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## MAYORS WELLNESS CAMPAIGN KICKS IT UP A NOTCH

### Hanover Township

Hanover Township Mayor Thomas “Ace” Gallagher and Board of Education Superintendent Justin Toomey each acted as captain of kickball teams made up of 30 resident 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. The December face off was part of the Mayors Wellness Campaign and resulted in a 1-1 tie with each team winning one game!

Other participants included: Recreation Superintendent Denise Brennan supervised the game, and DPW Superintendent Brian Foran acted as referee. Board of Education president Lisa Bomengo, Recreation Office Manager Jaime Getsinger, Recreation Clerk Brittany Heffler, Mayors Wellness Committee member Ava Ventrone were designated hitters and Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Tom Quirk was score keeper.

The Mayors Wellness Campaign is a statewide community health initiative that provides evidenced based tools and strategies for mayors and community leaders to help their residents achieve healthier lifestyles to improve overall health and wellness in their communities. Under the leadership of Mayor Gallagher, the New Jersey Health Care Institute has designated Hanover Township “an Up and Coming Healthy Town” in 2022 and a “Healthy Town to Watch” in 2023.

Special events like “Kickin It Kickball” showcase Hanover Township Recreation and Mayor Gallagher’s commitment to coupling fun with healthy activities via the Mayors Wellness Campaign.

A rematch will be scheduled in the spring at the Hanover Township Community Center.



(above) Hanover Township Superintendent of Schools, Justin Toomey shakes hands with Hanover Township Mayor Thomas “Ace” Gallagher before the start of the Kickin’ It kickball game. Mayor Gallagher’s team won a game as did Superintendent Toomey’s team. A rematch will be held in the spring.

Photos by Hanover Township



Courtesy photo

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# WINTER WONDERLAND SPARKLES IN HANOVER

The cold weather could not stop Santa or Hanover Township Recreation’s fourth annual Winter Wonderland event from happening on Saturday, December 14, 2024, at the Hanover Township Community Center.

The evening’s entertainment featured music provided by DJ Flo, photo ops with lovable characters Bluey and Olaf, and three performances by students from Sharon’s School of Dance.

In addition, members of the PBA #128 prepared and served hot chocolate and donuts and collected donations of new, unwrapped toys for deserving children.

Santa’s arrival via the brightly decorated Whippany Fire Department truck was the highlight of the evening. With assistance from

Mayor Thomas “Ace” Gallagher and Committee John Ferramosca, the crowd counted down to light the tree in front of the community center.

Winter Wonderland debuted in December 2020. “Traditionally, Hanover Township Recreation hosted a breakfast with Santa event,” explains Denise Brennan, Hanover Township Superintendent of Recreation & Park Administration. “However, we were prohibited from doing an event of that type during the pandemic. So, we took the holiday houses we use for Halloween, set them up at the Bee Meadow Pool parking lot and decorated them for Christmas to create a drive-through experience.” At the end of the drive through Santa’s favorite elf collected letters to Santa and Santa, himself, waved goodbye.



(above) After his arrival via the Whippany Fire Department truck, Santa met with (from left to right) Committeeman John Ferramosca, Santa, Mayor Thomas “Ace” Gallagher, and EMT/Firefighter Shawn Waldron.



(above) Hanover Township PBA #128 prepared and served hot chocolate at the event.



(above) Sharon’s School of Dance didn’t let the cold stop them from performing at Winter Wonderland.





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## KERRY O'CONNOR CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY OF ORGAN DONATION

### NJ Sharing Network

Kerry O'Connor of Morristown celebrated a significant milestone in September – it is 11 years since a pancreas transplant saved her life. Reflecting on her journey, Kerry is using this anniversary to advocate for NJ Sharing Network and encourage people to register as organ and

tissue donors to help save and enhance lives.

“Not a day goes by that I don't think about the incredible gift my organ donor gave me. Their selfless choice has given me a life I never imagined possible,” said Kerry. “Sharing my story with others is my way of honoring my donor's legacy and supporting the vital work of NJ Sharing Network.”

Kerry's health challenges began at a young age when she was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. Despite using the most up-to-date diabetes technology, including an insulin pump and Continuous Glucose Monitoring System (CGMS), Kerry struggled with severe hypoglycemia unawareness. Her blood sugar levels could drop dangerously low without warning, putting her life at constant risk. Simple activities like folding laundry could cause her blood sugar to plummet, forcing her to administer glucagon to herself to prevent losing consciousness.

Kerry had been living with Type 1 diabetes for 28 years. The only solution to her condition was a pancreas transplant. She was placed on the waiting list, and after 11 months, she received the life-changing call. Kerry's donor, like her, was CMV and EBV negative, a rare match that allowed for the successful transplant on September 3, 2013, at University of Minnesota Medical Center.

Since her transplant, Kerry has not only regained her health but has also embraced life with a renewed sense of purpose. She has traveled to France, volunteered often for NJ Sharing Network, and most notably, welcomed three children into the world. Her children, Gracyn (8), Saoirse (6), and Seamus (3), are a testament to the incredible second chance at life that her transplant provided.

“Most pancreas transplant recipients don't have children, let alone three,” said Kerry. “My husband Billy and I are truly blessed. I am living proof of the lifesaving power of organ donation. Our children are a daily reminder of what a miracle this journey has been. I hope my story inspires others to consider registering as organ and tissue donors. You truly have the power to save lives.”

According to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), over 100,000 Americans are waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant, with nearly 4,000 of them in New Jersey. One organ and tissue donor can save eight lives and enhance the lives of over 75 others. But the need for registered donors is critical, as only 3 in 1,000 people pass away in a manner that allows for organ donation.

To learn more about organ donation, get involved, and join the National Donate Life Registry, visit [NJSharingNetwork.org](http://NJSharingNetwork.org).



(above) Standing at right pancreas transplant recipient Kerry O'Connor enjoys a precious moment with her husband Billy and their children (l-r) Saoirse, Gracyn, and Seamus.

Photo by NJ Sharing Network

## STUDENTS EXCEL AT TABLE TENNIS TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS



Courtesy photo

The Joola 26th Annual North American Team Championships took place at the Gaylord National Resort in Washington, DC over Thanksgiving weekend. A total of 912 table tennis players from 226 teams around the world participated, including players from the U.S.A., Canada, Puerto Rico, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, Jamaica, Austria, Japan and China. They competed for championships across 17 divisions, each based on the team players'

average USA Table Tennis ratings.

Matchpoint TTC 7, led by Team Captain Enya Li, along with Yug Sinha and Rassi Zhou (Brooklake school 5th grade), secured 1st place out of 16 teams in Division 12 under the guidance of Florham Park resident and coach, Xuanming Hu. Rassi Zhou has been training at Matchpoint Table Tennis Center in Whippany, NJ, founded by Bochao Li, who is also a Florham Park resident.



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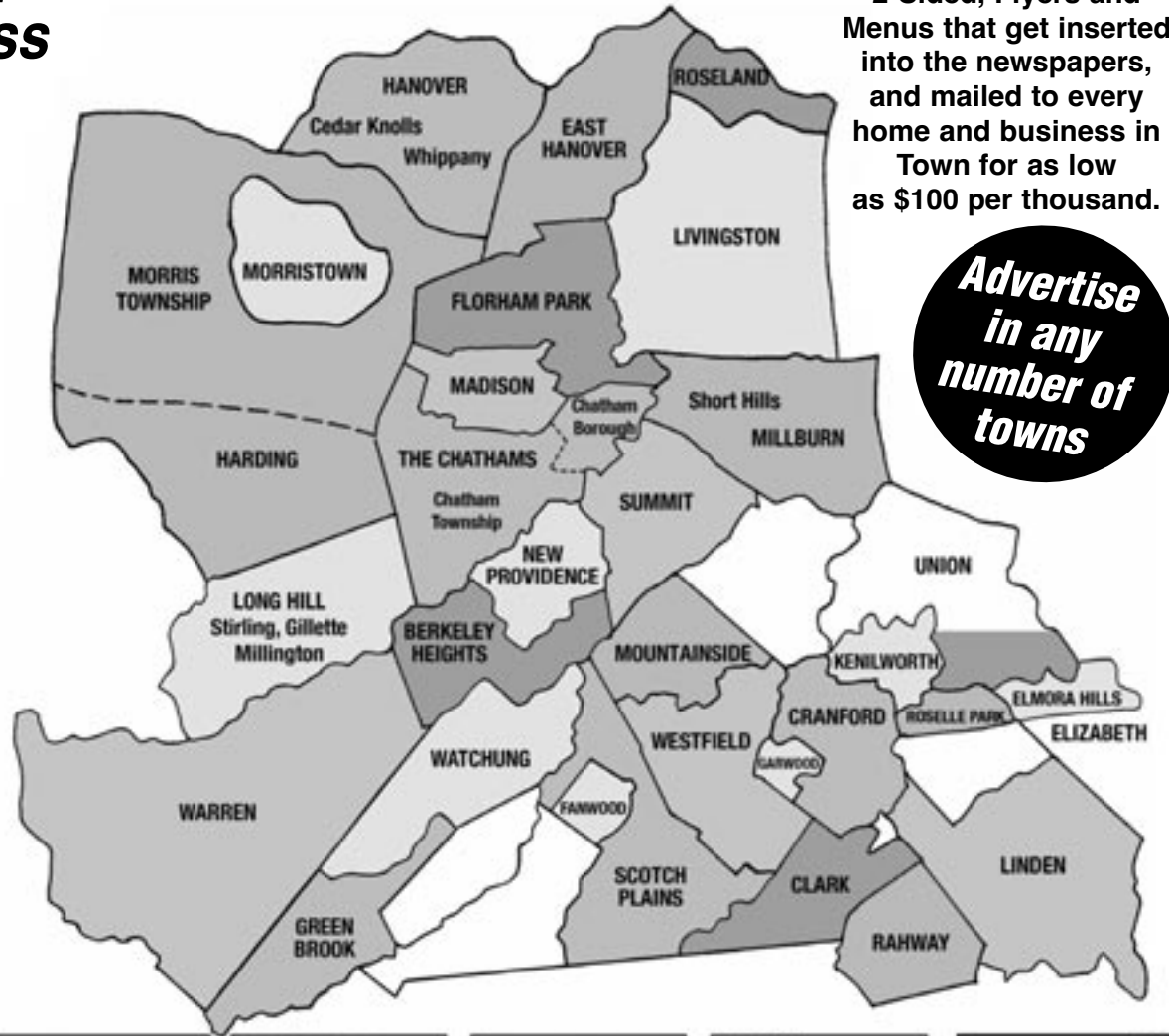
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6 Units	6.5"x6.25" or 10"x4"		320	760	1200	1400	1600	1800	2000	2200	2400	2600	2800
9 HALF PAGE	6.5"x9" or 10"x7"		360	860	1300	1600	1900	2200	2400	2600	2800	3000	3200
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## AN UNUSUAL GOOSE REHABBED 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 saltmarshes, 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](mailto:info@theraptortrust.org). To report an injured wild bird call 908-647-2353.

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Tuesday, January 14, 6:30 PM

Learn two ways to make beautiful 3D snowflakes and bring a winter wonderland into your home!

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### History of Tea

Thursday, January 23, 6:30 PM

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