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## TRY DRY JANUARY IN 2026

The CDC defines drinking in moderation by limiting intake to 2 drinks or less in a day for men or 1 drink or less in a day for women. Heavier drinking and long-term drinking can increase physical and mental problems. The concept of Dry January, wishing to cut down on your alcohol intake, or simply wanting to begin the new year with a clean slate by choosing not to drink beer, wine, or spirits for one month, appeals to someone who may have noticed a pattern that they're drinking a little bit more than they should, especially during the holidays.

### THERE ARE BENEFITS TO DRY JANUARY:

- You'll get a mood boost.
- You'll sleep more soundly.
- You might feel less bloated or even drop a few pounds.
- You'll save money.
- Your skin might look brighter.
- You'll have a stronger immune system.
- You'll feel better in the morning.
- You'll have a new relationship with alcohol.

A month may seem like a long time, but most people can be successful. Here are some tips for a successful Dry January:

Find a substitute non-alcoholic drink. For social situations, or when you crave a cocktail after a long day, reach for alcohol-free beverages like sparkling water, soda, or virgin beverages

(non-alcoholic versions of alcoholic drinks.)

Non-alcoholic beer or wine also is an option, but some brands still contain up to 0.5% alcohol by volume, so check the label.

Avoid temptations. Keep alcohol out of your house. When you are invited to someone's home, bring your non-alcoholic drinks with you.

Create a support group. Let friends and family know about your intentions and encourage them to keep you accountable. Better yet, enlist someone to do the challenge with you.

Use the Try Dry app. This free app helps you track your drinking, set personal goals, and offers motivational information like calories and money saved from not drinking. It's aimed at cutting back on or cutting out alcohol, depending on your choices.

Don't give up. If you slip up, don't feel guilty. Just begin again the next day.

If you found Dry January to be a positive experience, why not consider extending it a little longer or gradually decreasing your alcohol consumption? Embracing these small changes could lead to lasting improvements in overall health and well-being.

Written by Amy Lewis, MPH, MCHES, Health Educator, Westfield Regional Health Department, on behalf of the Mayors Wellness Campaign.

## 4 TIME AWARDEE of US News Best Nursing Home Union County's Leading Rehabilitation Option

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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](mailto:info@hickorytreechorus.org) or call 908-377-1399.



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## FROM BASEMENT DREAM TO GLOBAL STAGE

Twenty seasons ago, the Continuo Arts Foundation began as a dream in a basement in Westfield, New Jersey - an idea fueled by a belief that music could shape lives, bridge generations, and carry local voices to the world's greatest stages. Today, that dream resonates far beyond its humble beginnings. As Continuo Arts enters its 20th season, it stands as a thriving conservatory of music in Summit, a cultural home where artistry, education, and community converge week after week.

Founded by Candace Wicke, Continuo Arts was built on a simple but powerful premise: that music education should be rigorous yet welcoming, ambitious yet deeply human. What began with a small circle of singers has grown into an organization that now serves more than 200 members and families each week from six counties, offering opportunity, inspiration, and excellence across generations.

### A CONSERVATORY WITH A COMMUNITY AT ITS HEART

At the core of Continuo Arts is its conservatory model - one that embraces both breadth and depth. The Foundation now supports 10 intergenerational choral programs, along with musical theater, opera, and comprehensive conservatory instruction for vocalists and instrumentalists. From young beginners discovering their first notes to seasoned musicians refining their craft, students learn side by side in an environment that values mentorship, collaboration, and lifelong musicianship.

This intergenerational spirit has become one of Continuo Arts' defining strengths. Children, teens, adults, and seniors rehearse under the same artistic umbrella, sharing not only music but perspective, discipline, and joy. It is a living example of how the arts can connect people across age and experience.

### UNPRECEDENTED STAGES, UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS

Over the years, Continuo Arts has carried its music far beyond New Jersey, reaching milestones once thought unimaginable for a

community-based arts organization. Ensembles have performed in the Sistine Chapel, filled Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center with sound, collaborated with musicians from around the world, and even opened for the Vienna Philharmonic. Highlights include working with Disney Theatrical on 42 performances of The Hunchback of Notre Dame at The Paper Mill Playhouse and participating in the launch of Disney's live action Lion King Live movie. The organization's story and mission were further amplified through a full-length PBS documentary, "Requiem For My Mother", bringing its impact to audiences nationwide. Each of these moments reflects not only artistic excellence, but the courage to dream big—and to prepare relentlessly so those dreams can be realized.

### A LANDMARK 20TH SEASON

The 20th anniversary season marks not a pause for reflection, but a bold step forward. Among its highlights is the launch of the Institute for Lifelong Learning at The Continuo Arts Foundation, expanding educational offerings for adult learners who seek growth, enrichment, and connection through music at every stage of life. Audience-favorite annual cabarets return, blending intimacy, storytelling, and vocal artistry,

while the season also welcomes a special guest emcee—Mrs. New Jersey—bringing added sparkle and celebration to the festivities. On the international stage, Continuo Arts will present three world premieres at Carnegie Hall, reaffirming its commitment to new music and living composers. The season culminates in an extraordinary performance tour of France, including a featured concert in the iconic Notre Dame Cathedral—a moment that symbolically mirrors the organization's journey from a basement rehearsal space to the world's most revered sanctuaries of music.

### LOOKING AHEAD

As The Continuo Arts Foundation begins its 20th season, its story is no longer just about where it has been, but about what it continues to make possible. Under the enduring artistic vision of Candace Wicke and a community united by purpose, Continuo Arts remains a place where dreams are nurtured, voices are strengthened, and music becomes a lifelong companion. From Westfield to Summit, from local rehearsals to global stages, Continuo Arts proves that when passion meets perseverance, a single dream can grow into a legacy that sings across generations - and around the world.



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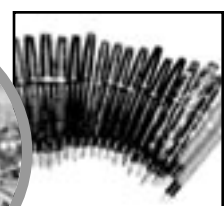


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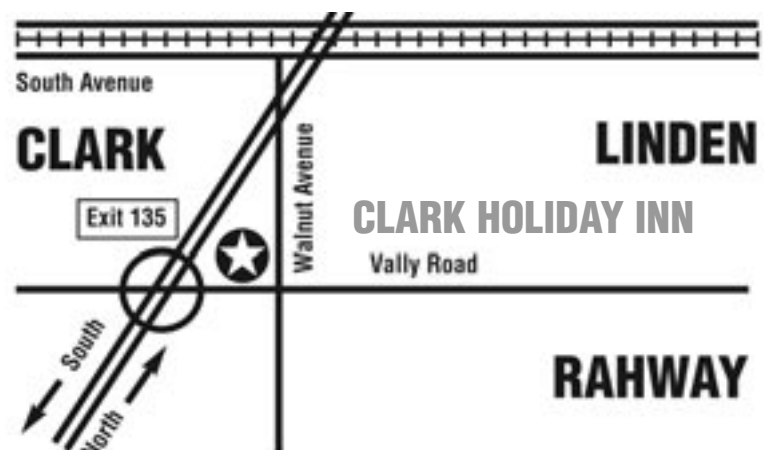
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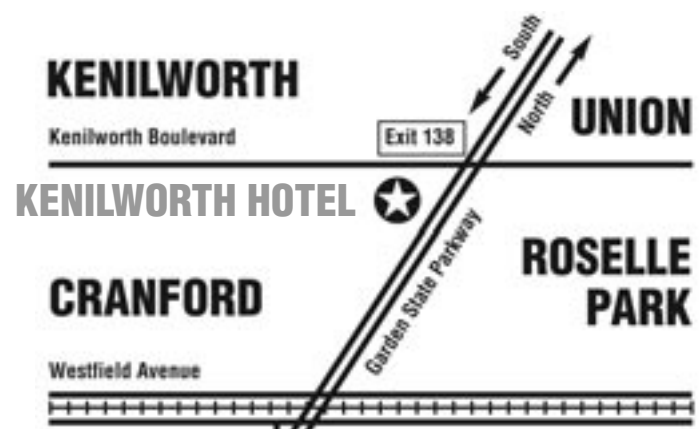
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# FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY PROGRAMS

The Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library offers new programs for youth and adults during the upcoming winter season.

## SATURDAY MORNING PERFORMANCES

Children will enjoy Saturday morning performances that encourage science, movement, creativity and more. From January through March these entertainment opportunities at the library are geared towards ages 3 to 10 with tickets available right before each show.

## OPERA

For those that enjoy the opera, join us for great seats to attend Madame Butterfly on March 11, and Innocence on April 22 as part of the Metropolitan Opera Wednesday 5 Series. An expansion of our performance trips include Sleeping Beauty by the New York City Ballet at Lincoln Center on February 18. Roundtrip bus service from the Westfield Memorial Library is also available with the Met Opera Series.

## JIGSAW PUZZLE SALE

The popular jigsaw puzzle sale for all ages will resume in January. You can donate your puzzles on February 20 through 22 and shop for puzzles on February 24 through 25. Throughout the year we offer a smaller pop-up puzzle shop on the first floor of the library.

## MUSEUM PASS PROGRAM

The Museum Pass program, available to card holding patrons of Westfield Memorial Library or members of the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library from other towns can enjoy free passes to 28 selected museums located in New York City, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The program also now includes a 20% discount to all of the Wildlife Conservation Society zoos and the aquarium in New York City, including The Bronx Zoo, The Central Park Zoo, The Prospect Park Zoo, Queens Zoo and New York Aquarium.

For dates and details on these highlighted programs and more please visit the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library at FWMLNJ.ORG. To join or renew your membership or to volunteer please email [info@fwmlnj.org](mailto:info@fwmlnj.org).

## LOST DOG

### \$2,500 REWARD

The dog was originally lost in Fanwood but has been seen in Scotch Plains, Westfield, Fanwood and most recently Plainfield/North Plainfield.



**CALL 908-370-1903**

# HOLIDAY CHEER FROM THE GARDEN CLUB

We decked our planters in Westfield's brilliant red bows on December 4th. The Club downtown with evergreen boughs, twigs, invites the community to follow it on Facebook snowflakes, berries, pine cones and festive, at [facebook.com/TheGardenClubofWestfield](https://facebook.com/TheGardenClubofWestfield).



(above, l-r) Cary Prisch, Joanne Mitchel, Holly Zakharenko, Margaret Allen, Marnix Godschalk, Marie Higgins, Rosemary Shire, Heidi Remak Ziff and Carolyn Fleder.

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## Bathrooms

My new Bathroom took less than 2 weeks from start to finish. Love my new heated towel rail.  
- Heather H.



## Kitchens

"Ryki & his guys did a great job on my mummy's kitchen remodel. He also brought me cookies every day."  
- Trinity the Pitbull

## Decks & Porches



Big new Composite Deck about 43Ft. x 28Ft., built in fall 2024. Looks Spectacular.  
- Anne B.

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- Dawn S



## Indoor & Outdoor Painting

Ryki and his guys painted the outside shakes of the house and capped all exposed wood with PVC coated aluminum. Good for another 20 years. House looks like new. - Tim & Anne R.

## Basement Waterproofing & Finishing



Had French drain and 2 sump pumps installed by Ryki's company in a very wet basement 3 years ago. Bone dry ever since. After a month when we were sure basement was dry, the Basement was finished.  
- Steven C



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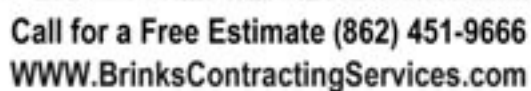
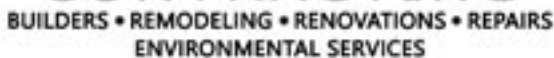


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The historic Brook Arts Center is proud to announce its Second Annual Speakeasy Soirée & Silent Auction, Friday, January 23, 2026, at 7:00 PM. This Roaring '20s-themed evening promises an unforgettable night of glitz, glamour, entertainment, and support for one of Somerset County New Jersey's, historic landmarks.

Guests will be transported back to the golden age as they enjoy live music, period-inspired entertainment, and a lavish buffet.

The evening's highlight is a silent auction featuring more than 100 exclusive items, including a cruise getaway, a Bradford Portraits gift certificate with a private photo session, a 20-inch framed wall portrait and luxury hotel stay, four VIP tickets to Meadowlands Racing with dinner and winner's circle photos, designer handbags, sports memorabilia, dining and spa packages and so much more.

Tickets are \$50 per person or \$80 per couple and include buffet dining, live music, live

entertainment, and a cash bar.

Attendees are encouraged to dress in their finest 1920s-inspired attire to fully embrace the spirit of the evening.

The Speakeasy Soirée is the Brook Arts Center's largest fundraiser of the year.

As a fully volunteer-run 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, the Brook Arts Center relies on community support to continue with the preservation and restoration of the facility and its mission of providing high-quality entertainment, inspiring creativity, fostering community partnerships, and nurturing education and growth through the arts.

Tickets are on sale now through January 16, 2026.

To purchase tickets or learn more, visit [www.brookarts.org](http://www.brookarts.org).

Reserve your tickets today and be part of a glamorous night that helps keep the arts alive in our community.





# SNOWFLAKE SUNDAY

**WINTER ON THE FARM**  
**JANUARY 25, 2026, 2-4 P.M.**

Winter days kept colonial farm families indoors tending to chores around the house. This was also a time to gather around the fire for games, stories, and maybe even some fresh baked treats. Join us at the museum for this kid-friendly program as we share some snowy stories, make snow flake crafts, and learn how colonial families kept warm when it snowed. Admission is \$5.00 for adults and children 13 and older, \$4.00 for children ages 3 to 12 and free under age 3. No reservations necessary.

The Miller Cory House Museum is located at

614 Mountain Avenue in Westfield, NJ. Call the museum at 908-232-1776 or email [millercorymuseum@gmail.com](mailto:millercorymuseum@gmail.com) for more information. Since 1968, the 501(c)(3) non-profit Miller Cory House Museum/Westfield Historical Society has worked to preserve, interpret and encourage interest in history, Westfield, and its residents through educational efforts and community outreach programs. For more information on the Miller Cory House Museum/Westfield Historical Society and their events, visit [millercoryhouse.com](http://millercoryhouse.com) or [westfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://westfieldhistoricalsociety.org) and, like us on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram.



(above) Miller Cory House Museum:  
Courtesy Photo

# SPIRITUAL? CURIOUS? SEEKING?

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](http://IHMParish.net/Alpha). If you have any questions, please call 908-889-2100.



## COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN NURSERY SCHOOL

Invites You To Join Us For An Open House!

**Date:** Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 9:00am to 11:00am

**Place:** 1459 Deer Path, Mountainside

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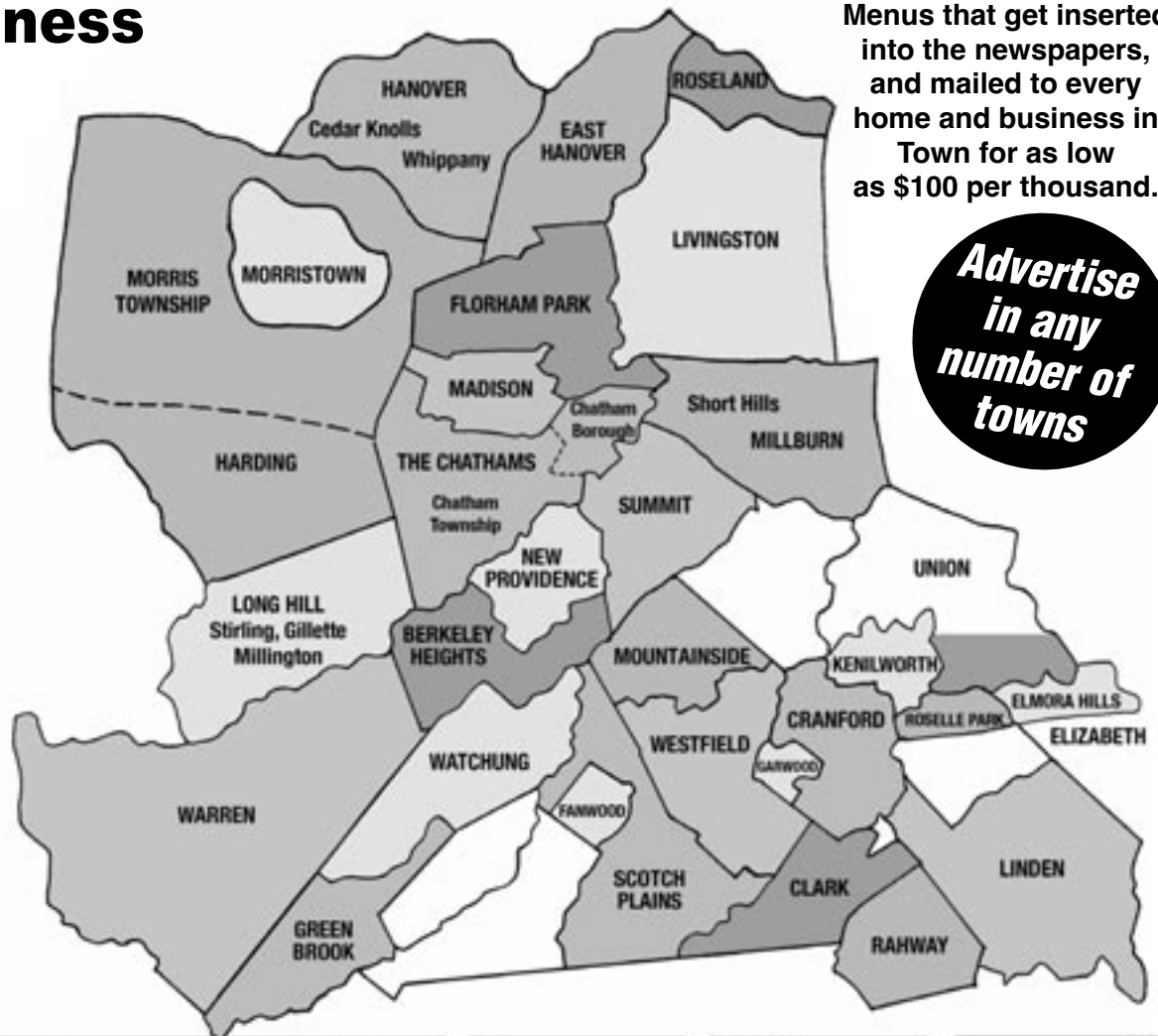
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1 Unit (Business card)	3.25"x2"0	100	260	360	460	560	600	660	700	800	900	1000
2 Units	6.5"x2" or 3.25"x4"	150	360	560	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1300
4 Units	3.25"x8" or 6.5"x4"	240	560	900	1000	1300	1600	1700	1800	1900	2000	2100
6 Units	6.5"x6.25" 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
18 FULL PAGE	10"x14"	500	1200	1800	2200	2500	2800	3000	3300	3600	3900	4300
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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 advertng 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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