

Scotch Plains NJ

WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY

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COMMUNITY CELEBRATES FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Scotch Plains Township

Hundreds of people gathered at the Alan M. Augustine Village Green next to Town Hall on Sunday, Dec. 29, 2024, to celebrate Hanukkah by lighting a giant ice sculpture menorah.

Rabbi Avrohom Blesofsky of Chabad of Union County and Rabbi Howard Tilman of Congregation Beth Israel (CBI) led the festivities, educating the residents of Scotch Plains about the holiday's fascinating history.

Sufganiyot, traditional round jelly donuts, were also part of the celebration. The donuts are fried in oil to symbolize the single day's worth of oil which lasted eight days in the Temple during the Hanukkah story.

Scotch Plains was pleased to celebrate the "Festival of Lights" with its residents and looks forward to next year's event.



Courtesy photos

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FIREFIGHTERS MICHAEL GALLO AND BEN LAGANGA WELCOMED

Scotch Plains Township

On January 13, 2025, two new Scotch Plains firefighters graduated from the Union County Training Academy in Linden. The two recruits are Robert Root, who will be reporting to the firehouse on Raritan Road, and Michael Gallo, who has been assigned to the firehouse on

Senger Place. Gallo was voted by his peers to win the Ben Laganga Leadership award "In Recognition of Outstanding Leadership Demonstrated Amongst Your Fellow Recruits." Many members of the Scotch Plains Fire Department attended the graduation to welcome the new recruits.



Courtesy photo

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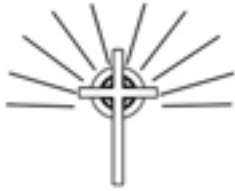


TISH ISACK RECEIVES COLLEGE CLUB SERVICE AWARD

The College Club of Fanwood Scotch Plains is pleased to announce Mrs. Tish Isack was selected for the 2024 Service Award. Tish has been the chair of the scholarship committee for a number of years coordinating the application process, overseeing the review and selection of the recipients. Mrs. Isack engages the scholarship recipients throughout the school year via emails

and texts to support their education efforts and Tish keeps the club members informed of this communication. Tish consistently supports every College Club fundraising event and activity. Tish embraces the mission of the College Club which focuses on education and service to the community, member fellowship and financial

assistance to college bound women. Our heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Tish for her nearly 20 years of service and dedication to the College Club! The College Club welcomes new members to join us. Please reach out via our website spcollegeclub.org, or our email address: collegeclub.fsp@gmail.com.



Celebrating 100 Years of God's Grace 1925-2025

We are thrilled to announce that Redeemer Lutheran Church will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2025! This is an incredible milestone that marks a century of Redeemer's faithfulness, fellowship, and service to our community. Throughout the year, we'll be hosting a series of exciting events to honor this momentous occasion. These events will culminate in a

Grand Anniversary Celebration: Sunday, September 28, 2025

2:00 PM Worship Service in the sanctuary Fellowship Reception to follow in Luther Hall, featuring food and beverages.

Whether you've been with us for years or are new to our church family, we invite you to join us in giving thanks for all that God has done, and will continue to do, through Redeemer Lutheran Church.

Stay tuned for more details about upcoming anniversary events!

Let's honor the past, rejoice in the present, and look forward to a bright future together.

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(above, l-r) Mrs. Naugle, Mrs. Tish Isack, and Mrs. Skubish.

Courtesy photo



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(above) Entertainment historian John Kenrick

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PULLING BACK THE CURTAIN ON LEONARD BERNSTEIN

College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains

Join us and bring guests on February 17th at 7:30 p.m. at Mira Vie, 295 South Ave., in Fanwood to learn about Leonard Bernstein. The event, sponsored by the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains, is free and open by the public.

This versatile composer, conductor, teacher and activist was one of the greatest personalities of the 20th Century. His triumphs ranged from the NY Philharmonic to Broadway's West Side Story to the score for Hollywood's On The Waterfront. Entertainment historian John Kenrick pulls back the curtain on the brilliant career and unconventional private life of an American musical legend.

John Kenrick has worked in the theatre at every level from amateur to Broadway, eventually serving as personal assistant to six Tony Award winning producers, including the team behind the original production of Rent. He has taught musical theatre history courses at New York University's Steinhardt School, Temple Emmanuel's Streicker Center, The New School University, and Philadelphia's University of the Arts. John's books include Musical Theatre: A History. He is one of the founding curators for the Museum of Broadway, as well as creator of the educational website Musicals101.com. One of John's students put it this way: "He didn't just make me laugh – he made me care."

VIDEO MAGNIFIER TO AID WITH READING

Scotch Plains Public Library

The Scotch Plains Public Library has received a high-definition desktop video magnifier for use within the library. The device is simple to use, allowing for adjustment of brightness, color, and magnification of books, photos, documents, and other items. Anyone interested in using the magnifier should ask at the Adult Services desk for a demonstration.

Local resident Veronique Cordier and her family graciously donated the magnifier in memory of her mother, Anne Marie Nabi, in the hope that it would be a benefit to seniors in our community. Mrs. Nabi was an avid reader, and the first female student to attend Union College full-time and never lost her devotion to education.

For more information, email library@scotlib.org or call (908) 322-5007 x 204. The Scotch Plains Public Library is located at 1927 Bartle Avenue.

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ANGELS IN AMERICA PART ONE: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES" AT CDC

We are excited to announce that Tony Kushner's acclaimed play, "Angels in America Part One: Millennium Approaches," will be in performance at the CDC Theatre in Cranford from February 14 to March 1. This monumental production is a significant event in the cultural calendar and promises to be a landmark moment for theatre enthusiasts.

"Angels in America Part One: Millennium Approaches" is the first part of Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning epic that explores the complex themes of politics, sexuality, and faith against the backdrop of the AIDS crisis in the 1980s. The play is known for its profound narrative, compelling characters, and its unflinching examination of societal issues.

The CDC Theatre in Cranford is honored to host this powerful work. As one of New Jersey's longest producing community theatres, CDC Theatre has a rich history of bringing high-quality productions to the stage. The upcoming performance of "Angels in America Part One: Millennium Approaches" is set to continue this tradition, offering audiences an unforgettable experience. Directed by Michael Kidney is the cast: Corey Chichizola as Prior Walter, Brian Petty as Louis Ironson, Sean Lynch-Littlejohn as Joe Pitt, Molly Reinhardt as Harper Pitt, Lisa Barnett as Hannah Pitt, Aaron Hancock as Belize, Richard Colonna as Roy Cohn and Even T. Charpentier as The Angel.

The staging of "Angels in America Part One: Millennium Approaches" at CDC Theatre is not just an exciting theatrical event; it is a cultural milestone. The play's themes are as relevant today as they were when it first premiered in 1991, making this production a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggles and triumphs within our society.

We invite you to join us for this extraordinary

production. Tickets are available at cdctheatre.org. Don't miss the chance to witness Tony Kushner's masterpiece come to life on the stage of CDC Theatre in 2025. This is an event you won't want to miss.

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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I am writing to address a matter that deeply affects the safety and well-being of everyone: the need for careful, responsible driving in our town.

Recently, I received a heartfelt letter from a resident of Ashbrook Drive who expressed immense gratitude for the swift actions of our police department. The letter detailed the harrowing experience of a reckless driver speeding through the neighborhood, endangering not only this resident and her two young children, but everyone else in the area.

Thanks to the vigilance and professionalism of Sgt. Ostrowski and Officer Pereira, appropriate measures were taken to address this dangerous behavior. While this outcome is a testament to the swift and ongoing dedication of our police force, it also serves as a stark reminder of the ongoing need for responsible driving.

As we all know, too many of our local streets in Scotch Plains lack sidewalks, requiring residents to walk, run, and bike directly on the roadways. This is of particular concern on the streets surrounding our schools during busy pick-up and drop-off times.

Driving at excessive speeds or engaging in reckless behavior not only violates the law but jeopardizes the lives of your neighbors and loved ones.

Just a day after receiving the letter from the Ashbrook Drive resident, I was driving my son to the high school. We saw a motorist recklessly

cut off other vehicles on a very busy Cooper Road – a one lane road with a 25-mile-an-hour speed limit – and came within inches of causing a major accident.

We must all be vigilant. I urge all residents to: Obey all traffic laws: Speed limits are carefully established to ensure the safety of drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. Please respect them.

Stay Alert: Pay attention to your surroundings, especially in neighborhoods and areas where people might be close to the road.

Lead by Example: I ask that you help set a community-wide standard of responsibility and care that others, including our younger and newer drivers, can emulate.

We are all fortunate to live in a town where community spirit and mutual respect are core values. Let's uphold these values by driving more safely and ensuring that our streets remain secure for everyone.

And to the resident of Ashbrook Drive who highlighted this critical issue: thank you for your diligence and for recognizing the efforts of our police officers. Your actions and words remind us all of the importance of working together to keep our neighborhoods safe.

Please join me in making a commitment to safer driving. Together, we can protect the lives and well-being of all who proudly call Scotch Plains home.

Mayor Josh Losardo

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DEIRDRE MONROY SWORN IN AS CASA VOLUNTEER FOR FOSTER YOUTH

Child Focus

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

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

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

members to step up to serve. We encourage anyone interested in supporting vulnerable children to attend an upcoming information session to learn how they can make a difference.”

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

Child Focus urges the community to enroll in CASA winter training to support growing list of abused and neglected children awaiting an advocate.

For more information visit casapassaicunion.org/info-session.

ABOUT CHILD FOCUS:

Child Focus prioritizes the needs and well-being of infants, children and teens impacted by, or at risk of, abuse or neglect by amplifying their voices and working toward lasting, permanent solutions that address their unique situations and provide support needed to thrive. This critical work is accomplished through three distinct but complementary programs: CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, NJ Safe Babies Court Team, and the Open Door Store. For more information about Child Focus, log on to childfocusnj.org.



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

Courtesy photo

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CELEBRATING AND HONORING THOSE WHO SERVE

The Scotch Plains Volunteer Rescue Squad held its annual Installation Dinner on Saturday, January 11, 2025. The all-volunteer organization has been responding to the urgent medical needs of the people of Scotch Plains and surrounding communities for 88 years.

During the dinner, several past members were remembered, including the founding members, without whom the squad would not exist. Squad officers were then sworn in by Frank Goodstein, chairman of the second district Emergency Medical Services Council of NJ, while other members were commended for their years of service. Chief Daniel Sullivan was honored for his remarkable 55 years of service with the squad. The only other member who has served longer is Harold Hill, with an incredible 66 years of service.

Other commendations included Suzanne Butler and Ed Fiedler with 45 years, Joanne Gurske and Jean Lozowski for 35 years, Patty Buckridee with 15 years and Ryan Lemence with 10 years. Those celebrating five years were Riley Gasson, Andrew Yu, Julia Jackson, Robert Mehorter, Ashini Bhardwaj, Lila Dasi and Karoline Hocevar.

These volunteer EMTs selflessly give their time to make Scotch Plains a greater and safer place to live. In 2024 alone, the squad recorded 834 calls of duty, all at no charge to patients.

Members "Ride for Pride, Not Pay," and the organization epitomizes Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

RESCUE SQUAD OFFICERS FOR 2025:
OPERATIONAL LINE:

- Chief - Daniel Sullivan
- Deputy Chief - Robert Gurske
- Deputy Chief - Fred Thomas

ADMINISTRATIVE LINE:

- President - Joan Lozowski
- 1st VP - Jerry Handsman
- 2nd VP - Sue Kessen
- Secretary - Joanne Gurske
- Treasurer - Raneë Muirhead;
- Chaplain - Charles Laskowski
- Delegates - Daniel Sullivan, Joan Lozowski, Raneë Muirhead
- Alternate Delegates - Patty Buckridee, Karolyn Buckridee, Charles Laskowski
- Trustees - Christian Hansis, Chang Yaramothu, Charles Berntson

To become a member, go to ScotchPlainsRescueSquad.com for more information.

Contributing Author: Susan Baldani, a life member of the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad.

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UNICO SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE MAR. 1

Scotch Plains-Fanwood UNICO

Scotch Plains-Fanwood UNICO Now Accepting 2025 Scholarship Applications for Local High School Seniors Pursuing College or Post-Secondary Trade/Vocational/Technical Education

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood chapter of UNICO, the largest Italian-American service organization in the United States, is committed to supporting local students in their educational journeys. Since its establishment in 1974, the chapter has awarded over \$275,000 in scholarships to deserving students.

This year, the chapter is proud to offer six scholarships to high school seniors of Italian descent who reside in Scotch Plains or Fanwood. The scholarships available are:

Four (4) \$2,500 scholarships for students

planning to attend a 4-year college or university
One (1) \$1,500 scholarship for a student attending a 2-year college

One (1) \$1,000 scholarship for a student pursuing a vocational, technical, or trade school
Scholarships will be awarded based on a combination of academic excellence, financial need, extracurricular involvement, and community service. For more information and to apply by the deadline of March 1, 2025, visit the Scholarship Program page at unicospf.org.

For any questions related to the scholarship application, please email spfunicoscholarship@gmail.com.

To become a member of our chapter or for information on upcoming events, please visit our website at unicospf.org or email us at spfunico@gmail.com.

S-F SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DUE FEB. 7

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Scholarship Foundation is currently accepting applications for high school seniors graduating in 2025 who reside in Scotch Plains or Fanwood, and residents currently attending college or other post high school institutions for scholarships. Electronic applications are now available at spfscholarshipfoundation.org.

The numerous scholarships offered by the Foundation range in criteria; some awards are need-based, while others have criteria such as the intent to pursue an education in a particular field or participation in certain activities in high school. The major criterion for eligibility is that the applicant resides in Scotch Plains or Fanwood; an applicant need not be a graduate of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School. In addition to the application, the Foundation requires a personal essay from the applicant, a letter of reference, and an official high school or college transcript.

The deadline for the Foundation to receive

applications - and any supporting documents as indicated - is February 7, 2025 at 5 p.m. Applicants may submit their applications and other supporting documents via our online application.

Since 1966, the Foundation has been able to award thousands of scholarships worth over \$4 million to students in Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

“The Foundation is proud to uphold the commitment to support the educational endeavors of the students in our communities,” says Michelle Wywra, President of the Foundation. “We could not accomplish this without the kindness and generosity of our donors, and the participation and support from the community via our fundraising efforts.”

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Scholarship Foundation’s Board of Trustees is a 100% volunteer-run 501c3 non-profit organization. To learn more about this year’s scholarship offerings, visit spfscholarshipfoundation.org.

CC SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE - FEB. 15

The College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains 2025-2026 scholarship application forms can be obtained from the SPFHS Counseling Office or at spfk12.org or fspcollegeclub.org.

This will be the 89th year that female students seeking financial assistance to pursue a four-year college degree have been helped by our club’s fund-raising efforts. To date the College Club has awarded approximately \$810,000 in scholarships to approximately 595 women.

In the words of one of our recipients “From the bottom of my heart, I thank the College Club for investing in my education. It means the world to me that I have a team of female supporters who saw something in me and spent their precious time and energy to raise the scholarship money that will allow me to further my education and pursue my dreams.”

Application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2025 to be considered.

The Scholarship Committee will be ready to begin reviewing applications the first week of March. The decision to select 2025-2026 Scholarship Recipients will be finalized in mid-April.

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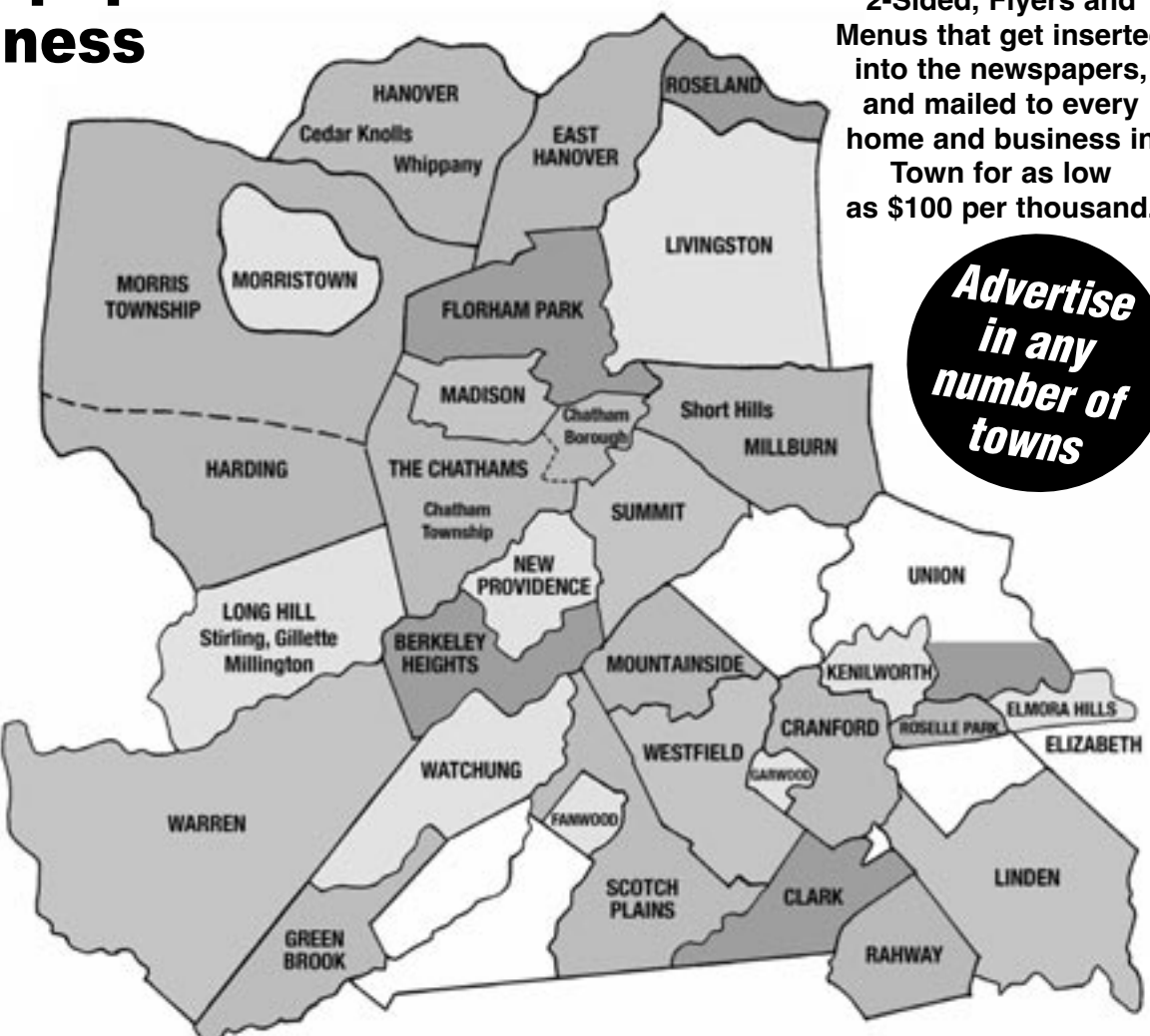
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Fanwood Post NJ Qty: 3,000 Zip: 07023	Florham Park Press NJ Qty: 6,000 Zip: 07932	Garwood Times NJ Qty: 2,500 Zip: 07027	Green Brook Gazette NJ Qty: 3,300 Zip: 08812	HANOVER TOWNSHIP PRESS NJ CEDAR KNOLLS WHIPPANY Qty: 6,100 Zips: 07927, 07981	BUSINESS • LIFE KENILWORTH NJ Qty: 3,500 Zip: 07033	NJ LIFE in LINDEN NJ Qty: 18,000 Zip: 07036	Livingston Monthly NJ Qty: 12,100 Zip: 07039
Long Hill LEADER NJ Qty: 3,500 Zips: 07933, 07946, 07980	MADISON MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,300 Zip: 07940	Short Hills MILLBURN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 8,200 Zips: 07041, 07078	MORRIS TOWNSHIP TIMES NJ Qty: 13,500 Zip: 07960, Harding 07976	MORRISTOWN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 7,000 Zip: 07960	MOUNTAINSIDE VIEW NJ Qty: 3,000 Zip: 07092	New Providence NEWS NJ Qty: 5,100 Zip: 07974	OUR TOWN Rahway, NJ NJ Qty: 13,100 Zip: 07065
Life in Roseland NJ Qty: 3,000 Zip: 07068	ROSELLE PARK MONTHLY NJ Qty: 5,600 Zip: 07204	Scotch Plains NJ WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY Qty: 9,600 Zip: 07076	Summit & Times NJ Qty: 9,600 Zip: 07901	Spirit of UNION NJ Qty: 7,800 Zip: 07083 (partial)	WARREN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,500 Zip: 07059	Watchung Post NJ Qty: 2,700 Zip: 07069	Westfield MONTHLY NJ Qty: 12,000 Zip: 07090

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6 Units	6.5"x6.25" or 10"x4"	320	760	1200	1400	1600	1800	2000	2200	2400	2600	2800
9 HALF PAGE	6.5"x9" or 10"x7"	360	860	1300	1600	1900	2200	2400	2600	2800	3000	3200
12 Units	6.5"x14"	400	960	1400	1800	2100	2400	2700	3000	3300	3600	3900
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LIBRARY ANNOUNCES NEW MUSEUM PASS PROGRAM

The Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library, in collaboration with the Scotch Plains Public Library, are excited to announce a new initiative that will provide residents of Scotch Plains with free access to some of New York and New Jersey's most renowned museums starting January 2, 2025.

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library and the unwavering support of the Scotch Plains Public Library Board, Scotch Plains Public Library adult resident cardholders will have the opportunity to reserve passes for various museums, including The Guggenheim, The Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), and more.

The full list of participating museums will be available on the Scotch Plains Public Library website, offering an easy way for residents to explore world-class art, history, and culture at no cost.

KEY FEATURES OF THE NEW PROGRAM:

- Free Museum Access: Adult residents of Scotch Plains with a valid library card will have access to passes for top museums.
- NEW: Advance Reservation: Passes can be requested up to 30 days in advance, ensuring you can plan your visits ahead of time. This new program provides a streamlined and reliable experience for library cardholders.

"We are thrilled to be able to offer this unique benefit to the residents of Scotch Plains," said Christine Szeluga, Vice President of the Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library. "This program is a wonderful example of how our fundraising efforts, supported by the community and the Library Board, directly enhance the cultural and educational opportunities available to our residents."

For more information and to access the full list of museums included in this program, please visit the Scotch Plains Public Library website at <https://www.scotlib.org/museum-passes-2/>.

ABOUT THE FRIENDS OF THE SCOTCH PLAINS PUBLIC LIBRARY:

The Friends of the Scotch Plains Public Library is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the Scotch Plains Public Library through fundraising, volunteering, and advocacy efforts. Their mission is to enhance library programs and services, ensuring the library continues to be a vibrant resource for the community.

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