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## AMERICA'S SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL: WHAT UNITES US

### Livingston Public Schools

The Livingston community came together on April 8th, at Livingston High School, for a truly special evening. The event: America's Semiquincentennial: What Unites Us. Was a beautiful tribute to our nation's history and the local spirit that keeps us moving forward.

From patriotic melodies to local history lessons, our students and community leaders reminded us of the power of unity. Here are a few highlights from the program:

- **Musical Magic:** Incredible performances by the LHS Chamber Singers & Notations, the Hillside Elementary Orchestra, and the Mount Pleasant Middle School Green Band.
- **Living History:** A captivating appearance by historical re-enactor Curt Radabaugh as George Washington, sharing insights into the Revolutionary War in NJ.
- **Voices of Livingston:** Heartfelt segments like the LPS Oral History Project and the "Matchbox Diaries" from our Heritage Middle School teachers.
- **Community Pride:** A big thank you to the Livingston Education Association and LPS for sponsoring this event, and to our Township Council and Board of Education and Livingston Public Library for their continued support.

We wrapped up the night the best way possible - in a community-wide sing-along of "This Land Is Your Land." Thank you to everyone who attended and helped us kick off the road to 250! You can visit our Facebook Page: Livingston Public Schools to see a video and photos of our talented students and guest speakers in action.



Photos by Livingston Public Schools

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# MILLBURN LIBRARY BOOK SALE - MAY 16 - 17

## Friends of the Millburn Library

Stack after stack and row after row of books for people of all ages will be available when the Friends of the Millburn Library's annual book sale, returns on May 16 and 17 after a one-year hiatus. One of the town's most widely anticipated and beloved events, the Friends are thrilled to bring back the sale, which will held in the library's newly renovated second floor spaces.

"I'm really excited about this year's sale," explained Dorothy Kelly, who has been in charge of the Friends book sale for the past 10 years. "Every year we make refinements to the ways we collect and organize the books. Now that we are in the new space, the sale will be even better."

Preparations for the big event have been ongoing for more than a month. The collection period started in early April and almost immediately, an army of dedicated volunteers began the laborious process of sorting. In past years, Friends received close to 50,00-0 items, all of which must be placed into the proper categories.

"Our volunteers are the heart and soul of this event," explained Kelly. "We have veteran volunteers, who have been doing this for as long as I have and we students who are joining us for the first time. It's a lot of work, but it is also a lot of fun."

One glimpse at the sorting room reveals the amount of organization involved in the enterprise.

Books are separated and set out on large tables, before being re-boxed and set aside. The real magic, however, comes when all the items are brought into the big room, which is transformed into a book buyers paradise.

All of the book sale profits go directly to funding Friends programs in support of the library, including summer and winter reading prizes, museum passes, entertainment and other events for all ages at the Millburn Library.

Got books? Donations will be accepted during regular library hours thru May 3.

The organization is accepting most books in good condition except textbooks, encyclopedias, business or travel books more than three years old or books that are incomplete, moldy, water-damaged or otherwise unsalable. They are also accepting vinyl records.

Want books? Regular sale days are Saturday, May 16 and Sunday, May 17, when book lovers are sure to snag a steal on all their favorite titles. Prices have remained the same for the past six years, with most hardcovers priced at \$2, and most softcovers at \$1. Record albums are \$2.

The other sale days include the Members Preview Sale on Thursday, May 14, 6:30-8:30 pm, which is open only to Members of the Friends. Membership must be purchased 24 hours in advance to be eligible and an Educator Appreciation Day on Friday, May 15, 3:30-5:00 pm, open to school employees with ID.

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# OPERA AT FLORHAM INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2026 AT 2:00 PM

Opera lovers won't want to miss this thrilling opportunity to experience the next generation of Opera stars before they take the world stage. Opera at Florham proudly announces its 36th Annual International Vocal Competition, a celebrated event that continues to attract exceptional talent from around the world. Established in 1987 in honor of the organization's benefactor and co-founder, Violetta DuPont, the competition reflects her visionary leadership and 25 years of unwavering dedication to the arts.

Each year, hundreds of aspiring Opera singers apply, with a select group advancing to live semi-final auditions in New York City. Finalists then compete before a distinguished panel of industry leaders, offering audiences a rare chance to witness rising artists at a pivotal moment in their careers.

Singers will compete for substantial prize money, including Grand Prizes of \$5,000, \$3,000, and \$1,500, along with encouragement awards recognizing exceptional promise. This directly aligns with Opera at Florham's mission to support and elevate young, up-and-coming Opera singers as they launch their professional careers.

This year's final competition will take place

on Sunday, May 17, 2026 at 2:00 pm in Lenfell Hall at the Mansion at Fairleigh Dickinson University, located at 285 Madison Avenue, Madison, NJ, 07940.

Join us for an afternoon of extraordinary vocal artistry and the excitement of the international Opera competition firsthand.

Don't miss this year's International Vocal Competition, because you will ...

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 General Admission: \$30  
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## OPERA TALK: THE OPERATIC HARP SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2026 - 2PM

Also, consider joining us on Sunday, May 3, 2026 at Hartman Lounge at The Mansion for Opera Talk: The Operatic Harp, given by Opera Lecturer Lou Barrella. 2:00 pm, Tickets \$10 at the door or online.

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## CONCERT FEATURES RENOWNED SLOVAK GUITARIST

The New Jersey Festival Orchestra (NJFO) concludes its season with One Thousand and One Nights, presented in collaboration with the Slovak American Cultural Center (S-ACC). Showcasing international artistry and cultural exchange, the program features acclaimed Slovak guitarist Karol Samuelčík as guest soloist.

Performances will take place on Saturday, May 30, 2026 at 7:00 pm at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, and Sunday, May 31, 2026



(above) Slovak Guitarist Karol Samuelčík

listeners, pairing the concerto's historic elegance with his signature vibrant energy and technical brilliance."

Born in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, Samuelčík trained at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Bratislava, graduating with the institution's highest honor, the Prize of the Rector. He has performed throughout Europe, Asia, and the Americas, appearing with leading orchestras and in renowned venues including London's Purcell Room and Shenzhen Concert Hall. A prizewinner of numerous international competitions, he is also an educator at the Academy in Bratislava, a recording artist, and a respected scholar, having published a landmark work on guitar technique in 2022.

The program culminates in Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade, a cornerstone of the orchestral repertoire inspired by the legendary tales of One Thousand and One Nights. With sweeping melodies and vivid orchestral color, the work evokes a world of distant voyages, mystery, and imagination, bringing these timeless stories to life.

Blending international collaboration with evocative repertoire, One Thousand and One Nights offers a richly imagined and memorable close to NJFO's season.

Tickets are available at [njfestivalorchestra.org/concerts](http://njfestivalorchestra.org/concerts) or by calling (908) 232-9400. Student discounts are available.

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at 2:30 pm at the Sieminski Theater in Basking Ridge.

At the heart of the program, Samuelčík brings his artistry to Joaquín Rodrigo's *Fantasia para un gentilhombre*, a work inspired by Spanish baroque dance traditions and celebrated for its elegance, lyricism, and expressive vitality.

"The Slovak-American Cultural Center is thrilled to partner—again—with the NJFO to introduce world-renowned guitarist Karol Samuelčík to American audiences," writes S-ACC Board Member and longtime NJFO supporter Tanya Pulver. "Performing Joaquín Rodrigo's celebrated *Fantasia para un gentilhombre*, Samuelčík promises to enchant

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## MEMORIAL DAY ANNUAL CEREMONY AND PARADE - MAY 25

The Livingston Memorial Day Parade will take place on Monday, May 25. The commemorative ceremony honoring those who have died defending the United States will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Memorial Oval. This will be followed by the parade at 10:00 a.m. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the Livingston High School Auditorium.

## ARTS COUNCIL'S "BACK TO THE GARDEN" EXHIBITION

The Arts Council of Livingston is ushering in the colors of spring with its upcoming exhibition, Back to the Garden, a celebration of nature's renewal after the quiet months of winter. The show highlights artists working in a wide range of media, each offering a personal interpretation of the season's return to vibrancy.

The exhibit is uniquely situated on the nine-acre Green Acres property at 240 E. Northfield Road, where the ACL Gallery shares space with rolling fields and former paddocks. Once a mini-horse farm, the site's pastoral landscape enhances the experience of viewing original fine art, creating a rare blend of creativity and countryside within suburban New Jersey.

Visitors are invited to enjoy the exhibition during regular gallery hours: Fridays from 3 to 7 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. A Sunday afternoon visit to Evergreen Farm offers a refreshing escape—an opportunity to slow down, take in the scenery, and appreciate the work of local artists in a serene, natural setting.

Back to the Garden promises a thoughtful and uplifting welcome to the new season, inviting the community to reconnect with both art and the landscape that surrounds it.

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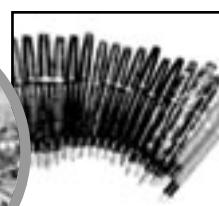
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# BROOK ARTS CENTER FEATURES RAGETIME & FREDDIE MERCURY IN MAY

## PARAGON - MAY 3

The Paragon Ragtime Orchestra will turn the Brook Arts Center in Bound Brook back into a 1920s movie palace on Sunday, May 3rd. The 12-piece ensemble performs Charlie Chaplin's *The Gold Rush* live, with the film on the big screen and the orchestra playing the score from the pit. Showtime is 3 PM.

Paragon Ragtime Orchestra (PRO) is led by founder and conductor Rick Benjamin, who stumbled into his life's work in 1985 when he unearthed thousands of turn-of-the-century orchestra scores that had been packed away and forgotten. Since then, millions have heard the ensemble's recordings as the daily music on Main Street, U.S.A. at Disneyland, Disney World, and Disneyland Paris.

PRO and Benjamin were recently featured on Great Performances on PBS: "Now Hear This: Everyone Loves Joplin," which aired April 17 with host Scott Yoo tracing the life of ragtime's most famous composer. The Bound Brook performance brings the orchestra to New Jersey just weeks after that broadcast.

In *The Gold Rush*, Chaplin stars as the Little Tramp, a lone prospector braving the Klondike in search of fortune. Facing blizzards, hunger, and a cast of rough-and-tumble gold seekers, he relies on his wit, charm, and slapstick brilliance to survive the wilderness and win the girl.

The performance is part of the Brook's "Road

to 100," leading up to the theatre's centennial in 2027. The Brook opened in 1927, near the end of the silent era, as a vaudeville and movie house. This is exactly the kind of show it was built for. The only surviving vaudeville theatre in Somerset County, it is listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places and is run entirely by volunteers.

Sunday, May 3 at the Brook Arts Center, 10 Hamilton Street, Bound Brook. Theatre organist Ian Fraser opens with a pre-show performance at 2:30 PM; showtime is 3:00 PM. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$20 for seniors and students. Get yours at [brookarts.org](http://brookarts.org) or call 732-469-7700.

Paragon Ragtime Orchestra concerts are sponsored in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

## MERCURY - MAY 15

Terry Barber is bringing his most requested tour to NJ and is available for interview. His recording of this material was considered for 8 Grammy nominations.

May 15, The Brook Arts Center, 8pm

Internationally acclaimed performing artist, Terry Barber who moved to NJ five years ago, has just signed an agreement for his most recent project, "3 Tenors of the Americas" to headline for the World Cup (FIFA) Festival in Mexico City in July.

In the meantime he is bringing his band from

Phoenix, NYC, and Chicago to share the best selling music of all time. "Mercury" has been touring the USA and Canada and is now headed for the historic Brook Theater in Bound Brook. Barber connected with Gail Woerner and Andrew Golden who are working to restore The Brook to its previous glory days.

The show not only features the hits of QUEEN live, but also helps the audience get to know legend, Freddie Mercury as Barber shares stories about him and his actual words.

"I am not impersonating this iconic artist who taught a generation how to Rock... But I believe my audience leaves with a better sense of the man, his triumphs, and tragedies," Barber explains about his most requested tour to date. "Like Mercury, my goal with this show is to entertain, of course. He cared deeply about the audience having a great time and this show is a party for all who attend, I hope. In short, We Will Rock You," Barber shares with a chuckle.

As a past member of the multiple Grammy award-winning group Chanticleer, American countertenor, Terry Barber has been a soloist at many of the world's best venues from the Metropolitan Opera to Moscow's Svetlanov Hall. He can be heard on recordings alongside artists from Madonna, Jewel, Chaka Khan and Cyndi Lauper to the London Philharmonic. Terry's recent album and tour, the music of Freddie Mercury was considered for 8 Grammy nominations.



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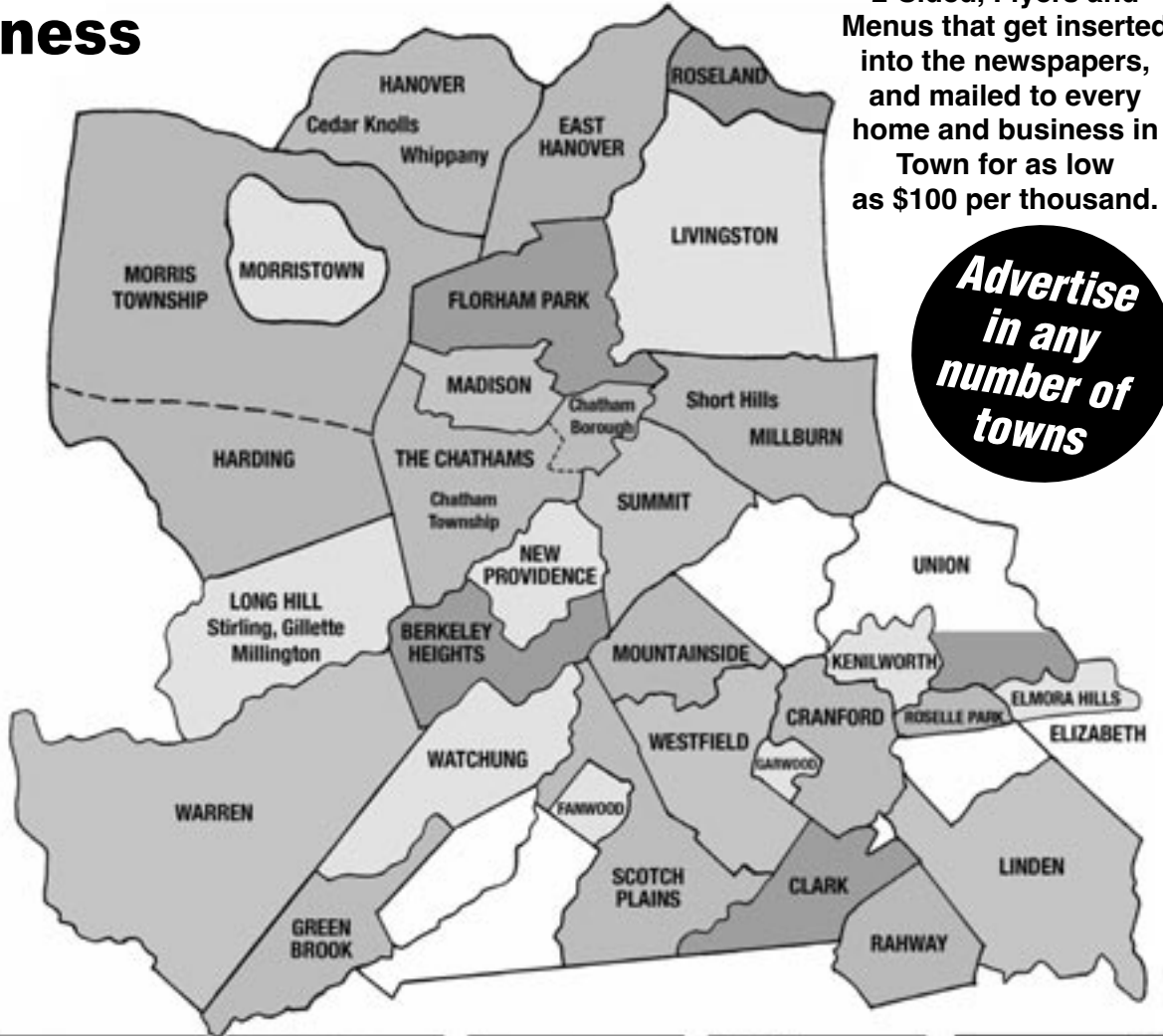
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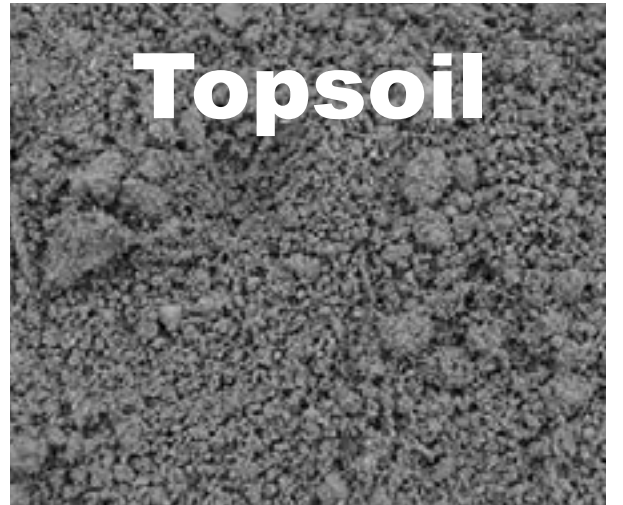
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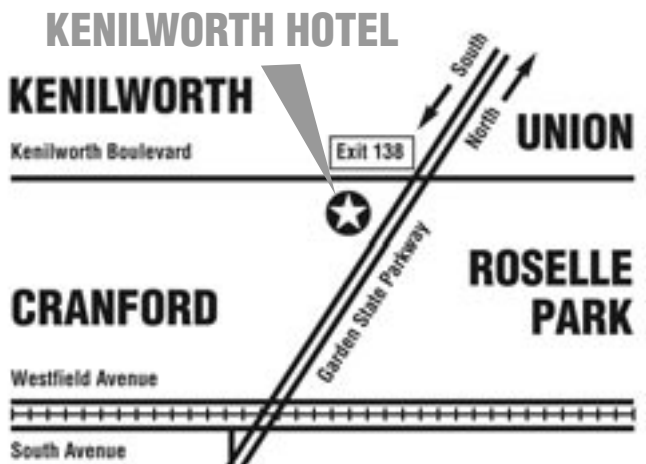
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