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MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS WELCOME CENTER OPENS

Linden Public Schools

Linden Public Schools celebrated a significant milestone on November 15, 2024, with the grand opening of the Multilingual Learners Welcome Center, a dedicated facility designed to support the district's rapidly growing multilingual population. The event featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony and guided tour.

Danie Orelie, Director of the Multilingual Learners Department, expressed her excitement about the center, the first of its kind in Union County. The center comes at a pivotal time as the district's multilingual student population has grown substantially, from approximately 500 students in 2019 to over 1,300 in 2024. This surge reflects the diverse and varied backgrounds of families seeking new opportunities, quality education, safety, and refuge from challenging conditions, including war and persecution.

The grand opening represents the culmination of Orelie's long-standing vision and tireless advocacy for a comprehensive resource center. Recognizing the limitations of conventional language support programs, such as ESL and bilingual education, Orelie aimed to create a center that addresses the full spectrum of needs critical for multilingual learners to thrive.

The Welcome Center's mission aligns with the whole-

child approach supported by Superintendent Atiya Y. Perkins and the Linden Board of Education. This holistic framework offers a range of essential services that empower students and engage their families:

Mental Health Support – The center connects students with mental health professionals, providing a safe space for them to process migration-related challenges and nurture emotional well-being.

Social Services and Community Connections – Partnering with local organizations, the center assists families with access to financial aid, food support, and healthcare, alleviating stress and enabling students to focus on their education.

Translation Services and Parent Workshops – To bridge linguistic and cultural gaps, the center provides translation services and hosts workshops that educate parents about school policies, academic expectations, and resources, fostering stronger parental involvement.

"The Multilingual Learners Welcome Center embodies Linden Public Schools' commitment to inclusivity and holistic student support," said Superintendent Perkins.

For more information about the Multilingual Learners Welcome Center and its services, please contact Danie Orelie at dorelie@lindenps.org or 908-486-2800 ext. 8029.

Photo by Linden Public Schools

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(above) Linden Public Schools Unveils Groundbreaking Multilingual Learners Welcome Center with Ribbon-Cutting.

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LIFE in LINDEN

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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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“IT TAKES A VILLAGE” AWARDS

Linden Public Schools

The Linden Board of Education celebrated the power of leadership, mentorship, and community impact by honoring three extraordinary individuals with the prestigious “It Takes a Village” Awards, showcasing how dedication and collaboration can transform lives and strengthen the Linden community.

The prestigious “It Takes a Village” Awards were presented to Linden High School standout senior Alonzo Smith, ROTC Master Sgt., Nicholaus Gombocz, and the city’s Director of Parks & Recreation, Keith Pressey, during the board’s Nov. 21 monthly meeting. The honorees exemplify leadership, mentorship, and a steadfast commitment to fostering a thriving and inclusive community.

STUDENT EXCELLENCE: ALONZO SMITH

Smith was recognized for his exceptional leadership, talent, and positive influence. Principal Charles Koonce described Smith as an outstanding student with a dynamic presence in the ROTC program, National Italian Honor Society, and the school band, where his skill as a drummer is both inspiring and unifying.

“When Alonzo plays the drums, it’s spiritual,” Koonce said. “His music keeps everyone together, just as his leadership uplifts those around him. Every time I see him, his smile and positive energy inspire me to lead with renewed vigor.”

Koonce also praised Smith’s family for their active involvement in the PTA and the community, crediting their unwavering support as foundational to his success. “Alonzo’s character and commitment make me incredibly proud to be his principal,” he concluded.

MENTORSHIP & LEADERSHIP MASTER SGT. NICHOLAS GOMBOCZ

ROTC Master Sgt. Gombocz was honored for his exceptional mentorship and dedication to student development.

Assistant Superintendent for Support Services Annabel Louis shared heartfelt testimonials about Gombocz’s impact, highlighting a student whose life was transformed through his guidance.

“Master Sergeant Gombocz’s influence is felt not only during students’ time in high school but well into their adult lives,” Louis said. “He continues to provide mentorship, welcoming former students into his extended family.”

Gombocz’s contributions are a cornerstone of Linden High School’s NJROTC program, which has grown to over 600 cadets since its founding in 1986. With a curriculum designed to instill values, discipline, and a sense of accomplishment, the NJROTC has become a pillar of leadership and community at the school. Guided by four instructors with over a century of combined military experience, the program offers cadets a unique environment that fosters character development and helps them navigate challenges.

The nomination for Gombocz came from School No. 2 Vice Principal Lizzie Lemus, who emphasized his role in promotion resilience and purpose among cadets. “His dedication to our students and the ROTC program has left an

indelible mark on our community,” Louis added.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION: KEITH PRESSEY

Pressey, director of Parks and Recreation and one of the architects of the city’s growing annual Halloween Parade, was celebrated for his efforts in strengthening community bonds. A member of the Linden Halloween Parade Committee, Pressey was a key figure in organizing the massive 71st annual parade on Oct. 27, 2024, which saw participation from nearly every school in the district and drew thousands from across Union County.

“The parade wasn’t just an event; it was a multi-generational celebration that brought together residents of all ages,” Superintendent Atiya Perkins said. “Keith’s leadership created an unforgettable experience that made everyone feel proud to be part of Linden.”

Pressey accepted the award with humility, crediting the committee and his team. “I may be the face, but this award belongs to the entire

committee who worked tirelessly to make the parade a success,” he said.

A TRIBUTE TEAMWORK

The “It Takes a Village” Awards spotlight the collective effort required to build a strong and supportive community. From inspiring students to providing mentorship and strengthening communal bonds, the honorees embody the district’s mission of collaboration and excellence.

Superintendent Perkins concluded the evening with a powerful message: “Together, we soar. These honorees remind us that through leadership, mentorship, and connection, we can achieve great things.”

With their remarkable contributions, Alonzo Smith, Master Sergeant Nicholaus Gombocz, and Keith Pressey demonstrate the true meaning of community spirit and dedication. The awards reflect the Linden Board of Education’s commitment to celebrating those who make a difference, ensuring a brighter future for all.

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PANCAKE BREAKFAST –JANUARY 19, 2025

Come to a Pancake Breakfast, hosted by the American Legion Auxiliary - Unit 102, on Sunday, January 19, 2025, at the American Legion Post 102, located at 112 West Elizabeth Ave., from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. This month's special will be Omelets!

Donations: Adults \$8.00 / Seniors & Children \$7.00 / Ages 5 & Under Free. Take outs are available.

This event is open to the public, so come out and enjoy a home cooked breakfast, and support our veterans!

PANCAKE BREAKFAST - JANUARY 25, 2025

Come one, come all to the VFW#1397 Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, January 25, 2025, for the VFW Post #1397, which will be held at the American Legion Post 102, located at 112 West Elizabeth Ave in Linden from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Donations: Adults \$7.00 / Seniors & Children \$6.00/ Ages 5 & Under Free. Take outs are available.

This event is open to the public, so come out and enjoy a home cooked breakfast, and support our veterans!

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 year-round 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.



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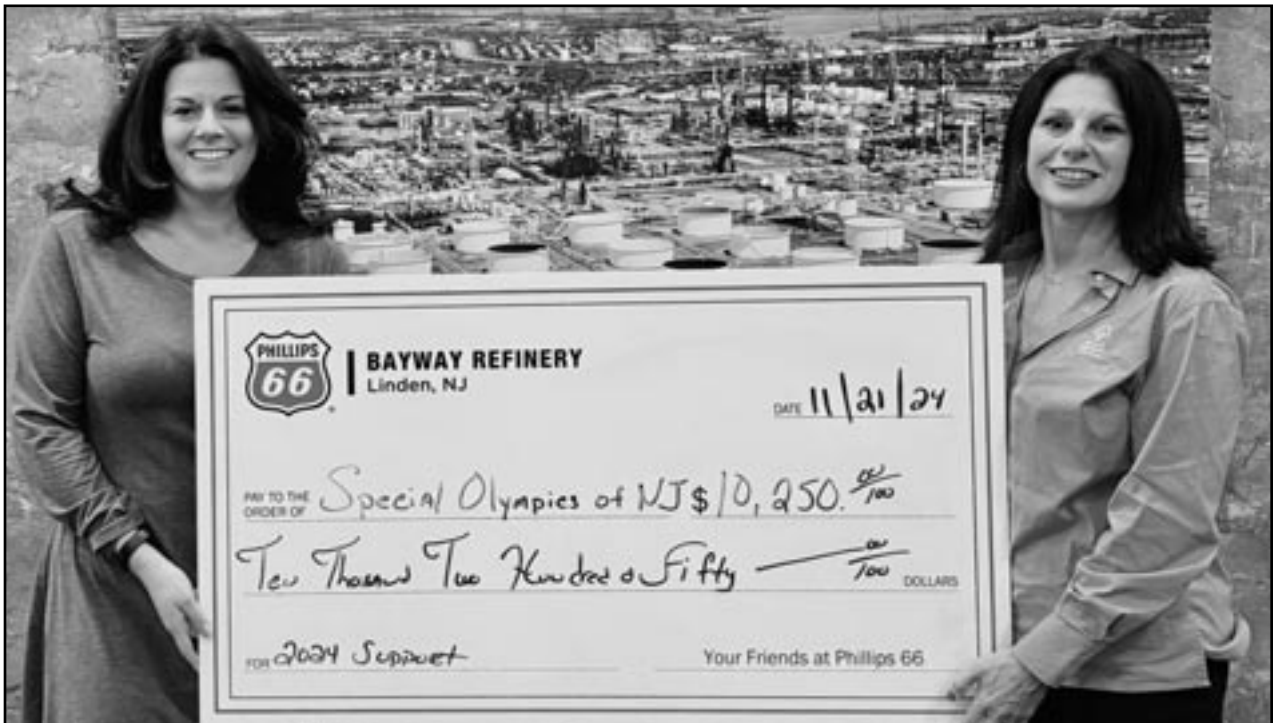
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(above) Lisa Barra, Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery, and Beth Starr, Special Olympics of New Jersey

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2024 HOLIDAY SOCIAL

The Linden Chamber Division of the Greater Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce participated in a Holiday Social at Vintage City Offices in Elizabeth, NJ.

Chamber members celebrated the season with a festive evening of networking, good company, and holiday cheer! They were treated to appetizers and mixed and mingled with local business owners and community members in a relaxed atmosphere. The event was free for members to attend.

The Linden Chamber Division of the GECC is a leader among the great organizations representing the Linden Business Community, established with the mission to provide support

to local businesses. The Chamber works to provide support for new and current businesses, advocates site development and promotes a forward thinking and carefully planned business environment in Linden. Their meetings are designed for sharing information and experiences. Representatives from the Linden Government are always in attendance at meetings, which allows for an open and communicative relationship between business owners and the municipality. Meetings take place at 8:30 a.m., on the fourth Tuesday of every month, except July and August. For more information about the Linden Chamber visit elizabethchamber.com or call (908) 355-7600.



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In addition to these, movies will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1 pm, for the full listing of movies please visit our website or call.

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT NEW JERSEY 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:

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ESTHER PADEN SWORN IN AS CASA VOLUNTEER FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Esther Paden of Linden proudly took the oath as a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) on Nov. 1, 2024, along with fellow trainees Deirdre Monroy of Scotch Plains, Kathleen McMahon of Cranford, Lydia Hernandez-Walford of Bayonne, Ellen Devin of Westfield, and La Wrence Burroughs and Tisa Joyner-Nance of Rahway. Union County Superior Court Judge Gavin I. Handwerker presided over the swearing-in.

These volunteers, equipped to champion the best interests of child victims of abuse and neglect, join a team of hundreds of devoted advocates with CASA of Passaic and Union Counties. Child Focus, the nonprofit organization that operates this CASA program, aims to provide dedicated life-changing advocacy and support services to each of the more than 500 children living in foster care through no fault of their own, across both counties.

“These seven dedicated individuals have made an invaluable commitment to ensure that every child’s voice is heard and valued. We are proud to welcome them to the Child Focus family,” said Erica Fischer-Kaslander, Executive Director of Child Focus. “Each CASA volunteer brings unique perspectives and strengths that impact the lives of those who need it most. There is a waitlist of children awaiting an advocate, and we urgently need community members to step up to serve. We encourage anyone interested in supporting

vulnerable children to attend an upcoming information session to learn how they can make a difference.”

No specific qualifications are required to become a CASA volunteer; Child Focus provides comprehensive training to equip volunteers with the skills needed to advocate effectively. Volunteers commit to visiting their assigned children at least once a month and collaborate with caregivers, educators, and other key figures in the child's life to make informed recommendations to the court.

Child Focus urges the community to enroll in CASA winter training to support growing list of abused and neglected children awaiting an advocate. This winter, Child Focus will hold two expedited CASA training sessions, each of which cover all necessary material over two- and three-week periods, as an alternative to the traditional six-week course.

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, log on to childfocusnj.org.



(above) Esther Paden of Linden was Sworn In as CASA Volunteer for Foster Youth. To learn more about becoming a CASA volunteer visit casapassaicunion.org/info-session.

Courtesy photo

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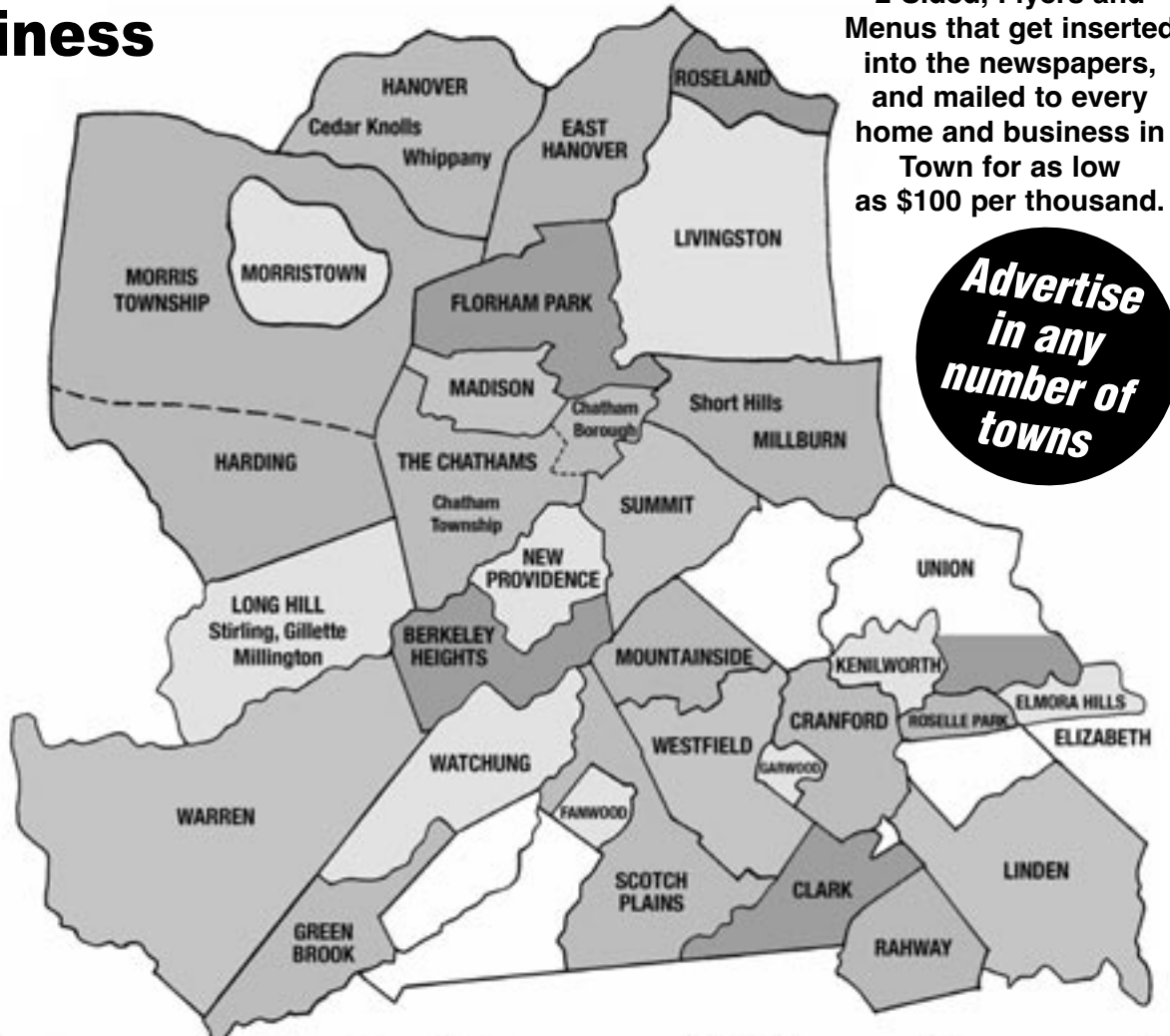
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Long Hill LEADER NJ Qty: 3,500 Zips: 07933, 07946, 07980	MADISON MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,300 Zip: 07940	Short Hills MILLBURN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 8,200 Zips: 07041, 07078	MORRIS TOWNSHIP TIMES NJ Qty: 13,500 Zip: 07960, Harding 07976	MORRISTOWN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 7,000 Zip: 07960	MOUNTAINSIDE VIEW NJ Qty: 3,000 Zip: 07092	New Providence NEWS NJ Qty: 5,100 Zip: 07974	OUR TOWN Rahway, NJ Qty: 13,100 Zip: 07065
Life in Roseland NJ Qty: 3,000 Zip: 07068	ROSELLE PARK MONTHLY Qty: 5,600 Zip: 07204	Scotch Plains NJ WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY Qty: 9,600 Zip: 07076	Summit & Times NJ Qty: 9,600 Zip: 07901	Spirit of UNION NJ Qty: 7,800 Zip: 07083 (partial)	WARREN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,500 Zip: 07059	Watchung Post NJ Qty: 2,700 Zip: 07069	Westfield MONTHLY NJ Qty: 12,000 Zip: 07090

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Units (wide x High) Size											
1 Unit (Business card) 3.25"x2"0	100	260	360	460	560	600	660	700	800	900	1000
2 Units 6.5"x2" or 3.25"x4"	150	360	560	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1300
4 Units 3.25"x8" or 6.5"x4"	240	560	900	1000	1300	1600	1700	1800	1900	2000	2100
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
12 Units 6.5"x14"	400	960	1400	1800	2100	2400	2700	3000	3300	3600	3900
18 FULL PAGE 10"x14"	500	1200	1800	2200	2500	2800	3000	3300	3600	3900	4300
2-PAGE SPREAD (2) 10"x14"	800										
BACK PAGE 10"x14"	600										
FRONT PAGE BANNER 8.25"x2"	360										
FRONT PAGE BOX 1.5"x4.5"	320										

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WHISKY

Ballantine	1.75L	\$30.99
Buchanan's 12yrs old	750ml	\$29.99
Buchanan's 12yrs old	1.75L	\$57.99
Bushmill's Irish	1.75L	\$46.99
Chivas Regal	750 ml	\$31.99
Chivas Regal	1.75L	\$62.99
Chivas Regal 18 yrs old	750 ml	\$82.99
Crown Royal	750ml	\$29.99
Crown Royal	1.75L	\$50.99
Dewars 12 yrs old	750ml	\$26.99
Dewars 12 yrs old	1.75L	\$45.99
Dewars White Label	750 ml	\$20.99
Dewars White Label	1.75L	\$33.99
Gentleman Jack	750ml	\$29.99
Gentleman Jack	1.75L	\$52.99
Glenmorangie 10 yrs old	750ml	\$44.99
Glenlivet 12 yrs old	750 ml	\$56.99
Glenlivet 12 yrs old	1.75L	\$104.99
Grants	750ml	\$15.99
Grants	1.75L	\$24.99
Jack Daniels	750ml	\$27.99
Jack Daniels	1.75L	\$48.99
Jack Daniels Fire	750ml	\$27.99
Jack Daniels Fire	1.75L	\$48.99
Jameson	750ml	\$29.99
Jameson	1.75L	\$58.99
Jim Beam Whisky	1.75L	\$32.99
Johnnie Walker Blue	750ml	\$193.99
Johnnie Walker Blue	1.75L	\$419.99
Johnnie Walker Black	750ml	\$29.99
Johnnie Walker Black	1.75L	\$59.99
Johnnie Walker Double Black	750ml	\$35.99
Johnnie Walker Red	750ml	\$19.99
Johnnie Walker Red	1.75L	\$33.99
Macallan 12yrs old (double cask)	750ml	\$74.99
Makers Mark	750ml	\$29.99
Makers Mark	1.75L	\$56.99

GIN

Beefeater	1.75L	\$36.99
Bombay Sapphire	1.75L	\$39.99
Seagram's gin	1.75L	\$24.99
Tanqueray	750ml	\$22.99
Tanqueray	1.75L	\$38.99

COGNAC & BRANDY

Courvoisier V.S.	750ml	\$35.99
Courvoisier V.S.	1.75L	\$66.99
Remy Martin V.S.O.P.	750ml	\$50.99
Remy Martin V.S.O.P.	1.75L	\$129.99

CORDIALS

Bailey's Irish Cream	1.75L	\$47.99
Duggan's Irish Cream	1.75L	\$32.99
Kahlua	1.75L	\$45.99
Krupnik	750ml	\$20.99
Licor 43	750ml	\$28.99
Licor 43	1.75L	\$45.99

VODKA

Absolut (regular)	750ml	\$17.99
Absolut (regular)	1.75L	\$29.99
Belvedere Organic Vodka	1L	\$39.99
Belvedere Organic Vodka	1.75L	\$45.99
Ciroc (all types)	750ml	\$19.99
Ciroc (all types)	1.75L	\$57.99
Finlandia	750ml	\$16.99
Finlandia	1.75L	\$32.99
Grey Goose	750ml	\$25.99
Grey Goose	1.75L	\$39.99
Ketel One	750ml	\$19.99
Ketel One	1.75L	\$39.99
Luksusowa Vodka	1.75L	\$25.99
Pinnacle (all types)	750ml	\$11.99
Pinnacle (80 proof)	1.75L	\$17.99
Skyy	1.75L	\$21.99
Sobieski	750ml	\$12.99
Sobieski	1.75L	\$19.99
Stolichnaya (all types)	1.75L	\$30.99
Tanqueray Sterling	750ml	\$19.99
Tanqueray Sterling	1.75L	\$30.99
Three Olives (all types)	1L	\$19.99
Tito's Vodka	1.75L	\$31.99

RUM

Bacardi Light & Gold	750ml	\$13.99
Bacardi Light & Gold	1.75L	\$20.99
Captain Morgan Spice	1.75L	\$27.99
Malibu	750ml	\$16.99
Malibu	1.75L	\$25.99

TEQUILA

Deleon Blanco Tequila	750ml	\$37.99
Deleon Blanco Tequila	1.75L	\$59.99
Patron Silver	750ml	\$44.99
Patron Silver	1.75L	\$81.99
Cantera Negra Coffee Tequila	750ml	\$29.99

BEER

Becks (12oz) 24pk	24pk	\$27.99
Blue Moon	24pk	\$36.49
Bud and Bud Lite cans	30pk	\$27.99
Bud and Bud Lite loose bottles	24pk	\$24.99
Coors Lite (24oz) cans	12pk	\$19.99
Coors Lite/Miller Lite loose bottles	24pk	\$24.99
Coors Lite/Miller Lite	30pk	\$27.99
Corona/Corona Lite loose bottles	24pk	\$32.99
Dab (16oz) cans	24pk	\$26.99
Founders All Day IPA	15pk	\$17.49
Heineken/Heineken Lite bottles	24pk	\$32.99
Land Shark	24pk	\$29.99
Modelo Especial cans	24pk	\$30.99
Pabst Blue Ribbon cans	30pk	\$20.99
Pilsner Urquell	24pk	\$35.99
Sam Adams Boston Lager	24pk	\$37.99
Stella Artois loose bottles	24pk	\$32.99
Super Bock	24pk	\$32.99
Tarczyn (16oz) cans	24pk	\$27.99
Yuengling Lager bottles	24pk	\$23.99
Zywiec (11.2oz)	24pk	\$21.99

WINE

Bartenura Moscato	750ml	\$12.99
Barone Fini Pinot Grigio	750ml	\$11.99
Bell Adagio Pinot Grigio	1.5L	\$10.99
Beringer White Zinfandel	750ml	\$ 6.99
Beringer White Zinfandel	1.5L	\$10.99
Black Box (All Types)	3L	\$19.99
Bonanza Cabernet	1.5L	\$40.99
Carnivor Cabernet Sauvignon	750ml	\$10.99
Casal Garcia Vinho Verde	1L	\$ 6.99
Cavit (All Types)	1.5L	\$15.99
Clos du Bois Chardonnay	1.5 L	\$19.99
Dom Perignon	750ml	\$264.99
Dreaming Tree (All Types)	750ml	\$13.99
Ecco Domani Pinot Grigio	750ml	\$11.99
Freixenet Brut, Extra, Extra Dry	750ml	\$11.99
Gato Negro (All Types)	1.5L	\$ 9.99
Gazela Vinho Verde	750ml	\$ 6.49
Joseph Carr Cabernet Sauvignon	750ml	\$21.99
Kendall Jackson Vintners Chardonnay	750ml	\$13.99
Kim Crawford Sauvignon Blanc	750ml	\$14.99
Louis Jadot Beaujolais Villages	750ml	\$14.99
Louis Jadot Pouilly Fuisse	750ml	\$26.99
Martini & Rossi Asti	750ml	\$11.97
Menage a Trois Red	750ml	\$10.99
Mi Amore Red	750ml	\$ 8.99
Moet Imperial Champagne	750ml	\$46.99
Noble Wine 337, 667	750ml	\$11.99
Papi (All Types)	1.5L	\$11.99
Ruffino Chianti	1.5L	\$15.99
Ruffino Tan label	750ml	\$19.99
Santa Margerita Pinot Grigio	750ml	\$22.09
Silver Oak Alexander Valley Cabernet	750ml	\$115.99
Simi Chardonnay	750ml	\$13.09
Woodbridge (All Types)	1.5L	\$12.49

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