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FATE BRINGS CHILDHOOD FRIENDS BACK TO EACH OTHERS ARMS

Submitted by Gabe Lamberty

Rahway residents Nelly Borges and Wilmer Vega's love story is proof that some connections are simply meant to last a lifetime. The couple first met as classmates at Dayton Street Elementary School in Newark in 1970, where a childhood friendship quietly planted the seeds for a future neither of them could have imagined at the time.

After high school graduation, life carried them in different directions. Nelly built a successful career as an administrator with jobs in New York and New Jersey. While Wilmer, a conga drummer, embraced life on the road as a traveling musician, sharing his talent with audiences internationally. Though their paths separated, and years passed, fate had plans for them to meet again.

Many years later, the two unexpectedly reunited at one of Wilmer's concerts in Newark—a moment that rekindled old memories and sparked a beautiful new beginning. Since that unforgettable reunion, Nelly and Wilmer have remained inseparable, proving that true love can find its way back, no matter how much time has passed.

Nelly and Wilmer are preparing to celebrate their wedding on June 12, 2026. Another celebration will follow in July

where they will be surrounded by family and friends, with a lifetime of shared memories.

Their journey from childhood classmates to lifelong partners is an inspiring reminder that love often arrives exactly when it is meant to.



(above) Life-long love birds Nelly Borges and Wilmer Vega will celebrate their wedding on June 12, 2026.

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(above) Wilmer and Nelly on the conga drums.

(left) Dayton Street School 1970 class photo.

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A THANK-YOU TO THE ANDERSON-RICH FAMILY

There are moments in our lives when goodness reveals itself not with trumpets or banners, but with the quiet certainty of a candle set in a dark window. The generosity shown by Mrs. Tori Anderson and her partner, Mr. Alfredo Rich, was such a light. It was steady, unassuming, and profoundly human. Through their kindness, six families were able to gather around a Thanksgiving meal that might otherwise have been an empty table.

Though the holiday has passed, their gift has not faded with the turning of the calendar. True kindness has a curious way of lingering, as though it seeks to outlast the moment in which it is given. It settles into memory, reminding us that gratitude is not tied to a single day of feasting, but is instead a way of seeing the world. A recognition that each of us is responsible for the well-being of our neighbors.

The Anderson-Rich family acted not from any desire to be noticed, but out of a deep sense that blessings are meant to be shared. Their generosity was the sort that does not insist on applause: it simply answers a need and, in doing so, restores some small part of the world to what it ought to

be. There is something quietly noble in such actions, for they remind us that the measure of our compassion is rarely found in grand gestures but in the willingness to place another's comfort before our own.

In offering these meals, they provided more than food. They offered assurance to families who needed, perhaps more than anything, to feel seen and cared for. At a time when many face uncertainty, such a gift becomes a signpost pointing toward hope—a reminder that even in difficult seasons, there are hearts that choose generosity over indifference.

And so, to Mrs. Tori Anderson and Mr. Alfredo Rich:

Thank you for embodying the kind of goodness that does not vanish with the holiday, but continues to warm the days that follow. Your act of compassion enriched not only those who received it, but all of us who witnessed it. May the goodwill you extended return to you in abundance in the coming year.

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EMPOWERING FUTURE SCHOLARS AS GLOBAL LEADERS

Submitted by Rahway Public Schools

The Rutgers Future Scholars (RFS) program, in partnership with the Rutgers Graduate School of Education (GSE), officially launched its innovative global initiative, Voices Across Borders, bringing together high school students from Rahway, New Jersey and South Africa for a shared virtual learning experience centered on identity, education, and global citizenship.

The inaugural session connected students from Rahway High School and Crestway High School in South Africa in a powerful exchange that set the tone for the program's mission: to amplify youth voice, foster cross-cultural understanding, and cultivate the next generation of globally conscious leaders.

During the first session, students engaged in introductions and meaningful dialogue about who they are as students and learners, the challenges they face within their schools and communities, and, of course, who their favorite musical artists are. The students engaged in conversations about what it means to be a matriculated student and connected on the many unknown similarities. Conversations highlighted themes of educational access, social pressures, identity, and resilience, demonstrating both the unique and shared experiences of youth across borders.

Voices Across Borders was founded by Dr. Shareyna N. James, Senior Program Manager for Rutgers Future Scholars-Rahway, and is co-led by Ms. Kayla Rodriguez, Senior Program Manager of RFS Camden. The initiative is supported by a collaborative team of educators and practitioners, including Rutgers Future Scholars Program Director Ms. Kim Williams and Rutgers Graduate School of Education lead Dr. Darren Clarke.

"This initiative is about more than connection. It is about creating a space where students see themselves as part of a larger global story," said Dr. James. "When young people have the opportunity to share their lived experiences and learn from others across the world, they begin to understand their power, their voice, and their ability to lead change."

The program is further strengthened through partnerships with Rahway Public Schools, under

the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Aleya Shoieb, and Rahway High School Principal Dr. Michele Panichi, as well as Crestway High School Principal Ms. Cheryl Jacobs. Academic collaboration is also supported by Professor Jonathan Jansen of the University of Stellenbosch.

The initiative includes a dedicated team of educators from Rahway Public Schools, one history teacher, a school psychologist, and a school counselor, alongside Rutgers Future Scholars and Graduate School of Education staff, ensuring that students receive both academic guidance and social-emotional support throughout the program.

This team will be traveling to South Africa this summer to engage with the students and administrative team on the ground for the official in-person launch in July 2026. This launch is in collaboration with the Rutgers GSE's 25th year anniversary celebration.

Over months, Voices Across Borders will engage students in bi-weekly sessions exploring topics such as:

- Global identity and culture
- Education and equity

- Youth leadership and social change
- Digital storytelling and narrative development
- Community impact and global responsibility

The program is designed not only to foster dialogue, but to empower students to become storytellers, advocates, and leaders within their own communities and beyond. This work aligns deeply with our commitment to preparing students for success in a global society. By connecting classrooms across continents, we are expanding what learning looks like and who it is for.

As the program continues, students will collaborate on shared projects and contribute to a collective digital archive of stories and reflections, creating a lasting testament to their voices and experiences.

ABOUT RUTGERS FUTURE SCHOLARS:

Rutgers Future Scholars is a pre-college access and success program that prepares first-generation, limited-income students for admission to and success at Rutgers University through academic enrichment, mentoring, and college readiness programming. Learn more about Rutgers Future Scholars here: futurescholars.rutgers.edu



(above) Rahway Students Participate in Rutgers Future Scholars' Inaugural 'Voices Across Borders: Empowering Future Scholars as Global Leaders'

Photo by Rahway Public Schools

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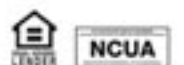
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The New Jersey Festival Orchestra closes its season with *One Thousand and One Nights*, an evening inspired by the legendary Arabian tales that gave rise to Rimsky-Korsakov's beloved orchestral masterpiece *Scheherazade*. Presented in collaboration with the Slovak-American Cultural Center (S-ACC), the program blends storytelling, international artistry, and symphonic color in performances on Saturday, May 30 at 7:00 pm at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield and Sunday, May 31 at 2:30 pm at the Sieminski Theater in Basking Ridge.

At the center of the program is *Scheherazade*, Rimsky-Korsakov's vivid musical interpretation of the timeless stories told by Scheherazade night after night to save her life. Sweeping melodies, shimmering orchestration, and dramatic contrasts immerse audiences in a world of myth and imagination, bringing the spirit of the legendary tales vividly to life.

"It is music that represents the rolling sea, the drama of adventure, and the allure of exotic romance," says NJFO Music Director David Wroe, describing the work as "an irresistible musical combination" that transports listeners into the world of *One Thousand and One Nights*.

The evening also features internationally

acclaimed Slovak guitarist Karol Samuelčík performing Joaquín Rodrigo's *Fantasia para un gentilhombre*. Presented through NJFO's collaboration with the Slovak-American Cultural Center, Samuelčík brings warmth and virtuosity to Rodrigo's celebrated work inspired by 17th-century Spanish music and dance traditions.

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

"What I love about the piece is its elegance, colour, and contrast," Samuelčík says. "The guitar creates a dialogue with the orchestra."

Together, these works create an evening shaped by imagination and storytelling, where music becomes the narrator and the orchestra brings centuries-old legends to life.

Tickets are available at www.njfestivalorchestra.org/concerts or by calling (908) 232-9400. Discounts are available to highschool and college students.

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June is a month known for strawberries, blooming roses, warm weather, sunny skies and Flag Day. June also includes the Summer Solstice, when the day and night are equal in length. Oh, and there's Father's Day! Hear that mom? Simply Longer days and more fun.

At the SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFE, on Saturday, June 13th, the Roadhouse Posse has again rounded up the unusual suspects and will present for your witness and ultimate verdict a "note-orious" group of musicians who are the gang known as **"WANTED IN APRIL"**

Remember them from last year? We wanted them again! It was no easy task. Gathering disparate (Desparate?) musicians together is like trying to herd cats. Ever try herding cats??

A year after their last trial at the Roadhouse,

where they were let go under their own cognizance; their individual musical shenanigans since have brought them to notorious scrutiny, and we had to round them up again.

The Roadhouse Posse has done it! These cats can really run, but a promise of food brought them to us.

On June 13th, at 8PM, the WANTED gang will be tried again. This time they have no defense.

All they will have are their reputations and performance abilities to bring to you, the jury, who will decide their fate as to whether or not they are acceptable to musical society or should be strictly kept under lock and key at the Salem Roadhouse Café, never to be unleashed upon unsuspecting audiences again, unless under supervision.

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IT'S NEIGHBOR VS. NEIGHBOR AS BITTERNESS CONTINUES A CHRONOLOGY OF THE REVOLUTION (PART VI) 1778-1779

Submitted by Al Shipley, City Historian and Rahway Library Research Consultant

The major confrontations were over in the Rahway/Spantown area by the end of 1777, yet hostilities continued even after both armies moved into other strategic positions to the north. Raids, assaults, and killings remained part of daily life in this still dangerous location. Loyalists who remained in town were easy targets for the rebels and rebels were constantly wary of harassment from the angry Loyalists who lived in towns to the south and east.

To protect the rebels, groups known as Councils of Safety - or more popularly Sons of Liberty - were organized. Most members were men who served and fought in the local militia. These Councils became the watchdogs and acted as both judge and jury in all "legal" matters involving the Loyalists. It was common practice for these groups to confiscate property of anyone convicted of being loyal to the crown and then turn it over to one of their own. One such incident involved a young man named Ichabod Oliver who had joined the British Army in the fall of 1776. Upon reaching his eighteenth birthday, he became the legal owner of a large portion of land in Rahway. However, since he was a known loyalist and considered dangerous to the American cause, his rights to the property were overturned and his land given to the rebels.

The confiscation of property as well as other injustices carried out against the Loyalists made them extremely troublesome. They were particularly dangerous since they were familiar with the roads and highways, the homes of prominent citizens, and which barns were well-stocked. One account of an indigent woman who was robbed by the British of half a pound of loaf sugar and nutmeg serves as an example. Besides being poor, the woman was in her last month of pregnancy and would be in need of such items. She later wrote a warning to those of her sex living near enemy lines to be very careful to keep out of sight of the enemy.

General William Irvine, an officer in the Continental Army who was camped a few miles outside of Rahway, wrote a letter to his wife in



*(above) The remains of Captain Richard Skinner lie in the Rahway Cemetery. The epitaph on his grave stone reads:
In Memory of Captain Richard Skinner
who died June ye 29th 1779,
in the 39th year of his age,
"Behold me here as you pass by, who bled and
died for liberty, from British tirants now care
free, My friends prepare to follow me"*

Pennsylvania concerning the dangers and sufferings of those living in this area. He wrote, "You may think your situation happy indeed, my love, when compared with that of the poor people of this part of our country. It grieves me beyond expression to see the distressed situation - particularly that of the women and children. Murder and rapine await them whenever these barbarians come. Were it possible, I would suffer a thousand deaths rather than see you in the situation some poor gentlemen here are forced to see their wives and daughters left in."

Members of the Council of Safety were also prime targets for Loyalists and redcoats who periodically came into the area on foraging raids or to spy on Council meetings. One such incident attesting to the perilous situation always facing

the rebels was the murder of Richard Skinner. Skinner was captain of the First Regiment of the Middlesex County Militia and in command of a company of 56 men. On July 1, 1779, while presiding over a safety committee meeting at the Crossroads Tavern, which was located on what is today the corner of St. Georges Avenue and Route 27, a messenger entered and handed Skinner a note. He unfolded the paper, read the note, called for a recess, and walked to the tavern's back door. When he stepped outside he was immediately shot and killed by a sniper's musket ball. Hearing the shot, council members rushed out and engaged in a bloody fight with loyalist soldiers. By the time the fight was over, one other council member was killed and 13 taken as prisoners.

Of the many Loyalists who raised havoc, none was more hated and feared than Thomas Long, a schoolteacher in Rahway and a fervent Loyalist. Nicknamed "Bunkeye" because of his large protruding eyes, he was sent to Philadelphia early in the war to serve as an American spy as his allegiance to the crown was not yet known. When American officers discovered Long was actually spying for the British, he became a hunted man. Facts were uncovered that he was responsible for leading many raiding parties and was especially cruel to American prisoners. His reign of terror ended when he was found and captured in a Rahway barn. Long was shortly thereafter tried by court martial, found guilty, and hanged. Before his execution which took place at Kinsey Corner (corner of St. Georges Avenue and Linden Avenue) he was brutally tortured by the people of the town. After Long's burial, the locals exhibited their extreme hatred for "Bunkeye" by digging up his body and making sport of it.

Such was the atmosphere in which the people living in Rahway had to endure. Rebels and Loyalists alike had to constantly remain on guard and "be very careful to keep out of sight of the enemy." Unfortunately, there would be little respite for either side before the end of the war.

(Coming in the July issue - 1780-1783)

MERCHANTS & DROVERS TAG SALE JUNE 13

Saturday, June 13, 2026, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., RAIN or SHINE, Merchants & Drovers Tavern and Museum, 1632 St. George's Avenue, Rahway will be having our annual TAG SALE in the Tavern yard. We will be receiving donations prior to the sale, June 8 - 12 from 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon, with volunteers on hand to assist (please, no clothing, shoes, hats, books, computers or large pieces of furniture). Kitchen items, small appliances in working order, dishes, linens, picture frames, luggage, handbags, small electronics, knick-knacks, home decor, jewelry, etc. all accepted. Call our office at 732-381-0441 with any questions.

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LADYBUGS - LADYBIRD BEETLES

Most people like ladybugs because they are pretty, graceful, and harmless to humans. In many cultures ladybugs are considered good luck, such as Germany. Several cultures even think of ladybugs as good luck charms for anything from marriage to childbirth to the weather to a good harvest.

There are about 5,000 different species of ladybugs in the world. These much loved critters are also known as lady beetles or ladybird beetles.

Farmers and gardeners love them because they eat aphids and other plant-eating pests. One ladybug can eat up to 5,000 insects in its lifetime! Most ladybugs have oval, dome-shaped bodies with six short legs. Depending on the species, they can have spots, stripes, or no markings at all.

Best known in America is the "Seven-spotted" ladybugs which are red or orange with three spots on each side and one in the middle. They have a black head with white patches on either side. Seven-spotted ladybugs are native to Europe but were brought to North America in the mid-1900s to control aphid populations.

Ladybugs are colorful for a reason. Their markings tell predators: "Eat something else! I taste terrible." When threatened, the bugs will secrete an oily, foul-tasting fluid from joints in their legs. They may also play dead or as many Americans call it "play possum".

Birds are ladybugs' main predators, but they also fall victim to frogs, wasps, spiders, and dragonflies.

Ladybugs lay their eggs in clusters or rows on the underside of a leaf, usually where aphids have gathered. Larvae, which vary in shape and color based on species, emerge in a few days. Seven-spotted ladybug larvae are long, black, and spiky-looking with orange or yellow spots. Some say they look like tiny alligators. Larvae grow quickly and shed their skin several times. When they reach full size, they attach to a leaf by their tail, and a pupa is formed. Within a week or two, the pupa becomes an adult ladybug.

Ladybugs are happy in many different habitats, including grasslands, forests, cities, suburbs, and along rivers. Ladybugs are most active from spring until fall. When the weather turns cold, they look for a warm, secluded place to hibernate, such as in rotting logs, under rocks, or even inside houses. These hibernating colonies can contain thousands of ladybugs.

The name "ladybug" was coined by European farmers who prayed to the Virgin Mary when pests began eating their crops. After ladybugs came and wiped out the invading insects, the farmers named them "beetle of Our Lady." This eventually was shortened to "lady beetle" and "ladybug."

NASA even sent a few ladybugs into space with aphids to see how aphids would escape in zero gravity.



(above) *Rahway citizen Bob M. pulled this collection out of the Rahway River during the Wheatina Park Earth Day clean up.*

Rutgers experts identify ladybugs as critical beneficial insects for gardens and farms. Renowned for their voracious appetites, adult and larval ladybugs are an invaluable part of natural pest control, consuming thousands of aphids, scale insects, and spider mites over their lifetimes.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension highlights ladybugs as the first line of defense in Integrated Pest Management (IPM), protecting crops like peaches and apples without relying heavily on chemicals.

Additionally Rutgers University-Newark insect experts, such as biologist Dr. Jessica Ware, note that their bright colors ward off predators and advise homeowners to welcome them, as they serve as excellent organic pest control.

INDOOR SWARMS AND OVERWINTERING

As temperatures cool in the fall, ladybugs including invasive species like the Asian multicolored lady beetle swarm the sunny sides of homes seeking warmth to overwinter.

Because they are beneficial, Rutgers experts suggest vacuuming them up and sealing cracks and windows rather than smashing them, which releases a foul-smelling, yellow stain.

Release your vacuumed lady bugs outside under shrubs and hopefully they will be safe until spring.

Then fall arrives and the ladybugs need to find warmth, which is most available inside people's homes – where they often descend in large numbers. Suddenly they're not as cute to many people as they seemed outdoors. But Jessica Ware, an insect expert and assistant professor of biology at Rutgers University-Newark, said having ladybugs indoors serves a very useful



(above) *Past President of The Rahway Garden Club, James Keane, has been researching and answering garden questions since 1995.*

*Visit 'Keane Gardener' blog at:
keanegardener.blogspot.com*

purpose, and humans should welcome their temporary house guests.

"They're actually great to have around," Ware said, "because they're most often predatory and they eat the insects we consider to be pests, especially aphids, soft-bodied insects that feed on vegetation. If you have aphids on any of your houseplants, and you have ladybugs in your house, you'll no longer have aphids and your plants will be fine. Do not kill them. Do not spray them because if you do, then you're destroying some of the natural predators that keep pests in check."

Because ladybird beetles (which Ware pointed out is the insects' actual name) gather in big groups mutually attracted by each other's pheromones they'll often enter just one home in a neighborhood and skip the others. Ware says there is no good way of predicting which house they will want except that they tend to like their environment moist and warm much as we humans do.

Many thanks to Rutgers University-Newark & Rutgers insect biologist, Dr Jessica Ware and National Geographic for their expertise on Ladybugs.

Good luck everybody,

James



Rahway Garden Club

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ADULTS & TEENS PROGRAMS

Interested in volunteering

June 8 at 6:00 p.m.

Calling all teens 13 and up! Interested in volunteering your time here at the library a couple hours a week during the summer? Join us in the Discovery Studio and learn all about the duties and responsibilities of being a Teen Volunteer at RPL!

Crochet Club

June 8 & 22 at 6:00 p.m.

Bring your own projects or learn a new pattern! Recommended for ages 16+.

Our Voices" Book Group

Wednesday 6/10 @ 6:00 p.m.

"Our Voices" Book Group Discussion of "Sky Full of Elephants" by Cebo Campbell in the Discovery Studio.

Juneteenth

Monday, June 15 at 6pm

Teens! Celebrate Juneteenth by creating and decorating your own banner in our Discovery Studio! For ages 13-17.

Show me the Honey

Monday 6/15

Join us in the patio by the Library Cafe for our presentation by local beekeeper Brett Wagner. For adults 18 and over.

Zawadi African Drumming & Dance

Wednesday 6/17 at 6:30 p.m.

by The Art Institute of Middlesex County Historical Division. Free and All are welcome.

Aging - ASK Kiosk

Thursday 6/18 10:00 a.m. - noon

From our table talk series, The Union County Division will be at the library to answer questions from .

Getting JUICED in June

Wednesday 6/24 at 6:00 p.m.

Sample some recipes you can make at home and learn the benefits about key ingredients in the Library Auditorium. To register please visit or call the reference desk at 732-340-1551

Caribbean Heritage Month Celebration

Saturday 6/27 at 1:00 p.m.

Caribbean Heritage Month Celebration featuring a steel drum band with various food tastings. Program starts at noon and band

Movie of the Week "The Mummy"

Monday 6/29 @ 2:00 p.m.

Unearth A Story Movie of the Week "The Mummy" (2017) in the Library Auditorium.

Pack a snack or grab one from us!

Library Cafe

June 29 at 6:00 p.m.

for some Jazz sounds from the 4Plus1 Jazz Band. Open to the public and free to attend. All ages are welcome!

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CAMINO DE ST. JOSEPH WINDS ITS WAY TO ELIZABETH

St. Joseph Social Service Center proudly hosted its inaugural Camino de St. Joseph on Saturday, April 18, 2026, drawing over 160 participants from across Union County and beyond in a powerful show of unity, faith, and support for our neighbors.

Held on the 40th anniversary of the soup kitchen program, the event offered participants a meaningful opportunity to walk in solidarity while raising awareness of the Center's mission. St. Joseph Social Service Center brings people and communities together to serve our neighbors by providing food, health programs, and support services with love, dignity, and compassion.

The day began with a 9 a.m. Mass at the Parish Community of St. Helen in Westfield, NJ, where participants gathered in reflection and fellowship before embarking on the journey. St. Helen's parishioners cooked and served the first soup kitchen meals on April 19, 1986. A meal has been served every Saturday since then.

Following Mass, attendees walked 3 miles to St. John the Apostle Church in Linden, where 4 generations of the Ruggieri family have coordinated the soup kitchen ministry.

After a brief rest, the group walked 3 miles to Warinanco Park in Roselle, and then 3 miles to St. Joseph's in Elizabeth. Additional participants joined at St. John's and Warinanco Park.

Volunteers from the many parishes that help with the soup kitchen and sandwich programs warmly welcomed the walkers and offered

snacks, water, rest and hospitality. The event concluded with a community lunch at St. Joseph's and a celebration of accomplishment and shared purpose among all who participated.

Police from Westfield, Clark, Linden, Roselle, Elizabeth, and the County of Union ensured the safety of participants along the route. Motorcycle and support police from the cities of Linden and Elizabeth provided a secure and well-coordinated escort throughout the day.

The success of the Camino de St. Joseph was made possible through the Camino planning committee. Chaired by Brendan Maher of Westfield, the committee included volunteers from many church partners, along with St. Joseph's staff. Volunteers from the following helped with planning and throughout the day: Holy Trinity and St. Helen's (Westfield), St. John's (Linden), Holy Spirit (Union), St. Agnes (Clark), Church of the Assumption (Roselle Park), St. Michael's (Cranford), Church of the Little Flower (Berkeley Heights), and Immaculate Conception (Elizabeth). County Commissioner Chairman Joseph Bodek joined the opening mass, and Commissioners Lourdes Leon and Joseph Bodek presented a resolution at the lunch.

"This event reflects the strength and compassion of our community," said Bernadette Murphy, Executive Director of St. Joseph's. "Together, we walked not only in faith, but in solidarity with those we serve every day. We are

grateful to all who prayed, walked, volunteered, and donated food and funds."

St. Joseph Social Service Center extends its deepest gratitude to all who participated and supported this inaugural Camino. If you would like to make a donation to the 40th anniversary appeal, please visit sjeliz.org/donate.

For more information about St. Joseph Social Service Center and future events, please contact Mary Phillips at mphillips@sjeliz.org or visit our website at sjeliz.org.

"Share your bread with the hungry and shelter the homeless poor" - (Isaiah 58)



(above) Walkers began the Camino from St. Helen's Church in Westfield.



(above) Walkers arriving at Warinanco Park in Elizabeth.

Courtesy Photos

Cranford

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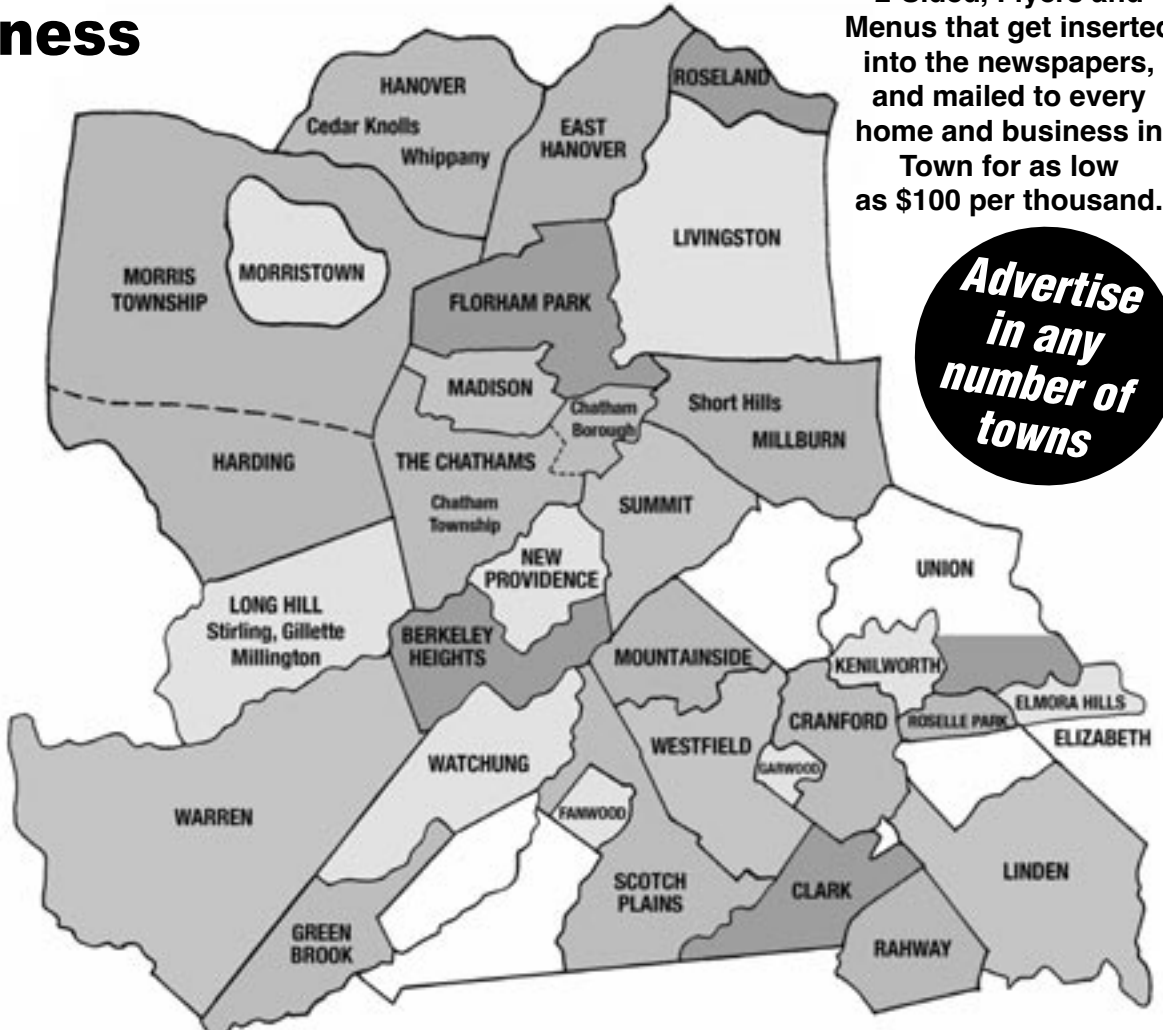
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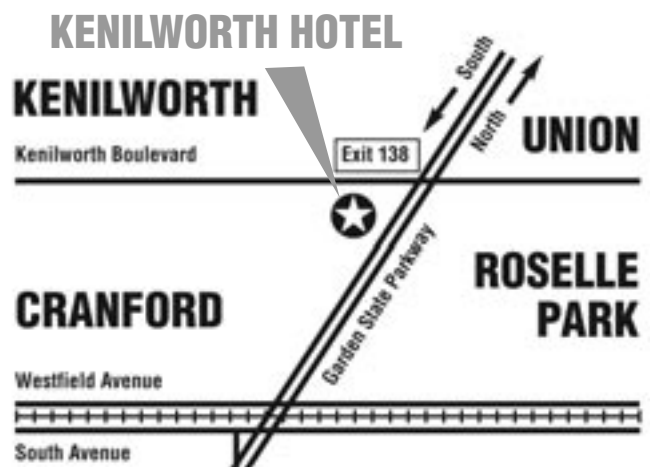
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