

Berkeley Heights

COMMUNITY NEWS NJ

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10TH ANNUAL WINTER WALK CELEBRATES HOLIDAY SEASON

Springfield Avenue was transformed into a winter wonderland for Berkeley Heights' 10th annual Winter Walk held on Saturday, December 7th. The event featured Santa and over 80 activities and performances, including a synthetic ice rink, horse and carriage rides, life-size snow globes, a trackless train, visits from Santa and Mrs. Claus, live music, dance performances, and games for all ages. The day concluded with the Berkeley Heights Recreation Department's Tree Lighting ceremony, followed by a stunning fireworks display at Peppertown Park, with fireworks generously provided by Garden State Fireworks.



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Berkeley Heights COMMUNITY NEWS NJ

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HICKORY TREE CHORUS WINTER SING-ALONG

Stay warm this winter by putting some music in your life in 2025! Join the Hickory Tree Chorus for a Winter Sing-Along, which will include a meet-and-greet, warm-ups and, of course, some wonderful singing. Dates are January 8 and 15, 2025, from 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. at The Shrine of St Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Road, Stirling, NJ. The chorus sings a variety of music, including old-fashioned love songs, Broadway, Disney, Beatles, and more, in a fun, supportive community. Come sing with us and share the joy of music together! Stay for friendship and fun!

And the event is free!

Hickory Tree is an award-winning women's chorus singing four-part a cappella harmony in the barbershop style. We are passionate about music, performance, fun and friendship. We believe every voice counts and encourage women singers of all ages, colors, ethnicities, and orientations to visit us and share our joy of music.

Please contact the Chorus for the Winter Sing-Along by email at info@hickorytreechorus.org. Find more information at hickorytreechorus.org.



(above) The Hickory Tree award-winning women's chorus is hosting free events on January 8 and 15, 2025, from 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. at The Shrine of St Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Road, Stirling, NJ.

Courtesy photo

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THE JANUARY SPEAKERS PROGRAM FOR THE SUMMIT AREA OLD GUARD

The Summit Area Old Guard is a social, educational, and recreational organization that serves men of retirement age. We meet most Tuesdays at the New Providence Presbyterian Church located at 1307 Springfield Ave. Our dues are minimal, and members manage all aspects of the operation. Our motto is "Come for the Programs. Stay for the Friends." The organization was founded in 1930.

IN JANUARY, WE WILL HAVE FOUR SPEAKERS:

JANUARY 7: FRED POLAK

On January 7th, Fred Polak will relate the love story of his parents, Jack and Ina, who nurtured their relationship through the exchange of letters while each was incarcerated in concentration camps during WWII. After liberation, they married and moved to America in 1950. Jack became the president of the Ann Frank Center, USA and lectured extensively on the Holocaust. Jack passed away at the age of 102 and Fred has been dedicated to retelling his parents' story and the lessons to be learned from this awful period.

JANUARY 14: SCOTT WALKER

On January 14th, we will learn how Rutgers Provides academic Support Services to Student Athletes. Our speaker will be Scott Walker, executive director of Rutgers' Academic Support Services for Student Athletes program (ASSSA), and a Princeton graduate. Services provided by ASSSA are available to all student-athletes at

Rutgers. During his tenure, which includes entry of Rutgers into the Big Ten, Scott has overseen the expansion and modernization of the program and the unprecedented academic success achieved by individual student-athletes and team sports. Scott will provide an insider's view of the services provided by ASSSA and how it has evolved over the years.

JANUARY 21: DR. STANLEY GERSCH

On January 21st, our speaker will be Dr. Stanley Gersch. He will discuss how Invisalign® revolutionized orthodontics and expanded the use of clear teeth aligners and about his early interest in how innovative technologies could enhance treatment for his patients, his early-stage introduction to Invisalign®, and how Invisalign® grew to become the leader in clear teeth aligners. Stan has been a practicing orthodontist in

Westfield, Cranford, and Linden for over 35 years and is the director of Invisalign® training in NYU's post graduate orthodontic department.

JANUARY 28: HON. JOEL B. ROSEN

Finally, on January 28th, our speaker will be the Hon. Joel B. Rosen. Joel will discuss the changing landscape in U.S. law, including the notion of the rule of law, federal prosecutions, judicial review, and ethics. Judge Rosen is a former United States magistrate judge, and as a former partner of the law firm Montgomery McKracken, was a nationally recognized leader in the practice of alternative dispute resolution. Over the course of his career, Judge Rosen has overseen thousands of state and federal legal matters, lectured extensively on constitutional principles, and was an adjunct faculty member of Rutgers Law School.



(above) Fred Polak



(above) Scott Walker



(above) Stanley Gersch

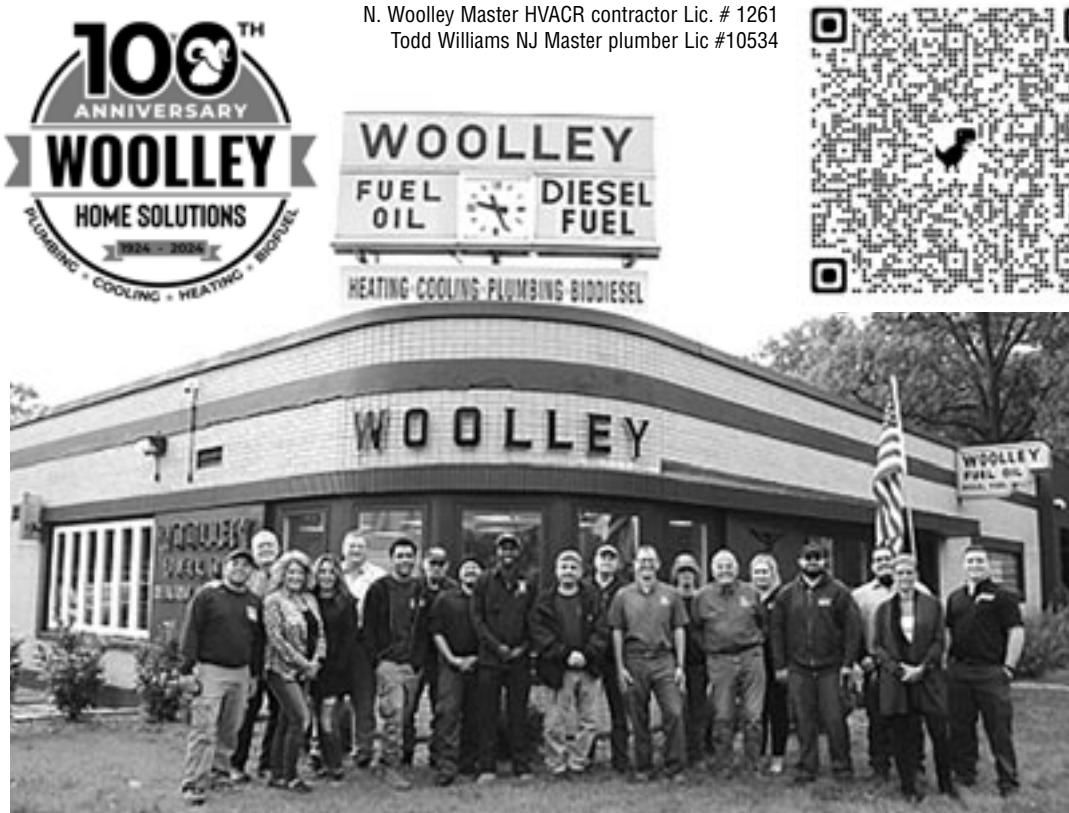


(above) Joel Rosen

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GLHS ART STUDENTS SHOW THANKS



Berkeley Heights Public Schools

Students in Studio 23 at Governor Livingston High School worked hard on some special projects 'commissioned' by the Township of Berkeley Heights. Under the guidance of GLHS Art Teacher, Ms. Michelle Harpster, two 4x8 pieces of artwork have been created, one of which is a fall-themed 'thankfulness board' that was on display at the inaugural Berkeley Heights Gobble & Go 5K Turkey Trot held on

Thanksgiving Day.

This beautiful, and massive, piece of artwork kept students busy during classes, lunch, and after school, as artists have been lending a hand any time they could to ensure it was done in time. Students and staff signed the board with what they are 'thankful for' and community members had the opportunity to do the same when they attended the event.

Photos by Berkeley Heights Public Schools



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AUDITION

CHILDREN'S CHOIR of New Jersey

Limited Availability

Serenades (Ages 6-8): 2 Openings

Crescendos (Ages 9-11): 4 Openings

OPEN HOUSE: Tuesday, January 14th 4:30pm

YOUTH CHOIR of New Jersey

Limited Availability

Chanticleers (Girls Ages 12-14): 2 Openings

Singers (Girls Ages 15-18): 4 Openings

Continuos (Boys Ages 12-18): 4 Openings

OPEN HOUSE: Monday, January 13th 7:30pm

CIVIC CHORALE of New Jersey (Adults)

Sopranos: 1 Opening

Altos: 3 Openings

Tenors: *Are you kidding? Come one come all!*

Basses: 3 Openings

OPEN HOUSE: Tuesday, January 14th 7:30pm

SENIORS SING! *No Audition Necessary*

OPEN HOUSE: Monday, January 13th 2:00pm

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OPPORTUNITY



(above, l-r) Summit's Mayor Fagan, JLS President Montgomery, JLS Executive VP Cristina Curiale

Courtesy photos

CELEBRATING 95 YEARS OF THE JUNIOR LEAGUE

Junior League of Summit

On November 18, 2024 - exactly 95 years from its inception- the Junior League of Summit was awarded a proclamation from the City of Summit. During the Common Council meeting, the proclamation was read by Summit Mayor Elizabeth Fagan and November 18th was declared "Junior League of Summit Day".

On hand at the reading were several members of JLS, including JLS President April Montgomery and JLS Executive Vice President Cristina Curiale, who formally received the proclamation.

The Junior League of Summit is proud of our 95 years of service in Berkeley Heights, Chatham, New Providence, Summit and surrounding communities.

The JLS has addressed critical community issues and created services such as the first Safe Houses in Union County for victims of domestic violence, Summit Childcare Center, Summit's

Senior Bus, SAGE – Meals on wheels Program, Family Service Association – Spanish Speaking Program and Santa Claus Shop, GRACE, Summit EMS and the Mabie Playground and more, leaving a lasting legacy of innovation and meaningful impact.

In addition to the above, Junior League of Summit's Thrift Shop is the oldest surviving business in Summit, having operated for 90 years. It's the primary source of funding for the wonderful services, projects, grants and programs that JLS provides.

Overall, we are thrilled to say we've returned over \$3 million in grants, scholarships, projects and programs to our local communities. It has been and continues to be a pleasure to provide much needed services. We work hard, learn, tackle challenges, enjoy ourselves and make a difference.

Interested in getting involved with JLS? Visit summit.jl.org

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(above) Some JLS members in attendance on Nov 18.



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Helen H. Cha-Pyo, Artistic Director

SEASON OF

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New Jersey Youth Symphony
Concert for Peace with Violins of Hope
January 12

Wharton Arts in the Community
Piano & Cello Faculty Recital January 26

Performing Arts School
The Moors January 24-February 2

Paterson Music Project
Black History Month Concerts February 1

New Jersey Youth Chorus
Men That Matter February 23

New Jersey Youth Chorus
Just Us Girls March 8

Wharton Arts in the Community
Jazz Vespers March 23

Wharton Arts Day

March 16

Wharton Arts invites students ages 4-18, as well as adults of all ages, for transformative performing arts education programs designed to hone their skills and nurture their personal growth. The depth and breadth of our offerings is unmatched in the Garden State. Our community transcends backgrounds and beliefs: we are united through the universal language of the performing arts.

Our umbrella organization, **Wharton Arts**, encompasses four distinct programs, each founded to advance music and performing arts education and engagement: New Jersey Youth Chorus, New Jersey Youth Symphony, Paterson Music Project, and the Performing Arts School. Join us this Season of Joy for life-changing performing arts experiences.

Tickets and more information at
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2025
Season

New Jersey Youth Chorus

WhartonARTS

Helen H. Cha-Pyo, Artistic Director



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Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization and is committed to being accessible to all patrons, students, parents and visitors. All programs, classes, events and concerts are accessible ensuring that everyone can participate in a diverse range of arts programming and classes.



WHARTON ARTS PRESENTS FREE CONCERTS IN SUMMIT

Wharton Arts, New Jersey's largest not-for-profit community performing arts education organization, will present several free concerts during the 2024-25 season at Saint John's Lutheran Church located at 587 Springfield Avenue in Summit.

Said Wharton Arts Artistic Director Helen Cha-Pyo, "We are excited to partner with Saint John's Lutheran Church and music director Christopher Harlow-Jennings for our Wharton Arts in the Community series. From the fun, interactive Halloween Hoopla to uplifting Jazz Vespers and world-class performances, this series offers something for everyone. It's a wonderful way to connect with the Summit community and make music accessible to all."

"I am thrilled to partner with Artistic Director Helen Cha-Pyo and her team at Wharton Arts this season to bring exciting new musical offerings to the greater Summit community," said Saint John's Lutheran Church Director of Music Christopher Harlow-Jennings. "This unique collaboration builds on our respective institutions' strong musical foundations and programming to engage listeners of all ages."

PIANO & CELLO FACULTY RECITAL

JANUARY 26, 2025, AT 4:00 P.M.,

LUCAS BUTTON, CELLO / LEAH FRANK, PIANO

Allow yourself to be transported by the sound and expression of this inspiring duo praised for their musical sensitivity and passionate artistry.

JAZZ VESPERS

MARCH 23, 2025, AT 4:00 P.M.,

LANCE BRYANT TRIO AND SAINT JOHN'S CHOIR

An inclusive experience of Lenten words and music, both modern and ancient, featuring the Lance Bryant Jazz Trio.

For more information, call 908-790-0700 or visit WhartonArts.org.

Alongside these engaging events, Wharton Arts aims to create meaningful connections and foster creativity in young people, as well as across generations, ensuring that everyone has access to an outstanding music and theater arts education. The depth and breadth of offerings, unmatched in the Garden State, transcends backgrounds and beliefs. Wharton Arts encompasses four distinct programs, each founded to advance music and performing arts education and engagement: the New Jersey Youth Chorus, New Jersey Youth Symphony, Paterson Music Project, and Performing Arts School. Join Wharton Arts this Season of Joy for life-changing performing arts experiences.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center serving nearly 2,000 students through a range of classes and ensembles. The 5 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Chorus, an auditioned choral ensemble program for students in grades 3-12, encourage a love and appreciation of choral music while

nurturing personal growth and creative development. The 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony, which serve over 500 students in grades 3-12 by audition, inspire young people to achieve musical excellence through high-level ensemble training and performance opportunities. Based in Paterson, the Paterson Music Project is an El Sistema-inspired program of Wharton Arts that uses music education as a vehicle for social action by empowering and inspiring young people to achieve their full potential through the community experience of ensemble learning and playing. From Pathways classes for young children to Lifelong Learning programs for adults, the Wharton Performing Arts School has a robust musical theater and drama program and offers both private and group classes for instruments and voice for all ages and all abilities. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been trained to enable our students to achieve their personal best.



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RECYCLE YOUR USED EYEGLASSES

New Providence Lions Club

Did you know that recycled usable glasses give new Life!

Refractive errors can be easily corrected with eyeglasses, yet millions living in low- and middle-income countries lack access to basic eye care services.

Lions have recognized the urgent need for corrective lenses and have been collecting usable glasses in New Providence to support the Lions Recycle For Sight Program.

The New Providence Lions Club Eyeglass collection site is in front of the New Providence Memorial Library, located at 377 Elkwood Avenue. The collected glasses will be sorted and sterilized and then donated to a charity and/or medical organizations that provide eye exams and eyeglasses to needy people.

The New Providence Lions Club is a 501(c)3 organization, giving back to the community 100% of the profits raised. Being a Lion empowers you to help others in a way that no one person could alone.

The Lions are dedicated to helping others. Lions make a difference! For more information/membership please visit nplions.org or email info@nplions.org.



(above) The New Providence Lions Club Eyeglass collection site is in front of the New Providence Memorial Library, located at 377 Elkwood Avenue.

STUDENTS HONOR VETERANS

Berkeley Heights Public Schools

In November, students throughout the Berkeley Heights Public School District took a moment to pause and honor our veterans in a variety of ways in honor of Veterans Day.

At Mountain Park School, each class enjoyed a special guest reader who read a story related to

Veterans Day. Special guests included Mayor Devanney, Councilman Manny Couto, Ted Romankow and BOE President Gale Bradford. The students also welcomed veterans including Sergeant Trent Fettes, VFW Commander Steven Mondragon, Timothy Neri, Dennis Ryan and Tom Butler.



(above) Prior to Veterans Day, students made paper poppies and thank you cards for our veterans which were delivered on 11/11 and presented at the VFW Veterans Day Ceremony.



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FAMILY PROGRAMS

Family Fun Friday

Friday, January 17 at 3:30pm
Make a Snowman.

Puzzle Exchange

Saturday, January 25 from 10am-2pm.

Movie Matinee How to Train Your Dragon

Sunday, January 26 at 2:30pm.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Lego Play

Friday, January 3 at 3:30pm.

Good Time String Band

Tuesday, January 14 at 10:30am

A fiddle and banjo sing-along.

WEEKLY DROP-IN PROGRAMS

Crafternoon

for ages 4-7 with caregiver

Mondays, January 6, 13 & 27 at 3:30pm.

Toddler Explorations

Tuesdays, January 7, 14, 21 & 28 at 10 am

Early literacy experiences for toddlers with caregiver.

Toddler Storytime

Wednesdays, January 8, 15, 22, 29 at 10 am.

Baby Playtime

Wednesdays, January 8, 15, 22, 29 at 1:30 pm.

Block Party

Thursdays, January 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at 10 am

Build and play with blocks.

Play Pals

Fridays, January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at 10 am.

Saturday Hangouts at 10am

January 4 (play), January 11 (craft),

January 18 (storytime), & January 25 (games)

TWEENS & TEENS PROGRAMS

(For ages 10 and up)

Melting Snowman Food Craft

Thursday, January 16 at 6:30pm.

Switch It Up

Friday, January 24 at 2:00 pm

Play video games on the big screen.

Teen Book Club

Tuesday, January 28 at 6:30p.m.

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl

ADULT PROGRAMS

Tinker Tuesday Crafts at 7pm

January 7: Paint a Succulent Planter,

January 14: Pine Tree Banner

Coffee & Conversation Group

Wednesdays, January 8 & 22 at 1pm.

Tech Help

Saturday January 11, 10am-12pm

Sunday, January 12 at 2pm-4pm.

Pins & Needles Crafting Group

Sunday, January 12 at 2:30 pm.

Watch & Make

Saturday, January 18.

Get Weird with Art

Wednesday, January 22 at 7pm.

Friday Movie Matinee

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

Friday, January 24 at 1pm.

Armchair Traveler Boston

Tuesday, January 28 at 7pm.

BOOK GROUPS

Morning Book Group

Friday, January 3 at 10:30am

The Library of Lost and Found Silent Reads

Sunday, January 5 at 2:30pm.

Mayor's Book Club

Thursday, January 9 at 7pm.

Evening Book Group

Tuesday, January 14 at 7pm

The Door-to-Door Bookstore

Thursday, January 16 at 7 pm

Joy of Cookbooking Soups

Monday, January 27 at 6:30pm.

Virtual Author Talks

register at <https://library.org/bhplnj/>:

The Magic of Found Family with TJ Klune

Wednesday, January 15 at 7pm:

Modern Irrationality with Amanda Montell

Thursday, January 23 at 2pm

Conversation with Lit Agent Seth Fishman

Thursday, January 28 at 1pm

OPERAS ON FILM SEASON LINEUP

Mountainside Rescue Squad

The Mountainside Rescue Squad presents Operas on Film, now in its 12th season. The selected films from famous opera houses throughout the world, will be played with subtitles on the second Friday of the month at 1 p.m. hosted by Mena Clemson. It is free to attend. Whether you are an opera buff or an opera neophyte, you are invited to join us for the following films:

JAN 10TH

WIENER BLUT-BY JOHANN STRAUSS

94 MINS, STARRING RENE KOLLO

GERMAN COMEDY

FEB 14TH

EINE NACHT IN VENDIG

BY JOHANN STRAUSS, 96 MINS,

STARRING ANTON DE RIDDER

GERMAN COMEDY

MARCH 14

ERNANI - BY VERDI

140 MINS, STARRING LUCIANO PAVAROTTI

APRIL 11TH

THE PEARL FISHERS BY BIZET

122 MINS, STARRING ANNICK MASSIS

MAY 9TH

IL TROVATOR BY VERDI

133 MINS, STARRING LUCIANO PAVAROTTI

JUNE 13TH

LA BOHEME BY PUCCINI

123 MINS, STARRING LUCIANO PAVAROTTI

CMS HOSTS MOBILE PLANETARIUM

Berkeley Heights Public Schools

Eighth grade students at Columbia Middle School recently enjoyed presentations in a 'mobile planetarium' where they explored various aspects of space which they have been learning about as part of the science astronomy unit. The planetarium provided an immersive experience that transported students into a captivating 360-degree view of the cosmos where they could explore planets, stars, and the constellations. This engaging experience brought to life science lessons from the classroom for a truly unforgettable experience.

AN UNUSUAL GOOSE REHABBED AND RELEASED

The Raptor Trust

The Brant goose, with its compact size and striking black-and-white plumage, is a remarkable bird. Adapted to drink saltwater, these geese embark on long migratory journeys from their Arctic breeding grounds to coastal winter



(above) We're thrilled to see this Brant goose take to the skies (or water) once more! It was a charming patient.

Photo by The Raptor Trust

habitats. Look for them in estuaries, mudflats, and salt marshes, where they thrive throughout the winter months.

Recently, The Raptor Trust treated a Brant goose (Admit #21-4190) found in Long Valley with wounds from a predator attack. After intensive care, including suturing lacerations, treating an eye injury and parasites, this resilient bird was successfully released at Sandy Hook on November 2nd.

ABOUT THE RAPTOR TRUST

The Raptor Trust is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located at 1390 White Bridge Rd., Millington, NJ. They provide free care and assistance to injured, sick, or orphaned wild birds. They offer educational programs to the public about wild birds, especially birds of prey. They strive to provide a human example for others. For more information about upcoming events, to make a donation, and volunteer opportunities visit info@theraptortrust.org. To report an injured wild bird call 908-647-2353.



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS NIGHT SKY GAZING

Amateur Astronomers, Inc (AAI) of Cranford, NJ celebrated their 75th Anniversary on Sunday, November 17, 2024, at The Westwood Caterers of Garwood, NJ. In attendance were 53 past and current members who range from teenagers to seniors.

AAI has always interested anyone who loves looking and learning about the night sky. Housed in the William Miller Sperry Observatory on the Union College campus in Cranford, the observatory is open to the public every Friday night with their twin domes looking at the heavens. One of the domes houses a 24-inch reflector and the other dome houses a refractor, which was constructed by club members. Public lectures start at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays, they are on current topics in astronomy.

Youth lectures are presented by the club at 7:00 p.m. to preregistered scout groups to help them earn their patches in science. If you are interested in preregistering a scout group, please contact info@asterism.org.

The club also celebrates celestial events such as eclipses by opening the Observatory and having numerous telescopes outside the building. For more information about AAI email, membership@asterism.org, or visit asterism.org.

ASTRONOMY DAY - MAY 17, 2025

Amateur Astronomers, Inc. along with the North Jersey Astronomical Group, two amateur astronomy clubs located in New Jersey, are once again holding their annual Astronomy Day on Saturday, May 17, 2025. The event will be held in 2 locations: Trailside Nature & Science Center in Mountainside in the afternoon and at William Miller Sperry Observatory on the campus of Union College in Cranford in the evening. The theme is "Solar Max, Unlocking the Secrets of the Sun." This is a family friendly event that focuses on learning about our Sun and its impact on us, and also about astronomy and related sciences in a fun and easy to understand atmosphere. This event appeals to both children and adults. The event is free and open to the public and does not require preregistration. So, mark your calendars for Saturday, May 17, 2025, and come out to learn more about the Sun and our universe!



(above) AAI has always interested anyone who loves learning about the night sky. Housed in the William Miller Sperry Observatory on the Union College campus in Cranford, the observatory is open to the public every Friday night. One of the domes houses a 24-inch reflector and the other dome houses a refractor. Public lectures start at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays, on current topics in Astronomy.

SPIRITUAL? CURIOUS? SEEKING?

Do you consider yourself spiritual? Are you curious about what people are talking about when they speak of having faith or being spiritual? Are you seeking peace of mind, of heart of soul?

Come and see for yourself. Come and explore the Christian faith. Come and discuss with other seekers what is on your mind, what you cannot talk about except with other seekers. Come to an Alpha gathering.

Alpha is for everybody that wants to discuss seeking answers to life's big questions. Why are we here? Is this all there is to life? Where are we going? How do I attain peace of mind, heart, and soul? Whether you are young or old, have faith or are atheist or agnostic, Alpha provides a safe environment for exploring our big questions about life.

We begin by sharing a meal together and

getting to know each other. We watch a video together then break into small groups for uninhibited discussion about what is on our minds.

The series runs for 12 weeks on Monday nights beginning at 7:30 p.m. and ending at 9:00 p.m. It will begin February 3rd, 2025, and end May 12th, 2025. Three of the sessions are live in person and the remainder are on Zoom. There is no cost to participate. You will need a desire for frank discussion, a willingness to participate and a commitment to attend. You will also need a computer or smartphone capable of Zoom sessions.

The live in person sessions will be held at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 1571 S. Martine Ave., Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

To register go onto IHMParish.net. If you have any questions, please call 908-889-2100.



Alpha Winter/Spring 2025 13-week program returns

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More details available at www.ihmparish.net/alpha



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SIEMINSKI THEATER 2025 SEASON STARTERS

The Sieminski Theater is thrilled to announce Act 1 of their 2025 season featuring diverse shows that are sure to deliver something unforgettable for every theatergoer.

**JANUARY 25TH @ 7:30PM
WOODEN SHIPS BAND**

Opening their season on January 25th @ 7:30pm is WOODEN SHIPS. The WOODEN SHIPS BAND pays homage to the fantastic music of Crosby, Stills & Nash (and Young). The band faithfully reproduces the CSN songbook just like you remember it, but with a twist – the beautiful, intricate vocal harmonies are sung by three women! WOODEN SHIPS BAND is composed of seasoned, well-respected musicians who know how to deliver a great show. The music, having passed the test of time, is classic.

**FEBRUARY 8TH AND 9TH
THE LIGHT OPERA OF NEW JERSEY
PUCCINI'S MADAMA BUTTERFLY**

Up next, The Light Opera of New Jersey presents one of the most beloved of all operas, Puccini's Madama Butterfly February 8th and 9th. Madama Butterfly premiered in 1904 and has enthralled audiences ever since. This timeless opera tells the tragic story of Cio-Cio-San, a young Japanese woman who falls in love with an American naval officer, B.F. Pinkerton. As she waits faithfully for his return, her unwavering devotion clashes with the harsh realities of betrayal and abandonment. With its breathtaking melodies and powerful themes of hope, longing, and heartbreak, Madam Butterfly not only captivates opera enthusiasts but also invites newcomers to experience its profound emotional depth.

**FEBRUARY 23RD @ 2:30
THE NEW JERSEY FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA**

On February 23rd @ 2:30 the New Jersey Festival Orchestra, under the music direction of David Wroe, will present "Vienna: Invitation to the Dance" with Strauss Waltzes and a Mahler's 4th symphony to close the program. Famed Polish Soprano Marcelina Beucher to also join NJFO.

**MARCH 2, 2024, AT 2:30 PM
NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY CHAMBER PLAYERS**

The New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players will present two programs this season. On March 2, 2025, at 2:30 pm they will present a mix of classical and contemporary compositions spanning a range of vibrant, dynamic styles and showcasing the versatility of a woodwind quintet. The chamber players will return on June 22, 2024, at 2:30 pm, this time with a string quartet. The programs will feature compositions by Black composers from the 18th century through today in a collection of powerful string quartet works.

For more information on all the upcoming shows of our 2025 season visit our website at www.sieminskitheater.org.

Tickets are available online at www.sieminskitheater.org or by phone at 908-580-3892. Tickets range from \$25.00 to \$90.00 depending on the show with discounts available for students and seniors. The theater is located at 8000 Fellowship Road, Basking Ridge on the campus of Fellowship Village.

Enjoy an exceptional preshow dining experience at Wilson's Tapas Bar Lounge restaurant before the evening performance. Located steps away from the Sieminski Theater, culinary dishes prepared by Fellowship Village's award-winning executive chef feature only the freshest ingredients and highest quality. Make a reservation by calling 908-580-3818 for 5:30 pm for the show date.

ABOUT THE SIEMINSKI THEATER:

Bringing a professional performing arts venue with a diverse lineup of entertainment to Basking Ridge and the surrounding communities makes the Sieminski Theater and Somerset County an artistic and cultural destination. We enjoy a newly expanded performance schedule from American Theater Group, Light Opera of New Jersey, New Jersey Festival Orchestra, Trilogy Repertory, and countless national touring groups. Our intimate, award-winning non-profit venue features technical amenities that rival any Broadway theater.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT NJ BLOOD SERVICES

New Jersey Blood Services (NJBS), a division of New York Blood Center, which provides blood for local patients, is looking for a few good volunteers. The blood drive volunteer is an integral member of our team whose tasks include assisting donors with registration and/or at the refreshment area. No medical background necessary. Volunteers should be outgoing to provide friendly customer service, be able to perform tasks as needed, must provide proof of COVID Vaccination prior to volunteering and must have transportation. All training is provided including additional precautions for the safety of our team and blood donors. For additional information call or text Sharon Zetts, Manager, NJBS Volunteer Services at 732-850-8906, Monday to Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To apply online as a blood drive volunteer, please go to:
volgistics.com/appform/2127944197

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<p>New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players <i>Woodwind Quintet</i> March 2</p>	<p>Anything Goes <i>Presented by Trilogy Repertory</i> March 2 – April 6</p>	<p>Frontiers <i>A Journey Tribute</i> April 26</p>
<p>Doscoteks <i>A Disco & Motown Tribute</i> May 10</p>	<p>Broadway in the Burbs <i>Presented by American Theater Group</i> May 18 & 19</p>	<p>New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players <i>String Quartet</i> June 22</p>

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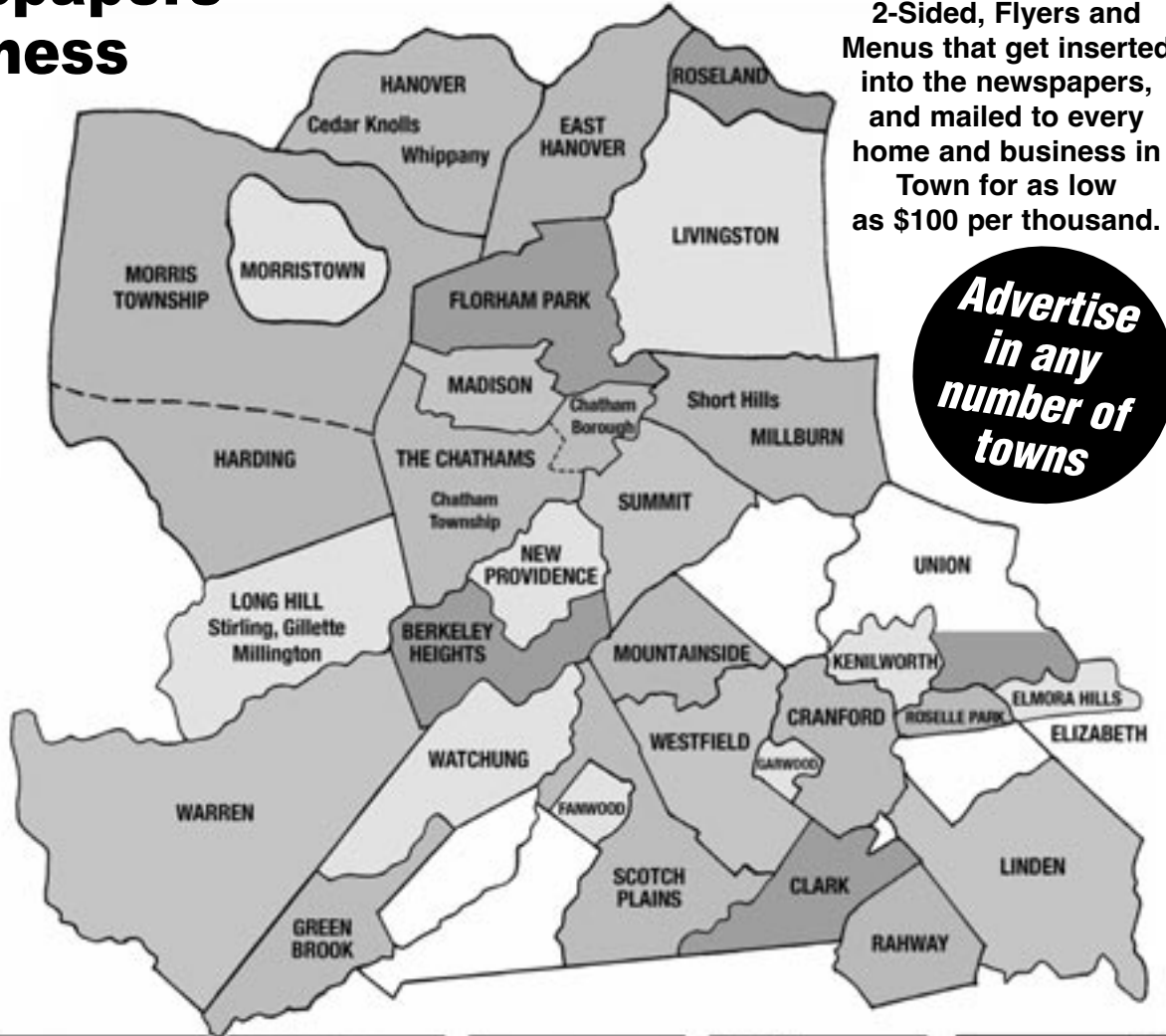
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UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESERVING HISTORY

The Hannah and James Caldwell Memorial Obelisk recently underwent a complete restoration and cleaning at the Siloam-Hope First Presbyterian Church (formerly known as the First Presbyterian Church of Elizabethtown) in Elizabeth thanks to the Union County Historical Society (UCHS).

UCHS President Joanne Rajoppi said, "The 179-year-old obelisk honoring Revolutionary War pastor and patriot James Caldwell and his wife Hannah, was in terrible condition: encrusted dirt from years of neglect with loose mortar and unreadable engravings. As we approach the 250th anniversary of our country, what better time to reflect, remember and honor the contributions of our patriots, especially the Caldwells, who sacrificed their lives for independence."

The Siloam-Hope First Presbyterian Church cemetery is one of the oldest in the state, dating to the late 1680s. More than 40 officers of the

Continental Army are buried there, many of whom attended the church while Reverend Caldwell served as its pastor. Caldwell also served as General George Washington's Deputy Commissary of supplies during the war. The British placed a bounty on his head and he was murdered in 1781. His wife Hannah and mother of their nine children had been murdered the previous year by a British soldier in the aftermath of the Battle of Connecticut Farms.

There are also more than 313 enslaved and free African Americans buried in the historic cemetery, often in unmarked graves: some are children, and some are likely war veterans. The 313+ Ancestors Speak Project acknowledges and commemorates their lives and burials. A monument with their names was recently erected in the cemetery.

The restoration of the Caldwell memorial was partially funded by a Union County Heart Grant,

donations by the Union Township Historical Society, the NJ Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, (NJSAR), the West Fields Chapter of SAR, American Legion Post 248, the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield and many individual contributors.

Ms. Rajoppi said that the restoration included a workshop on how to clean gravestones.

Volunteers, including local area Boy Scouts, the Crane's Ford Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and UCHS members attended the four-hour event.

The restoration work was completed by Richard Grubb & Associates, a full-service cultural resource management firm and one of the largest, independent archaeological and historic preservation consulting companies in the eastern United States. Their corporate headquarters are in Cranbury, New Jersey.

ABOUT THE UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY

The UCHS was incorporated by an Act of the 93rd Legislature of the State of New Jersey on April 1, 1869. The objective of this Society is the collection and preservation of all matter of historical relics, books, records, documents, and manuscripts, to stimulate and encourage historical research and the study of history pertaining to the territory originally embraced by Elizabethtown and the present Union County.

The Society exists through the help and generosity of its members. Membership is comprised of citizens who have a common interest in preserving the past. There is no paid staff. The Executive Board and Members perform all Society functions.

For more information visit unioncountyhistoricalsocietynj.org.

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(above) The recent restoration and cleaning of the James and Hannah Caldwell Memorial Obelisk at Siloam-Hope First Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth was commissioned by the Union County Historical Society.

Courtesy photos

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