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PLANS FOR PHASE 2 OF LIBRARY RENOVATION

The Millburn Free Public Library

The Board of Trustees of the Millburn Free Public Library is excited to announce the upcoming Phase 2 of its building renovation project. This phase will focus on the modernization of the second-floor program rooms, community meeting spaces, hallways and restrooms. Renovations are anticipated to commence in early 2025.

Following the successful completion of Phase 1 in 2022, which revitalized the first floor and mezzanine areas—enhancing the children's room and teen space—the library is now set to turn its attention to the upper level. The planned improvements aim to create a more accessible, functional and welcoming environment for all patrons.

“Modernizing our second floor will not only enhance our facilities but also better serve the diverse needs of our community,” said Director Mike Banick. “We are committed to providing a space that fosters learning, collaboration and connection among our library users.”

Key highlights of the renovation include:

Enhanced Auditorium with New Windows: Installation of windows along the second-floor auditorium will flood the space with natural light. New blackout shades, flexible seating arrangements with new chairs and tables and upgraded technology will accommodate a variety of events and activities.

Revitalized Community Meeting Spaces: More inviting environments designed to encourage community

engagement and collaboration. Upgraded technology and audio-visual equipment will improve presentations, meetings and connectivity.

Modernized Restrooms: Restrooms will be completely refreshed and reconfigured, featuring all new fixtures designed with sustainability in mind.

Upgraded Flooring, Ceilings and Lighting: The entire second floor will showcase all-new flooring, ceilings and energy-efficient lighting.

Focus on Sustainability: The renovation emphasizes efficiency; all new fixtures will adhere to stringent environmental standards.

The library will stay open throughout the renovation. While the second floor will be closed, the mezzanine—home to the non-fiction stacks and a quiet study area—will be accessible to patrons. The library staff is committed to minimizing disruptions, however brief closures may be necessary for safety reasons. Programming will continue during the renovation, utilizing virtual options or relocating events to the first floor or off-site as necessary.

The projected completion date is late summer 2025. Community members can expect a refreshed and inviting space that enhances their library experience.

Further updates about the renovation process will be available on the library's website at millburnlibrary.org and through social media channels.

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(above) Phase 2 of Millburn Free Public Library's building renovation completion date is late summer 2025.

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MILLBURN MENORAH LIGHTING

Chai Center Chabad held its annual Millburn Menorah lighting on Sunday, Dec 29 at Taylor Park. Rabbi Bogomilsky lit the 15-foot menorah, with Mayor Annette Romano and Township

committee member David Cosgrove in attendance, as the crowd of over 300 people cheered on. A fire show, followed by hot latkes, donuts and hot chocolate was enjoyed by all.



Courtesy photo

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NCJW, WEST MORRIS ZOOM SERIES: 'SOUNDS OF OCTOBER RAIN'



(above) Cantor Perry Fine
Courtesy photo

Cantor Perry Fine of Temple Beth Shalom in Livingston will offer a free two-part series, titled "Sounds of October Rain," exploring Israeli popular song in the aftermath of the Oct. 7, 2023 terrorist attack in Israel. The series will take place via Zoom on Thursdays, Feb. 6 and 13 at 1 p.m.

Cantor Fine's program is sponsored by National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), West Morris Section's Our Jewish World program, under the leadership of Ilene Dorf Manahan and Melanie Levitan, both of Morristown.

Cantor Fine will examine a wide range of musical responses to the events of Oct. 7, reflecting a myriad of emotions--from sadness to anger to resolve, and the role of music in helping

to heal a nation. With the cantor's insightful guidance, participants will study the poetry of each song, which often is laced with biblical allusions, and how the music helps bring out the meaning of the text.

Session one will look at a variety of newly composed songs, including "October Rain," the Israeli song entry in the prestigious Eurovision Song Contest 2024. The cantor will delve into the lyrics' meaning and significance, and the controversy surrounding the song's inclusion in the song festival.

Session two will focus on how popular songs of the past, including those by Naomi Shemer and James Taylor, were reintroduced to the public in new arrangements, and how these classics, reimagined, took on new meaning to fit the times.

During 2024, Cantor Fine celebrated his 33rd year in the cantorate and his 13th at Temple Beth Shalom. A graduate of the University of Michigan and the Jewish Theological Seminary,

Cantor Fine has given numerous concerts and lectures, including many years as part of the NCJW, West Morris Section's Clergy lecture series.

Cantor Fine is the co-founder and principal conductor of Voices in Harmony, an interfaith choral ensemble that has served the greater Essex County community for the past 27 years. He has been awarded the Conservative Movement's Nathan H. Winter Award for Professional Excellence, and in April 2024, he was honored by both the South Orange/Maplewood Interfaith Holocaust Remembrance Service and the Seton Hall Sister Rose Thering Jewish/Christian Studies Program for lifetime achievement.

For the past 28 years, Cantor Fine has served on the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary, teaching biblical cantillation to a generation of budding cantorial students.

Preregistration is required for "Sounds of October Rain." To register, email iadpr@aol.com.

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PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES:

3rd Annual Tiny Art Show

Create: February 1-28

Exhibit: March 1-31

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PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS:

Local Author Talk: Julia MacDonnell (Virtual)

Wednesday, February 5, 7-8pm, Zoom

Maplewood author Julia MacDonnell (Chang) will read from and discuss her new memoir, *Hidden Girls: A Birth Mother's Story of Reunion and Reckoning*.

Registration required for virtual link.

Uncovering the Enslaved with Liberty Hall Museum (Virtual)

Thursday, February 13, 7-8pm, Zoom

In honor of Black History Month, join Liberty Hall Museum staff and explore the stories of enslaved people who lived and labored at Liberty Hall. Learn about the museum's ongoing research with Kean University.

Registration required for virtual link.

Resume Writing in the Modern World (Virtual)

Thursday, February 27, 7-8pm, Zoom

Optimize your job search. Organizations use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to search through 1,000's of resumes. Learn to write an ATS friendly resume and the do's and don'ts of using AI. Registration required for virtual link.

KIDS AND FAMILIES PROGRAMS

Black History Month: Paper Quilt Craft

Thursday, February 6, 4-4:45pm

Auditorium

Inspired by quilts made by the celebrated African American quilt-makers of Gee's Bend, AL, we invite you to make a square for a paper quilt! For ages 4-12. Registration required.

Sleepytime Tales

Wednesday, February 19, 7-7:30pm,

Children's Room

Families are welcomed to join us for an evening storytime. Kids are welcome to wear their pajamas and bring a stuffy! For kids ages 2 to 8 with a parent/caregiver. Registration required.

TEENS AND TWEENS PROGRAMS

College Visits: What To Ask, What To Know

Monday, February 10, 7-8pm

Teen Space

Get the most out of your college visits so you make the best choice on Decision Day.

Registration required.

After Hours Lock-In: Escape Night

Friday, February 28, 6-8pm

Teen Space

Think outside the box to solve a series of puzzles and escape the room! Registration required.

RESOURCE OF THE MONTH:

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REGENERON SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH SCHOLARS

Millburn Public Schools

Seniors Neel Ahuja and Benjamin Li, both members of the Millburn High School Senior Research Program, were recently named as Regeneron Science Talent Search (STS) Top 300 Scholars. This is our country's oldest and most prestigious science competition. Thirteen alumni of the STS have gone on to win the Nobel Prize, and two have won the Fields Medal. Entrants conduct original research and submit a research paper documenting their findings.

Neel's research project is "Reducing Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Water Contamination With Mycorrhizal Hydroponics

Plants."

Benjamin's research project is "Multimodal, Depth-Aware Brain Tumor Segmentation in Sub-Saharan Populations."

Each top 300 scholar receives a \$2,000 award from Regeneron, with an additional \$2,000 going to their school to support STEM-related activities. The competition awards \$3.1 million to provide the opportunities and resources students need to become the next generation of inventors, entrepreneurs, and STEM leaders. The 40 finalists each receive \$25,000 and the chance to compete for the \$250,000 first-place prize in a week-long competition in March.

VIKRANT KAWADKAR - SCIENCE OLYMPIAD WINNER

Millburn Public Schools

Congratulations to MMS 8th grader Vikrant Kawadkar, who participated in the inaugural International Environmental Science Olympiad held in Puerto Rico over the winter break. The Olympiad had several events, including buzzer-based bees, written exams, fieldwork, and task force programs.

Vikrant was the second-place winner in the

Overall Individual Championship for the middle school division. He also earned five medals across various events - 3 Silver medals in Zoology Bee, Beach Ecology Fieldwork, and Rainforest Alliance Youth Ambassador Task Force, and 2 Bronze medals in the Environmental Science Battery Exam and Carbon Emissions Task Force. An amazing achievement!



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Open Rehearsals Schedule

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- Big Band 3:00-4:00 PM

Faculty Concert 3:00 PM

Parents Welcome!

February 24*

- Flute Choir 5:00-5:40 PM
- Flute Forum 6:30-7:10 PM
- Fortissimo Flutes 8:00-8:40 PM

*Location: Wharton Performing Arts School
60 Locust Avenue, Berkeley Heights

February 25

- Percussion Ensemble III 4:00-4:45 PM
- Sinfonia 5:00-6:00 PM
- Youth Symphony 6:30-8:00 PM

February 26

- Philharmonia 6:15-7:15 PM
- Clarinet Ensemble 6:30-7:00 pm

February 27

- Primo Strings 4:30-5:15 PM
- Percussion Ensemble II 4:30-5:15 PM
- Percussion Ensemble I 6:30-7:15 PM
- Concertino Strings 6:15-7:00 PM
- Youth Orchestra 6:15-7:45 PM



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Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children of Essex County is proud to announce the addition of fourteen new advocates to our CASA family this fall. These remarkable individuals, representing diverse backgrounds and communities across New Jersey, have stepped forward to make a lasting impact on the lives of youth placed in foster care in Essex County.

After completing an intensive screening process and rigorous training program, these advocates are now equipped to provide essential support and guidance to children navigating the complexities of the foster care system. Their journey culminated in a heartfelt swearing-in ceremony held at the Essex County Family Courthouse, where they celebrated their accomplishments alongside family, friends, and CASA staff at a courthouse reception.

“Our new advocates exemplify the spirit of compassion and commitment that defines CASA Essex,” said Marla Higginbotham, Executive Director of CASA Essex. “Their dedication ensures that foster youth in our community receive the highest level of care and advocacy during critical moments in their lives.”

The newly sworn-in advocates have already begun their work, partnering with CASA Essex to ensure that the voices of foster youth are heard and their needs met. Through their efforts, these children will have a dedicated champion

advocating for their well-being, education, and placement in safe, loving homes.

CASA Essex invites the community to join us in celebrating this milestone and recognizing the tireless commitment of these incredible volunteers. Together, we can continue to create brighter futures for the most vulnerable members of our community.

CASA for Children of Essex County is actively looking for additional volunteers. For more information on how to apply for this unique volunteer opportunity that will change a child’s life, email our Outreach Coordinator, Alexis Pugliese, at apugliese@casaessex.org.

ABOUT CASA FOR CHILDREN OF ESSEX COUNTY

CASA of Essex County is a non-profit and tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization which promotes the welfare of children in foster care who have been removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment by providing a safety net of support, advocacy, and mentorship. CASA trains and supervises community volunteers to advocate for the best interests of these children in court to ensure that each child has the opportunity to thrive by receiving needed services and assistance while helping to move the child toward a safe and permanent home as quickly as possible. Over 500 youth in Essex County are currently in foster care and in need of an advocate and ally such as yourself. For more information visit casaessex.org.

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MASTER GARDENERS OF ESSEX COUNTY PRESENTATION ON HYDRANGEAS

Livingston Public Library

The Livingston Public Library is offering an informative session on hydrangeas, one of America's most beloved shrubs on Sunday, February 9, 2 p.m.

This presentation by Master Gardener Karen Fricke covers the six most popular hydrangea species grown today, their unique characteristics, and the best ways to grow and care for them. Learn essential tips on soil, pruning (including

the confusing subject of old and new wood), and troubleshooting common issues, as well as how to maximize and enjoy their stunning blooms throughout the seasons.


Whether you're a novice gardener or a seasoned pro, this talk will provide you with everything you need to know to make the most of these beautiful plants in your own garden.

Born on a farm in central Illinois, Karen Fricke was digging in the dirt before she could walk. Through her years as a magazine editor, high school teacher, graduate student, stay-at-home mom to four, and fiber artist, she always found

her way outside to the garden. She became a Master Gardener in Maryland in 2014, and worked at a plant nursery, where she developed and ran their educational workshop program. Karen and her husband moved to New Jersey in 2022 to be closer to children and grandchildren, and she transferred to the Essex County Master

Gardeners program. Throughout her years as Master Gardener plant clinics and working at the plant nursery, the most common question she heard is, "Why aren't my hydrangeas blooming?"

This program is in collaboration with the Master Gardeners of Essex County.



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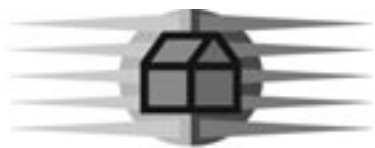
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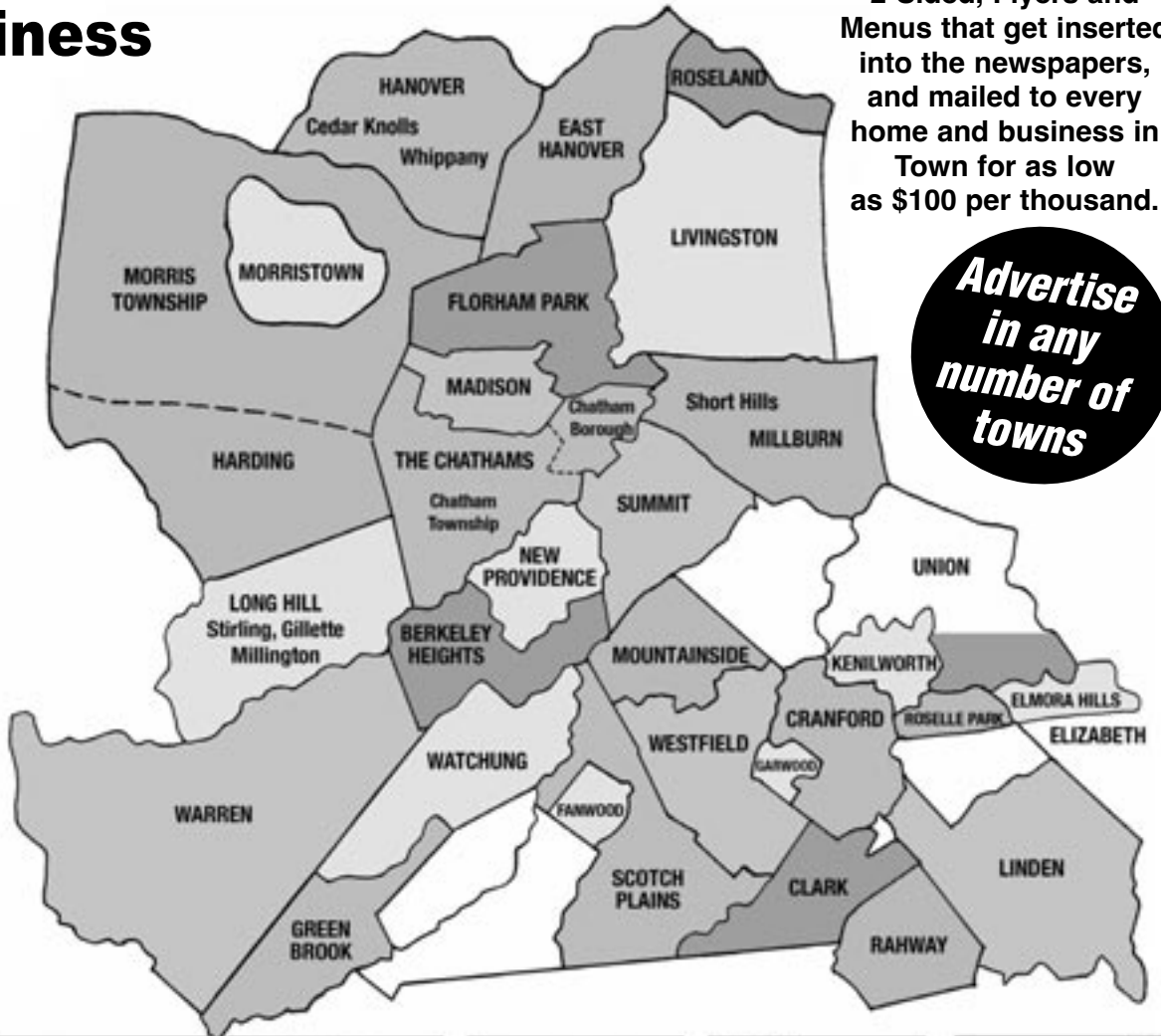
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'KALEIDOSCOPE' CONCERT – FEB. 12

Special free Concert by Hanover Wind Symphony

Like a kaleidoscope, arrangements for wind bands have changed in tone and tenor through the years, and the renowned Hanover Wind Symphony will spotlight these changes in a special free concert, called "Kaleidoscope," on Wednesday, Feb. 12, at 7 p.m., at Memorial Junior School, 61 Highland Ave., in Whippany.

"This concert presents a wonderfully eclectic and changing view of wind band repertoire," Matthew Paterno of Parsippany, HWS music director and conductor, points out. "From classic to contemporary, we explore the changing colors and styles of this most versatile ensemble."

Guest conductors for the concert will be Thomas Sansone and Ayden Khan.

Among the pieces to be performed at this memorable concert, part of the HWS's 40th anniversary year, are the following:

- "Cosmopolitan America," by Helen May Butler; arranged by Clarence Barber
- "Canzona," by Peter Mennin
- "Winds of Change," by Randall Standridge; guest conductor Ayden Khan
- "City Trees," by Michael Markowski; guest conductor Thomas Sansone
- "Nessun Dorma," by Giacomo Puccini, from the opera "Turandot"; arranged by Merlin Patterson; in memory of Harry Elfers
- "Burst!" by Dayla Spencer

The guest conductor for "Winds of Change," Ayden Khan, is currently the director of bands at Soehl Middle School in Linden. He was previously director of bands at Neptune High School since 2017. He received his master's in percussion performance, as well as his bachelor's in music education, from Montclair State University. He regularly performs in New Jersey, New York City, and Philadelphia. Additionally, Khan has taught master classes and coached percussion ensembles and drum lines in several different schools in New Jersey. He was the first recipient of the merit-based Centanni Percussion Scholarship for showing excellence in artistic

performance, advanced methods, and demonstrating high academic achievement. Among his numerous accomplishments, the guest conductor was honored with the opportunity to perform as the principal timpanist at Carnegie Hall, and on tour in Spain and Argentina with the Grammy Award-winning New York youth symphony.

Thomas Sansone, guest conductor for "City Trees," is an instrumental music teacher in the Montville Township public school district. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education from Rutgers University, and a master's in curriculum and instruction from Liberty University. This is his third season playing bass trombone with the Hanover Wind Symphony. He has a strong commitment to music education and performance.

The Hanover Wind Symphony is a unique extension of the great American tradition of adult music performance. One of only a handful of outstanding community-based adult wind bands in New Jersey, the Hanover Wind Symphony delights audiences of all ages by giving a contemporary twist to traditional favorites. The large orchestra, made up exclusively of woodwind, brass and percussion instruments, embraces as its mission "bringing music to people and people to music."

For 40 years, the Hanover Wind Symphony has played to enthusiastic audiences. HWS members are volunteers who share a love for music and a passion for enriching the cultural fabric of the community with the thrill of live wind band performances. By day, HWS members are accountants, engineers, teachers and executives. They come together to connect musically with others, share the enjoyment of music with live audiences, and help mentor the next generation of wind musicians.

For further information about the Hanover Wind Symphony, including dates of upcoming concerts, visit hanoverwinds.org.



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