

CRANFORD MONTHLY_{NJ}

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YOUTH CROSS COUNTRY TEAM SETS NEW RECORDS

The Cranford Youth Cross Country team capped a banner third season with record growth, strong finishes, and standout performances at both league and state championships.

This fall, the program featured 96 runners ages 6-14 — more than half new to the team — and celebrated an impressive 198 personal bests. Training twice a week and competing on Sundays, the Cougars continued to develop as one of New Jersey’s most promising youth distance programs.

At the Lakeland League Championships on October 25, Cranford delivered its best overall results yet. The Boys 8-and-Under team finished third, the Girls 9-and-10 team placed fourth, the Boys 11-and-12 team also took fourth, and the Boys 13-and-14 squad came just five points shy of first place.

The team carried that momentum into the USATF New Jersey State Championships on November 2, where several athletes qualified for Regionals in Pittsburgh.

In the Boys 8-and-Under 2000-meter race, Jude Planer placed seventh with a time of 9:26, and Maxwell Johnson finished tenth in 9:31. Additional strong performances came from Ryan Fidlow (31st, 11:31), Adam Van Dyk (44th, 12:10), Colin Van Dyk (45th, 12:11), Ryan Fortus (46th, 12:12), Ashley Wojcik (40th, 13:15), Marco Sojka (19th, 15:21), and James Donovan (22nd, 15:55).

The program is supported by coaches Chris Hooper, Becky Planer, Michael Solebello, Steve Streicher, and Justin Van Dyk, along with volunteers from the Cranford High School team.

The group now looks ahead to Cranford Youth Track & Field, open to athletes ages 6-15 this spring, featuring shot put, long jump, and a variety of track events. For more information, visit www.CranfordTrack.com.



Courtesy Photos

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“The athletes trained hard, supported one another, and represented Cranford with pride. The goal isn’t to be perfect, but to get incrementally better - as an athlete and a person - every single day.”
- Head Coach Tim Styler

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NEW JERSEY DAR SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

COUNTDOWN TO JULY 4TH, 2026

In New Jersey, RevolutionNJ.org has been set up and is a partnership between the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), a division of the New Jersey Department of State, and the nonprofit Crossroads of the American Revolution Association to plan the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in New Jersey.

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TOY DRIVE - DEC 14TH

Cranford PBA Local #52

We're excited to announce our Annual PBA Toy Drive in memory of Honorary Officer Ray Schwartz will be held on Sunday, December 14th from 9:30am-3pm at Rear of Cranford Police Station, 8 Springfield Avenue, Cranford NJ.

Please consider dropping off a new, unwrapped toy to support local children and families this holiday season. Your generosity truly makes a difference.

NEW JERSEY FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

Return of the 3 Holiday Tenors

 **SAT, Dec 6 at 7:00 pm**
The Presbyterian Church, Westfield

 **SUN, Dec 7 at 3:00 pm**
Drew University, Madison

Renowned tenor fare, holiday classics, and winter-time favorites guaranteed to make the season merry.

BROADWAY THROUGH THE AGES

WED, Dec 31 at 5:00 **THURS, Jan 1 at 2:30**
Westfield High School Sieminski Theater



www.NJFestivalOrchestra.org | (908) 232-9400

ENROLLING IN MEDICARE AND UPDATING YOUR PLAN

By George Sosa, President, The Sosa Insurance Group

Turning 65 marks eligibility for Medicare, a federal health insurance program designed for seniors and certain individuals with disabilities. While the system can be complex, resources are available to help beneficiaries navigate enrollment, updates, and plan changes to ensure their coverage continues to meet their needs.

Original Medicare consists of Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (medical insurance). Part A covers hospital stays, skilled nursing facilities, home health, and hospice care. Part B focuses on outpatient care, doctor visits, preventive screenings, and therapies. While comprehensive, Original Medicare leaves gaps in coverage, which can be supplemented through Medigap policies. These help with deductibles, co-pays, and sometimes foreign travel coverage, offering flexibility and predictability.

Medicare Advantage (Part C), offered by private insurers, combines Parts A and B and often includes additional benefits like vision, dental, hearing, fitness programs, and lower premiums. These plans have out-of-pocket maximums, but often require use of in-network providers.

Prescription drug coverage (Part D) is also offered through private plans. Each plan has a formulary outlining covered medications, cost-sharing structures, and potential coverage gaps, though assistance programs like "Extra Help" exist for those with limited income. New Jersey also provides state assistance through PAAD and Senior Gold to help seniors manage prescription

drug costs.

For higher-income beneficiaries, Medicare applies IRMAA (Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount), which adds extra costs to Part B and D premiums based on IRS tax information.

Enrollment timing is crucial. While some may delay enrollment due to employer coverage, late enrollment penalties apply if coverage lapses without creditable insurance.

Every year, Medicare beneficiaries have an opportunity to review and adjust their coverage. The Annual Enrollment Period (October 15 – December 7) allows switching between Original Medicare and Advantage plans, adding or changing drug plans, or returning to Original Medicare. Any changes take effect January 1. Additionally, the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment (January 1 – March 31) allows those in Advantage plans to switch or return to Original Medicare.

When evaluating options, beneficiaries should consider cost, provider networks, additional benefits, drug coverage, and changes in their health or medications.

Understanding Medicare is the first step to making the best decisions for your health and budget. If you'd like help comparing plans or reviewing your coverage for 2026, The Sosa Insurance Group is here to guide you every step of the way. Contact us at 973-902-5445 to schedule a one-on-one review about your Medicare choices.

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The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is the time when Medicare beneficiaries can choose to re-evaluate their health care coverage. Getting Medicare or changing Medicare plans is a major milestone.

We specialize in Medicare Supplement, also known as Medigap, Medicare Advantage, Medicare and Medicaid and Stand-Alone Part D Prescription. We provide prospective clients with phone, virtual and face-to-face appointments to assist in navigating all your Medicare options:

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- Enroll in a Prescription Drug Plan or change your Prescription Drug Plan.
- If you're new to Medicare, you might have a different election period; reach out to us to review your options.

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The Sosa Insurance group is dedicated to assisting Medicare beneficiaries throughout their Medicare journey.

If you, parents or a loved one is new to Medicare, considering a change or just simply want to review their plan options, please call 973-902-5445 to speak with one of our expert agents. You can also reach us by email at info@thesosainsurancegroup.com to request a quote. Consultations are free of charge.



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George A. Sosa Jr.
President



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AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS AT THE NITSCHKE HOUSE

Kenilworth Historical Society

During a Sunday, Dec. 7 (12-4 p.m.) Holiday Celebration Featuring "An Old-Fashioned Christmas" at the Oswald J. Nitschke House (49 S. 21 Street), visitors will have an opportunity to meet and take photos with Santa from Victorian times, tour the c. 1880 home authentically decorated for the holidays, view exhibits, enjoy favorite holiday tunes sung by the Christmas Matters Holiday Carolers (dressed in Dickens-style attire) and visit the site's Christkindlmarkt featuring handcrafted items, baked goods and other holiday treats.

Tours will be offered in English and Spanish. The Kenilworth Education Association PEP Committee is generously sponsoring the carolers' performance.

Admission to the Dec. 7 event is free.

Visitors are invited to bring, for the Nitschke House Cultural Heritage Tree, an ornament labeled with their family name and heritage. Shown here from last year's holiday celebration are Victorian Santa and Kenilworth Historical Society vice president, Fran Day, together with the Christmas Matters Carolers. Also shown is Santa with Kenilworth Historical Society volunteers and some of the many children who visited. Further details about this year's celebration and other events will be posted on Facebook.

Courtesy Photo



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CRANFORD HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR NEWS

Cranford Public Schools

Four Cranford High School students were selected and performed in the 2025 New Jersey All-State Mixed Chorus this November. Congratulations to Christopher Uglialoro, Marie Oliver, Jack Heyder, and Aaron Rogers who were selected to sing alongside 300 of New Jersey's top high school vocalists. Christopher earned additional recognition as the third-ranked singer in his section statewide.

The students rehearsed and performed under the direction of Dr. Kimberly Dunn Adams, Director of Choral Activities at West Chester University.

The choir appeared at the NJMEA Teachers Convention on November 7th in Atlantic City and again at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center on November 16th.

All four Cranford students are members of the CHS Choirs and were sponsored by Choir Director Anthony Rafaniello.

The students are commended for their great achievement and for representing Cranford at the state level.



(above, l-r) Christopher Uglialoro (grade 12), Marie Oliver (grade 11), Jack Heyder (grade 11), and Aaron Rogers (grade 11)

Courtesy Photo

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ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPERA SPECTACULAR - DEC 7

December 7, 2025, 3:00 PM - Celebrate the magic of the season as Opera at Florham presents its beloved Annual Holiday Spectacular at St. Margaret of Scotland Church, 6 Sussex Avenue, Morristown, NJ.

After an incredible turnout at our recent Due Soprani e Un Tenore concert, you've GOT to get your tickets for the December 7th Holiday Spectacular! This concert will be held at St. Margaret of Scotland Church in Morristown, which offers FREE PARKING and plenty of room in the beautiful sanctuary—so gather your friends and family for an afternoon of festive music and joy.

Whether you're a lifelong Opera lover or discovering Opera at Florham for the first time, this delightful performance captures the spirit of the holidays through music that transcends generations. From beloved Arias to familiar seasonal melodies, the Holiday Spectacular is a joyful celebration of artistry and community -

perfect for audiences of all ages. Opera at Florham's Holiday Spectacular is more than a concert—it's a heartwarming experience that has become a highlight of the holiday season across New Jersey. Each year, this festive performance transforms St. Margaret of Scotland Church into a winter wonderland of music, where world-class voices and live accompaniment inspire wonder and joy.

Expect to be swept away by the power of the human voice, the beauty of timeless melodies, and the spirit of togetherness that defines this special time of year. Whether you come to be uplifted, share the magic with family and friends, or simply savor the music of the season, the Holiday Spectacular is a gift you'll remember long after the final note.

Tickets are \$30 for general admission, with student discounts available. For tickets and more information, please visit operaatflorham.org. Purchase in advance on line or at the door.

Cranford Elks #2006
HOOP SHOOT
Free Throw Competition




FREE TO COMPETE!

Sunday, December 7th, 2025
Cranford Recreation Center
375 Centennial Ave, Cranford, NJ 07016
Open to boys and girls ages 8-13 (as of April 1, 2026)
Parking available in the pool lot
Water provided for all contestants
Awards will be presented immediately after each age group


Event Schedule:
Ages 8-9: Registration 9:30 AM | Start 10:00 AM
Ages 10-11: Registration 10:30 AM | Start 11:00 AM
Ages 12-13: Registration 11:30 AM | Start 12:00 PM

SCAN TO PRE-REGISTER:


Questions? Contact John Smith at 908-400-4708 or cranfordelkshs@gmail.com



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'HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS' HOUSE TOUR - DEC. 7TH

The Cranford Woman's Club warmly invites you to join us for our annual 'Home for the Holidays' house tour, running on Sunday, December 7th from 12 to 4 p.m. Enjoy the day with friends as you tour six of Cranford's most beautiful and iconic homes, showcasing restoration, renovation, and innovation, dating from 1902 to 2024.

All the homes will be magnificently decorated for the holidays and will feature stunning displays from the Garden Club of Cranford, the Green Thumb Garden Club, and the Floraphile Garden Club, along with beautiful holiday arrangements donated by Rekemiers, Donato's, Christoffers, Lidios, and the Cranford Florist.

Live music by the CHS Madrigals, along with a harpist, will fill the air with joyful holiday classics and get us ready for the spirit of the season!

This year's tickets will also include a special

little gift at each home commemorating our theme 'From the Heart of Cranford' as a special heartfelt keepsake. Tickets, remaining at \$50, will be available at Zeffy.com starting on November 15th and will also be available at the Cranford Library, Augusta Mae, Hickory & Hill, Periwinkles, and The Curious Heart; please note that payment by cash or check will only be accepted. Tickets are rain or shine, and for 12 years old and up, limited to 400 participants, so

don't hesitate, as they have sold out in the past. Our house tour is one of our biggest fundraisers, and we appreciate your support; last year, we were able to donate over \$35,000 back to our community, which included Cranford Family Care, Bosom Buddies, and Project Home. We truly believe this is the start of the season, and we hope you will continue to, or start, the tradition of making memories 'From the heart of Cranford' on this special day with us.

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Cranford Area Chamber of Commerce Holiday Events

Saturday, December 13

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Cranford Knights of Columbus

On Sunday, November 9th, the Cranford Knights of Columbus Council #6226 made a ceremonial check presentation to Post Commander Mike Gregory at the Cranford VFW Post 335 annual Veteran's Day Breakfast held at the Post.

The Council donated \$5,000 from the proceeds

of our Annual Golf held in September at the Galloping Hill Golf Course in Kenilworth, NJ.

We would like to thank all of the local businesses and organizations for their help and support that continues to make this worthy event a success every year.

Since its inception in 2004, the Council's Annual Golf Outing has raised over \$400,000,

which has been used to help worthy charities and organizations that the Council supports on an annual basis. Pictured in the check presentation photo from the left are Brother Knights Rich Leahey and Ed Bagniewski, Post Commander Mike Gregory, Past Grand Knights John Doolan and Jerry Conheeney and Brother Knights Paul Zissler and Rick Ferraioli.

Since the Council's founding in 1970, the Cranford Knights of Columbus is a Catholic Men's Fraternal Organization dedicated to our four core principles, Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. The Cranford Council supports many worthy charities and civic causes and is committed to be a viable part of our community nationally, statewide and locally. For information about joining the Cranford Council, please contact our Grand Knight Tom Turner at 908-884-4083 or visit our web site, cranfordknights.org.



(above) The Cranford Knights of Columbus Council #6226 made a ceremonial check presentation to Post Commander Mike Gregory at the Cranford VFW Post 335 annual Veteran's Day Breakfast held at the Post.

Courtesy Photo

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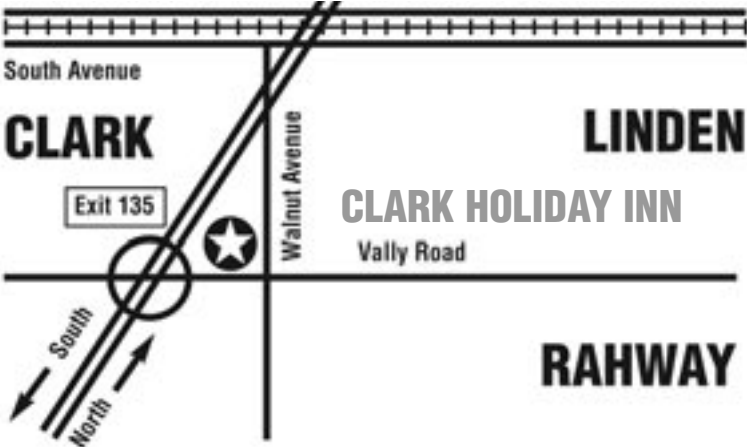




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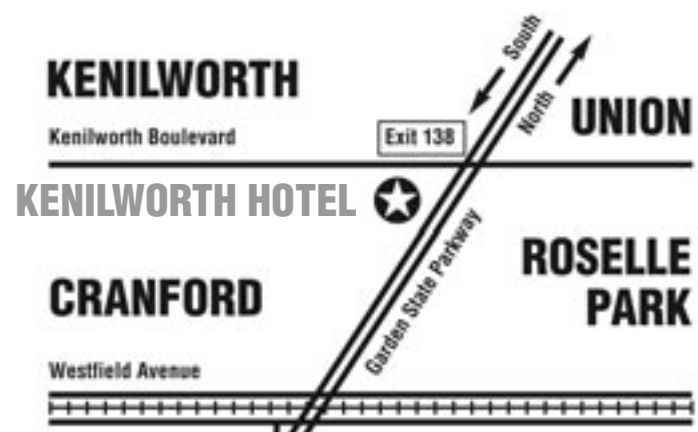


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ANNUAL PINK GALA CELEBRATES MILESTONE

Bosom Buddies of NJ, with its roots in Cranford, supports our neighbors affected by cancer through meaningful gestures and assistance that bring comfort, hope and a sense of community during challenging times. A memorable milestone was marked on October 23rd with our 5th Annual Pink Gala, held at the beautiful Shackamaxon Country Club in Scotch Plains. Led by executive board members Amy DiPaolo, Kristen Strobel, Kelly Sommers, Paula Perreault, and Laura Gussis, the nonprofit welcomed 275 guests highlighting the community's support for the mission.

Eleven local high school volunteers supported the event, assisting with guest check-in, raffle tables, and the ever-popular tricky tray - featuring 85 beautifully baskets and a lively 50/50 raffle.

Proceeds from the gala will fund comfort baskets for local families navigating cancer diagnoses and provide scholarships that give back to the community.

Reach out to the Bosom Buddies via Facebook:
Bosom Buddies of New Jersey



Event Photoatgraphers: Andrew Feldman and Frankie Novick

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Romance Readers Book Club—Monday

December 1, at 7pm

Join us for our Romance Readers Book Club. Today's book is "Voices in the Snow" by Darcy Coates. If you don't want to read that book, or for some reason can't find a copy, feel free to come anyway to discuss whichever romance you've recently read.

Movie Night

Wednesday, December 3, at 7pm

Join us the first Wednesday of the month for a screening of a recently released DVD! Please visit our website or contact the library for film titles.

Junk Journaling

Thursday, December 4, at 6:30pm

Join us at our new monthly program to create and add to your very own junk journal! Please visit our website for more information.

Cookbook Club Cookie Swap

Saturday, December 6, at 2pm

Join us for the Cookbook Club's annual cookie swap! Spots are limited so there will be enough cookies for everyone. Please visit the library website to register.

International Film

Monday, December 8, at 12:30pm and 7pm

Join us for an International film screening. The same film will be shown at 12:30pm and 7pm.

Please contact the library for the film title.

Please note the new start time for the afternoon showing.

Adults Create

Tuesday, December 9, at 7pm

Join us the second Tuesday of the month for crafts! All supplies will be provided! Space is limited; please visit our website to register and for more information about this month's craft.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library.

Lit Café

Saturday, December 13, at 10:15am

Literary Café is a book chat program. The format is simple: Bring a few of your recent favorite books and tell the other members of the group what you like about them. There is no required reading, and you will have the opportunity to learn about books recommended by other group members. Admission is free and all are welcome. Light refreshments provided by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library. Attend in person or on Zoom (contact library for link). Lit Café will meet Fridays in the Summer and return to Saturdays in the Fall.

Books and (Coffee Brew)

Monday, December 15, at 2pm and 7pm

Join us for our monthly book discussion at The Morning Roast! Visit our website for book titles and more information. Coffee and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase.

Vince Guaraldi: The Man Behind "Peanuts"

December 16, at 7pm

Celebrate the holiday season with this educational concert/lecture about the music of Vince Guaraldi, the man behind the music of the Peanuts special!. We'll have singing, dancing, volunteers sitting in with the trio, and more! Presented by Patrick Kerksen. Sponsored by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library.

Wednesday Morning Adult Craft

Wednesday, December 17, at 10am

Join us for crafts! Visit our website to register and for more information about this month's craft. Sponsored by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library.

Readers' Forum Book Club

Monday, December 22, at 7pm

All are welcome to join this book club!

Additional copies are available at the Circulation Desk. This month's book is Small Things Like These by Claire Keegan (2021)

PEARL HARBOR DAY SERVICES – DEC. 7TH

On Sunday, December 7th at 9:00 a.m., Cranford VFW Post #335 will hold their annual outdoor Memorial Service in remembrance of the attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941 which ignited the beginning of World War II.

This service is open to the public and will be held at the VFW Post Memorial Home at 479 South Ave. E. in Cranford. The program will last approximately a half hour. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be moved indoors at the Post. After the service a buffet breakfast will be served in the hall upstairs.

Featured at the service will be the VFW Color Guard, and a bugler to solemnly play taps, as well as a taped recorded playing of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's famous "date which will live in infamy" radio address. For additional info, please call 908-482-0132 or visit the Post website at vfw335.org.



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4 Units	3.25"x8" or 6.5"x4"	240	560	900	1000	1300	1600	1700	1800	1900	2000	2100
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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FREE DECEMBER ZOOM SERIES - ‘OBJECTS OF SURVIVAL: MATERIAL CULTURE AND HOLOCAUST MEMORY’

Dr. Angela West, adjunct professor in Drew University’s Holocaust Studies Department, will present a free two-part Zoom series, titled “Objects of Survival: Material Culture and Holocaust Memory,” on Thursdays, Dec. 4 and 11, at 1 p.m. via Zoom.

The series, sponsored by National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), West Morris Section and coordinated by the Our Jewish World program, will offer a singular look at how Holocaust captives remained emotionally strong and survived during this most unimaginable of times through “material objects”--items they created, preserved, or stole from World War II Germany.

Our Jewish World is coordinated by Melanie Levitan and Ilene Dorf Manahan, both of Morristown.

Dr. West will focus on a variety of objects that have since served as powerful tools for uncovering and interpreting Holocaust history. Some of the donated historical items have connections to Morris County community members and their experiences.

“The tactile and deep human connection to objects and artifacts tells of individuals’ lives and communal experiences during World War II and offers powerful insights into the history of the Holocaust,” Dr. West explains. “In the ghettos, concentration camps, and places of hiding, both women and men crafted and saved meaningful items that preserved memories, expressed identity, and sustained their spiritual life under impossible conditions.”

In the first session, on Dec. 4, Dr. West will review the kind of stories that objects represent about resilience, survival and resistance, and the role such items--that is, the “material culture” created, saved or hidden in ghettos, camps or secret places--now play in helping future generations remember the past. Through the use of such deeply personal artifacts as a prisoner’s uniform, handmade art from Bergen-Belsen, and a saved trapped door, Dr. West will make it clear

how physical objects can preserve memory and offer new ways of connecting to individuals’ stories during times of extremity.

In the second session, on Dec. 11, the speaker will turn to the end of World War II and the liberation of the concentration camps, which marked a turning point, but not an end for Holocaust survivors. In the years that followed, many remained in displaced persons (DP) camps, navigating the challenges of uncertainty while beginning to rebuild their lives. Dr. West will share survivors’ testimonies from this complex postwar period through the lens of material culture and will include objects that accompanied individuals on their journeys--items that continued to be material witnesses to resilience, identity, and renewal in their postwar lives and offer powerful insights into how people chose to carry memory and reclaim agency in the aftermath of the Holocaust.

Dr. West emphasizes, “Understanding this ‘material culture’ is particularly helpful to know, especially as the survivor generation continues to shrink and soon the tactile ‘things’ will be all that remain.”

Besides teaching at Drew University, the speaker is also a consulting historian, museum curator, and currently the manager of the Holocaust Remembrance Center at Temple Sinai in Summit. Her recent exhibit documents the stories of child survivors of the Holocaust who now reside in New Jersey. Dr. West is dedicated to advancing public understanding of the Holocaust, far-right extremism, and its implications for contemporary society.

NCJW confronts today’s most urgent social and economic challenges facing women, children and families. Powered by the Jewish imperative to ensure dignity for all, we impact policy, advocate for justice, and support the community. Together our voices make a meaningful difference in the world.

Preregistration is required for this series. Register by e-mailing iadpr@aol.com.



(above) Dr. Angela West, adjunct professor in Drew University’s Holocaust Studies Department, will present a free two-part Zoom series, titled “Objects of Survival: Material Culture and Holocaust Memory,” on Thursdays, Dec. 4 and 11, at 1 p.m. via Zoom. Register by e-mailing iadpr@aol.com.

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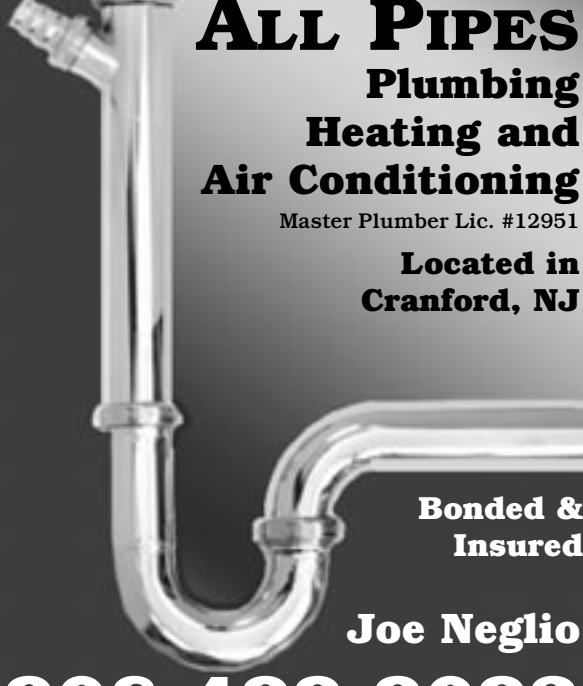
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