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BOY SCOUTS HELP BRING DESERTED VILLAGE TO LIFE

Submitted by Dan Bernier, Scoutmaster

As they do every year on the third weekend of October, the members of Boy Scout Troop 23 helped the Union County Parks Department staff the Four Centuries in a Weekend program at the Deserted Village of Feltville. Over 2,000 visitors came to the Deserted Village from throughout New Jersey, as well as from as far away as England.

The Scouts helped staff an archaeological activity for children, old-fashioned children's games, and a campfire with marshmallow toasting. As they have been doing for over 40 years, Troop 23 ground apples and pressed them into apple cider which visitors could sample. The Scouts pressed more than 20 bushels of apples!

When not staffing activities, the Scouts were able to take a hayride through the woods and fields of the Watchung Reservation. By spending the weekend at the Deserted Village, and staffing the event, the Scouts qualified for the Historic Trails Award.

Boy Scout Troop 23 meets on Wednesday nights at the hall under St. Genevieve's Church. 200 Monmouth Road, Elizabeth. New members are welcome at any time, all year round. For more details, please contact Dan Bernier, Scoutmaster, at 908-451-1948 or webfoottroop@gmail.com.



Courtesy photo

(above) Scouts Frankie, Ethan and Michael helped grind 20 bushels of apples into apple cider at the annual Four Centuries in a Weekend program at the Deserted Village of Feltville

STOCK UP NOW ON FIREWOOD

Do you need firewood for your backyard chiminea, fireplace or wood-burning stove?. You can get wellseasoned split hardwood logs at St. Genevieve's Church, 200 Monmouth Road, Elizabeth, for less than what you pay in the supermarket. And at the same time, you will be supporting the camping program of Boy Scout Troop 23, including a campership fund that helps send financially-challenged Scouts to summer camp.

Help yourself from Webby's Wood Shed, located behind the Rectory near the garages that face 818 Livingston Road. Follow the directions on the envelopes provided to make a donation. Thank you for your support!

> (right) You can buy seasoned split hardwood from Boy Scout Troop 23 from Webby's Wood Shed



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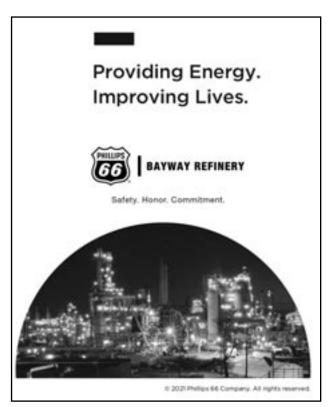
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SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS OF NEW JERSEY

The Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery provided a \$10,250 grant to the Special Olympics of New Jersey.

This grant is for general support of their yearround programs throughout Union County. Programs are free to all registered athletes. This grant helps with the cost of insurance, facilities, equipment, uniforms, housing and meals at events, awards, sports, and education. At Phillips 66, we understand that we share our communities and take responsibility for our neighbors' safety and well-being.



(above) Lisa Barra, Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery, and Beth Starr, Special Olympics of New Jersey Courtesy photo

SUPPORT FOR THERAYOUTH FOUNDATION

\$10,000 grant to the TheraYouth Foundation. This grant is for general support of their programs. TheraYouth is a nonprofit foundation offering children of low-income families, with or without insurance, outpatient therapy to

Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery provided a overcome physical and developmental barriers. They solve the problem of scarce and costly therapeutic care in high-density neighborhoods by offering affordable occupational, physical, and speech therapy. To learn more about TheraYouth visit therayouth.org.



(above, l-r) Jennifer Allen, TheraYouth Volunteer; Lisa Barra & John Allen, Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery; and Dr. Irina Marcoff, TheraYouth Founder. Courtesy photo

START STRONG, STAY CONNECTED AT THE GATEWAY FAMILY YMCA

The Gateway Family YMCA Provides Unique Opportunities for Everyone this Winter

At The Gateway Family YMCA, individuals and families find more than just a place to work out. With opportunities to connect with new people, develop new skills and explore new interests, the Y facilitates the discovery of new passions and assists in gaining a greater sense of purpose and belonging for all. This January, The Gateway Family YMCA is helping everyone in the community start strong with new programs, new hours, community initiatives and a membership special!

Winter programs at The Gateway Family YMCA include new options that introduce Arts, Enrichment and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) in addition to traditional YMCA programs like Dance, Gymnastics, Swimming Lessons, Youth Sports, and Group Exercise. With registration available now, for winter programs, childcare and summer camp, January is the ideal time to get ahead and plan for an exciting 2025. Beginning January 2nd, The Gateway Family YMCA has announced expanded facility hours in Elizabeth, Rahway and Union to better serve the local community. In addition, January 1 - 15, everyone can join the YMCA with \$0 Joiner fee using promo code JAN at tgfymca.org/join-the-Y. This offer is available on all membership types, including Family Memberships with one to four adults. For local families, The Gateway Family YMCA provides a fun and unique opportunity to support all ages, together or apart, within the same organization.

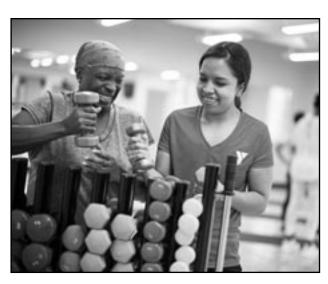
The Gateway Family YMCA provides alternative solutions for busy families, including virtual group exercise, a mobile app with 24-hour access to thousands of recorded seminars, skill drills, group exercise, art and motivational programming.

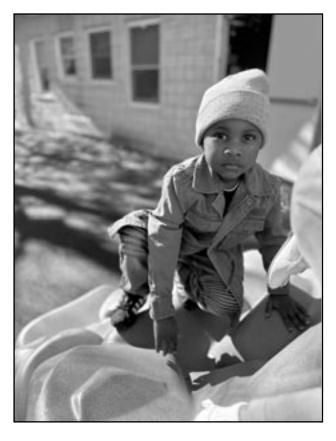
Unique programs for specialized communities is at the heart of the Y's mission. Through WISE Community Services programs individuals with Alzheimer's, Dementia, Mild Cognitive Impairment, or those who would benefit from additional assistance and their caregivers receive specialized services and support to ensure they

remain healthy, active and independent. This March, The Gateway Family YMCA will launch a Veterans Wellness Initiative. For interested individuals, the Wellness Center Branch is collecting an interest list at 908-349-9622 or veterans@tgfymca.org Chronic Disease prevention and management programs like Enhance Fitness for Arthritis, Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring and LiveSTRONG at the YMCA provide a comprehensive community resource without the additional burden of travel. The 7th Grade initiative, Boys and Young Men of Color Strategy (BYMOC) and innovative programs like Esports ensure that everyone receives the support and commitment of caring role models, leadership opportunities and lifeskills necessary for a bright future.

"Our mission is to serve and support all individuals in our community, and we have a unique opportunity to ensure equitable access is available through financial assistance supported by community partners and donors in our Annual Support Campaign," stated Colleen A. Clayton, Chief Development and Strategy Officer.

To learn more about The Gateway Family YMCA, visit tgfymca.org or contact the Elizabeth Branch 908-355-9622, Five Points Branch 908-688-9622, Rahway Branch 732-388-0057 or the Wellness Center Branch 908-349-9622 for more information.











SCOUTING FOR FOOD DRIVE WAS 2ND LARGEST EVER



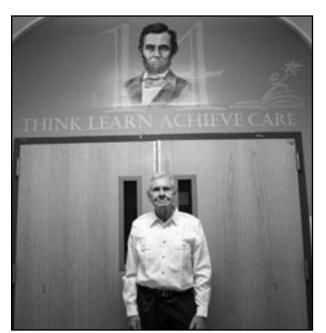
(above) Boy Scout Troop 23 and Cub Scout Pack 23 delivered 5,900 pounds of food donations to six local food pantries during their Scouting for Food drive on November 23.

Courtesy photo

STUDENT VISITS SCHOOL HE **ATTENDED 77 YEARS AGO**

Mr. Glenn Goldberg reached out to School No. 14 Principal Diane Matos-Reis in hopes of being able to visit the school and room that he attended Kindergarten in, 77 years ago. It was a moment of much nostalgia and a drive down memory lane as Mr. Goldberg, now a Counsellor at Law, walked the halls of Abraham Lincoln School No. 14 as he did back in 1945. He was entirely grateful for this opportunity and shared that although very vague, he has many fond memories of his time at Abraham Lincoln. He shared that he will be looking to add to the display of props that the school has from the classes of the late 1900's. It was a true pleasure to meet Mr. Goldberg and share in his love and pride for Abraham Lincoln School No. 14. Principal Matos-Reis and Vice Principal Collins stated that it is truly heartwarming to lead a school with such history and so much left behind for its legacy.

Follow Elizabeth Public Schools on Facebook



Boy Scout Troop 23 and Cub Scout Pack 23 have been participating in the nationwide Scouting for Food drive in a big way since the program first began in 1988. Thanks to the generosity of hundreds of Elmora residents, the food collection on November 23 was again a huge success. Almost 5,900 pounds of food was collected, making it our second largest collection

Canned and dry goods, turkeys, and dozens of Pinho's pies were distributed to six different local food pantries. With so many of our neighbors still in need, this food will help a lot of people. Thank you to everyone who contributed food items, frozen turkeys or cash (which will be converted

to grocery gift cards). Your generosity is most appreciated!

The Scouting program instills character, good citizenship and physical fitness in youth through outdoor activities such as campouts and hikes, involvement in community activities, and just plain FUN!

Cub Scout Pack 23 provides activities and training for boys and girls in Kindergarten through fifth grades. Boy Scout Troop 23 is for boys who are at least 11 years old or graduated from the fifth grade. New members are welcome at any time, all year round. For more details, please contact Dan Bernier, Scoutmaster, at (908) 451-1948 or webfoottroop@gmail.com.

SPIRITUAL? **CURIOUS? SEEKING?**

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

Do you consider yourself spiritual? Are you 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.



LONG-TIME PUPPY RAISERS HONORED

The Seeing Eye

The Seeing Eye recently honored five long-time puppy raisers with induction to "The Seeing Eye 21 Club", a special honor for volunteers who have raised at least 21 Seeing Eye® puppies. The non-profit also honored the Seeing Eye puppy raising club volunteers with two awards, the Outstanding Leader Award and the 20-year Leader Award. Finally, 34 exceptional college-bound puppy raisers were awarded college scholarships totaling \$64,000.

"Each year, The Seeing Eye's Family Day is a celebration of all the hard work and dedication of our volunteer puppy raising families," said Seeing Eye director of canine development Peggy Gibbon. "An army of volunteers provides each Seeing Eye puppy with a loving home environment, socialization, and basic training that prepares them to become Seeing Eye dogs for

people who are blind."

"We're actively recruiting puppy raisers and puppy sitters for our upcoming litters that are planned for the coming months. If you're interested in joining our community of dog lovers, now is a great time to reach out to us and learn what puppy raising is all about," said Gibbon. "We need homes and families of all shapes and sizes for our puppies because fully trained Seeing Eye dogs are placed in similarly diverse families and living situations with people who are blind."

A puppy raiser family is responsible for providing a loving and nurturing home environment for approximately one year. During that time, the raiser is responsible for teaching basic obedience, house manners, bringing the puppy to Seeing Eye puppy club meetings and socialization trips in their area. The Seeing Eye

puppy could be a German shepherd, Labrador retriever, golden retriever, or a Labrador/golden retriever cross.

Puppy raisers must live within New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware or New York (Rockland or Orange Counties) so they can attend regular puppy club meetings where they will receive help and coaching with their puppies. All veterinary expenses are covered by The Seeing Eye and a stipend is provided to help cover the cost of dog food. If a Seeing Eye puppy does not graduate from the program, the family who raised the puppy is offered the first option to adopt the puppy they raised. For more information seeingeye.org/raise.

Established in 1929, The Seeing Eye provides specially bred and trained dogs to guide people who are blind. Seeing Eye dog handlers experience greatly enhanced mobility and independence, allowing them to retain their active lifestyles. The Seeing Eye is a 501(c)3 non-profit supported by contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations, bequests, and other planned gifts.

The Seeing Eye is a trademarked name and can only be used to describe the dogs bred and trained at the school's facilities in Morristown, N.J. If you would like more information on The Seeing Eye, please visit the website at SeeingEye.org, call 973-539-4425, or email info@seeingeye.org.



(above) Pam Heady was among those inducted into "The Seeing Eye 21 Club", a special honor for volunteers who have raised at least 21 Seeing Eye® puppies.

Courtesy photo



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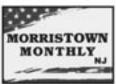
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Toddlers World

Friday, January 3 & 17 at 11 am An hour of fun songs to sing, music, and playtime.

Junior Chess Club (ages: 7-12)

Friday, January 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31 at 4pm Don't miss out on our Chess Club for Kids! We welcome beginners. Join us and let's play some chess!

Zumba Gold

Monday, January 6, 13, & 27 and Thursday, January 9, 16, & 23 at 9 am Add fitness to your daily routine through the joy of dance!

Mahjong

Monday, January 6, 13, & 27 from 12 pm - 2 pm Everyone who loves Mahjong is welcome to come & play at the library. Bring friends or come alone & find new partners. We'll provide the space for open play. A minimum of 4 players are required to play the game. Ages: 18 & up

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Crochet with Sol

Monday, January 6 & 13 and Tuesday, January 7 & 14 at 12 pm Learn the tips and tricks with Ms. Sol! She will teach you everything you need to know to get started, from fundamental stitches to understanding gauge.

Tai Chi & Qi Gong

Monday, January 6, 13, & 27 at 4 pm and Wednesday, January 8, 15, 22, & 29 at 9 am Join Pete on Monday & Wednesday for Tai Chi, a gentle Chinese martial art that combines slow, flowing movements with deep breathing. Experience the refreshing benefits of mindfulness!

The Book Clubbing Club

Tuesday, January 7 at 11 am Join our Book Club meeting and engage in a lively discussion about our latest book.

Word Search Wednesday

Wednesday, January 8, 15, 22, & 29 Come to Elmora Branch Library to solve a word search puzzle in your free time.

Lil' Bookworms

Wednesday, January 8 at 5 pm Encouraging kids to share their love of reading, engage in book discussions, and feel eager about reading.

Bubbles aRe Us

Saturday, January 11 at 1 pm Located on 640 3rd Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ Join Ms. Martha for songs, stories, and crafts with LOADS of fun! This storytime will feature stories in English and Spanish for the whole family. FREE PIZZA!!!

Stitch & Chat

Tuesday, January 14 at 10 am and Wednesday, January 22 at 5 pm Come to Elmora to mend your clothing. Bring the article you need help with and assistance will be provided.

ESL Classes for Kids

Wednesday, January 15 at 5 pm Join us every third Wednesday of each month, to learn English as a Second Language with fun interactive activities. For ages 5-12

Adult Scrabble

Thursday, January 16 from 2 pm - 3:30 pm Word lovers! Exercise your B-R-A-I-N (7 points) by playing Scrabble with other like-minded adults.

Drawing for Kids

Tuesday, January 21 at 3 pm Come and join us for a delightful storytime where you will get to learn how to draw!

Winter Storytime & Craft

Saturday, January 25 at 1 pm

Step into a magical winter wonderland with Ms. Martha! Enjoy a story followed by a fun craft that will spark your creativity and warm your heart. Don't miss out on this enchanting experience!



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