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NINA SYLVESTER LEADS RAKE AND HOE GARDEN CLUB

Rake and Hoe Garden Club

The Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield proudly begins its new season under the leadership of newly elected president Nina Sylvester.

A longtime resident of Mountainside and a dedicated member of the club for ten years, Sylvester brings a wealth of experience and passion to her new role. A certified flower show judge and Rutgers Master Gardener, she comes from a long line of avid gardeners – her mother and grandmothers all shared a deep love of horticulture. Her professional background includes a career in quality assurance at Merck, followed by the raising of three children.

Sylvester originally joined the club through her daughter Emma's involvement in the Rake and Hoe Juniors program. Over the years, she has been recognized with multiple club awards, including the prestigious Barbara Mullin Award for Mentoring and Educating. Her dedication to nurturing the skills and creativity of fellow members in crafts and floral design has been deeply appreciated throughout the club.

Her theme for the 2025–2026 club year is “Let’s Grow Together.”

“I’ve always loved the ‘Back to School’ season,” Sylvester shared. “It’s full of promise and potential—a fresh start. A new garden club year holds the same excitement. I’m honored to serve as president, and I look forward to all the ways we’ll grow together—through learning, gardening, and friendship.”

Nina will be supported by an Executive Board of Margot Partridge (Vice President), Betsey Chance (Treasurer), Joann Androconis (Recording Secretary), Jane Christiani (Corresponding Secretary) and Sharon Shiraga (Director).

The Rake and Hoe Garden Club offers a wide range of educational programs, hands-on workshops, and service opportunities. Membership is open to all levels of experience—no need to be a Master Gardener to join.

Upcoming Programs Include: November 12 – “Sustainable Floral Design” with Tania Gindili. Gindili will present techniques and materials



(above) The Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield proudly begins its new season under the leadership of newly elected president Nina Sylvester. New members welcome!

Courtesy Photo

focused on environmentally-friendly floral arranging using locally-sourced and native plant varieties.

Additional programs and workshops for the season include: Air-Dry Artistic Crafts creating trinket leaf dishes; Bird ID Apps learning how to use Merlin and other tools; Designing Without Oasis featuring sustainable floral arranging without floral foam; Still Life Photography Workshop and Thanksgiving Centerpiece Design Sessions

Members will also be active in community service, including maintaining local community gardens, creating floral arrangements for mobile meals, crafting ornaments and decorating holiday trees at Jardine Academy, managing plantings at the NJ Veterans Memorial Home and supporting the Rake and Hoe Juniors in youth-focused gardening activities.

“Let’s Grow Together” is about more than plants,” said Sylvester. “It’s about friendships, learning, and cultivating beauty in our gardens and our communities.”

Interested in joining?

Guests are welcome to attend an upcoming meeting in November to learn more. For more information, please contact Membership Chair Margot Partridge at margotpartridge816@gmail.com.

The club is affiliated with the Garden Club of New Jersey and the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Membership is open to residents of Westfield and surrounding towns.

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National Custodian Day is celebrated on October 2 to honor the hardworking custodians who keep our spaces clean and safe. Throughout Berkeley Heights Public Schools, students took time to thank and celebrate the wonderful men and women who work so hard in the schools and district buildings to keep them beautiful and running smoothly.



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OPERAS ON FILM

Mountainside Rescue Squad
Operas on Film, now in its 12th season is held at the Mountainside Rescue Squad.
The selected films from famous opera houses throughout the world, will be played with subtitles on the second Friday of the month at 1 p.m. hosted by Mena Clemson and Norma Huber, Jr. It is free to attend.

Whether you are an opera buff or an opera neophyte, you are invited to join us for the following films:

- November 14th, THAIS**
starring Renee Fleming,
Metropolitan Opera 2008, 138 mins
- December 12th, I LOMBARDI**
starring Jose Carreras LaScala,
1984, 127 mins

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For more information visit:
<https://www.alwaysconnected.org/about>

CANDLELIGHT CONCERT AND TENORS RETURN

Step into an evening of sophistication and charm as the New Jersey Festival Orchestra presents its first-ever candlelight concert, Romance in the Mansion, on Saturday, November 15 at 6:30 PM at the James Ward Mansion in Westfield.
Guests can indulge in complimentary wine and small plates as they enjoy this unique fusion of artistry and atmosphere. With its golden décor,

intimate seating, and unforgettable musical program, Romance in the Mansion promises to be a highlight of the NJFO season.

Following Romance in the Mansion, NJFO rings in the festive season with one of its most anticipated events — The Return of the Holiday Tenors.

Back by popular demand, this symphonic spectacular will fill the concert hall with the magic of the holidays, featuring award-winning tenors John Kun Park, Luke Norvell, and Michael DeShield alongside guest choruses and the full New Jersey Festival Orchestra. Together, they'll perform an uplifting program of holiday classics, Broadway-style showstoppers, and beloved seasonal songs that capture the joy and wonder of the season.

Under Maestro Wroe's direction, this festive performance blends grand symphonic arrangements with soaring vocals and heartwarming moments, making it a beloved tradition for families across New Jersey.

Performances take place on Saturday, December 6, at 7:00 PM at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, and on Sunday, December 7, at 3:00 PM at The Concert Hall at Drew University in Madison.

Tickets are available at njfestivalorchestra.org or by calling the NJFO office at (908) 232-9400 during operational hours. Seating is limited, and early reservations are encouraged.

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Return of the Holiday Tenors

Sat, December 6, 7:00 pm
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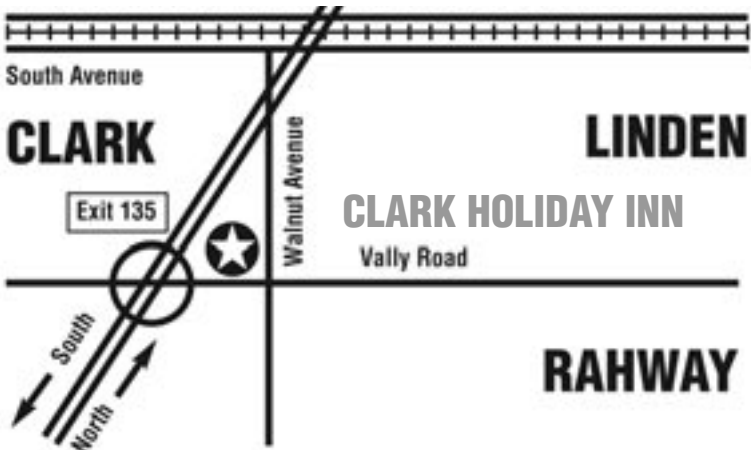
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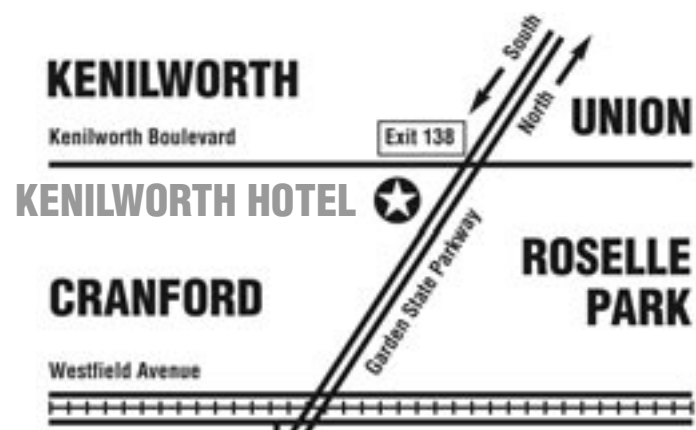


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EVENT TO TACKLE SOCIOECONOMIC BARRIERS - NOV. 13

Junior Leagues

The Junior Leagues of New Jersey State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC), in collaboration with the Junior League of Summit and the Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield, will host “Bubbles and Bills: Building Stronger Communities: Addressing the Socioeconomic Barriers to Well-Being” on Thursday, November 13, 2025, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Summit Elks Lodge (40 Maple Street, Summit, NJ).

This dynamic, non-partisan event will feature a social hour from 6:00–7:00 p.m., followed by a panel discussion from 7:00–8:30 p.m. The evening will bring together community leaders, advocates, and public affairs experts to explore how civic engagement and strategic partnerships can help uplift underserved communities across New Jersey.

Confirmed panelists include Amanda Block,

Founder of GRACE; Peter Jacob, Executive Director of Family Promise Union County; and Dr. Christine Thorpe, Founder of Stronger Tomorrow Wellness. Legislative speakers will be announced on November 5, 2025.

“SPAC is committed to advancing dialogue and action around the barriers that impact the health, safety, and well-being of women, children, and families,” said Victoria Williams, Chair of SPAC. “I’m honored to moderate this event. It promises to be a powerful opportunity to bring our communities, partners, and leaders together in meaningful conversation and collaboration.”

The event is free and open to Junior League members, community partners, and the general public. Space is limited, and early registration is encouraged. To register:

BubblesAndBills2025.eventbrite.com

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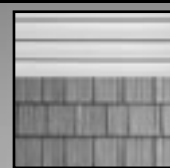
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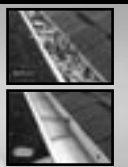
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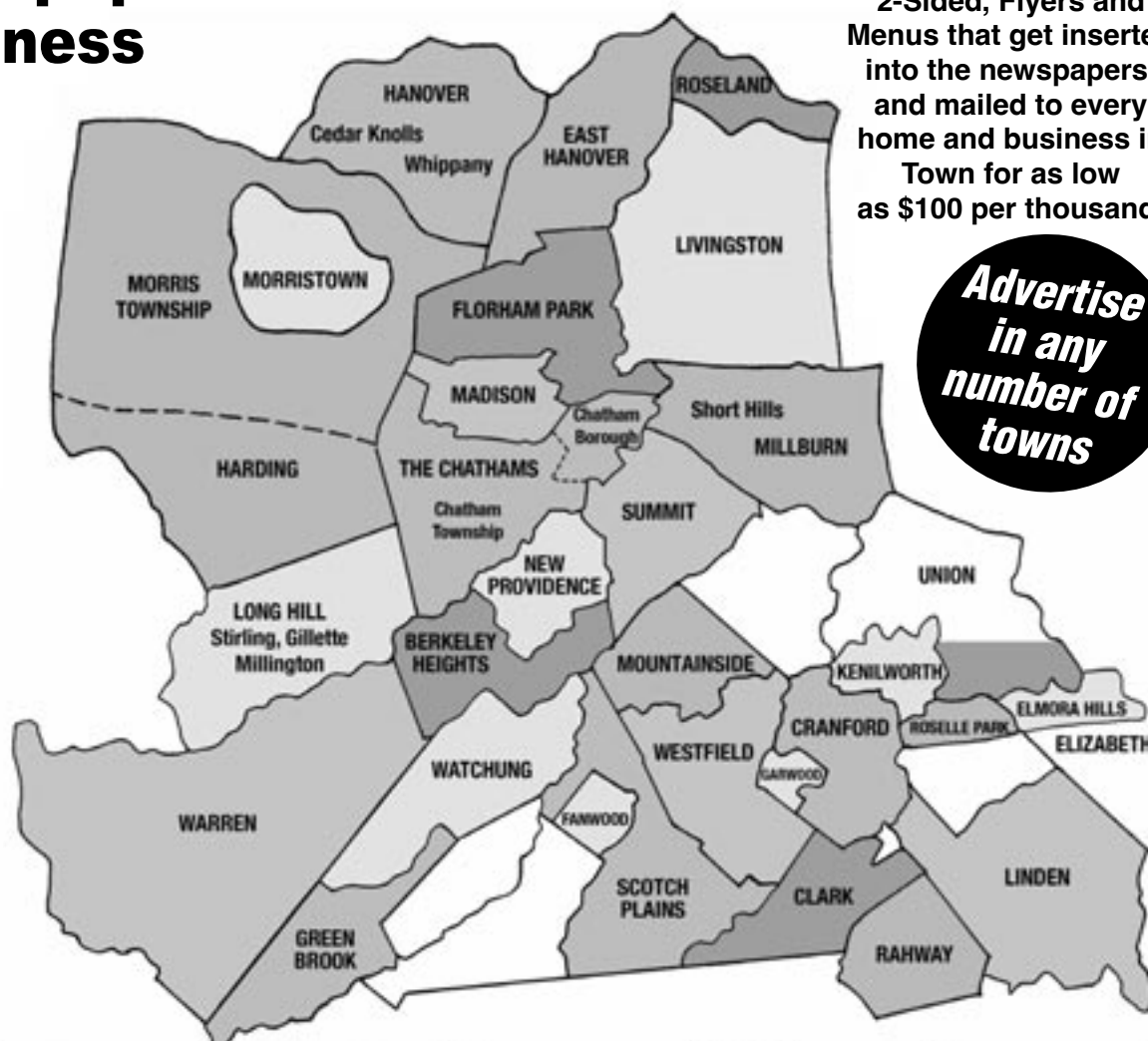
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Please register in advance as space is limited.

Children's Storytime

Tuesday, Nov. 4th, 18th & 25th 10:30am

For Ages 0-5. Features fun, engaging stories to spark a love of reading. All children must be accompanied by a grownup.

Forever Judy and the Wizard of Oz

Wednesday, Nov. 5th 2pm

Francine Evans & Joel Zelnik will take you on this musical camp cabaret featuring America's number one female vocalist, Judy Garland.

Thursday Night Book Club

Thursday, Nov. 6th 6:30pm

This month's book "Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine" by Gail Honeyman. Books are available for pick-up at the library.

Move Today: Workshop for Adults

Thursday, Nov. 6th & 20th 10am

The Move Today Exercise Program is a 45-60 minute, non-aerobic exercise class for older adults. The program consists of 12 sessions, meeting once a week for 12 weeks. Resistance bands and exercise manuals will be provided for each participant.

Friday Afternoon Movies

Fridays, Nov. 7th & 21st 1pm

Nov. 7th "Jurassic World: Rebirth" (2025),

Nov. 21st "Ordinary People" (1980)

Registration not required.

Create & Craft: Pumpkin Suncatchers

Wednesday, Nov. 19th 3pm

Create festive pumpkin-shaped suncatchers that will brighten your windows with seasonal color. All supplies are provided, and no experience is needed. This craft program is for adults.

CHEF VIRTUAL EVENTS

Library Chef: Stuffed Bell Peppers with Turkey, Quinoa and Veggies

Wednesday, Nov. 5th 7pm

High in protein, fiber-rich, and low in refined carbs - for supporting balanced blood sugar.

Junior Chef: Pumpkin Breakfast Cookies

Tuesday, Nov. 11th 6pm

Teens ages 10 and up will learn how to measure ingredients, practice kitchen safety, and bake tasty, wholesome pumpkin cookies.

Virtual Wellness Event: Breathwork Basics

Tuesday, Nov. 11th 7:30pm

Discover how easy breathing techniques can help you release stress, sharpen focus, and boost overall well-being.

Junior Chef: Pumpkin Muffins and Storytime "The Littlest Pumpkin"

Wednesday, Nov. 19th 6pm

Make pumpkin muffins while learning basic measuring and oven safety. Includes read-aloud of The Littlest Pumpkin. For kids ages 5-9.

Library Chef: Smart Snacking

and Label Reading- Diabetes Awareness

Wednesday, Nov. 19th 7:30pm

Discover how to decode nutrition labels and choose smarter snacks. Perfect for anyone managing diabetes.

VIRTUAL AUTHOR TALKS

Virtual Library Author Talk Joseph Lee

Wednesday, Nov. 5th 2pm

You're invited to learn from journalist and author Joseph Lee as he chats online with us about his stirring memoir.

Virtual Author Talk with Amanda Peters

Thursday, Nov. 13th 7pm

Join us in an online conversation with acclaimed writer Amanda Peters as we discuss her instant bestselling novel, The Berry Pickers, as well as her tender short fiction collection.

Virtual Author Talk with Charles Duhigg

Tuesday, Nov. 18th 2pm

Charles Duhigg, author of the bestselling books The Power of Habit and Smarter Faster Better, presents the ultimate guide on how to communicate and connect with anyone at work, home, and in life in his latest work.

HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

The Friends of the Mountainside Library will hold its annual Holiday Boutique November 12 through November 15, 2025. Gently used Christmas and Hanukkah decorations and gifts will be for sale. This is a wonderful opportunity to do your holiday shopping locally. If you have any items you wish to donate, please place them in the container right inside the library front door. All monies raised will be used to enhance your library programs and collections. If you have questions, please call the library at (908)233-0115 or contact the Friends of the Library at FOLmountainside@gmail.com.

Holiday Boutique schedule is as follows:

November 12...12 noon-5:30 pm

November 13...12 noon-7:30pm

November 14...10am-4:30pm

November 15...10 am-4:30 pm

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