# Garwood Times II

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# **LINCOLN SCHOOL VISITS THE STATE HOUSE**

Garwood Public Schools

In June, fifth through eighth grade members of the Garwood Public Schools Student Council visited the State House in Trenton for a guided tour where they expanded their knowledge of state symbols and the legislative process. A previously scheduled meeting with Senator Jon Bramnick (District 21) was one of the highlights of the students' visit. Senator Bramnick led the students in a discussion about the path a bill takes from starting as an idea to becoming a law.

As the group made their way from a conference room to the rotunda, Senator Bramnick introduced them to Assemblywoman Nancy Munoz who also represents legislative district 21, where the students reside. Assemblywoman Munoz shared further insights about the responsibilities of elected officials with the students.

Outside of the Governor's office, Senator Bramnick reached out to Governor Murphy who came from his office to meet with students in the rotunda, graciously posing for several photographs.

Afterwards, NJ Supreme Court nominee John Jay Hoffman passed through the rotunda, and the senator introduced the state's former attorney general to the students. He, too, graciously offered words of advice to the students; he encouraged them to, "...work hard and find passion in what you do, and you will end up in a good spot."

At the conclusion of the meeting with Senator Bramnick, he answered multiple questions and even posed for selfies with the students! Before travelling back to Garwood, students stopped by a committee room in the State House Annex to listen to testimony provided by invited guests to the Assembly Higher Education Committee.



(above) Garwood students and school staff, New Jersey State Senator Jon Bramnick, and Governor Phil Murphy.



(above) State Senator Jon Bramnick engaged the students and answered multiple questions.

Photos by Garwood Public Schools

Although members of the Garwood Schools Student Council frequently visit the State House on their annual field trip, Principal Mary Emmons and Student Council advisor Tamara Benc, who both chaperoned the trip, agreed that this 2024 visit was extraordinary. Students, too, remarked on and were impressed by the knowledge, friendliness, sense of humor, and approachability of their senator.



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# Garwood Times "

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### **HONORING THE LESLIE BARTELL FOUNDATION**

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

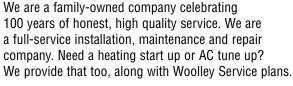
seniors to advance their education. Also in attendance was former ALJ Teacher Jack Ford. One of the Leslie Bartell Memorial Scholarships is offered in his name.

Additionally, two former recipients were in attendance, ALJ Principal Tara Oliviera who received the award in 2000, and Victoria Venezio, an ALJ alumni who received the award in 2021.



(above, l-r) Mr. Andrew Amendola, Director of Counseling & Assessment; Mrs. Tara Oliveira, Principal; Grace Wright Recipient; Mr. Richard Bartell; Recipient Elizabeth Brighouse; 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 Venezio.

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## FOR THE MCCOMBS FAMILY, PONY CLUB IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

For the McCombs household of Garwood, NJ, the United States Pony Club has become a central part of their lives. What started as a few horseback riding lessons at Watchung Stables, Union County Parks, during the COVID-19 pandemic has blossomed into a full-fledged family passion for equestrian sports.

In 2022, the McCombs family discovered Whispering Lake Equestrian, a private hunterjumper barn in Pittstown, NJ. Here, they were introduced to the United States Pony Club (USPC), New Jersey Region. The family quickly became active members and volunteers of the Amwell Valley Hounds Pony Club. James McCombs now serves as District Commissioner, and Victoria McCombs volunteers as a Pony Club teacher, providing weekly horse and barn management lessons to aspiring equestrians aged 7-13. The United States Pony Club is renowned for its emphasis on character building, teamwork, and leadership. According to their website, (ponyclub.org) the USPC provides opportunities for members to learn about horses and riding while developing important life skills such as responsibility, perseverance, and respect. Pony Club members participate in a variety of disciplines, including dressage, show jumping, and eventing, and they gain hands-on experience in horse care and management.

Sarah McCombs, 13, entering 8th grade at Garwood Lincoln School, already has a promising future in equestrian sports. Ms. McCombs represented New Jersey in dressage at the 2024 United States Pony Club Championships. The annual event brings together the best young riders from across the country to compete in various equestrian disciplines. "The U.S. Pony Club allows me to compete with professional riders and to learn from top trainers" said Sarah McCombs, "plus, you make such good

(above) July 19th Sarah McCombs and "Sin City GSH" during Standard Training Level Test 3, where she placed 3rd out of 24 overall, and the only Junior Young Rider to place top 3 against professional adult riders.

For the McCombs household of Garwood, NJ, friends at the barn and the rallies and else!" "At the barn, you'll see an 8-year-old girl competitions!" further fueling her passion for the tell a 1,200-pound animal what to do, that takes character and confidence! Hard work, inclusion,

In preparation for the 2024 Pony Club Championships, Sarah trained with Lauren Chumley, an international-level dressage rider who is currently in Paris to support her trainer, Olympian Marcus Orlab, a member of Team USA's Paris 2024 Olympic Equestrian Team. "Sarah has had these opportunities thanks to the United States Pony Club and our amazing barn family," said Victoria McCombs. "Equestrian sports can be prohibitive, the United States Pony Club changes that- it allows anyone interested in equestrian sports to learn about these amazing animals, how to care for them, and how to safely ride. James McCombs added, "These kids work hard—they muck stalls, groom horses, train, and learn about equine health, rider safety, land conservation, and self-advocacy. It's something else!" "At the barn, you'll see an 8-year-old girl tell a 1,200-pound animal what to do, that takes character and confidence! Hard work, inclusion, discipline, teamwork, and good character are very important to our family." Said Victoria McCombs. Sarah regularly competes in hunterjumper and dressage shows throughout New Jersey, representing Whispering Lake Equestrian and Amwell Valley Hounds Pony Club at the regional level, and the New Jersey Pony Club at the national level. Her dedication and hard work have set her on a path to achieving her equestrian dreams.

The McCombs family's journey with the United States Pony Club is a testament to the organization's mission of making equestrian sports accessible and enriching for all young people. The Garwood community can take pride in Sarah's athletic achievements and the values instilled through her Pony Club experience.



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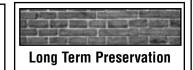
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## **FOOTBALL TEAM VISITS FIRST CHILDREN'S SCHOOL**

Clark Public Schools

Members of the Arthur L. Johnson High School Crusader Football Team visited the First Children's School, located in Plainfield, NJ on August 15, 2024.

The First Children's School in Plainfield is a stepping off point for children who need highly specialized educational services for some period of time in their lives. First Children's services extend into the home districts of students with special needs where they are invited to work with faculty and administration to assure that

children with special needs get cutting-edge services in their home schools. The dedicated staffs, including teachers, aides, and therapists, are prepared to deliver their services in the schools and homes of the children they serve. First Children partners with districts and other providers like Children's Specialized Hospital and Eden Autism Services to make sure that the children receive the very best services possible.

Members of the team went into various classrooms and participated in a multitude of activities relating to the school's curriculum.

Anthony DelConte, Head Football Coach, had this to say about the event. "The football program was thrilled to be able to assist with the daily routines and to participate in activities held at the First Children's School. It was fun watching our Crusader Student Athletes as they interacted with the children, and I think both groups not only enjoyed the experience but learned a lot while doing it."

The team would like to thank everyone associated with the First Children's School for welcoming us being a part of a fabulous day.



(above) The 2024 Arthur L. Johnson Crusader Football Team visits the First Children's School on Thursday, August 15, 2024.





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## **REMEMBERING 9/11**

The Garwood Partnership for Arts and Culture (GPAC) invites members of the Garwood community to share their remembrances of September 11, 2001. Original poems, prose, or memoirs of the events of 9/11 may be submitted to cnolde@garwood.org by September 8th for consideration. The max length of submissions is 2 pages, double spaced.

A 9/11 Remembrance Event will be taking place on Wednesday, September 11, 202,4 at 7 p.m. at Garwood Borough Hall (403 South Avenue, Garwood).

For more information, please contact cnolde@garwood.org or call (908) 789-0710.

### **VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT**

Borough of Garwood

Are you a Garwood resident looking to make an impact within the Garwood community? The Borough of Garwood is seeking volunteers to serve on its newly established Municipal Alliance Committee, a Garwood-based prevention committee that will identify substance use disorder prevention and education needs in the Garwood community and will plan, coordinate, and conduct alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention activities. The committee is part of the NJ Municipal Alliance Program, which is located in all 21 counties in NJ and provides over 3,800 prevention programs throughout the state. The Borough of Garwood's Municipal Alliance Committee will meet on a quarterly basis and will hold its first meeting on Monday, September 16th at 7 pm at Borough Hall (403 South Avenue, Garwood).

For more information on the Municipal Alliance, please visit: www.garwood.org/municipalalliance. If interested in becoming a committee member or for questions, please contact Patricia Vazquez, Municipal Alliance Coordinator, at (908) 789-0710 ext. 102 or by email at p-vazquez@garwood.org.

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## **GARWOOD SENIOR CITIZEN NEWS**

#### Submitted by Carol Lombardo

The Garwood Senior Citizen Club enjoyed a wonderful river cruise on the beautiful Manasquan River and Barnegat Bay on August 8th. The seniors enjoyed a sumptuous buffet along with the relaxing sights of the beautiful river

The Senior Club meets on the first and third Thursday of each month at noon at the Knights of Columbus building located on South Avenue in Garwood. Entrance is through the Willow Avenue parking lot at the rear. The building is handicap accessible and all on one level. All Garwood residents, age 55 and over, are welcome to join. Annual dues are \$10 per person. Seniors 90 years and older are exempt from paying dues.

The Club has lunch and plays bingo at every meeting. Several times a year, speakers are invited in to discuss timely topics.



Courtesy photo





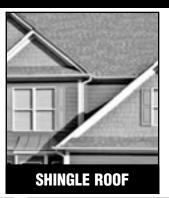




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### **GREEK FEST IN WESTFIELD - SEPT 27-29**

Get ready to immerse yourself in the vibrant culture of Greece at the highly anticipated annual Westfield Greek Festival, NJ Greek Fest, hosted by Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Westfield. This beloved community event promises a weekend filled with delectable Greek cuisine, lively entertainment and family-friendly activities, including an exciting Mega 50/50 Raffle.

The festival will take place from Friday, September 27- Sunday, September 29 at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, located at 250 Gallows Hill Road, Westfield, NJ. Highlights of this year's festivities include:

Authentic Greek Cuisine: Indulge in mouthwatering gyros, souvlaki, spanakopita, baklava, loukoumades and other traditional homemade Greek delicacies.

Live Music and Dance Performances: Enjoy live performances of Greek music and traditional dance, featuring vibrant costumes and energetic routines that celebrate Greece's rich cultural heritage.

Marketplace: Browse our emporium offering Greek-themed arts, crafts, jewelry, and souvenirs, perfect for taking home a piece of Greece.

Kids' Activities: Keep the little ones entertained with games, face painting, and other fun activities designed just for them.

Mega 50/50 Raffle: Win up to \$10,000 in our Mega 50/50 Raffle. Purchase a raffle ticket for 7 chances to win up to half of the total amount collected from ticket sales. Only 500 tickets will be sold at only \$100 each, maximizing your odds of winning!

"We are excited to welcome the community to our annual NJ Greek Fest, where everyone can experience the warmth and hospitality of Greece right here in Westfield," said Fr. Peter Delvizis, presiding priest of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. "It's a wonderful opportunity for people of all backgrounds to come together, enjoy delicious food, lively music, and celebrate our cultural traditions."

Admission to the festival is \$2. A portion of the festival proceeds will benefit Holy Trinity's community outreach programs.

Join us in celebrating Greek culture, heritage, and community spirit at the annual Westfield Greek Festival. For more information and updates, please visit nigreekfest.com and follow @njgreekfest on Instagram and Facebook.

About Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church: Holy Trinity is a cornerstone of the Westfield community and surrounding area, founded in 1966, is dedicated to enriching lives through faith, fellowship, and service. Our annual NJ Greek Fest is one of the many ways we connect with our neighbors and celebrate our shared values.

For media inquiries, please contact: Jeannie Arida, Media Liaison, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, (908) 233-8533,



## **LIBRARY EVENTS**

For more information and to register for programs, call 908-789-1670 or email garwoodlibrary@garwood.org. Mon through Thu, 9 am to 8 pm; Fri 10 am to 4:30 pm; Sat 10 am to 1 pm starting Sep 7; Su Closed The Library will be closed Monday, September 2, 2024, for Labor Day.

#### **Knitting Club**

9/9, 9/16. 9/23 and 9/30/2024 at 10:30 am Learn how to knit or show others how it's done while enjoying fun conversation. Open to all levels. No Registration required. Yarn and needles provided to newcomers

#### **Monday Book Club**

9/16/2024 at 1 pm

Join us for a lively discussion of this month's book, Mrs. By Caitlin Macey.

#### Music Production Workshop and Book Signing 9/17/2024 at 7 pm

Gabriel Costa Gomes, Garwood resident and author of "4 Horsemen of Mixing & Music Production" will discuss how to get an industry quality sound using what you already have.

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Did you know September is the new January for people wanting to change their health and fitness?

The 6-week "holiday season" pales in comparison to three fun-filled months of summer.

It's so easy to slip off the fitness wagon and tell yourself, "I'll wait until after Labor Day."

Well that time is here and if you want to return to pre-summer shape (or if it's been a while since you've been in shape), then our **Fit for Fall 50-Day Challenge** may be

just what you need. It kicks off on September 23.

Here's what you'll get:

- A thorough fitness assessment to determine your starting point
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- Your 50-Day Waist-Shrinking Healthy Habit Checklist
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- RESULTS!
- \*This is our most popular fitness challenge of the year, so spaces are limited to the first 12 people!
- \*\*Added BONUS for your best value!
- \*\*The Challenge begins on September 23, but you can sign up now and get started early at no extra charge!



To claim your spot or to learn more, call 908-389-8009 or scan the QR Code below.



This program is valued at \$699, but readers of this newspaper, like you, can get it for just \$499!

(Mention this newspaper when registering)



"We are THE local personal training gym for "non-gym people" who want to lose weight, feel younger and age better without crazy fad diets or workouts designed for people half their age!"



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