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COMMUNITY NEWS NJ

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DINE & DISCOVER: 20 WAYS TO ENJOY RESTAURANT MONTH

September is a very special time for food, friends and family in Berkeley Heights: It's Restaurant Month, which runs from September 1 - 30, 2025. Now is the time to make your plans to take advantage of special offers from 20 establishments. Options range from fine dining to casual and quick-serve restaurants. This event attracts diners of all ages for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It's your chance to:

- Try new dishes and special meals at your favorite eateries
- Make family dinnertime easy and delicious on busy weekdays
- Venture out to new places (some new restaurants have opened this year!)
- Encourage fun get-togethers with friends or co-workers as the summer ends
- Urge teens to head downtown after school and enjoy something new

"Berkeley Heights boasts a vibrant dining scene that draws visitors from near and far," said Julie Lloyd of the Downtown Beautification Committee. "From special nights out to BYOB deals, there's something delicious for everyone. We're grateful to our local restaurants for making this ninth annual Restaurant Month easy, affordable, and enjoyable."



Find the information you need to ensure you get the most value and fun out of Restaurant Month at www.experiencebh.com, including menus and specials. Follow the fun on social media at @ExperienceBerkeleyHeights on Facebook and [experience_berkeley_heights](https://www.instagram.com/experience_berkeley_heights) on Instagram. Please share your photos with the tag #experiencebh.

AS OF THIS WRITING, THESE ARE THE 20 PARTICIPATING ESTABLISHMENTS:

- Amerigo Cucina ItaloAmericana
- Ami Sushi
- Bubbakoo's Burrito's
- Cafe Vincotto
- Cousins Deli
- Clemente's Pizzeria
- Delicious Heights
- Domino's
- Gabagool Deli
- Goodman's Deli and Restaurant
- Grain and Cane
- Hop Hing
- La Rosa Chicken & Grill
- Lupa Ristorante
- Neelam Fine Indian Cuisine
- Patria Station Cafe
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LANDSCAPE WITH BIRDS IN MIND

The Raptor Trust

How many Eastern Screech Owls do we currently have at The Raptor Trust? Apparently ALL of them! Most of these owlets were displaced after the trees that held their nests were cut down.

Cutting down trees and landscaping - especially during nesting season - can destroy active nests, scare off parents, and even injure adult birds during a critical time.

Most birds nest between March and August. Even small projects - like pruning shrubs or pulling out vines - can have a devastating result on a nest.

Here's how you can help:

- Delay major trimming until fall
- Check for nests before cutting or clearing

- Leave a few brush piles
 - birds and critters love them
 - Avoid pesticides and non-native plants
- These small steps can make all the difference for birds trying to raise their families nearby—or young birds in the first days of their lives.

The Raptor Trust is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization which provides free medical care to thousands of orphaned or injured birds each year. Our infirmery staff is available seven days a week during daylight hours to admit injured birds, but we must rely on the people who find them to bring them to us for care.

If you find a bird that needs help, please visit our website theraptortrust.org for instructions. We cannot do what we do without the kindness of many – including our visitors!

Berkeley Heights COMMUNITY NEWS NJ

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POLICE OFFICERS ADOPT LUCKY PUPPIES THEY RESCUED

Best Friends Animal Society

In December 2024, a trio of officers with the Clark Police Department in New Jersey responded to a call from a Good Samaritan about puppies that were abandoned in a five-gallon bucket. When they arrived on the scene, the officers discovered eight tiny puppies, only a couple of weeks old, huddled together for warmth in the freezing winter temperatures.

The puppies were immediately rushed to Associated Humane Society-Newark after hours by their Animal Care Officers (ACOs) for veterinarian evaluation and treatment. They were cold, starving, severely dehydrated, and infested



(above) Clark Police Officer Ronny Taborda (adopted Capri), Detective Bruce McDonald (adopted Zeus), and Detective Paul Sosnowski (adopted Ozzy).

Courtesy photo

with fleas.

“Deann Bowen, the Manager at AHS’s Tinton Falls location and a veteran vet tech with experience in neonatal care, was able to meet our ACO’s halfway up the Parkway and took them right into foster,” said Danielle Mania, Chief Operating Officer of AHS-Newark.

With the puppies safely in foster care, which included round-the-clock feedings until they were able to eat on their own, the team at AHS-Newark set about finding their family. They posted the story and photos on social media the next morning, took press interviews, and raised \$40,000 to provide for the puppies’ medical treatment and care.

“We did receive a few tips, but all were unsuccessful,” said Mania. Once they were old enough, the puppies were sent to foster in different foster homes.

The officers were instantly interested in adopting puppies from the litter. With each passing day, they could not stop thinking about the puppies’ wellbeing and regularly checked in on them. When they were all spayed/neutered and ready to adopt in March 2025, there was no need to list them all. Three of the puppies - now named Ozzy, Capri, and Zeus - had already found their loving homes with the three police officers that saved their lives on that cold winter day. Officer Ronny Taborda (adopted Capri), Detective Bruce McDonald (adopted Zeus), and Detective Paul

Sosnowski (adopted Ozzy).

“The Clark PD has an adorable group chat to keep in touch with all of the adopters, and they frequently have play dates with each other,” said Mania. “This situation was really a testament as to how we work together as a team across the entire organization to save lives and find pets homes.”

This full circle moment highlights modern animal services practices, and the pet lifesaving work that police and animal control officers do in their communities. It is also a reminder of the importance of microchipping pets and having them wear up-to-date identification tags, so in the event they become lost, they can be quickly reunited with their owners. Data indicates that 52% of lost dogs and two out of every five cats are successfully returned when microchipped, which reduces the amount of time lost pets stay in shelters that often already have limited space.

Best Friends Animal Society, a leading national animal welfare organization working to end the killing of cats and dogs in America’s shelters, is partnering with AHS-Newark to help them achieve their pet lifesaving goals. Best Friends’ most recent data shows that New Jersey is on the verge of becoming a no-kill state with an 89% save rate. There are just ten shelters in the state that need to save less than 100 pets to achieve no-kill. For more information, visit bestfriends.org.

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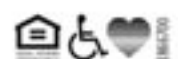
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SEPTEMBER AUDITION FOR NOVEMBER SHOW

Hickory Tree Chorus

The award-winning Hickory Tree Chorus will hold auditions on September 17, 2025, at the Shrine of Saint Joseph in Stirling, New Jersey, for participation in their November 15th 2:00 PM show, “Thank You for the Music: A Celebration in Song”.

Auditions will take place from 6:30 to 7:00 pm. Participants are asked to perform an a cappella song of their choice. Following the auditions, they are invited to stay for an additional hour to engage in vocal skill activities, observe chorus practices, and enjoy singing demonstrations.

The performance will be held at The Concert Hall at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. Recognized for its beautiful design and exceptional acoustics, the 433-seat Concert Hall has been sought after by major artists for both recording and performance since its opening in 2005.

The Hickory Tree Chorus has consistently demonstrated its exceptional talent, winning first place in Division A at the Greater NY/NJ Sweet Adelines Region #15 competition in Albany, New York in both 2024 and 2025. Their top-scoring performance at the 2025 competition earned them a coveted spot in the Harmony Classic at the 78th Annual Sweet Adelines International Convention & Competition in October 2026, which will be held at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio.

Master Director Carolyn Schmidt, a member

of Hickory Tree Chorus since 1974 and musical director since 1994, has been instrumental in the chorus’s success. She is one of only five active Master Music Arrangers in Sweet Adelines International and arranges a significant portion of Hickory Tree’s unique repertoire. In addition to her role as director, she serves as a Sweet Adelines International Approved Music Category Judge.

Hickory Tree Chorus is dedicated to advancing

the musical art form of four-part a cappella harmony sung in the barbershop style. As a chapter of Sweet Adelines International Organization, it has been entertaining audiences in the New Jersey area since 1968. They believe every voice counts and encourage women singers of all ages, colors, ethnicities, and orientations to visit us and share our joy of music.

Visit hickorytreechorus.org for more information or call 908-377-1399.



(above) Hickory Tree Chorus, a women's a cappella group, announces September Auditions for a November Show.

Courtesy photo

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FRED’S ROOM HELPS CHILDREN PROCESS GRIEF

Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss
At Imagine, we know that grief is complex, and big feelings need a safe place to be expressed. That’s why we created the Volcano Room, a dedicated space where children can release their emotions in a healthy way. Recently redecorated with characters from the Inside Out film series, the room features cushioned walls, soft basketballs, and big pillow piles to jump in where children can process their grief in their own time.



(above) The DeJesus family gathers in Imagine’s “Volcano Room” recently dedicated in memory of Scotch Plains resident Fred DeJesus.

For the DeJesus family of Scotch Plains, Imagine has been a source of comfort for the past five years. To honor their beloved husband, son, and father, they chose to dedicate the Volcano Room as "Fred’s Room." The event happened on the fifth anniversary of Fred DeJesus’ death at just 38 years old. Fred’s wife Suzanne, and their daughters led the family in a heartfelt dedication ceremony.

“We know that Fred is watching over us, front row for every dance recital, Girl Scout event, and school performance,” Suzanne shared. “He’s still cheering us on, asking, ‘How did it go, kiddo? I know you hit it out of the park.’”

Spaces like Fred’s Room are made possible by families who want to create a lasting tribute to their loved ones. As Imagine continues to grow, we are honored to help families find meaningful ways to celebrate the lives of those they hold dear.

Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss is a 501c3 that offers grief and loss education and training to the community and free year-round grief support groups for children ages 3-18 and young adults 19-30 who are coping with a loss due to death. Concurrently, support groups are available for the parents and caregivers of the children in the groups and offered in English and Spanish. For more information, please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imagineinj.org or visit their website at imagineinj.org.

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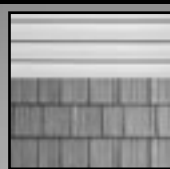
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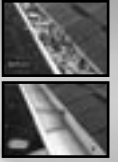
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BERKELEY HEIGHTS LIBRARY SEPTEMBER PROGRAMS

Please check the library's website bhplnj.org for more information and any program changes or additions.

FOR ALL AGES:

Family Movie

Sunday, September 14 at 2:30.

Library Birthday Party

Saturday, September 20

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS:

MONDAYS:

Baby Storytime

Mondays at 10am - September 8, 15, 22, 29

Crafternoon

crafts for ages 4-7 with caregiver

Mondays at 3:30pm - September 8, 15, 22, 29

TUESDAYS:

Toddler Tuesdays

for toddlers with caregiver

Tuesdays at 10 am - September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Tummy Time

Tuesdays at 2pm - September 9, 16, 23, 30

Evening Storytime

Tuesdays at 6pm - September 9, 16, 23, 30

WEDNESDAYS:

Family Storytime

Wednesdays at 10am - September 3, 10, 17, 24

Elementary STEM

Wednesdays at 3:30pm - September 3, 10, 17, 24

THURSDAYS:

Block Party

(Build & play with blocks)

Thursdays at 10am - September 4, 11, 18, 25

Puzzles & Games

Thursdays at 3:30 - September 4, 11, 18, 25

FRIDAYS:

Play Pals

Fridays at 10am - September 5, 12, 19, 26

Lego Play

Fridays at 3pm - September 12 and 26.

Family Fun Friday

Friday, September 19 at 3:30pm.

SATURDAYS:

Saturday Hangouts

Saturdays at 10am - September 6 (Play)

13 (Family Storytime), and 27 (Games).

SUNDAYS:

Floor Puzzles

September 28 at 3pm.

TEEN PROGRAMS:

Weekly Teen Program

Thursdays at 6pm - September 4, 11, 18, 25

ADULT PROGRAMS:

MONDAYS:

Joy of Cookbooking

September 16 at 6:30pm (Sheet Pan Dishes).

Weird Art: September 29 at 7pm

(Sharpie/Alcohol Tiles).

TUESDAYS:

Tinker Tuesday Crafts

Tuesdays at 7pm - September 2

(Tapered Candle Painting)

and September 9 (Fall Welcome Mat).

Evening Book Club

September 9 at 7pm - Night Watch.

Friends of the Library Meeting

September 16 at 7pm.

WEDNESDAYS:

Adult Coloring

Wednesdays at 1pm - September 3 and 17.

Coffee and Conversation

Wednesdays at 1pm - September 10 and 24.

THURSDAYS:

Mayor's Wellness Book Club

September 11 at 7pm - The DOSE Effect.

Books Speak Volumes Book Discussion

September 18 at 7pm.

FRIDAYS:

Morning Book Discussion

September 5 at 10:30am

The Paris Bookseller.

Friday Movie Matinee

Friday, September 26 at 1pm - In the Heights.

SUNDAYS:

Pins & Needles

September 7 at 2pm.



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Get ready to immerse yourself in the vibrant sights, sounds, and flavors of Greece at the 48th Annual Greek Festival, taking place at the St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Union, NJ. This eagerly anticipated event, the largest and longest-running Greek Festival in Union County, will delight attendees from September 4th to September 7th, 2025, with a weekend of cultural immersion, culinary delights, and family-friendly entertainment.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- **Authentic Greek Cuisine:** Indulge in a feast of traditional Greek dishes including souvlaki, moussaka, pastitsio, spanakopita, loukoumades, and baklava, all freshly prepared on premises with the finest ingredients reminiscent of your Greek Yia-yia's cooking.
- **Live Music and Dance:** Experience the lively rhythms of Greece with live music and dance performances featuring traditional Greek folk music and dances such as syrtaki and kalamatiano.
- **Artisan Marketplace:** Browse through a bustling marketplace offering handmade jewelry, clothing, and imported goods from Greece.

EVENT DETAILS:

- **Dates:** September 4th to September 7th, 2025
- **Location:** St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, 721 Rahway Ave, Union, NJ 07083 (Free Parking in neighboring lots)
- **Admission:** \$2 general admission; a portion of admission proceeds benefit local Union Township/Union County charities "We are thrilled to invite the community to join us for our 47th Annual Greek Festival," said Betty Spiropoulos, Festival Committee Co-Chair "This event is a celebration of our Greek heritage and a wonderful opportunity for everyone to experience the warmth and hospitality of our culture."

ABOUT THE ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH:

Established in 1928 in Newark and relocated to Union in 1984, the St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church has been a cornerstone of the Union Township community, celebrated for its rich diversity and dedication to promoting Greek culture, faith, and community spirit. Over the years, it has warmly welcomed people from various backgrounds, fostering an inclusive environment that embraces cultural diversity and unity among its members.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates and behind-the-scenes looks at the festival: @stdemetriosunion

Don't miss out on this unforgettable celebration of Greek culture and community! Join us at the 48th Annual Greek Festival in Union, NJ, for a weekend filled with delicious food, vibrant music, and family-friendly fun.

ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

48TH ANNUAL

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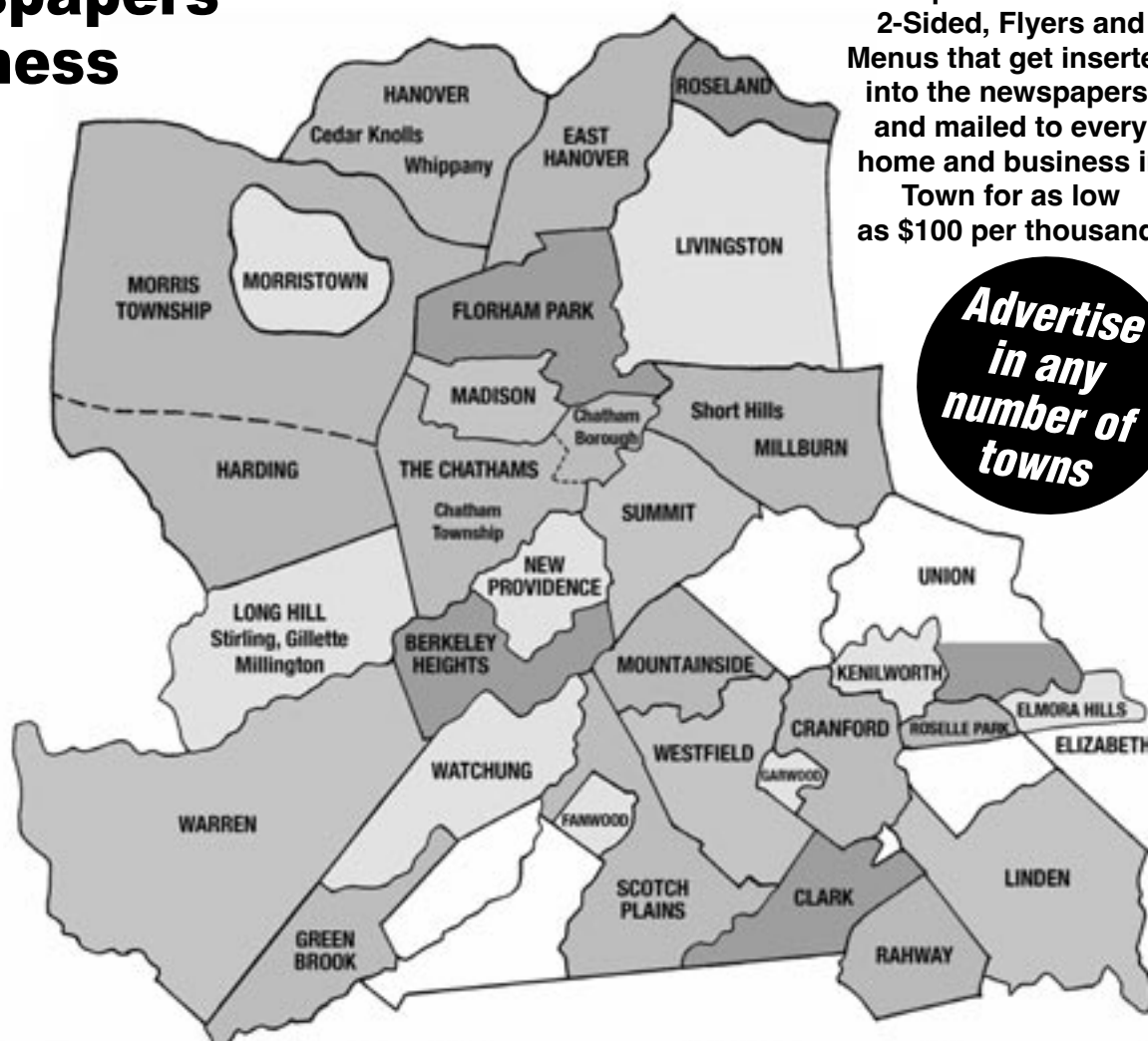
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6 Units	6.5"x6.25" or 10"x4"	320	760	1200	1400	1600	1800	2000	2200	2400	2600	2800
9 HALF PAGE	6.5"x9" or 10"x7"	360	860	1300	1600	1900	2200	2400	2600	2800	3000	3200
12 Units	6.5"x14"	400	960	1400	1800	2100	2400	2700	3000	3300	3600	3900
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“I NEVER LIKED GOING TO THE GYM... BUT NOW I'M HOOKED!”



TRISH - I never liked going to the gym...until I joined Gabriele Fitness! The very knowledgeable and professional trainers make sure that every person receives personalized attention and feedback in class. I never expected to achieve such great results and it's all due to Gabriele Fitness. But now I'm hooked! They are the best!

“I WAS WORRIED ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO KEEP UP”



STEVE - My results were both amazing and motivating! It's such a welcoming space. I was worried about not being able to keep up. But that's never been an issue at all. I've never felt rushed even if my pace was slower than those around me. I really love this aspect of the experience. I'm so glad to be part of this community.

“LIFE CHANGING FOR ME.”



DENNIS - Life changing for me. Great and entertaining trainers. Can't say enough positive things about GFP. Even now, in 2024, the experience at GFP continues to get better. The trainers do a great job helping each and everyone achieve their goals and consistently improve. The gym members support each other. I look forward to every session.

“I'M NOT SCARED TO WEAR SHORTS ANYMORE.”



JEN - I felt completely disconnected from the strong person I used to be. From the very first interaction, I could tell Gabriele Fitness was different. I'm not exaggerating when I say I owe my life to this gym and these people. My clothes fit again. I'm not scared to wear shorts anymore. I smile in photos. I know how to take care of myself. My blood work is amazing. I'm not hiding anymore. I'm happy again.

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- **Personalized and Simple Nutrition Help:** Our coaches are going to sit down with you to map out everything so you know exactly what to eat and when to eat it, which means you'll start making progress immediately.
- **Unlimited Cardio Sessions:** You'll get Unlimited Access to our 'Fat Blast' Sessions that will help get your body buzzing and your blood flowing to help shed those calories and fat!
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ABOUT GABRIELE FITNESS: Gabriele Fitness is a personal training gym that helps people lose weight, gain energy, and live a more active life without the use of fad diets or workouts that beat up their body. They've helped thousands of men and women in the Berkeley Heights Area to transform their health and life for the past 17 years. As leaders in the fitness industry they present their methods to trainers and gyms around the world.

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