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UPCOMING HOLIDAY EVENTS SCHEDULE

The Garwood Recreation Committee announces its upcoming winter holiday events and activities including the Holiday Tree Lighting, Family Skate Night, Holiday House Decorating Contest, Santa's Mailbox, and the Menorah Lighting.

The Annual Holiday Tree Lighting will take place on **Saturday, November 30th from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.** at Borough Hall (403 South Avenue). The event will feature music, fun family friendly activities, vendors, food trucks, and special guest, Santa Claus! The Garwood Police Department will also be collecting donations for Toys for Tots. This event is free and open to the public.

The Garwood Family Skate Night will also take place that same evening on **Saturday, November 30th from 6 - 8 p.m.** at Warinanco Sports Center (One Park Drive, Roselle). Garwood residents are invited to skate for free! Pre-registration for the Garwood Family Skate Night is required and can be done by visiting: garwoodrec.com

The Festival of Lights at the Garwood Annual Menorah Lighting will be held at the end of **December during Hanukkah**

starting at 6:30 p.m. with the date to be announced. The event will take place at Borough Hall (403 South Avenue) and will feature a laser light show, music, cider, and donuts. This event is free and open to the public.

The Annual Holiday House Decorating Contest will again take place with entries being accepted between **December 9th - 19th**. Garwood residents can enter the contest for a chance to win a gift card (and bragging rights!).

The children of Garwood are again invited to drop a letter into **Santa's Mailbox this year by December 20th** for a reply by Christmas. Santa's Mailbox will be located at the Garwood Public Library located at 411 Third Avenue in Garwood starting in December.

For more information about the Garwood Recreation Committee's upcoming holiday events and activities, please email recreation@garwood.org or call (908) 789-0710 ext. 5.

For announcements and updates, follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/garwoodreccom or on Instagram at instagram.com/garwoodnj.

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EMMA HERKO'S SIGNING DAY

Submitted by Gus Kalikas

On Wednesday, November 13, 2024, various staff members and administration at Arthur L. Johnson High School participated in a signing day ceremony to honor Emma Herko (Women's Soccer) for her years of service to her sport. This event commemorated her signing of a Nation Letter of Intents to play NCAA Collegiate Athletics at Drexel University for the Dragons.

SOME OF HER SOCCER ACCOLADES INCLUDE:

- Four-Year Varsity Gold Letter Winner Grades 9th - 12th.
- Varsity Girls Soccer Captain Grade 12th ALJ.
- Varsity Girls Soccer Captain Grade 10th and 11th at Wardlaw.
- Varsity Girls Soccer All-GMC Blue Division Grade 10th and 11th.
- Emma finished her high school soccer career with an outstanding 66 points.
- Gothia Cup captain and two-time semifinalist (International Club Tournament in Sweden).
- Play Semi-Pro soccer in the summer with Paisley FC in the USLW.
- She was her Club and Super Y Captain with Union County FC.
- US Futsal National Team invitee.
- Helped earn Champions Cup qualification at IMG Academy for STA.
- Outside of soccer, Emma is involved in:
 - Varsity Winter and Spring Track Grades 9th - 11th while at Wardlaw.
 - Varsity Girls Track & Field Captain

at Wardlaw.

- Varsity Track 800m School Record Holder at Wardlaw.
- Peer Tutor & a Tutor for English Second Language students.
- Involved in Active Minds & Spanish National Honor Society.
- Private soccer coach and trainer & is a mentor for young female athletes.
- Paid internship at a Physical Therapy and Sports Performance.

"Emma has been a wonderful addition to the Johnson Girls Soccer program. Her leadership, character, and work ethic are evident and speaks through her love of the game. Drexel University will be gaining an exceptional student athlete to

their program." Said Head Girls' Soccer Coach Brittany Casares.

Emma maintained a GPA of over 4.8 while taking honors and AP classes throughout her high school career. In addition, she volunteers teaching ESL through a program in Plainfield. Emma has coached young athletes, both independently and alongside her coaches, working with players aged 4 to 13. She is currently shadowing at the Training Ground, gaining experience in physical therapy, her intended profession.

Crusader Athletics would like to wish the best of luck to Emma as she culminates her wonderful career for the Crusaders this year and continues her academic and athletic success as a collegiate student athlete.



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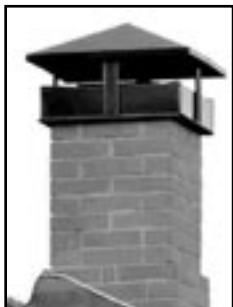


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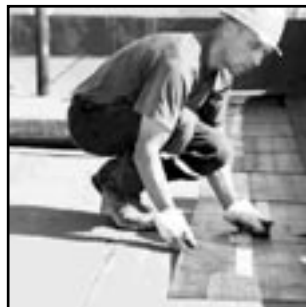
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ARTHUR L. JOHNSON 2024 FALL ATHLETIC AWARDS

The Arthur L. Johnson Athletic Department recently held their 2024 Fall Athletic Awards. All the Fall Athletic Teams and their seasons were highlighted by their coaches while all athletes received letters and awards. Over 177 varsity athletic letters were awarded throughout the evening, as participation in athletics at ALJ High School continues to prosper.



(above) 2024 Fall BTAs.

The program culminated with the Student Athlete Award, which was presented by the Athletic Director of ALJ High School, Mr. Gus Kalikas. The Student Athlete Award is given out each athletic season to a student athlete that is not only a champion on the field, but in the classroom as well. The 2024 Fall Student Athlete award recipient was Ryan Volmut, with a 4.47 G.P.A.

In addition, the Crusader G.P.A. Challenge was awarded to the team that finished with the highest overall G.P.A. amongst athletic teams for the fall season. The recipients were presented with certificates and will have their team memorialized on a plaque to celebrate their actions both in the classrooms and on the fields. The winner of the 2024 Fall Seasonal G.P.A. Challenge was the Tennis Team with a G.P.A. of 4.1. Members of the Field Hockey Team include: Allison Gilbride, Lena Blumenstock, Juliana DeDeo, Victoria Martino, Jaylin Rivera, Yazmin Yoplac, Isabel Martinez, Taylor Sesely, and Meera Raguseo.

The Best Teammate Award will be given out seasonally to one member from each athletic team that best fits the characteristics of a good teammate. The individuals that receive these awards exhibit upbeat attitudes and outstanding

character. They helped influence the team's culture in a positive manner, while always supporting teammates and promoting team unity. The Best Teammate Award Winners were: Cross Country – Russel Tortorici & Ava Szarszeswki, Field Hockey – Elizabeth Fitzharris, Football – Anthony Ayre, Boys' Soccer – Gabriel Alves, Girls' Soccer – Suzie Pires, Girls' Tennis – Juliana DeDeo, Volleyball – Livia Cantor, and Cheerleading – Lindsey Marczewski.

The evening culminated with the announcement of the Team Most Valuable Players. The MVPs were: Cross Country – Connor Sesely & Aja Yerovi, Field Hockey – Avery Forfa, Football – Robert Gallagher, Boys' Soccer – Richard Howard, Girls' Soccer – Mackenzie Thompson, Girls' Tennis – Yazmin Yoplac, Volleyball – Kathryn Conti, and Cheerleading – Madison Rappa.

Athletic Director Gus Kalikas, had this to say about the event: "Once again, our Fall Athletic Awards Program was a successful event as it allows the District, Administration, and Coaches the opportunity to acknowledge a wonderful Fall Sports Season as well as recognize both student athletes and their parents alike for all that they have accomplished this past fall athletic season."



(above) 2024 Fall MVPs.



(above) 2024 Fall G.P.A. Winners – ALJ Tennis Program.



(above) Ryan Volmut 2024 Fall Student Athlete Award

Photos by Clark Public Schools

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TRACK CLUB SHINES AT USATF JUNIOR OLYMPIC MEET

WESTFIELD AREA YMCA

Twenty-five young Westfield Area YMCA Flyers Track Club athletes competed alongside nearly 500 other participants at the USATF New Jersey Junior Olympic Cross Country Meet on November 3. Held at Central Park in Morris Plains, the Flyers delivered outstanding performances at the meet and brought home four national qualifiers:

- Greyson Dunleavy (Boys 7-8) - 3rd Place;
- Grayson Van Dyk (Boys 7-8) - 4th Place;
- Leo Anspach (Boys 11-12) - 14th Place;
- and Luke Barba (Boys 13-14) - 8th Place

In addition to individual accomplishments the team results showcased the Flyers' collective strength and teamwork:

Girls 11-12 team finished 5th in the 3000m race with runners Katalyna Aguilar, Avalee Deutsch, Sandra Jakubiuk, Sarah Licata, and Mika Snyder.



(above) Group of Westfield Area YMCA Flyers Athletes in the Boys Division.

Boys 11-12 team secured a 4th place finish in the 3000m race with strong showings from Leo Anspach, Slater Centeno, Nicholas DiChiaro, Doruk Karagoz, Deven Lele, and Adrian Wood.

Boys 13-14 team earned an impressive 3rd place finish in the 4000m race led by Luke Barba, Benjamin Halpern, Ronan Connolly, Graham

Gallagher, Davin Hettiarachchi, and Liam Grunwald.

The Westfield Area YMCA Flyers Track Club is led by USATF-certified coaches and serves hundreds of athletes ages 7-15 year-round. Athletes learn the fundamentals of distance running and techniques unique to off-track running, with more experienced runners building on fundamental skills through conditioning and in-depth training. Registration is open now for the Flyers Winter Conditioning program beginning December 2, 2024.

For more information about Flyers Track Club, visit flyerstrackclub.com or contact Michelle Almeida at malmeida@westfieldynj.org 908-301-9622 ext. 279.

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Visit westfieldynj.org to learn more about Westfield Area YMCA and Cranford YMCA programs. Financial assistance is available for YMCA memberships and programs to those who qualify.



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FULFILL WISH LISTS OF FOSTER CHILDREN

Child Focus

As the holiday season approaches, Child Focus, the nonprofit child advocacy organization that runs Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Passaic and Union Counties, is thrilled to announce the launch of its annual Holiday Wish List Drive. This initiative aims to bring joy and personalized gifts to more than 400 children removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect, honoring their unique interests and wishes this holiday season. The holidays can be especially difficult for those involved in the child welfare system, and this drive seeks to ensure each child feels seen, valued, and celebrated.

Child Focus invites community members, organizations, and businesses to support the drive by purchasing items directly from its Amazon Wish List, donating gift cards to popular retailers such as Target, Amazon, Walmart, Macy's, Old Navy, and Sephora, or contacting Child Focus directly to learn what specific items are needed this year. All gifts must be new, unwrapped, and delivered to the Child Focus offices in Wayne or Elizabeth by Monday, December 9.

"The holiday wish list drive is always a bright spot in our programming, as our community comes together to make wishes come true for these children who have experienced so much turmoil in their young lives," stated Child Focus Executive Director, Erica Fischer-Kaslander. "It is an important reminder that a small act of kindness can have an incredible impact in a young person's life. We are grateful for our community partners who have stepped up year after year, including those who have been willing to scour the internet and pound the pavement to locate some of those special gifts, injecting some much-needed holiday magic into the lives of these deserving children."

Child Focus thanks the community partners who continually step up to make wishes come true for hundreds of children in foster care.

For more information on the Holiday Wish List Drive, including a link to the Amazon Wish List, or to learn how you can become a CASA volunteer, please visit childfocusnj.org or call (973) 832-4002.

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, visit childfocusnj.org.

Thank you to the Garwood PBA Local 117 Civic Association for sponsoring Garwood's new veterans' banners, which now hang downtown. Councilwoman Karina Boto worked with the PBA to create these banners to remember the Garwood heroes who were killed in action during World War I and II, Vietnam and

the Korean War. Our Police Department has three veterans among its ranks: Captain Rocco, Sgt. Lewis, and Officer Schoenberger. We thank them for their service along with all of our veterans. Garwood is proud to hang these banners to honor of all of our veterans and active military.



GARWOOD LIBRARY DECEMBER EVENTS

411 Third Ave. Garwood, NJ 07027 • Phone: 908-789-1670

Hours: Monday & Tuesday 9:00 am - 8:00 pm, Wednesday & Thursday 10:00 am - 8:00 pm, Friday 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, Closed on Weekends • Website: <https://garwoodpl.org/>

The Library will be closed

December 24, 25 and 26 for Christmas.

Knitting Club

December 2, 9 and 16 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

Send a Letter to Santa

December 2 through December 20

Children can write a letter to Santa and drop it in his mailbox located at the Garwood Library. Be sure to include your child's first name, last name, a return envelope with a stamp and delivery address. Sponsored by the Garwood Recreation Committee.

Holiday Photo Station

December 2 through December 20

Come take your holiday picture at our do-it-yourself Holiday Photo Station complete with a festive backdrop and a cardboard Santa. Goodie bags for kids available.

Storytime

December 3, 10 and 17 at 10 am and 11 am

Join Miss Maryanne for stories and more.

Registration is required. Limit 12.

Registration required

Library Board Meeting

December 4, @ 7:30 pm

A meeting of the Garwood Library Board of Trustees will take place in the Library. This meeting is open to the public

Kid's Chess

December 5, 12, and 19 at 3 pm

Informal chess games for children of all ages.

Note this is non-instructional supervised play.

No registration required. Limit 12.

Holiday Cookie Contest

December 5 at 7 pm

Get in the spirit of the season by entering our Holiday Cooke Contest. Come to the library

with three dozen of your favorite cookies (one variety only) on Thursday, December 5, at 7 p.m. Contestants and bystanders can taste and vote for their favorite cookie. A first-place, second place, and crowd-favorite prize will be awarded. Registration is required to compete. Adult contestants only. Limit 10 contestants.

Children can taste and vote

Grab and Go Kid's Craft

December 10 @ 3pm

Pick up supplies and instructions for a seasonal craft.. Registration is required for craft kits and is limited to 15 participants. Sign up on the Library's website calendar or by phone.

LEGO CLUB

December 11 at 3 pm

Be inspired by this month's theme or build whatever comes to mind. Some creations will be displayed in our showcase.

Registration required Limit 12

RummiKub for Adults

December 12 at 1 pm

Play Rummikub! It's a rummy-like game that you play with tiles instead of cards. Open to all levels. No registration needed. Limit 12.

Monday Book Club

December 16 at 1 pm

Join us for a lively discussion of this month's book, The Dearly Beloved by Cara Wall

Grab and Go Adult Craft

December 17 @ 3pm

Pick up supplies and instructions for a seasonal craft.. Registration is required for craft kits and is limited to 15 participants. Sign up on the Library's website calendar or by phone.

COUNT DOWN TO NOON 11:00 to 12:30 pm

December 28 @ 11 am

Bring in the New Year at the Garwood Library. Enjoy treats, crafts and a whole lot of fun with a noon ball drop celebration for children in 2nd grade and younger, Registration required.

GARWOOD FIRST AID SQUAD ACTIVELY RECRUITING

The Garwood First Aid Squad is actively recruiting volunteers and invites you to join our team. Whether you are looking to help out the community or get a start in the medical field, we would be glad to have you join us. You can work on board the ambulance or just help out around the squad house. No experience necessary. As a squad member, you can make a difference in a person's life join today.

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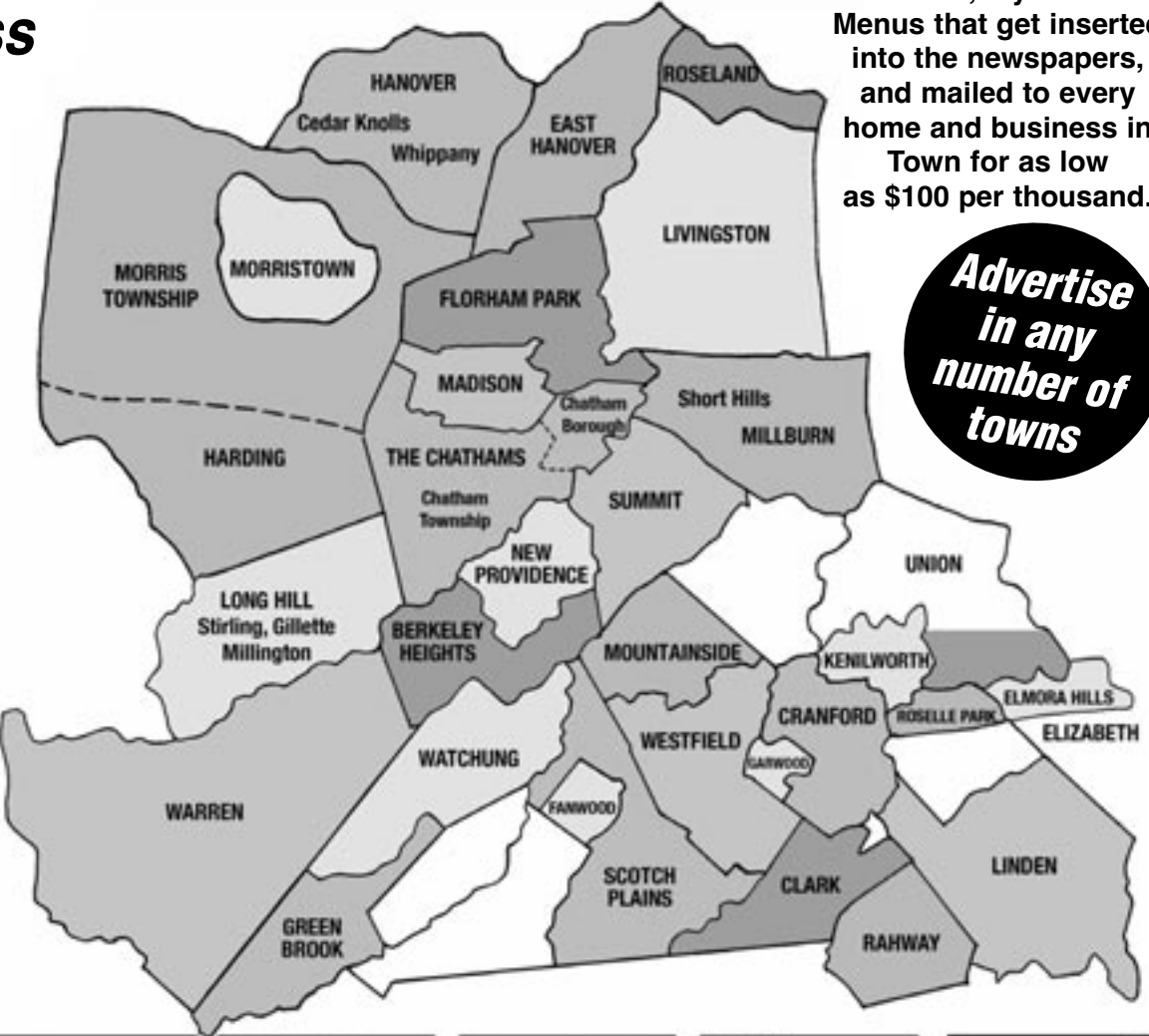
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NJIO PRESENTS FREE FAMILY HOLIDAY CONCERT IN SUMMIT

New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra will be entertaining families on Sunday, December 8, 2024 with a free concert of seasonal holiday favorites. The concert will be from 2pm to 3pm at Summit High School, 125 Kent Place Boulevard, Summit, NJ. Families with children of all ages are invited to come and join in the fun!

NJIO's three orchestral ensembles will combine to perform music by Corelli, Reinecke, Strauss, and more! The concert concludes with Leroy Anderson's exciting Sleigh Ride, with percussion accompaniment provided by the youngest members of the audience!

The concert is free and open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted.

Following the concert, the famous NJIO Instrument Petting Zoo returns! Experienced NJIO musicians will guide young audience members and assist them in safely trying out the instrument of their dreams. Instruments are loaned by Elefante Music of New Providence and Scotch Plains.

Sunday, December 8, 2024 at 2 pm
Summit High School
125 Kent Place Boulevard, Summit, NJ
Admission is free;
donations are gratefully accepted.

This concert is made possible by funds from: the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts; Frank and Lydia Bergen Foundation; The Lillian Schenck Foundation; The Henry S. and Agnes M. Truzack Foundation; Investors Foundation; Standish Foundation; and many other generous supporters. NJIO is a proud participating organization in the Families First Discovery Pass Program, a program of the NJ Departments of Health and Human Services.

NJIO is committed to ensuring that its programs and concerts are accessible. For more information regarding the concert or to inquire about patron services, please contact NJIO at info@njio.org, or visit NJIO's website njio.org.

New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra, now in its 31st season, has been nationally recognized as a leader in intergenerational excellence through its unique approach to teaching musical performance and as a model for intergenerational orchestras across the country. Depending on space availability, NJIO welcomes new members of all ages and abilities each concert period to one of its several orchestras - no auditions needed!

NJIO's Winter Concert
Sunday, February 23, 2025, 3 pm – Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church, Plainfield, NJ
NJIO's Spring Concert
Sunday, April 27, 2025, 3 pm - Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church, Plainfield, NJ
We hope to see you there!

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Sunday December 8th, 2024 at 2 PM

Summit High School
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More information:

www.NJIO.org
 info@njio.org
 (908) 603-7691

NJIO is committed to creating an accessible concert experience for all.

This concert is made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts; Instrument Petting Zoo sponsor Elefante Music; and our season sponsors: the Frank and Lydia Bergen Foundation, The Lillian Schenck Foundation, The Henry S. and Agnes M. Truzack Foundation, Standish Foundation, and many other generous supporters. NJIO is a proud participating organization in the Families First Discovery Pass Program, a program of the NJ Departments of Health and Human Services.

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