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Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

NJ

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"RIDGE RACERS" WIN BIG AT STEM RACING COMPETITION

The Ridge Racers

The Ridge Racers, a STEM-based competitive team comprised of middle school 6th grade students from Valley View (Brandon Seto, Brian Hannan, Caleb Cua, Jonas Bratton, Max Mayers, Noah Harvey) and an elementary 4th grade student from Bayberry (Sophia Seto) was led by adult team leader Mr. Alex Seto, recently represented Watchung and the state of New Jersey at the STEM Racing Nationals in Charlotte, NC on April 13-15, 2026.

After months of hard work utilizing CAD software and engineering principles to design high-performance model vehicles (Please see "1-Ridge Racers Stem Racing Cars), the team brought home four major awards in the development class:

1st Place – Knock Out Race: A testament to the team's precision engineering and tactical speed on the track. (Please see "2- National 1st Knockout Race Champion" and "3- Driver Launches Stem Racing Car at Nationals" - Jonas Bratton) 3rd Place – Overall: Recognizing the Ridge Racers as one of the top-performing development class teams in the nation. (Please see "4-National 3rd Place Award and 5- National 3rd Place Champions Team Photo" from left to right - Brian Hannan, Sophia Seto, Brandon Seto, Noah Harvey, and Caleb Cua)

Team Unity Award: Given for the team's outstanding collaboration, communication, and mutual support during high-pressure competition.

Sustainability Award: Awarded for the team's dedication to eco-friendly design and the use of sustainable practices in their engineering process.



This national success follows their previous achievements as "New Jersey State Champions," "2nd Place at the Eastern Regionals," and 1st Place Video Challenge winners.

It is a testament to these young residents' dedication and their commitment to excellence in engineering and teamwork. I have attached high-resolution photos of the team with their awards for your consideration. Please let me know if you need any further details or a formal press release to include this in an upcoming issue.

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ECRWSS



(left, l-r) Noah Harvey, Max Mayers, Jonas Bratton, Brandon Seto, Sophia Seto, Caleb Cua, and Brian Hannan

*****ECRWSSDDM*****
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Watchung Post

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MOUNTAINEERS ARE CENTRAL JERSEY BASEBALL LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

Submitted by Terry MacConnell

The Valley View Middle School Baseball team capped off an amazing season by winning the championship of the Central Jersey B Baseball League. Valley View, who finished in first place during the regular season, defeated the defending champions, Somerville Middle School 8-5 in the tournament final. The Mountaineers, who were seeded #1, received a bye in the first round before defeating Readington Middle School in the semi-finals, 6-5.

Valley View was facing Somerville for the third time this season. After losing 12-2 to the Pioneers in the season opener, the Mountaineers never lost again, finishing the season with a 12-1-1 mark, including an 8-2 win over Somerville later in the regular season. Somerville came into the championship with a 11-2 mark.

After Devon Chatteo needed only seven pitches to retire the side in the top of the first inning, the Mountaineers erupted for six runs in the bottom of the frame. Big hits were provided by Thomas Hacuk's two run scoring double followed by a triple by Shayne Patel. Peter Marcos Morales followed with a sacrifice fly to score Patel. Two Somerville

errors and 2 walks led to two more runs and a 6-0 lead after one inning of play.

The Mountaineers were able to keep Somerville to only one run through the first 6 innings due to some outstanding defensive plays, which included five double-plays, four of which were started by shortstop Zander Williams. Two included grounders up the middle which Williams scooped up touching second before throwing to first for the double plays. Another was a pop up that Williams gloved and then caught the runner off second base, and the last, a routine 6-4-3 double play. Earlier in the third inning with the bases loaded, Chatteo was able to get a comebacker which he quickly threw to catcher Thomas Sharkey who then threw to first baseman Shane Patel to complete the 1-2-3 DP.

Valley View increased their lead to 8-1 with two more runs in the 5th inning on a two run single by Morales. Somerville would score four runs in the top of the seventh inning to cut the lead to 8-5 and with the tying run at the plate on pitch number 109, Chatteo would strike out the last batter and the Valley View Mountaineers were the Central Jersey Baseball B League Champions!

Courtesy Photo



(above) Valley View Middle School Central Jersey Baseball League Champions: Front row: Shyane Patel, Meyer Griffith, Zander Williams, Max Solewski and Devon Chatteo; Back Row: Assistant Coach Terry MacConnell, Head Coach Jack Griffith, Julian Bonilla, Thomas Hauck, Thomas Sharky, Aiden Gilligan, Marcel Gilbert, Arnad Patel, Peter Marco Morales, and Assistant Coach Troy MacConnell

GLP-1 FAILED THIS NEW PROVIDENCE MOM...BUT THEN SHE DROPPED 80 POUNDS AND RAN HER FIRST 5K.

There's something nobody tells you when you start GLP-1. The medication can help you eat less. It can move the scale. For a lot of people, it's a genuine tool that opens a door that felt permanently closed.

But it can also quietly take something you can't afford to lose. Research shows that for many people, 25 to 40 percent of the weight lost on a GLP-1 isn't fat at all — it's muscle. The very tissue that keeps you strong, steady on your feet, and independent as you age.

So here's what Cristina Montero learned the hard way: The medication is not the transformation. It's just the beginning of one — if you do the other parts right.

Cristina is 52, a mom from New Providence, and she's down nearly 80 pounds. Her inflammation markers (the culprit for almost every disease) are finally normal. She runs, carries five-gallon water jugs up the stairs and crossed the finish line of her first 5K without walking a single step.

But she'll be the first to tell you: the shot alone didn't do that. This is her story... and if you're over 40 and currently taking GLP-1, or thinking about it, it may be the most important thing you read this year.

GLP-1 WASN'T ENOUGH ON ITS OWN

Before she started this journey, Cristina was ashamed... and she hid under her clothes.

"I knew how I felt and looked was my fault but I needed help," she said. "I always had an excuse for why I couldn't walk, exercise, or take the stairs. I felt tired and achy often. My doctors would tell me to lose weight and I'd say sure, I'm trying — but never really started. I functioned, yes. But I never realized how much my body missed feeling really great."

The frustrations ran deep. Looking in the mirror and hating how her clothes fit. Her chest size felt unmanageable, leading to upper back pain every single day. After gaining close to 100 pounds during her son's pregnancy, her health had taken a serious turn — arthritis in her knees, autoimmune issues, hypertension, and chronic inflammation that no medication seemed to touch.

"My energy — well, if I was in the middle of the mall and they only had stairs, I'd look for an elevator or just sit and wait," she said. "I was so out of shape for the last 25 years. Always tired, almost every morning waking up with a new pain."

There were moments that were quietly humiliating — the ones she didn't talk about much. If something fell on the floor, she had to ask her kids or husband to pick it up because kneeling caused excruciating knee pain. There were times her back spasms were so severe she got stuck on the floor.

She tried everything. The 3-day tuna diet. Nutrisystem. A staple in her ear. Atkins. Weight Watchers. Paleo. Gluten-free. 21 Day Fix. Factor. Orangetheory. Private trainers. Get In Shape Women. Zumba. Some of them worked temporarily. None of them lasted.

"I was successful in some of them but it never lasted," she said. "I'd start to lose a little weight, then go back to normal habits — and always gain it back and more."

Then came GLP-1.

The first time she tried it, she thought the injection alone would do the work. No meaningful diet changes. No exercise. Just the medication.

"That failed miserably," she said plainly. "Injecting and continuing to eat normal junk didn't move the scale like I expected. It only made me feel sick."

She stopped GLP-1. A few months later she tried again... this time with a completely different mindset. This time, she was mentally ready to include something she'd always avoided: A fitness program with people that knew what they heck they were doing.

THE CONVERSATION THAT CHANGED THE PLAN

Cristina's son, Andres, had been talking to her for years about what lasting change actually requires. When Cristina restarted her GLP-1 journey he helped her understand something that most people on the medication never hear: the drug can reduce your appetite and help with weight loss, but without weight training, a significant portion of what you lose won't be fat — it'll be muscle. As much as 25 to 40 percent of it, according to the research.

And muscle isn't just about looking toned. It's the tissue that protects your bones, keeps you strong, and decides whether the next twenty years of your life are spent independent or needing help. Lose muscle and everything gets harder. Your metabolism slows. You feel weak.

"My son opened my eyes to incorporate weight training and cardio," she said. "That was the piece I'd always been missing."

NOT THIS



THIS



That's when she walked into Gabriele Fitness, a small personal training gym in Berkeley Heights that had a 19 year stellar reputation for helping adults over 40 get in the best shape of their lives. As trainers that always stay on the cutting edge... they knew exactly how to help someone taking GLP-1 maximize their results.

WALKING INTO GABRIELE FITNESS FOR THE FIRST TIME

She arrived embarrassed, scared but quietly hopeful. Like many adults over 40 she was afraid of making her knee pain even worse and was convinced she wouldn't be able to do most of the exercises. And after years of fitness programs that hadn't worked, she was bracing herself to be disappointed again.

What she found was something different than anything she'd experienced before.

She started two days a week. The coaches didn't hand her a generic program and wish her luck. When her knee barked, they modified it. When her back felt it, they adjusted in real time — often before she said a word...because they were watching her face, her movement, the subtle signals her body was sending. And every session was building the one thing the medication couldn't give her back: strength.

"They know when to push and how much," she said. "They recognize when it's an off day and work with me to keep me moving. No more excuses."

For the first time in 25 years of trying, she didn't feel lost in a gym and instead was filled with hope.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GLP 1 AND PERSONAL TRAINING WORK TOGETHER

Once the training clicked alongside everything else, the results that had been stalled for months began to move — and they didn't stop.

Nearly 80 pounds gone. Inflammation markers, elevated for over a decade despite multiple medications, are finally normal. Her doctors, who had been telling her for years to lose weight, are looking at her bloodwork with something close to disbelief.

"Years of taking so many meds could have been avoided with a prescription to a gym with a great group of caring personal trainers"

But the numbers only tell part of the story.

"My clothes fit better and I actually don't hide under them anymore," she said. "I've lost inches throughout my entire body. Occasionally when I'm with my husband and kids, I love showing them how I notice a muscle — how my quads are actually forming. It truly is amazing. It's a change I never thought I'd see."

She's simply a happier person. After she posted a picture recently, a friend reached out to congratulate her for looking so happy and confident — and then told her she'd motivated her to start as well.

"I feel more confident in my clothes and in my own persona," Cristina said. When people see me in person, they tell me I look like a completely different person. A happy and confident woman."

She can kneel now without pain. The woman who used to ask her kids to pick things up off the floor because she couldn't bend down now carries five-gallon water jugs in each hand up the stairs. She hops into her husband's truck without struggling. She wears three-inch stiletto heels. She walks into any store she wants and does a celebration dance in the fitting room when things fit.

These aren't just cosmetic wins. They're the quiet markers of a body that's going to stay strong and independent for decades — getting off the floor on your own, carrying the load, catching

yourself when you stumble. That's what muscle buys you, and it's the one thing no injection can.

And this past September, she stood at the starting line of a 5K, knowing she never had run that far in her life. She was nervous and worried she wouldn't make it.

She crushed it, and didn't stop once. Not even on the hill. "Crossing that finish line without stopping was one of the proudest moments of my life," she said

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM CRISTINA TO ANYONE ON GLP-1 — OR THINKING ABOUT IT

"GLP-1 is a tool. But it's not the secret fix the media is making it out to be. I learned that the hard way the first time around. The gym — real coaching, real structure, real accountability — is what made everything actually work."

I'm not getting any younger, and I want to live long enough to see my grandkids. Most importantly, I don't want to be a burden to anyone. That's what finally got me serious.

Get Started before you feel ready. You don't need to know what you're doing or get in shape on your own BEFORE you hire a trainer... that's what they're for. Just show up and the right gym will take it from there. For me, it's Gabriele Fitness and that one decision changed everything for me. You'll start to feel better than you have in years. Slow and steady works, if you stay consistent.

We all start nervous. Stop waiting for the perfect time and just get up and start."

For Those Who See Themselves... or are worried about someone that would resonate with Cristina's Story — Read This:

Gabriele Fitness has opened 13 spots for local residents to experience their personal training program FREE for 14 days. You'll get 14 days to experience what Cristina found when the missing piece finally clicked into place.

This offer expires soon and is limited to 13 people. To get the full details and see if any spots are still available, scan below or call 908-464-4441



Scan the code or go to refer.gabrielefitness.com/cristina or Call us at (908) 293-9666

P.S. Many people reading this article will be inspired by Cristina yet still feel hesitant to try the program. With anything new, there's always uncertainty — especially with something like a new fitness routine. But if you're not working out right now, or you've been inconsistent (like most people) you've read the exact article you needed to read today because...

Gabriele Fitness has helped thousands of people in this community over the past 19 years. For some, the program has had a life-changing effect, and many members have stayed for nearly two decades.

A large number of them are now in the best shape of their lives (...and 2 decades older) — but they all started in the same place as anyone reading this and considering starting their fitness journey. Because living longer only matters if you stay strong enough to enjoy it.

If you're still hesitant, the link below shares an ocean of success stories from people just like you... who've transformed their lives... and in some cases, the lives of everyone in their family. This is powerful stuff.

<https://gabrielefitness.com/results/>

To get the full details about the Free Personal Training Program and to see if any of the 13 spots are still available scan below...



Scan the code or go to refer.gabrielefitness.com/cristina or Call us at (908) 293-9666

LOCAL STUDENTS HONORED IN AMERICA 250 CONTESTS

Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter DAR
Local students received state and national recognition in contests hosted by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to celebrate America's 250th birthday.

Neil Nikhils, a 10th grade student at Watchung



(above) National contest winner for poetry, Neil Nikhils, with DAR Chapter Regent Nancy Stoll.

Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) in Warren, placed first in the nation in the DAR's Junior American Citizens Contest for his poem, "Dear America." The contest had the theme, "Happy 250th Birthday, America!" with categories in art, writing and community service. Nikhils was presented with his awards at the Watchung Hills Board of Education meeting on June 2.

"These contests were meant to promote the study of American history and to help young people better understand the celebration of America's 250th," said Holly Dunbar, DAR state chairman. "It is not just about celebrating a date on the calendar. It is about the men and women who have sacrificed to obtain and sustain our freedom."

The Patriots of the American Revolution Essay Contest asked high school students to examine the life of a person who lived during the

Revolution. Three WHRHS students were recognized. In her essay, "The Woman Behind the Uniform," Isabelle Walk, grade 11, followed the life of Deborah Sampson, a woman who disguised herself as a man to serve in the Continental Army. Walk's entry received second place on the state level. Shruthi Sridhar, grade 10, received second place on the local level and Carolyn Hockmeyer, grade 11, placed third. The three students received their awards at a DAR chapter meeting on June 9 at Green Brook Town Hall.

Additional DAR awards for youth will be presented at the Somerset County 4-H Fair in August. All of these contest entries were sponsored by Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter DAR. The chapter serves areas of Somerset, Middlesex and Union counties. Visit DAR.org or contact the chapter at ESCchapterDAR@gmail.com.

Courtesy photos

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(above) DAR essay contest winners display their awards. Regent Nancy Stoll, Carolyn Hockmeyer, Isabelle Walk, Shruthi Sridhar, and DAR members Beth Kavanaugh and Clara Barbaz.

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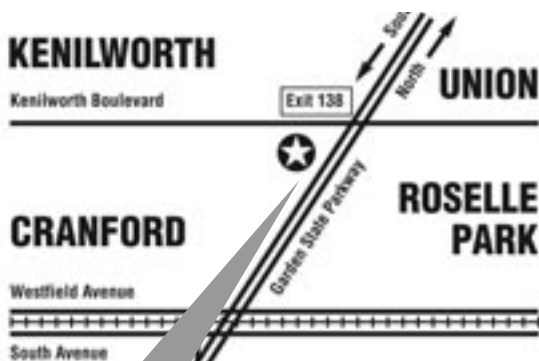
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WATCHUNG LIBRARY JULY 2026 EVENTS

The following programs are hosted at SCLSNJ's Watchung Library, located at 20 Stirling Rd. unless otherwise noted. Some programs require registration. Visit SCLSNJ.org to register today. For additional assistance, call (908) 845-8400. To discover all SCLSNJ has to offer, visit SCLSNJ.org or connect with SCLSNJ on Facebook, Instagram, X or YouTube.

Spin the Wheel Wednesday

(families with children)

Wednesdays, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

BIRTH TO 3 YEARS

Baby/Toddler Storytime

Monday, July 20, 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.
 Introduce your child to the beginnings of storytime in this interactive program featuring rhymes, movement, songs, and stories.

AGES 2-7

Dinosaurs Arise (Offsite Program)

Friday, July 31, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

With caregiver. Hosted at Wilson Memorial Church. Meet and interact with Terry the T-Rex and his other realistic animatronic dinosaur and puppet friends, hear a story, and dig for fossils!

AGES 4 AND UP

Bingo with Miss June

Wednesday, July 22 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Share your love of Bingo with other players as you compete to win prizes.

AGES K-4

Read to a Therapy Dog

Tuesday, July 21, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Practice your reading skills by reading a story to a certified therapy dog. Registration is required.

GRADES K - 5

Paint and Snack: Fruit Bowl Still Life

Tuesday, July 14, 4:30 - 5:15

LEGO® Fun

Wednesday, July 15, 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.

STEAM: Real Fossil Excavation

Tuesday, July 28, 4:30 - 5:15 p.m.

Discover paleontology and dig up real fossil specimen to keep.

GRADES 5-12

Teen Craft and a Pizza - Crystal Sun Catcher

Friday, July 24, 4:30 - 5:15 p.m.

Make a crystal sun catcher. Pizza and drinks will be served.

GRADES 6 - 12

Teen Volunteer Afternoon:

Letters to Community Helpers

Thursday, July 16, 23, 30, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Help the library out for an hour. Attendees will earn one hour of service time.

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Family Storytime: Move and Groove

Monday, July 13, 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Discover songs, stories, and movement in this active storytime.

Family Storytime: Yoga

Monday, July 27, 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Discover songs, stories, and yoga poses in this active storytime.

ADULT

Qigong for Stress Relief

Thursdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Patty Barron will lead gentle sitting and standing Qigong exercises/meditation focusing on body/mind connection.

Hosted at Wilson Memorial Church

Adult Book Discussion

"The Wedding People" by Alison Espach

Thursday, July 9, 6:30 - 7:45 p.m.

Hosted at Wilson Memorial Church

Plan Ahead: Your Decisions Matter

by Office on Aging and Disability Services

Friday, July 17, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

This program helps individuals understand the importance of planning ahead for future health care and financial decisions.

CASTING CALL

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A television and streaming renovation project is seeking a limited number of homeowners in this area with outdated or distressed homes requiring substantial remodeling. This opportunity is for full-scale renovations only-not cosmetic repairs.

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43RD ANNUAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

Watchung PBA Local 193

On June 5, 2026, members of the Watchung 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.

Courtesy Photo



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.

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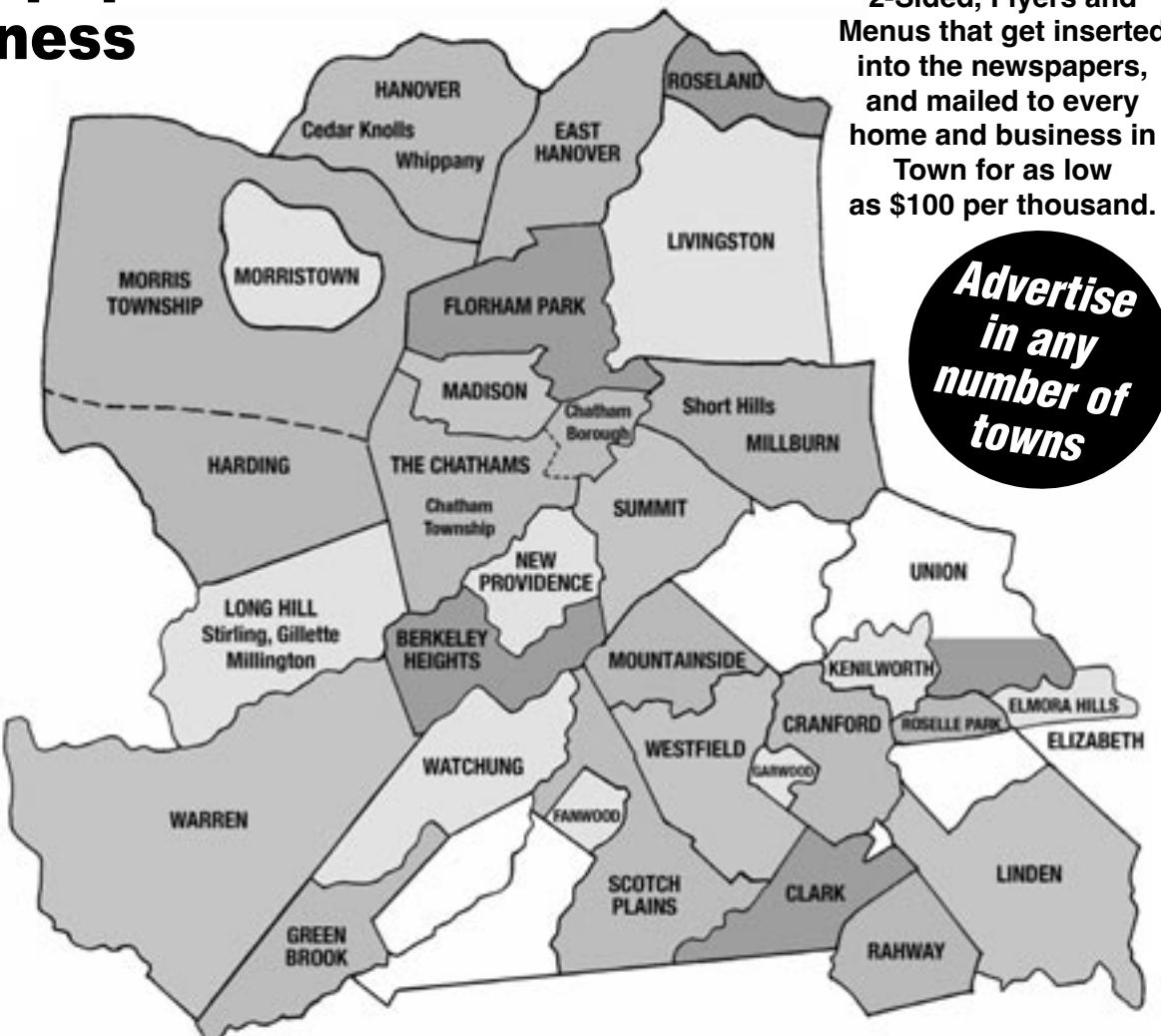
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6 Units 6.5"x6.25" or 10"x4"	320	760	1200	1400	1600	1800	2000	2200	2400	2600	2800
9 HALF PAGE 6.5"x9" or 10"x7"	360	860	1300	1600	1900	2200	2400	2600	2800	3000	3200
12 Units 6.5"x14"	400	960	1400	1800	2100	2400	2700	3000	3300	3600	3900
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UNDER CONTRACT



55 DEER RUN, WATCHUNG, NJ
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UNDER CONTRACT



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2 BD | 3 BA | 1 HB | \$1,250,000



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