CRANFORD MONTHLYNJ

Published by Renna Media. On-line at RennaMedia.com

Issue 135 • March 2025

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FIRST ANNUAL ST. PATRICK'S PARADE STEPS OFF MARCH 16

Cranford St. Patrick's Parade Committee

The sounds of bagpipes, marching bands and Irish dancers will fill the air on Sunday, March 16 when Cranford celebrates its first St. Patrick's Parade. The parade will kick off at 1 p.m. from the Community Center and continue down Walnut Avenue through downtown Cranford ending with a performance by Shea-Jennings Irish Dancers at N. Union and Springfield Avenues.

Parade Chairman Dr. Terrence Curran had been thinking about a Cranford parade and a family friendly celebration of Irish heritage for some time. Last fall, he organized the committee that has been planning the parade, working with local groups and businesses and designing Irish and Cranford inspired merchandise.

In the tradition of St. Patrick's Day celebrations, the committee chose a familiar face as the Grand Marshall to lead the parade. Well known to many in Cranford and beyond as the owner of the former Kilkenny House, Barry O'Donovan will don the top hat for the festivities. An Irish native, Barry came to America and worked in the hospitality industry in New York before coming to Cranford to open his own very popular establishment. In addition to running a successful business, Barry immersed himself in the Cranford community as a Board member of the Downtown Management Corporation, Cranford Family Care, soccer coach and numerous other volunteer efforts. Barry and his wife, Peggy Murray, and sons Kevin and Tim reside in Cranford.



(above) Terrence Curran, Parade Chair



(above) Barry O'Donovan, Parade Grand Marshall

Curran thanked the many local businesses and individuals who are generously sponsoring the parade. Anyone interested in being a sponsor should contact Barry O'Donovan at cranfordstpatricksparade@gmail.com. Go to the parade's Facebook page 'Cranford St. Patrick's Parade' for more information about sponsorships, volunteer opportunities, and parade information.

The Parade Committee is co-chaired by Kevin Cumiskey, Kathleen Curran, Jim D'Arcy, Billy Folinusz, Kathleen Miller Prunty, Mary Novick, Barry O'Donovan, Irene Reilly and Noelle Zielenbach. Parade Committee Junior members are Jessica Curran, Brian Guterl, Annie and Grace Jorda, Caitlin and Declan McKittrick, and Caroline Wing.

IRISH MAN AND WOMAN OF THE YEAR

The Cranford St. Patrick's Parade Committee has announced the Cranford residents who will march as the Irish Man and Woman of the Year.

Dave Farrell, a native of Portmarnock, County Dublin, Ireland, arrived here in 2012 and has been an active member of the community ever since. Dave is an active member of the Cranford Jaycees and as served as race director for the 4th of July Firecracker Run increasing the participation to a record high of 2,058 runners in 2024. The Firecracker Run helped the Jaycees award \$50,000 in scholarships to Cranford students. Since 2019, the race generated more than \$280,000 to benefit the Jaycees annual scholarship fund and other causes the Jaycees support in the Cranford community. In 2023, Dave was elected President of the Jaycees and currently serves as Chairman of the Jaycees Board. Dave and his wife, Julie, are the proud parents of Jack, Maeve and Aisling.

Mary O'Connor is a recognizable face in Cranford having served on the Township Committee for nine years and being





(above, l-r) Irish Man and woman on the year Dave Farrell and Mary O'Connor

active in various organizations like St. Michael's Ministries, the Community Food Bank and the Daughters of Ireland. Mary's heritage has always been important to her and she enjoys exploring her Irish background.

Courtesy photos



CRANFORD MONTHLYNJ

Renna Media, LLC, Publishers 202 Walnut Ave., Cranford, NJ 07016

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RICHARD BROWN RECEIVES MLK AWARD

Temple Sha'arey Shalom

The Dr. Martin Luther, Jr. Award was presented by the Cranford Clergy Council to Richard Brown, a Cranford resident. Richard was recognized for his many years of dedicated leadership with Monarch Housing and Bridges

outreach to housing insecure and homeless individuals in Union County. Richard is also a committed leader at Temple Sha'arey Shalom in the synagogue's social action programs. For additional information about Temple Sha'arey Shalom: 973-379-5387 or office@shaarey.org.



(above, l-r) Rabbi Uri Allen, Richard Brown, Cindy Hannen, Kathleen Murray, Rabbi Paul Kerbel.

Courtesy photo











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MICHELLE CONWAY SWORN IN AS ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN

On Thursday, Feb. 13, Union County Superior the Court Judge Gavin I. Handwerker presided over the swearing-in of 12 volunteers who trained with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Passaic and Union Counties to advocate for vulnerable children in foster care. Among them is Cranford resident Michelle Conway.

As to why Conway chose to train and serve as a CASA volunteer, she said, "I love children and feel that we need to protect them as they are innocent and impressionable. I hope to make a positive impact on the families and help children get the best possible life."

Classmates include Patricia Joffe of Mountainside; Byron Ruales-Correa of Orange: Juliette Abadir and James Pritchett of Scotch Plains, and Sharon Dorry, Mary Louise Kandigian, Tara McGroddy, Cecilia Nicholas, and Dalida Nigro, of Westfield.

Now equipped to champion the best interests of child victims of abuse and neglect, the volunteers join a team of hundreds of devoted advocates with CASA of Passaic and Union Counties who provide life-changing advocacy and support services to each of the more than 350 children across both counties living in foster care through no fault of their own.

No prior knowledge of child welfare is required to become a CASA volunteer; comprehensive training equips volunteers with the skills necessary to advocate effectively. Volunteer advocates visit their assigned child at least once monthly and communicate with

(above) Michelle Conway

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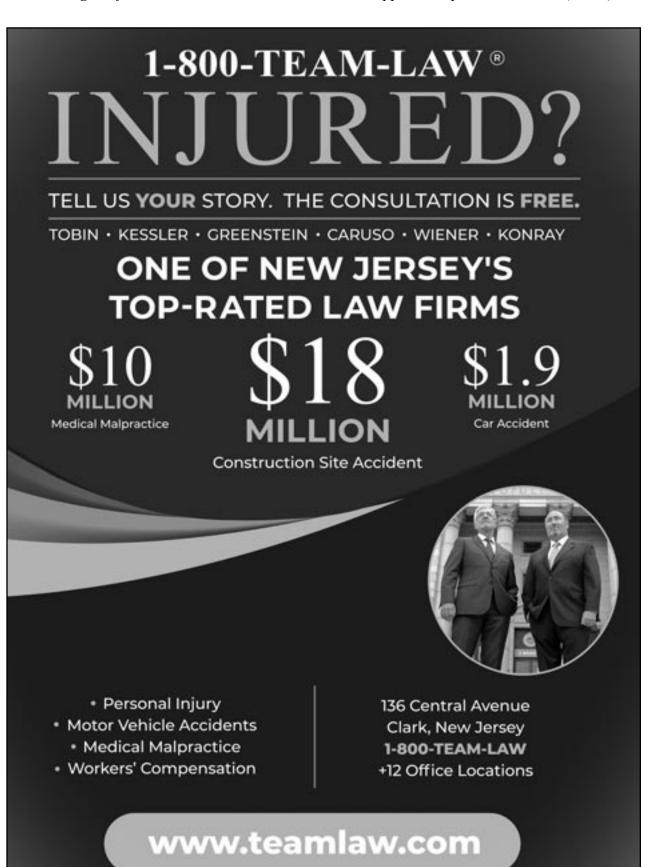
mark@hobbieandhobbie.com edward@hobbieandhobbie.com 476 South Avenue. East, Cranford, NJ 07016-0863 recommendations to the judge.

CASA of Passaic and Union Counties is a program of Child Focus, which prioritizes the visit www.casapassaicunion.org.

caregivers, educators, caseworkers, and others in needs and well-being of infants, children, and child's life to make informed teens impacted by, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. For details about the CASA program, call 973-832-4002, e-mail info@casapassaicunion.org, or



(above) Union County Superior Court Judge Gavin I. Handwerker presided over the swearing-in of 12 volunteers who trained with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).



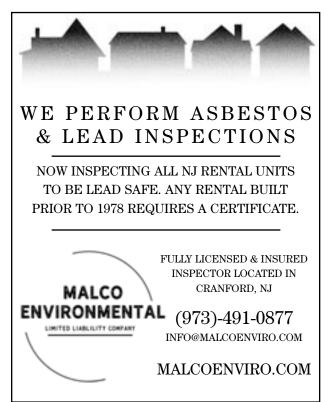


CRANFORD MONTHLY • Page 6 • March 2025

LECTURE ON FIRE SAFETY - MARCH 12

On Wednesday, March 12, at 7:30 p.m. the Cranford Fire Dept will discuss various aspects of fire safety in your home. Discussion will include roles of the fire fighters, police and EMT units, preventative measures to "fire safe" your home, steps to follow when a fire is discovered in your home, creation of a "family action plan".

The event is free and open to the public, and is hosted by the First Presbyterian Church, Thomson Hall, 11 Springfield Ave, Cranford, NJ.





REC PROGRAMS NOW OPEN FOR REGISTRATION

Cranford's Recreation and Parks department is excited to announce the opening of registration for its 2025 Spring Recreation Programs. Offering a variety of activities for all ages and skill levels, this season's lineup includes youth and adult sports, fitness classes, arts and crafts, and engaging programs for all ages—preschool to seniors.

"We're thrilled to welcome the community back for another season of fun and engaging programs," said Steve Robertazzi, director of the Recreation and Parks department. "Spring is the perfect time to get active, try something new, and connect with others, and our programs are designed to offer something for everyone."

Registration will open in March. Early registration is encouraged, as spots are limited. Participants can browse program offerings at cranfordrecreation.org or in person at the Cranford Community Center, located at 220 Walnut Avenue.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SPRING 2025 LINEUP INCLUDE, BUT NOT LIMITED TO: Youth and Adult Sports:

Soccer, tennis, and pickleball leagues and clinics.

Fitness & Wellness:

Yoga, pilates, martial arts.

Creative Arts:

Painting, knitting, and dance workshops for all skill levels.

STEM & STEAM classes:

Science, technology, engineering and art-based science classes for youth.

Join us this spring for an exciting season of recreation and community connection!

Please visit cranfordrecreation.org and the Cranford Recreation and Parks Department Facebook and Instagram pages for updates and more information. Questions? Please email: recreation@cranfordnj.org or call

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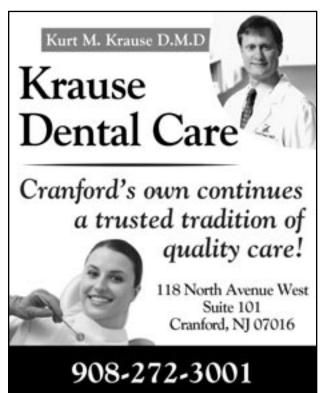
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CHICAGO: TEEN EDITION - MAR 7, 8 & 9

Department proudly presents Chicago: Teen Edition on March 7 at 7:30 p.m., March 8 at 7:30 p.m., and March 9 at 2:00 p.m.

This iconic musical focuses on two women in top celebrity criminal as they navigate a corrupted criminal justice system.... "And All That Jazz". Originally produced in 1975, the book was written by Fred Ebb and Bob Fosse, music by John Kander, and lyrics by Fred Ebb. The musical was based on a play by Maurine

Cranford High School Performing Arts Dallas Watkins, and the script adaptation had been by David Thompson. The revival performance in 1996 was awarded a Tony for best revival musical.

For our production, you can easily find ticket the roaring 1920's who are both vying to be the information by visiting chs.booktix.com or Elizabeth emailing Mrs. Adams (adams@cranfordschools.org) beginning February 9th.

> The cast, crew, and production team look forward to a night of "Razzle Dazzle" at CHS. We hope to see you there!



(above) Cranford High School Performing Arts Department proudly presents Chicago: Teen Edition on March 7 at 7:30 p.m., March 8 at 7:30 p.m., and March 9 at 2:00 p.m.

Courtesy photo

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CRANFORD HIGH SCHOOL DECA CHAPTER

Cranford Public Schools

The CHS DECA Chapter competed at Central East Districts on January 10, 2025, with over 150 students - one of the largest showings for Cranford High School in many years.

Congratulations to the 29 qualifiers:

Corey Botskos, Aashritha Jinaga, Madeleine Garofalo, Robert Kelly, Zach Breslin, Eden Krispin, Natalie Oliveira, Sophie Botsakos, Lauren Moritz, Rebecca Ferreira, Lilianna Keating, Izabela Onisko, Halle Earl, Jacqueline Consorte, Elizabeth Curro, Chloe Rantanen, Dominick Lotito, Arline Bound, Charles Springer, Olivia Martinez, Anthony Alesi, Emily

Curtin, Dylan Aveno, Braeden Grace, Matteo Loikith, Christopher Ruka, Adrianna Miller, Maanya Kuthethur, and Klaire Keogh who all advanced to Atlantic City in March.

The following students also have been recognized for top scores in DECA Exams and Role Play Scores:

Corey Botsakos, Sophie Botsakos, Adrian Estevez, Jacqueline Consorte, Olivia Martinez, Anthony Alesi, Garrett Towne, Jacob Liss, Dylan Aveno, Braden Grace, Maanya Kuthethur, Adrianna Miller, Morgan Nicholls, Samuel

Congratulations to all students!



Photo by Cranford Public Schools

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FLEX YOUR TRIVIA MUSCLES APRIL 2, SUPPORT CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

CASA of Passaic and Union Counties

Calling all trivia buffs, pub quiz champions, and fun-seekers! CASA of Passaic and Union Counties invites you to its first-ever Pub Quiz Trivia Night to benefit local children living in foster care through no fault of their own.

Held 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 2 at the "The World Famous" Waiting Room in Rahway, forget your midweek woes and enjoy an unforgettable night of brain-teasing questions, team strategizing, and community spirit. Whether a seasoned trivia master or just there for the laughs and good food – children under 12 years old eat free on Wednesdays! – there will be plenty of competition, camaraderie and, most important, charity.

Show off your smarts in pop culture, sports, history, science, and more, amid friendly rivalry and a community playing for a purpose. All proceeds benefit CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, which champions the best interests of abused and neglected children through effective advocacy in court, community, and classroom.

You can help change the lives of local children in foster care, one question at a time. So rally your friends, coworkers, or family and form a team of two to six players, or go solo for the big win yourself. Prizes go to the top three individuals or teams.

Pre-registration is suggested. Tickets are \$20 per person.

For more information and to secure your spot at the table visit: www.childfocusnj.org/pubquiz, or contact Courtney Como at courtney@childfocusnj.org.

CASA of Passaic and Union Counties is a program of Child Focus, which prioritizes the needs and well-being of infants, children, and teens impacted by, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. For details about the CASA program, call 973-832-4002, e-mail info@casapassaicunion.org, or visit casapassaicunion.org.





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Flesh World is a collaboration of drummer Justin Vedovelli, keyboardist Peter Rushing, and saxophonist/ keyboardist Carter Vames. They play an eclectic and experimental mix of diverse musical styles, ranging from free jazz to Afro-Caribbean and pop. Their repertoire includes cutting-edge original compositions as well as covers of tunes by popular artists such as Britney Spears, Juice WRLD, and Nine Inch Nails. At the May 2024 show they opened for headliner band Coo Moe Ghee, who, along with the audience, raved about them. True eclectic music lovers will appreciate their musical style in our excellent music "listening room".

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ST. THOMAS FLEA AND CRAFT MARKET

St. Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church in Rahway NJ, will host a Flea Market and Craft Sale on Saturday March 8, 2025. All are invited to shop 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, with vendor access starting at 7:30 am.

The Flea Market is held in the parish center located at 1407 St.Georges Ave. Rahway. This handicap accessible center can accommodate 60+ vendors at each market. Everyone who attends will receive a free raffle ticket for a drawing of a special gift card at 1:00 pm.

The Vendors have beautiful gifts for children and adults, as well as household items, collectibles, toys and antiques. Our Parish Gift Shop will also be open. This shop is filled with unique religious articles for the holidays, Baptisms and Weddings.

Our kitchen will be open for both breakfast and lunch. The St. Thomas chefs offer homemade ethnic specialties such as stuffed cabbage, kielbasa and sauerkraut subs and pirohi, as well as taylor ham and egg sandwiches for breakfast.

Vendors can call 908-217-6856 for table rental information. The Flea Committee provides a 8ft table to rent for \$ 30.00.





NOGGIN THE SLED DOG VISITS LIBRARY – MAR 29

The Cranford Public Library presents "Mush! With Noggin the Sled Dog," an educational program for all ages, on Saturday, March 29 at 10:00 a.m. in the Cranford Community Center. 2025 is the 100th Anniversary of the 1925 Diphtheria Epidemic Serum Run! Remember Balto and Togo and the many heroic huskies and mushers who carried life-saving anti-toxin to the town of Nome, Alaska? Want to learn more? Musher, Karen Land, will cover these subjects and more when she and Noggin, the Alaskan husky, visit the Cranford Community Center!

Land is a writer, public speaker, and three- Doors open at 9:50 a.m.

time participant in the 1000-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race as well as many other sprint and endurance races. Since 2000, Land has traveled to nearly every state with her dog sled, mushing gear, Arctic clothing, and beloved dogs, giving over a thousand school and public library presentations.

This free program is made possible by the Friends of the Library and is open to participants of all ages, children and adults.

Registration is not required, but space is limited and may be unavailable to latecomers. Doors open at 9:50 a.m.

CHILDREN'S ROOM EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE

The Cranford Public Library is thrilled to announce the start of construction on a major expansion of its beloved Children's Room. This exciting project will double the size of the current space, creating a bright, modern, and inviting area for our youngest patrons. The expanded room will feature large, sun-filled windows and a spacious layout designed to foster learning, creativity, and a love of reading.

To accommodate the construction, the Children's Room will be temporarily relocated to the Community Center next door, 220 Walnut Avenue. Beginning Monday, March 3, and will be open during regular library hours.

We understand that this temporary move may cause some inconvenience, and we appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to create a wonderful new space for the children of Cranford. The construction is expected to take approximately one year. We are confident that the final result will be well worth the wait!

During the construction period, all children's programs and services will continue to be offered in the temporary location at the Community Center. Please check our website at cranfordlibrary.org for a complete schedule of events and updates on the construction progress.

We look forward to welcoming you to the temporary Children's Room in the Community Center on March 3, and we can't wait to unveil the new and improved Children's Room next year!

RESPONDING TO GRIEF AND LOSS

Cranford Public Schools

Across Cranford Public Schools, we continue to provide strategies and information for students as well as faculty and staff to respond to grief and loss as a Grief Informed District.

Professional development was conducted with staff in October, followed by student opportunities to learn and reflect. Cranford High School solicited assistance from students to create a "Tree of Life" mural symbolizing the commitment to two of our Full Value principles:

Care for Self and Others and Let Go and Move On.

Plans are being made for the tree, created by sophomore Brooke Santos, to be painted on a wall at Cranford High School and our high school community will have opportunities to add a symbol of their loss in the flowers that will continue to grow over time. This mural will further the conversation about the role loss plays in our social and emotional development in life.

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Tuesdays starting at 1pm
Have questions about your smartphone, tablet, or other device? Register for a 15 minute tech help appointment with a librarian. Register online or contact the library. Appointments are weekly on Tuesdays from 1-2:30pm at the Cranford Community Center. This program is co-sponsored by the Cranford Public Library and the Cranford Community Center.

Romance Readers Book Club

Monday, March 3, at 7pm

Join us for February's Romance Readers Book Club. Please keep an eye on our website for the book title. If you don't want to read that book, or for some reason can't find a copy, feel free to come anyway to discuss whichever romance you've recently read.

Movie Night

Wednesday, March 5, at 7pm

Join us the first Wednesday of the month for a screening of a recently released DVD!

Please visit our website or contact the library for film titles.

Lit Cafe

Saturday, March 8, at 10:15am

Literary Café is a book chat program. The format is simple: Bring a few of your recent favorite books and tell the other members of the group what you like about them. If you don't have a copy of the book you want to talk about, that's okay, too. The books can be new or old, fiction or non-fiction, classic or contemporary. There is no required reading, and you will have the opportunity to learn about books recommended by other group members. Admission is free and all are welcome. Light refreshments provided by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library. Attend in person or on Zoom (contact library for link).

International Film

Monday, March 10, at 12:30pm and 7pm Join us for an international film screening. The same film will be shown at 12:30pm and 7pm. Please contact the library for the film title. Please note the new start time for the afternoon showing.

Adults Create

Tuesday, March 11, at 7pm

Join us the second Tuesday of the month for crafts! This month we are making sugar scrubs. Space is limited; please visit our website to register. Sponsored by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library.

Virtual Opera Talks: Marian Anderson

Wednesday, March 12 @ 7pm (Zoom)
Join Tanisha Mitchell—opera singer,
librarian/archivist, and creator of "Opera
Talks"— for this virtual program all about
Marian Anderson. Zoom link can be found on
our library website. Sponsored by the Friends
of the Cranford Public Library.

Theater Project

Saturday, March 15, at 2pm
The Friends of the Cranford Public Library invite everyone to attend a live theatrical performance! New Jersey's own Theater Project will present a reading of an original short play. The reading will be followed by a question and answer session with the audience, director, playwright and cast. This program has been made possible by funds from the Union County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Funds have also been provided by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library.

No registration needed. You Can Make a Difference: Be a Foster or Adoptive Parent Information Session

Tuesday, March 18 @ 6pm
Join a representative from the New Jersey

Department of Children and Families Union County for this program. No registration needed.

Trivia Night

Wednesday, March 19, at 7pm

Join us for another fun evening of trivia! This free event is hosted by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library! Join us in the Community Room on the first floor of the Community Center! Feel free to bring your own snacks and (non-alcoholic) drinks. Prizes awarded to the winning team. Please visit our website or contact the library to register.

Books and Brew Book Club

Monday, March 24 @ 7pm

(at The Morning Roast)

Join us for our initial Books and Brew book club at The Morning Roast! We are reading Before The Coffee Gets Cold. Books will be available through the library and Hoopla. The Morning Roast offers coffee and non-alcoholic beverages available for purchase.

Mush! With Noggin the Sled Dog

Saturday, March 29 @ 10am

Meet musher Karen Land-and Alaskan Husky Noggin!-- and learn about the fascinating world of mushers and sled dogs. Sponsored by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library.

All ages welcome.

Darkroom Drop in

Wednesdays from 5:30pm-8:30pm

Photographers of all levels are invited to connect, share their work, talk shop, and work in the darkroom. The Darkroom is located in the Arts & Crafts Room on the second floor of the Community Center, the space is wheelchair-accessible.

Made possible by funds from the Union County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.





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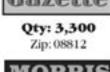
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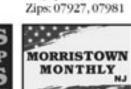
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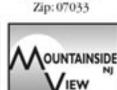
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JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ELIZABETH-PLAINFIELD

The Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield (JLEP) is pleased to announce that in 2025 we will be awarding three \$4,000 scholarships to college bound women who reside in Union County and demonstrate a passion for volunteerism.

The JLEP believes that volunteerism is a vital force in our community, and we support young women who share our passion by awarding scholarships to college-bound high school seniors who have demonstrated a commitment to volunteer activities. The scholarships will be awarded in May 2025.

To be considered for a scholarship, applicants are asked to complete the application form, write a 300-to-400-word essay about their volunteer experiences, and provide two letters of recommendation. The application form is available on our website, jlepnj.org, or can also be obtained by sending a request via email to scholarship@jlepnj.org or by leaving a message with your address and/or email address at 908-709-1177.

The deadline for submitting applications is April 4, 2025. There will be a formal presentation of the scholarships to the recipients at the JLEP's Annual Dinner on May 21, 2025.

To find out more about the League's scholarship program or about how to join as a member, please contact the League at 908-709-1177, via email at scholarship@jlepnj.org, or visit our website at ilepni.org.

ABOUT THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ELIZABETH PLAINFIELD

The Junior League of Elizabeth Plainfield is a chapter of the Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc. and is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.



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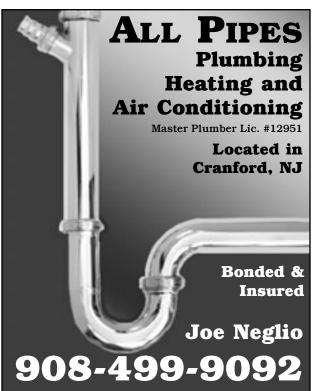
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