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Published by Renna Media

Issue 17 • February 2017

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THREE RESIDENTS AMONG NEW FOSTER CHILD ADVOCATES

On December 14, 2016 Union County Superior Court Judge Daniel R. Lindemann administered oaths to two graduating classes of community members — among them Marty Jeiven, Carol Pinkus and Maria Rodriguez of Scotch Plains — who've stepped up to serve as extra eyes and ears for Family Court judges on cases involving the county's abused, neglected or abandoned children currently in foster care. Of the two classes, one had 19 participants, including CASA of Union County's new executive director, Marla Higginbotham. The second is the result of the nonprofit offering for the first time a five-session, intensive day training at its offices, and included nine volunteers.

The new CASA volunteers completed 30 hours of training. After performing the oaths, Judge Lindemann stepped off the bench and personally thanked each advocate for committing to serve children in need of a voice. Members of the organization's board participated, and each new advocate received a commemorative pin and certificate. During celebratory luncheons that followed, advocates were matched to their new case and learned about their youth.

Volunteers with varied backgrounds and experiences make successful advocates, and these classes are no exception: They range in age from 22 to 75 and most have no prior knowledge of the foster system. They include parents, non-parents and empty-nesters; a recent college graduate and recent retiree; careers include health professionals, school personnel, counselors, legal professionals, former military, business entrepreneurs and homemakers. Languages spoken in addition to English include Spanish, German, French and Yoruba.

Several experienced abuse in their own childhoods.

William "Joe" Goodson of Plainfield, a CASA volunteer years ago who returned to help another child now that his own schedule allowed, said this work is a calling. "I know the situation in the African-American community, and I want to give back. I've been there and done that. We need more positive role models for these children who need us. I can make a difference and be someone they relate to, and that's what I'm looking for." Goodson added that on Thanksgiving, his CASA youth weighed heavily on his mind: "I'm looking at a table full of food and family and thinking of him, wondering, 'Is he ok, today?'"

CASA volunteers have court-ordered access to all parties in a child's life, including foster parents, doctors, caseworkers, therapists and teachers, and incorporate into court reports findings from these contacts as well as time spent with the youth. Volunteers advocate both in the community and court to ensure their youth's needs are met and time in care is as short as possible. There are 600 Union County children currently in foster care; CASA of Union County serves approximately one-third of those and its mission is to provide an advocate for every child that needs one.

For details on future training sessions, several of which incorporate new, flexible options and timeframes, contact Lisa at 908-527-7048 or lporis@casaoofunioncounty.org. To inquire about other ways to support CASA of Union County, contact Marla at 908-527-7041 or marlah@casaoofunioncounty.org.

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(above) New CASA volunteers include Katherina Abreu and Karen Flood of Fanwood; Mureen Allen and Padmini Bagchee of Linden; Anne Bristow and Phyllis Dunlop of Westfield; Quanae Chambliss of Rahway; Julie Exarhakos of Cranford; Aase Forbes of Union; Julie Goldman of Short Hills; William "Joe" Goodson of Plainfield; Nataly Gutierrez of Elizabeth; Maryann Higgins of Mountainside; Marty Jeiven, Carol Pinkus and Maria Rodriguez of Scotch Plains; Katherine Taylor of Somerset; and Ashley Trotter of Piscataway.

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Scotch Plains Monthly is published by Renna Media. 9,500 newspapers are printed monthly and mailed to every business and resident in Scotch Plains.

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PROMOTE YOUR COMMUNITY EVENT

Community service organizations, schools and sports teams are encouraged to submit news of upcoming events or highlights and photos from recent events.

Organizations who are interested in submitting content, please email

editor@rennamedia.com

MAGGIE LAPOLLA SELECTED BEST OFFENSIVE PLAYER AT INTERNATIONAL LACROSSE TOURNAMENT

Scotch Plains' Maggie Lapolla, a freshman at Union Catholic Regional High School, was selected "Best Offensive Player" at Lax Cup 2017, an international lacrosse tournament in The Netherlands, on January 14-15, 2017.

Maggie was a member of USA Team Liberty, a team composed of select high school athletes from all across the country. Team Liberty traveled

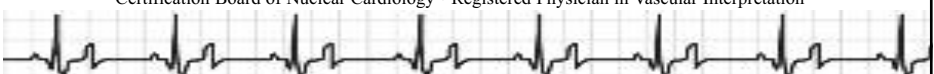
to The Netherlands to compete against local clubs and National selection teams. The Swedish National Team placed first, Team Liberty placed second and Dutch National Team placed third. During Team Liberty's visit they put on teaching clinics for local club teams and youth programs. Maggie plays club lacrosse for Ultimate NJ based in Princeton, NJ.



(above) Maggie Lapolla #12 with USA Team Liberty at Lax Cup 2017 held in The Netherlands in January.

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SCOTCH PLAINS POLICE LT. PEAL SPEAKS AT THE UN

On December 12, 2016, Police Lieutenant Beverley Peal spoke at the United Nations to the African Project of the International Visitor Leadership Program.

The program "Women Leaders: Promoting Peace and Security" for the Africa Regional Project, consisted of women from African countries, whose objectives were highlighting women's role in conflict resolution, national reconciliation and peace keeping, and humanitarian relief operations. Lt. Peal specifically addressed the exploration of best practices for incorporating women's presence in police forces including recruitment, retention and

promotional opportunities.

"The discussion went extremely well with a lot of open dialog about some of the myths and abilities of a female officer's effectiveness in law enforcement, and potential solutions to improving recruitment and advancement of women in law enforcement," said Peal. "This evolved into a discussion of how female officers improve the reporting and investigation of crimes such as human trafficking, sexual abuse and addressing victim issues," she added.

The U.S. State Department has invited Lt. Peal Bev Peal to return in May to speak with another delegation at a security conference.

Lt. Peal is the Regional 2 Coordinator of the International Association of Women Police. As part of her position, which is strictly voluntary, Lt. Peal has traveled to Australia, Wales, Ireland, Trinidad, and Tobago, United Arab Emirates and all over the North American continent promoting Training and Leadership for Law Enforcement. Scotch Plains Police Chief Ted Conley commented, "We are proud that Lt. Peal is a member of the IAWP and represents the Scotch Plains Police Department all around the world."

More information about the IAWP and Lt. Peal's talk can be found at www.iawp.org



(above) Lieutenant Beverley Peal is surrounded by members of the delegation.



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VOLUNTEERS MAKE SANDWICHES FOR LOCAL YOUTH CENTER

Volunteers at Congregation Beth Israel in Scotch Plains prepared sandwiches for Plainfield's Second Street Youth Center (SSYC) on Wednesday, December 14.

The synagogue's Social Action committee organizes monthly sandwich-making sessions for volunteers of all ages to prepare after-school snacks for participants at the youth center. Sandwiches are delivered to the youth center the following day.

The Second Street Youth Center Foundation is a multipurpose non-profit organization that provides educational, vocational, cultural and recreational activities for youth and adults in the Plainfield community.



(above) Max LeBrun, age 9; Ryan LeBrun, age 7; Debi LeBrun; Richard Polonitza; and Greta Polonitza.

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(above) Oz Attar, Israeli Rishon from The Partnership for Jewish Learning and Life; and Debi LeBrun with sons Ryan, age 7, and Max, age 9.

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On Sunday, February 26, the Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce (GWACC) is hosting the Trinitas Regional Medical Center Health and Wellness Expo from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. at Snuffy's Pantagis, 250 Park Avenue in Scotch Plains. The Expo is free to all attendees.

"With the limitless choices of health and wellness practitioners, we thought the public would benefit from learning about local organizations and businesses that can provide valuable resources right in their back yard," said Gene Jannotti, Executive Director of the

GWACC.

In addition to exhibitors, the expo will feature demonstrations and speakers. The keynote will be delivered by Dr. Ben Michaelis, a Manhattan clinical psychologist, author of "Your Next Big Thing", and frequently featured as a mental health expert on The Today Show, Fox News, and MSNBC as well as numerous national publications. Members of the Trinitas staff will also be holding educational sessions on a variety of health topics.

The GWACC has more than 120 member businesses in the wellness industry alone, including yoga studios, personal trainers, juice bars, gyms, holistic practitioners, therapists, life coaches, chiropractors, nutritionists, dentists, and more. Practitioners will be on hand to present information on their products and services.

Exhibitor spaces are only available to members of the GWACC. For more information about this event, including exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities, visit www.geaccnj.com/trinitas-health-expo, contact Heather Bryant at hbryant@gwaccnj.com or call the GWACC at 908-233-3021.



(above) Dr. Ben Michaelis, a Manhattan clinical psychologist will be the keynote speaker.

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SPF RAIDER WRESTLING

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School wrestling team spent a Saturday morning washing Fanwood's fire engines, ambulances and police cars and Scotch Plains police cars. The event, held outside Fanwood Fire Headquarters, was a community service project spearheaded by wrestling head coach Marc Fabiano and Fanwood Police Officer Dan Piccola. The wrestling team currently has 52 members in grades 9-12.



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(above l-r) Rich Fortunato and Rich Wagner of Scotch Plains' Immaculate Heart of Mary parish, who delivered the donations, with volunteers working at Operation Jersey Cares, including Christopher Murray, center foreground, Director of Logistics. An estimated 40 boxes of donations collected for the MLK Day of Service were recently delivered to Operation Jersey Cares in Raritan.



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CONGRATULATIONS SPF HIGH SCHOOL'S MODEL UNITED NATIONS CLUB

SPFHS' Model United Nations club attended their annual conference in Hershey, PA from January 6-8, sou. Members spent three days debating resolutions in their UN committees, working as part of a press corps, or arguing briefs in front of the International Criminal Court or International Court of Justice. Senior Alison Zimmerman served as the Vice Chair of the

International Court of Justice while Deblina Mukherjee and Henry Lewand, also seniors, served as the chairs of the Legal committee and Security Council. Zimmerman was also invited to the Conference on National Affairs (CONA), a conference only a limited number of students are invited to, in North Carolina over the summer. Mukherjee was selected as an alternate to this

conference. Additionally, Justin Greenman, grade 12, took home the award for Premier Delegate in the International Criminal Court. Juniors Alex Joshua, Matthew Lozito, and Vaishnavi Ramanan all won awards for Outstanding Country Research Paper in their respective committees. After all the hard work and dedication, the entire delegation was awarded Outstanding Delegation.



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10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Sign-in/setup starts at 9:00 am

Cranford Community Center

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Registration is \$8. At Door \$12 • Note: this is a non-rated tournament.

Non-scouts (under 18 only) can register by calling Joe Renna at 908-447-1295.

Scouts can use Patriots' Path Council Munsee District Double Knot link
to register on-line at ppbsa.doubleknot.com/event/2031497

Scouts can email Jim Parlapiano jim.parlapiano@hotmail.com for more info.

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CASINO NIGHT SET FOR FEBRUARY 10TH

The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club will hold a Casino Night Fundraiser on Friday, February 10th at 7pm at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Scotch Plains. Tickets are \$60 per person and include a buffet dinner and \$100 in casino play money. All attendees must be at least 21 years of age. Doors will open at 6:30pm and gaming will occur between 7pm and 11pm. Tickets can be purchased on Eventbrite (Eventbrite.com).

Or mail a \$60 check to the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary, PO Box 426, Fanwood 07023, RE: Casino Night. For further information about the event, including sponsorship opportunities, contact Donna D'Annunzio at dannunzio22@gmail.com.

The fundraiser will support the many

charitable activities managed by the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club, a thriving organization with over 50 members. The club currently sponsors local and international causes, as well as scholarships for Fanwood-Scotch Plains High School students. As the club continues to grow, it plans to expand its service initiatives and support for non-profit organizations.

The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club has been serving the community since 1938. Meetings are held on Wednesdays at noon at the Stage House Restaurant and at 6pm at Darby Road on the last Wednesday of the month. Guests are invited to attend and learn about the good that Rotary is doing worldwide. For further information, go to fsprotary.org.

LENAPE CULTURE: AN INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN INDIAN LIFE IN NEW JERSEY

The Lenape occupied New Jersey, southeastern New York, eastern Pennsylvania and northern Delaware at the time of European exploration and colonization. This lecture, the monthly meeting of the Historical Society of Scotch Plains and Fanwood held on Tuesday evening February 28th, presents a variety of authentic artifacts, crafts and clothing to explain Lenape daily life, beliefs, history and creative expression. It also explains the special relationships between the people, the animals and the forest preceding contact with Europeans. The speaker, Beverly A. Friend, of Cherokee heritage, will make her presentation in American Indian attire. Beverly Friend is a protégé of James Lone Bear Revey, American Indian Council of New Jersey.

Everyone is invited to this special meeting on the Lenape generous funding of the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. The meeting starts at 8:00PM on Tuesday February 28th. The meeting is held at the Scotch Hills Country Club located at Plainfield Avenue and Jerusalem Road in Scotch Plains. Refreshments and fellowship follow the meeting.

COLLEGE CLUB SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE FEBRUARY 15TH

The College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains 2017-2018 scholarship application forms can be obtained from the SPFHSC Counseling Office or at www.spfk12.org or at collegeclubfsp.org. Scholarships are awarded annually to women who are

- 1) high school seniors or
- 2) college students, and who plan to pursue a Baccalaureate Degree at a four-year college. Scholarships totaling \$27,750 were awarded for the academic year 2016-17.

To be eligible for consideration, high school applicants must be residents of Fanwood or Scotch Plains.

College applicants must be local residents of Fanwood or Scotch Plains at the time they graduate from high school. Scholarships are awarded based on three primary characteristics of the applicants: financial need, academic achievement, and; character of the applicant.

Application materials must be postmarked ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 15, 2017 to be eligible for consideration.

FREE TAX APPEAL SEMINAR Paying More than Your Fair Share in Property Tax?



Jennifer Jacobus, Esq.

Did your tax bill go down with your home's home value since 2007? Or maybe you always thought you were over taxed!

This Free Seminar, February 28th at the Westfield Y will teach you about the tax appeal system to address these issues and get you the

lower tax bill you may deserve.

And since homebuyers are tax conscious too, you will boost your property value by getting your taxes reduced before you hit the market.

Any homeowner may appeal, with or without an attorney. **All appeals must be filed by April 1st.**

To help you understand the process and possibly put you on the path to considerable tax savings, Jennifer Jacobus, Esq. will outline all you need to know to consider if a tax appeal is right for you. **The Seminar is Free and Open to the Public** February 28th, 7:30 pm, at the Y—220 Clark St. in Westfield. Sponsored as a public service by Scott Gleason, RE/MAX Properties Unlimited.

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Through the generosity of the Brunner School PTA, Young Audiences Arts and Theatre Company presented, “Opera Works” at Brunner School in December.

Brunner students learned about the similarities and differences between opera and other music types, they learned about the characteristics of opera,

as well as the history of opera.

Additionally, students learned about aspects of opera in the theatre, how opera is similar and different in different countries, The students also learned about audience etiquette. Bravi Young Audiences and Bravi Brunner School!



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The Thrift Shop at the Fanwood Presbyterian Church opened on Wednesday January 4th with freshly stocked clothing. There is a large selection of winter coats and clothing for children of all ages and featured at this time is a good selection of clothing for large women.

The Shop will be open each Wednesday from 10am to 4pm.

The Thrift Shop is located on McDermott Place at the rear of the Church complex. For further information and directions please call the church office at 908-889-8891 or e-mail admin@fanwoodpc.org.

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CDC THEATRE YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM REGISTRATIONS AND AUDITIONS

Introduce your child to the fun of live theatre! CDC Theatre in Cranford, New Jersey's oldest continuously operating community theatre, has opened registration for the Young Artists production of Disney's *Mulan Jr.*, its Curtain Call Classes and announces auditions for *Rent*.

Open to students in grades 4-8, there is no audition required to be a part of *Mulan, Jr.* but space is limited and registration is on a first come

basis. Additional information can be found by visiting www.cdctheatre.org.

To register contact Andrea Redmount at andreadredmount@yahoo.com.

Curtain Call classes begin on February 27, and run on Mondays and Wednesdays after school: Mondays for grades K-3 and Wednesdays for grades 4-8.

During the spring, classes focus on movement,

acting and singing as students prepare a one of a kind cabaret performance of some of Broadway's biggest hits on May 20 at 12:00 and 3:00 pm. Details at www.cdctheatre.org.

Students in grades 8-12 are invited to sign-up and audition for *Rent* on March 25 and April 1.

Visit www.cdctheatre.org for information and sign-up details.

Photo By Elizabeth Lynch Photography



(above) The cast of CDC Theatre 2016 Young Artist Program production of *Footloose*

AUDITIONS FOR THE MUSICAL 9 TO 5 AT CDC THEATRE IN CRANFORD

CDC Theatre in Cranford, New Jersey's oldest continuously producing community theatre, will be holding open auditions for the musical *9 to 5* at the theatre's 78 Winans Ave. home.

Auditions will be Wed. 2/15 7:30 -10pm and Sat 2/18 2-5pm with Callbacks on Tues. 2/21 7:30-10pm. The show will run from May 5 – 20, 2017.

Interested performers are asked to prepare 32 bars of a song of your choice. There will be no initial dance audition. Additional information can be found by visiting www.cdctheatre.org.

9 to 5 The Musical, with music and lyrics by Dolly Parton and book by Patricia Resnick, is

based on the seminal 1980 hit movie. Set in the late 1970s. This hilarious story of friendship and revenge in the Rolodex era is outrageous, thought-provoking and even a little romantic. Pushed to the boiling point, three female coworkers concoct a plan to get even with the sexist, egotistical, lying, hypocritical bigot they call their boss. In a hilarious turn of events, Violet, Judy and Doralee live out their wildest fantasy – giving their boss the boot! While Hart remains "otherwise engaged," the women give their workplace a dream makeover, taking control of the company that had always kept them down. Hey, a girl can scheme, can't she?

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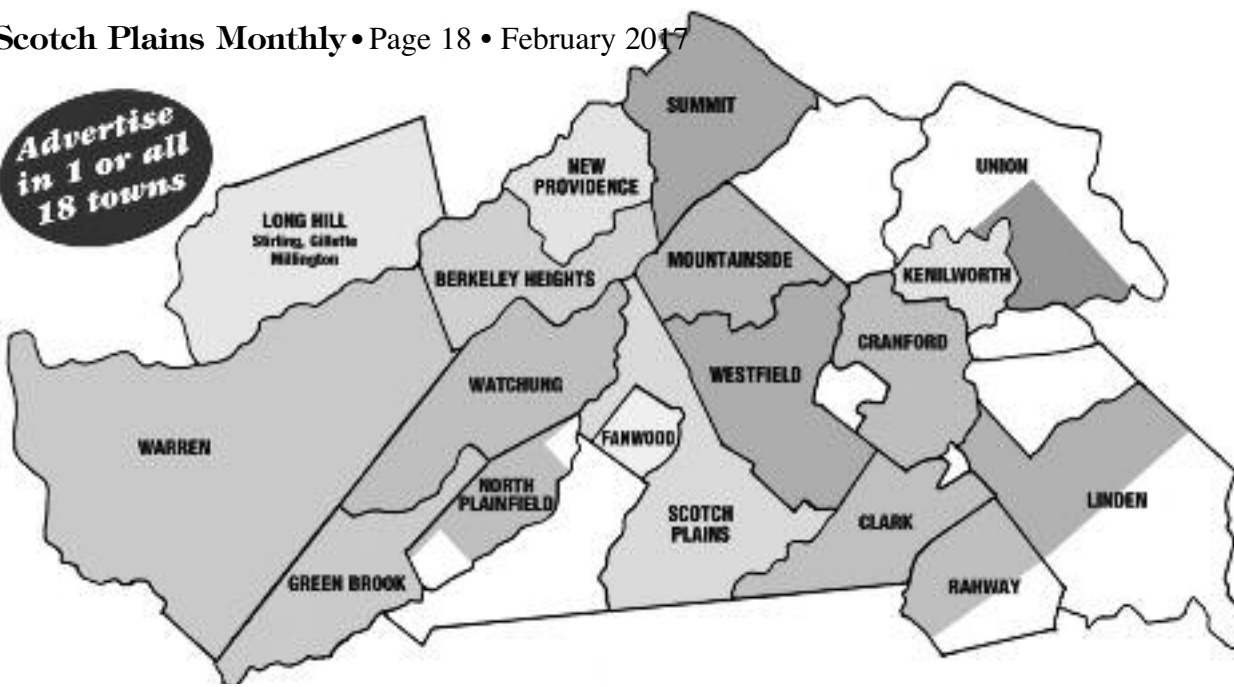
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1 Unit - Business card	3.25" x 2"	\$60	\$150	\$250	\$340	\$400	\$450	\$500
2 Units	3.25" x 4"	\$100	\$250	\$400	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$800
4 Units	6.5" x 4"	\$180	\$450	\$700	\$950	\$1100	\$1300	\$1500
6 Units	10" x 4"	\$240	\$600	\$900	\$1250	\$1400	\$1650	\$1900
9 HALF PAGE	10" x 6"	\$320	\$800	\$1000	\$1350	\$1500	\$1800	\$2100
12 Units	10" x 8"	\$360	\$900	\$1200	\$1550	\$1800	\$2150	\$2500
18 FULL PAGE	10" x 14"	\$400	\$1000	\$1400	\$1750	\$2000	\$2400	\$2800
FRONT PAGE BANNER	8.25" x 2"	\$320	PAY FOR 6 MONTHS AND GET 1 FREE					
BACK COVER	10" x 14"	\$600						

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Minimum run 5,000

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