



DELSEA REGIONAL HOMECOMING: Queen Candidates (left to right): Angelina Caltabiano, Paige Effinger, Macey McGinley, Tatiyana Matthews, Sienna Cairone, Olivia Russo, Leila Roesly, and Lilliana Stickel. King Candidates (left to right): Jax Familiare, Anthony Dalponte, Milo Gebhard, Jayden Reyes Brescia, Blake Bottino, James Kirkpatrick, Lukas Kanos, and Connor Stewart. The winner will be announced at Homecoming on October 9th.

CAR OWNERSHIP COSTS HIT \$12,863 ANNUALLY

AAA's newly released 2026 Your Driving Costs analysis challenges the way consumers traditionally shop for cars: a lower fuel bill or attractive monthly payment can disguise a substantially more expensive vehicle to own. The findings give shoppers a timely reason to rethink the traditional question, "How much car can I afford?" And, the more revealing question: "What will this car actually cost me by the time I'm done owning it?" The analysis puts the average cost of owning and operating a new vehicle at \$12,863 a year, or \$1,071.92 every month, underscoring a financial reality many shoppers may overlook: the price negotiated at the dealership is only the beginning of what a vehicle actually costs. The findings also challenge some conventional assumptions about which vehicles save buyers money. AAA found that depreciation remains the single largest ownership expense, averaging \$4,422 annually. EVs delivered fuel costs roughly 66% to 70% lower than comparable gas vehicles, yet those savings were often overwhelmed by depreciation, financing, fees and other expenses. In the medium-sedan category, for example, AAA found an EV cost 29.1% more annually to own than a comparable gas model. Hybrids, meanwhile, emerged as the most consistently lower-cost alternative to gas vehicles across the categories AAA compared.

WOODBURY MAN SENTENCED TO 3 YEARS IN PRISON FOR AGGRAVATED ASSAULT

Woodbury - Jose Velez, 39, of Woodbury, was sentenced to 3 years in state prison Friday, September 25th for third-degree aggravated assault by the Honorable Kevin T. Smith, pursuant to a plea agreement, Gloucester County Prosecutor Andrew B. Johns, announced. According to documents filed in this case and statements made in open court:

On November 27, 2025, a 43-year-old female victim reported to Woodbury Police that Velez was outside of her residence and strangled her until she nearly passed out. She reported that over the next few hours he assaulted her by kicking her "like a soccer ball" and hitting her "like a punching bag." Velez pled guilty to third-degree aggravated assault and violation of probation. He was sentenced to 3 years in state prison to run concurrently with 365 days in state prison for the probation charge.

The State was represented by Chief Assistant Prosecutor Bryant Flowers and Assistant Prosecutor Kylie Finley. Prosecutor Johns thanked the Woodbury Police Department for their assistance in the investigation.

CLAYTON MIDDLE SCHOOL UNVEILS NEW BOOK VENDING MACHINE TO PROMOTE READING

Clayton Middle School is giving students a new and exciting way to discover the joy of reading with the addition of a book vending machine, purchased using Title I grant funding.

The school held a ribbon-cutting celebration on September 25 to officially introduce the new machine. Middle school administrators, guidance counselors and office staff joined students for the event. Students recognized through the school's Positive Behavior Support in Schools (PBSIS) program were among the first to have the opportunity to select a book from the machine. As part of the program, students can earn special PBSIS coins that can be used in the vending machine to choose a book of their own. The initiative connects the school's positive behavior program with its ongoing efforts to encourage literacy and foster a love of reading.

The vending machine features a variety of popular, age-appropriate titles designed to appeal to a wide range of student interests. Books will be rotated regularly throughout the school year, providing students with fresh selections and new opportunities to find their next great read.

By combining student recognition with literacy, Clayton Middle School hopes the new vending machine will make choosing a book an exciting and rewarding experience for students.



SERIOUS MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH

On Tuesday, September 29th at approximately 10:41 p.m., officers from the Gloucester Township Police Department responded to the area of Black Horse Pike (State Highway 168) and Almonesson Road for a report of a serious motor vehicle crash. Based on the preliminary investigation, a Toyota Venza was traveling southbound on Black Horse Pike when it entered the northbound lane and struck the rear of a Honda Accord. The impact caused the Honda Accord to spin before coming to rest along the roadway. The Toyota Venza continued through the intersection of Black Horse Pike and Almonesson Road, left the roadway, struck a utility pole guide wire, landscaping, and a freestanding brick business sign with an electronic display before overturning and coming to rest in the parking lot of a nearby business. Both vehicles sustained significant damage as a result of the crash.

The occupants of the Toyota Venza were extricated by firefighters from the Blenheim Fire Department, with assistance from Virtua Paramedics and Inspira Basic Life Support Emergency Medical Technicians. Both occupants were transported by ambulance to a local medical center for treatment of serious injuries. The driver of the Honda Accord reported no injuries at the scene. The circumstances and cause of the crash remain under investigation by the Gloucester Township Police Department Traffic Safety Unit's Serious Crash Investigation Team. The identities of those involved are being withheld at this time as the investigation remains ongoing. The Gloucester Township Police Department reminds motorists to remain attentive, obey posted speed limits, wear seat belts, and exercise caution while traveling on area roadways. Motorists are encouraged to make safe and responsible driving decisions to help prevent serious crashes and injuries.



Best wishes on your retirement to Clayton Borough Clerk Chris Newcomb who retired last week. Chris is pictured here with Clayton Mayor and Council members.



WALKING TOUR OF CEDAR GREEN CEMETERY - Everyone is invited on a Self-guided walking tour of Cedar Green Cemetery, 251 E. Academy St, Clayton on Saturday, October 3rd from 10AM to Noon. Take a free, self-guided walking tour through Clayton's iconic Cemetery. Follow the path shown in our booklet where you can read about some of our Mayors, Military and Memorials, presented by Clayton Historic Preservation.

CLAYTON FALL FESTIVAL - On Saturday October 3rd from 12 noon to 4PM the Borough of Clayton will hold their annual Fall Festival at Autumn Pasquale Memorial Park (RD 10/4). Residents, families, local business, organizations, clubs, groups and community members are welcome to participate! Several businesses will decorate and bring treats to have fun handing out candy. Celebrate the season with a fun-filled afternoon featuring Trunk-or-Treat, Crafters, business, and Vendors. Music provided by our DJ, Family-friendly activities and games. Bring the whole family and enjoy one of Clayton's favorite fall traditions!

ART WALK & NIGHT MARKET - This Saturday, October 3rd from 5PM to 9PM, the town of Glassboro will hold an inspiring festival that will include dozens of local and area glassblowers, sculptors, painters, metalsmiths and woodworkers, plus a multitude of other handcrafters that will offer their items for sale and be demonstrating their skills and craftsmanship right before your eyes! The night market offers visitors the chance to browse a variety of goods while basking in a festival atmosphere full of food and other alfresco fun in Downtown Glassboro on High Street. Families are invited to interact with artists, create and see demonstrations that emphasize the way art keeps everyone connected to the past and improves the present why preserving art as important for the future. This is a FREE family fun event and there is something for every art enthusiast or casual admirer.

HARVEST DAY FESTIVAL - The 28th Annual Elmer Harvest Day Festival will be held on Saturday, October 3rd from 10AM to 4PM (No Rain Date) at the Corner of State & Main Street in Elmer. Free Admission and fun for all ages featuring food vendors, Crafters, a Car Show, Basket Raffle, SJ Gas Engine Club, Live Music by Loose Ends, Hayrides, Bounce Houses, Fire Truck Rides, 5K Race and much more!

WOODBURY CAR SHOW/FALL FESTIVAL PARADE - Also on Saturday, October 3rd on Broad Street in downtown Woodbury there will be a Car Show, and the 76th annual Woodbury Fall Festival Parade. This year's theme is Red, White, Blue & 250 Too! Woodbury celebrates America's 250th birthday. With hometown pride, community spirit and a patriotic salute to 250 years! The parade begins at 5PM on Broad Street. The parade will begin at Colonial Avenue and Broad Street (Route 45) in North Woodbury, proceeds south along Broad Street and ends near Salem Avenue. There will be marching community organizations, businesses, dance groups, bands, fire companies, floats, marching groups and more so please join us and help bring this year's celebration to life.

GHOST WALK - Explore Mullica Hill's haunted history on Saturday, October 3rd from 6PM to 9:30 PM through chilling tales and spooky secrets hidden within Main Street's historic buildings! The 1 ½ hour guided tour exploring the towns haunted history. Hear chilling tales as you walk past the historic homes and shadowy buildings along Main Street. The Jersey Unique Minds Paranormal Society (JUMPS) will join the event, and Doug Hogate Jr. will broadcast his paranormal radio show, Paradelphia, live from the Ghost Walk! Tickets are \$13 with proceeds supporting the Harrison Twp Historical Society. Families are welcome. Children in strollers do not require a ticket. Tours depart from the High Street Deli, 46 S. Main Street, every 10 minutes beginning at 6PM. Don't forget to bring your flashlights and cameras and wear comfortable walking shoes! Parking on High Street on Main Street. Contact (856)478-4949 for more info.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



By Cindy Merckx

Every October, there are many residents that like to plan to get away for a weekend and pack the car and head north to the Highlands or to the Delaware Water Gap or Pocono's. They are chasing the first blaze of seeing nature's annual color landscape of bright red and gold leaves. But this year, with gas prices still pinching every household budget, there's a chance that maybe you want to stay closer to home within an hours drive.

Many longtime South Jersey residents already know that while the northern part of the state is past peak by late October, the Pinelands and areas of Cape May County are just hitting their stride. South Jersey's foliage season runs later, peaking in late October and stretching into early November. That means our readers who stay close to home this month aren't settling for second-best.

The route is simple. Take Route 55 south, or follow Route 47—the Delsea Drive—as it winds through Gloucester, Cumberland, and Cape May counties. Either way, you'll pass through a wide corridor of forested land that turns around the end of this month from green to yellow, orange, and reddish brown especially as the month wears on. The Pine Barrens Scenic Byway offers a similar stretch of oak and pine, with the Wharton State and Belleplain State Forest serve as the anchors.

Wharton State Forest is worth a stop on its own. At Batsto Village or Cape May visitors can walk among historic buildings set against a backdrop of

pinetrees, oaks, and wetlands. Belleplain is closer to Cape May County and offers a quieter mix of oak-hickory forests and Atlantic white cedar swamp. There are also a few good places to pull over, stretch your legs, and take some photos.

This is also the season when the nuts start falling and my walkway has its daily share. I have lived in the oak forest on the west side of Malaga Lake for many years now and can attest that a single large oak tree can drop thousands of acorns. There are roughly nineteen species of oak and I do not eat acorns. However I am told that the white oak acorns are the sweeter ones. They must be, because the squirrels in my neighborhood favor them and hickory nuts; red oak acorns are very bitter. The Shagbark hickory nuts are prized by those willing to crack them, while the bitternut hickory tree feeds the squirrels and not much else. All I can say is that the squirrels seem to enjoy the challenge each day to climb to the very top of my hickory trees to enjoy one or two nuts each day. The sound of acorns hitting my car roof, house roof or the forest floor also has its own kind of fall soundtrack this month and is one you may get while you travel along the road-way.

If you want a destination, October is a great month to travel that offers plenty of activity or the scenery you may be looking for. Last weekend we had a very wet Noreaster storm that cancelled several events and flooded most of the shore towns. This week on the front page we have listed the latest local fall activities that are planned for this weekend. The good news is that none of these events will require a full tank and a full day on the interstate or a toll road. All you need is a free afternoon and a willingness to take the back road, and keep an eye out to enjoy our beautiful season of Autumn.



PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Oct. 1st- Glassboro Council WS-6:30PM
- Oct. 1st- Monroe Twp Senior Comm-5:15PM
- Oct. 5th- Monroe Twp Open Space-7pm
- Oct. 6th- Franklin Twp Zoning Board- 7PM
- Oct. 8th- Newfield Council- 7PM
- Oct. 12th- Columbus Day- Legal Holiday
- Oct. 13th- Janvier Board Fire Comm-7:30PM
- Oct. 13th- Franklin Twp. Committee- 7PM
- Oct. 14th- Franklin Twp BOE-Janvier School-6PM
- Oct. 14th- Monroe Twp Council-6:30PM
- Oct. 14th- Monroe Twp board Health-7PM

The Sentinel
of Gloucester County

330 OAK AVENUE
MALAGA, NJ 08328

E-mail: ftsentinel@comcast.net
(856) 694-1600

Published every Thursday by Cindy Merckx Publications LLC, t/a The Sentinel of Gloucester County, in the interest of Gloucester County. Cindy & Norman Merckx ... Editor, Owners and Publishers

Annual Digital copyrates: \$30.00 per year.

All paid subscriptions are non-refundable. Address all correspondence to: The Sentinel, 330 Oak Avenue, Malaga, NJ 08328. We're relocated at 330 Oak Avenue, in Malaga, NJ.

Publishing Legal Notices for Gloucester County and its Municipalities since 1942.

All contents© 2026 by Cindy Merckx Publications, LLC. T/A The Sentinel of Gloucester County. All rights reserved. Property rights for the materials contained herein are wholly retained by The Sentinel. None of the contents of this publication may be reproduced without prior written permission.

Neither The Sentinel, its publisher, nor participating advertisers will be responsible for typographical errors or any incorrect information printed herein. The publisher reserves the right to edit or reject any and all materials submitted for publication. Political Advertising reflects the views of the writer/candidate and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Sentinel. We accept no responsibility for the content of Political advertisement. Letters of political endorsement from September and through November, Must be a paid advertisement stating who paid forthead.

Student Spotlights

WHITEHALL SCHOOL



This week, students in Mrs. Quinton's 4th Grade class at Whitehall Elementary in Monroe Township stepped into the shoes of lawmakers as they learned about the process of how a bill becomes a law and how it travels through our three branches of government. After learning about the roles and responsibilities of each branch, students had the opportunity to put their knowledge into action by creating their very own "laws." Each student came up with a rule they believed could help improve either lunch or recess time, thinking carefully about how their idea could make a positive difference for our school community. It was a fun and engaging way for students to experience the lawmaking process firsthand while practicing creativity, collaboration, and civic responsibility!

BOOK VENDING MACHINE



Clayton Middle Schools new book vending machine. Story on page 1.

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF DECISION
CLAYTON BOROUGH PLANNING/ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that at the regular meeting of the Borough of Clayton Planning/Zoning Board of Adjustment held on September 28, 2026 at 7:00 PM, time prevailing, the following resolution was adopted in the matter set forth herein:

APPLICANT: UNITED AUTO RECYCLING CORP.
PROPERTY: 1152 N. DELSEA DR., CLAYTON, NJ
A/K/A BLOCK 1902, LOT 3
ACTION TAKEN: GRANTING A (D)(2) USE VARIANCE, PRELIMINARY & FINAL MAJOR SITE PLAN, BULK VARIANCES, AND WAIVERS

APPLICANT: DREAM HOMES & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PROPERTY: 201 EAST AVE., CLAYTON, NJ,
A/K/A BLOCK 2002, LOT 22
ACTION TAKEN: GRANTING AMENDED FINAL MAJOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL

APPLICANT: DREAM HOMES & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PROPERTY: N. BROAD ST., CLAYTON, NJ,
A/K/A BLOCK 1902, LOT 35
ACTION TAKEN: DENYING AN APPLICATION FOR A USE VARIANCE

Copies of the aforementioned resolutions are available for public inspection in the Office of the Planning Board Secretary, Borough of Clayton Municipal Building, 125 North Delsea Drive, Clayton, NJ 08312 (856-881-2882 ext. 102) during regular business hours or by appointment, holidays and weekends excluded.

BY ORDER OF CLAYTON BOROUGH COMBINED PLANNING/ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
DEBBIE SCHLOSSER, Secretary
The Sentinel of Gloucester County 10/01/2026
Fee \$31.50

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS ZACHARY NEGIN, JACOB SHACHAR NAMED NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP COMMENDED STUDENTS

Washington Township High School seniors Zachary Negin and Jacob Shachar have been named Commended Students in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSP). A Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), which conducts the program, recently was presented by Executive Principal Ray Anderson to these scholastically talented seniors.

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2027 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students placed among the top 50,000 students who entered the 2027 competition by taking the 2025 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

"Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success," the NMSC said in a statement. "These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success."



ROWAN COLLEGE OF SOUTH JERSEY CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION TO HOST HIRING EVENT FOR TRADE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Rowan College of South Jersey (RCSJ) Career & Technical Education will host a Hiring Event on Thursday, October 1, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., seeking experienced industry professionals interested in sharing their knowledge and expertise with students and adult learners preparing for careers in the skilled trades.

The event will highlight part-time and adjunct teaching opportunities supporting both RCSJ's credit programs and workforce training programs. Positions are available with day, evening, and Saturday schedules, providing flexibility for professionals who are currently working in the industry as well as retired tradespeople looking for an opportunity to train the next generation. RCSJ is especially seeking professionals with experience in: HVAC, Electrical, Welding, Carpentry and Plumbing

Industry professionals bring valuable real-world experience to the classroom, helping students develop the technical knowledge and hands-on skills needed to succeed in today's workforce.

"Industry professionals have a unique perspective that can make a lasting impact on students preparing for careers in the skilled trades," said Dr. Brenden Rickards, president of Rowan College of South Jersey. "We are looking for experienced professionals who want to share what they know, inspire the next generation, and help strengthen the region's skilled workforce."

The hiring event is an opportunity for qualified professionals to learn more about available positions, teaching opportunities, scheduling options, and RCSJ's Career & Technical Education programs. Whether currently working in the trades or recently retired, experienced professionals are encouraged to explore how their skills and knowledge can help prepare the next generation of skilled workers



Students in Miss Eshelman's and Mrs. Lopez's Second Grade class in Monroe Township had a fun time exploring science! As part of their Mystery Science lesson, students experimented with different types of candy to see what would happen when it was placed in hot water. They observed whether the candy would melt into a liquid or remain a solid. Students then made observations as the candy cooled to see if it would return to its original solid form. It was a fun, hands-on way for students to make predictions, observations, and explore changes in matter.

Grateful for You!

The Bauer Group of TAM Lending
would like you to JOIN US

5 YEAR Anniversary

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION EVENT

OCTOBER 3, 2026
1 PM – 4 PM

Our Franklinville Office
2557 Delsea Drive
Franklinville, NJ 08322

Fun for the Whole Family!

BOUNCE • GAMES • FOOD • PRIZES
PUMPKIN PAINTING • & MORE!

RSVP
GBauer@tamlending.com
856-213-5793

mortgagemakersonline.com
#makingithappen #TeamTAM

Thank you for being a part of our journey!



Our Towns

Email your events to ftsentinel@comcast.net - there is no cost - when available space permits

MEGA JOB FAIR & RESOURCE EVENT
Join us at the MEGA Job Fair & Resource Event at Rowan College of South Jersey on Friday, October 9th from 9AM to 12 Noon at Rowan College of South Jersey Gymnasium, 1400 Tanyard Road, Sewell. .

PEDRICKTOWN DAY
Join us for a day of fun throughout the town on October 10th from 9AM to 3 PM. Craft Vendors, Breakfast, Lunch and BBQ Dinners (2-4PM). Raffle for Beer/Wine/ Liquor Wagon. Contact Bethany (856)759-2368 for dinner tickets pre-order as limited supply.

COUNTRY LINE DANCE PARTY
Kick up your heels every Thursday at the American Legion Post, 141 N. Main Street, Mullica Hill with Steve & Laura, aka the Dance Bullies!~ They will be spinning tunes and teaching the moves for a boot-stomping' night of country line dancing. Just \$10 gets you in the door and all ages and skill levels are welcome, so grab your boots and join in the fun!

WINERIES MYSTERY TOUR
Cumberland County Wineries. On Sat. October 10th from 3PM to 7PM the Bridgeton Area Chamber of Commerce presents the Cumberland County Wineries Myster Tour. Join the fun as we take attendees on a fun-filled, trolley tour of Terra Nonno, Cedar Rose, and Frightened Turtle wineries, spending about one hour or so at each stop. Along the way, there will be a mystery to discuss and solve plus other fun, wine, food and other beverages. The tour begins at Hopewell Twp. Municipal Building/Chamber office parking lot. Please arrive by 2:24PM. Explore three wineries on a comfortable motor coach, enjoy the vistas of the fall countryside, wine tastings, delicious food, a mystery event and other activities. Tickets cost \$75 per person and include wine tasting at each winery. Coupon for food & wine beverages at a winery of choice. Chance to win prizes in the mystery event along the way. To register go to www.tinyurl.com/BACC Wine or call (856)455-1312.

OKTOBERFEST
Enjoy a traditional fall Oktoberfest with craft beer, sausages & much more food with Bavarian Oktoberfest music & raffles in the friendly outdoor environs of the Mantua VFW's outdoor Pavilion on Saturday October 10th from October 10th from 2PM to 6PM. Tickets are \$35 per person and can be purchased at the Mantua VFW, 8 New York Avenue, Mantua, NJ 08051 or on line at www.Post192.com.

CLOTHING DRIVE
Cleaning Out Closets? Delsea Project Graduation will receive money for every pound donate. Please be sure that all donated items are in tightly tied plastic bags and DROP OFF in front of the Delsea High School Main Entrance on Saturday, October 10th from 9:30 AM to 12:30PM.

FALL FESTIVAL IN MULLICA HILL
Join us on the weekend of October 10th at 10AM and October 11th at 3PM on Main Street in Mullica Hill to celebrate the 54th annual Fall Festival! We will have vendors, crafters, food trucks, entertainment, live music, free pumpkin painting for kids and so much more. There will also be some ghastly Tales of the Civil War! Hear about the horrible tales about Civil War medical practices, funeral lore and town tales. You can visit both camps by candlelight and end the evening with the night firing of the Canon and a song or two on Sat. Oct 10th from 6:30-7:30PM.

FRIGHT NIGHT 2026
Bring the family out for a spooktacular evening of trick-or-treating, costumes, and Halloween fun presented by Clayton Athletics & Activities! Wednesday, October 28 6-8 PM Clayton High School Children ages 12 and under are welcome to trick-or-treat! Come dressed in your favorite costume and make your way through the festivities, including a Haunted Trail at the Performing Arts Center! Help support our Food Drive: Please bring canned goods to donate at the door. Enter: Doors adjacent to the Gymnasium Parking Lot Exit: Performing Arts Center Grab your costumes, bring a canned good, and join us for a frightfully fun night!

MONROE TWP FALL SHREDDING EVENT
Got papers? We've got the shredder! Monroe Township's Fall Shredding Event is THIS SATURDAY, October 3rd. Clear out those old statements, outdated documents, and paper clutter while helping protect your personal information. from 9 AM-12 Noon — or until the truck is full 1040 Glassboro Rd., Williamstown Monroe Township residents only! Bring the paper pile you've been meaning to deal with and leave with a little less clutter! Shred today. Protect tomorrow. This event is rain or shine.

CELEBRATE ITALIAN HERITAGE
The City of Vineland and the Italian Cultural Foundation of South Jersey invite the community to join us for the Annual Italian Flag Raising Ceremony & Luncheon on Monday, October 12. A Flag Raising Ceremony will take place on the City Hall Steps beginning at 11 am. Rain location: City Council Chambers, 2nd Floor of City Hall. Following the ceremony, join us for a FREE Luncheon at 12 Noon at the North Italy Club, 414 Virano Lane, Vineland. Enjoy good food, fellowship, and music provided by The Incredible Funny Group! Reservations are required for the luncheon. To reserve your tickets, contact Special Events Coordinator Sheena Santiago at 856-794-4000, ext. 4169 or email shsantiago@vinelandcity.org. Come celebrate the rich Italian heritage and traditions that are such an important part of our Vineland community.

HAUNTED WALK AT ALCYON PARK / SQUAD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
Enter if you dare to a Haunted Walk at Alcyon Park on October 16th from 6PM to 9PM. A Family Friendly Hour from 6PM to 7PM with no jump scares permitted! Calling all Haunted Walk Volunteers! If you want to help, bring the 2026 Pitman Haunted Walk to life on Friday, October 16th at Alcyon Lake Park we are looking for creative costumed actors to create fun and spooky characters along the trail. Prizes will be awarded for Borough Choice Award and Fan Favorite Award. Volunteer proposals are due by October 1st. Volunteers are invited to participate as costumed actors along the route adjacent to the Rotary Pavilion. Participants are encouraged to create imaginative costumes and simple themed displays or props that enhance the experience for visitors. All costumes, props and displays are subject to Parks & Recreation approval and must be capable of being set up between 5PM and 6PM and removed immediately following the event. All proposals must be submitted by October 1st. The Parks & Rec Committee will be in contact with each individual/group to provide additional details and grant formal approval of your proposal that can be submitted online.

SHADOW EQUESTRIAN 24TH ANNUAL TRAIL-A-THON
The Trail-a-athon will take place on Sat. Oct 17th at 10AM to 1PM. We invite the community to our farm at 1907 Monroeville Rd., Franklin Township, to watch students ride the trail stops. Family Fun, food, basket raffles and more!

BLOOD DRIVE
The Monroe Township Woman's Club has made a new home at the Timber Lake Community Associations clubhouse, moving from our previous location at the Pfeifer Center. As gratitude we would like to assist them in spreading the word about a Blood Drive at the Timber Lake Community Association Clubhouse on October 24th. Some of our members will be at this event but it is being organized by them.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY'S FINAL CELEBRATION OF AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY
The Gloucester County Clerk's Office is proud to announce its final countywide celebration commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution. Community members of all ages are invited to join the Gloucester County Clerk's Office for a day of family-friendly festivities at the Gloucester County Store located in the Deptford Mall. Festivities will begin on October 24th at 10:00 AM and conclude at 5:00 PM. The Gloucester County Clerk's Office is honored to host this final celebration as we recognize the history, heritage, and contributions of our county while partaking in the conclusion of the nationwide commemoration of America's 250th anniversary. Brief History — Founded in 1686, Gloucester County is one of New Jersey's oldest counties and originally encompassed areas that now include present-day Atlantic and Camden Counties.

MELODIES ON MAIN; COUNTRY NIGHT!
Melodies on Main: Country Night is Coming to Williamstown! Grab your cowboy hats and boots and join us for an evening of country fun at Melodies on Main on Thursday, October 15th from 6 PM - 9 PM Main Street, Williamstown. Presented by Monroe Twp Economic Development
Enjoy: Live music by Vinnie Trav Food trucks Free pony rides Family-friendly activities Cold drinks and great times with friends and neighbors
A special thank you to SSE Party Rentals for sponsoring this event! Come out to Downtown Williamstown and experience a great night of music, community, and country charm. We can't wait to see you there!

OBITUARIES

JENNIFER RENEE HERNANDEZ
Jennifer Renee Hernandez, age 40, on Sunday, September 20, 2026, in Mullica Hill, New Jersey. Beloved daughter of Connie Marie Knox and cherished sister of Christine Hernandez. Dear niece of Cheryl Green and her husband, Greg; Sam Knox and his wife, Jennifer; and Bobby Knox and his wife, Cindy. Loving cousin of Kelsey (née Green) Pittman and her husband, Josh; Kasey (née Green) Harris and her husband, Keith; Molly Knox; and Jackson Knox. Affectionately known as “Zsa Zsa” to her younger cousins Kesley Pittman, Carter Pittman, and Kaylee Harris. Jennifer held a special place in the hearts of her family and will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.
Born on December 16, 1985, in Washington Township, NJ, Jennifer was raised in Clayton. She was a proud 2004 graduate of Clayton High School and continued her education at Camden County Vocational School, graduating in 2007 from the Cosmetology program. Jennifer became a self-employed hairdresser in 2008 and continued her work throughout the years. Her career allowed her to combine her creativity with her natural ability to connect with people.
After growing up in Clayton, Jennifer made Glassboro her home, where she lived for the past eight years. She lived life to the fullest and enjoyed finding new experiences and making memories along the way.
Jennifer had an eclectic love of music and enjoyed listening to every genre and era. She was also an avid movie lover, enjoying both classic films and newer releases. Jennifer loved going out to eat, discovering new restaurants, and trying different foods. She also enjoyed visiting local farmers markets and exploring the different offerings they had to share. Jennifer had a particular fondness for trying new coffee shops and collecting their promotional giveaways, especially from places such as Dunkin’ and Starbucks. Although she did not necessarily drink the coffee, she loved the excitement of finding and collecting the various items. She and Christine shared many memorable outings, including attending numerous concerts together. Jennifer was often the responsible designated driver, making sure everyone made it home safely.
She had a genuine love for children and adored her nieces and nephews. Jennifer was exceptionally patient with them and took great joy in spending time with them. She was also a devoted animal lover, especially her beloved Maltipoo, Lillian, who brought her great companionship and joy.
Jennifer will be remembered for her generous heart, honesty, loyalty, love of life, and ability to make a lasting impression on everyone around her. She was deeply loved and will be forever missed by her family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing her.
Services are private at the convenience of the family under the direction of the BARCLAY FUNERAL HOME of Clayton. Sororfully submitted by the family.
ELIZABETH 'LIBBY' LEDDEN
Elizabeth “Libby” Ledden (Abrams), a beloved wife, mother, sister, and friend, passed away peacefully on September 24, 2026 in the comfort of her home, surrounded by family. Libby was raised on the farm lands in Tabernacle and was the cherished daughter of the late Robert W. Abrams Sr. and Mildred V. Abrams (Miller). She was also predeceased by her dear sister, Sharon Yoder and her husband Floyd Yoder.
Libby was a beacon of strength and grace throughout her courageous battle with cancer, embodying the same resilience and spirit that she demonstrated throughout her life. She is survived by her devoted husband, Allen W. Ledden Sr., with whom she shared a loving and enduring marriage since October 29, 1982. Together, they built a beautiful life, raising their two children in a home filled with love and laughter.
In addition to her loving husband, Libby is survived by her daughter Laura Ledden and her husband Christopher Fichter, along with Allen W. Ledden Jr. and his wife Catherine Ledden, all who were the pride and joy of her life. Libby was also a loving grandmother to her grandson Jeremiah, who brought her immense happiness and fulfillment. She is also survived by her brother Robert W. Abrams Jr. and his wife Donna Abrams, along with a host of loving nieces, nephews, extended family members and dear friends, all of whom were special to her heart. Libby was a proud graduate of Lenape High School, class of 1970. Her career as a secretary in the construction industry spanned many years, where she was known for her meticulous work ethic and dedication. Beyond her professional accomplishments, Libby was a woman of many passions. She had a profound love for gardening, finding peace and joy in nurturing her vibrant blooms. Her heart was equally open to animals, and she shared her life with many beloved pets over the years. Libby dedicated herself to local organizations such as the Home and School Association of South Harrison Elementary where her children attended and was very active in many aspects of her children's school. Known for her quick wit and a heart full of kindness, Libby's selflessness was a hallmark of her character. She was always ready to lend a hand to those in need, and her warm, caring spirit touched the lives of everyone she met. Her thoughtful nature and unwavering commitment to the happiness of her family, especially her devoted husband Allen and their children, were truly inspiring. A visitation will be held on Monday, October 5th from 10 am to 12pm, with service to follow, at Fertig Funeral Home, 63 North Main Street, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062. Following the service, friends and family are invited to attend the burial at Monroeville Cemetery.
JOHN 'JACK' JAMES MCGUIRE
John “Jack” James McGuire, 82, of Oak Valley, passed away peacefully on Monday, September 21, 2026. Jack was the beloved husband of the late Marie A. McGuire (née Panichi); the treasured father of Scott McGuire (Janet), Tim McGuire, Brian McGuire (Kelly), and Ginger Quinn (Pat); and the loving stepfather of

Theresa Bliss (Steve) and Bob Weaver (Maria). He was the proud grandfather of 20 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Jack was predeceased by his parents, James and Margaret McGuire. A proud veteran, Jack served in the United States Navy from 1962 to 1966, including tours aboard the USS Dash (MSO-428).
Jack was an active member of the Knights of Columbus at St. Margaret's Church. He will be remembered for his devotion to his family, his service to his country and community, and the many lasting memories he created with those he loved. He will be greatly missed by his many nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family, and friends. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on 9/28 at St. Margaret's Church, Woodbury Heights. Interment followed at Gloucester County Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Under direction of McGuinness Funeral Home, Woodbury.
CARL LOUIS VANDERGRIFT, SR.
Carl Louis Vandergrift, Sr., age 85, passed away peacefully on Saturday, September 26, 2026. He was the beloved father of Carl Vandergrift Jr. (Dawn), and Kelly Chropka (Michael); and loving grandfather of Grace Chropka, Joseph Chropka, and Wyatt Vandergrift. He was the dear brother of Thomas Vandergrift (Evelyn); the late James Vandergrift (Linda); the late LaVerne Wilson (late Robert); and Marie Cheruka (late Ronald). He was the son of the late Thomas and Edith (nee Harper) Vandergrift. Carl was also preceded in death by his beloved cocker spaniel, "Maggie", who held a special place in his heart.
Born on August 22, 1941, in Vineland, NJ, Carl was raised in the Janvier section of Franklin Township on the family farm. He attended Clayton High School and continued to live in Janvier for a number of years. He briefly resided in Reading, PA, before making Glassboro his home for many years. Following his retirement, Carl enjoyed spending his summers in Ocean View, NJ, and his winters in Florida. He later moved to Spotsylvania, VA, where he lived for several years to be closer to his sister, Marie, before recently returning to New Jersey and settling in Williamstown.
Carl began working during high school at Community Oil where he learned the HVAC trade. He then joined Agway and worked his way up to Sales Manager before leaving the company in 1973. Carl went on to establish his own business, becoming the owner and operator of Vandergrift's Oil Service Inc. in Glassboro. He proudly operated the business until his retirement in November 1999.
As a member of the Janvier Fire Company, Carl followed in the footsteps of his father, Thomas, who was instrumental in its development. His mother, Edith, was also active with the Ladies Auxiliary. Having grown up around the fire company, Carl joined as a teenager, and in his high school yearbook he wrote that we wanted to become a "first class firefighter". Through his many years of dedicated service, he eventually became Chief and a member of the New Jersey State Fire Company Relief Association.
Carl was committed to serving his community in many ways. He served as a member of the Delsea Regional Board of Education from 1966 to 1972 and was a member of the Free and Accepted Masons, Lodge 85 of Glassboro. He was also a member of the First United Methodist Church in Glassboro and served as Secretary for the Franklinville Republican Club.
Growing up on a large family farm, Carl developed a strong connection to the outdoors from an early age. The farm was home to pigs, chickens, and a donkey, and Carl often shared stories of his childhood responsibilities. In his earlier years, Carl also enjoyed hunting, fishing, and spending time with his family at the shore.
Carl especially loved his time in Florida after retirement, but some of his favorite adventures were at sea. He absolutely loved cruising and was devoted to Royal Caribbean, where he was a member of the Crown & Anchor Society. Over the years, he enjoyed many trips to Bermuda and the Caribbean.
Above all, Carl will be remembered as a devoted father, grandfather, brother, and friend whose life was defined by family, community service, hard work, and a love of adventure. His stories, dedication, and generous spirit will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.
Relatives and friends are invited to his viewing on Thursday, October 1, 2026 from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM at the BARCLAY FUNERAL HOME, 208 Maple Street, Clayton, NJ 08312. A funeral service will begin at 11:00 AM, followed by interment at Manahath Cemetery in Glassboro.
DORIS 'DORIE' MARIE WEISS
Doris "Dorie" Marie Weiss (née Monroe) passed away peacefully on the morning of September 23, 2026. She was 95 years old. Dorie was predeceased by her loving husband Al in 2008 whom she was married to for 58 years. Dorie leaves behind her 6 children-Barbara (Bill), Donna (Ed), Alfred (Ginny), Richard (Kathy), John (Mindy), and Timothy (Suzanne). She was a loving grandmother of 16 and great grandmother of 23, affectionately known as Me-mom/Mi-mi and mom-mom. She is also survived by her youngest sister Margie along with many nieces and nephews.
Dorie was born and raised in Collingswood along with 5 siblings. She graduated from Camden Catholic in 1949 married Al in 1950 and soon became a homemaker and mother. She enjoyed traveling throughout the years and was happy to become a snowbird for many years never missing the cold weather. Her life was full, with many Florida friends and neighbors in Boynton Beach. She will be sorely missed by her loving family and many friends. Relatives and friends are invited to attend her visitation on Monday, October 12th from 10:30AM to 11:15AM in the SS Peter and Paul RC Catholic Church, 362 Ganttown Road, Sewell. Funeral Mass at 11:30AM. Interment will be private.

DECHRISTOPHER MEMORIALS, INC.

Family Owned and Operated Since 1915
2 Locations in New Jersey to Serve You:
4126 Tuckahoe Rd (Rt 555), Williamstown, NJ 08094
(5 miles So. Of Gloucester County Veterans Memorial Cemetery)
(856) 262-7720
Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 1-5 p.m.
Saturday and Evenings By Appointment Only
1010 Hollis Avenue, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
(856) 428-4882
Hours: Saturday and Evenings by Appointment Only
Serving All Faiths & Cemeteries in the Delaware Valley

GREY GRANITE MEMORIALS



24x12 Flush Marker \$995



24x16 Slant Marker \$1,200



36x16 Slant Marker \$1,900



36x24 Upright Memorial \$2,500
Designs are for illustration only

BARCLAY FUNERAL HOME



BARCLAYFUNERALHOME.NET



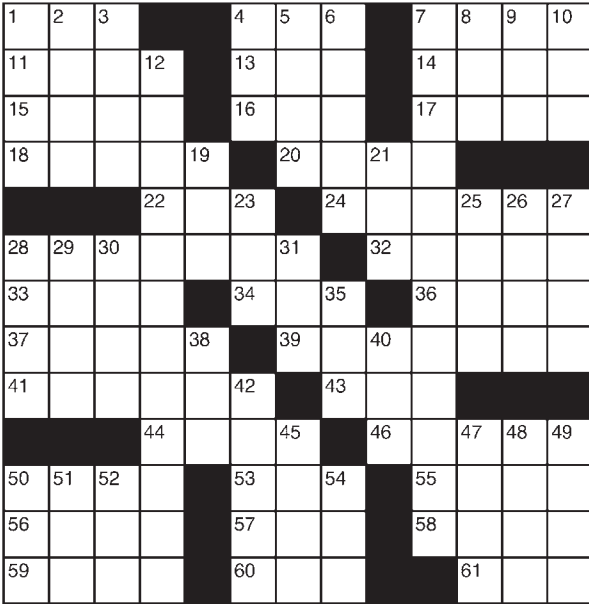
WILLIAM C. BARCLAY, III
N.J. Lic. No. 4232
SENIOR DIRECTOR

856.881.3040
208 MAPLE STREET
CLAYTON, NJ 08312

Proudly Serving The Community Since 1934
Through Three Generations.

King Crossword

- ACROSS
- 1 Hot tub
- 4 Gore and Pacino
- 7 Poet Teasdale
- 11 Sod
- 13 Architect I.M. —
- 14 Sty cry
- 15 Play opener
- 16 Up to
- 17 — Minor (bear constellation)
- 18 Bas-relief medium
- 20 Leave out
- 22 Grass shack
- 24 Paper fastener
- 28 Mosque tower
- 32 Florida game fish
- 33 Optimist's credo
- 34 Apprehend
- 36 Pharmaceut-ical
- 37 Transmits
- 39 Baking pota-toes
- 41 Orders of pan-cakes
- 43 "Don't Start Now" singer
- 44 Intimate
- 46 Tactics
- 50 "Star Wars" knight
- 53 Resistance unit
- 55 "East of Eden" twin
- 56 At the summit of
- 57 Pint-sized
- 58 Belafonte song
- 59 Orange veggies
- 60 Matching pair
- 61 Arced tennis shot
- 10 Rap sheet let-ters
- 12 Popular British dish
- 19 Owned by us
- 21 The "I" of TGIF
- 23 Sawbuck
- 25 Skin opening
- 26 LummoX
- 27 Heart charts (Abbr.)
- 28 Avoid
- 29 "Rhyme Pays" rapper
- 30 "Peter Pan" pooch
- 31 Roofing goo
- 35 Future flower
- 38 Enjoy Vail
- 40 "How's it goin'?"
- 42 Bamboozles
- 45 Biblical pro-noun
- 47 Exam format
- 48 Vacillate
- 49 Ellist
- 50 Comic Leno
- 51 JFK info
- 52 — Perignon
- 54 Bumped into



© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

Psalm 44:22-23

Yet for your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever.

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

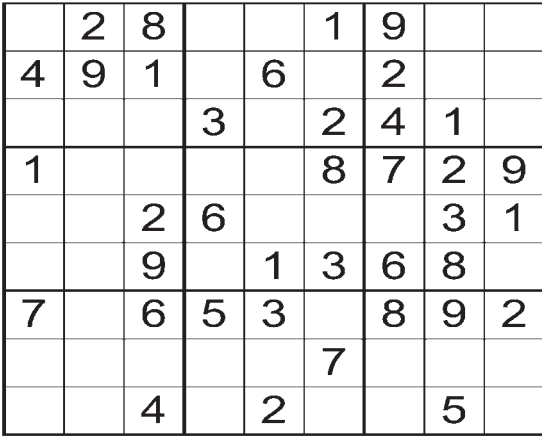
G W R E V E R O F D
F N H S R S K J Z R
E L O Y L A H A E O
R H E L L E R E S L
C O N S I D E R E D
F F F S R Q K P K P
A D A Y H U N Y A Y
C H T A E D O F W E
E R E J E C T Y A T
I J R O U S E T A U

Find the **bolded/underlined** words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

WWW.SEARCHING-FOR-JESUS.COM

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

Weekly SUDOKU



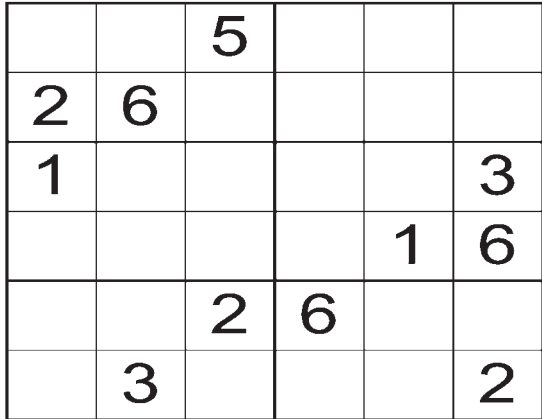
Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

MINI SUDOKU



Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 6-box square contains all of the numbers from one to six.

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

MAGIC MAZE ● — INCLUDED

P R O L J G T R E S S E D E B
Y I W U R P T C N K D I G D B
Z T H Y M X N S V S R Q O M Y
S I N S T A L L A T I O N R K
H E I U R N N G E F N C E A Y
I W L U O E A U U I K V S Q P
P N S P L C B R A G I A J H F
P N E C M X S M R L A Y E X V
I U S Q P A N I E A M P K R J
N H F E C T S D D M W I B Z B
G Y X S N O I T C U R T S N I

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: SWEET COURSE AFTER DINNER

- Breakfast Delivery Discount Drink
- Gift Installation Instructions Insurance
- Manual Membership Samples Shipping
- Tax Tip Warranty

©2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Even Exchange

by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

1. Prawn — H — — — — Economize — C — — — —
2. Playground menace — U — — — — Nanny's mate — I — — — —
3. Beckham or Bowie — — — — I — — — — Geena, Viola, or Bette — — — — S
4. Practical joke P — — — — — Open and honest F — — — —
5. NYC player — — — — — E Tugged quickly — — — — — D
6. Resentful — — I — — — — Oleo's competition — — U — — — —
7. Crane H — — — — — Damp M — — — —
8. Night sky hunter — — R — — — — Pungent bulb — — N — — — —
9. Stock or flea — — — — — T Felt-tip pen — — — — — R
10. Pouch — — O — — — — Fencepost — — I — — — —

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Gentle CAPLID

Flop ROLES

Worth EAVUL

Slight NORMI

TODAY'S WORD

new — — — — — cakes."



©2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Light is missing. 2. Pillow is larger. 3. Top rung of ladder is missing. 4. Bedpost is taller. 5. Bedspread hangs down more. 6. Rear bedpost in corner is not seen.

CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, **A** is used for the three L's, **X** for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each week the code letters are different.

G FTI'P FT PAGIUR CTD

PAZ DZROTIRZ TD PAZ

BTIPDTNZDRX. G QYRP VGNZ

HX VGCZ. — DGAKIHK

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: O equals R

AVSPO YGW YVR JWHKPUUPQ

DW KOPJBRPUX DBHP DW DGP

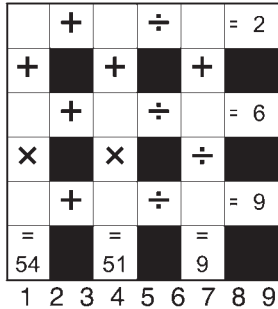
RPJWIQ VIXDGBIM RGP

JWWSPQ: APDDX JUWJSPQ.

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

GO FIGURE!

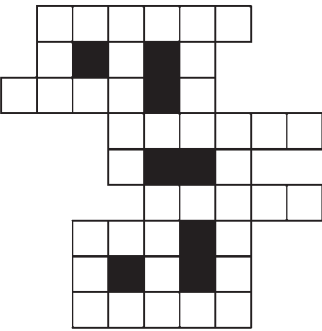
The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.



©2026 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

FEAR KNIGHT
By: rj johnson
DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

- ♥ APN
ABPNDE
♥ RSTPO
♥ ENDE
♥ EPHRIS
♥ TNI
♥ NPSI
EPBOR
♥ NBI
PIGANT
CBNHU
TONO

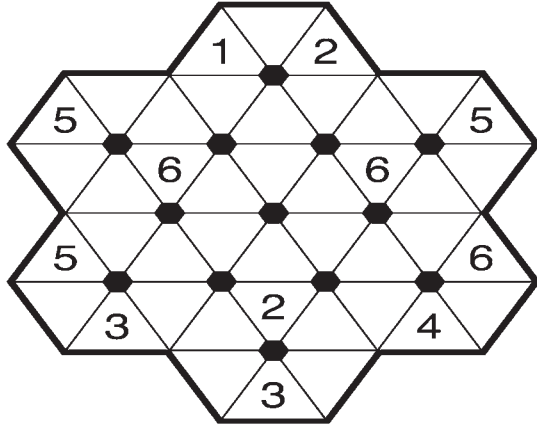


Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. HAGNEC becomes CHANGE). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥RATHE becomes HATER or EARTH or HEART). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦ Difficult

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

YARD SALE

TOWNWIDE YARD SALE - Pitman Town Wide yard Sale will be held on Saturday, October 3rd from 9AM to 1PM.

SERVICES

BOSTWICK INC.

Lumber and Hardware

Elmer and Center Sts.

Elmer, New Jersey

Phone: 358-7191

Asphalt Paving Corporation

Road Construction & Paving

Elmwood Ave., Malaga, N.J.

Fax (856) 694-0607

Phone 694-2200

Fred Harz and Son

U.S. Route 40 • Elmer, N.J. 08318 • (856) 358-8128

We Specialize in Tires From The Smallest To the Largest - We Have The Odd Size



ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Although practical situations continue to dominate this week, there's time for the Lamb to indulge in the fun things in life -- like maybe taking a special someone out for a great evening!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) This week favors relationships. Take time to renew old ones and make time to go where new friends can be found. On a more practical note, expect news about a business deal.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You should be seeing some progress on a new workplace situation. Meanwhile, family matters might demand more attention, and you'll want to set aside time to deal with them.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) A relationship might suddenly present some challenges that you never expected. After talking things out, you might want to consider taking some time to assess what you've learned.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) A disappointing response to a request might dampen the Lion's spirits. But you might want to ask what the reasoning is behind it. What you learn can be of great importance in a future undertaking.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) A once-volatile situation should be settled by now, giving you a chance to refocus on a project that you've been planning for. Look for an interested party to rally to your support.

LIBRA (September 23 to

October 22) A business matter that unexpectedly turns into a personal situation could create complications. It's best to resolve the matter now before too much harm can be done.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Emotions can run high when they involve personal matters that no one really wants to talk about. But this could be a good time to create the means to a workable outcome.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) A positive response to a workplace request could lead the way to other long-sought-out changes. Congratulations! A personal situation also takes a welcome turn.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Patience pays off as a once-overwhelming work situation continues to become easier to handle on a one-by-one basis. Look for positive news from a colleague.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) It might be a good idea to take more time to reassess your next move in working out a complex situation. You could benefit from a new perspective on the matter.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) You might want to consider making time to discuss a change of plans with everyone concerned. Be prepared to explain your actions. Also, be prepared to listen to alternatives.

BORN THIS WEEK: You have a strong sense of what's right and you try to work from this foundation. Your friends and employers see you as reliable.

(c) 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

EVERYONE READS THE SENTINEL!

Gloucester County's Weekly Digital News



Get your copy delivered in your e-mail each week. Only

\$30.00 per year. Sign up today - Call 856-340-6680

to start getting the latest in local news!

SUBSCRIBE TO...

THE

SENTINEL

of Gloucester County

AND KEEP UP WITH ALL THE LOCAL NEWS, SPORTS AND HAPPENINGS IN THE AREA.

FOR ONLY \$30.00

PER YEAR

MAIL YOUR RENEWAL AND COMPLETED FORM TO



THE SENTINEL



330 Oak Ave Malaga, NJ 08328

ENCLOSED IS \$.....

Please Send Me The Next 52 Issues of

THE SENTINEL

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

E-MAIL.....

PHONE.....

OR CALL (856) 340-6680

WITH CREDIT CARD INFORMATION



GRAMMY-WINNING ARTISTS SASHA COOKE AND JASON VIEAUX BRING "SONGS OF THE AMERICAS" TO WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP



Songs of the Americas

Sasha Cooke & Jason Vieaux

10/18/26

3:00 pm

MUSIC at Bunker Hill

Bunker Hill Presbyterian Church
330 Greentree Road
Sewell, NJ 08080 (856) 494-6077

Music at Bunker Hill will present Songs of the Americas, featuring two Grammy Award-winning artists, mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke and guitarist Jason Vieaux, on Sunday, October 18, 2026, at 3 p.m. The concert takes place at Bunker Hill Presbyterian Church, 330 Greentree Road in Sewell, NJ.

The program pairs Cooke's voice with Vieaux's guitar in music that ranges from Spanish song to American folk traditions and musical theater. It includes selections from Enrique Granados's Tondillas and Aaron Copland's Old American Songs, alongside works by Joaquín Rodrigo, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim and others. Vieaux will also perform his composition Tidal Pools, featured on his new album of original solo guitar music, Gratitude, released September 18 on Azica Records.

Cooke has appeared at the Met and other leading opera and concert stages and received two Grammy Awards. Vieaux is an internationally acclaimed classical guitarist and Grammy winner. Together, they bring an intimate voice-and-guitar program to Music at Bunker Hill's South Jersey audience.

Tickets are \$30 for adults and seniors and \$5 for students with ID. Doors open at 2:30 p.m., and seating is unreserved. Advance online ticket purchase is advised. Hybrid format offers live and remote viewing. Tickets and program information are available at musicatbunkerhill.org/songs-of-the-americas.

This program is made possible in part by funding from The Gloucester County Cultural and Heritage Commission at Rowan College of South Jersey, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department

of State and the National Endowment for the Arts.

About Music at Bunker Hill

Founded in 2008, Music at Bunker Hill brings great performers to the heart of southern New Jersey, enhancing the cultural life of our community by preserving the tradition of classical music while exploring other musical genres. With outreach concerts in schools and libraries, our artists inspire the next generation with their passion for the arts and standards of excellence. Our goal is to make great music affordable, accessible, and appealing to as many people as possible.

SEWELL HOME CARE LEADER EARNS STATE, FEDERAL AND NATIONAL ADVOCACY HONORS



Sewell resident Rebecca Russell, director of BAYADA Home Health Care's Washington Township Adult Nursing office, has been named New Jersey Ambassador of the Year, Federal Ambassador of the Year and National All-Around Ambassador of the Year by Hearts for Home Care and BAYADA. The honors recognize her extraordinary commitment to ensuring home care clients, families and caregivers have a voice in the policy decisions that affect their lives.

Throughout her more than 26-year career with BAYADA, Rebecca has made advocacy a defining part of her leadership. She regularly brings policymakers together with the people they represent, welcoming legislators into her office, coordinating conversations with clients and families and

participating in legislative meetings.

What makes Rebecca's advocacy especially impactful is her ability to make policy personal. She helps lawmakers understand how decisions about funding and regulations directly affect whether an individual can live safely and independently at home. Just as importantly, she empowers clients, families and caregivers to recognize the power of their own stories and speak directly with elected officials.

Her recognition at the state, federal and national levels reflects the impact she has made both here in South Jersey and within the broader home care community. A photo of Rebecca receiving her award from BAYADA CEO, Bryony Winn is above.

JEFFERSON HEALTH HONORS SOUTH JERSEY COLLEAGUES WITH DAISY & BEE AWARDS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PATIENT CARE

Four Jefferson Health caregivers in South Jersey were recently honored for delivering exceptional care, compassion, and support to patients and their families.

DAISY AWARDS: Angel Roman, a nurse on the 2-East inpatient unit at Jefferson Stratford Hospital, and Sophia Walker, a labor and delivery nurse at Jefferson Washington Township Hospital, received DAISY Awards for Extraordinary Nurses: Angel Roman was recognized for supporting a patient and her family through a frightening day filled with uncertainty. He clearly explained the patient's condition, listened closely to her concerns, and ensured the family remained informed throughout her care. The patient described Roman as "a bright light on a dark day" who went "above and beyond" when she needed reassurance most.

Sophia Walker was recognized for comforting a first-time mother during a difficult labor and delivery. She explained the patient's options, acknowledged her emotions, and remained a steady presence for the patient and her family. Walker continued checking on the patient after she transitioned to the mother-baby unit, reinforcing the meaningful connection they had formed.

BEE AWARDS: Jai Wilson, a food and nutrition services associate at Jefferson Stratford Hospital, and Sophia Jimenez, a patient care technician in the Emergency Department at Jefferson Washington Township Hospital, received BEE (Being Extraordinary Everyday) Awards: Jai Wilson was recognized for bringing comfort to a patient experiencing significant fear and anxiety during a hospital stay. He listened patiently, carefully confirmed the patient's meal preferences, and offered warm conversation that helped the patient feel more at ease. His attention to both the patient's nutritional and emotional needs turned routine meal deliveries into impactful moments of connection.

Sophia Jimenez was recognized for demonstrating exceptional vigilance when she noticed a concerning change in a patient's behavior. She immediately shared her observation with the patient's care team, prompting further evaluation that identified a serious medical condition requiring timely attention. Her attentiveness and willingness to speak up helped the team respond quickly to the patient's changing needs.

"These honorees demonstrate that exceptional care takes many forms — from clinical expertise and careful observation to a reassuring conversation or a steady hand during a life-changing moment," said Kimberly Edson, DNP, MBA, MS, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, Chief Nursing Officer, Jefferson Health—East Region. "These colleagues each saw what a patient needed and responded with skill, compassion, and purpose."



CONGRESSMAN VAN DREW URGES FCC TO REJECT VERIZON PLAN TO END COPPER SERVICE IN SOUTH JERSEY

Congressman Van Drew sent a letter to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Brendan Carr urging the FCC to reject Verizon's proposal to discontinue copper-based telephone service in parts of New Jersey, including Salem County.

"Many people in South Jersey still de-pend on these copper lines, especially in rural areas where cell service can be unreliable," said Congressman Van Drew. "These lines are used for medical-alert systems, alarm monitoring, elevator phones, and dependable 911 ac-cess. I have heard the concerns from people across South Jersey, and I agree with them. I am asking the FCC to turn this proposal down and make sure residents are not left without a reliable option."

BILLS TO HONOR VETERANS, PRESERVE THEIR LEGACIES PASS ASSEMBLY



Two bills sponsored by Assemblyman William F. Moen Jr. that would honor New Jersey veterans by caring for their final resting places and helping preserve their stories for future generations passed the General Assembly on Thursday.

Bill A2375 would establish the New Jersey Veteran Gravesite Maintenance Grant Program within the Department of Veterans Affairs. The program would provide grants to qualified veterans' organizations to help maintain veterans' gravesites throughout the state. The department would establish guidelines and criteria for awarding grants and oversee the use of grant funding.

"Our veterans deserve to be remembered not only for how they served, but how they lived and the sacrifices they made," said Assemblyman Moen (D-Camden, Gloucester). "As the son of a Vietnam War Veteran and grandson of two World War II Veterans, this bill is personal to me. Caring for our veterans' final resting places is one way we can show our continued respect and gratitude long after their service has ended."

Bill A2342 would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop and maintain an informational campaign promoting awareness of the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress. The project collects and preserves firsthand accounts from U.S. military veterans, helping ensure their experiences remain accessible to future generations.

"Every veteran has a story, and those stories are an important part of our history," said Assemblyman Moen. "By making more New Jersey veterans and their families aware of the Veterans History Project, we can help ensure their experiences are documented, preserved and passed down. Together, these bills are about making sure the people who served our country are never forgotten."

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF FILING EVENT

The event on Saturday, October 3, at our Salem Legislative Office, located at: 199 East Broadway Salem, NJ 08079

Representatives from the New Jersey Division of Taxation will be on site to assist residents directly with filing their PAS-1 Property Tax Relief Application, which includes Senior Freeze, ANCHOR, and Stay NJ benefits. No appointment is necessary. Event Hours: 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM Lunch Break: Division of Taxation representatives will be unavailable from 12:15 PM – 1:15 PM. Residents are welcome to stop by during event hours for assistance with their application. Please feel free to share this information with anyone who may benefit from assistance with their Property Tax Relief application. If you have any questions prior to the event, please contact our Salem Legislative Office at 856-279-2920 or dwood@njleg.org.

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE 23-2026
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2-2026 FIXING THE SALARIES, WAGES AND COMPENSATION TO BE PAID THE VARIOUS OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF CLAYTON, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY FOR THE YEAR 2026

TAKE NOTE that the foregoing ordinance was introduced at a meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Clayton held on September 24, 2026 and was then read for the first time. The said ordinance will be further considered for final passage by the Mayor and Council at the Municipal Building, 125 N. Delsea Drive, Clayton, New Jersey, at a meeting beginning 6:00 p.m. on October 8, 2026, at which time and place, or any time and place to which such meeting be adjourned, all persons interested will be given an opportunity to be heard concerning such ordinance.

BY ORDER of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Clayton.

Debbie Schlosser Deputy Clerk
The Sentinel of Gloucester County 10/01/2026
Fee \$18.00

PUBLIC NOTICE BOROUGH OF CLAYTON

ORDINANCE 23-2026
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE #2-2026 FIXING THE SALARIES, WAGES AND COMPENSATION TO BE PAID THE VARIOUS OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF CLAYTON, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY FOR THE YEAR 2026

BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Clayton, County of Gloucester and State of New Jersey as follows:

Section 1. That the Salaries, Wages and Compensation of the various officers and employees of the Borough of Clayton established under Ordinance #2-2026 are hereby amended by and/or by adding the following:

YEARLY SALARY RANGES (NOT TO EXCEED)

HOURLY SALARY RANGES

Part-time Finance Clerk	15.92	26.00
-------------------------	-------	-------

The said Salaries, Wages and Compensation listed above shall be paid heretofore; and shall be paid in the manner and at the time decided upon by the Mayor and Council.

Section 2. Repealer

All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistencies.

Section 3. Severability

Each section of this Ordinance is an independent section, and the holding of any section or part thereof to be unconstitutional, void or ineffective, shall not be deemed to affect the validity or constitutionality of any other sections or parts hereof.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that this Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon formal approval by the Clayton Borough Council and publication as required by law.

BOROUGH OF CLAYTON
V. CHARLES SIMON, Mayor
ATTEST:
SUE MILLER, ACTING BOROUGH CLERK
The Sentinel of Gloucester County 10/01/2026
Fee \$34.50

PUBLIC NOTICE Notice of Pending Bond Ordinance and Summary

BOND ORDINANCE 24-2026

The bond ordinance, the summary terms of which are included herein, was introduced and passed upon first reading at a meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Clayton, in the County of Gloucester, State of New Jersey, on September 24, 2026. It will be further considered for final passage, after public hearing thereon, at a meeting of the Mayor and Borough Council to be held at the Clayton Borough Municipal Building, 125 North Delsea Drive, Clayton, New Jersey, on October 8, 2026 at 6:00 o'clock PM. During the week prior to and up to and including the date of such meeting copies of the full ordinance will be available at no cost and during regular business hours, at the Borough Clerk's office for the members of the general public who shall request the same. The summary of the terms of such bond ordinance follows:

Title: BOND ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM OF THE BOROUGH OF CLAYTON, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, NEW JERSEY; APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$1,200,000 THEREFOR; AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OR BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES OF THE BOROUGH OF CLAYTON, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, NEW JERSEY, IN THE AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF UP TO \$1,200,000 MAKING CERTAIN DETERMINATIONS AND COVENANTS; AND AUTHORIZING CERTAIN RELATED ACTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE FOREGOING

Purpose/Improvement	Estimated Total Cost	Down Payment	Amount of Obligations	Period of Usefulness
Various Improvements to the Borough's Water Distribution System including, but not limited to, the Replacement of the Water Main Along Delsea Drive (NJIB Project No. 0801001-002), together with the acquisition of all materials and equipment and completion of all work necessary therefor or related thereto, all as more particularly described in the engineering materials submitted to the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank and on file in the Clerk's office	\$1,200,000	\$0	\$1,200,000	40 years

Appropriation:	\$1,200,000
Bonds/Notes Authorized:	\$1,200,000
Grants (if any) Appropriated:	\$0
Section 20 Costs:	\$240,000
Useful Life:	40 years

Debbie Schlosser Deputy Clerk
This Notice is published pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:2-17.
The Sentinel of Gloucester County 10/01/2026
Fee \$66.00

Governor Mikie Sherrill on 9/30 unveiled her Administration’s comprehensive five-pillar plan to accelerate housing production and bring down costs at the Governor’s Conference on Housing and Economic Development. The Governor also announced strong actions out the gate as part of the rollout, including doubling housing production from 20,000 to 40,000 on state-owned land, introducing a shot clock to ensure permit applications can move forward on clear timelines, and deploying a new tax credit auction to generate tens of millions for affordable housing.

The plan was developed by the Housing Governing Council, established by Executive Order No. 17 during Governor Sherrill’s first 100 days in office. In a report included by the Council, they found that New Jersey must build 350,000 additional homes to keep pace with growth, increase affordability, and remain competitive. This plan lays out ambitious, urgent action to close that gap and make room for the next generation. It centers on five key pillars:

- Deliver more homes where New Jerseyans want to live, work, and stay;
- Increase New Jersey’s “speed to shovel” by making approvals faster, clearer, and more predictable;
- Partner with municipalities to build and preserve housing;
- Expand access to housing opportunities for New Jersey families; and
- Lower costs, fight unfair housing practices, and keep New Jerseyans housed.

“Too many New Jerseyans cannot afford their rent or mortgage, seniors are being priced out of their homes, and young people cannot afford to buy their first house—all while the actions of the Trump Administration continue to drive up prices and construction costs. We need a new approach, and this plan sets in motion urgent statewide action—bringing together government, builders, labor, business, and community leaders—to speed up housing production, get shovels in the ground, and drive down costs,” said Governor Sherrill. “A home is the foundation on which people build their lives and financial security, and I’m taking strong action to ensure New Jerseyans can afford to build their futures here.”

The report also highlights action already underway across the Sherrill Administration, including:

- Advancing new transit-oriented housing developments in Red Bank, Bayonne, and Linden;
- Launching a permitting dashboard with six projects representing more than 3,700 potential homes and clearing major permitting backlogs;
- Tripling the number of municipalities with hands-on housing development assistance;
- Fully funding New Jersey’s homelessness response system for veterans; and
- Cracking down on unfair practices that lead to rent increases.

The strategy calls for smart development near transit, jobs, schools, and opportunity, as well as the redevelopment of underused state property, vacant office buildings, and aging strip malls. It also focuses on preserving existing affordable homes, revitalizing downtowns, expanding pathways to homeownership, narrowing racial wealth gaps, and protecting open space and the environment. This action comes as decisions in Washington—from President Trump’s tariffs to the war in Iran—continue to increase construction and housing costs. Additionally, consumer protections are an integral part of the Governor’s plan, particularly as the Trump Administration has weakened safeguards for renters, homebuyers, and homeowners by gutting the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

The Governor delivered her remarks at the 2026 Governor’s Conference on Housing and Economic Development. The annual conference convenes leaders from government, housing, community development, finance, labor, non-profits, and the private sector to advance housing and economic opportunity across New Jersey.

MANTUA TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS RELEASE UPDATED STATEMENT REGARDING AMAZON DRONE DELIVERIES

Mayor Zimmerman and the Mantua Township Committee have received questions regarding Amazon’s drone delivery operations. They stated, Mantua Township does not control the airspace over the Township. Airspace and the operation of aircraft, including delivery drones, fall under the authority of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Amazon’s drone operations have received the necessary federal approvals to operate within the authorized airspace. The drone delivery hub is located in West Deptford Township. Matters involving the hub, including its site, land use, and zoning, fall under the jurisdiction of West Deptford Township. Mantua Township’s authority is limited to matters within its jurisdiction, including the use of public property. Amazon has advised the Township that the drone will deliver directly to the customer’s designated location and will not be landing on Mantua Township public property. In response to concerns about privacy, security and data collection, Chief Murphy spoke with Rich Swayze, Regulatory Specialist, from Amazon today August 25th who indicated that: “Prime Air drones use onboard cameras and sensors for navigation, obstacle detection, and safe delivery. The cameras help the drone see where it’s going and operate independently, they are not viewed live by any person.”

Mr. Swayze also provided the following additional details: “There is a Detect & Avoid (DAA) system that does collect video data - it is used by the system; the flight monitors do not see the video during flight.” “This video is used by the system to track other manned aircraft in the vicinity and to perform avoidance maneuvers if the system determines there is a potential conflict with another manned aircraft.” “The data is not retained unless it is determined that there is a safety issue with the specific flight that warrants further analysis. If there are no issues with the flight the data is recorded over during the following flights.” “If it is determined a flight does warrant further safety analysis then the data is downloaded. The data is stored in a controlled/protected database for which a very limited number of Prime Air staff have access.” “Prime Air would share with the FAA and/or NTSB if requested for safety purposes.” “None of this operational flight data collected by the drone is sold.” We understand that residents have questions and concerns. However, the Township cannot regulate or prohibit the use of FAA-approved airspace over Mantua Township. Where and how a customer receives a delivery on private property is not controlled by the Township. Amazon officials were asked if any type of community engagement outreach for residents or customers is planned. Amazon indicated that they generally do host this type of community event but could not confirm a date at this time. No further comment will be provided at this time. As more information becomes available, we will share it with the public.

Back-to-School Sandwiches to Nourish Kids’ Bodies and Minds

FEATURE IMPACT

When you picture a schoolchild sitting down at a cafeteria table and opening their lunchbox, you’re probably already imagining there’s a sandwich inside. After all, it’s a classic back-to-school staple that parents rely on for ease, convenience and nutrition when they’re trying to get everyone out the door on time – all you have to do is put bread and fillings together, and you’re good to go. That, of course, only leaves the question of which bread and fillings to choose.

A new survey conducted by Atomik Research on behalf of Nature’s Own indicated that modern parents care a lot about nutrition when deciding which kind of bread to buy, with 88% of survey respondents agreeing that feeding their kids wholesome bread feels like an easy parenting win.

With clean, simple ingredients that balance taste and nutrition, Nature’s Own bread supports an attainably healthy lifestyle for busy families. Whether you choose a classic white bread, reach for a whole-wheat loaf or need to account for dietary restrictions, you can feel confident you’re selecting bread that’s free from artificial colors, flavors and preservatives.

For a nutritious lunch that fits the bill for 85% of parents who show strong interest in breads made with whole grains,

pack this Ham, Turkey, Bacon and Cheese Pocket made with honey wheat bread. The flavorful mixture of deli meats and American cheese baked to perfection make every bite satisfying. Consider getting the whole family involved assembly-line style to make multiple batches at once, cutting down on time in the kitchen during the week ahead while encouraging learning opportunities as kids count ingredients and measure fillings.

Some school days call for simple, fun comfort food, and that’s where the Fluffernutter comes in. Soft bread, creamy peanut butter and fluffy marshmallow make for a combination that nourishes kids of all ages not just physically, but emotionally. Whether you pack it as a lunchbox surprise or have it ready as an after-school treat, this is a sandwich that promises sweetness and nostalgia – a perfect fit for the 78% of parents who agreed that sandwiches are a canvas for small moments of care, like notes in lunch bags.

Since sandwiches are so customizable, you can easily adapt these recipes to your family’s unique preferences and needs. Whether you decide to use different seasonings or swap to a multigrain bread, there’s no such thing as a wrong sandwich decision as long as it works for you.

To view ingredients and decide what kind of loaf you want to stock up on during the school year, visit naturesownbread.com.

Fluffernutter Sandwich

Total time: 10 minutes
Servings: 1

- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 2 slices Nature’s Own Butterbread
- 2 tablespoons marshmallow fluff

Spread peanut butter on one bread slice. Spread marshmallow fluff on second slice. Put both slices together to form sandwich.



Ham, Turkey, Bacon and Cheese Pocket

- 8 slices Nature’s Own Honey Wheat Bread
- 1/4 pound deli turkey
- 1/4 pound deli ham
- 4 slices cooked bacon
- 4 slices white American cheese
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon cold water
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt

Preheat oven to 350 F.
Chop turkey, ham and bacon and toss together. Set aside.
Using knife, cut off crust on each piece of bread.

With rolling pin, roll and flatten each slice of crustless bread. Take four slices and place spoonful of chopped meats in middle of each slice. Top with broken slices of cheese.
Place remaining slices of crustless bread on top of each pocket.
In small bowl, crack egg and add water. Beat together. Dip fork into egg mixture and crimp each edge of pocket until two slices are sealed together. Repeat on each pocket. Brush top of each pocket with remaining egg mixture and sprinkle salt on top.
Place on sheet pan and bake until golden brown, 7-10 minutes.
Let cool a few minutes and enjoy.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AS STUDENTS HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL

New Jersey is investing more than \$125 million in school- and community-based mental health and wellness programs this school year. These investments are providing families with accessible resources to combat the youth mental health crisis. The Governor signed legislation establishing the School-Based Partnerships for Access and Resilience for Kids (SPARK) pilot program to further connect students with behavioral health services within the school community. The Fiscal Year 2027 budget included \$8 million in funding to support this program.

“Our kids are facing unprecedented pressures, and as they head back to school, we need to make sure they know that help is there when they need it. Combating the youth mental health crisis takes all of us – families, educators, and government working together to ensure that our schools are places where every child feels supported and ready to succeed,” said Governor Mikie Sherrill. “From reducing digital distractions in the classroom to strengthening school-based mental health services and making it easier for students to connect with care, we are taking a comprehensive approach to supporting the well-being of New Jersey’s young people. With the launch of SPARK, we are building the continuum of supports to make sure every student has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.”

Governor Sherrill on Monday, 9/28, signed legislation, S4413/A5253, establishing the School-Based Partnerships for Access and Resilience for Kids (SPARK) pilot program, which will create an additional pathway to connect students with behavioral health services and supports. Under the legislation, the pilot program aims to:

- Provide mental health support: Offer psychiatric consultations, assessments, triage, and short-term stabilization and medication support for students awaiting longer-term care.
- Connect students to care: Refer students and families to school- and community-based mental health providers, including NJ4S when appropriate.
- Help families navigate services: Coordinate care, engage families, manage necessary authorizations, and help reduce delays in accessing treatment.
- Support students returning to school: Provide psychiatric clearance, re-entry support, and transition planning following a mental health crisis, hospitalization, or emergency room visit.
- Equip schools with technology: Provide a secure platform to manage behavioral incidents; suicide risk screenings; harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) incidents; and behavioral threat assessments.
- Train and support educators: Help districts implement the platform and provide school personnel with training, consultation, and behavioral health guidance.
- Track results: Collect and report data on program participation and outcomes.
- Strengthen school mental health policies: Help State and local school leaders develop and implement evidence-based student mental health policies.

Services will be made available to K-12 students in participating districts upon a referral by a teacher or school mental health professional, with the permission of the child’s parent or guardian. The pilot program will begin delivering services in early 2027 in up to 10 school districts selected by NJDCF, in consultation with NJDOE. School districts will be recruited this fall to participate in the pilot, and a Request for Proposals is expected to be issued in the coming weeks for the development of a mobile application to support the program. New Jersey students and families who need mental health support do not have to wait for services through their school. Several statewide resources are available to connect young people with support when and where they need it. New Jersey students and families can access mental health support at any time.

FESTIVAL OF FINE CRAFT

Celebrating 27 years of artistic excellence, Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center will hosts the anticipated annual Festival of Fine Craft on October 3 and 4, rain or shine! This crowd-favorite event features the work of over 150 juried contemporary and traditional artists, unique artist demonstrations, a Beer & Wine Garden, family art activities, WheatonArts signature Glass Pumpkin Fundraiser, live musical entertainment, and more! Throughout the WheatonArts campus, visitors can connect with a diverse community of returning and new artists while exploring, appreciating, and purchasing their handcrafted works of art. From inspired paintings, decorative ceramics, and dazzling jewelry to innovative wood sculptures and vibrant wearables, the Festival offers interesting one-of-a-kind treasures for everyone! Some of the artist demonstrations for this year include basket making, woodturning, tapestry bead weaving, copper flame painting, and more! Scarecrow Construction is a cherished annual tradition where families come together to create life-sized scarecrows using a playful mix of old clothes and bundles of straw—yours to take home and enjoy. Thanks to a generous PNC Arts Alive grant, guests can also enjoy a variety of free, hands-on art activities, including daisy-chain pony-bead keychains, pinecone spiders, paper-bag scarecrow puppets, sidewalk chalk, and the vibrant Chalk-Topia: Sidewalk Chalk Station. For those looking to explore even more creative outlets, additional fee-based art experiences—such as basket weaving and make-your-own fused-glass crafts—will be offered throughout the grounds.

WheatonArts signature Glass Pumpkin Fundraiser will be back once again as an outdoor installation that invites Festival goers to be immersed around beautifully handcrafted glass pumpkins of all shapes, sizes, and colors—each individually handcrafted by WheatonArts’ Glass Studio Team. Located across from the Pottery Studio, glass pumpkins will be available for purchase, with proceeds supporting arts educational programming at WheatonArts. Visitors 21 years and older can grab a seat or a hay bale to enjoy the Beer & Wine Garden with selections from Glasstown Brewing Company and Bellview Winery. Various gourmet food vendors and specialty food trucks will line the food court with refreshments for purchase. Additionally, visitors can enjoy live musical entertainment from the Tabernacle Reggae Band on Saturday, October 3, and the Package Goods Orchestra on Sunday, October 4. The Festival fun doesn’t end there, as everyone can stop by the information table near the front gate to sign up for a chance to win a variety of WheatonArts door prizes! Festival hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, October 3 and 4, rain or shine, and are included with general admission to WheatonArts. Admission at the gate is \$14 for adults, \$13 for senior adults (62+), \$8 for students, and free for WheatonArts Members and children ages five or younger. For more information, call 856-825-6800 or 800-998-4552.