


# CRANFORD MONTHLY NJ

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## ANNUAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SPECIAL OLYMPICS TORCH RUN

### Cranford Police Department

On June 5, 2026, Tommy Wisnewski and members of the Cranford Police Department joined police officers and other community members from across the state to be Guardians of the Flame in the 43rd Annual Law Enforcement Torch Run to benefit Special Olympics of New Jersey. Over 3,000 Police Officers took to their local streets to raise funds and awareness for this incredible organization. They carry the "Flame of Hope" which officially leads into the Special Olympics Summer Games. This event helps raise awareness and funds to support year-round sports training and competition opportunities for thousands of athletes with intellectual disabilities throughout New Jersey.

### ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN®

The Law Enforcement Torch Run® (LETR), initiated in 1981 by Wichita Police Chief Richard LaMunyon, has grown into a worldwide movement. What began as a humble initiative has transformed into a global beacon of hope and unity, driven by the collective efforts of law enforcement volunteers. Known as Guardians of the Flame, these dedicated individuals join hands with Special Olympics athletes to champion the cause of acceptance and inclusion for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The essence of LETR lies in its community-centric approach. Law enforcement members from various levels, including federal, national, state, provincial, local, and even military sectors, come together to support this noble cause. Their collaboration extends beyond mere participation; it signifies a commitment to fostering a society where everyone, irrespective of their abilities, is embraced and celebrated.



(above) Selfie of Cranford Police Department officers running in the Annual Law Enforcement Torch Run to benefit Special Olympics of New Jersey.

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# CRANFORD MONTHLY NJ

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# KATHY WILLIS HONORED FOR 38 YEARS OF SERVICE TO CRANFORD

During a Cranford Family Care event to celebrate their 90th Anniversary, Christopher D. Sands, President of the New Jersey Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, presented Kathy Willis with the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution Bronze Good Citizenship Medal, "In recognition of notable services on behalf of our American principles".

The Bronze Good Citizenship Medal is a multi-purpose award designed to recognize individuals whose community achievements are noteworthy. Kathy's service to Cranford while serving as a volunteer at Cranford Family Care, and then as its Executive Director, spanning over 38 years, surely meets that criteria!



(above) Cranford residents Cathy Willis and Chris Sands

Courtesy Photo

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## SEVEN VOLUNTEERS SWORN IN AS CHILD ADVOCATES FOR FOSTER YOUTH



(above) Rachel Hajjar of Cranford was recently sworn in as a child advocate for foster youth.

Courtesy Photo

### CASA of Passaic and Union Counties

Rachel Hajjar of Cranford is among seven volunteers to take an oath to stand beside children in foster care as advocates during some of the most uncertain moments of their lives. Union County Superior Court Judge Rosalba Comas presided over the swearing-in ceremony for the newest Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) with CASA of Passaic and Union Counties. Each volunteer will now be assigned to advocate for a child or sibling set in foster care.

Her classmates include Crystal Coleman of South Plainfield, Maria de Gannes of Linden, Julie Harnisher of Westfield, Elizabeth Maher of Summit, and Barbara Monaghan of Westfield.

For children navigating foster care, CASA volunteers are often the one consistent adult focused solely on their best interests both inside and outside the courtroom. Now equipped to advocate for infants, children, and teens who have experienced abuse or neglect, the volunteers join a network of dedicated advocates serving children across Passaic and Union counties. CASA volunteers provide consistent support, gather information from the adults in the youth's life, and make informed recommendations to help ensure their needs and well-being remain at the forefront daily and in court decisions.

Said Erica Fischer-Kaslander, Executive Director of Child Focus, the nonprofit organization that oversees the CASA program,

“Every child deserves at least one adult who shows up consistently, listens carefully, and refuses to let them fall through the cracks. These seven volunteers have made an extraordinary commitment to children who urgently need stability, encouragement, and someone wholly dedicated to their future. Their advocacy can, and will, change life trajectories.”

No prior knowledge of child welfare is required to become a CASA volunteer; comprehensive training equips volunteers with the skills necessary to advocate effectively. Volunteer advocates – all of whom bring their own unique life experiences – visit their assigned child regularly and communicate with caregivers, educators, caseworkers, and others before making informed recommendations to the court.

More volunteer advocates are still urgently needed across Passaic and Union counties to help ensure every child in foster care has a dedicated voice in court and the community.

CASA of Passaic and Union Counties is a program of Child Focus, which prioritizes the needs and well-being of infants, children, and teens impacted by, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.

For details about becoming a CASA volunteer, call 973-832-4002, e-mail [info@casapassaicunion.org](mailto:info@casapassaicunion.org), or visit CASA of Passaic and Union Counties' website at [casapassaicunion.org](http://casapassaicunion.org).



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# A RECORD \$55,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED BY CRANFORD JAYCEES

The Cranford Jaycees are proud to award a record \$55,000 in scholarships to the Class of 2026! These Cranford students have served our community and demonstrated strong leadership and character qualities in addition to their academic accomplishments. Best wishes to all the winners and to the Class of 2026! And thank you to the community and our sponsors for supporting our events, like the 2026 Cranford Jaycees Firecracker 4-Miler & Fun Run, which has allowed us to expand our scholarship program.

## AND THE WINNERS ARE (SOME ARE PICTURED)

- Elena Amitie
- Grace Lyubarsky
- Charles Santomauro
- Joshua Ashinoff
- Shannon Morin
- Robert Schiffl
- Oliver Capozzi
- Anna Mufti
- Kiran Shusterman
- Natalie Ciampi
- Sabrina Noll
- Liam Soyka
- James Giblin
- Adelena Paine
- Wyatt Timpson
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# WHY YOUR FITNESS GOALS KEEP FAILING YOU (AND WHAT ACTUALLY WORKS)

When it comes to getting fit, you may think only about the big picture: losing 20 pounds, running a 5K, or dropping two sizes. These are what we call "outcome goals"—they're all about the end result. While these goals are great for giving you direction, they're not always the best way to stay motivated or see lasting success. Instead, focusing on small, daily habits, known as "process goals," might be the smarter way to reach your fitness dreams.

## THE PROBLEM WITH OUTCOME GOALS

Outcome goals sound exciting because they focus on a big win—but here's the catch: they're not always fully in your control. For instance, you might work hard all week but not see the scale budge as much as you'd like. Or life might throw a curveball—a busy schedule, a sprained ankle, or just plain old fatigue—and suddenly, your goal feels out of reach. When that happens, it's easy to feel frustrated and lose motivation.

## THE POWER OF PROCESS GOALS

Instead of zeroing in on the finish line, process goals focus on the steps you take to get there. These are the small, actionable habits you can control, like taking a 20-minute walk after dinner, drinking more water, or eating an extra serving of veggies each day.

Process goals might not sound as thrilling, but they're incredibly effective because they help you build consistency, give you daily victories, and create healthy habits that stick.

Janice M., from Cranford, put it this way, "I had always been focused—obsessed, really—with the numbers on the scale. I could never hit my goal, and I would give up and gain even more weight. It wasn't until the coaches at ALF taught me how to work on the process instead. Now I make sure I get in my steps and workouts consistently, and the weight is falling off."

Here's why process goals work so well:

1. They Keep You Motivated. Every time you check off a small win—like completing a workout or packing a healthy lunch—you get a boost of confidence. This keeps you going, even when the scale or other results aren't moving as quickly as you'd hoped.
2. They're Flexible. Life happens, but process goals allow you to adjust. Can't make it to the gym? No problem—you can take a brisk walk around your neighborhood instead. You're still moving toward your goal.
3. They Build Better Habits. Focusing on actions, like exercising three times a week or cutting back on sugary drinks, helps you create a healthier lifestyle overall. These habits will serve you long after you've reached your initial goal.



4. They Reduce Stress. Focusing on the process makes you less likely to get caught up in things you can't control, like a bad weigh-in or an off week. This takes the pressure off and makes the journey more enjoyable.

## REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE: WALKING FOR FITNESS

Let's say your outcome goal is to lose 15 pounds. Instead of focusing solely on the number on the scale, set a process goal of walking 30 minutes a day, five days a week. This is something you can do regardless of what the scale says. As you stick with it, you'll work toward your weight-loss goal and improve your energy, mood, and overall health.

## START SMALL, STAY CONSISTENT

The best part about process goals? They're manageable. You don't have to overhaul your life overnight. Start with one or two small habits, like stretching before bed or swapping out chips for fruit at lunch. Once those become second nature, you can add more.

## THE TAKEAWAY

Big goals can be inspiring, but it's the little steps you take every day that truly lead to success. By focusing on what you can control—your habits—you'll stay motivated, build lasting routines, and enjoy the process of getting healthier. So, the next time you think about your fitness goals, don't just dream about the finish line. Start by lacing up your sneakers and taking that first step—literally.

Marty Musikant and his wife, Kim, own Active Life Fitness, a fitness community dedicated to helping adults in Cranford, Westfield, Clark, Garwood, and surrounding towns get stronger, move better, and live more actively. For more information, call (908) 389-8009 or visit [activelifefitness.net](http://activelifefitness.net).

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## CELEBRATE AMERICA'S 250TH B-DAY JULY 3

As part of the many activities planned to celebrate our Country's Semiquincentennial, the Cranford Township 250th Revolution NJ Committee will be holding an AMERICA 250 Birthday Celebration on Friday, July 3, 2026. The free event will run from 1 - 6 p.m. at Hanson Park in Cranford (if inclement weather it will be held indoors at the Cranford Recreation Center at 375 Centennial Avenue, Cranford).

This Birthday Celebration will include demonstrations, displays, games, crafts, food trucks, music, giveaways, photo booth, facepainting, and entertainment. The Committee is working with local historic houses and community groups to highlight Colonial Times, the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War in New Jersey. Sponsored activities include Quill Pen writing (Merchants and Drovers Tavern), Tin Punching (Miller-Corey House), and Colonial Games and Toys (Boxwood Hall). Some of the many local groups participating will be the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, Girl and Boy Scouts,

Cranford86, and the Cranford Historical Society.

This program is made possible in part by a 2026 HEART (History, Education, Arts Reaching Thousands) Grant from the Union County Board of County Commissioners. The Cranford 250 Committee invites additional groups or individuals to sponsor this event. Visit our website at [cranfordnj.org/Cranford250RevNJ](http://cranfordnj.org/Cranford250RevNJ) for more information.



Courtesy Photo

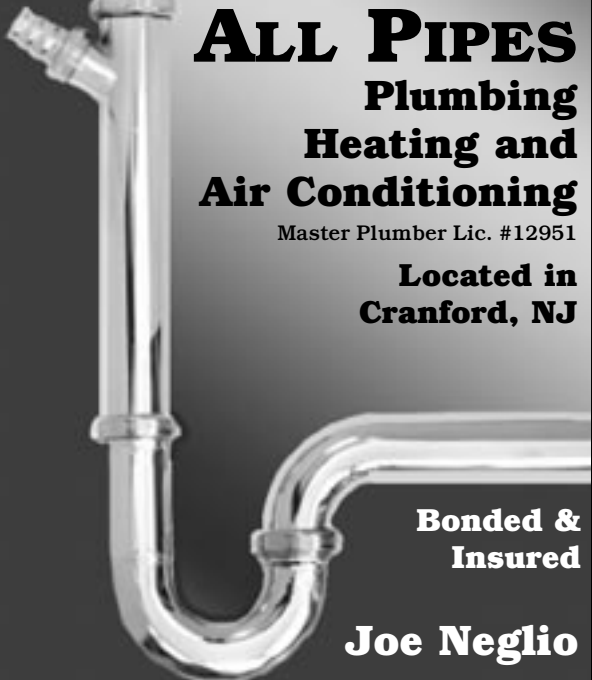
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# TV35 WINS 14 AWARDS, FOUR FIRST PLACE AT 2026 JAG AWARDS

## Township of Cranford

Cranford's local access channel TV35 walked away with numerous awards and commendations at the Jersey Access Group's (JAG) annual awards for excellence in local television.

The station won 14 awards, four of them for top place, in categories such as public parade, community award presentation, community development and concerts. The awards ceremony was the crowning event of JAG's annual statewide conference held in Edison on May 13, 2026.

"We are proud to have represented Cranford so well," said Station Manager Don Smith. "We all work hard to shed light on Cranford's stories and its people so we can grow as a community."

The shows capturing first place were the station's coverage of the first St. Patrick's Day parade, by Don Smith, Chris Hoffman, Mike Brown, intern Olivia Burtryn, announcers Mary Kate Santulli and Lori Talbot and crew Erik Hastrup; Dead Aire concert and also Father's Day Fishing Derby by Michael Vastano; and American Trash Open at Cranford Theater with

Rob Lasardo interview by Don Smith, Chris Hoffman and host Lori Talbot.

The station also captured second place awards for the Life with Lori premiere, Johnstone ribbon cutting and TV35 bulletin board. Third place honors went to On Call, a day with Cranford First Aid Squad; HealthWatch -- Stroke Awareness, with Dr. Curran and guest; Cranford Football versus Summit; Township Committee meeting, February 4; Life With Lori Celebrates the Season; Chopped premiere, and NJ In Focus with Assemblywoman Linda S. Carter.

"The Township is very proud of all of TV35's accomplishments over the past year," said Township Administrator Lavona Patterson. "Receiving more than 14 awards from the Jersey Access Group is a wonderful way to both honor and recognize the hard work of a dedicated team of people. TV35 works incredibly hard, all year long, to bring meaningful programming to the Cranford community and beyond. We are thrilled that their work is being recognized."

TV35, located on the first floor of the municipal building, serves the Township of

Cranford and focuses on broadcasting and streaming government meetings, township events and information, and community activities. TV35 produces over 300 videos a year.

You can watch TV35 on Channel 35 on Comcast and Verizon and in HD on Channel 2147 on Verizon. Content also is on Cranford TV35 Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit.

"TV35 had an incredible showing at the JAG Awards this year, and it's well deserved," said Township Commissioner Gina Black. "Fourteen awards is no small accomplishment, and it speaks to the team's commitment to producing high quality, meaningful programming for our residents. Cranford relies on TV35 to tell our stories and keep people engaged, and this recognition highlights just how well they do it."

Jersey Access Group is a nonprofit, professional organization advocating for the right to access local news and information via public, education and government media. It serves municipalities, schools and independent producers and assists with technical questions, franchise renewal and legislative issues.



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# SUMMER PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES

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## Annual Summer Reading Challenge

from June 22 through August 14

Options for readers of all ages: early literacy (ages 0-4), children (ages 5+), teens (ages 10-18), and adults! This year's theme is "Unearth a Story" and it's all about dinosaurs and archaeology. Track your reading to earn fun prizes and a chance to win one of our grand prize drawings. Stop by the library or visit [cranfordlibrary.beanstack.com](http://cranfordlibrary.beanstack.com) to get started.

### Summer Reading Party

Thursday, August 6.

We'll have crafts, music, and a special visit from Dinosaurs Arise! Report any amount of time to the library before Wednesday, August 5 if you'd like to attend. The last day to claim prizes is Friday, August 21.

### Kids beginner-friendly Dungeons & Dragons

June 11, July 2, July 23, and August 13 from 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Players will work together to explore a fantasy world, solve puzzles, and overcome challenges using creativity and teamwork. No prior experience is needed. Registration is required for each individual meeting.

### Pool Storytimes

Friday, July 17, and August 7 at 3:45 p.m.

Just in time for adult swim, join us at the kiddie pool for a fun storytime! Orange Avenue Pool.

Must be a member of the Cranford Pool to participate.

## Eyes of the Wild

Wednesday, July 1 at 7:00 p.m.

Animal rescue and conservation group Eyes of the Wild will bring some amazing, exotic animals to the Cranford Community Center. This program is best suited to elementary-aged children. No registration required, but space is limited and may be unavailable to latecomers.

### Prehistoric Life of New Jersey

Tuesday, July 7 at 6:00 p.m.

Dinosaurs, Mammoths & Sharks, Oh, My! Examine fossils from New Jersey while exploring changes in terrain, sea level, and climate that influenced our native species over geologic history. Sort through 15-million-year-old sediments to find fossils you can keep! Children ages 7-10. Registration is required.

### Steve Woyce, Unearth a Magical Story

Wednesday, July 8.

Audience volunteers will bring the book How to Catch a Dinosaur to life with magic, help build a dinosaur skeleton, and even see Steve in his own Who Would Win Challenge: Dino Vs. Magician! This program is best suited to elementary-aged children and meets on No registration is required, but space is limited and may be unavailable to latecomers.

### Storybook Woods

July 9, 16, and 23 at 9:30 a.m.

Get outside for a morning of stories and songs! This all-ages storytime series meets at Hanson Park. Please bring something to sit on. This outdoor storytime is weather permitting and will be cancelled if for inclement weather.

### Fossil Fun

Thursday, July 9 at 5:30 p.m.

Learn about fossils and participate in hands-on interactive arts & crafts activities with the Rutgers Geology Museum! This program is for children ages 6-18.

### Kids Can Cook

Monday, July 13 at 6:00 p.m.

Children ages 7 and up are invited to this fun cooking class, happening on This month we'll learn how to make Viking Bread, a recipe that's been around since Viking times. While it bakes, we'll learn how to write our names in Viking Runes. This event meets in the Cranford Community Center, registration is required.

### Mysteries of the Maya

Tuesday, July 14 at 6:00 p.m.

Travel back in time to explore the fascinating world of the ancient Maya! Kids will discover Mayan culture through crafts, games, and stories inspired by one of history's most amazing civilizations. This program is for children ages 7+

### Storyface-a-Saurus Show

Wednesday, July 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for this exciting storytelling show featuring live, intricate face painting! Stories include folktales about ancient creatures like crocodiles, sharks and legendary dragons. This program is best suited to elementary-aged children and meets on No registration is required, but space is limited and may be unavailable to latecomers.

## Dino Shadow Art

Thursday, July 16 at 4:00 p.m.

Paint a background for a dinosaur silhouette and make show-stopping dino-art! This program is for children ages 7 and up. Registration required.

### Toشو-con

Saturday, July 18, 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Join us on for a full day of panels, programs, special guests, crafts, artist alley, dance parties, cosplay contest and more in celebration of anime, manga, comics and pop culture! This free program is open to everyone and will have events for all ages throughout the day!

### Mini Dino Terrarium

Monday, July 20.

We'll make our own tiny night light terrariums with recycled materials and mini dinosaurs. This program is for children ages 7 and up. Registration required.

### Zoophoria

Wednesday, July 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Join Zoophoria NJ and embark on a hands-on adventure interacting with reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. This program is best suited to elementary-aged children. No registration is required, but space is limited and may be unavailable to latecomers.

### Reading Buddies

Tuesday, July 7, 14, 28,

August 4, 11, and 18 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Emerging readers ages 4-7 are invited to practice their skills at the library! Read out loud to a trusted teen. No registration is required.

### Messy Storytime

Friday, July 24 at 10:15 a.m.

Listen to a fun story and create a themed craft. Dress for a mess! This program is for children ages 2 and up, registration is required.

### Edible Dino Bone Hunt and Storytime

Monday, July 27.

We'll read some fun dinosaur books and make our own mini edible dinosaur dig with pudding, cookies and white chocolate dino bones. This program meets in the Cranford Community Center. Ages 4 and up, registration is required.

### Reading is Dino-Mite Magic Show

Wednesday, July 29 at 7:00 p.m.

Reading Is Dino-Mite is a dinosaur themed show filled with magic, comedy, puppets, storytelling, and tons of audience participation. There will be dinosaurs and lots of prehistoric fun, too! No registration is required.

### The Amazing Generation Book Club



Wednesday, August 12, from 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Let's dive into The Amazing Generation and share great discussions, pizza, crafts, and an escape room! This book club is for children ages 8-12. Registration is required.

### Tea Rex Party

Monday, August 24 at 6:00 p.m.

Come dressed in your finest tea party clothes (or your favorite dino shirt) and hear a story, nibble on some cookies and learn some proper tea etiquette. This program meets in the Cranford Community Center. Ages 4+, registration required.

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# CRANFORD LIBRARY ADULT JULY PROGRAMS

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## Junk Journaling

Thursday, July 2, at 6:30pm

Join us at our new monthly program to create and add to your very own junk journal! Please visit our website for more information.

## Romance Readers Book Club

Monday, July 6, at 7pm

Join us for our Romance Readers Book Club. Visit our website for this month's book. If you don't want to read that book, feel free to come anyway to discuss whichever romance you've recently read.

## Lit Cafe

Saturday, July 11, at 10:15am

Literary Café is a book chat program. The format is simple: Bring a few of your recent favorite books and tell the other members of the group what you like about them. There is no required reading, and you will have the opportunity to learn about books recommended by other group members. Admission is free and all are welcome. Light refreshments provided by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library. Attend in person or on Zoom.

## Wednesday Morning Adult Craft

July 15, at 10am

Join us for crafts! Visit our website to register and for more information about this month's craft. Sponsored by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library.

## Trivia Night

Wednesday, July 15, at 7pm

Join us for another fun evening of trivia! This free event is hosted by the Friends of the Cranford Public Library! Join us in the Community Room on the first floor of the Community Center! Feel free to bring your own snacks and (non-alcoholic) drinks. Prizes awarded to the winning team. Please visit our website or contact the library to register.

## Tosho-con

Saturday, July 18, 10am-4pm

It's our 4th annual Cranford Tosho-con! Join us for a full day of panels, programs, special guests, crafts, artist alley, dance parties, cosplay contest and more in celebration of anime, manga, comics and pop culture! This free program is open to everyone and will have events for all ages throughout the day!

## Books and (Coffee) Brew

Monday, July 27, at 2pm and 7pm

Join us for our monthly book discussion at The Morning Roast! Coffee and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase. Registration is recommended and can be done through the Library website.

## Readers' Forum Book Club

Monday, July 27, at 7pm

All are welcome to join this book club! Additional copies are available at the Circulation Desk.

## Genealogy: In Introduction

Thursday, July 30, at 7pm

Join us for an engaging and informative presentation by fellow Cranfordian Steve Albert. Although an amateur, Steve has learned a lot over the years. This talk is a high level introduction about how you can start learning about your family tree for free before committing to paid services. He will also talk about what sorts of resources are available for those who might want to know more or even just wonder what genealogy is all about and the kinds of amazing discoveries and connections you can make.

## Senior Tech 1:1 Appointments

Tuesdays, between 1 and 2:30pm

Sign up for a 15 or 30 minute session and ask one of our librarians your tech questions! Feel free to bring your phone, tablet or other device. In partnership with Cranford Community Center. Registration is required.



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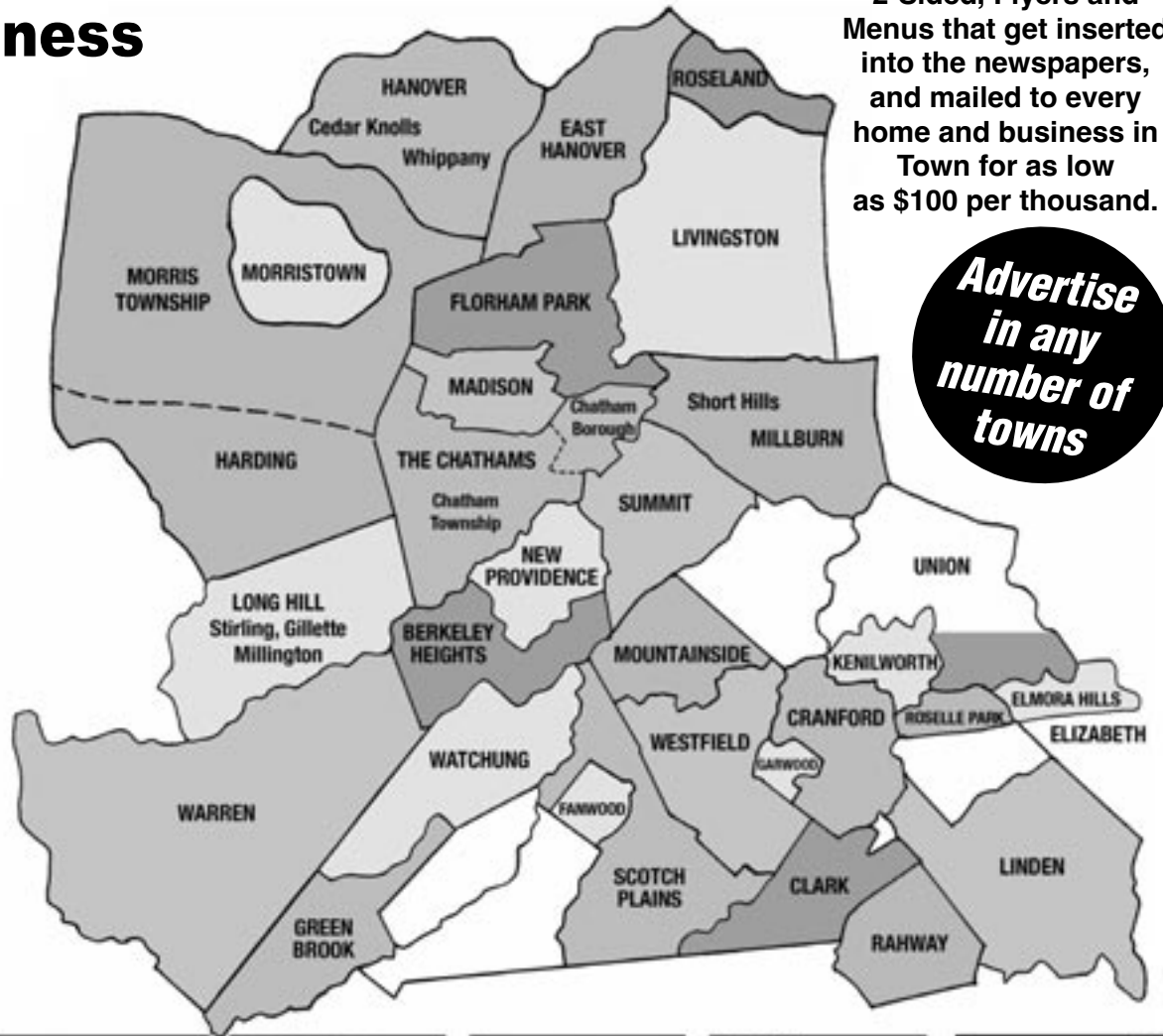
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# PASSING THE TORCH AT 250: HOW NORTH JERSEY'S NEWEST ENLISTEES CARRY AMERICA'S LEGACY FORWARD

*Martha Papson Garcia, Ed.D. (U.S. Army)  
Director of Veterans Services, ROTC Liaison,  
Fairleigh Dickinson University*

Veteran organizations often serve as the backbone of community support for those who have served in the military. Yet, one group is uniquely transforming how America honors its newest service members—before they even don the uniform. While traditional groups like the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the American Legion focus primarily on veterans returning from conflict, Our Community Salutes (OCS) dedicates its mission entirely to the next generation of patriots: high school seniors stepping into the U.S. Armed Forces.

As communities across the nation prepared for Fourth of July celebrations and looked forward to America's milestone 250th birthday, the work of Our Community Salutes of North Jersey stood as a powerful reminder of what local support truly meant.

Founded in 2009 by educator and Army veteran Dr. Kenneth Hartman, OCS was created to fill an important gap in community recognition. While college-bound seniors receive enthusiastic decision-day applause and student-athletes draw local headlines for signing with sports teams, military enlistees often quietly slip away to basic training without public acknowledgment. Our Community Salutes ensures these young men and women are the first to hear a collective "thank you" from their hometown.

The organization operates on a three-pronged

support model. For enlistees, public recognition ceremonies provide resources, mentorship, and a sense of pride to ease their transition into active duty. For families, educational tools, community connections, and peer networks that help parents and siblings navigate the military journey. For communities, a collaborative platform uniting local business leaders, veterans, educators, and elected officials to honor local defenders.

Each spring, the North Jersey chapter of OCS brings this essential mission into focus. Recently, the group hosted its 10th Annual Enlistee Recognition Ceremony at Fairleigh Dickinson University's Florham Campus in Madison, New Jersey.

At this high-profile event, more than 90 high school seniors from across northern New Jersey were honored as they committed to enlist in the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, or National Guard. Surrounded by active-duty military leaders, veterans, local dignitaries, and emotional families, these young patriots received a formal send-off recognizing their induction into the elite "less than 1% club" of Americans who wear the uniform. To further support families, OCS introduced programs like OCS Connect, designed specifically to build community for those at home during their loved ones' military journey.

As America approaches its Semiquincentennial—its 250th birthday—the thread connecting these North Jersey enlistees, today's veterans, and the original patriots of the

Revolutionary War becomes profound. It is an unbroken chain of everyday citizens choosing extraordinary sacrifice.

In 1776, the Continental Army was built by farmers, blacksmiths, and tradesmen who swapped civilian tools for muskets to defend the ideal of freedom. Many marched through northern New Jersey, known as the "Crossroads of the Revolution," enduring hardships such as brutal winters in Morris and Bergen counties. Today's veterans have inherited the responsibility of maintaining peace through decades of global conflict. Now, these high school enlistees—stepping onto the same historic Jersey soil—carry forward that legacy by voluntarily safeguarding American liberty. Just as only about 3% of colonists fought for independence, today's service members represent a committed minority protecting the majority.

Many historical battles that were won long ago are celebrated on the Fourth of July. But organizations like Our Community Salutes remind us that freedom is an active, ongoing relay race. By honoring the new generation of military enlistees, OCS ensures that the legacy of American liberty remains vibrant.

The act of honoring veterans isn't just about looking back - it is an investment in the future of the nation. Through grassroots support and community recognition, these young patriots receive a powerful message: their sacrifice is valued, their service is celebrated, and their legacy is America's ongoing story.



(above) Our Community Salutes of North Jersey 2026, High School Enlistees

Courtesy Photo

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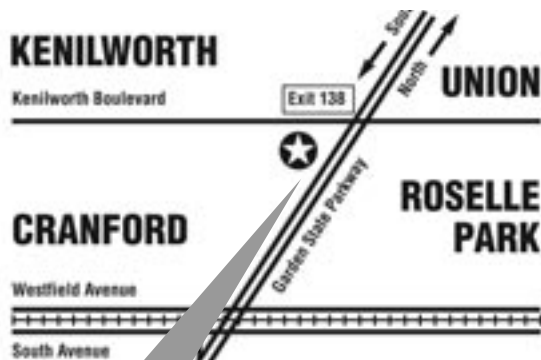
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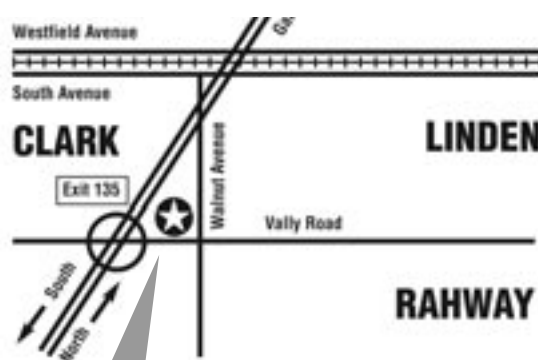
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