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ROBOTIC PETS DISBURSED TO HOMEBOUND RESIDENTS

Morris County

During the holiday season, the Morris County Office of Aging, Disabilities, and Community Programming (ADCP) reminds residents of the importance of supporting the senior community and ensuring they feel connected, valued, and cared for during this special time of year.

This year, the ADCP office provided more than 110 "Joy for All" robotic companion pets to qualifying residents and facilities across the county as part of an initiative aimed at alleviating social isolation, loneliness, and cognitive decline among seniors.

The program, which was funded by the Aging American Rescue Plan, allocated 20 robotic companion pets to the Morris County Sheriff's Office, which distributed them to clients enrolled in its Project Lifesaver program. Additionally, 12 pets were donated to the Cornerstone Adult Day Center and each of the county's 12 nutrition sites "adopted a pet" to keep onsite. 40 pets were distributed through the Nutrition Home Delivered Meals program, and Hope House will distribute another 25 pets.

"When addressing social isolation and dementia care, we wanted something creative approach. The "Joy for All" companion pets have been the focus of rigorous, peer-reviewed studies demonstrating their efficacy to alleviate the many of the effects of loneliness and social isolation," said

Christine Hellyer, Christine Hellyer, Director of the ADCP office. "The partnership with the Sheriff's Office to distribute the pets was an essential component of this program. In total, about 120 companion pets were provided to seniors or senior programs that could benefit from them."

To qualify for a companion pet, recipients must be at least 60 years of age, homebound, and either socially isolated or experiencing dementia or a similar cognitive condition. Designed to mimic real pets, the "Joy for All" animals aim to provide companionship and comfort for those unable to care for live animals.

Sheriff Gannon, who joined in delivering a companion pet to a Project Lifesaver client, emphasized the importance of this program.

"Anytime the Sheriff's Office can provide comfort to those in need, we are going to do it. This simple act of support provides aid to those who are homebound," said Gannon. "We look forward to seeing the tremendous benefits of this program being passed on to a sometimes forgotten population in our community."

The pets respond to motion and touch: the cats will roll over and purr, while the dogs bark and wag their tails. The pets do not come with names, allowing recipients the personal experience of naming their new robotic dog or cat, which they are welcome to keep for as long as they wish.



(above) Morris County Sheriff James Gannon and a Project Lifesaver client with a companion pet cat.



(above) Morris County resident Lynn Biss receives her companion pet dog.



(above) Morris County resident Regina Shekon with her companion pet dog

Photos by Morris County

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NJAC-NATIONAL SOCCER DIVISION CHAMPIONS

The Morristown High School Boys Soccer Team were champions of the NJAC-National Soccer Division this year finishing with a record of 14-5-3. This is the first time since 1967 that the boys soccer team has won a conference title.

- The team was led by Senior Captains: Jonah Sulkin, Mickey Chong, Harold Funes, Atticus Lindsley and Keiran O'Neill.
- Senior Striker Harold Funes lead the team

- with 32 total points (14 goals and 4 assists).
- Junior Striker Jermaine Campbell had 22 total points on the year (10 goals and 2 assists).
- Senior Striker Enrique Esteves had 21 total points (8 goals and 5 assists).
- Junior Gavin Raiz led the team in assists with 7 and had 15 total points on the year.
- Senior Goalie Atticus Lindsley had 148 saves this year, 289 lifetime.



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KERRY O'CONNOR CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY OF ORGAN DONATION

NJ Sharing Network

Kerry O'Connor of Morris Township 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



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

Photo by NJ Sharing Network

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, Gracy (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

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SIEMINSKI THEATER 2025 SEASON STARTERS

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.

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.

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PUCCINI'S MADAMA BUTTERFLY

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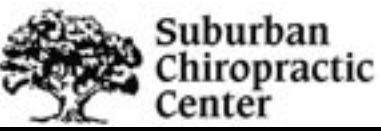
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<p>Wooden Ships <i>Crosby Stills and Nash Tribute</i> January 25</p>	<p>Madama Butterfly <i>Presented by</i> <i>The Light Opera of New Jersey</i> February 8 & 9</p>	<p>NJ Festival Orchestra <i>Vienna: Invitation to the Dance</i> February 23</p>
<p>New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players <i>Woodwind Quintet</i> March 2</p>	<p>Anything Goes <i>Presented by</i> <i>Trilogy Repertory</i> March 2 – April 6</p>	<p>Frontiers <i>A Journey Tribute</i> April 26</p>
<p>Discoteks <i>A Disco & Motown Tribute</i> May 10</p>	<p>Broadway in the Burbs <i>Presented by</i> <i>American Theater Group</i> May 18 & 19</p>	<p>New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players <i>String Quartet</i> June 22</p>

8000 Fellowship Road
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FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOK SALES:

Our popular used book sales are held every Tuesday from 10am-2pm and the first & third Saturday of each month. Cash or checks only please. Donations for the sale happily accepted inside the Library during all open hours. For details about donations or volunteering to help, email the Friends friends@mmt.mainlib.org New inventory added weekly!

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MMT Library provides eBooks, digital magazines and eAudiobooks through Libby, access to streaming movies through Kanopy, and Spanish language films and games through The Shelf. We're pleased to be able to now offer online access to the WSJ & NYT!

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Check out our great collection of beautiful jigsaw puzzles! Museum Passes are popular and we have passes to many area attractions.

JANUARY ADULT PROGRAMS:

Stamp Club

January 2, 10:00 am

Join like-minded folks on the 1st Thursday of every month for stamp collecting fun & information. Sponsored by The Jockey Hollow Stamp Club of Morristown and The American Philatelic Society.

Foreign Film Lovers Club

January 8: "Between Two Worlds" (France)

January 22: "Godland" (Iceland)

7:00 PM on Zoom.

Films available through the Library on Kanopy and DVD. The Foreign Film Lovers Club highlights a variety of thought-provoking films from Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Ahead of each meeting, you'll watch the movie on your own at home through Kanopy, a movie streaming platform available free to Morristown and Morris Township library cardholders. Then when we meet on Zoom, everyone will have a chance to talk about what we liked or didn't like about that night's film.

Studio Ghibli Film Nights

Join us to watch and discuss popular Japanese animation films. All ages welcome.

January 29, 6:30 pm "Princess Mononoke"

Yoga

Every Monday at 6:00 pm & Thursdays at 10:00 am

Join us for some much-needed relaxation and gentle exercise! All ability levels from beginner to advanced are welcome. Monday classes are bilingual Spanish and English. Please bring your own yoga mat and equipment.

Qigong

Every Saturday at 9:30 am

Qigong is a traditional Chinese mindful exercise system for cultivating and strengthening the body's vital energy. Similar to Tai Chi, these low-impact exercises heighten awareness of the mind-body-breath connection. It can be practiced by all age groups and is easily adapted for the physically challenged. No previous experience or special equipment required.

Valentine's Concert – Sat Night Fundraiser

Saturday, February 1, 2025 at 7:00 pm

for a jazz concert by the David Humm Quintet with your favorite love songs from the American songbook.

Featuring vocalist Audra Mariel. This event will be held in the Media Wing and light refreshments will be served.

Tickets are \$30, cash or check only at the door. Doors open at 6:30 pm, no advance ticket sales. This program is a fundraiser for The Friends of the Library. Snow date is February 8.

BOOK CLUBS:

Book Lovers Circle

January 2, 7:00 pm on Zoom

Do you have a passion for reading and books? Come to our Book Lovers Circle on the first Thursday of every month. Not a traditional book club, you will hear about the latest books at the Library, receive a new reading list and have a chance to share your own favorites, old and new. A great way to expand your literary horizons, email morristownreaders@mmt.mainlib.org for the Zoom code.

The Seers

January 8, 7:00 pm

"Encounters: Experiences with non-human intelligences" by Diana Walsh Pasulka

Join us on the first Wednesday of every month to discuss all things related to spirituality, self-help, motivation, and inspiration.

Morning Book Club

January 9, 10:00 am

"The Mystery of Mrs. Christie" by Marie Benedict

Evening Book Club

January 21, 7:00 pm

"The Mystery of Mrs. Christie" by Marie Benedict

Virtual Classics Book Club

January 9, 7:00 pm on Zoom

"The Group" by Mary McCarthy

Held online the second Thursday of every other month.

Email morristownreaders@mmt.mainlib.org for the Zoom code.

Science Fiction Book Club

January 11, 2:00 pm

"Exhalation" by Ted Chiang

JANUARY CHILDREN'S & TEENS PROGRAMS:

Baby Story Times

January 13-May 19; every other Monday at 10:30 am

Ages 6 months – 2 years - with caregivers

Children's Storytimes

January 14 – May 21; Tuesdays & Wednesdays

at 10:00 am, Saturdays at 11:00 am

Ages 2-8 years. Stories and crafts with caregivers

Second & Third Grade Book Club

January 16, 7:00 pm

"Dragonbreath" by Ursula Vernon

The third Thursday of each month.

Fourth – Sixth Grade Book Club

January 9, 7:00 pm

"Willodeen" by Katherine Applegate

The second Thursday of each month.

Teen Book Club

January 14, 5:00 pm "A Darker Shade of Magic"

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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 10 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!



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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:

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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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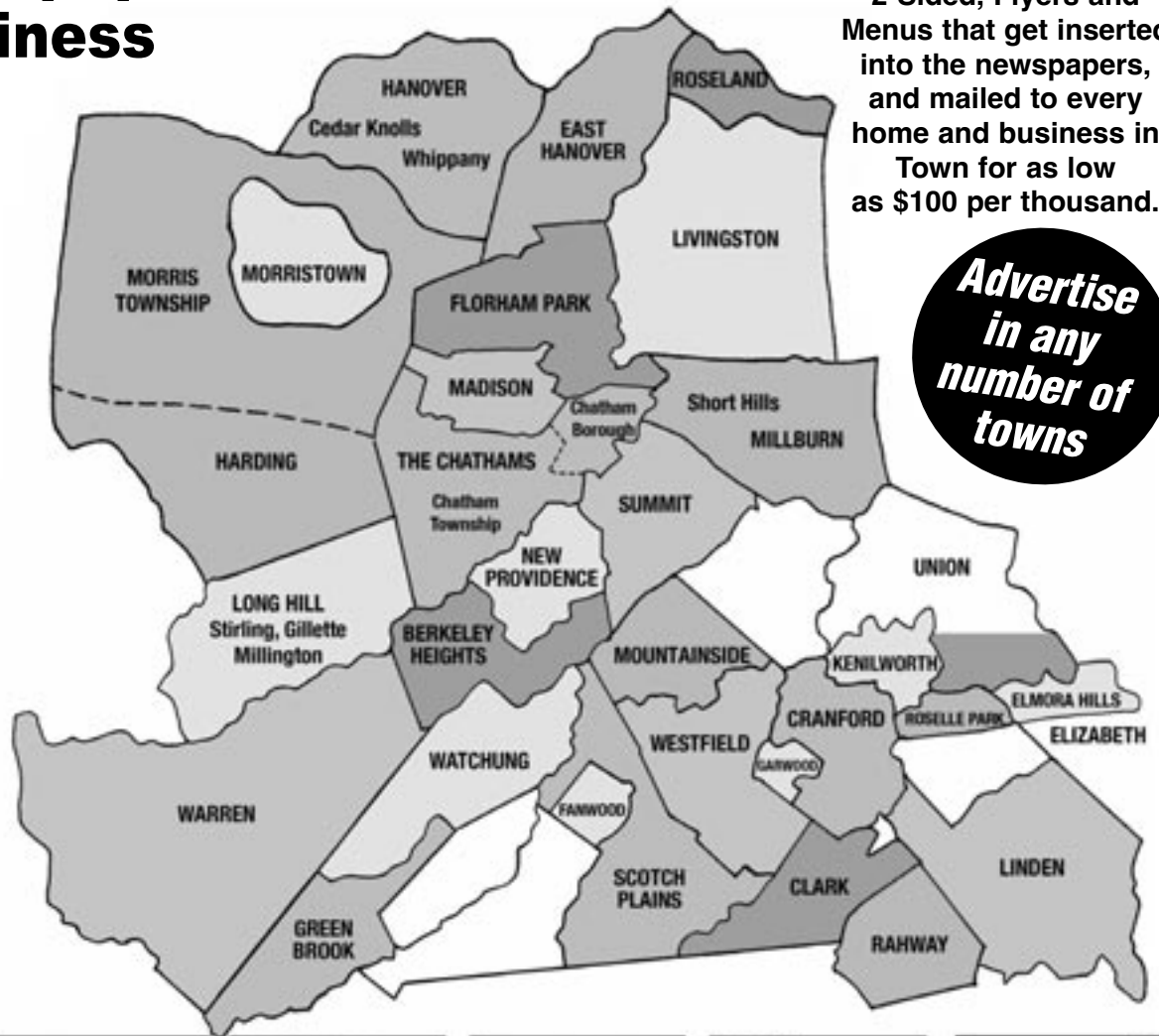
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