

Clark Monthly NJ

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ALJ HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY 2024

Clark Public Schools

Arthur L Johnson High School held its sixty-eighth commencement ceremony on June 19th, 2024. The event was attended by Clark Board of Education President Steven Donkersloot, Clark Board of Education Vice President Thomas Lewis, Clark Board of Education members, Clark Mayor Sal Bonaccorso, Clark Superintendent Edward Grande, Garwood Board of Education President April Farrell, Garwood Superintendent Christopher Kinney, family members, teachers, administrators, and other community members.

Christopher Di Nucci, Interim, introduced those in the processional. Assistant Principal Katrina Poskay served as master of ceremonies for the event. Senior Class President Zoey Brown led the Pledge of Allegiance and Marianna Milara sang "The Star-Spangle Banner". The processional leaders included Zoey Brown and Shannon Lancellotti, Student Council President.

Salutorian Taylor Normann addressed the class stating, "When you leave here today and move on to go to either college, trade school, job, military or wherever your path may lead, I want you to remember to embrace the change. Confront the fear. And don't forget where you came from." She continued, "Do what makes you scared. Don't let anxiety and fear be the thing that stops you. Let it be what drives you to keep pushing forward."

Marianna Milara and ALJ Alumni Judah Gray performed a duet of the song "Unwritten" by Natasha Bedingfield.

Zoey Brown, Senior Class President reflected on her experience at ALJ stating, "If each of our lives is a book, then each of our books is a different volume to the series we call ALJ. The final pages may be written here tonight as peers add their final words and memory of switching their tassel from right to left." She continued, "Some of us may be introducing the new book in our series at the college of our dreams in the next two months, some going into the trade they are fascinated and driven by, and others may not be sure where their pages take them next, and that is okay."

Clark Board of Education President Steven Donkersloot stated, "As you embark on what comes next, remember the lessons learned during your years spent in school and with the community and carry those lessons with you moving forward in life. Continue to work hard, dream big, be kind, and make a difference." He congratulated the students and thanked parents, guardians, teachers, administrators, and staff for the efforts in supporting these graduates.

Superintendent Edward Grande shared the honors, accolades, and pursuits of the Class of 2024 mentioning that this class received over \$14.5 million in scholarships. He asked students to "Live with intensity and focus. Take calculated risks. Challenge both yourselves and others but make sure that the needed supports for success are in place. Love with all that you have. Be patient for you never know what others are coping with. Be the one in the room whom the others can count on to speak the truth



Photo by Clark Public Schools

about them when they are no longer there."

Tara Oliveira, principal of ALJ, addressed the graduating class about likening your life to a book. She stated, "Undoubtedly, you have learned a lot over the course of your four years. Think back to your first day of freshman year at ALJ. I'm sure you were nervous yet excited about the unknown. Remember the friendships that you forged in the classrooms, on the playing fields, the late nights you spent studying or laughing. These are the moments that have shaped you. That have defined the Arthur L. Johnson chapters of your life."

Students were awarded diplomas by Board of Education members. Names were announced by students Abigail Henkel and Shannon Lancellotti.

Valedictorian Grace Wright talked about following your passion and getting out of your comfort zone. She asked the class to consider, "What are you passionate about? What do you think about for hours on end that you just can't seem to shake? What do you need and crave to make yourself feel whole? What ignites a fire so big and bright inside you that it's too painful to keep it in?" She gave examples from her graduating class of different "sparks" of passion. She concluded with a message to "Carry yourself with kindness."

Ms. Poskay concluded the ceremony wishing the students "Blessings, peace, protection and happiness on all of the adventures that lie ahead of you. You will always be Crusaders and this will always be your home. Make us proud."



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FIRE DEPARTMENT'S 100 YEAR CELEBRATION

It is with great excitement that the Clark Volunteer Fire Department is celebrating 100 years of service and the dedication of Ladder one! The event will take place rain or shine from 12-noon until 6 p.m. on Saturday, August 17, 2024.

Festivities will be held at Clark Fire headquarters, 250 Broadway in Clark, NJ, and parking for the celebration will be just across the street, in the rear parking lot of Mother Seton Regional High School.

There will be fun for all ages, including live music entertainment from local band, The Mix, as well as bounce houses for the little ones. There will be a variety of fan favorite food trucks in attendance, such as, Cousins Maine Lobster, MozzArepas, Il Fornos a Legna, Bistro 1051, and ice cream from So Delicious Ice Cream for a sweet treat. A beer truck will be available for a few libations which will be free with the purchase of a commemorative mug. Non-alcoholic beverages will also be accessible. Plenty of seating will be provided under tents for your comfort. The event is for all to enjoy so it is strongly encouraged to share with friends, family, or neighbors!

This celebration could not be possible without the patronage of local citizens and businesses. To share our gratitude, Clark Volunteer Fire Department would love for our supporters to join in this celebration of commendable service and

the marking of an extraordinary apparatus joining our fierce armada. Whether it be to celebrate with the firefighters or to partake in the amenities, it would be the pleasure of Clark Volunteer Fire Department to host those in attendance.

Cheers to 100 years of exemplary service and plenty more from the members of the department and Ladder One!

CLARK
Volunteer
FIRE DEPARTMENT

100 YEAR CELEBRATION
Ladder ONE DEDICATION
Sat. August 17, 2024
12 pm to 6 pm
Clark Fire Headquarters @ 250 Broadway

- 🔥 50/50 Raffle!
- 🔥 Beer Truck!
- 🔥 Bounce Houses!
- 🔥 Live Music: The Mix!
- 🔥 Food Trucks:

- 📍 Cousins Maine Lobster
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LORI'S CLARK TRANSACTIONS FROM 1/1/20 TO PRESENT

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| SOLD | 11 Avon Rd. | 72 Dorset Dr. | 306 Parkway Dr. | 67 Lefferts Lane |
| 15 Westfield Ave. | 81 New York Ave. | 5 Schmidt Lane | 75 Union County Pkwy | 41 Oleander Way |
| 40 Ivy St. | 42 Kenneth Pl. | 269 Willow Way | 49 Briarwood Path | 160 Riverside Dr. |
| 15 Tudor Dr. | 1 Kathryn St. | 18 Ginesi Dr. | 549 Valley Rd. | 45 Briarheath Lane |
| 10 Washington St., Unit 03 | 29 Hillside Ave. | 7 Blake Dr. | 161 Meadow Rd. | 40 Emerald Pl. |
| 47 Briarwood Path | 9 Shetland Dr. | 43 Willow way | 16 Nassau St. | 24 Hawthorne Dr. |
| 39 King St. | 12 Yorktown Dr. | 95 Briarheath Ln. | 160 Meadow Rd. | 45 Briarwood Path |
| 56 Lexington Blvd. | 84 Wheatsheaf Rd. | 18 Terhune Rd. | 415 Valley Rd. | 21 St. Germain Dr. |
| 13 Blake Dr. | 12 Ascot Way | 1 Jarvais Ter. | 49 Joseph St. | 532 Valley Rd. |
| 213 East Lane | 301 West Lane | 39 Frances Dr. | 23 Ayers lane | 21 Orchard Ter. |
| 1168 Lake Ave., Unit 4 | 1119 Maurice Ave. | 28 Gibson Blvd. | 110 Sweet Briar Dr. | 307 West Lane |
| 45 Wendell Pl. | 1 Longfellow Lane | 41 Largo Lane | 30 Stanton St. | 64 Mildred Ter. |
| 501 Oak Ridge Rd. | 8 Wendell Place | 5 Tudor Dr. | 76 Harding Ave. | 103 Amelia Dr. |
| 309 Oak Ridge Rd. | 13 Blake Dr. | 111 Westfield Ave. | 53 Stemmer Dr. | 1132 Westfield Ave. |
| 29 Conger Way | 42 School St. | 14 Washington St. | 291 Willow Way | 22 Glenwood Ter. |
| 13 Florence Dr. | 29 Harvey Ct. | 118 Jupiter St. | 330 West Lane | 344 West Lane |
| 303 West Ln. | 18 Yorktown Dr. | 61 Sycamore Rd. | 139 Jupiter St. | 30 Haliday St. |
| 1 Rose Ter. | 45 Starlite Dr. | 15 Briarheath Ln. | 458 Oak Ridge Rd. | 30 Coldevin Rd. |
| 187 Liberty St. | 1538 Franklin St. | 43 Kathryn St. | 307 West lane | 30 Stanton St. |
| 11 Harding Ave. | 40 Conger Way | 54 Harding Ave. | 93 Jupiter St. | 131 Jupiter St. |
| 40 John St. | 15 Ayers Lane | 1 Plymouth Rd. | 166 Meadow Rd. | 63 Liberty St. |
| 77 John St. | | | | |
| 17 Hillside Ave. | | | | |

TOTAL NUMBER OF TRANSACTIONS = 251, 170 ARE IN CLARK

7TH GRADE STUDENTS RECEIVE SUPPORT THROUGH YMCA PROGRAMS

The Gateway Family YMCA's

Registration begins on August 15th for the 2024-2025 class of 7th Grade Initiative at The Gateway Family YMCA. As part of the NJ YMCA 7th Grade Initiative, a state-wide strategy designed to support and encourage teens to maintain a healthy lifestyle, The Gateway Family YMCA offers a complimentary membership for all 7th Grade Students in the local community as well as a supportive 7th Grade Leaders Club. Incoming 7th Grade students are invited to visit the YMCA and join with proof of grade and a guardian's signature. Registration is available in person at The Gateway Family YMCA – Elizabeth Branch - 135 Madison Avenue, Five Points Branch -201 Tucker Avenue, Union, Rahway Branch – 1564 Irving Street, Rahway and Wellness Center Branch – 1000 Galloping Hill Rd, Union.

All 7th Grade students are provided a complimentary full YMCA membership including wellness and fitness access, group exercise programs, basketball, pickleball, soccer, swimming, virtual YMCA360 and a variety of other programs specifically created based on their interests and feedback. The goal of the 7th Grade Initiative is to increase physical activity and support teens in the development of lifetime healthy habits, volunteerism and leadership skills while providing a safe and supportive environment with role models at the YMCA.

“We know that 7th grade is a pivotal time in youth development, and teens begin to make their own decisions on life choices. We remain committed to support the youth in our community and work together to ensure a bright future for all,” stated Melynda A. Disla, President and CEO, The Gateway Family YMCA. “As they approach their teens and sports become more competitive, there is a chance of becoming sedentary. The Y is here to provide activity, socialization, leadership skills, and staff role models to encourage healthy habits to last a lifetime.”

The 7th Grade Leader's Club, a structured program offering teens leadership and volunteer



opportunities is also available for registration on August 15th. With a focus on team building, personal growth, character and job skill development, service and volunteerism, the 7th Grade Leader's Club empowers teens to create a chart of work and volunteer projects specific to the needs in their community, identified and completed by students.

The Gateway Family YMCA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, health and community service

organization of caring staff and volunteers dedicated to strengthening the foundations of community and stands For Youth Development, For Healthy Living and For Social Responsibility. The Y impacts the community by providing quality services to people of all ages, races, faiths or incomes. Providing services for Eastern Union County and Northern Middlesex County, for 123 years, The Gateway Family YMCA has six YMCA branches in Elizabeth, Rahway and Union, serving the communities of Avenel, Carteret, Clark, Colonia, Elizabeth, Hillside, Kenilworth, Linden, Plainfield, Port Reading, Roselle, Roselle Park, Sewaren, Union, Vauxhall, Winfield Park and Woodbridge, NJ.

For more information about The Gateway Family YMCA's 7th Grade Initiative, visit www.tgfymca.org or contact the Elizabeth Branch at 908-355-9622, Five Points Branch at 908-688-9622, Rahway Branch at 732-388-0057 or Wellness Center Branch at 908-349-9622.

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A Clark History

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YMCA RAPIDS SWIM TEAM AUGUST TRYOUT DATES

The Gateway Family YMCA will have tryouts for the 2024-2025 Fall/Winter Rapids Swim Team at the Gateway Family YMCA – Rahway Branch, 1564 Irving Street, Rahway. Tryout session options include Thursday, August 8 6:00-8:00pm, Sunday, August 11 1:00-3:00pm, Wednesday August 14 6:00-8:00pm or Thursday, August 15 6:00-8:00pm. Swimmers, ages 6 –18 are invited to visit the YMCA to try out for the Rapids Swim Team during any of the tryout dates. No advance registration is necessary. Swim team tryouts consist of demonstrating abilities for each of the four competitive strokes. For individuals who have been on the swim team previously, no tryout is necessary.

“Competitive swimming at the YMCA combines a sense of collaboration and belonging for our athletes, a celebration of individual and team achievements, along with positive and supportive relationships with coaches and



mentors,” stated Melynda A. Disla, President and CEO, The Gateway Family YMCA. “We provide a continuum of aquatic programming beginning with foundational support in Safety Around Water and YMCA Swimming Lessons. The Rapids competitive swim team is the natural progression and next step for our experienced young swimmers, while providing an ideal environment for cognitive, physical, and social-emotional development.”

Registration for the 2024-2025 Fall/Winter Rapids Swim Team will begin on August 8th online at tgfymca.org or in person at the YMCA. The Gateway Family YMCA Rapids Swim Team is available for children throughout the communities served by The Gateway Family YMCA in Eastern Union County and Northern Middlesex County.

“The Gateway Family YMCA offers a competitive swim team year-round, including quality coaching and advance technique instruction, in a collaborative and competitive team atmosphere” stated Rodger D. Koerber, EVP, Chief Operating Officer, The Gateway

Family YMCA. “Our goal is to provide every athlete an opportunity to improve swimming skills and achieve success at their individual level of ability, while working together as a team.”

The YMCA competitive swim season typically runs from September through March; with dual meets starting in October and Championship meets starting in February. Because the Rapids swim team competes against other YMCA’s in the league, swim meets are held at The Gateway Family YMCA - Rahway Branch, at the site of the competing YMCA team or a championship swimming facility.

As a leading nonprofit committed to youth development, the Y has been a leader in providing swim lessons, teaching water safety and inspiring competitive swimmers. The Gateway Family YMCA continues to help youth and adults experience the joy and benefits of swimming, so they can be healthy, confident and secure in the water. Aquatic programming includes swim lessons for all ages, starting with parent/child lessons through adult, water exercise, recreational family swim, and competitive swimming. To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate, financial assistance is available to those who qualify.

To learn more about The Gateway Family YMCA’s Rapids Swim Team or other aquatics programs, please visit tgfymca.org or contact the Rahway Branch at 732-388-0057.





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- Prosciutto, onions, garlic, and basil in tomato sauce

THIRD COURSE
(Choose one)

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- Your choice of style:
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- *Eggplant Rollatini* -
- Filled with ricotta and mozzarella cheese over linguine
- *Pan Roasted Skin-On North Atlantic Salmon*
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(Choose one)

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Clark Public Schools

At the Arthur L. Johnson High School Senior Awards Ceremony held on June 6th, Richard Bartell, owner of Bartell Farm and Garden Supplies in Clark, was presented with a plaque thanking him and his family for supporting our ALJ students for the past 26 years. The Leslie Bartell Memorial Scholarship fund has provided over 1 million dollars in scholarships to ALJ seniors to advance their education. Also in attendance was former ALJ Teacher Jack Ford. One of the Leslie Bartell Memorial Scholarships is offered in his name. Additionally, two former recipients were in attendance, ALJ Principal Tara Oliveira who received the award in 2000, and Victoria Venezia, an ALJ alumni who received the award in 2021.



(above, l-r) Mr. Andrew Amendola, Director of School Counseling & Assessment; Mrs. Tara Oliveira, Principal; Recipient of this year award Grace Wright; Mr. Richard Bartell; Recipient Elizabeth Brighthouse; Recipient Damian Mnich; Former ALJ Business teacher and DECA Advisor Jack Ford; Recipient Katherine Mallick; ALJ Class of 2021 recipient of the Leslie Bartell Award Victoria Venezia.

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Peripheral Neuropathy

is a condition that affects millions of Americans, commonly resulting in pain, tingling, numbness, and other painful symptoms in the hands, legs and feet. This pain changes your life and affects how you work, how you play and how you live.

How do you know if YOU have Peripheral Nerve Damage?

Peripheral neuropathy is the consequence of damage to your peripheral nerves. There are over 100 different kinds of peripheral nerve disorders or neuropathies – some are the result of a disease like diabetes, while others can be triggered by a viral infection. Still others are the result of an injury or compression on the nerves. No matter where the problems begin, it is imperative nerve disorders are resolved as soon as possible to prevent permanent damage.

Many people suffer with pain for years, not realizing that their symptoms may be due to Peripheral Neuropathy. Symptoms start gradually, then get worse, including numbness, burning or tingling sensations and sharp, electrical-like pain. Treatment options have been limited to a small assortment of pain medications, which can lead to further issues. Ignoring the problem or masking the symptoms has never been a viable solution. If you suffer from any of the aforementioned symptoms, we can help.

New FDA-cleared treatments provide hope

Northeast Spine and Sports Medicine is pleased to announce their new program for treating Peripheral Neuropathy, which includes a combination of advanced FDA-cleared treatments with breakthrough technology that aids in healing the damaged nerves.

What does Peripheral Neuropathy look like?

Healthy Nerve Cell

Properly processes sensory information to the brain:



Damaged Nerve Cell

Sends incorrect signals to the brain, from phantom pain to tingling and numbness:



The effects of this program can be felt on the first few visits. This treatment restores, stabilizes, and rebuilds the nerves in your extremities. Treatment has also been effective in addressing painful symptoms of arthritis, MS, and other forms of chronic pain. Patients generally feel relief physically throughout the treatment period and even feel better emotionally after experiencing a reduction in pain.

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-The Northeast Spine and Sports Medicine Team

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ANNUAL L'OREAL DAY OF BEAUTY

Clark Township

Approximately 40 seniors recently had their nails done, talked about how to use and apply make-up, and went home with a goodie bag full of great make up. This Clark Recreation program has been taking place for many years and is offered to our seniors through L'Oreals Giving Back – Volunteer day.

Courtesy photos



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CHESS IN MILLBURN
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23RD ANNUAL DRIVE FOR AUTISM GOLF EVENT

Drive for Autism Foundation

The Drive for Autism Foundation is pleased to announce that its annual golf event, Drive for Autism XXIII will be held at Royce Brook Golf Club in Hillsborough, NJ on Monday September 16, 2024.

The Drive for Autism Golf Outing, which has been held since 2002 has raised and distributed over \$855,000 to local school programs. Previous beneficiaries of grants were Morris Union Jointure Commission (New Providence, NJ), Salt Brook School (New Providence, NJ), AW Roberts School (New Providence, NJ), Union County Educational Services Foundation/Crossroads School (Westfield, NJ), Educational Partnership for Instructing Children (Paramus, NJ), Young Life (greater Summit area), Eden II/Genesis Programs (Staten Island, NY), Spectrum360 - formally The Children's Institute (Verona, NJ), and Seton Foundation/Mother Francheska Elementary School (Staten Island, NY).

Grant recipients use money to fund Health and Fitness Programs, Social Skills Programs, educational curriculum and teacher training, a van for community trips and transportation to job training centers, laptop computers, computer touch screens, iPads, video projectors and educational toys and games

The golf event is the main fundraising function for the foundation. Single golfers and foursomes

are welcome as well as, product donations and corporate sponsorships. To register online please go to: birdease.com/DriveforAutismXXIII

ABOUT DRIVE FOR AUTISM FOUNDATION:

Based in New Providence, New Jersey, The Drive for Autism Foundation (EIN#20-1760417), is a 501(3)(c) tax exempt public charity that was created in the Spring of 2002 for the sole purpose of raising and distributing funds for educational facilities specializing in students with autism.

DRIVE FOR AUTISM GOLF OUTING 2024

The Drive for Autism XXIII is scheduled for Monday Sept 16, 2024, at Royce Brook Golf Club in Hillsborough, NJ. The event consists of a morning round of golf followed by a barbeque. Special events include golf contests, raffles and a silent auction of sports memorabilia, game tickets and golf trips.

To register or for additional information please visit birdease.com/DriveForAutismXXIII, call 908-451-8033

or email driveforautism@comcast.net.



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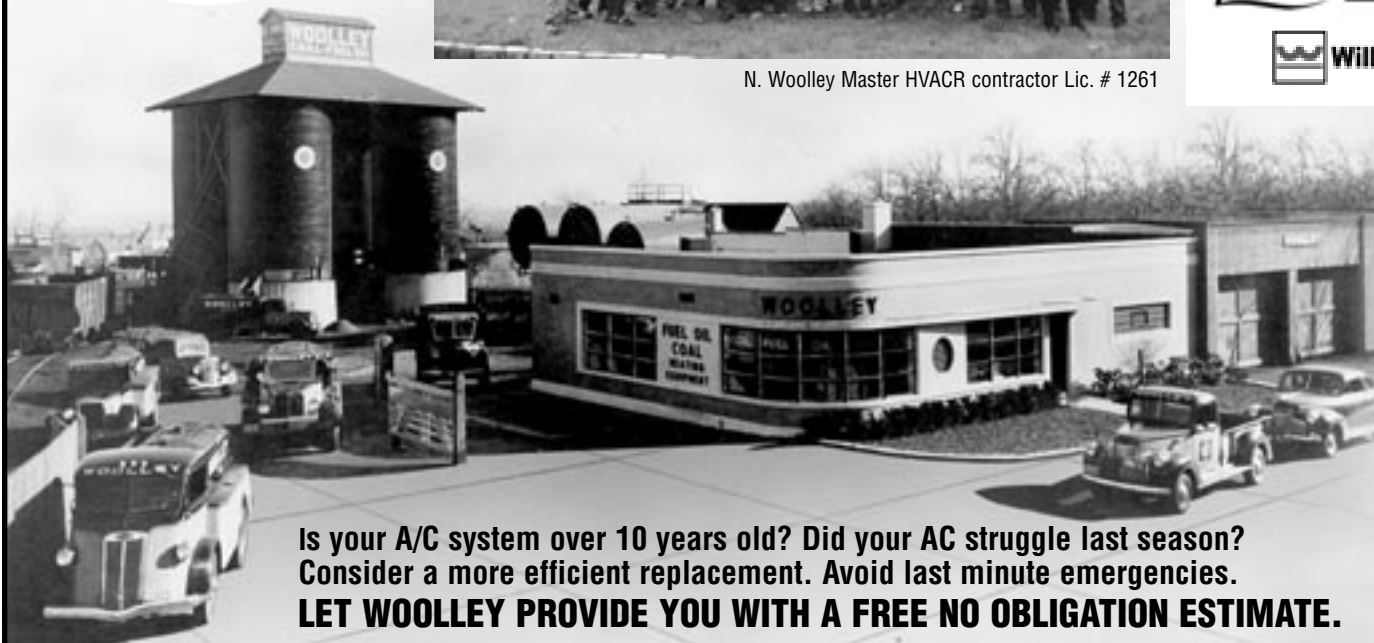
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CENTER FOR HOPE AUXILIARY FUNDRAISING CONTINUES

Submitted by Dana Gillie

The Center for Hope Hospice and Palliative Care Auxiliary hosted its annual Wine Tasting Fundraiser recently. During the event Dolores Paruta, president of the Auxiliary, presented Frank Brady, president of the Center for Hope Hospice and Palliative Care with a check for \$75,000. Our Auxiliary raises funds to support the Charity Care Program at the Center providing financing for patients who are unable

to pay for the services of the Center. Last year alone the Auxiliary was able to donate well over \$100,000. These funds are raised through events sponsored by the Auxiliary such as the Wine Tasting in the spring and our Baskets of Hope luncheon fundraiser in the fall. The Hope Chest thrift store, located on Prospect Street in Westfield, is manned fully by volunteers and is the auxiliary's major fundraiser.

The Auxiliary's next fundraiser will be the

Baskets of Hope on October 6, 2024, at the Gran Centurions in Clark. Please contact the Hope Chest, 908-233-9973, or the Center for Hope Hospice and Palliative Care, 908-889-7780, for further information regarding the event.

The Auxiliary is always happy to welcome new members and information on membership can be found at the above numbers or on the Center's website - cfhh.org.



(above) Auxiliary president, Dolores Paruta and Center for Hope Hospice and Palliative Care President Frank Brady.

Courtesy photo

KUMPF MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION CEREMONY

Clark Public Schools

Eighth graders at Carl H. Kumpf Middle School in Clark participated in a promotion ceremony on June 18, 2024. The event was attended by Board of Education President Steven Donkersloot, Board of Education members, Superintendent Edward Grande, family members, teachers, administrators, and other community members.

Salutatorian Mia Liu reflected on her memorable experience at Kumpf. She encouraged the class, "Take today to acknowledge the accomplishments you've made and how far you've come. It's also important to remember the people that have helped get us here."

Superintendent Edward Grande also addressed the class. Grande stated, "You should be very proud of what you have accomplished thus far both in the classroom and on the field and stage." He continued, "Trust that you are leaving Kumpf as well-equipped for this new challenge as you

could possibly be."

Delmonaco congratulated all of those who received awards at the awards ceremony held the previous week. He noted two special awards given then. The Citizenship Award was given to Eeshan Dixit. The Faculty Award was given to Morgan Chesney. He also recognized three teacher retirements Barbara Corby, Cheri Fabrizio, and Dr. Judith Koebli. He addressed the class stating, "When things get tough or seem overwhelming, realize you can dream, work hard, and persevere."

Valedictorian Stephen Ortiz reflected on his time at Kumpf stating, "Our time at Kumpf has prepared us not just for high school but has prepared us for life's journey. During our time at Kumpf, we've grown, we've matured, and we've developed into the young men and women who sit here today."

Assistant Principal Amanda Clarke read the names and Board of Education Members presented the students with diplomas.

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RECREATION CAMP WRAPS UP SUMMER OF 2024

Clark Recreation's famous summer rec camp began July 1st. The camp runs for 6 weeks – Monday thru Thursday – 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. "A record number of children attended the first

day – 879 children + 150 counselors!!!! The kids love the camp, as well as the counselors, and so do I - the biggest kid." – Recreation Director Ralph Bernardo admitted.

Courtesy photos



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ADVOCATE FOR ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Child Focus is seeking dedicated community members to make a difference in the lives of abused and neglected children by volunteering as Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASA volunteers. The next training session to become a child advocate kicks off in September at the Clark Public Library.

Each year in Union County, more than 250 children are removed from home, through no fault of their own, and placed in foster care. These children suffer a dual layer of trauma - first from the abuse and neglect that led to their placement in the child welfare system, and second from the upheaval and uncertainty that comes with being removed from the only home they've known. They need a reliable adult on their team, someone whose only agenda is speaking up for the best interests of that child.

That's where the nonprofit Child Focus' Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program comes in. A CASA volunteer ensures a child's needs are met while in care awaiting a safe, permanent home. Advocates visit the child regularly and connect with those in the child's life, making informed, independent, evidence-based recommendations to a family court judge. As caseworkers and resource homes frequently change, the CASA volunteer is often the only consistent adult presence in the child's life, and providing continuity during a time of turmoil and unknowns is critical.

No professional experience or prior knowledge of the child welfare system is needed, as volunteers are trained on the ins and outs of advocating for child-victims, and fully supported

by CASA staff. Volunteers complete a 36-hour in-person training course that covers a wide range of topics to ensure volunteers are prepared to navigate court proceedings, build trusting relationships with children, and collaborate with caseworkers and attorneys to create a comprehensive support network.

"Our CASA training program is designed to ensure that volunteers have the tools they need to succeed in this role and advocate for what's truly in the best interests of the child or sibling group," said Erica Fischer-Kaslander, Executive Director of Child Focus. "We teach a strengths-based approach, which helps volunteers harness the potential within each child and the support network surrounding them. It's about fostering resilience and optimism for children who have experienced very difficult circumstances, and for all those involved in their journey toward a brighter future."

In addition to educating volunteers on the child welfare system and preparing court reports, the multi-disciplinary training delves into a range of issues from trauma and mental health to poverty and cultural competency. The training incorporates role-play as well as courtroom observations, the latter of which help demystify the work. Upon successful completion of training, volunteers are equipped with the tools

needed to successfully advocate for local vulnerable children, and are sworn in by a Family Court judge.

Interested in securing a spot in the fall training? Attend one of these information sessions: Wednesday, August 14 at 5:30pm at the Union County Colleen Fraser Building, 300 North Avenue East in Westfield; Thursday, August 22 at 5:30pm at the Rahway Public Library, 2 City Hall Plaza; and Wednesday, August 28 at 12pm at the Child Focus office at 1143 East Jersey Street, 2nd Floor in Elizabeth. Sessions at the Wayne Child Focus office, Hamburg Turnpike, Suite D2, are Tuesday, August 6 at 5:30pm, Thursday, August 15 at 12pm, and Monday, August 19 at 12pm. 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.



(above) A recent CASA Volunteer class during their training session at the Child Focus office.

Courtesy photo

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YOUTH FACILITATORS SOUGHT: TRAINING IN AUG

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If you're a high school age youth interested in training to become a volunteer facilitator at Imagine the next training will take place over two days beginning on August 28th and concluding on August 29th and interested volunteers should plan to attend both days of the training. The training will be held from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. each day. Please visit Imagine's website at imaginejnj.org to learn more about volunteering with Imagine and to complete an interest form for our upcoming training. Questions about training to be an Imagine facilitator can be directed to Imagine's Clinical Program Supervisor, Abigail Preece, LPC at abigail@imaginejnj.org.

Imagine's youth facilitators partner with our adult volunteers as they facilitate Imagine's peer support groups for children. Youth facilitators are an integral part of Imagine's team as they create safe spaces where Imagine's young participants can share their stories or use play as an outlet for their feelings of grief.

One of Imagine's former youth facilitators said this about her experience as a volunteer:

"Being a part of imagine as a youth facilitator not only made my high school experience, it made me who I am today. I am so honored to be a part of a community that holds a space for so many families they can find nowhere else, as well as one that creates a space where us too as volunteers grow, and learn, and listen. At Imagine, I gained things that I don't think are accessible elsewhere, all while hopefully adding to someone else's life." The staff at Imagine are so grateful for the time that youth volunteers commit to their programs and for the unique perspective and empathy that they bring to their support groups.

Imagine is a 501c3 that offers grief and loss education and training to the community and free year-round grief support groups for children ages 3-18 and young adults 19-30 who are coping with a loss due to death. Concurrently, support groups are available for the parents and guardians of the children in the groups and offered in English and Spanish. For more information please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imaginejnj.org or visit our website at imaginejnj.org.



(above, l-r) Participants in Imagine's recent youth facilitator training proudly displaying their certificates of completion: Tim Jiao, Addy Oni, Ava Handler, Amanda Linde and Lauren Glasofer

Courtesy photo

BLOOD DRIVES

Clark Volunteer Emergency Squad

The Clark Volunteer Emergency Squad (CVES) has scheduled more blood drives through The New Jersey Blood Services Division of the New York Blood Center. During the summer months, blood supplies drop to critical levels. People are more active, and injuries occur more frequently. Many of the injured need blood to survive. This is above the chronically ill who also require blood.

Blood drives are scheduled for the following dates: August 6th and 19th. You can stop during lunch, on your way home from work or anytime between 1:00 – 7:00 p.m.

The August 19th drive is in memory of Gary Letizia, the late father of the squad's Medical Director, Dr. Matt Letizia. Gary had leukemia and his life was extended thanks to the blood people donated.

Adults must wait eight weeks between donations. Donating is safe and easy. The Clark Squad House is located at 875 Raritan Road, Clark and offers private, off-street, lighted parking.

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Chess Club

Thursdays, August 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29
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New members and all levels are welcome!

Thursday Afternoon Movies

Thursdays, August 1, 22 & 29 at 1pm

Enjoy a movie for adults.

Science Heroes: Adventure of the Lost Treasure

Thursday, August 1 at 4pm

Join us on a treasure-hunting adventure deep within the jungle!

Stories and More

Fridays, August 2 & 9 at 10am

This program is designed for children ages 3 and up. Registration is required.

Friday Family Flicks

Fridays, August 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 at 2pm

Family friendly movie and popcorn!

Tales for Tots

Monday, August 5 at 9:45am
OR at 10:30am

Geared toward ages 2-3 with a caregiver. Older children are welcome! Please register.

Baby Bookworms

Tuesday, August 6 at 10am

Babies and toddlers are invited to listen to some books, and learn some songs, rhymes, lap bounces, and fingerplays.

Patches and Stitches

Tuesdays, August 6, 13, 20 & 27
from 12pm - 2pm

Bring your quilt or other crafty project and visit with the members of the quilting club.

Adventures in Food Around the World for Kids

Tuesday, August 6 at 3pm

At this session we will be making Brigadeiro, a great Brazilian dessert similar to bonbons!

Totally New Tuesdays

Tuesdays, August 6, 13, 20 & 27 at 6:30pm

Enjoy a new movie for adults just released to DVD on our big screen. Please check our online calendar or visit the library to check the movies being shown.

Adventures in Crafting

Around the World for Kids

Wednesday, August 7 at 3pm

Adventure begins at the library this summer!

Join us for a weekly craft program for elementary aged children with a featured craft from regions of the world! This week we will visit South America and do some yarn weaving.

The Amazing Race - Library Edition

Thursday, August 8 from 4pm to 7pm

Drop in between 4 pm and 7 pm and take an amazing race around the world.

Needlework Club

Saturday, August 10 from 10am to 2pm

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Open Play For Little Ones:

Mondays, August 12, 19, & 26,

Tuesdays, August 13, 20 & 27, and

Fridays, August 16 & 30 from 10am-11am

There's no story time today, but please feel free to drop in for open play with the library's toys!

Outsmart the Scammers

Wednesday, August 14 at 11am

Join us for this informative seminar on various financial scams and what you can do to protect yourself. Topics will include grandparents scams, lottery/sweepstakes scams, and romance/long-distance relationship scams.

Lego Master Builders

Thursday, August 15 at 3:30pm

Create your own LEGO® structures to be displayed in the Children's area of the library!

LEGO® are provided by the library. For children entering grades K - 5.

Light snacks will be served.

Kumpf Middle School Summer Reading Book Discussion

Thursday, August 15 at 2pm

Join us to discuss the required summer reading title "Eleven" by Tom Rogers. Share your thoughts and questions about the book and learn what your classmates think as well.

Finger Painting

Friday, August 23 at 10:30am

No childhood is complete without some good, old-fashioned, messy finger painting.

We will read a story and then make some squishy, colorful creations.

Wear some old clothes!

Evening Book Club

Monday, August 26 at 7pm

We will be discussing "Malibu Rising" by Taylor Jenkins Reid. Please speak with a librarian or email reference@clarklibrary.org if you need a copy of the book.

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| Ballantine | 1.75L | \$30.99 |
| Buchanan's 12yrs old | 750ml | \$29.99 |
| Buchanan's 12yrs old | 1.75L | \$57.99 |
| Bushmill's Irish | 1.75L | \$46.99 |
| Chivas Regal | 750 ml | \$31.99 |
| Chivas Regal | 1.75L | \$62.99 |
| Chivas Regal 18 yrs old | 750 ml | \$82.99 |
| Crown Royal | 750ml | \$29.99 |
| Crown Royal | 1.75L | \$50.99 |
| Dewars 12 yrs old | 750ml | \$26.99 |
| Dewars 12 yrs old | 1.75L | \$45.99 |
| Dewars White Label | 750 ml | \$20.99 |
| Dewars White Label | 1.75L | \$33.99 |
| Gentleman Jack | 750ml | \$29.99 |
| Gentleman Jack | 1.75L | \$52.99 |
| Glenmorangie 10 yrs old | 750ml | \$40.99 |
| Glenlivet 12 yrs old | 750 ml | \$56.99 |
| Glenlivet 12 yrs old | 1.75L | \$104.99 |
| Grants | 750ml | \$15.99 |
| Grants | 1.75L | \$24.99 |
| Jack Daniels | 750ml | \$27.99 |
| Jack Daniels | 1.75L | \$48.99 |
| Jack Daniels Fire | 750ml | \$27.99 |
| Jack Daniels Fire | 1.75L | \$48.99 |
| Jameson | 750ml | \$29.99 |
| Jameson | 1.75L | \$58.99 |
| Jim Beam Whisky | 1.75L | \$32.99 |
| Johnnie Walker Blue | 750ml | \$193.99 |
| Johnnie Walker Blue | 1.75L | \$449.99 |
| Johnnie Walker Black | 750ml | \$29.99 |
| Johnnie Walker Black | 1.75L | \$59.99 |
| Johnnie Walker Double Black | 750ml | \$35.99 |
| Johnnie Walker Red | 750ml | \$19.99 |
| Johnnie Walker Red | 1.75L | \$33.99 |
| Macallan 12yrs old (double cask) | 750ml | \$74.99 |
| Makers Mark | 750ml | \$29.99 |
| Makers Mark | 1.75L | \$56.99 |

GIN

| | | |
|-----------------|-------|---------|
| Beefeater | 1.75L | \$36.99 |
| Bombay Sapphire | 1.75L | \$39.99 |
| Seagram's gin | 1.75L | \$24.99 |
| Tanqueray | 750ml | \$22.99 |
| Tanqueray | 1.75L | \$38.99 |

COGNAC & BRANDY

| | | |
|----------------------|-------|----------|
| Courvoisier V.S. | 750ml | \$35.99 |
| Courvoisier V.S. | 1.75L | \$66.99 |
| Remy Martin V.S.O.P. | 750ml | \$50.99 |
| Remy Martin V.S.O.P. | 1.75L | \$129.99 |

CORDIALS

| | | |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| Bailey's Irish Cream | 1.75L | \$47.99 |
| Duggan's Irish Cream | 1.75L | \$32.99 |
| Kahlua | 1.75L | \$45.99 |
| Krupnik | 750ml | \$20.99 |
| Licor 43 | 750ml | \$27.99 |
| Licor 43 | 1.75L | \$45.99 |

VODKA

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Absolut (regular) | 750ml | \$21.99 |
| Absolut (regular) | 1.75L | \$31.99 |
| Belvedere Organic Vodka | 1L | \$39.99 |
| Belvedere Organic Vodka | 1.75L | \$49.99 |
| Ciroc (all types) | 750ml | \$29.99 |
| Ciroc (all types) | 1.75L | \$57.99 |
| Finlandia | 750ml | \$16.99 |
| Finlandia | 1.75L | \$28.99 |
| Grey Goose | 750ml | \$25.99 |
| Grey Goose | 1.75L | \$39.99 |
| Ketel One | 750ml | \$19.99 |
| Ketel One | 1.75L | \$39.99 |
| Luksusowa Vodka | 1.75L | \$25.99 |
| Pinnacle (all types) | 750ml | \$11.99 |
| Pinnacle (80 proof) | 1.75L | \$17.99 |
| Skyy | 1.75L | \$21.99 |
| Sobieski | 750ml | \$12.99 |
| Sobieski | 1.75L | \$19.99 |
| Stolichnaya (all types) | 1.75L | \$30.99 |
| Tanqueray Sterling | 750ml | \$19.99 |
| Tanqueray Sterling | 1.75L | \$30.99 |
| Three Olives (all types) | 1L | \$19.99 |
| Tito's Vodka | 1.75L | \$31.99 |

RUM

| | | |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| Bacardi Light & Gold | 750ml | \$13.99 |
| Bacardi Light & Gold | 1.75L | \$20.99 |
| Captain Morgan Spice | 1.75L | \$27.99 |
| Malibu | 750ml | \$20.99 |
| Malibu | 1.75L | \$30.99 |

TEQUILA

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Deleon Blanco Tequila | 750ml | \$37.99 |
| Deleon Blanco Tequila | 1.75L | \$59.99 |
| Patron Silver | 750ml | \$44.99 |
| Patron Silver | 1.75L | \$81.99 |
| Cantera Negra Coffee Tequila | 750ml | \$29.99 |

BEER

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|------|---------|
| Becks (12oz) 24pk | 24pk | \$29.99 |
| Blue Moon | 24pk | \$36.49 |
| Bud and Bud Lite cans | 30pk | \$26.99 |
| Bud and Bud Lite loose bottles | 24pk | \$24.99 |
| Coors Lite (24oz) cans | 12pk | \$18.99 |
| Coors Lite/Miller Lite loose bottles | 24pk | \$23.99 |
| Coors Lite/Miller Lite | 30pk | \$26.99 |
| Corona/Corona Lite loose bottles | 24pk | \$32.99 |
| Dab (16oz) cans | 24pk | \$26.99 |
| Founders All Day IPA | 15pk | \$17.49 |
| Heineken/Heineken Lite bottles | 24pk | \$31.99 |
| Land Shark | 24pk | \$29.99 |
| Lech (500ml) | 20pk | \$32.99 |
| Modelo Especial cans | 24pk | \$29.99 |
| Pabst Blue Ribbon cans | 30pk | \$20.99 |
| Pilsner Urquell | 24pk | \$35.99 |
| Sam Adams Boston Lager | 24pk | \$37.99 |
| Stella Artois loose bottles | 24pk | \$32.99 |
| Super Bock | 24pk | \$32.99 |
| Yuengling Lager bottles | 24pk | \$23.99 |
| Zywiec (11.2oz) | 24pk | \$21.99 |

WINE

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Bartenura Moscato | 750ml | \$12.99 |
| Barone Fini Pinot Grigio | 750ml | \$11.99 |
| Beringer White Zinfandel | 750ml | \$ 5.99 |
| Beringer White Zinfandel | 1.5L | \$ 9.49 |
| Black Box (All Types) | 3L | \$19.99 |
| Carnivor Cabernet Sauvignon | 750ml | \$10.99 |
| Casal Garcia Vinho Verde | 1L | \$ 6.99 |
| Cavit (All Types) | 1.5L | \$15.99 |
| Clos du Bois Chardonnay | 1.5 L | \$19.99 |
| Dom Perignon | 750ml | \$264.99 |
| Dreaming Tree (All Types) | 750ml | \$13.99 |
| Ecco Domani Pinot Grigio | 750ml | \$11.99 |
| Adagio Pinot Grigio | 1.5L | \$10.99 |
| Freixenet Brut, Extra, Extra Dry | 750ml | \$11.99 |
| Gato Negro (All Types) | 1.5L | \$ 9.99 |
| Gazela Vinho Verde | 750ml | \$ 6.49 |
| Joseph Carr Cabernet Sauvignon | 750ml | \$21.99 |
| Kendall Jackson Vintners Chardonnay | 750ml | \$13.99 |
| Kim Crawford Sauvignon Blanc | 750ml | \$14.99 |
| Louis Jadot Beaujolais Villages | 750ml | \$13.99 |
| Louis Jadot Pouilly Fuisse | 750ml | \$26.99 |
| Martini & Rossi Asti | 750ml | \$11.97 |
| Menage a Trois Red | 750ml | \$10.99 |
| Mi Amore Red | 750ml | \$ 8.99 |
| Moet Imperial Champagne | 750ml | \$46.99 |
| Noble Wine 337, 667 | 750ml | \$11.99 |
| Papi (All Types) | 1.5L | \$11.99 |
| Ruffino Chianti | 750ml | \$ 9.99 |
| Ruffino Chianti | 1.5L | \$14.99 |
| Ruffino Pinot Grigio | 1.5L | \$14.99 |
| Ruffino Tan label | 750ml | \$19.99 |
| Santa Margerita Pinot Grigio | 750ml | \$22.09 |
| Silver Oak Alexander Valley Cabernet | 750ml | \$115.99 |
| Simi Chardonnay | 750ml | \$13.09 |
| Woodbridge (All Types) | 1.5L | \$12.49 |

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