

# Livingston Monthly

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## CASA FOR CHILDREN OF ESSEX COUNTY

CASA for Children of Essex County (CASA Essex) staff convened with their advocates at Rutgers University School of Law on March 8th to further their understanding of issues affecting youth in foster care.

Karen Smith from the Psychology Department at Rutgers University kicked off the day by helping advocates explore how predictability and safety create variability in children's responses to facing adversity.

Following this informative session, the training leaned into inclusion. Nayamka Williams and Qiana Cooper from the DCF Office of Diversity, Equity and Belonging led a highly engaging discussion of why words matter when addressing individuals and respecting how they choose to address themselves.

To culminate the training, advocates and staff alike were provided with key steps on how to assist youth in the foster care system that are facing immigration issues, led by Katarina Martucci of the NJ Consortium for Immigrant Children.

This day of training proved to be a deep dive into hot topics that are prevalent in the current climate – topics that deeply affect the ability of a child to thrive. As such, there are still over 300 youth in foster care in Essex County that do not have a CASA advocate. Nearing its 40th anniversary, CASA Essex has always aimed to ensure that these youth have a voice in court and in all areas of life by training and supporting community volunteer advocates.

Whether through volunteering, spreading awareness, or partnering with CASA Essex, your support can provide stability, hope, and advocacy to a child in need. To learn more, visit [casaessex.org](http://casaessex.org) or reach out to our Outreach Coordinator, Alexis Pugliese at [apugliese@casaessex.org](mailto:apugliese@casaessex.org).

### LAST YEAR NEARLY 500 CHILDREN IN ESSEX COUNTY SPEND TIME IN FOSTER CARE.

They are removed from their home due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment, separated from their family, and find themselves in a world filled with professionals they don't know. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) is committed volunteers who work diligently to make sure these children receive the services they need while in foster care.

### WHAT A VOLUNTEER DOES:

Being a CASA is a unique volunteer experience, one where you will make a difference in the life of a child. Working one-on-one with children in foster care, you give them a voice. CASA volunteers advocate for a child's best interest. Volunteers work to collaborate with others involved in the child's life, conduct an assessment of the child's needs, make recommendations on the child's behalf, and provide critical information to the court to assist judges in making timely and informed decisions.

### ELIGIBILITY

You do not need any special skills to be a CASA volunteer. You just need desire to help change a child's story, a valid driver's license, be at least 21, clear a background check, basic computer skills and have the ability to communicate orally and in writing. CASA for Children of Essex County provides equal opportunities to all volunteers and volunteer applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. To learn more, visit [casaessex.org](http://casaessex.org).

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(above) CASA for Children of Essex County (CASA Essex) staff members.

Courtesy photo

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# Livingston Monthly <sup>NJ</sup>

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Do you have a community service that you need help publicizing? Did you or someone you know accomplish something amazing? We are interested in hearing about your latest achievement (honor, award, etc.), send us your news! **Email: [editor@rennamedia.com](mailto:editor@rennamedia.com)**

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# NO PLASTIC BAGS REMINDER

## Livingston Township

Why Not Put Plastic Bags in Recycling or Recycling in Plastics Bags?

Residents are reminded that they should never put plastic bags in with recycling or put any type of recycling in plastic bags. Always put recycling out in a sturdy reusable container, such as a recycling container or bin. Paper recycling can be put out in paper bags or in a sturdy reusable bin.

Garbage can be put into plastic bags — kitchen bags, contractor bags, or saved single-use bags, such as those from a supermarket or store from takeout food, etc. Put heavier-duty bags at the curb by themselves or in a bin or container. Lighter-weight bags should be put inside a sturdy container such as a trash can and placed at the curb.

Why Not Use Plastic Bags for Recycling?

Recycling plants use machines and production lines to handle a high volume of recycling items. Plastic bags in the recycling stream become tangled with other items and then get caught and twisted around the rollers. When this happens, the processing line must be completely stopped in order for the plastic bag to be cut apart so that it can be removed from the rollers. This is why it is so important that residents never put either paper or commingled recycling out in plastic bags of any kind.

Properly disposing of these plastic bags in a Plastic Bag Recycling Bin helps the environment and helps keep local recycling moving smoothly. Anyone needing to dispose of plastic bags can place them in one of the special Plastic Bag Recycling Bins, such as those located outside of the Livingston ShopRite and the Livingston Kings Supermarket, both located on S. Livingston Avenue.

The following information can also be found on the township website:

- Metal Recycling: [livingstonnj.org/Metal](http://livingstonnj.org/Metal)
  - Electronics Recycling: [livingstonnj.org/Electronics](http://livingstonnj.org/Electronics)
  - Battery Recycling/Disposal: [livingstonnj.org/Batteries](http://livingstonnj.org/Batteries)
  - Other Special Items: [livingstonnj.org/Recycling](http://livingstonnj.org/Recycling)
  - Additional information about Garbage and Recycling: [livingstonnj.org/GarbageRecycling](http://livingstonnj.org/GarbageRecycling)
- Keep up with Livingston's recycling efforts by visiting [livingstonnj.org/Recycling](http://livingstonnj.org/Recycling). Follow Livingston Township, NJ on Facebook and Instagram and on X (Twitter) @LivingstonNJ, and register for emergency alerts from the police department and township at [livingstonnj.org/Alerts](http://livingstonnj.org/Alerts).

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## A BENEFIT CONCERT FOR RISING OPERA STARS

Opera at Florham proudly presents *Celebriamo Puccini*, a breathtaking concert celebrating the timeless works of Giacomo Puccini. In honor of the recent centenary of Puccini's death, this special benefit event will take place on Sunday, April 6, 2025, at 2:00 pm at The Mansion at Fairleigh Dickinson, 285 Madison Avenue, Madison, NJ 07940.

Audiences will be transported by the passion, drama, and exquisite beauty of Puccini's most beloved Operas, such as *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Turandot*. The concert will feature Arias from these best loved Opera as well as a distinguished lineup of rising Opera singers, whose exceptional artistry brings Puccini's masterful compositions to life.

Proceeds from ticket sales will directly support the awards for Opera at Florham's Annual International Vocal Competition, taking place on Sunday, May 4, 2025. This prestigious competition provides critical financial support and performance opportunities for emerging Opera singers, reinforcing Opera at Florham's commitment to nurturing the next generation of Opera stars.

Tickets for *Celebriamo Puccini* are \$30 for general admission and can be purchased online in advance or at the door. More information and ticket details are available at [www.operaatflorham.org](http://www.operaatflorham.org). Student discounts are available.

This benefit concert offers an unforgettable musical experience while directly supporting the



(above 2024 first place winner, Trevor Haumschilt-Rocha, Baritone)

future of Opera. Join Opera at Florham for an afternoon of extraordinary music and help champion the next generation of Operatic excellence.



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# HEALTH DEPARTMENT APRIL PROGRAMS

## G'ARTBAGE ART CONTEST

Register by Wednesday, April 9

Project Drop-Off, Saturday, April 12  
10am to 1pm

This g'ART'bage contest takes a creative approach to protecting our planet from plastic pollution by pulling plastics out of the waste-stream and transforming them into works of public art. Contest participants are challenged to be thoughtful and creative in crafting art made from single-use plastic garbage (non-recyclable plastics). Team and individual projects are welcome. Projects must be crafted to withstand the elements, as they will be showcased in an outdoor setting on the grounds of the Essex County Environmental Center. Prizes awarded.

Pre-registration required, contact 973.228.8776 or email [tcasella@parks.essexcountynj.org](mailto:tcasella@parks.essexcountynj.org) for more information and to register.

**JOIN THE WALKING CLUB THIS SPRING**  
**APRIL 18, 2025, THROUGH JUNE 13, 2025**  
**10:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M.**

The Livingston Health Department will offer a free Walking Club this spring, starting in April. The Club will meet on Fridays to walk around the reservoir at the South Mountain Recreation Complex, located in West Orange.

The Walking Club will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Fridays from April 18, 2025, through June 13, 2025, weather permitting.

The Walking Club is free and open to adults over the age of 18. We will meet in the free public parking lot at McLoone's Boathouse. The walk is 1.75 miles around the reservoir, which should take about one hour.

Walking is a great way to get some exercise and offers many health benefits: it can help you maintain a healthy weight, reduce joint pain, improve balance, lower the risk of high blood pressure, and more.

Pre-registration for the Walking Club is required. For questions or to pre-register, please

contact Jessica, Health Educator, at 973-535-7961 ext. 7110 or [jekelly@livingstonnj.org](mailto:jekelly@livingstonnj.org).

To stay up to date on Livingston Health Department programs and events, visit [livingstonnj.org/Health](http://livingstonnj.org/Health).

**SENIOR SAVERS: FIRST AID MADE SIMPLE**  
**Thursday, April 17, 2025,**  
**from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

The Livingston Health Department, in conjunction with the Livingston First Aid Squad and Livingston High School students, is offering a program for seniors on first aid. The program will be on Thursday, April 17, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Livingston Senior/Community Center, 204 Hillside Ave, in Tahaney Room 1 on the first floor.

Seniors, do you know what to do in a first aid emergency for you or someone else? Come find out how you can become a senior saver by sharpening your first aid skills.

Pre-registration is required.

To register, call the Health Department at 973-535-7961 ext. #7110, #7109, or #7108.

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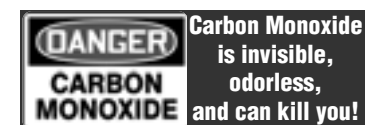
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## ANNUAL YOUTH FISHING DERBY - APRIL 12

### NATIVE PLANT PROGRAM

The Millburn Environmental Commission is partnering with the Great Swamp Watershed Association for their annual Native Plant sale! There will be a kickoff webinar on March 31, and the plant sale will run online only from April 1st to April 18th. Plant pickup will be on Sunday, May 4th, from 9am to 12pm at Gero Park, 357 White Oak Ridge Road, Short Hills. Go to [www.greatswamp.org/native-plant-sale](http://www.greatswamp.org/native-plant-sale). Don't miss out on this great opportunity to introduce or expand a native plant garden and cultivate vibrant habitats for pollinators and birds.

**GSWA's Annual**  
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**Kickoff Webinar March 31**  
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visit [greatswamp.org](http://greatswamp.org) for more info!

The Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club Annual Youth Fishing Derby will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2025 at Echo Lake Park in Westfield, NJ. The event is free for children under 16, and \$10 for adults who wish to participate. Sign up is early morning 7:30/8:00 a.m. and throughout the event.

Tagged Fish will be stocked that day so the children can see them get stocked. Prizes are awarded for different species of fish. This is an ongoing event until May 3 so if a child cannot fish that day they can sign up and send in their tag if they catch a tagged fish up to the deadline that tags will be received.

You may donate and sponsor a fish for this event. Download our form online at [nbfcc.org](http://nbfcc.org), we can mail one to you, or stop in at Ponzio's, 211 Union Ave., Scotch Plains, NJ.

The Newark Bait and Fly Casting Club was founded in 1907 and remains the oldest fishing club in the nation. We are listed on Amazon Smile and are a recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit. We provide outings to support veterans, adults and children as well as people with disabilities which focus on environmental education, fishing knowledge and practice. We are always looking for new members, donations, and volunteers if anyone would like to get involved. Our monthly meetings are held at the Kenilworth VFW, located at 33 S. 21st St., Kenilworth, NJ, on the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. (except July

and August). There is no fee to attend a meeting. For more information visit [nbfcc.org](http://nbfcc.org) or contact Bob Jones: [BJonesJRNJ@hotmail.com](mailto:BJonesJRNJ@hotmail.com), 908-325-6657.



(above) The Newark Bait and Fly casting Club Annual Youth Fishing Derby will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2025 at Echo Lake Park in Westfield, NJ. - Photo from 2019 Derby

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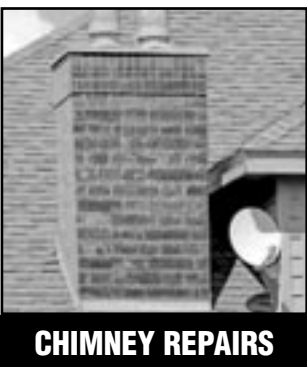
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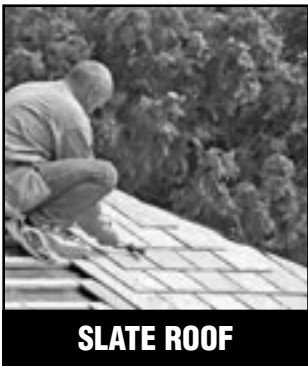
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## JUMP DANCE & SING – APRIL 26TH

### LIBRARY EVENT

For a full listing of programs and events visit:  
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**Wordsmith and Wonder:**

**An Author Talk with Jodi Picoult**

**Wednesday, April 26, 2025**

**7:00 pm**

Step into Spring with us as we chat with the highly acclaimed New York Times bestselling author Jodi Picoult about her newest novel, *By Any Other Name*.

In 1581, Emilia Bassano - like most young women of her day - is allowed no voice of her own. But as the Lord Chamberlain's mistress, she has access to all theaters in England and finds a way to secretly bring her work to the stage. And yet, creating some of the world's greatest dramatic masterpieces comes at great cost: by paying a man for the use of his name, she will write her own out of history.

In the present, playwright Melina Green has just written a new work inspired by the life of her Elizabethan ancestor Emilia Bassano. Although the challenges are different four hundred years later, the playing field is still not level for women in theater. Would Melina—like Emilia—be willing to forfeit her credit as author, just for a chance to see her work performed?

Told in intertwining narratives, *By Any Other Name* is a sweeping tale of ambition, courage, and desire that asks what price each woman is willing to pay to see their work live on—even if it means they will be forgotten. Register now to join the wondrous conversation!

About the Author: Jodi Picoult is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of twenty-nine novels, including *By Any Other Name*, *Mad Honey* (co-authored with Jennifer Finney Boylan), *Wish You Were Here*, *The Book of Two Ways*, *A Spark of Light*, *Small Great Things*, *Leaving Time*, and *My Sister's Keeper*, and, with daughter Samantha van Leer, two young adult novels, *Between the Lines* and *Off the Page*. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband.

On Saturday, April 26th at 2 p.m., Children (babies, family, pre-K) will count the strings on the guitar, play their "air" guitars, dance, sing-along, and help Mr. John write their very own version of "Wheels on the Bus" at this interactive concert. After the concert, everyone will take a

turn playing the guitar!

Children under age 12: a parent or responsible caregiver (age 16 or older) must remain with the child or remain in the Library and be immediately accessible to the child at all times, including when a child is attending a library program.

Sponsored by the Friends of Livingston Library

# Jump! Dance! Sing!

**Kids Concert for ages 0-5**  
 Saturday, April 26th  
 2:00 pm to 2:45 pm

Sponsored by the Friends of the Livingston Public Library

## Wordsmith and Wonder:

An Author Talk with Jodi Picoult

### Virtual Author Talk

Wednesday, April 2 at 7pm

Registration is required

**Jodi Picoult**  
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## 40TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT – APRIL 27

Celebrating four decades of “bringing music to people and people to music,” the renowned Hanover Wind Symphony will present a gala 40th Anniversary Concert on Sunday, April 27, at 3 p.m., at Morristown High School, 50 Early St., in Morristown. The concert is free and open to the public.

Matthew Paterno of Parsippany, HWS music director, encourages everyone to “Come and join us on April 27 to hear some great music, see some dear friends and celebrate a momentous milestone!”

The Hanover Wind Symphony, a unique



(above) Michael Baker, trumpet soloist for the 40th Anniversary Concert.

Courtesy photo

extension of the great American tradition of adult music performance, is made up exclusively of woodwind, brass and percussion instruments. The group was founded in 1985 by Peter Boor, who saw the need for an adult ensemble that could perform music of the highest caliber. Boor will be a guest conductor at the 40th Anniversary Concert on April 27. Also serving as a guest conductor will be Ayden Khan of Wayne, HWS associate music director.

Michael Baker, trumpet soloist for the 40th Anniversary Concert, has played with the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Ballet, and the New Jersey Symphony. He is currently performing with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and he is also a member of the prestigious Brass Band of Battle Creek. The soloist has toured the United States, Japan, Australia, the UK, Canada, Norway, Sweden, and Korea as a trumpet and cornet soloist.

HWS exemplifies the power of music and its influence on our lives. Its highly talented members do not come from the ranks of professional musicians; rather, most are full-time professionals working outside the field of music and include accountants, attorneys, engineers, and corporate executives. Also performing with the symphony are a number of music educators who seek both an outlet for their creative talents and an opportunity to refine their musical skills.

The Hanover Wind Symphony serves the community by playing marches, toe-tappers, and

standards while also presenting pieces written by current active composers, some of whom are members of the ensemble. HWS also helps to mentor the next generation of wind musicians by offering scholarships for young people to study with acclaimed musicians at the top of their fields.

In addition, the group showcases the work of world-class artists. Some of these soloists have included Joseph Alessi (a trombonist) and Philip Smith (a trumpeter), both with the New York Philharmonic; Patrick Sheridan, one of the world’s most famous tuba players; Steven Meade, a world-renowned euphonium soloist and recording artist; and Dr. Paul Cohen, the world’s premier classical alto saxophone player. For the 40th Anniversary Concert, acclaimed trumpeter Michael Baker will share his talents as a soloist.

The group has performed at various regional venues in the Northeast, including the Boston Festival of Bands at Faneuil Hall in Boston; the New York Brass Conference and Lighthouse International in New York; the Nicholas Music Center at Rutgers University, in New Brunswick; the Weis Performing Arts Center at Bucknell University, in Lewisburg, PA; the Community Theatre in Morristown; the Bickford Theatre at the Morris Museum in Morristown; and the Tribeca Performing Arts Center in New York .

For further information about the Hanover Wind Symphony, including dates and locations of upcoming concerts, visit [hanoverwinds.org](http://hanoverwinds.org).



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## VICKIE BOLL: A VOLUNTEER WHO MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

### New Jersey Veterans Network

Every day, the New Jersey Veterans Network (NJVN) supports disabled veterans and their families, providing crucial resources that can truly change lives. A big part of that success is due to our amazing team of volunteers who give their time, energy, and heart to help our heroes.

One volunteer who stands out is Vickie Boll. Vickie is a regular face in the veteran community,

and her dedication to the cause is nothing short of inspiring. Despite facing her own challenges as someone with autism, Vickie works tirelessly to ensure that veterans have access to the resources they need and that they feel appreciated and supported. Whether it's helping load trucks with supplies or bringing cheer to veterans at recreational therapy events, Vickie is always there, offering a helping hand and a smile.

For Vickie, helping veterans is more than just a task – it's a personal passion. She finds a sense of safety and belonging with veterans, who, she says, are nonjudgmental and deeply appreciative of her efforts. Their gratitude motivates her to continue her work, and her positive attitude has made a real impact on the lives of many veterans.

But Vickie's good deeds don't stop there. Her heart of service extends beyond veterans. Most recently, she spearheaded a successful collection for St. Hubert's Animal Rescue, further showing

her commitment to making the world a better place for both people and animals.

It's an honor to have Vickie on the NJVN team. Her kindness, compassion, and tireless work ethic are a reminder that small actions can make a huge difference. The world is truly a better place because of people like her.

Help us save Vets – and make a lasting impact on those who served.

NJVN are always looking for volunteers that can both assist with upcoming events and help mentor veterans so they can live better productive lives. Volunteers are the most important NJVN resource, and we would love to have more people help us save lives. If you need assistance or are interested in joining the team, please send us your name, email, and phone number to [NJVN1775@gmail.com](mailto:NJVN1775@gmail.com) or call 973-332-1556. Check out our website [NJVN.org](http://NJVN.org) for our services and accomplishments.



(above) Vickie Boll is a regular face in the veteran community, and her dedication to the cause is nothing short of inspiring.

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## SCOUTS SHINE AT YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Submitted by Daniel Cannon, Commander - Sons of the American Legion, Millburn Squadron 140, Guy R. Bosworth

Eight outstanding Scouts from Scouting America Troop 19, St. Rose of Lima Church in Short Hills, NJ, recently completed the prestigious Spirit of America Youth Leadership Program at Valley Forge from February 27 to March 2, 2025.

The program was sponsored by the Military Order of World Wars (MOWW), Alfred Shehab Chapter.

The MOWW is committed to its mission of encouraging responsible citizenship, patriotism, youth leadership, military and public service, veteran support, and national security, considers the Spirit of America Youth Leadership Program the capstone of its youth development initiatives. Through a strong partnership with the Alfred Shehab Chapter and New Jersey Department Commander, Lieutenant Colonel William Rapp and Sons of

American Legion Squadron 140, Guy R. Bosworth, Commander Daniel Cannon, eight Scouts were selected based on their leadership, academic record, and commitment to community service.

The Scouts who participated in the program were: Genevieve Brazell, Annette Johnson, Ava Legasto, Lea McKenna, Eliana Park, Penelope Williams, Mischa Williams-Owolabi, and Kelsey Quane

Each graduate is from Millburn High School except Penelope Williams who attends Jonathan Dayton High School, Springfield, NJ.

Over the course of four days, these high school sophomores and juniors had an unforgettable experience as they engaged in mock congressional debates, free enterprise challenges, historical site visits, and interactive activities designed to enhance critical thinking

and leadership skills. Living on campus, they fostered new friendships while gaining a deeper understanding of their responsibilities as American citizens.

Among the 90 participants, Genevieve Brazell earned top honors, as she was recognized as one of the top three graduates of the program. Her leadership and dedication to amplifying the experiences of her peers earned her accolades in the Freedom Forward After-Action Report. As a key member of the Affirmations Committee, she played a crucial role in supporting and uplifting all participants, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to youth leadership and civic responsibility.

As a Founding Forward top student, Genevieve now advances to compete for a spot at the MOWW Youth Civics Summit in Washington, DC.



(above, l-r) Eight outstanding Scouts after completing at Spirit of America Youth Leadership Program: McKenna, A. Legasto, E. Park, G. Brazell, A. Johnson, K. Quane, P. Williams, and M. Williams-Owolabi.

Photo by Scouting America Troop 19, St. Rose of Lima Church, Short Hills, NJ

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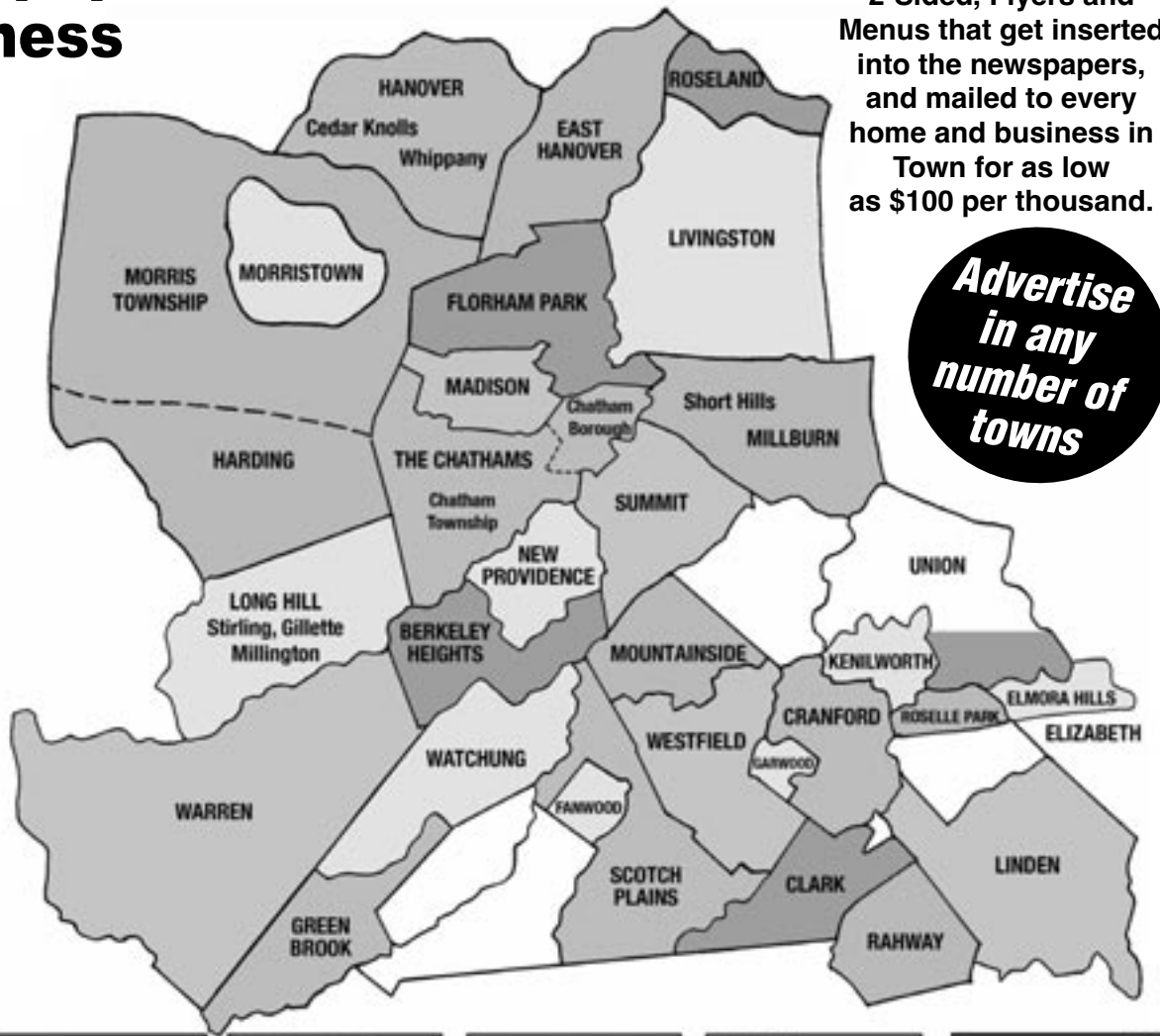
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## CELEBRATING 75 YEARS NIGHT SKY GAZING

Amateur Astronomers, Inc (AAI) of Cranford, NJ celebrated their 75th Anniversary on Sunday, November 17, 2024, at The Westwood Caterers of Garwood, NJ. In attendance were 53 past and current members who range from teenagers to seniors.

AAI has always interested anyone who loves looking and learning about the night sky. Housed in the William Miller Sperry Observatory on the Union College campus in Cranford, the observatory is open to the public every Friday night with their twin domes looking at the heavens. One of the domes houses a 24-inch reflector and the other dome houses a 10 refractor, which was constructed by club members. Public lectures start at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays, they are on current topics in Astronomy.

Youth lectures are presented by the club at 7:00 p.m. to preregistered scout groups to help them earn their patches in science. If you are interested in preregistering a scout group, please contact [info@asterism.org](mailto: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](mailto:membership@asterism.org) or visit [asterism.org](http://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 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 nights. One of the domes houses a 24-inch reflector and the other dome houses a 10 refractor. Public lectures start at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays, on current topics in Astronomy.

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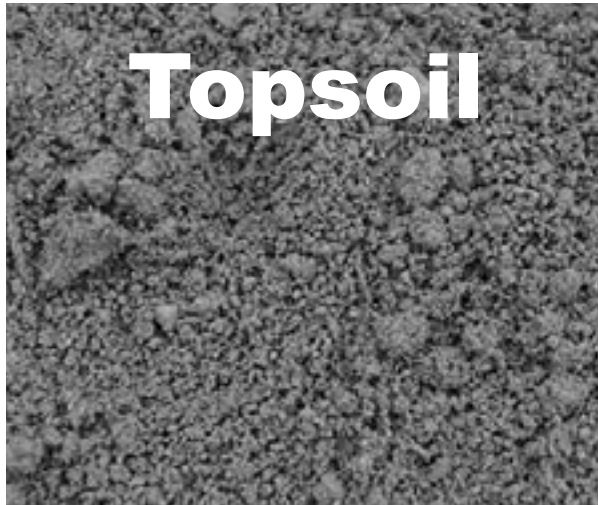
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