



Cover Photo by Lara Beth Photography, photo-shopped by Mt. Olive Online



Don't forget to vote this tuesday Nov 5

The General Election is this Tuesday, Nov. 5. Voters of the 24th Legislative District of Mt. Olive Twp. can cast their votes when polls are open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Like choosing which way to turn at an intersection, the decision remains with every voter.

On the local front, Democrats are driving for change against the Republican incumbents for the Mt. Olive Twp. Council vying for three seats. The mayor is running in an uncontested race. The Mt. Olive Board of Education has three open seats with three incumbents running against a new candidate who also seeks change as a recent graduate from Mt. Olive High School.

Good luck to all candidates!

Welcome readers to the 32nd issue of Mt. Olive Online. Get MO news online today! Advertise with us

Vote To Protect The Environment

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

One of the reasons I chose to plant my family in northwestern New Jersey eight years ago was the pristine environment, fresh air, abundant rivers, lakes and mountains, the rolling green topography, and proximity to the vast outdoor recreation areas. If you talk with residents in our communities or with realtors, owners of our local breweries and wineries, outdoor recreational businesses and family farms, they overwhelmingly agree that our unique environment and natural resources are primary reasons many choose to live, work, play and raise our children in this region.

Sadly, our current Assembly representatives Parker Space and Hal Wirths don't agree with most residents that protecting our environment and ensuring clean air and water is critically important for safeguarding our health or strengthening our local economy. Recently, the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters' released their 2019 Environmental Scorecard which rates each member of the New Jersey Legislature on their votes taken to protect the environment, affecting air and water quality, open space, and the fight against climate change. Space and Wirths rank as "the top five worst in the Assembly" on conservation and protection of our environment with the lowest scores of 29 percent.

<https://www.njlc.org/scorecard>

Our health, natural resources, and local economy are at dire risk unless voters in Mt. Olive, Sussex and Warren Counties vote for representatives who will fight to protect our environment; our health, safety and quality of life depend on it. Vote Deana Lykins and Dan Smith for State Assembly on Nov. 5.

Shelly Morningstar

Flanders

Photo Credits: Shelly Morningstar; Budd Lake, Mt. Olive Township, Morris County; Culver's Lake, Franklin Township, Sussex County.

Backpack Campaign Carries Student Lesson On Altruism

Items Being Collected

Sought for the Helping Homeless Heroes/ Helping Homeless Hounds severe weather backpack campaign are new or gently used backpacks; \$5; small blankets; sweatshirts; socks; hats; scarves; gloves; hand/feet warmers; lotion; lip balm; advil/tylenol (travel

size); toothpaste / brush; tissues; granola bars; single packaged cookies; candy; and dog treats.

By Cheryl Conway

With outside temperatures dipping as fast as the leaves are falling, Mt. Olive Middle School students have got their backs- backpacks, that is, for homeless veterans.

Seventh grade students of the Gifted & Talented Program at MOMS got it covered as they are leading the Helping Homeless Heroes/ Helping Homeless Hounds severe weather backpack campaign organized by the All Veterans Alliance and Morris County American Legion. The collection runs up to Veterans Day on Nov. 11.

Under the leadership of MOMS G&T Teacher Ann Greszczak, 26 G&T students jumped on board Oct. 22 by writing a letter to teachers, creating posters to hang up around the school and making collections boxes.

Charlie Wood Uhrmann, founder of the All Veterans Memorial and AVA, who is coordinating the campaign, reached out to Greszczak in hopes that she would execute the campaign and that the students would take an interest.

Students were more than eager to pitch in and help the cause.

"They served for us and they don't get anything in return," says seventh grader Vrishank Malek, about veterans now homeless.

"They are sitting their homeless without any food," says another seventh grader Katelyn Allessandrini. "The veterans served for us. Other homeless are important too; you can't tackle everyone at once," she reasons.

"A good percentage of homeless are veterans," says another student Teresa Zentko. "I think it's sad. We just look at it and don't do anything about it."

"It's the least we can do to give back to them," says another classmate Shawn Lavery.

Who knows, it may trigger a "pass it on" effect, mentions another student.

A homeless veteran, who received a backpack, may give back to the community by possibly giving back to others who do not serve in the military.

The students spent their class period on Thursday, Oct. 24, during their G&T class, making posters and boxes for the campaign. They had just received approval that week from their new school principal, James Kramer, that they could execute the campaign in the school.

“He liked the idea very much,” says seventh grader Isha Mishra.

Mishra and another student, Thomaz Honda, had participated in the morning announcements when school began that day, to inform the students, faculty and staff in their two-minute segment about the severe weather backpack campaign for homeless veterans.

Honda told his listeners there are “over 1,000 homeless veterans” in the United States.

Many living on the streets suffer with PTSD, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, says Mishra.

“There’s a lot of homeless veterans on the street,” says Mishra, with more than nine percent who are adult veterans.

“They researched the information from the internet,” says Greszczak, and also attained information from the flyer provided by Uhrmann.

The students were planning to make at least six posters around the school about the campaign and their request for donations.

Some were even “giving up their lunch period to create more posters,” adds Greszczak.

They were also decorating cardboard boxes scattered around the school so students, teachers and staff can drop off any items throughout the day.

Honda wrote a letter, attaching it to the flyer provided by Uhrmann, to place in all of the teachers’ mailboxes.

“They don’t ask for much,” Honda writes in his letter to teachers about homeless veterans, “but as the cruel touch of winter approaches, they will need more and more help. We hope that you can donate backpacks that we can pack with supplies that they will need to survive the charge of winter. Join the “pack” and donate old backpacks that you don’t use anymore!”

Items Being Collected

Sought for the Helping Homeless Heroes/ Helping Homeless Hounds severe weather backpack campaign are new or gently used backpacks; \$5; small blankets; sweatshirts; socks; hats; scarves; gloves; hand/feet warmers; lotion; lip balm; advil/tylenol (travel size); toothpaste / brush; tissues; granola bars; single packaged cookies; candy; and dog treats.

Donations at MOMS can be dropped off in boxes located in between the two doors of the entrance of the school.

History Of Campaign

Since the All Veterans Memorial has been running with this campaign annually, 12,350 backpacks have been collected and donated to homeless veterans throughout Northeast N.J., says Uhrmann, through the efforts of the AVA and the and Morris County's American Legions. The AVA was established year as a registered 501(c)19 non-profit military service organization.

"We did three drop offs per year - summer and twice in the winter," she says. "Last year, our organization was the only one that delivered during the first snowstorm.

"Various American Legions will collect what they need and distribute the backpacks as needed or requested," explains Uhrmann of the process following the collection. We usually receive numerous calls during storms."

Her plan this year is to collect all the donations by Veterans Day Monday, Nov. 11 at the AVM anytime between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

On Friday and Saturday before Veterans Day, the AVM will be hosting a Civil War re-enactment, she adds.

"We will be collecting donations throughout the weekend," says Uhrmann. "We will be providing warm beverages, demonstrations and tours on Saturday Nov. 9."

Adds Uhrmann, "Once we take possession of the donations - we will inventory what we have and what we need and prepare for the assembly.

"Our goal is 600 backpacks," she adds.

Residents can drop their donations off at the AVM on Nov. 8, 9, 10, or 11.

Greszczak says she and her students plan to visit the AVM at 10 a.m. on Nov. 11, to present their collection to the AVA.

The seventh grade G&T students from MOMS will then be invited back to the AVM to help put “together the final product,” says Uhrmann.

Students will get to meet with the AVA volunteers and Morris County American Legion on a Saturday to help stuff the backpacks with all of the items collected, adds Greszczak.

Idea Sprouts Into Thousands Of Backpacks

Uhrmann’s son Eric Wood, currently living in Greer, S.C., came up with the idea in 2006 when he was ironically a student at MOMS.

“The idea was created for the USA Weekend National Make A Difference Day as my way of bettering our community,” says Wood. “The USA Weekend sponsored National Make A Difference day is a day designed to unite the community to improve the lives of others.”

Wood was in sixth grade at the time and thought of the name of his Operation “Out In The Cold.”

His involvement included “creating, organizing the collection efforts, preparing the backpacks with all the necessary supplies, and delivering the backpacks to the Bowery Mission,” he explains. “I worked with several entities including the Mt. Olive Middle School (MOMS), Mt. Olive Public Library, and M&M Mars as my primary source of gently used backpacks. As part of the donation request, we asked donors to also include \$5 to help cover items such as hats, scarfs, gloves, and socks. My involvement could be best described as the conduit between generous donors in Mt. Olive and the homeless who needed them. Without the support and generosity of the community the event would have not been nearly as successful as it was.”

Wood says “in the first year, the community was able to compile approximately 450 complete backpacks (all the items) in addition to hundreds of unmatched supplies. Due to the success of the first year, this would become a recurring annual drive and my estimate would be we've donated over twelve thousand backpacks!”

At that time “This drive was for all homeless and was not only limited to homeless veterans,” says Wood.

Pleased and proud is how Wood describes his reaction to how his idea has grown. "Seeing this campaign grow and surpass ten thousand backpacks is mind blowing," says Wood. "I am so proud to see the community unite and show continuous support over the years."

As an adult looking back, Wood realizes how this campaign helped mold him into a kind and giving person, traits and characteristics he would continue throughout his life.

"Since I was a young boy, my mother raised me with a volunteer's heart and these core values became a "normal" mindset for me," says Wood. "Volunteering became an emotionally fulfilling activity that would be a constant reminder of how blessed one is. Volunteering with drives like Operation "Out in The Cold" will establish a foundation of core values that would help people succeed later in life. For me, this passion to help others continued through high school, college and even professionally.

"I expanded the campaign to Florida when I moved down in 2010 to attend college," Wood continues. "I redesigned the campaign from providing warm weather clothing to personal hygiene items. I regularly worked with a range of clubs to volunteer and support local Tallahassee homeless shelters. When I graduated, while at RSM and currently at TD Bank, I have collected and built personal kits to be distributed at local shelters. At RSM, the collection drives were so successful, they spread like wildfire to dozens of other offices throughout the southeast.

"The drive was renamed Operation Outreach vs. Operation "Out in The Cold" because Florida barely gets cold ha-ha!" he laughs. "I focused on providing items such as: soaps, shampoos, conditioner, body lotion, toothbrushes, and toothpaste."

Wood carried his altruism in his briefcase.

"Currently at TD Bank, I continue to actively collect items and regularly donate to local shelters for distribution," he says.

Wood can consider how his upbringing played a role throughout his life.

“My involvement as a 15-year old would help mold my character foundation to become a selfless individual who can help others with the expectation of nothing but the personal satisfaction of doing the right thing,” he says.

By asking the students at MOMS to pitch in, Uhrmann hopes that their participation has an impact like it has her son all these years.

“I believe that when parents raise their children to help others, their children lead a happier and more fulfilled life,” says Uhrmann. “Giving to those less fortunate should always be considered as an opportunity and should always be done unconditionally and with no expectation of receiving anything back. We give not for others, but for ourselves.”

Wood is grateful of the support he had received while a student at MOMS and can only hope that today’s school leadership can mirror his experience.

“I would like to give Dr. Severns (M.O.M.S. principal) and the faculty a lot of credit for their support in the beginning of this campaign,” says Wood.

“Additionally, Dr. LaMonte (M.O. School District superintendent) was another major contributor to the success. Had the initial campaign failed, I think of the thousands of people who would have gone without much needed support. Had it failed, the campaign would not have grown and become what it is today.”

AVM Takes Over Idea

“We did three efforts at the Middle School,” Uhrmann recalls from when her son was a student there. “Once Eric left the middle school, he began to focus on veteran outreach programs and the AVM with organizations he was part of at the MOHS. The AVM adopted the Helping Homeless Heroes campaign, targeting the community at large.”

Lesson On Veterans Goes Full Circle

The G&T seventh grade students at MOMS have been learning about veterans since last year as part of a county wide program called Living Voices, a comprehensive oral history project undertaken by students across Morris County and coordinated through The Morris County Historical Society and the New Jersey Consortium for Gifted and Talented Programs.

For the project, MOMS’ theme was Living Voices of Heroes.

"They picked veterans," says Greszczak.

Students interviewed multiple veterans and learned about the local veterans' memorial, the All Veterans Memorial in Budd Lake. A stipulation with the project was they were not allowed to use the internet, nor books.

All the information had to come from living voices, notes Greszczak.

Uhrmann visited the students last year and presented information about the AVM and then students visited the AVM to learn more.

Students have also visited the AVM on Saturdays to volunteer, says Greszczak.

"They'd go clean up the memorial before Veteran's Day, painting, pulling weeds," says Greszczak. "Some made a wall out of bricks before Memorial Day.

"These kids have a total connect with the veterans and the population," says Greszczak.

Collecting backpacks for homeless veterans, this year, "continues on that theme," notes Greszczak. "This has more meaning because they've met veterans."

Learning about the veterans and the AVM, and then finding out that so many are homeless, was daunting to the students.

"They go through such a rough time and then they get back here, it's such a rough world," says seventh grader Kevin Karram.

"They deserve more," says another student Romaisa Arsalan. "They went willingly and served, saving so many lives."

G&T Builds Character

As part of the G&T class, Greszczak encourages the students to volunteer and help the community, both local and far.

This year her theme is "Heroes Don't Always Wear Sneakers," she explains, so students will be studying the Renaissance; their own personal heroes; heroes of the space program; and heroes of the U.S. with a trip planned to West Point.

G&T at MOMS is an enhanced classroom that "encompasses everything," explains Greszczak. It focuses on problem base learning and stresses multiple characteristics such as respect, responsibility and critical thinking, to name a few.

characteristics such as respect, responsibility and critical thinking, to name a few. Each year her students complete a service project. Helping Homeless Heroes/ Helping Homeless Hounds severe weather backpack campaign is one of those service projects.

Last year, her students collected 8,000 paperback books for grades kindergarten through 12 and donated them to the Trenton school district, she adds.

The students reasoned why this backpack campaign is so important.

Realizing how many homeless veterans are out there, seventh grader Charlie Atkinson says it is important "to bring awareness to the issues we have right now."

Karram mentions how high the suicide rate is among veterans. "It's just a way to help them out," he says.

"These men are giving their all for us; what are we doing for them?" questions Greszczak. "Part of my job is to make students aware as a whole."

What Is In A Backpack?

"It's a small thing but to the veterans it's a big thing," says student Mia Montiel, "a small backpack. It makes me feel really happy that we are giving back to them." Adds Karram, "It feels good; all you are doing is donating a small thing," like a granola bar or toothbrush. "You might not realize what you are doing or how important it is what you are doing for them." To them, it is a big deal.

"It makes me feel happy," continues Karram, when thinking of "some of the veterans life conditions," like sleeping on benches or unhealthy places. A backpack comes in handy, not only the items that it is filled with, but "they can even use it as a pillow," he notes.

"It makes me feel proud of what we can achieve with something so small and how much of an impact it can make," continues Karram.

"A lot of veterans can get the help they need but they don't know how to," says Karram. "They can take a class; a lot have PTSD," which "makes it harder to adjust" after serving in the military than returning to the "real world."

With an uncle who served in the marines and a grandfather who served in the military in Portugal, student Liam Pereira realizes the importance of helping homeless veterans. When visiting San Francisco Ca he shares "There were a lot

homeless veterans. When visiting San Francisco, Calif., he shares "there were a lot of homeless people there."

Donating backpacks to homeless veterans will "teach us now how to help others," says Atkinson, "and then we can teach others. No one is making a big difference to help the veterans and homeless people," he observes.

MOMS Is Known For Its Giving

"MOMS is notorious for helping kids in the community," says Greszczak.

Some of the past efforts include coat drives, food drives, book drive, dress down Fridays to raise money for cancer, Tunnel For Tower, N.J. Special Olympics, pen pal with Ghana students, donating pencils and pencil sharpeners to Ghana.

"This is a big part of who we are," she says. "Every week it's a different cause," that may help a local family in need or a person who is ill.

"Students, they really rise to the occasion when they are doing this," says Greszczak.

For the backpack campaign, she estimates students will be working on the project during their 50 minutes G&T class every other day for three weeks. Two minute announcements will be shared every morning with reminder announcements during lunch.

She says their goal is "to give as many as we can give."

Any monetary donation can help. One student says "Everything adds up in the end."

It is good "to give to others so they can give back to the world," says Pereira.

Boy Scout Liam O'Connell, who mentions he can use this experience toward his community service hours, notes the importance of "generosity, kindness and teamwork."

Other Towns Pitch In

With the Morris County American Legion also involved in the severe weather backpack campaign, other towns in the county are participating as well such as Pequannock and Bloomingdale.

Dennis Porpora, historian for the Morris County American Legion and post commander of Post 450 in Pequannock, is organizing the campaign in his town.

"We're getting a big box in our post where people can donate whatever they

"We're getting a big box in our post where people can donate whatever they want," says Porporna.

The post is located at 11 Oak Ave. in Pequannock and drop off is from 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays; noon to 11 p.m. on weekends.

As a member of the American Legion, Porporna says he would like to help the AVM with its campaign.

"It's my mission to do this," says Porporna, a Vietnam veteran who served in the army as a tech controller running communications.

Drafted in 1969, he says "I was drafted on my 21st birthday," says Porporna, May 29, 1947, "so it's a date I'll never forget.

"I believe in what the All Veterans Memorial is doing," says Porporna. "We are a veterans' organization and anything to help out another veterans' organization or another vet, that is what we stand for. That's why we are willing to help out."

Last year they contributed \$600 "worth of stuff" through the Sons of the American Legion toward the AVM's backpack campaign, notes Porporna.

He is trying to get the Pequannock Twp. Schools to participate too.

"I went to the board of education to put this letter in all the schools," he says.

"Hopefully they are going to get the students to contribute."

Poporna also helped with the AVM's poppies project last year and other causes such as collecting pumpkins for veterans and recently organizing classes at his post on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. for veterans who struggle with PTSD.

"Anyone whose got problems" is invited to come in and talk, says Poporna. "We will discuss anything you want to discuss to let people vent over coffee and water."

Meetings are open to anyone in or out of Morris County, he notes.

"We are trying to help out anyone with a problem," he says about his "brand new venture. We've had three meetings so far; we've helped two people. If we can't

help we will find places that can. We can get help from the VA Hospital if we have to. We have to first find these people.

"If we can help out one person, then we did what we could," concludes Porporna. Chaplain Adam Charman of Bloomingdale is also helping to collect backpacks for the homeless veterans. Involved with the John A. Dean American Legion Post 154 in Butler, Charman set up a collection site at the post advertising the campaign

in Butler, Charman set up a collection site at the post, advertising the campaign through the schools, town, police and fire department.

An AVM Board of Trustees member, Charman serves as chaplain for the AVM, Morris County American Legion and Post 154 in Butler.

For more information or to volunteer, email info@allveteransmemoiral.org.

Photo Gallery

Pumpkins Bring Smiles To Veterans

By Cheryl Conway

There is something about the fall that brings back warm happy memories to most, including veterans.

Close to 400 pumpkins and another 100 mini gourds were collected and donated to veterans in New Jersey this month. In its fifth year, Pumpkins 4 Vets was a smashing success this season with deliveries to veterans at nine different establishments.

"Everybody loves fall," says Chaplain Adam Charman of Bloomingdale- who serves as chaplain for the Morris County American Legion, All Veterans Memorial in Budd Lake and John A. Dean American Legion Post 154 in Butler. "You get the smell, the look. Pumpkins are bright orange. They are just awesome to see. You get the feel of a kid. It puts a smile on their face."

Charman calls it "The Power of the Pumpkin."

Charman started the Pumpkins 4 Vets Drive in 2014. It has been "five years of "Delivering Gourds to the Old Guard," he says.

He came up with idea after a pumpkin carving contest at a local school.

Charman had inquired at that time if he could take possession of the pumpkins and donate them to veterans after the event. Problem was when he went back to the school at 9 a.m. the next morning to pick them up they had already been thrown out in the dumpster.

The misunderstanding did not destroy his plan.

So instead he posted on social media a request for pumpkin donations. On a poster board he wrote "Pumpkins 4 Vets," he says. "It was goofy; it was whimsical."

He visited a local garden center and got a discount on pumpkins.

That first year, he rounded up 67 pumpkins and mini gourds and delivered them to Lyons VA Hospital in Lyons.

The second year they delivered to two places.

"Now we are up to a couple of hundred" pumpkins, he says.

Deliveries of pumpkins this year were made to: Lyons VA Campus, Lyons; Veteran's Haven North, Glen Gardner; Boonton Fireman's Home, Boonton; Health/Senior Living Center, Bloomingdale; Paramus Veterans Home, Paramus; Menlo Park Veterans Home, Edison; Home of the Brave Veteran Shelter, Camden; Vineland Veterans Home, Vineland; Veterans Haven South, Hammonton.

The Morris County American Legion had started accepting pumpkins the first

week of October and they were delivered on a three-day run the third week of October, says Charman. Out of the donations, 400 were pumpkins and 100 included mini gourds.

They "lost 40 to rot," says Charman.

The first two years he brought carved pumpkins "but they rotted quickly," says Charman.

This year he got lucky after being connected to a large farm owner in Pennsylvania.

While participating in Rolling Thunder bike race in D.C. for veterans, Charman met Roger Tutton who served in the Air Force. Tutton, who owns a small pumpkin patch, connected Charman to farmer Titus Hoover, who owns a larger pumpkin patch spread over a couple hundred acres.

Tutton told Charman, "If you want to take a drive out here, you can have all the pumpkins you want," says Charman.

Charman took his new friend up on the offer and drove out to pick up the free pumpkins, 350 total.

"It was a lot of fun," says Charman. "It was a three hour drive out there. We had to pick the pumpkins. It was rainy misty horrible day." But "we had volunteers," and enjoyed the moment."

There is "something about a pumpkin patch," says Charman. "Everyone felt like a kid; we were laughing and smiling."

The Morris County American Legion purchased the small gourds that were distributed to the hospitals; the bigger pumpkins were used to decorate the foyers, he says.

The Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts helped to paint some of the pumpkins.

"We go around every year delivering pumpkins," says Dennis Porpora, Morris County American Legion historian. "Whatever we can get, any size."

Since Pumpkins 4 Vets is not a registered nonprofit charity organization, it cannot accept monetary donations. Those who want to give, however, can donate money to the garden centers to pay for the pumpkins, he explains.

“Anybody who wants to get involved can,” says Charman. “We just don’t take money because we are not a 501c3.”

They “just want to bring cheer” to the veterans, says Charman. “It’s just good to be good.”

CMS Readers Turn Into Illustrators For The Day

By Cheryl Conway

Art and reading took on a new dimension for second graders at Chester M. Stephens Elementary School in Budd Lake last week.

Five classes made up of 113 students, accompanied by their homeroom teachers, went on a trip to Pinot's Palette in Hackettstown during the week of October 21-25. Two classes went on Tuesday, Oct. 22, two on Wednesday, Oct. 23, and one group on Thursday, Oct. 24.

"Due to space, we had to go in shifts," explains Ann M. Scotland, CMS second grade teacher.

CMS's second year participating with its first visit last October, Scotland enjoys the trip as it carries many lessons and provides an outlet for students to create and share in their love for reading.

"The purpose of this visit was to have a final celebration for our author study of Kevin Henkes," explains Scotland. "All month we have been showcasing his books and characters. Each book has a relatable character that reminds/teaches the audience a life lesson.

"The conversation that follows a read is priceless," says Scotland. "The vocabulary that Mr. Henkes uses is rich and valuable. His illustrations are detailed and inviting. Many of his beloved characters are in the image of a mouse. The children love this. Very quickly the boys and girls learned what it is to use personification as a writer."

The cost of the trip was \$19 per student, which included \$12 for the studio and a \$7 bus fee.

Each student created the same character at the studio, explains Scotland. The character that was chosen was Kevin Henke's character, Chester.

"Since we go to Chester M. Stephens Elementary School, it seemed fitting," says Scotland.

"We read several Kevin Henke's books throughout the month of October in school," says Scotland. Several copies were on display at Pinot's Palette, but only

one was read.

"While the kids were waiting for their painting to dry, they listened to the story *Chester's Way*," by Kevin Henkes.

Many Lessons Learned

"Multiple lessons were learned during this study," says Scotland. "By taking the lesson out and going to the studio gave the message that our learning is meant to be used beyond the school walls. We need to enjoy and embrace it in the outside world.

"The studio had all types of Kevin Henkes books displayed," she continues. "The professional artists gave themselves the name of a character from a Kevin Henke's book. They had opinions to share, favorite characters of their own and celebrated with us. That type of learning sticks to a child's mind and heart!" Other skills had to take shape for the students to succeed in their task at hand.

"In addition, students had to be good listeners, follow directions and share supplies in order to find success," says Scotland. "They stood tall as they carried their paintings home."

Having art classes offered at CMS prepared the students for their trip. CMS art teacher "Mrs. Palmisano is a fabulous teacher that gets the children excited about art," says Scotland. "She brings out talent that the boys and girls didn't even know they had. It was from this confidence that they were able to go into an outside studio and experience art in a different setting. Again, learning isn't meant to stay in school. We want it to walk out the door with the children and be utilized as much as possible in all different ways."

What Is Not To Love?

"I love this trip because it highlights a message that we are trying to provide... books are fun!" says Scotland. "We learn from them, connect to them, and can pull from them in a variety of ways. They also recognize the patience, imagination, and joy you can find when creating an illustration for a book.

"One student said to me "Mrs. Scotland, it must take Kevin Henkes a long time to draw all those pictures for his books," concludes Scotland. "This moment gets

their minds thinking about the craft of an author/illustrator... and the talent it takes. What's not to love?? They go home excited about reading.”

Photo Gallery

Local and county news

Soccer Season Ends For Boys & Girls at MOHS

Both Mt. Olive High School boys and girls soccer lost in the quarterfinals of states this week. The girls lost 4-1 against Montclair High School on Thursday, Oct. 31, at Montclair. In photo, senior players pose for final picture.

MOHS boys varsity soccer lost 3-1 against Clifton High School on Friday, Nov. 1, at

Clifton.

Mt. Olive Recreation Recognized For Bubble Palooza Event

By Cheryl Conway

Anyone who has planned an event knows the logistics involved in coordinating, from site location, to supporters, marketing and recruiting volunteers.

The Mt. Olive Recreation Department plans dozens of events year-round but there was one held this past year that recently received county and state recognition.

Jill Dagon and Liz Meininger from the Mt. Olive Recreation Department were recently awarded the 2019 Morris Park Alliance for Outstanding Program Award.

The recreation department leaders were recognized on Wednesday, Oct. 23, at the Morris Park Alliance 2019 Community Recognition Awards Dinner held at the Haggerty Education Center in the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morris Twp.

The event they were recognized for was Bubble Palooza 5K Run or Walk, which was held April 21, 2018 and again on April 27, 2019.

They received an award trophy from the Morris County Park Alliance and a certificate from the State of N.J. Senate and General Assembly.

“Mt. Olive Recreation reached out to Bubble Palooza of Calverton, N.Y. to help us implement their new fun event that combines bubbles and a color run,” as it is stated on Mayor Rob Greenbaum’s Facebook page. “They have specialized equipment and expertise. Mt. Olive Recreation provided the venue, local logistics support, marketing and soliciting of sponsors.

Recreation coordinated with the Mayor’s Office, DPW, Parks, Health Dept., MOPD, and EMS for event logistics. We recruited 20+ volunteers to assist with on-site registration and athlete packet pick up and stationed at the bubble chutes.

Twenty-five sponsors supported the event, with 15 onsite. Water stops, comfort stations, DJ and a party area were supported by our sponsors.

“Over 700 participants (and their entourages) came and enjoyed the day – running through bubbles and dancing in the color bubble pit,” as described on the mayor’s page. “Chasing bubble “tumble weeds” was a terrific activity for the

children waiting for family members to complete the course. This year we modified the course to be a 2.5K course, so families could do it twice for twice the fun of running through bubbles, or if their littlest runners were tired, they could stay and party at the bubble pit.”

Daggon and Meininger were happy with their recognition.

“We were surprised and grateful when we were notified that our Bubble Palooza event was chosen to receive the 2019 Outstanding Program Award,” the women note in a statement to “Mt. Olive Online.”

“Our Recreation Team always puts a tremendous effort into every event we do.” In explaining the basis of the recognition, they say “The Morris Park Alliance supports several Morris County Parks initiatives. They also want to recognize the excellent facilities, programs, organizations and volunteers that make Morris County shine.”

Mt. Olive Recreation was also awarded two years ago.

“We received the 2017 Award for Outstanding Facility for Mount Playmore and Pirates Cove at Turkey Brook Park and the 2017 Award of Merit for a Program for the Do or Dye Run,” they say. Congratulations Mt. Olive Recreation for a job well done!

MOMS Follows Suit To Limit PowerSchool Hours

Beginning Oct. 28, Mt. Olive Middle School halted email alerts to families for grades entered that are less than a 70 percent.

Families were sent emails of this change last week. The Mt. Olive High School eliminated all grade alerts and reduced the hours of the PowerSchool portal at the onset of this school year.

The PowerSchool Portal will be closed from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday thru Friday for parents and students at both the high school and middle school.

“Both measures are intended to alleviate the anxiety and stress affiliated with the alerts and the review of grades during the school day,” according to James Kramer, newly hired principal at the MOMS. “We hope to continue improving parent-teacher-student interaction and communication during the school year.

The absence of the alert feature and framing PowerSchool access will foster a

more balanced relationship with roles, accountability and responsibilities.

Any questions, contact Kramer at 973-691-4006, ext. 5101.

For a more detailed story about the elimination of grade alerts and reduced PowerSchool portal hours, see last week's Mt. Olive Online at

<https://mountoliveonline.today>.

Library Events Covered This Fall Like Leaves

The Mt. Olive Public Library plans to host "Medicare Made Clear" on Monday, Nov. 4 from 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. in the Gathering Room. This free Medicare educational event is presented by Craig Lordigyan, president of The Lordigyan Insurance Agency, LLC.....No Selling, Just Telling!

A free financial workshop, "Women & Money," is set for Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 7 p.m. in the Gathering Room. Join Ruby Sanders, representative, and Suzanne Troiano, regional vice president, with Primerica and learn about the Rule of 72; Debt Stacking, Revolving Debt Traps and How Life Insurance Works.

Trying to eat healthy and still enjoy all the "goodies" of the holidays? A workshop titled, "Healthy Holiday Eating," is set for Thursday, Nov. 7, at 7 p.m. in the Gathering Room. Join Kate-Lyn Snare, retail dietitian from ShopRite of Flanders, as she teaches us to make better choices and focus on a healthy balance of food, activities and fun. By implementing a few simple steps, begin and maintain a healthy lifestyle! There will also be a Q & A session following the presentation so bring questions!

"Movies at the Library" will be offered on Tuesday, Nov. 19 at either 1 p.m.-3 p.m. or 6 p.m.-8 p.m. for the movie "Red Joan," inspired by an extraordinary true story about one of the most influential spies in living history. The movie brings to life the conflicts between patriotism and idealism, love and duty, courage and betrayal. Rated R - Restricted: No one under the age of 17 admitted!

Interested in **learning to speak Spanish**? Join Dr. Paul Reilly for a 10 week class, which will emphasize spoken conversational Spanish in travel situations as a tourist.

Classes are set for Thursdays through Nov. 21, from 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. in the Career Room. If someone misses more than two classes, they will forfeit their

space. Limited to 10 adults.

Registration required for all programs. Call 973-691-8686 Ext. 106 or go to www.mopl.org to register.

Freeholder Board Honors Military Veterans From Morris County

With Veterans Day approaching on Nov. 11, the Morris County Freeholders on Wednesday evening Oct. 23 presented Morris County Distinguished Military Service Medals to eight veterans from across the county, honoring these men and women for their service to their country and their communities after their days in the military.

Receiving county medals at a special ceremony in Morristown were: Mohammed Abdul Aziz, U.S. Army, Rockaway Twp.; Leonard Gleason, U.S. Army, Morristown; Kim Hawkins U.S. Navy, Rockaway Twp.; James Hill, U.S. Air Force, Jefferson Twp.; Donna M. Scheel, U.S. Army, Mt. Olive; (the late) Steven H. Scheel, U.S. Army, Mt. Olive; Samuel Sisco, U.S. Army, Mine Hill; Todd Stawicki, U.S. Army, Roxbury Twp.; Connor Scheel, the grandson of the late Steve H. Scheel, accepted the county medal on behalf of his late grandfather.

Also honored was Marine Corps veteran Emerson Crooks of Randolph, who served in Vietnam in the 1960s. He received a special county resolution in

connection with the 244th birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps.

In addition, Morris County American Legion Commander Amery Vasso received a special county resolution marking the 100th anniversary of the American Legion. "To all of our veterans, we say: Thank you!" said Freeholder Director Doug Cabana. "For all veterans, regardless of your service and the era in which you served, you have paid a price for the freedom we enjoy. You have paid with your courage and honor. We salute you for your service."

Also attending the veterans' event were state Assemblymen BettyLou DeCroce, County Clerk Ann Grossi, County Prosecutor Fredric M. Knapp, and Sheriff's Detective Lt. Michael Turkot, representing Sheriff James M. Gannon.

Each of the eight veterans, or their families, at the event received the Morris County Distinguished Military Service Medal from the Board of Freeholders. The unique medal was designed by a special committee of county veterans, with some variations in medals and ribbons for various conflicts and military eras. They also received special state citations from DeCroce, representing the 26th Legislative District, and from Bucco, from the 25th Legislative District, plus certificates from Gannon and a special item from Knapp.

Donna M. Scheel, U.S. Army, of Budd Lake, grew up in Orchard Park, N.Y. and attended the State University of New York at Plattsburg, where she earned a bachelor's in Communications, and later earned a master's in Media and Technology at Boston University.

Scheel joined the US Army in October in 1977 and trained as a broadcast journalist. She was assigned to the headquarters of the American Forces Network in Frankfurt, Germany, and later at the Fort Gordon, Ga., Public Affairs Office. Her citations include Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, NCO Professional Development Ribbon, German Army Marksmanship Badge in Bronze.

Following her service, Donna worked for 17 years with the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development as a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program interviewer. She currently is director for the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training.

She was married for 41 years to the late Steven M. Scheel, who was a Vietnam War veteran.

The late Steven M. Scheel, U.S. Army, of Budd Lake grew up as the son of an Air Force officer and lived all over the world, eventually graduating from Englewood High School.

After entering the Army, he trained as a flight operations coordinator and deployed to Vietnam in 1968-69. He later served in Korea. For his service, he was awarded the Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60 Device, Army Commendation Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, and Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

After Korea, he went to the Defense Information School to become a broadcast journalist and was stationed at the American Forces Network Headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany and Fort Gordon, Georgia, among others.

After the service, he earned a bachelor's in history and a master's in education, worked at commercial radio stations, and later worked with students who could not attend normal school classes. His last job was with the N.J. Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

He was married for more than 41 years to his loving wife, Donna, before he lost his battle to his wartime exposure to Agent Orange.

Hope One Mobile Unit Gets State Recognition

The United States Department of Health and Human Services Regional Executive Officer Dennis Gonzalez visited the Morris County Sheriff's Office Hope One mobile substance use resource and recovery unit on Monday, Oct. 21, while promoting National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Oct. 26.

Gonzalez, Public Affairs Specialist Sean Hightower, and Matt Birchenough, director of Special Events for the Partnership For A Drug-Free New Jersey, met Sheriff James M. Gannon and his Hope One team on the Morristown Green as part of a twice-weekly schedule of bringing critical recovery services directly to people.

Gonzalez was in Morristown to promote National Take-Back Day, which was held on Saturday, Oct. 26, when people can drop off expired and unused prescription medications at multiple locations, including at least 13 in Morris County between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Gonzalez said medicine cabinets containing unused opioid prescription drugs can tempt people into experimenting or trying a few, which can easily lead to addiction and a quest on the street for cheaper drugs like heroin.

Gonzalez met the Hope One team – Morris County Sheriff's Office Corporal Erica Valvano, CARES Certified Peer Recovery Specialist Kelly LaBar and Madine Despeine-Udoh, director of Self-Help, Advocacy and Education for the Mental

Health Association of Essex and Morris – while Gannon detailed Hope One’s impressive statistics since its launch on April 3, 2017.

“Hope One is an outstanding program, very innovative and creative,” said Gonzalez, who oversees HHS Region 2 that encompasses New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

“Congratulations to the sheriff for having the vision to bring this to Morris County. It’s great the sheriff is so proactive in a county where you wouldn’t think addiction would be happening.”

Impressed by the visit, Gannon said, “For the executive officer of the federal Department of Health and Human Services to visit Hope One and meet people

struggling with substance use disorders, that shows true concern and a commitment to end the grip of addiction that opioids and heroin have on so many people.”

Hope One has had contact with 9,389 individuals since its launch, and trained 2,057 people in how to administer Narcan to reverse an opioid-induced overdose. The staff has arranged for 152 people to receive recovery or rehab services and another 114 people have been connected to mental health services.

The US Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is one of multiple federal, state, county and local programs to curb the opioid and heroin epidemic. It’s a safe, convenient and responsible way to dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs. In Morris County, it supplements Prescription Drug Drop-Off boxes that many police departments have on-site.

The National Take Back Day in April 2019 brought in 937,443 pounds – nearly 469 tons – of unused or expired prescription medications.

Hope One and Morris County Sheriff’s Office Detective Michael Vanarelli planned to spend National Take Back Day outside the Walmart at 40 International Drive South in Flanders, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Morris County Prosecutor’s Office also had detectives at various locations..

Free Book Festival Planned In Long Valley

The Inaugural Middle Valley Book Festival is set for Saturday, Nov. 9, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Middle Valley Community Center in Long Valley. The public is invited to this free event, with refreshments too!

Stop in for this unique event to meet more than a dozen other published authors representing a variety of genres including children's books, mysteries, science fiction, military, romance and humor among others, who will be on hand to sign their books and discuss the publishing process.

For more information, contact Loren Spiotta-DiMare at

www.LorensReadingRoom.com; or visit the MVCC website http://www.middlevalleynj.org/about_us.html.

Taking part in a special check presentation at the event are, from left, Xenia Danko, director of Shelter Operations for Strengthen Our Sisters; Thomas Kemly, president and CEO of Columbia Bank; Sandra Ramos, founder and executive director of Strengthen our Sisters, and Cheryl Kelsey, Strengthen Our Sisters Board member.

Golfers Raise \$100k To Support Battered Women's Shelter

Columbia Bank in Fair Lawn raised \$100,000 in its Thirty-First Annual Charity Golf Classic at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne on Sept. 17, with proceeds to benefit Strengthen Our Sisters, a non-profit program in northern New Jersey for homeless/battered women and children. Nearly 150 golfers took part in this annual charitable fund raiser.

According to Thomas Kemly, Columbia's president and chief executive officer, "Our annual golf classic was another successful charitable endeavor for Team Columbia. We are extremely pleased that we were able to support the outstanding efforts of Strengthen Our Sisters which helps so many needy women and children break the cycle of domestic violence, poverty and abuse. As a true community-based bank, we remain committed to helping local organizations that make a difference in people's lives."

In addition, earlier this year it was learned that this shelter was in foreclosure and

was on the verge of being shut down. The Columbia Bank Foundation responded with a \$50,000 grant and assumed responsibility for its outstanding mortgage. As a result of the bank's quick response, the lights were kept on with no interruption of service taking place.

Monies from the golf outing will go toward the mortgage note and to pay the necessary bills to keep the seven shelter houses operating, according to Cheryl Bullock-Hannah, spokesperson for Strengthen Our Sisters.

Financial donations are always sought.

"We are behind in our utilities in our efforts to keep our mortgage current," says Sandra Ramos, founder and executive director of SOS. "For the continuance of the shelter to break the cycle of poverty and abuse, we need support. We are seeking contributions and monthly pledges to Strengthen Our Sisters domestic

violence shelter. We are a nonprofit 501c3, and your donations are tax deductible. For more information, contact Sandra Ramos @ 973-831-0898. Visit <https://www.strengthenoursisters.org/spark-our-sisters/>

College News

CCM Students Play Games To Help Heal Kids

CCM students enjoying games during the 24-hour Extra Life charity event in 2018.
Photo by Eric Guadara

Get ready to play some games! From Saturday, Nov. 2, through Sunday, Nov. 3, students and friends at County College of Morris (CCM) in Randolph will be participating in the 24-hour Extra Life charity event "Play Games, Heal Kids." Participants will be playing video games and board games, while raising funds to benefit Children's Miracle Network Hospital in Mountainside.

The charity gaming event will take place in CCM's Davidson Rooms located in the Student Community Center. The event is geared for CCM students and their friends who are 18-years-of-age and older. Co-sponsored by the Student Electronic Gaming Organization (SEGO), TCG Trading Card Gaming (TCG) and Game Developers of CCM, games will range from card games, to super Nintendo to new consoles.

"Extra Life is a global event that benefits the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, and I thought it would be a great opportunity to do something positive for the local community," says Eric Guadara, CCM instructor of information technologies. "Gaming students use critical thinking skills and it is great that they are coming together with their passions to help others."

This is the second year in a row that CCM students will be participating in the charity event. Those who wish to donate to the CCM team during the 24-hour gaming event can visit <http://tinyurl.com/ccmextralife2019>. Participants are asked to park in Lot 7. CCM is located at 214 Center Grove Road, Randolph.

CCM Presents the Musical Bright Star

Photo by Colleen McArdle

The Department of Music, Performing Arts and Music Technology at County College of Morris in Randolph presents the Fall musical, "Bright Star," inspired by a true story of the "Iron Mountain Baby," that features the Tony-nominated score by Steve Martin and Edie Brickell.

Directed by Professor Marielaine Mammon, the show runs at the Dragonetti Auditorium from Wednesday, Oct. 30, through Sat., Nov. 2, 7: 30 p.m., with a Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. General admission seating is \$15, while tickets for CCM students, alumni, children under 12 and seniors 62 and over are \$10.

Tickets can be purchased at <https://bookstore.ccm.edu/category/tickets-events/theater-shows>

“Bright Star” tells a sweeping tale of love and redemption set against the rich backdrop of the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina in the 1920s and '40s. The story is a delightful and uplifting tale of a young woman’s triumph over heartache and secrets.

Patrons are asked to park in Lot 6.

Centenary Board Names 14th President To Lead University

The Centenary University Board of Trustees unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Bruce Murphy as the University’s 14th president. Murphy will begin his tenure at Centenary on Jan. 1.

In making the announcement, Board Chair Wolfgang Gstattenbauer cited Murphy’s extensive background in higher education administration and thoughtful insights into growing Centenary University.

“This was an extremely thorough process that began with more than 70 applicants,” Gstattenbauer said. “While the board considered several strong candidates, Dr. Murphy impressed us, drawing on his leadership at other higher education institutions to present a thoughtful plan to lead Centenary University into a strong future.”

Murphy is currently a consultant with the Registry for College and University Presidents, an organization that fosters the placement of interim presidents at institutions in transition. He was the fifth president of Nicholls State University in Louisiana and was also a professor of educational leadership there.

A U.S. Army veteran, Murphy retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel. He taught leadership courses at West Point and was vice president for academic affairs at the U.S. Air Force’s Air University in Alabama. Murphy’s higher education career has also included teaching posts at Vanderbilt University and Mercyhurst College, where he was the founding director of the Master of Science in organizational leadership program and chair of the Walker School of Business. In addition, he was the founding dean of the School of Business and professor of management at Point Park University.

Murphy earned a doctorate in educational leadership from Vanderbilt University, master's degrees from Teachers College at Columbia University and the University of Southern California, and a bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley. He looks forward to beginning his tenure at Centenary University.

"I'm very impressed with the Centenary University community," Murphy said. "The University's passion for excellence is evident everywhere you look, from its dedicated faculty and students, to new career-focused academic programs. I'm grateful for the board's confidence in selecting me to lead Centenary University into a new era."

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