Union's Hometown Newspaper

Issue 74 • February 2017

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AÁSE FORBES AMONG NEW FOSTER CARE ADVOCATES

On December 14, 2016 Union County Superior Court Judge Daniel R. Lindemann administered oaths to two graduating classes of community members — among them Aáse Forbes of Union — 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@casaofunioncounty.org.

To inquire about other ways to support CASA of Union County, contact Marla at 908-527-7041 or marlah@casaofunioncounty.org.



(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; Aáse 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.



Spiriton

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Although great care has been taken to ensure the information contained within is accurate, Renna Media assumes no liability for errors or omissions.

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BASEMENTS & ATTICS • DORMERS & ADDITIONS • DECKS & PORCHES • MASONRY STEPS & PATIOS

THE GATEWAY FAMILY YMCA ADDS WISE CENTER YMCA BRANCH IN UNION

The Gateway Family YMCA Adds Fifth Branch to Association

The Gateway Family YMCA announced the addition of a fifth YMCA branch to the New Jersey association, serving Eastern Union County and Northern Middlesex County. The WISE Center YMCA Branch, located in Union, NJ is the fifth official YMCA branch within The Gateway Family YMCA. The WISE Center YMCA Branch joins two current Union branches, the Five Points Branch and the Wellness Center Branch, as well as the Elizabeth Branch and Rahway Branch.

The WISE Center YMCA Branch is located at



2095B Berwyn Street in Union, NJ and is host to programs such as the W.I.S.E. (Wellness, Independence and Socialization for our Elders) Adult Day Services Program, Connections – a specialized program for individuals diagnosed with early state dementia or mild cognitive imparement, and community support groups such as a Bereavement Support Group and an Alzehimer's NJ Caregivers Support Group.

"Since 1900, our YMCA has served communities in New Jersey," stated Krystal R. Canady, CEO, The Gateway Family YMCA. "With the addition of the WISE Center YMCA Branch, we have strengthened our commitment to serving individuals and families of all ages."

The WISE Center YMCA follows the addition of a fourth branch, the Wellness Center Branch, also in Union, in 2011. "We are excited to see our YMCA grow to better serve our members and community," stated Melynda A. Mileski, EVP/COO, The Gateway Family YMCA.

As stated in a proclamation signed by Kevin

Washington, CEO, YMCA of the USA,"This branch has been welcomed into the worldwide family of YMCAs so that is may put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all."

The Gateway Family YMCA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, health and community service organization of caring staff and volunteers dedicated to strenghthening the foundations of community and stands For Youth Development, For Healthy Living and For Social Responsibility. The Y impacts the community by providing quality services to people of all ages, races, faiths or incomes. The Y is a powerful association of men, women and children of all ages and from all walks of life joined together by a shared passion: to strengthen the foundations of community.

For more information about The Gateway Family YMCA or the WISE Center YMCA Branch, visit www.tgfymca.org or contact wiseinfo@tgfymca.org.







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Kids 3-6\$3.99	Kids 3-6\$5.99
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Kids 7-10\$5.9	9 Kids 7-10	\$6.99
Kids 3-6\$3.9	9 Kids 3-6	\$5.99
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OSCAR-THEMED BEEFSTEAK DINNER AND TRICKY TRAY EVENT



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Clubs of Union County first Alumni and Friends Beefsteak Dinner and Tricky Tray on Friday February 24, 2017. This Oscar-themed event will take place at the Elks Lodge in Union from 6pm to 10pm. Please join us for a wonderful evening filled with delicious food (catered by The Brownstone) and a wide variety of Tricky Tray prizes. Creative attire is welcome! There will be over 100 Tricky Tray prizes including 4 Disney Park-hopper passes, XBOX 1, sports memorabilia, an American Girl Doll, Coach Handbags, a basket filled with over \$400 of L'Occitane products, gift certificates to AMC Theatres, tickets to the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and tickets to Ripley's Believe It or Not! Be sure to check our website for updates on tricky tray items.

"We are excited to host our first Beefsteak Dinner and reconnect with alumni, as well as meet new friends," said Russel Triolo, Chief Executive Officer. "It's sure to be a great time for everyone."

Tickets are on sale now through the Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County website, wwww.bgcuc.org. Early Bird special package is \$45 and includes 4 sheets of tier 1 tickets, 2 sheets of tier 2 tickets and 2 tier-3 tickets. This special is available until February 3rd. The best deal for this event is a table of eight (8) for \$480. By purchasing a table, each person at the table will receive an extra sheet of tier 1 tricky tray tickets. For more information or to purchase

Step out on the red carpet at Boys & Girls tickets please contact Joe DeMaio at jdemaio@bgcuc.org or by phone 908-687-2697

> Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County offers youth programs in 5 communities in Union County: Plainfield, Elizabeth, Union, Hillside and Roselle. Teen leadership programs for ages 14-18 are available in Union, Elizabeth and Plainfield. Members participate in characterbuilding, leadership, career preparation and community service activities throughout the year. Aquatics instruction is available at our Union Club. For information on our clubs and programs, please visit our website www.bgcuc.org or contact us 908-687-2697.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County

Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County seek to inspire and enable young people, who need them most, to realize their full potential and have provided opportunity for youth since 1955. They are part of a national network of some 4,000 neighborhood-based facilities, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, which serves more than 4.6 million young people annually, in all 50 states and on U.S. military bases worldwide. Clubs provide guidance-oriented character development programs on a daily basis for children 6-18 years old, conducted by a full-time professional staff. Key Boys & Girls Club programs emphasize leadership development, education and career exploration, financial literacy, health and life skills, the arts, sports, fitness and recreation, and family outreach.



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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF UNION COUNTY COOK UP A SPECIAL BREAKFAST

Rise & Shine! Join Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County Union Club and Applebee's for a special breakfast fundraiser benefiting Keystone Club members. This delicious event is Sunday February 12th from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM at Applebee's, 1721 Morris Avenue, in Union. Breakfast includes pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs and a beverage for only \$12. Come out to support Union Keystone Club and enjoy a great breakfast. Keystone Members will be serving, taking orders and look forward to greeting you! Members are raising support to attend 50th National Keystone Conference in Chicago, IL, March 2-4. For tickets and information please contact Ron Brangman at 908-687-2697 or rbrangman@bgcuc.org.

"Our Keystone Club members have been working hard all year to raise funds for the National Keystone Conference", said Russell Triolo, Chief Executive Officer. "This is a great example of the principles of Keystone Club, which includes leadership, character development and community engagement."

Interested in supporting our Members' efforts to attend the Conference? There are many sponsorship opportunities available, including hotel, ground transportation and baggage fees. Visit www.bgcuc.org for sponsorship information. Keystone National Conference allows teens to experience sessions in leadership, community service, healthy lifestyles and College, Career & Workforce Development. Attendees discuss topics that are important to

them. Teens will also participate in a group community service project in Chicago.

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(above) Kawameeh Middle School students with their donations totaling \$2,400 for The Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside. The students collected donations over the holiday season and purchased toys for the hospital's playroom.

BRESLOW PRESENTED WITH ACTIVE RETIREE LEADERSHIP AWARD

On January 12, 2017, Committeeman Manuel Figueiredo presented Irv Breslow with the Union Township Active Retiree (UTAR) Leadership Award at the Senior Center in recognition for his service in the Monday Club.

The award was given to him in appreciation of his commitment and dedication for representing the UTAR as president. Breslow had been president of the Monday Club for 14 years from 2002 to 2016.

Breslow, as well as the other members of the Monday Club, were also acknowledged for their help in raising \$500 in a fundraising event to be donated to the Township's Food Pantry.

(right) Committeeman Manuel Figueiredo presenting Irv Breslow with the Union Township Active Retiree Award bestowed upon him by the Monday Club.







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"MEET THE MAYOR" IS UNION TOWNSHIP **CHAMBER'S FEBRUARY NETWORKING EVENT**

The Union Township Chamber of Commerce extends an invitation to its annual "Meet the Mayor" networking event on Wednesday, February 15, from 5 pm to 7 pm, at ConnectOne Bank, 2455 Morris Avenue, in Union.

Business owners will meet the newly-sworn in Union Township Mayor Suzette Cavadas, who will share her vision for the Township in the coming year, and update attendees on current projects and programs affecting the economic vitality of the community. In addition, various Township officials and department heads will be in attendance to address issues and concerns from local businesses and organizations.

"This is one of our most popular events," said

Chamber Executive James Masterson, "It draws a diverse group of attendees who come to hear from Township officials about what is new in Union and to dialogue with the Mayor."

Admission for the event is \$10 for members and \$15 for guests.

Preregistration is required by contacting the Chamber by calling 908-688-2777. or by emailing

executivedirector@unionchamber.com.

The Union Township Chamber of Commerce is a professional association dedicated to uniting. strengthening, promoting representing member businesses located in Union and the surrounding area.

SONNY AVERONA JR. & JOHNNY BONES TO PERFORM COMEDY SHOW AT UNION VFW

Sonny Averona Jr. & Johnny Bones bring a splash of classic stage comedy to the Michael A. Kelly VFW Hall on Saturday, February 11th in support of our veterans and troops. The comedy duo comes to Union as a part of a fundraiser that will benefit the 2017 Veteran's Alliance Memorial Day Parade.

The comedy duo brings to life a traditional comic show with jokes and music from the 50's and 60's. Averona Jr. and Bones carry on the tradition of a comical pair that first gained popularity with the working of Bing and Bob as well as Martin and Lewis.

Their show contains a variety of entertainment routines that mix with some original material while also borrowing some routines from the 1946 Martin and Lewis show with additional new twists.

"This is a wonderful event kicking off our year with laughs and comedy" stated Phyllis Monguso, fundraising chairman of the Veteran's Alliance Memorial Day Parade, "I encourage families to come out and laugh along with us".

The comedy show will take place in the

Michael A. Kelly Post 2433 VFW Hall on High Street. Tickets for the show are \$35. Doors will open at 7:00 p.m. and the show will start at 8:00 p.m. For more information, call (908)-851-5290.



(above) Comedic Duo Sonny Averona Jr. and Jonny Bones. Coming to the Union VFW for a comedic performance on February 11th



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FIREFIGHTERS COMPETE AT FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

On Monday, February 27, 2017, firefighters from around New Jersey will compete at the Cooked and Uncorked Food and Wine Festival benefiting the New Jersey State Firefighter's Mutual Benevolent Association and The Burn Center at Saint Barnabas Medical Center. This event, which draws people from throughout New Jersey, will be held at The Pines Manor, 2085 Route 27, Edison, NJ from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Last year more than \$50,000 was raised from the event which was attended by more than 900 people.

The Ultimate Fire Department Cook-off will be part of the evening as firefighters from 20 departments will compete in two different categories: Gourmet and Firehouse Cooking.

The competition is part of the culinary extravaganza where participants will be able to experience the tastes and flavors of more than 40 of New Jersey's finest restaurants, caterers and dessert shops all in one location. Event sponsors include Allied Beverage Group, Bayonne Community Bank, ShopRite, and Autoland.

If you are looking for an entertaining evening of great food and wine, don't miss this event. Tickets are \$60 in advance and \$65 at the door. Visit www.cookedanduncorked.com to order tickets, view participating restaurants and wine/spirits and for more information. Tickets can be also be ordered by calling Liz Bennett at 973-322-4305.

NEW RESIDENTS WELCOMED AT TOWN HALL



(above) The Township of Union held its first New Residents Reception of 2017 on Tuesday, January 10th. The event functions as more than just a welcome, but as a way to connect newcomers with each other and help them with access to information on programs, services, and agencies that will help them root themselves in the community.



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BLACK HISTORY MONTH COMMEMORATED

The Union Township Historical Society will commemorate Black History Month with an exhibit on Eulace Peacock (pictured), the Union High School track and field star who beat Jesse Owens. Open houses will be held at the Caldwell Parsonage, 909 Caldwell Avenue, Union, on Sunday, February 12, and Sunday, February 26, from 2 to 5 pm. Admission is free. Refreshments will be served. For more information, please call 908-687-0048.





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Tuesday & Thursday 11:30 am - 11 pm Friday & Saturday 11:30 am - 12:30 am Sunday & Holidays 12:30 pm - 11 pm



UNION ANNOUNCES ESSAY COMPETITION FOR BUS TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mayor of Union, Suzette Cavadas, recently announced at a community Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration, that the Township of Union will be sponsoring an essay contest, themed "Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere."

Participants in the contest will be competing to win an expense-paid, day trip to the African American History Museum in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, March 25th, 2017.

"We hope that through this contest, we can come together to honor the life and legacy of Dr. King while also taking a stand against the violation of people's rights no matter their race, creed, or color," said Cavadas during her announcement speech.

Community leaders, teachers and parents are asked to encourage others to think about, and write an essay or poem coinciding with the 2017 theme. Contest categories, by grade, are: 2nd and

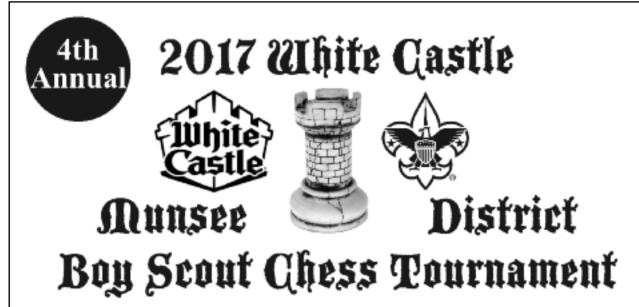
3rd, 4th through 6th, 7th through 9th, 10th through 12th, and Adult.

Entries will be accepted in person, via standard mail, and via the online submission form at www.uniontownship.com.

The Contest is open to Township of Union Residents only. Mailed entries can be sent to: 2017 King Essay Contest, c/o Township of Union Office of Public Information, 1976 Morris Ave Union, NJ 07083. Deadline for submissions is Tuesday, February 14th, 2017. Winners will be notified by phone and email.

For full contest and prize details, visit http://www.uniontownship.com/752/MLK-Essay-Contest.

For additional information, please contact Natalie Pineiro at (908) 851-5096 or via email at publicinfo@uniontownship.com.



Open to all registered Boy Scouts/Venturers/Explorers. Non-scouts welcomed!

Saturday, February 25, 2017

10:00 am to 2:00 pm Sign-in/setup starts at 9:00 am

Cranford Community Center

220 Walnut Avenue, Cranford, NJ • 908.709.7283

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.

Trophies awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers. Lunch will be provided by White Castle for all players and fans. This tournament meets the 6a requirement for earning a Chess merit badge.

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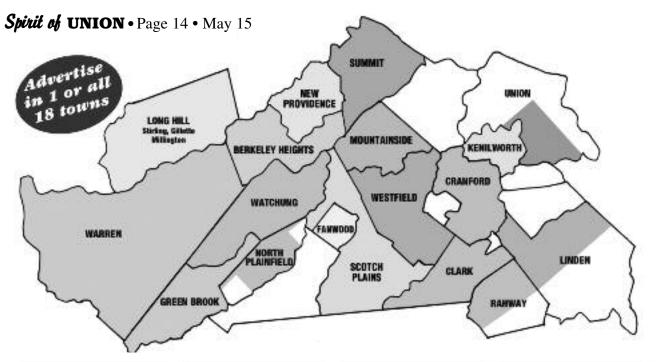


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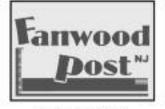
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Lease For

109 Per Mo //24 Mos

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