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## PETE BERKENKAMP RECEIVES LIFELONG SERVICE AWARD

### Hanover Township

Hanover Township is proud to announce that Pete Berkenkamp has been selected as the 2025 Hanover Township Lifelong Service Award recipient. He was honored during the Hanover Township Volunteer Recognition dinner held in early December at the Hanover Manor.

For more than 30 years, Pete has been a shining example of what it means to serve our community. From coaching youth sports, supporting Recreation programs, and volunteering with the Knights of Columbus, to his leadership

on the Recreation Commission, Project Graduation, the Memorial Day Parade Committee, OEM, and CERT — Pete has dedicated his time, heart, and energy to Hanover Township.

His decades of service have strengthened our programs, supported our families, and inspired countless residents. His commitment to helping others truly represents the spirit of this award.

Thank you, Pete, for your lifelong dedication to making Hanover Township a better place for all.



(above, l-r) Committeeman Michael Milhako, Superintendent of Recreation Tom Quirk, Pete Berkenkamp and Mayor Thomas "Ace" Gallagher Courtesy Photo

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**CELEBRATING OUR EXEMPLARY NJ EDUCATORS**

*Hanover Park High School*  
The Board of Education recognized an incredible group of educators during their December 10, 2025 meeting, who have been honored as Exemplary Educators for the State of New Jersey.

The board stated “Your dedication, innovation, and unwavering commitment to our students shine brightly and inspire us all. We are immensely proud of your achievements and the positive impact you make every single day. Thank you for setting the standard for educational

excellence in our district and across the state. Your passion is truly contagious.

- ”Recognized Staff:  
**HANOVER PARK HIGH SCHOOL:**  
Mrs. Alexa Rockland,  
Mr. Jamie Ott,  
Mr. Sergio Silva.  
**WHIPPANY PARK HIGH SCHOOL:**  
Mrs. Jenna Forbes,  
Ms. Julie Lane, Mr.  
Tom Gaglione.



Photo by Hanover Park High School

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## WHIPPANONG LIBRARY FEBRUARY EVENTS

*\*To register, go to the Whippanong Library event page at [whippanong.org/events](http://whippanong.org/events)*

### **Creating with Clay (Grades 6-8)**

**Monday, February 2, 6:30-7:30 PM**

Have fun creating your own unique piece of pottery with Lisa Hartensveld. Must pre-register.\*

### **Trivia Night (Adult)**

**Tuesday, February 10, 6:30 PM**

Join us for a fun night of trivia! Split into teams and compete together across three different rounds – 70's music, 80s movies, and classic literature. Must pre-register.\*

### **Behind the Iron Curtain: America's Jazz Ambassadors with Alex Prizgintas**

**Tuesday, February 17, 6:00 PM**

Historian and cellist Alex Prizgintas will showcase a historical overview of the state-funded 1950s program where American musicians were sent on tours behind the iron curtain. He will also play noted selections from many of America's great Jazz artists, such as Dave Brubeck, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Benny Goodman, and Duke Ellington. Must pre-register.\*

## THE GRINCH LOST

### **Hanover Township Cultural Arts Committee**

A mid-December snowstorm did not deter the Hanover Township Cultural Arts Committee from bringing the magic of the holidays to the township. A snowstorm on Dec. 14 forced a postponement of the "Holidays in Hanover" concert by the Hanover Wind Symphony and the Morris Music Men. But the concert came off without a hitch in early January--Santa hats and all. Memorial Junior School in Whippany was packed with holiday revelers who heard all the traditional holiday favorites and even joined in a sing-along. Now that's the spirit!



*(above, l-r) Nate Barrett, music director of the Morris Music Men, and Matthew Paterno, music director of the Hanover Wind Symphony, share a light moment before the "Holidays in Hanover" holiday concert at Memorial Junior School in Whippany.*

Courtesy Photo

## MORRIS COUNTY LIBRARY FEBRUARY EVENTS

30 E Hanover Ave, Whippany, NJ 07981 • (973) 285-6930 • [www.mclib.info](http://www.mclib.info)

### **The Georgia of the North**

**Tue., Feb. 3, 7:00-8:30 p.m. via Zoom.**

Black Women & the Civil Rights Movement in NJ: Centering New Jersey as the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, The Georgia of the North highlights the critical role of Black women intellectuals of the Garden State in the long fight for Black freedom. Join us for a talk with author Dr. Hettie V. Williams as she discusses the work of Black women in affecting civil rights legislation, legal equality, and integration, from the Great Migration to 1954.

Registration (required) at:

<https://tinyurl.com/mcl-bhm1>

### **Speed Book Dating**

**Thu., Feb. 5, 6:00-7:00 p.m.**

Get ready for a fun and fast-paced in-person event where book lovers check out new books! You'll spend a brief amount of time with one book, just to see if you hit it off, then move on to the next book -- no strings attached! At the end of the hour, we hope you'll leave with at least one new book you can't wait to read!

Spaces limited; registration required at:

<https://tinyurl.com/mcl-bookdating>

### **Teen Dating Violence Awareness**

**Tue., Feb. 17, 7:00-8:00 p.m. via Zoom.**

A representative from JBWS will talk on teen dating violence, awareness, signs, and what you can do about it. Open to all. There will be time for Q&A. Registration is required at:

<https://tinyurl.com/mcl-tdv>

## ADULTS

### **Computer Classes**

Registration required for all classes. For more info about and to register for any of our computer classes, visit [www.mclib.info/Programs/Computer-Classes](http://www.mclib.info/Programs/Computer-Classes)

Classes held in the Computer Lab on the second floor. This month's classes include: Intro to Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel (series) I, II & III, and Intro to Excel Tables.

### **Tech Help Mondays**

**Mondays, Feb. 2, 9 & 23, 2:00-4:00 p.m. on the second floor. (We are closed Mon., Feb. 16 for Presidents' Day.)**

Drop-in for help with your device, general internet instruction, and how to use library catalogs, databases, and apps.

### **Friday Afternoon Movies at 2:00 p.m.**

No registration needed:

2/6: "Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale"

2/20: "A Beautiful Mind"

2/27: "CODA"

### **Tuesday Book Club**

**Tue., Feb. 10, 2:00-3:00 p.m.**

This month we're talking about Valiant Ambition: George Washington, Benedict Arnold, and the Fate of the American Revolution by Nathaniel Philbrick. For more info or to reserve a copy of the book, please call 973-285-6970. No registration needed.

### **Medieval Book Club**

**Wed., Feb. 11, 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

This month we're talking about El Cantor del Mio Cid: The Song of the Cid. For more info or

to reserve a copy of the book, please call 973-285-6970. No registration needed.

### **Socrates Cafe**

**Wed., Feb. 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

A discussion group using the dialogue of the Socratic Method. The only requirement for this program is a willingness to listen respectfully. Speaking is not required, although encouraged. No registration required.

### **True Crime Chat (Via Zoom)**

**Thu., Feb. 19, 7:00-8:30 p.m. via Zoom.**

Virtual true crime discussion group meets via Zoom. The Zoom link will be emailed to you shortly before the program start time. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/mcltruecrime>

February topic: Stalking

### **Mystery Book Club**

**Mon., Feb. 23, 7:00-8:00 p.m.**

We read and discuss books chosen by the group. No registration necessary. This month's book: Murder Crossed Her Mind by Stephen Spotswood. To reserve a copy of the book, please call 973-285-6970.

## CHILDREN

### **Preschool Storytime & Music**

**All Tuesdays in February, 10:00-10:30 a.m.** w/Mr. Laurence: Stories, fingerplays and music with Mr. Laurence. For ages 2-5.

No registration needed.

### **LEGO Club**

**Sat., Feb. 14, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

Create and build using LEGO! Your creations will be displayed in the Children's Room. For ages 4-12. Registration (required) for all adults and children in your group opens Feb. 3 at:

<https://tinyurl.com/mcl-lego6>

### **NEW PROGRAM! Paws for Reading**

**Thu., Feb. 19, 3:30-4:30 p.m.**

Read to a very patient therapy dog from Creature Comfort Pet Therapy! For ages 5-12. Registration (required) begins Feb. 10 at: <https://tinyurl.com/mcl-paws2>

### **Anime Drawing Class**

**Mon., Feb. 23, 3:30-4:45 p.m.**

Carlos Nieto from Anime Your Way will teach you how to create and modify an anime character using simple shapes and easy to understand instructions, no matter what your drawing level! For ages 6-15.

Registration (required) begins Feb. 17 at: <https://tinyurl.com/mcl-anime>

## TEENS & ADULTS

### **Spanish Conversation**

**Thu., Feb. 26, 3:30-4:30 p.m.**

Practice your Spanish language proficiency in a casual, small group environment. A basic level skill is recommended, however any skill level is welcome. No registration required. For teens and adults.

## TEENS

### **Teen Grab & Go Crafts!**

Take mindful breaks this February and make time to be creative! One craft per teen per week, while supplies last, please. For ages 13-18. Pick up crafts throughout February at the Readers Services Desk.

## ROBOTIC PETS BRING COMFORT TO SENIORS

### County of Morris

Morris County recently distributed robotic companion pets to seniors living in county-supported housing as part of the “Joy for All” Companion Pet Program, sponsored by the Morris County Office on Aging, Disabilities and Community Programming and expanded this year to include the Morris County Housing Authority.

The Office on Aging partnered with the Housing Authority in 2025 to broaden the program’s reach to seniors residing in senior housing. As part of the expansion, the Housing Authority received 36 robotic companion pets, 26 of which have already been distributed to residents age 60 and older.

The companion pet program was launched in 2024 to help reduce social isolation, loneliness and cognitive decline among older adults by providing the comfort and companionship of a pet without the responsibilities associated with caring for a live animal. In its first year, the program distributed 110 robotic companion pets to eligible residents and facilities throughout Morris County and partnered with the Morris County Sheriff’s Office Project Lifesaver program.

The robotic cats and dogs are designed to respond to motion and touch, offering realistic behaviors such as purring, rolling over, barking and wagging their tails.

“The companion pets have been the focus of rigorous, peer-reviewed studies demonstrating their effectiveness in reducing loneliness and



(above) Morris County resident Ana Rios receives her companion pet dog.

social isolation,” said Christine Hellyer, director of the Office on Aging, Disabilities and Community Programming. “Recipients often name their pets and keep them as long as they wish, forming meaningful emotional connections.”

The program is funded through the Aging American Rescue Plan. To qualify, recipients must be at least 60 years old, homebound, and either socially isolated or living with dementia or a similar cognitive condition.

## HOMETOWN HEROES BANNER PROGRAM

The Township of Hanover is proud to continue The Hometown Heroes Banner Program. This program is a living tribute meant to honor Hanover Township residents and former residents who have served or are currently serving in any branch of the military.

Submissions are now being accepted for the next round of the Hometown Heroes Banner Program. Honor a current or former service member with a banner displayed from Memorial Day through Veterans Day. Submission deadline is March 4, 2026. For more information contact Brittany Heffler, [bheffler@hanovertownship.com](mailto:bheffler@hanovertownship.com) 973-428-2463.

Or visit:

[hanovertownship.com/1508/Hometown-Heroes](http://hanovertownship.com/1508/Hometown-Heroes)



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## BENEFIT CONCERT FOR THERAYOUTH

At Drew University, Madison, NJ • Saturday, March 21, 2026 • 4:00 PM

Pegasus: The Orchestra will perform at Drew University on Saturday, March 21 at 4:00 PM for the TheraYouth Foundation's Third Annual Concert fundraiser. Held at the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts, the concert will unite world-class professional musicians with local student performers to raise critical funds for TheraYouth's mission to provide needed physical, occupational, and speech therapy services to disadvantaged children who cannot otherwise access care.

Pegasus: The Orchestra pairs artistic excellence with social impact. Pianist, conductor and composer Karén Hakobyan founded the group in 2017 as a nonprofit dedicated to supporting exceptional musical talent, and to bringing world-class performances to underserved communities. True to its namesake, the ensemble empowers its musicians to soar artistically. Pegasus functions as a collective of artist leaders, resulting in performances that run the range of vibrant, driven orchestral performances alternating with intimate and chamber-like expression. The New York Concert Review calls Pegasus "a truly first-rate ensemble" and a "can't miss" group, urging audiences to "get your tickets right away before they sell out."

As a composer-arranger, Director Hakobyan frequently crafts orchestral works to showcase

the unique musicality of the ensemble's artists, as in this concert which Hakobyan specifically wrote for this performance.

The Chatham High School Chamber Choir, directed by Kenneth Bryson, will perform the Interlude. This ensemble has performed at venues including the White House, the National Anthem at Citi Field to open a Mets game, the Empire State Building, and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and appreciated for their musical excellence.

The proceeds from this concert will support the TheraYouth Foundation, whose mission is to ensure that children are never denied critical physical, occupational, or speech therapy simply because their families cannot afford it. TheraYouth serves disadvantaged youth with treatable conditions, helping them gain strength, communication, and independence. Funded entirely through donations and fundraisers, every dollar raised supports life-changing therapy sessions for children who might otherwise go without the care they need to thrive.

"Every child deserves the chance to reach their full potential," said TheraYouth founder, Dr. Irina Marcoff, DPT. "This concert not only raises vital funds but brings the community together around the belief that early, high-quality therapy can change the course of a child's life."



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## OPERA AT FLORHAM PRESENTS VALENTINE SERENADE

Lenfell Hall, The Mansion, Fairleigh Dickinson University (285 Madison Ave, Madison, NJ) • Sunday, February 15, 2026 at 2:00 PM

Opera at Florham invites audiences to celebrate Valentine's Day weekend with a concert of love on stage: Valentine Serenade, a special Sunday afternoon concert on February 15, 2026 at 2:00 pm at Lenfell Hall, The Mansion, Fairleigh Dickinson University (285 Madison Ave, Madison, NJ 07940).

Featuring beloved Opera at Florham favorites Sarah Barrera, Soprano, and Pedro Barrera, Tenor, this program showcases a married couple united on and off the stage, whose shared artistry brings rare intimacy and authenticity to every performance. The concert unfolds as a cinematic emotional journey - exploring love, longing, joy, and farewell through music that resonates deeply with the heart.

In past performances, the Barreras have captivated audiences with repertoire ranging from Giuseppe Verdi, Giacomo Puccini, and Charles Gounod to Ennio Morricone, Stephen Sondheim, and other modern favorites, seamlessly bridging Opera, theater, and film in performances that are both emotionally rich and theatrically compelling.

### WHY YOU CAN'T MISS IT

- A rare opportunity to hear a married couple perform together, bringing genuine intimacy and emotional authenticity to the stage

- A cinematic, story-driven program that goes beyond a traditional recital
- A unique blend of Opera, musical theater, and film music
- Performed in the elegant, intimate setting of Lenfell Hall at The Mansion, perfect for a Valentine's weekend experience

**Tickets available online [operaatflorham.org](http://operaatflorham.org):**

**General Admission: \$30**

**Students (25 & under): \$10**

**FDU Students (25 & under): FREE**

A Valentine Serenade is presented by Opera at Florham as part of its ongoing commitment to offering inspired, intimate performances in one of New Jersey's most beautiful historic venues. Reserve your seat online and early to enjoy this afternoon of love and passion, as limited tickets will be available at the door.

Opera at Florham has been northern New Jersey's leading Opera company since its founding in 1982. This 2023-2024 Season, we present six concerts, including the International Vocal Competition, and the educational series Opera Talk. Our concerts are performed by professionally trained artists singing Opera Arias and excerpts from Broadway musical theater and The Great American Songbook.

FOUNDED IN 1982

# OPERA AT FLORHAM

Presents

## Valentine Serenade




**Sunday, February 15, 2026**  
**2:00 pm**

Lenfell Hall, The Mansion  
Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison, NJ

**\$30 General Admission**  
Tickets & Information  
[operaatflorham.org](http://operaatflorham.org) | 973-443-8620  
[info@operaatflorham.org](mailto:info@operaatflorham.org)

Opera at Florham is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

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