calling 9-1-1 who will walk you through an emergency situation, showing them how easy it is to do CPR compressions, and letting them know that there's nothing to learn when it comes to using an AED – you literally just unzip a zipper, press a button, and follow voice prompts," Jill A. Pall, The Aliver Foundation.

The Garwood First Aid Squad led a short demonstration for attendees, including a fantastic group of middle school students. One woman noted that prior to this evening, she wasn't confident she would be able to help in an emergency situation, but now she is.

The Aliver Foundation's founder, Garwood resident Jill A. Pall, had sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) nearly three years ago at Union County's Echo Lake Park. While bystander Ailene Connors-Albarron started CPR immediately, there was no AED to be found (unfortunately, there still isn't), and it took paramedics over 10 minutes to arrive. Jill approached Garwood's newly elected mayor, Jennifer Blumenstock, in January 2023 to discuss installing a specific all weather, climate controlled, tamper proof AED enclosure model in the community's public recreation spaces, after seeing an article about a life that was saved because of one. The mayor spoke with the Garwood Police Department who



(above) Garwood Volunteer Fire Department Chief John Scalzadonna, Garwood First Aid Squad Captain Josh Regan, Garwood Mayor Jennifer Blumenstock, Garwood Resident Cardiac Arrest Survivor & Founder of The Aliver Foundation Jill A. Pall, Garwood Police Department Sergeant John Wright, Garwood Police Department Chief Douglas Stoffer at the community unveiling event.



(above) Members of the Garwood Fire Department with Jill A. Pall of The Aliver Foundation after presenting her with an incredibly generous donation at the community unveiling event.

looked into grant funding to purchase the two of these enclosures, and the rest is history. The hope is that nobody will ever have to use these AEDs but knowing they are there, if needed, means everything.



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Garwood Times "

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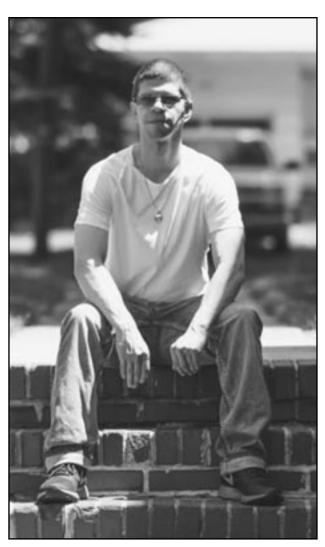
TRAIN STATION FEATURED IN BRET FLEMING "THE BRIDGE OF INCLUSION" MUSIC VIDEO

Bret Fleming is a singer/ songwriter and drummer with William's Syndrome from Westfield, NJ., recently released the single "The Bridge of Inclusion" which is an anthem for inclusion for people with or without disabilities. His musical journey began at the age of 2 years old when his aunt Helen bought him his first snare drum. Since then, Bret has been drumming away. He released his first full length LP entitled "Life" in 2016.

Bret earned a bachelor's degree at the Berkshire Hills Academy of Music in Massachusetts in 2002 when he also joined the global non-profit organization Best Buddies International, whose mission is inclusion for people with developmental disabilities. Today, Bret is still a global ambassador for Best Buddies and part of the New Jersey chapter advisory board.

Bret shot the music video for "The Bridge of Inclusion" in downtown Garwood, New Jersey at the train station. His music can be found on all major social media and streaming platforms.

> (right) Singer / Songwriter Bret Fleming of Westfield, NJ., recently released the single "The Bridge of Inclusion"



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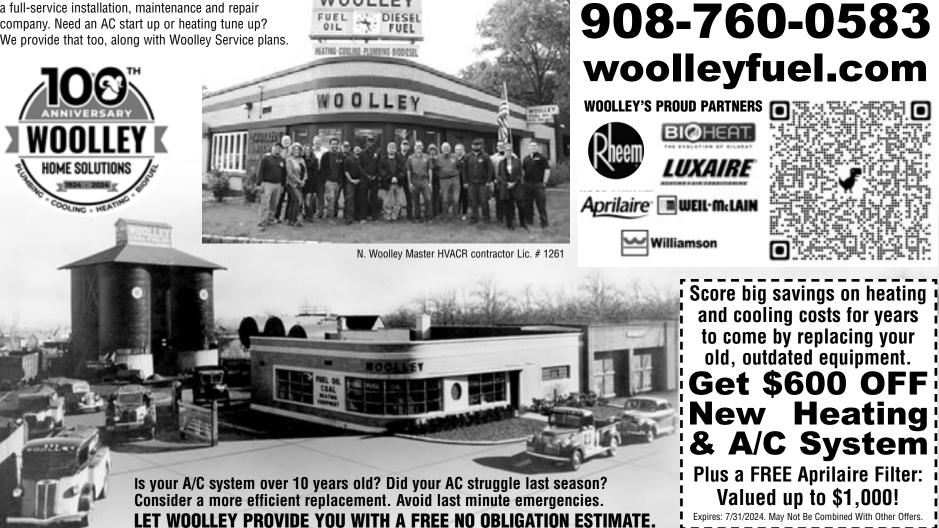
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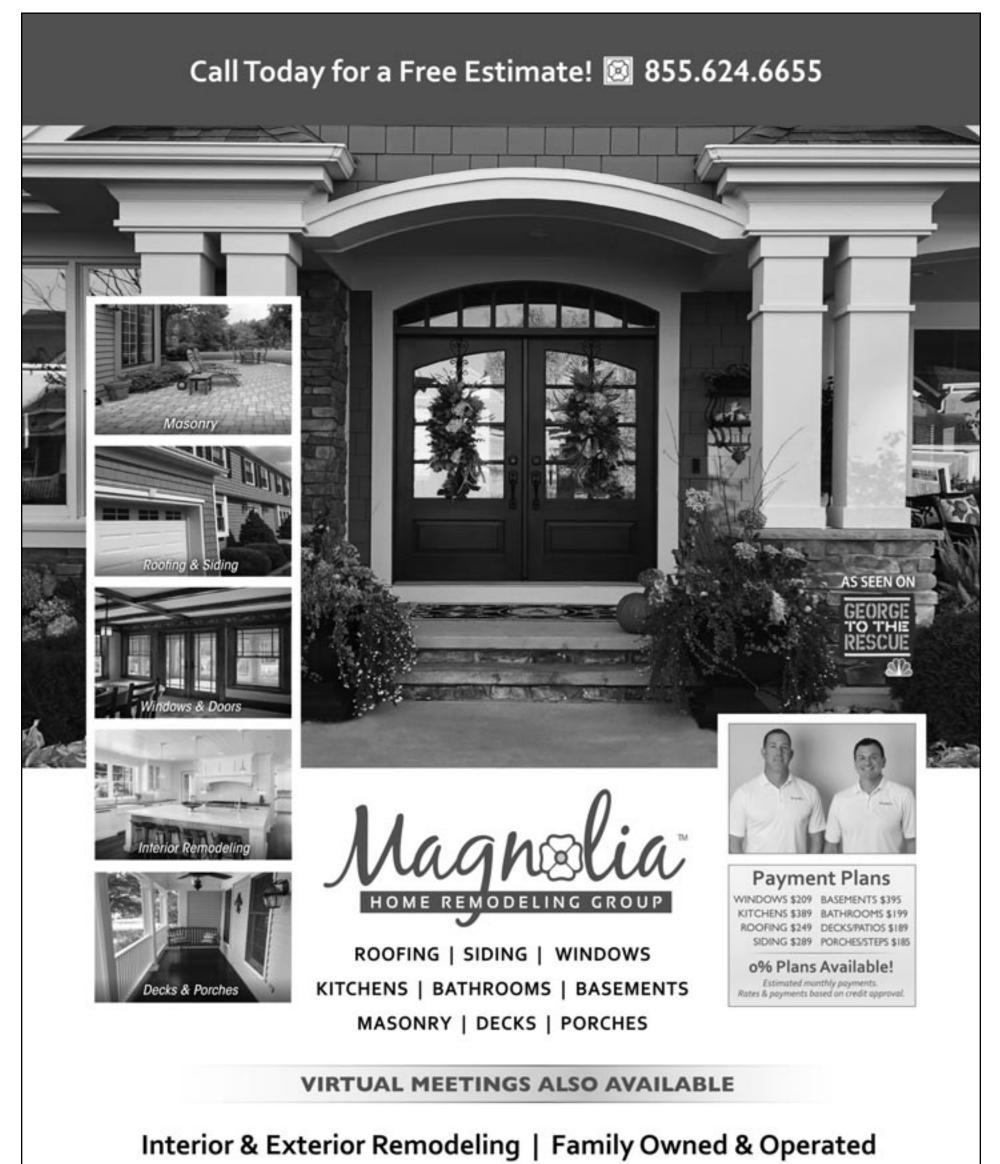
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ARTHUR L. JOHNSON SENIOR AWARDS CEREMONY

Clark Public Schools

Arthur L. Johnson High School held its Senior Awards Ceremony on June 6th, 2024, to recognize outstanding student accomplishments. Seniors were honored with several awards and scholarships recognizing outstanding contributions in the areas of academics, athletics, community service, and beyond. Superintendent Edward Grande stated, "The outpouring of support from the larger communities of Clark and Garwood for our soon-to-be graduates was heartwarming to see. We have every confidence that these graduates will continue to make us proud as they move ahead with their life journeys."



Garwood PTA Scholarship Photo by Clark Public Schools (above, l-r) Representative from Garwood PTA Kelly Ferrara, recipient Ava Wood, recipient Abigail Henkel, recipient of the Major Crincoli Citizenship/Leadership Award Kaeley Yurchak, Director of School Counseling Services & Assessment Andrew Amendola.





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VALEDICTORIAN GRACE WRIGHT AND SALUTATORIAN TAYLOR NORMANN



Clark Public Schools

Arthur L. Johnson High School Valedictorian Grace Wright and Salutatorian Taylor Normann were honored at the thirtyninth annual Recognition Breakfast for Outstanding Scholars of Union County held by the Union County Superintendents' Roundtable. The students and their families, Superintendent Edward Grande, ALJ Principal Tara Oliveira, and Director of School Counseling Services Andrew Amendola attended the event held on May 21st at Embassy Suites Hotel in Berkeley Heights.

The students, along with other scholars from

(left ,l-r) Arthur L. Johnson High School Class of 2024 Valedictorian Grace Wright and Salutatorian Taylor Normann

around Union County, were recognized for their outstanding achievements and presented with certificates by Daryl Palmieri, Interim Executive Union County Superintendent.

Grace will be attending the University of Virginia and pursuing a major in biochemistry. Taylor plans on studying Pharmaceutical Sciences and/or Chemistry at Duquesne University in the fall.

Superintendent Edward Grande stated, "Grace and Taylor's recognition at this breakfast ceremony for their extraordinary academic achievements was so very well deserved. I was thrilled to be a part of the morning."

ARTHUR L. JOHNSON PTA SCHOLARSHIP



(above, l-r) Superintendent Ed Grande, PTA President Michele Thompson, PTA Vice President/Membership Allyson Toto, recipient Jacob Kolibas, recipient Abigail Henkel, recipient Gwendalyn Cahill, recipient John Uniacke, recipient Keira Thompson, recipient Steven Vigliotti, recipient Leah Scepkowski, recipient Jordyn Toto, PTA Teasurer Lori Karnaugh, PTA Recording Secretary Kim Belverio.

Photo by Clark Public Schools

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URGENT NEED FOR ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

Child Focus

The latest class of CASA volunteers were sworn in to advocate for youth in foster care on June 11, 2024.

Union County Superior Court Judge Rosalba Comas presided over the swearing-in of the newly trained volunteers, and each can now be assigned to work with children living in foster care through no fault of their own, advocating for their best interests and ensuring their needs are met while in the child welfare system.

The nonprofit organization Child Focus operates CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, and its goal is to provide a CASA volunteer for each of the more than 250 child-victims in Union County foster care. Currently, just 30 percent of these vulnerable infants, children, and teens have the continuity and support of a CASA volunteer serving as extra eyes and ears for judges hearing their cases. The need is critical for additional volunteers to step up and serve waiting children.

"We are proud to welcome this new group of volunteers to the CASA family," said Erica Fischer-Kaslander, Executive Director of Child Focus. "These individuals have taken concrete action to make a difference in the lives of children who have experienced immense trauma, having been removed from home through no fault of their own, often due to abuse or neglect. We look forward to working with our new advocates as they serve these vulnerable youth and urge more community members to follow their example by volunteering to support

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children in need."

Judge Comas expressed her gratitude for the CASA program and the volunteers' commitment to the children they serve. "If I really want to know what's happening with a child I listen to the CASA worker, because they are 100% in tune with everything that the child needs, and everything that's happening in the child's life," she shared. "Their job is to look out for the kids, represent the children's interest, and make sure that all of their needs are being addressed. It's not just whether they need clothes or whether they need toys, it's the bond. It's what they need emotionally, it's someone they can count on."

Since caseworkers, attorneys, and foster homes are ever-changing, the CASA volunteer or advocate - is a much-needed constant in a child's life, committing to work with the child until they reach permanency in a stable home and the case closes. Children assigned a CASA volunteer are more likely to receive services, spend less time in the foster system, and experience significantly better outcomes than those without an advocate.

BECOMING A CASA - TRAINING SCHEDULED IN JULY

Becoming a CASA requires no special skills or background in child welfare. Child Focus provides thorough training on the ins and outs of advocating for abused and neglected children, and volunteers are fully supported by CASA program staff. Volunteers visit the children at least monthly and get to know the people in the

child's life, such as foster parents, biological parents, teachers, therapists, and attorneys in order to make unbiased recommendations to the family court judge that support the child's best interests.

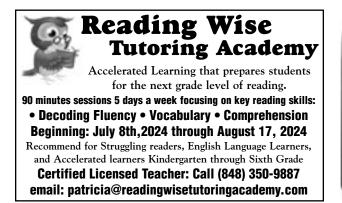
The first step to becoming an advocate is to attend an information session. Upcoming sessions will be held Monday, July 8 at 5:30 p.m. at the Elizabeth Public Library (Elmora Branch), 740 W Grand St, Elizabeth, NJ 07202; Thursday, July 11 at 5:30 p.m. at the Rahway Public Library, 2 City Hall Plaza in Rahway; Thursday July 25 at 5:30 p.m. at the Union County Colleen Fraser Building, 300 North Avenue E. in Westfield; or Monday July 1 at 10 a.m., Monday July 15 at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday July 24 at 12 p.m., and Wednesday July 31 at 5:30 p.m. at the Wayne Child Focus office, 415 Hamburg Turnpike, Suite D2. Register: casapassaicunion.org/info-session.

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, visit childfocusnj.org.



(above) The latest class of CASA volunteers were sworn in to advocate for youth in foster care on June 11, 2024. To learn more about becoming an advocate, info sessions are scheduled for July. For more information visit: casapassaicunion.org/info-session Courtesy photo





MILITARY FAMILIES SACRIFICE TOO

Michael D Boll, NJVN President

For the last few years, the New Jersey Veterans Network (NJVN) has been helping veterans with resources and assistance with their mental health conditions. Over time we came to realize that the veteran's family was being affected by their struggles as well. Our team had to learn how to include their family members in our outreach efforts. We lose 22 veterans each day to suicide, and they leave behind grieving families. Recently, we decided to make sure all veteran family members can use the same resources that our team has available for veterans. Sometimes we forget about the sacrifices our veteran families have to make and this country should appreciate them for this.

One thing our team decided to do was to have Gold Star families meet disabled veterans at our events, so they can work together and form a bond. This effort was extremely affective and immediately brought joy to both the Gold Star families and to the disabled veterans. By adding veteran family members to the team, it allows us to work together on our peer support and recreational therapy programs. We are honored to have veteran family members to work alongside us and know they are just as committed with helping our veterans live a better way of life.

If you need assistance, or would like to join the team as a volunteer, please send us your name, email, and phone number to NJVN1775@gmail.com.

ABOUT NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK

We are a group of veterans and volunteers dedicated to helping our veterans and their families live better lives. Our mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs. Help us save Vets! We are always looking for volunteers, with various skills, to join the team. If you are a veteran or family member that is in need of assistance; or are interested in volunteering, would like us to speak at your event, or contribute to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email NJVN1775@gmail.com. To learn more visit njvn.org.



(above) Michael D Boll, NJVN President, with Dina and Tom Duffy who lost their son Tom Duffy, a Marine Corporal and Afghanistan War veteran.



(above) NJVN team members participated in a 22-hour ruck march in Wildwood, NJ in remembers of Tom Duffy, a Marine Corporal and Afghanistan War veteran.





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ALJ 2024 SENIOR ATHLETIC AWARDS



(above) Unselfish Contributions to Johnson Athletics - Mike Manzella



(above) Timothy Poskay Memorial Lacrosse Scholarship was presented to Patrick Cook



(above) Peragallo Scholarships were presented to Kailiegh Netland & Joey Ortega



(above) The recipients for the Outstanding Athlete Awards were Krista LaBianca and Emilio Menicucci



(above) Investor Savings U.C.I.A.C. Scholarships were awarded to Antonio Rafoe, Leah Scepkowski, Jillian Duffy, Sean Joy, Sean Asgaralli, Martin Venezio, and Julian Bencivenga.



(above) Richard Superak Scholarships were presented to Zoey Brown, Ava Wood, Dillon Cahill, and Robert Tyra.



(above) Softball Central Jersey Group 2 Sectional State Champions



(above) Recipients for the Thomas Santaguida Sportsmanship Scholarship: Elisabeth Brighouse, Kaitlyn DOnkersloot, Thomas Huff, and Steven Vigliotti.



(above) Annual Jeffrey Felter - Michael Sot Memorial Scholarship was presented to Steven Vigliotti



(above) The recipients for the Book Scholarship were Ava DeMarco, Veronica Parzych, Lacey Vill and Joey Ortega.

Clark Public Schools

The Arthur L. Johnson Athletic Department held their 2024 Senior Athletic Awards on June 05, 2024. The evening, sponsored by the Crusader Athletic Booster Club, was held at the Gran Centurions in Clark.

All the Senior Student Athletes, their Athletic Teams, and their seasons were highlighted by their coaches while handing out plaques and awards to the student athletes.

The program continued with the acknowledgements of all of the student athletes that will be continuing their academic and athletic careers playing the sports they love in College:

- Zoey Brown Field Hockey TCNJ Lions – D3
- Patrick Cook Lacrosse
- Montclair State Univ. Red Hawks D3
- Cassandra Gloster Volleyball
 Delaware Valley University Rams D3
- Brooke Hilton Softball
- Rutgers Newark Scarlet Raiders D3
- Krista LaBianca Softball
- Montclair State Univ. Red Hawks D3
 Emilio Menicucci Football
- University of New Haven Chargers D2Joey Ortega Wrestling
- Kutztown University Golden Bears D2C. J. Pina Football
- Kean University Cougars D3
- Valeria Sourimto Fencing
- Boston College Eagles D1
- Robert Tyra Lacrosse
- Merrimack College Warriors D1
- Ava Wood Field Hockey
- Ursinus Grizzly Bears D

The evening culminated with the announcement of multiple awards and scholarships.

The 3rd Annual Timothy Poskay Memorial Lacrosse Scholarship was presented to Patrick Cook.

The 8th Annual Richard Superak Scholarships were presented to Zoey Brown (Field Hockey), Ava Wood (Field Hockey), Dillon Cahill (Basketball), and Robert Tyra (Lacrosse).

Annual Jeffrey Felter - Michael Sot Memorial Scholarship was presented to Steven Vigliotti.

6th Annual Louis Peragallo Scholarships were presented to Kailiegh Netland & Joey Ortega

Investor Savings U.C.I.A.C. Scholarships were awarded to Antonio Rafoe, Leah Scepkowski, Jillian Duffy, Sean Joy, Sean Asgaralli, Martin Venezio, and Julian Bencivenga.

Booster Club President, Mr. Jimmy Minniti, next presented the ALJ Booster Club Outstanding Athlete Awards and Book Scholarships.

The recipients for the Outstanding Athlete Awards were Krista LaBianca and Emilio Menicucci.

The recipients for the Book Scholarship were Ava DeMarco, Veronica Parzych, Lacey Vill and Joey Ortega.

Recipients for the Thomas Santaguida Sportsmanship Scholarship: Elisabeth Brighouse, Kaitlyn DOnkersloot, Thomas Huff, and Steven Vigliotti.

