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NJ

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Edward Jones

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AHLUWALIA CONTINUES HIS UNBEATEN STREAK

Millburn Library Student Chess Tournament

Submitted by Scott Massey

In 1981, Michael Wojcio directed the first Millburn Library Student Chess Tournament sponsored by The Friends of the Millburn Library. It became an annual event which Wojcio directed for the first 30 years. On Saturday December 7, 2024, the 43rd Annual Millburn Library Student Tournament was held with the only absence being 2020, the covid year.

The tournament drew 37 children mostly from Millburn, Livingston and Maplewood into 3 sections from ages 5 to 14. Dorothy Kelly and many other Friends of the Millburn Library did a fantastic job of organizing the event. Two parents, Rajesh Sharma and Mashal Dias did a great job on the floor by confirming checkmates. The tournament was directed by Master Scott Massey.

Section I (5-7 year olds) had 12 children. Sven Mao, a 6 year old first grader from South Mountain won first place by winning 3 games and one draw for a 3 1/2 out of 4 score. He was the only undefeated player in Section I. Anish Sharma, a first grader from Hartshorn Elementary School in Millburn captured second place after a playoff game over third place Manveer Kainth. Both scored 3 out of 4 wins. Honorable mention went to Enzo Puri from South Mountain and Dylan Zhang



(front row, l-r) Nikhil Begerhotta, Sven Mao, Arjun Korada, (middle, l-r) Anish Sharma, Juefei Liu, Logan Zipkin, Anika Sharma (back, l-r) Ayansh Ahluwalia, Director Scott Massey, Neal G., Atari Karamcheti.

from Collins Elementary school in Livingston both with 2 1/2 out of 4 points.

Section II (8-10 year olds) was dominated by Nikhil Begerhotta. This 8 year old from Hartshorn was the only one to win 4 successive games during the tournament with the last 2 against the second and third place finishers. A playoff decided the next three places as all three won 3 games and lost one. Second place went to Juefei Liu, a third grader from Hartshorn. Third place went to Logan Zipkin, a fourth grader from Collins. Arjun Korada, a third grader from Glenwood Elementary School in Millburn finished in fourth place.

The headline for this tournament could have been; Ahluwalia continues his unbeaten streak in Millburn Library Chess Tournaments. Five years ago, Ayansh dominated Section I by winning all 4 games. He did the same in Section II a couple of years later. Neil G. stopped the winning streak in round 4 as the game ended in a draw. These 2 seventh graders from Millburn Middle School faced each other in a playoff game. It ended in a draw so a second playoff game was needed. Ayansh won to capture first place in Section III (11-14 year olds). Neil G. took a very close second place. Third and fourth place was also decided by 2 eighth graders in a playoff game. Atharv Karamcheti from Millburn Middle School took third place while Max Greenspan from Newark Academy was fourth.



(above) Ayansh Ahluwalia finished first place in the 11 to 14 year olds section with Tournament Director, Chess Master Scott Massey.

Courtesy photos

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MILLER GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM CELEBRATED

At the November 25th Board of Education meeting the Miller Girls Volleyball team was celebrated for their successful season. NJ.com named Millburn the Super Essex Conference Team of the Year, with Divya Issac earning the title of SEC Conference Player of the Year. Divya was also named to the All Group 3 1st Team, and Franna Hawksworth to the 2nd Team.



Photo by Millburn Public Schools

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TALREJA STRIKES GOLD AT USA PICKLEBALL NATIONALS



(above) Vishal Talreja at his Gold medal presentation at the 2024 USA Pickleball National Championships.

Courtesy photo

MILLBURN TEACHERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Two Millburn special education staff members (Meghan Stenziano, Ed.M, and Jennifer Stracquadano, Ed.M, BCBA) presented at the Autism New Jersey Conference in Atlantic City in November 2024. The topic was Promoting Social Skills for Students with ASD in Public Schools. The presentation highlighted notable achievements in Millburn's ABA program including social skills inclusion, reverse inclusion, and after-school enrichment opportunities.



Photo by Millburn Public Schools

Vishal Talreja from Short Hills, NJ, clinched the gold medal in the highly competitive 5.0/40-49 skill/age bracket at the prestigious 2024 USA Pickleball National Championships recently held in Mesa, Arizona. Talreja has been playing pickleball since 2020 and is also a certified coach who loves to teach. Competing against a field of 15 strong teams, Talreja and his partner Rob Hagmann (from Arizona), went undefeated to secure the top spot on the podium.

In a unique twist, Talreja teamed up with his partner for the first time at the tournament, making their success all the more remarkable. The duo's seamless collaboration and unyielding determination proved to be an unbeatable combination.

This victory marks Talreja's second medal at Nationals, highlighting his exceptional skill and rising prominence in the pickleball community. Reflecting on the achievement, Talreja said,

"Winning gold at Nationals is a dream come true. Partnering with someone I'd never met before and still achieving this result shows the power of adaptability, trust, and teamwork. I'm incredibly grateful for this unforgettable experience."

The 2024 USA Pickleball National Championships brought together top players from across the country, showcasing the growth and popularity of pickleball. Over 2400 players participated across all divisions and age groups. Talreja's performance underscores his dedication to the sport and his relentless drive to compete at the highest level.

Talreja extends his gratitude to his supporters, family, and the pickleball community for their encouragement throughout his journey. As he celebrates this monumental achievement, he looks forward to future competitions and continuing to inspire others in the sport.

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JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

MARIA IODICE'S ESSAY WINS CONTEST

Congratulations to Millburn High School Junior, Maria Iodice, who was recently recognized for her outstanding contribution in a contest held by The Italian History and Culture Committee (IHCC) of New York. Her winning essay was about Giovanni daVerrazzano, the explorer who first sailed into New York Bay 500 years ago as part of a contest commemorating the anniversary. Maria also won a monetary prize and will be honored by the IHCC at a future event.



Photo by Millburn Public Schools

Millburn Township Public Schools

The job training program at Millburn High School seeks to help students to learn valuable on-the-job skills.

The high school is excited to highlight a new business partnership for their job training program. A partnership with Trend by J and M. The store is owned by former Millburn High



(above) The job training program at Millburn High School seeks to help students to learn valuable on-the-job skills. Ceci is learning to help stock the shelves, fold items, interact with customers and learn more skills related to working in a retail store environment.

School Teacher Michele Acitelli. This is a wonderful boutique store with fantastic items located in Summit.

Millburn High School's Job Training Program currently partners with the following companies: CVS, Millburn Board of Education, Summit YMCA, Maplewood Cleaners, Farmers Insurance, Master Pizza, Millburn Camera, Grace Giving and Walgreens. We are always looking for additional opportunities for our students so if you would like to learn more please reach out to Roger Askins at roger.askins@millburn.org.



(above) Former Millburn High School Teacher Michele Acitelli and Ceci.

Photos by Millburn Township Public Schools



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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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Chanticleers (Girls Ages 12-14): 2 Openings

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

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Erin Viani is an elementary school teacher who continues to create a positive learning environment in the classroom and help build children's creative minds. She lives with her husband and two children in Essex County, NJ, and enjoys spending time with family and friends.

The book, Let's Play Pretend, Tents of Imagination, follows Anna, Jai, and Reina as they enjoy creating a variety of tents out of objects around the house just by using their imagination. This helps them design a space to play pretend.

The book is for purchase on Amazon and available in digital form on Kindle.



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LIBRARY / PROGRAMS / JANUARY 2025

Wisdom Begins in Wonder is the theme for winter at the Millburn Free Public Library. The Library is pleased to present its January lineup.

Programs are free and open to all residents.

Register at millburnlibrary.org/events.

For virtual programs, registrants will receive a Zoom link.

PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES:

Be a Reading Machine: Winter Reading Challenge

January 1-31

Join us for our 6th annual Winter Reading Challenge. Our goal is to read 2,025 books this winter across all ages! Log the books you read this winter for a chance to win WONDERful prizes. Sponsored generously by the Friends of the Millburn Library.

Calming Craft: Boho Wall Hanging

January 2-31

Take & Make: Register to receive a kit to make a decorative clay wall hanging at home. For ages 8 and up, teens and adults.

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS:

Tech Talk: Simplify Life & Business with AI (Virtual)

Wednesday, January 8, 7-8pm, Zoom

A showcase on how AI tools can simplify your daily tasks, enhance productivity, and bring a new level of efficiency to both personal and professional endeavors.

Presented by industry expert Eddi Khaytman.

Registration required for virtual link.

Local Author Talk: Allie Nava (Virtual)

Tuesday, January 14, 7-8pm, Zoom

NJ author Allie Nava will read from and discuss her new novel July and Everything After, which tells the story of an American immigrant's return visit to Sri Lanka.

Registration required for virtual link.

Cooking Demo: Vibrant Soups (Virtual)

Thursday, January 23, 7-8pm, Zoom

Learn to make vibrant soups perfect for any night of the week. Explore delicious

customizations, flavor combinations and vegan or vegetarian options. Presented by The Thirsty Radish. Registration required for virtual link.

PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES:

Lunar New Year Dance Performance

Saturday, January 11, 4:30-5:30pm.

Bauer Center in Taylor Park

Folk Art (FA) Dance's award-winning student dance troupe returns to perform traditional Chinese folk dances in celebration of the Lunar New Year! Thanks to the generosity of the Millburn Township Recreation Department, we will hold this event at the Bauer Center located in Taylor Park. Registration is required.

Crafternoon

Wednesday, January 29, 4-5pm.

Children's Room

What does crafts + afternoon equal? Why, crafternoon of course! Kids are invited to make a fun seasonal craft. Drop in.

PROGRAMS FOR TEENS:

"Pop Up" Craft: Zines with Fiona

Tuesday, January 7, 3:30-4:30pm.

Teen Space

Make your own zine (aka a homemade mini magazine)! Stop by the Teen Desk to create your one-of-a-kind zine with Fiona and Janis. We'll have examples for inspiration, but zines can be whatever you make them. Drop in.

College Prep: Accel or AP?

Monday, January 13, 7-8pm, Teen Space

Learn the differences between the Accelerated and Advanced Placement tracks and how they affect the path to college. Registration required.

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ANNUAL THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE SUCCESS

Millburn Township Public Schools

South Mountain, Glenwood, Wyoming, Hartshorn, Deerfield, Washington, the High School, and the Ed Center teamed up for the PTOC annual district Thanksgiving food drive this year. Students at the Middle School collected food for the Community Food Bank of New Jersey.

Once again, our students and school community collected Thanksgiving food items and other non-perishable pantry staples to distribute to local families and local community partners serving those in need in Essex County.

Together, we packed more than 95 food boxes/bags that were distributed to local families, and through the Interfaith Food Pantry of the Oranges to the broader Essex County community. We also provided 1,555 items of Thanksgiving foods to the Junior League of the Oranges and Short Hills to supply their Thanksgiving meal

program. The remaining Thanksgiving items and pantry staples were donated to MEND, which supplies foods to 23 food pantries in Essex County. We filled half a truck with 36 cases of food!

We also raised close to \$6,700 in cash donations, which we were able to use to purchase gift cards for distribution to local families and families served by our community partners, including Family Promise of Essex County, which works with unhoused families experiencing homelessness.

Thanks to the Millburn Fire Department for their help each year in picking up and delivering the mountains of boxes filled with staples for those in need. Thanks also to PTOC Outreach Chairs, Sarah Webb and Angela Cohen for coordinating this tremendous effort that brings joy to families in need and to all of us in gratitude for the generosity of this community!

ADULT CPR CLASS JANUARY 11

The Millburn-Short Hills Volunteer First Aid Squad (MSHVVAS) is pleased to offer CPR classes exclusively to members of the Millburn-Short Hills community. By doing so, we hope to increase the number of CPR-trained citizens, spread overall awareness of cardiac arrest care, and continue the Squad's longstanding tradition of giving back.

These courses cover the American Heart Association (AHA) Adult CPR and AED guidelines, and successful participants will be issued an AHA course completion card.

All courses will be offered at a reduced price to community residents over the age of 16. Residents who are 16 or 17 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The small course fee of \$20 covers the AHA certification card course materials.

All members, including those teaching these courses, are volunteers. The squad relies solely on private donations and does not charge for any services offered, so any additional tax-deductible donations are always welcome and much appreciated.

The class dates, times and registration link can be found on our website www.mshvfas.org/cpr. Or use the QR Code.

(right)
You can use
the QR Code
to register.



REFLECT ON SAFETY—BRIGHT IDEAS SAVE LIVES

Millburn-Short Hills Volunteer First Aid Squad

In collaboration with the Millburn Police and Fire Departments, we encourage everyone to Reflect on Safety—Bright Ideas Save Lives!

For Your Home: Make sure your house numbers are visible from the street both day and night. Reflective or illuminated numbers help emergency services find you faster, especially during the winter season when early sunsets make visibility more challenging. Clear, easily recognizable house numbers allow emergency services to respond quickly when every second counts.

For You and Your Loved Ones: Pedestrians, cyclists, and bikers are encouraged to wear reflective clothing or carry flashlights to increase their visibility, particularly during early morning

and evening hours. Don't forget to outfit your small children and pets with reflective accessories for added safety.

Let's keep Millburn shining bright and safe for the holidays and beyond!

About the Millburn-Short Hills Volunteer First Aid Squad

The Millburn-Short Hills Volunteer First Aid Squad (MSHVVAS) has been a community tradition since the squad answered its first call in 1958. It has been staffed 100% by dedicated volunteers, funded solely by private donations, and has never charged for any services rendered. The squad serves the community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

For more information on joining MSHVVAS, visit our website mshvfas.org, or give us a call 973-379-7969.



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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."

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

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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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JOHN CONNOLLY APPOINTED AS ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Millburn Public Schools

The Board of Education has approved the appointment of John Connolly as Assistant Superintendent beginning on January 1, 2025. Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kate Diskin said, "I look forward to continued collaboration with Mr. Connolly in his new role in the central office. His deep knowledge of our schools and community will be an incredible asset to the district."

Mr. Connolly is currently the Principal at Millburn Middle School, where he has been its leader since July 2017. Planning for the transition at MMS is underway. An interim Principal will be appointed for the rest of this school year, and we will start the search for a permanent Principal in the spring. Mr. Connolly will transition slowly and continue to be a touchpoint for the middle school throughout this year.

Mr. Connolly grew up in Millburn and graduated from Millburn High School. He began his teaching career in Madison, NJ as a Health and Physical Education teacher, ultimately

becoming the K-12 Supervisor of Health and Physical Education. He was the Assistant Principal/Dean of Students at Madison High School from 2008 to 2017, when he left to return to Millburn as Middle School Principal.

In his time at MMS, Mr. Connolly has successfully implemented many initiatives designed to support the social and emotional well-being of students and staff. Included among these are recommendations from Challenge Success for reducing stress, the recognition of MMS as a "No Place for Hate School," the implementation of a new bell schedule, and efforts to build a greater sense of community in the school through "One Millburn." As a school administrator, Mr. Connolly has been directly involved with curriculum development, staff development, budgeting, and staffing, all of which will be integral to his new position.

Mr. Connolly received his Bachelor of Arts in Education from Rowan University and his Master of Arts in Education, Human Services Leadership, from the College of St. Elizabeth.



(above) John Connolly, Assistant Superintendent, Millburn Public Schools.

Courtesy photo

BRINGING WARMTH THROUGH COATS FOR KIDS

Knights of Columbus Council 6386

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the St. Rose of Lima community, the Knights of Columbus Council 6386, chartered at St. Rose of Lima Church in Short Hills, NJ, successfully concluded its annual Coats for Kids campaign. Between mid-September and early November, over \$8,000 was raised, enabling the purchase of 360 brand-new winter coats. These coats were distributed to children in need at the St. Joseph Social Service Center, located in Elizabeth and St. Mary's Church, located in Newark, NJ.

Thomas Abella, Coordinator for the Coats for Kids campaign, underscored the campaign's mission, "It's so important to provide warm clothing for children in need. Every coat symbolizes care, compassion, and a brighter winter for a child."

This year's success is part of a proud tradition. Over the past seven years alone, the St. Rose community has contributed over 2,000 coats to

children in need. This effort is part of the larger Knights of Columbus initiative, which has seen over 1,500 councils across North America donate more than 1,000,000 coats since the program began in 2009.

The Coats for Kids campaign exclusively provides brand-new coats purchased through the Knights of Columbus' worldwide network. Abella emphasized, "We focus on delivering new, high-quality coats to ensure children are fully equipped to face the cold months."

Expressing his gratitude, Abella added, "We are so thankful, once again, to the St. Rose community for their incredible generosity."

The Knights of Columbus Council 6386 continues to demonstrate the power of faith, community, and generosity in addressing local needs. This year's coat drive stands as a testament to the collective compassion of the St. Rose parishioners and their commitment to making a tangible difference in the lives of children.



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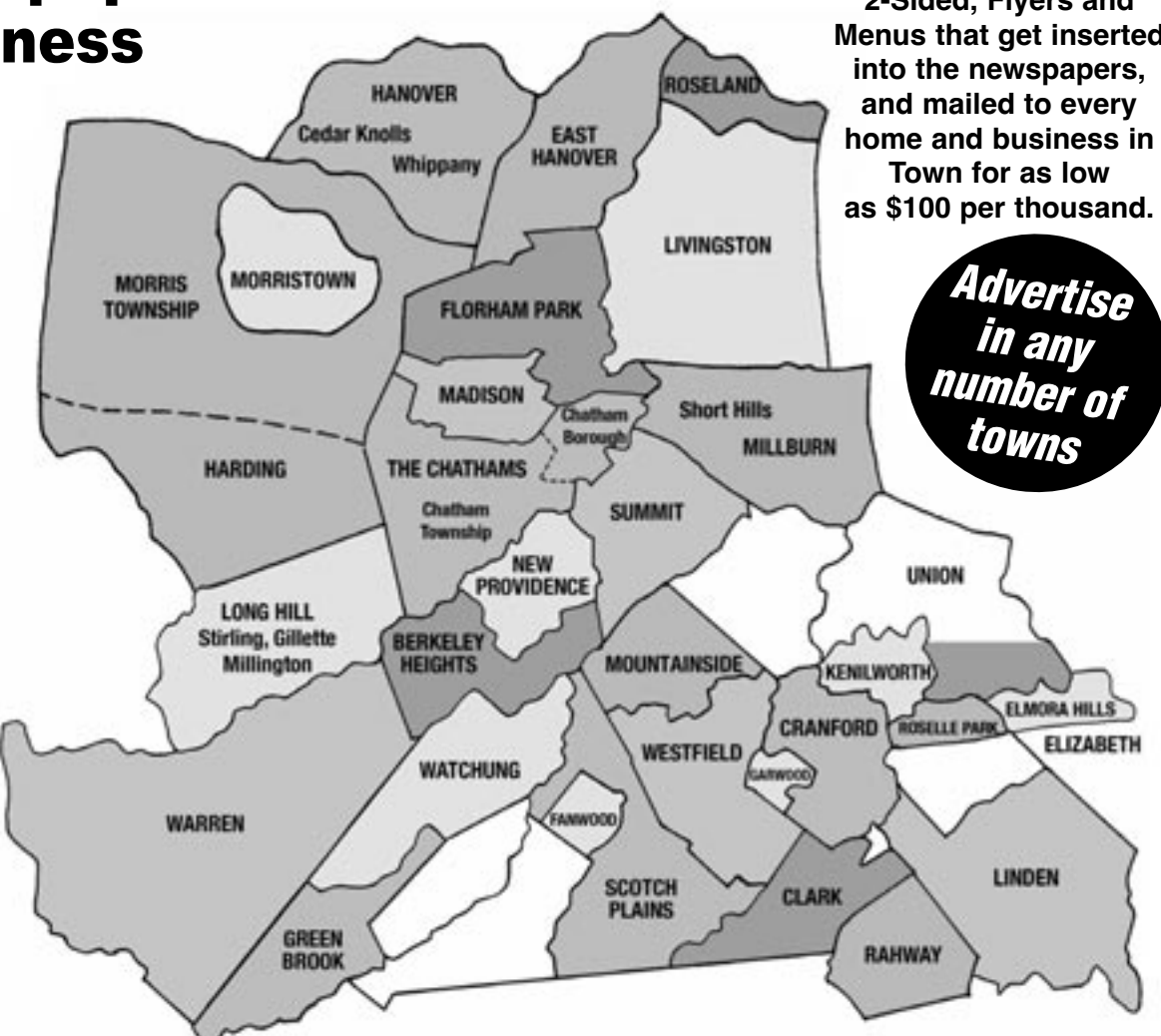
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PROCLAMATIONS RECOGNIZE CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS DAY

Imagine a Center for Coping with Loss

The Township of Millburn joined Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss, in recognizing November 21, 2024, as Children's Grief Awareness Day. Other municipalities that joined in issuing proclamations in recognition of the day included Bridgewater, Cranford, Mountainside, Raritan, Scotch Plains, Westfield, and the entire County Commissioners of Essex County.

Additionally, Governor Murphy added Children's Grief Awareness Day to the commemorative dates honored in New Jersey. Imagine would like to thank them all for their partnership in Imagine's work to ensure that all communities are aware of the need for grief support for children, teens, young adults, and all those who are grieving.

Imagine's Executive Director, Lindsay Schambach shared this about the importance of recognizing this day: "I remember, 7 years ago,

not knowing this honorary day existed, or even that there was a need for this day to be recognized at all. I was unaware that 1 out of every 13 children in our state would suffer from losing a parent or a sibling before they turn 18 years old. In 2018, I was blissfully unaware of all of this, until I started at Imagine. My husband of just 8 years, died in June 2018, June 14th to be exact, and I called Imagine about 20 days after, in a blur, unsure of what I said, or what I expected, just knowing that my son and I needed support.

In July, my son and I walked through the doors of Imagine for the first time. I don't remember much from that first visit, other than the adoration on my son's face as he lit up seeing the beauty of this grief support center. The word grief was new to him at the time. But it didn't matter. He didn't see Imagine as being a place for grief. For him, it was a place for belonging.

Our first group in September, we were

encouraged to bring a picture of the person who died. Cameron and I found a space on the wall, and I cried as we put his picture up. Cameron wiped away my tears. As we left that first night, Cameron ran down the hallway and stopped at his father's picture. "I'll see you in two weeks, Dad," he said. And just like that, his little ritual took hold. Each week, "I'm here, Dad" he said at the start of our groups. And "Bye, Dad, see you in two weeks," as the groups ended.

In November, it was our first Children's Grief Awareness Day. I was so destroyed, having to acknowledge this day. I couldn't believe that my children would be included in this. It felt like the world was playing a cruel joke, but we chose to participate in Imagine's recognition of the day.

Now, as the Executive Director of Imagine, I understand that it is all of our responsibility to advocate, to understand, to fundraise, to ensure that every child, like Cameron, and the 151,000 other children in the state of NJ, have the support that they need, when their lives fall apart, because we never know who it will happen to. We are so deeply grateful for our local municipalities that have answered the call and done their part to raise awareness!

We all share a responsibility in ensuring that children have the chance to belong to a community where they aren't just living in their grief, but are finding places of belonging, where their pain and fear and loss is welcome and acknowledged, and their joy and growth and resilience is fostered.

Thank you to everyone who helps children to feel less alone and who remembers that children are grieving every day! Not just on Children's Grief Awareness Day."

If you're interested in speaking with someone at Imagine about ensuring that your town recognizes Children's Grief Awareness Day in 2025, please contact Imagine's Chief Development Officer, Rena Jordan at rena@imaginejnj.org.

Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss is a 501c3 that offers grief and loss education and training to the community and free year-round grief support groups for children ages 3-18 and young adults 19-30 who are coping with a loss due to death. Concurrently, support groups are available for the parents and guardians of the children in the groups and offered in English and Spanish. For more information, please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imaginejnj.org or visit our website at imaginejnj.org.

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