

Short Hills MILLBURN MONTHLY

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STUDENT CHESS TOURNAMENT IN LIBRARY'S NEW AUDITORIUM

On December 6, children from Millburn and neighboring towns gathered on the second floor of the Millburn Library to compete in the Friends of the Millburn Library's annual chess tournament, started by Michael Wojcio in 1981.

The Friends did another great job led by Dorothy Kelly with aid from Ruthie Binder, Sapna Gupta, Mindy Pilgar, Lori and Ashley King.

The tournament drew 40 contestants and was divided into three age group sections. There were 11 students competing in Section One. The competition for first and second place was close. After a playoff, first grader Anvay Sharma from South Mountain School won first place. Jonathan Li, a second grader from Deerfield School, drew with Anvay in round four for 3 1/2 points to capture second place. First grader Sam Colin from Wyoming School scored 3 of 4, only losing to Jonathan, to finish in third place. Max Tamaroff, a second grader from Deerfield scored 2 1/2-1 1/2 to come in fourth place.

Section Two had 16 entries. Logan Zipkin, a fifth grader from Collins Elementary School in Livingston, dominated by winning all four games for first place. Bruce Liu, a fifth grader from Washington School, won the playoff for second place. Third place went to third grader Rian Timbadia from Hartshorn School. Honorable mention, 2 1/2 of 4, went to Ayaan Sharma, a fourth grader from Mt. Prospect Elementary School in Basking Ridge, Aadya Verma, a third grader from South Mountain School, Nikita Dias, a fourth grader from Hartshorn School, Onel Adhseesha Manoratne, a fifth grader from Washington School and Luke Chen, a fifth grader from Salt Brook Elementary School in New Providence. All earned trophies.

Section Three was the most interesting section as most of the 13 entries were from Millburn Middle School. This section was led by eighth grader Ayansh Ahluwalia who had not lost a game in the Millburn Library Tournament in over six years. Second place was captured by Arin Telang, a seventh grader from MMS. Marcelo Navas, a sixth grader from MMS, captured third place with 3 out of 4, only losing to Eshan in



Winners of groups 2 and 3 (8-10 year olds & 11-14 year olds) with Scott and helpers. Back Row (L to R): Max Lin, Scott Massey, Eshan G., Ayansh Ahluwalia and Anish Pathak. Students pictured are: (Front Row :L to R) Nikita Dias, Aadya Verma, Rian Timbadia, Bruce Li, Marcelo Navas, Logan Zipkin and Onel Adhseesha Manoratne



(above left) Winners from group 2 (8-10) year olds. (front row: l-r): Aadya Verma, Rian Timbadia, Logan Zipkin, Bruce Li, Nikita Dias; (back row: L-R): Onel Adhseesha Manoratne, Scott Massey, and Aayan Sharma. Winners of group 1 (5-7 year olds). (above, right, l-r): Reynash Arya, Max Tamaroff, Anyav Sharma and Sam Colin.

round three. Avansh was fourth place.

Master Scott Massey, who teaches the Saturday afternoon classes at the Millburn Library, directed the event. Max Lin and Anish Pathak provided much needed help during and after the tournament.



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Short Hills NJ MILLBURN MONTHLY

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NJ YOUTH CHORUS TO HOLD AUDITIONS

The New Jersey Youth Chorus (NJYC), a program of Wharton Arts, will hold mid-year auditions for select ensembles in January 2026 for singers in grades 3–12. Auditions provide young vocalists with the opportunity to join a vibrant choral community rooted in musical excellence, collaboration, and belonging. To register for an audition for NJYC's Primo Coro, Cor Amici, Sola Voce, and Camerata, visit NJYC.org.

Throughout the season, NJYC choristers participate in exceptional performance and educational opportunities at the local, regional, and national levels. Highlights this season include:

- Life of Song Festival in Washington, DC, for Sola Voce and Cor Amici
- "The Vocal Edge" Middle School Boys Festival
- "Together We Sing" Festival for Primo Coro
- Collaboration with the Maplewood Glee Club for Camerata
- Performance of the National Anthem for the New York Mets, featuring all NJYC choirs
- Choral Festival at Carnegie Hall for Camerata
- Sing a Mile High Festival in Denver, Colorado, for Sola Voce and Cor Amici

For more information, call (973) 998-5670 or email info@njyc.org.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing

arts education center serving nearly 2,000 students through a range of classes and ensembles. The 5 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Chorus, an auditioned choral ensemble program for students in grades 3–12, encourage a love and appreciation of choral music while nurturing personal growth and creative development. The 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony, which serve over 500 students in grades 3–12 by audition, inspire young people to achieve musical excellence through high-level ensemble training and performance opportunities. Based in Paterson, the Paterson Music Project is an El Sistema-inspired program of Wharton Arts that uses music education as a vehicle for social action by empowering and inspiring young people to achieve their full potential through the community experience of ensemble learning and playing. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable our students to achieve their personal best.



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COMMUNITY INVITED TO SUBURBAN CHIROPRACTIC OPEN HOUSE - JAN 8

The Suburban Chiropractic Center, located at 301 Main Street in Chatham, New Jersey will be celebrating 41 years in practice with an Open House on January 8, 2026. The public is invited to stop by and enjoy refreshments and fellowship. Community service is an integral part of the

practice and Dr. Murphy would like to thank his patients, as well as the local community for another successful year.

Dr. Joseph J. Murphy began the center in 1985 to offer the community a natural alternative to the traditional allopathic medical facilities in the Chatham area. They owe their success to the loyal patients who have continued with them, referred their friends and family, and their efforts to provide the highest level of service possible.

Dr. Murphy has a record of supporting the local first responders, police, fire, and emergency squad. He also focused on supporting student programs including being an advisor to the Kiwanis Club's Chatham High School Key Club. Dr. Murphy has been a member of the Chatham/Madison Kiwanis Club for over 40 years, offering his services to all their events

including being a guest speaker. He especially enjoys the Summer Hot Dog & Ice Cream social for the Chatham Library children. He can be found volunteering at Chatham schools during their Teacher's Wellness Day events and is a supporter of the Chatham Education Foundation and Sports Foundation. For 25 years Dr. Murphy has served on the Board of Trustees of ECLC in Chatham, a school for special needs students, including a stint as Board President. He was a consistent participant in over 23 Fishawack events and is a sponsor of Bottle Hill Day in Madison. He is a member of the Madison Elks BPOE 1465 and Chatham Chamber of Commerce, where he has served as President.

You can find out much more about the Suburban Chiropractic Center by visiting their website at drmurphy.com.



(above) Dr. Joseph Murphy has been a member of Kiwanis Club for over 35 years.

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HICKORY TREE CHORUS INVITES ACAPPELLA SINGERS TO OPEN AUDITIONS

The award-winning Hickory Tree Chorus is calling singers in the soprano, alto, and contralto ranges to join their harmonious sisterhood!

Performing in communities throughout northern and central New Jersey, the chorus enjoys singing recognizable popular songs - arranged in rich four-part harmony.

Fresh off their top-scoring performance at the 2025 Sweet Adelines Region 15 competition, the

chorus has earned a coveted spot in the Harmony Classic at the 78th Annual Sweet Adelines International Competition in Columbus, Ohio, October 2026. Now, they're building their sound for the world stage.

Open auditions will be held in Stirling between 6:30-7:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings in January 2026 and take less than 10 minutes (flexible scheduling is available). Singers are

asked to perform a brief acappella song of their choice. No experience required, just a love of singing and a desire to grow.

This is more than a chorus—it's a sisterhood, a mission, and a moment. Will your voice be part of it?

For details and to schedule your audition, email us at info@hickorytreechorus.org or call 908-377-1399.



(above) The award-winning Hickory Tree Chorus invites you to join the sisterhood. For details and to schedule your audition, email us at info@hickorytreechorus.org or call 908-377-1399.

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WHARTON PAS ANNOUNCES NEW LOCATION FOR SUMMER CAMPS

The Wharton Performing Arts School (PAS) is pleased to announce that all 2026 Summer Camps will take place at a new location: 570 Central Avenue in New Providence—the home of the New Jersey Youth Chorus and New Jersey Youth Symphony. Bringing PAS summer programming to this site allows Wharton Arts to host all camps under one roof and create a unified, convenient experience for its student families.

"We're excited to welcome our summer campers to a new home this year," said PAS Director Debra Joyal. "This location supports our commitment to providing a fun, engaging, and inspiring summer for every student."

Said Wharton Arts Artistic Director & Principal Conductor Helen H. Cha-Pyo, "As we bring our Performing Arts School summer camps to New Providence, families can rest assured that the same exceptional instruction and nurturing environment they've come to expect will continue without interruption. Our New Jersey Youth Symphony orchestral, double reed, and chamber music camps will remain in the New Providence location as always. Looking ahead, we're excited by the possibilities of uniting all Wharton Arts summer programs under one roof creating a vibrant, cross-disciplinary summer experience where young performers can learn, grow, and be inspired together."

Wharton Arts' 2026 summer camps feature programs in music, drama, and musical theater for students of various ages and experience levels. Registration is now open online. For more information and complete summer camp listing, visit WhartonArts.org.

The Wharton Performing Arts School (PAS) is proud to be part of Wharton Arts, New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center, serving nearly 2,000 students each year through a wide range of programs. PAS has been nurturing artistic excellence and creativity in the community for 40 years. Offering programs in music and performing arts, the school empowers students to develop their talents, confidence, and lifelong appreciation for the arts.

Wharton Arts' mission is to offer accessible,

high quality performing arts education that sparks personal growth and builds inclusive communities.

Wharton Arts' vision is for a transformative performing arts education in an inclusive community to be accessible for everyone.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center serving nearly 2,000 students through a range of classes and ensembles. The 5 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Chorus, an auditioned choral ensemble program for students in grades 3–12, encourage a love and appreciation of choral music while nurturing personal growth and creative development. The 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony, which serve over 500 students in grades 3–12 by audition, inspire young people to achieve musical excellence through high-level ensemble training and performance opportunities. Based in Paterson, the Paterson Music Project is an El Sistema-

inspired program of Wharton Arts that uses music education as a vehicle for social action by empowering and inspiring young people to achieve their full potential through the community experience of ensemble learning and playing. From Pathways classes for young children to Lifelong Learning programs for adults, the Wharton Performing Arts School has a robust musical theater and drama program and offers both private and group classes for instruments and voice for all ages and all abilities. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained.



(above) PAS is pleased to announce that all 2026 Summer Camps will take place at a new location: 570 Central Avenue in New Providence.

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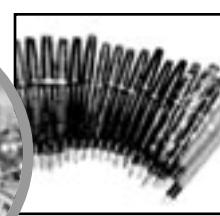
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All programs, classes, events and concerts are accessible ensuring that everyone can participate in a diverse range of arts programming and classes.



CHESS IN MILLBURN ACADEMY DOMINATES STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

In a stunning display of strategy and mental fortitude, Chess in Millburn Academy students cemented their reputation as a state powerhouse at the NJ Brookdale K-12 Scholastic Championship on November 23, 2025. Facing stiff competition from across New Jersey, the Chess in Millburn Academy students brought home a remarkable haul of individual and team trophies, headlined by a first-place finish in the Kindergarten division and multiple team championships.

The tournament, a premier event on the New Jersey scholastic chess calendar, saw Chess in Millburn Academy students securing top positions across various grade levels. Coach Gensay and Bilgen, who are the head coaches of the academy, are proud of the students' success.

INDIVIDUAL BRILLIANCE

The day's crowning individual achievement belonged to Academy student Ethan Su, who captured 1st Place in the Kindergarten section. Su's performance was flawless, securing not only the individual gold but also securing the 1st Place Team award for his division single-handedly.

Another standout performance came from Kabir Bhatia in the 4th Grade section. Bhatia finished in 4th Place, but the story of the day was his meteoric rise; he achieved a staggering 400-point increase in his chess rating during the tournament, a testament to the rapid improvement fostered by Coach Gensay and Bilgen's training.

The Academy saw several other students crack the prestigious Top 10 in their respective divisions:

- Bryce Lin took 8th place (tied for 4th) in the 2nd Grade.
- Riyom Dhamjia finished 10th (tied for 8th) in the 2nd Grade.
- Max Liu secured 6th place in the 4th Grade.
- Raymond Ouyang earned 6th place in the 6th Grade.

DEERFIELD DOMINATE IN TEAMS

The depth of talent at Chess in Millburn Academy was perhaps most visible in the team standings. Academy students representing Deerfield Elementary School proved to be an unstoppable force, taking home 1st Place trophies in both the 2nd Grade and 4th Grade team competitions, as well as a strong 3rd Place finish in the 3rd Grade division. Coaches have been training the Deerfield Elementary Team for 3 years now.

Success was widespread across other grades as well. Krish Muthuraman led the charge for the 5th Grade, securing a 1st Place team finish. In the middle school divisions, the duo of Nikoloz Maglakelidze and Arushi Bindal combined to win 1st Place for the 7th Grade team. The 6th Grade saw a double victory, with Mehreen Kainth and Ayaan Agarwall taking 2nd Place, followed closely by fellow Academy student Raymond Ouyang helping secure 3rd Place.

A RISING TIDE OF TALENT

Beyond the trophy winners, dozens of Chess in Millburn Academy students earned Honorable Mentions, showcasing the program's deep bench of talent. Notable performances included strong showings from Theodore Wang and Jay Arora in 1st Grade, Mason McCutcheon in 2nd Grade, and Anny Chen in 8th Grade, among many others who finished in the top tiers of their sections.

ABOUT CHESS IN MILLBURN

Chess in Millburn Academy offers in-person and online courses designed to foster critical thinking and a love for the game in students of all ages. For more information on upcoming tournaments and classes, visit www.chessinmillburn.com.



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CARING KIDS 2025 HOLIDAY GIFT DRIVE

Hartshorn School was hopping as families from Millburn and beyond gathered on Saturday, December 13, 2025 to wrap gifts, make cards and enjoy chocolate dipping at the Caring Kids Holiday Party. This was no ordinary seasonal fest. The party was the culminating event of Caring Kids Holiday Gift Drive, an initiative begun by Sharon Cohen and Kim Moore 15 years ago, in which they donate toys and gift cards to students and their families at the New Jersey Regional Day School in Newark and the

Center for Autism. Every child in the school has significant special needs. Additionally, almost all families deal with incredible financial hardships and food insecurity.

The real mastermind behind the drive is Sharon Cohen, who is a master at juggling spreadsheets and producing humorous videos to ensure that each child's needs are met. "These are individuals who likely will not receive any gifts during the holidays. If I can bring just a little bit of joy into their lives at this time of year, then I am happy," explained Cohen.

"This is truly a community-wide effort," noted Millburn Township Director of the Caring Kids Educational Program Dorothy Kelly. "The Middle School Peer Leaders and the High School Key Club played an active role in spreading the

word and getting donations. All the elementary schools pitched in and we also received tremendous support from the Township."

The results spoke for themselves. During the 2025 drive, Caring Kids received more than 1,000 gifts for 300 students. They also collected \$10,000 in Shop Rite and Walmart gift cards to help their families purchase food and other essentials.

The final piece of the Caring Kids Holiday puzzle came on Thursday, December 18, when Cohen and Moore loaded up all the goodies in up a U-Haul truck and delivered them to the school in Newark. "This is the best part of the season for me," said Cohen. "Every year, I am grateful for the generosity of our community, who come together to pull this off."



(above) Millburn Middle School Peer Leaders Minna Kelly and Juliet Kobos Wrapping a Gift



(above) Elementary School Aged Party-Goers posing with wrapped gifts and chocolatey smiles



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Do you consider yourself Spiritual? Are you Curious about what people are talking about when they speak of having faith or being spiritual? Are you Seeking peace of mind, of heart of soul?

Come and see for yourself. Come and explore the Christian faith. Come and discuss with other seekers what is on your mind, what you cannot talk about except with other seekers. Come to an Alpha gathering.

Alpha is for everybody that wants to discuss seeking answers to life's big questions. Why are we here? Is this all there is to life? Where are we going? How do I attain peace of mind, heart, and soul? Whether you are young or old, have faith or are atheist or agnostic, Alpha provides a safe environment for exploring our big questions about life.

We begin by sharing a meal together and getting to know each other. We watch a video together then break into small groups for uninhibited discussion about what is on our minds.

The series runs for 12 weeks on Monday nights beginning at 7:30 p.m. and ending at 9:00 p.m. It will begin February 2nd, 2026, and end May 4th, 2026. Five of the sessions are live in person and the remainder are on Zoom. There is



no cost to participate. You will need a desire for frank discussion, a willingness to participate and a commitment to attend. You will also need a computer or smartphone capable of Zoom sessions.

The live in person sessions will be held at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 1571 S. Martine Ave., Scotch Plains, NJ.

To register go onto IHMParish.net/Alpha. If you have any questions, please call 908-889-2100.

THE GATHERING PLACE

The first Wednesday of every month
12 noon to 2pm
in Lile Hall

CAFE FOR THOSE WITH MEMORY LOSS

Christ Church, Summit, NJ

Too often, those living with memory loss can suffer from social stigma and isolation. A Memory Cafe is a social gathering for those living with cognitive loss, together with their care-partners. It's a welcoming community where all feel safe, accepted, and understood.

"The Gathering Place" is a monthly Memory Cafe hosted by volunteers at Christ Church in Summit. They meet the first Wednesday of every month, from 12 - 2 p.m.

Guests socialize over a light, nutritious lunch and share friendship, information, and often a few laughs. It is non-sectarian and all are welcome. From guests: "It was enjoyable, uplifting, and worthwhile," and "I wish my mother had something like this to participate in while she was able."

A suggested donation is \$5 per person. RSVP is requested for menu-planning. Contact Brenda Dodds 908 273-5549 or brenda@ccsnj.org. Christ Church is located at 561 Springfield Avenue, Summit, NJ.

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68 Elm Street, Summit, NJ

Sat, Jan 31: Bergen Town Center
Route 4 East & Forest Ave

Sun, Feb 1: Montclair Art Museum, Montclair
3 S Mountain Ave, Montclair

Sat, Feb 7: Livingston YMCA
321 S Livingston Ave, Livingston

Sat, Feb 21: Morris Museum, Morristown
6 Normandy Heights Rd, Morristown

Sun, Feb 22: Village of Ridgewood
131 N Maple Ave, Ridgewood (next to Library)

Sat, Feb 28: Menlo Park Mall, Edison
55 Parsonage Rd, Edison

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600

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900

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360

560

600

700

800

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1000

1100

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1300

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240

560

900

1300

1600

1700

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2000

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320

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3000

2800

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3400

3600

3800

12 Units 6.5"x14"

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STATE CANCELS LEGAL NOTICE MANDATE

We rarely ever hear about the government reducing taxes but it happened this year when New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy eliminated the mandate that legal notices must be printed in a newspaper.

The antiquated mandate is decades old and the cost for the advertising was paid for by public funds from municipalities, counties, school districts, and independent authorities. It was a lucrative business for the publications and more recently the majority of their revenue. Without the mandate the fear in the newspaper industry was that the publications relying on the legal advertising income will not survive.

In some cases the majority of content in the newspaper had been the legal ads. In question was the criteria for the mandate, i.e., were the publications meeting the required numbers of

paid subscriptions, and circulation.

The idea of doing away with the mandate, though practical, was considered political poison. No lawmaker wanted to be deemed responsible as the cause for newspapers' closures and people losing their jobs. During the Governor Christi administration the Star Ledger warned that doing away with the mandates would cause 250 weekly newspapers to close.

What brought about the change is a successful lawsuit filed by the County of Warren which named the Star Ledger and Daily Record as defendants. The suit may have been the last straw in the Ledger's decision to stop printing the newspaper in January of 2025.

Local governments will now be required to publish their legal notices on their websites.

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or visit chathamseniorcenter.org.

Alzheimer's NJ Caregiver Support Group

Thursday, Jan. 8, 10:30 a.m.

This group provides families and caregivers with the emotional support and education they need to better understand Alzheimer's Disease and other forms of dementia. A trained facilitator guides the group. Visit alznj.org to register and learn about their additional programs, or call the Center.

Plastics & Health

Monday, Jan. 12, 11:00 a.m.

Learn about plastics, why recycling is not an option, and steps to reduce exposure to its harmful impacts.

Problems Falling & Staying Asleep

Wednesday, Jan. 14, 1:00 a.m.

Learn how sleep problems, sleep schedules, and bedtime habits can affect your daily life.

Classical Piano Performance

Monday, Jan. 19, 1:00 p.m.

Luc Reyes, a 17-year-old, who has received multiple awards at prestigious piano competitions will perform classical pieces.

Photography Group: Smartphone Cameras

Wednesday, Jan. 21, 11:00 a.m.

This meeting focuses on taking pictures with cell phones.

Benefits of Walking in Winter

Monday, Jan. 26, 1:00 p.m.

Learn the benefits of outdoor walking adventures.

Salute to Sondheim, His Songs & Shows

Tuesday, Jan. 27, 12:00 p.m.

Hear about the unforgettable work of Stephen Sondheim - from his iconic Broadway hits to his boundary-pushing storytelling techniques.

Aging with Intention: Rewriting Your Narrative

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 12:00 p.m.

This presentation discusses Positive Psychology principles that promote vitality, engagement, meaning, and accomplishment - and ways to enhance overall health and happiness while aging.

Courtesy Photo



(above) Our thanks to the Town and Country Garden Club of Chatham for returning to teach the always-popular holiday centerpiece project.

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