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UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESERVING HISTORY

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The Hannah and James Caldwell Memorial Obelisk recently underwent a complete restoration and cleaning at the Siloam-Hope First Presbyterian Church (formerly known as the First Presbyterian Church of Elizabethtown) in Elizabeth thanks to the Union County Historical Society (UCHS).

UCHS President Joanne Rajoppi said, “The 179-year-old obelisk honoring Revolutionary War pastor and patriot James Caldwell and his wife Hannah, was in terrible condition: encrusted dirt from years of neglect with loose mortar and unreadable engravings. As we approach the 250th anniversary of our country, what better time to reflect, remember and honor the contributions of our patriots, especially the Caldwells, who sacrificed their lives for independence.”

The Siloam-Hope First Presbyterian Church cemetery is one of the oldest in the state, dating to the late 1680s. More than 40 officers of the Continental Army are buried there, many of whom attended the church while Reverend Caldwell served as its pastor. Caldwell also served as General George Washington’s Deputy Commissary of supplies during the war. The British placed a bounty on his head and he was murdered in 1781. His wife Hannah and mother of their nine children had been murdered the previous year by a British soldier in the aftermath of the Battle of Connecticut Farms.

There are also more than 313 enslaved and free African Americans buried in the historic cemetery, often in unmarked graves: some are children, and some are likely war veterans. The 313+ Ancestors Speak Project acknowledges and commemorates their lives and burials. A monument with their names was recently erected in the cemetery.

The restoration of the Caldwell memorial was partially funded by a Union County Heart Grant, donations by the Union Township Historical Society, the NJ Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, (NJSAR), the West Fields Chapter of SAR, American Legion Post 248, the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield and many individual contributors.

Ms. Rajoppi said that the restoration included a workshop on how to clean gravestones.

Volunteers, including local area Boy Scouts, the Crane’s Ford Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and UCHS members attended the four-hour event.

The restoration work was completed by Richard Grubb & Associates, a full-service cultural resource management firm and one of the largest, independent archaeological and historic preservation consulting companies in the eastern United States. Their corporate headquarters are in Cranbury, New Jersey.



(above) The recent restoration and cleaning of the James and Hannah Caldwell Memorial Obelisk at Siloam-Hope First Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth was commissioned by the Union County Historical Society.

Courtesy photos

ABOUT THE UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY

The UCHS was incorporated by an Act of the 93rd Legislature of the State of New Jersey on April 1, 1869. The objective of this Society is the collection and preservation of all matter of historical relics, books, records, documents, and manuscripts, to stimulate and encourage historical research and the study of history pertaining to the territory originally embraced by Elizabethtown and the present Union County.

The Society exists through the help and generosity of its members. Membership is comprised of citizens who have a common interest in preserving the past. There is no paid staff. The Executive Board and Members perform all Society functions.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAMS

Township of Union

Mayor Bowser and the Township Committee are thrilled to announce a lineup of events for Black History Month, celebrating the rich history and ongoing contributions of the Black and African-American community through a variety of engaging activities, performances, food, and more.

“We are excited to host a range of events throughout Black History Month that honor the legacy and achievements of the Black community,” said James Bowser, Mayor. “These events provide a chance for all of us to come together, learn, and celebrate the rich cultural heritage that makes our community stronger.”

The month’s festivities will include the following:

Hear Him Roar: A Celebration of Black Men in the Arts Performances: Saturday, February 15th at 2pm and 7pm at Jefferson Elementary School (155 Hilton Avenue, Vauxhall). Free admission, however tickets are required. Tickets can be picked up in the Town Hall Administration Office (1976 Morris Ave).

Black Excellence Art Gallery: Friday, February 28 at 6 p.m. at the Congressman Donald Payne Meeting Center (333 Russell Street, Vauxhall). Art from local Black artists and elementary schools will be available for viewing. Free admission and light bites.

Further information and event updates will be posted on uniontownship.com and on social media, @TWPUnionNJ.



(above) The Township of Union will be hosting multiple events in celebration and recognition of Black History Month, an expo, performance of “Hear Him Roar: A Celebration of Black Men in the Arts” and art gallery.

Photo by Township of Union

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SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTS HOLOCAUST LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The Holocaust Learning Experience (HLE), a nonprofit developed by MorseLife Health System in West Palm Beach, is expanding beyond Florida to New Jersey. Township of Union Public Schools and West Orange Public Schools will implement HLE's age-appropriate Holocaust education model for students in grades 5-12.

"Our Social Studies and English departments incorporate Holocaust instruction across all grade levels. While we have several partnerships with universities and Holocaust Studies programs, we joined forces with The Holocaust Learning Experience to further enhance our curriculum," said Michael Figueiredo, Social Studies District Supervisor K-12, West Orange Public Schools.

"The vetted resources from the Holocaust Learning Experience are suitable for all grades and their detailed lessons guide educators through teaching the Holocaust effectively. Additionally, the subscription includes in-person professional development, allowing teachers to fully grasp the material and ask questions about best practices during and after training."

HLE's Learning Management System (LMS) develops, deploys and delivers turnkey lessons about the Holocaust that focus on enhancing civic duty, civility and compassion. Using the historical context of the Holocaust, these lessons address issues such as bullying, cyberbullying, hate speech and physical violence, promoting

tolerance, kindness and the importance of confronting bigotry.

"We're thrilled to educate young minds in New Jersey. It's crucial to reach students at this highly impressionable age, as this impacts their future. The Holocaust Learning Experience humanizes history, especially for visual and audio learners who absorb videos better than textbooks," said Keith A. Myers, President and CEO of MorseLife. "Often, history feels disconnected and unrelatable to young students, but HLE draws parallels between the Holocaust and modern issues like bullying, aiming to end antisemitism, prejudice and bias, while remembering the six million lives lost in the Holocaust."

Pre-recorded lessons and Holocaust survivor testimonials bring history to life, helping students connect personally through inspirational stories of courage, resilience and compassion. The

platform offers grade-appropriate, plug-and-play lessons for grades 5-12, enhancing existing Holocaust curricula in urban, suburban and rural districts. The program includes documentary-style films and professionally produced interviews with survivors, accompanied by a Teacher's Resource Guide for each grade.

Preliminary student outcome data in Florida documents a positive impact, and similar results are expected in New Jersey. Internal surveys of participants reported:

87% gain a greater understanding of embracing differences in others; 85% recognize the importance of putting themselves in others' shoes; 80% now feel empowered to share how hate led to the Holocaust; and 79% express a commitment to standing up against hateful behavior towards others.

For more information, visit holocaustlearningexperience.com.

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BOY SCOUTS HELP BRING DESERTED VILLAGE TO LIFE

Submitted by Dan Bernier, Scoutmaster

As they do every year on the third weekend of October, the members of Boy Scout Troop 23 helped the Union County Parks Department staff the Four Centuries in a Weekend program at the Deserted Village of Feltville. Over 2,000 visitors came to the Deserted Village from throughout New Jersey, as well as from as far away as England.

The Scouts helped staff an archaeological activity for children, old-fashioned children's games, and a campfire with marshmallow toasting. As they have been doing for over 40 years, Troop 23 ground apples and pressed them into apple cider which visitors could sample. The Scouts pressed more than 20 bushels of apples!

When not staffing activities, the Scouts were able to take a hayride through the woods and fields of the Watchung Reservation. By spending the weekend at the Deserted Village, and staffing the event, the Scouts qualified for the Historic Trails Award.

Boy Scout Troop 23 meets on Wednesday nights at the hall under St. Genevieve's Church, 200 Monmouth Road, Elizabeth. New members are welcome at any time, all year round. For more details, please contact Dan Bernier, Scoutmaster, at 908-451-1948 or webfootroop@gmail.com



(above) Scouts Frankie, Ethan and Michael helped grind 20 bushels of apples into apple cider at the annual Four Centuries in a Weekend program at the Deserted Village of Feltville.

Courtesy photo

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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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FEBRUARY EVENTS AT THE UNION PUBLIC LIBRARY

New Library Opening still expected in Spring 2025! We recommend everyone sign up for our newsletter, found at www.uplnj.org/newsletter, to keep up with all new programs, services, and updates from the library. Registration is required for all events by visiting uplnj.events.mylibrary.digital.

Adult Crochet for Beginners (Vauxhall Library)

Wed. 2/5 @ 6:00 pm

Please join us as Ms. Lisa Roberts teaches attendees the basics of learning how to crochet. Attendees can bring their own crochet hooks and yarn, but supplies will be provided!

Saturday Afternoon Trivia: Black Excellence (Vauxhall Library)

Sat. 2/8 @ 1:00 pm

Please join us for this special themed trivia where we celebrate the achievements of African Americans throughout the century in celebration of Black History Month.

Art by African Americans: From the Protests of the '60s to the Age of Black Lives Matter (Vauxhall Library)

Mon. 2/10 @ 6:00 pm

At the dawn of the Civil Rights Movement, African American artists were inspired not only to create amazing works, but to advocate for fundamental change in the art world. After being marginalized and ignored for so long, they demanded greater representation of their work in museums, as well as the inclusion of African American scholars and curators in the ranks of museum professionals. Join us as we celebrate Black History Month by enjoying the rich contributions these pioneers made to American culture. We will see some of the work that continues to astonish art lovers today.

Build Your Balance (Main Library)

Wed. 2/12 @ 10:30 am

It's more important than ever to avoid the risks of falling as we age. Through gentle strength exercises, and stepping strategies, learn to keep your body balanced in different situations. Give this popular class a try!

Library Karaoke: The Best of Motown (Vauxhall Library)

Wed. 2/12 @ 6:00 pm

Do you think you can sing better than Stevie or Diana? Maybe you still like showing off your moves while singing to the Temptations? Please join us for some fun and prizes as we sing some of the best from Motown

Adult Gel Printing (Main Library)

Thurs. 2/13 @ 6:00 pm

Join us at the Union Public Library and learn the basics of a new painting technique, Gel Printing with Joy Ann Cabanos. She will lead you through learning and using this new painting technique. All materials will be provided and seats are limited.

A. Philip Randolph Documentary Viewing (Vauxhall Library)

Sat. 2/15 @ 1:00 pm

Join us for this biographical documentary as we talk about the life of civil rights activist and American labor unionist, A. Philip Randolph and the 100th anniversary of the first black union he helped create.

Black History Month Taste Celebration (Vauxhall Library)

Wed. 2/19 @ 6:00 pm

Please join us as Chef Jesse Jones returns to the Vauxhall Branch Library to prepare a tasty Southern recipe in honor of Black History Month. Chef Jesse will be making his finger licking good sticky wings and sweet potato waffles.

Celebrate the Vibes with the Exodus Supreme Duo (Vauxhall Library)

Sat. 2/22 @ 1:00 pm

Please join us for an afternoon of music as two members of Exodus Supreme play Jamaican music like reggae, soca, and much much more. Exodus Supreme was originally a late 80's reggae band from Paterson, NJ. This musical performance is in celebration of Black History Month.

Vauxhall Negro League Baseball Club (Vauxhall Library)

Mon. 2/24 @ 6:00 pm

Are you a baseball fan and love history?

Perhaps you are a fan of Satchel Paige or the Kansas City Monarchs? Come join us as our goal is to preserve the history of Negro League Baseball. Our meetings will consist of presentations, discussions, film viewings, book talks, and much more.

Miles Davis - The Birth of Cool (Virtual on Zoom)

Thurs. 2/27 @ 6:00 pm

Join us on Zoom for a historic lecture led by Rick Feingold. The 1959 Miles Davis album Kind of Blue is the most successful jazz recording of all time. Featuring John Coltrane on saxophone, Miles Davis on trumpet, Bill Evans on piano and Jimmy Cobb on drums the album achieved 5 x platinum status. This program features music from Miles Davis classic recordings Birth of the Cool, Porgy and Bess, Sketches of Spain, Kind of Blue and more.

Weekly Chair Yoga (Main Library)

Tues. @ 9:00 am

Take a deep breath with friends and stretch! A popular class for beginners or professionals now as a weekly series. Presented by the Gateway Family YMCA.

Walk-in Wednesdays: One-on-One Library Technology Assistance (Vauxhall Library)

Weds. @ 12:30 - 2:00 pm

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Meditation

Virtual on Zoom

Thurs. @ 11:30 am

Join Bindu Bhatt for virtual meditation sessions. No prior experience is necessary. Bindu has practiced meditation for over 30 years and wants to share her insight.

For more information about our adult programs and resources, please call Adult Services at (908) 851-5450, extension 3, or check out our website at uplnj.org or visit us at the Main Library at 1060 Stuyvesant Ave. and the Vauxhall Branch at 123 Hilton Ave.

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CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF 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!



(above) AAI has always interested anyone who loves looking and learning about the night sky.

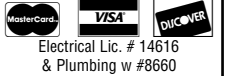
Housed in the William Miller Sperry Observatory on the Union College campus in Cranford, the observatory is open to the public every Friday night.

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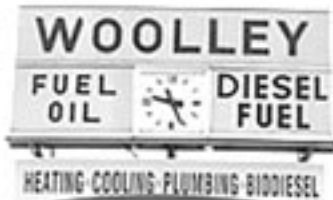
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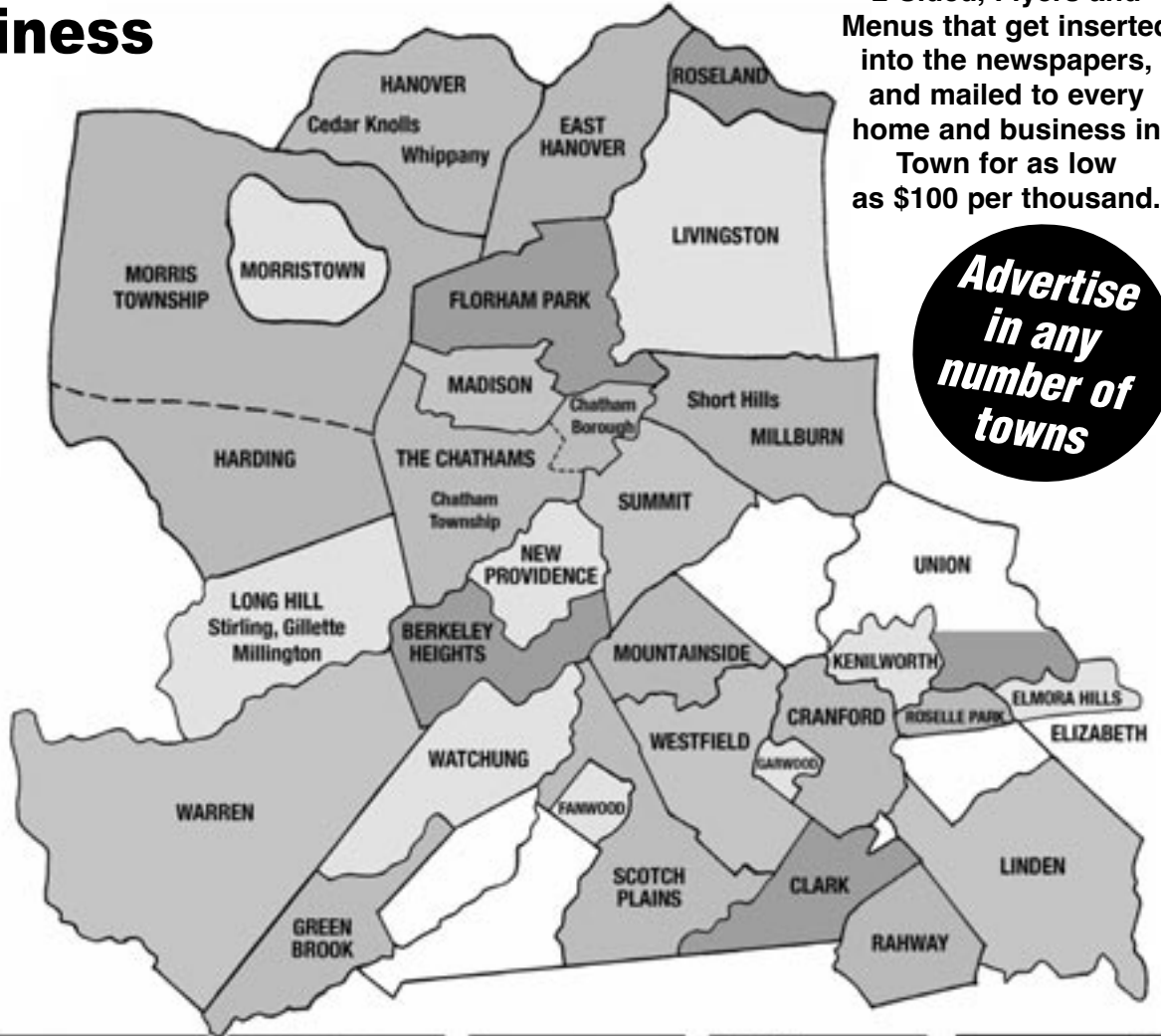
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1 Unit (Business card) 3.25"x2"0	100	260	360	460	560	600	660	700	800	900	1000
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6 Units 6.5"x6.25" or 10"x4"	320	760	1200	1400	1600	1800	2000	2200	2400	2600	2800
9 HALF PAGE 6.5"x9" or 10"x7"	360	860	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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2-PAGE SPREAD (2) 10"x14"	800										
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AN UNUSUAL GOOSE REHABBED AND RELEASED

The Raptor Trust

The Brant goose, with its compact size and striking black-and-white plumage, is a remarkable bird. Adapted to drink saltwater, these geese embark on long migratory journeys from their Arctic breeding grounds to coastal winter

habitats. Look for them in estuaries, mudflats, and saltmarshes, where they thrive throughout the winter months.

Recently, The Raptor Trust treated a Brant goose (Admit #21-4190) found in Long Valley with wounds from a predator attack. After intensive care, including suturing lacerations, treating an eye injury and parasites, this resilient bird was successfully released at Sandy Hook on November 2nd.

ABOUT THE RAPTOR TRUST

The Raptor Trust is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located at 1390 White Bridge Rd., Millington, NJ. They provide free care and assistance to injured, sick, or orphaned wild birds. They offer educational programs to the public about wild birds, especially birds of prey. They strive to provide a human example for others. For more information about upcoming events, to make a donation, and volunteer opportunities visit info@theraptortrust.org. To report an injured wild bird call 908-647-2353.



(above) We're thrilled to see this Brant goose take to the skies (or water) once more! It was a charming patient.

Photo by The Raptor Trust

2025 NJ FMBA COOKED & UNCORKED

On Monday, February 24, 2025, firefighters from around New Jersey will compete at the Cooked and Uncorked Food and Wine Festival, at the Pines Manor in Edison. Proceeds from the event will be donated to the Mark A. Virag Memorial Cancer Fund, Family Promise of Bergen County, and The Burn Center at Saint Barnabas Medical Center.

The Ultimate Fire Department Cook-off is an integral part of the evening as firefighters will compete in three different categories: Gourmet, Firehouse and Dessert.

The competition is part of the culinary extravaganza where participants will be able to experience the tastes and flavors of some of New Jersey's finest restaurants, caterers, and dessert shops all in one location.

COOKED and UNCORKED

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE COOKING COMPETITION OF THE YEAR!

MONDAY FEBRUARY 24TH, 2025
PINES MANOR, EDISON
6:00PM - 9:00PM
DOORS OPEN AT 5:00PM

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT
 MARK A. VIRAG MEMORIAL CANCER FUND
 FAMILY PROMISE OF BERGEN COUNTY
 THE BURN CENTER AT COOPERMAN BARNABAS

SCAN TO PURCHASE TICKETS

Please join Troop 83 in thanking our Veterans & First Responders at our 8th Annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser

Sunday, February 23, 2025
 anytime between 8:00am - 12 noon

Kenilworth VFW Hall
33 S.21st Street, Kenilworth

Tickets are \$ 8.00 per person
 Veterans, First Responders & children under 5 eat FREE

Buy tickets at:
<http://njtroop83.square.site>
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