



Franklin Township – A Sustainable Jersey Silver Certified Municipality

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Summer 2024

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Care, Share, Aware Returns Celebrating Autism Acceptance Month

On April 19th, in honor of Autism Acceptance Month, the Franklin Township Parks & Recreation Department's Therapeutic Program hosted its sixth annual Care, Share, Aware. This family-friendly community event offered many the opportunity to meet various local service providers and organizations, highlighting beneficial programs and services for the neurodiverse community. In addition to providing pathways to a host of valuable resources, the event featured a wide array of activities and entertainment.

Throughout the evening's event, all minds were celebrated with an interactive bubble show, balloon artist, sensory table, and reptile presentation. Families were amazed by the different styles of bubbles that floated into the audience and some lucky participants were put in a bubble as tall as themselves! Later in the evening, a tortoise, snake, and lizard made a special appearance. Children and adults alike gravitated to observe, pet, and learn some cool fun facts about these amazing creatures. Families had a chance to win door prizes, meet Recreation staff, and learn more about community opportunities, all while having fun.

"The Franklin Township Therapeutic Department provides adapted programs for individuals with physical and/or intellectual disabilities, to provide a meaningful and engaging leisure experience. Some of the benefits of therapeutic programs are smaller program sizes and additional staff," said Maria Dueñas, CTRS, Therapeutic Program Coordinator.

The Therapeutic Recreation Program is looking to add more members to its exceptional team. If you have experience working with individuals with disabilities and would like to assist with or lead programs, please contact Maria Dueñas, Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator at (732) 873-2500 x6357 or email Maria.Duenas@franklinnj.gov.



Meet Councilman Alex Kharazi

Alex Kharazi became the Councilman-at-Large for Franklin Township commencing in January 2024. After receiving his Ph.D. from University of California in Berkeley, Councilman moved to New Jersey. Being a proud resident of Franklin Township for over 37 years, he has served the community in many capacities.

"Recognizing that Franklin is one of the most diverse communities in New Jersey and as the past president of Franklin Township Interfaith Council, one of my passions has been to promote unity and mutual respect amongst Franklin's diverse community. I believe people of all backgrounds make invaluable contributions to our community, and we can make Franklin among one of the best places to live in the nation," remarked Councilman Kharazi.

During his swearing in Councilman Kharazi stated that he will support activities that bring more equity among the residents of this town. Amongst his goals are creating more employment opportunities, addressing food and rent insecurities, supporting small businesses, improving access to better education and health services, making Franklin Township safer, and promoting a stronger partnership between local and county government.

"I will work with anyone who is willing to help our Township and its people to improve the quality of life in Franklin."

Councilman Alex Kharazi is available at the Municipal Office by appointment for listening to residents and businesses and offering his assistance. He can be reached at 732-873-2500, Ext. 6329 or Councilman.Kharazi@franklinnj.gov.



Councilman Alex Kharazi

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**POSTAL CUSTOMER
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Franklin Times
475 DeMott Lane
Somerset, NJ 08873

MUNICIPAL DIRECTORY

POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE EMERGENCIES DIAL 9-1-1

POLICE DEPARTMENT
 Non-Emergencies 732-873-2300
 Non-Emergencies
 Auto-Attendant 732-873-5533
 Non-Emergency for Residents in 609 area code..... 732-821-1800
 Non-Emergency Auto-Attendant For Residents in 609 area code..... 732-821-1888
 Tips Hotline (Pass along the information)... 732-873-PASS (7277)

MUNICIPAL BUILDING
 Main 732-873-2500
 Extensions
 Animal Control 6255
 Assessor 6320
 Clerk (Elections, Dog Licenses, Voter Registration) 6208
 Construction Code Enforcement 6220 or 732-873-7283
 Collector (Tax, Water)... 6330 or 732-873-7284
 Community Resource 6310
 Court 6268 or 732-873-7285
 Economic Development 6274
 Engineering 6230
 Fire Prevention..... 6303
 Health Complaint 24/7 6370
 Historic Preservation..... 6274
 Human Resources..... 6202
 Municipal Alliance..... 6353
 Open Space 6279
 Planning Board 6215
 Public Works..... 732-249-7800
 Purchasing 6239
 Recreation 6266 or 732-873-1991
 Redevelopment Agency..... 6271
 Rent Leveling Board..... 6274
 Senior Advisory..... 6347
 Special Projects..... 6427
 Township Manager 6201
 Vital Statistics (Marriage and Death Certificates) 6375
 Youth Center 732-873-7292
 Zoning Officer 6271
 Zoning Bd. of Adj. 6215

WEBSITE
www.franklintwpnj.org

TOWN HALL
 732-873-2500

E-MAIL
Township Manager
Bob.Vormlocker@franklinnj.gov

Franklin Times
Franklin.Times@franklinnj.gov

Collector of Revenue
Rossana.Gutierrez@franklinnj.gov

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Board of Education
 732-873-2400
www.franklinboe.org

Library
 732-873-8700
www.franklintwp.org

Sewerage Authority
 732-873-2121
Ftsa-nj.org

Health Department/Education
 908-231-7155

CONNECT WITH US
franklintwpnj.org/connectwithus



Mark Your Calendar

July 3 (Rain date: July 5)	Independence Day Fireworks
July 5	Blood Drive
July 9	Police Youth Academy Orientation
July 17	Stigma-Free Council Meeting
July 28	Walk & Roll North
August 2	Blood Drive
August 6	National Night Out
August 9	Cultural Arts Concert @ the Gazebo
August 17	Week of the People @ Williams Park
August 21	Stigma-Free Council Meeting
August 25	Walk & Roll South
September 6	Blood Drive
September 10	9/11 Commemoration
September 18	Stigma-Free Council Meeting
September 28	Franklin Day

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
 475 DEMOTT LANE | SOMERSET | NJ

Every Drop Counts

GIVE LIFE. GIVE HOPE. GIVE BLOOD.

- July 05, 2024
- August 02, 2024
- September 06, 2024

To make an appointment: www.nybc.org/drive
 Sponsor code: 12909
 Please scan QR code or call 1-800-933-2566



Appointments are preferred however walk-ins will be welcomed if space permits. Please remember to eat, drink and bring your ID with name and photo. Masks requirements may change depending on CDC guidelines. Visit nybc.org/coronavirus for complete COVID-19 safety protocols.

Connect With Us

<https://franklintwpnj.org>
<https://franklintwpnj.org/enotification>
<https://nixle.com/township-of-franklin>
 Text your zip code to 888777

@FranklinTwpSomersetCty
 @FranklinTwpRecreation
 @FranklinTwpPolice

@TwpofFranklin
 @FTPDSomersetNJ

@TwpofFranklin_NJ
 @FranklinYouthCenter
 @FTPDSomersetNJ

@TownshipofFranklin

Comcast 29; Verizon 33
<https://franklintwpnj.org/stream>

WRBX AM1630

QR Code

Be in the know

welcome NEW HIRES

Michael Deutchman	Class III Special LEO
Juan Peralta Rodriguez	Police Officer
Abhishek Patel	Police Officer
Tanner Carneglia	Mechanic
Myshia Barron	911 Telecommunicator
Jordyn Williams	Administrative Aide
Kenneth Jacobs	Recreation Program Coord.
Jerry Winters	PT Athletic Coach/Instructor

thank you RETIREES

Michael Mento	Engineering Inspector
Florindo DiMarzio	Sr. Lieutenant
James Troulis	Foreman
Jolanda Lacewell	Captain
Gregory Pinheiro	Foreman

FRANKLIN FOOD BANK
 Neighbors Helping Neighbors

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
 Sign up today and strengthen the community,
 one neighbor at a time!
FranklinFoodBank.org

NOW HIRING

- Client Services Supervisor
- Client Department Supervisor
- Corporate Development Manager
- Grant Writer

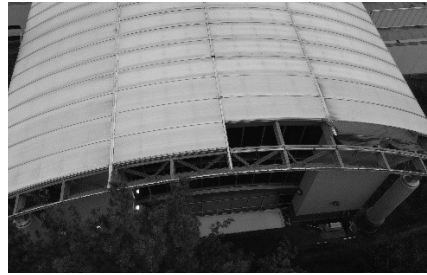
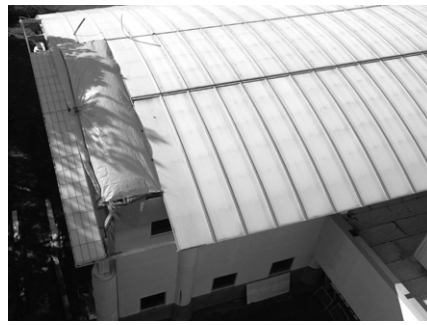
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP COUNCIL	
Name	Contact Information
Phillip Kramer, Mayor	mayor.kramer@franklinnj.gov 732-675-7912
Kimberly Francois, Councilwoman, At-Large	councilwoman.francois@franklinnj.gov 732-829-8258
Alex Kharazi, Councilman, At-Large	councilman.kharazi@franklinnj.gov 732-873-2500 ext. 6329
Ram Anbarasan, Councilman, At-Large	councilman.ram@franklinnj.gov 908-581-3188
Ed Potosnak, Councilmember, 1 st Ward, Deputy Mayor	councilmember.potosnak@franklinnj.gov 732-745-1866
Shepa Uddin, Councilwoman, 2 nd Ward	councilwoman.uddin@franklinnj.gov 732-857-6339
Charles Onyejiaka, Councilman, 3 rd Ward	councilman.onyejiaka@franklinnj.gov 908-507-7832
Carl R. A. Wright, Councilman, 4 th Ward	councilman.wright@franklinnj.gov 908-612-6393
James Vassanella, Councilman, 5 th Ward	councilman.vassanella@franklinnj.gov 732-873-2500 ext. 6328

BIG CHANGES COMING TO THE LIBRARY

To serve the community better and to provide a safe and comfortable environment for visitors, the library will be embarking on two major projects during this spring. Given the scope of these projects, some library services may be impacted. Further details are listed below.

GALLERY ROOF PANEL REPLACEMENTS

The panels on the gallery roof are being replaced with new panels that will be insulated to prevent heat loss in the winter and excessive build up in the summer months. The new panels will also do a better job of diffusing light on sunny days. This gallery project started around April 9, 2024. There will be two phases, with work beginning at the back of the gallery and moving towards the front doors. The entire project is estimated to last approximately two months.



The library will remain open throughout the project. Visitors should expect limitations to various library services as the roofing progresses. Impacts include but are not limited to:

- The Community Room will be unavailable for public programs.
- New Arrivals, DVDs, Blu-rays, and Manga/Graphic Novels will temporarily be located at the front of the nonfiction collection, right around the corner from their previous location.
- Both silent study rooms will be unavailable for the duration of the project.
- There will be restricted access to the library's Fiction and Large Type collections.
- Restrooms will be inaccessible during phase II of the project.
- The front entrance to the library will be closed during the second phase. Visitors will be able to enter the building through the doors located to the right and left of the front of the building.
- As always, residents will be welcome at the library's two other full-service branches during this time.

NEW LIBRARY SOFTWARE

The library will be implementing a new library software system to improve service. With this new system, library patrons will be able to:

- Navigate the catalog on their phones, tablets, or computers
- Use Smart Searches with spellcheck, automated search suggestions, and the option to see related keywords to their searches.
- Check out and hold eBooks, audiobooks, and more -- right from the catalog.
- Select a preferred pickup location from any participating library location.
- Change their communication preferences to be contacted via email or text.
- See library locations integrated with Google Maps.

The new library software system also supports behind-the-scenes library operations such as cataloging, acquisitions, patron records, and more. The library's investment in this project reflects its commitment to serving the community.

The final leg of this project will begin on May 7, 2024. During this time, many library services will be unavailable including, but not limited to:

- Patron accounts
- Holds
- Fine payments

Due dates will be extended to reflect this period of limited accessibility. We expect all library services to resume on May 15, 2024.

We appreciate the public's patience as library staff work to provide the best possible service at the library. Announcements and updates on both projects, including exact timing for the Gallery roofing project, will be posted in the building, on our social media channels, and on the library website. For immediate updates, please visit www.FranklinTwp.org/status. We welcome any questions, comments, or concerns. There is a contact form on the library website for this purpose.



**FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Where Ideas and People Meet

**HELP!
THERE IS A BABY
DEER IN MY YARD!**

DO NOT TOUCH THE FAWN!

99% of the time the fawn is not injured or orphaned. There is no need to call the Police or Animal Control.

Generally, if there is no dead doe in the area or on nearby roads, the fawn is not an orphan. Fawns do not give off a scent. Often, a doe will not return to their fawns until well after dark, for fear of leading a predator to the fawn. Keep yourself and pets far away from the fawn. It may take a good 24 hours for a doe to feel safe enough to return to her fawn.

If a mother were to return to her fawn prematurely, she might risk leading a predator directly to her fawn. Coyotes, dogs, cats, raccoons, construction, etc. are not reasons for fawn removal. These are things that deer must encounter on a daily basis in New Jersey. A mother deer will move her fawn away from danger if given the chance.

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

**EAST MILLSTONE FIRST AID SQUAD
FREE EMT TRAINING**

While EMS training has changed over the years, the need for more volunteers to help answer 911 calls in our community has not changed. Our members, all of whom feel the need to help others, come from diverse careers, backgrounds and cultures, ranging from 16 years old to retirees.

If you have a desire to help others, call us. You can become a member, too. We offer Free CPR and EMT Training to our members. All you need to provide is time.

Check out our website for further info:
www.emfas52.org
Contact us at:
info@emfas52.org or 732-873-8882

SUMMER 2024 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Township Council

Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 7:00 p.m.
June 11, 25 • July 9 • August 13

Planning Board

Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 7:30 p.m.
June 19 • July 3, 17 • August 7

Zoning Board of Adjustment

Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 7:30 p.m.
June 20 • July 11, 18 • August 1

Advisory Board of Health

Municipal Building, Large Conference Room, 7:30 p.m.
July 3 • August 7

Advisory Recreation Council

Community Senior Center/Youth Center, 6:00 p.m.
July 3 • August (No Mtg.)

Agricultural Advisory Committee

Municipal Building, Large Conference Room, 8:00 p.m.
July (No Mtg.) • August 1

Board of Health

Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 6:00 p.m.
June 25

Community Foundation

Remote via WebEx, 7:00 p.m.
August 21

Cultural Arts Council

Community/Senior Center, 6:30 p.m.
July 10 • August 14

Environmental Commission

Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 7:00 p.m.
June 17 • July 1, 15 • August 5, 19

Fire Prevention Board

Municipal Building, 7:30 p.m.
June 13 • July 11 • August (No Mtg.)

Hamilton Street Advisory Board

Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 7:00 p.m.
July 1 • August 5

Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

Municipal Building, Large Conference Room, 7:30 p.m.
July 2 • August 6

Housing Authority

25 Parkside Street, 7:00 p.m.
July 10 • August (No Mtg.)

Human Relations Commission

Municipal Building, Large Conference Room 7:00 p.m.
May (No Mtg.) • June 26 • July 24 • August 28

Library Board of Trustees

Municipal Library, 5:45 p.m.
June 26 • July (No Mtg.) • August 28

Municipal Alliance for the Prevention of Substance Abuse/ Youth Services Commission

Community Senior Center/Youth Center, 4:30 p.m.
July (No Mtg.) • August (No Mtg.)

Open Space Advisory Committee

Municipal Building, 7:00 p.m.
June 18 • July 16 • August 20

Redevelopment Agency

Municipal Building, Remote, 7:00 p.m.
June 17 • July 15 • August 19

Senior Citizen Advisory Committee

Community Senior Center, 10:00 a.m.
June 28 • July 1(No Mtg.) • August (No Mtg.)

Sewerage Authority

70 Commerce Drive, 6:30 p.m.
July 2 • August 6

Shade Tree Commission

Municipal Building, Large Conference Room, 7:00 p.m.
June 27 • July 25 • August 22

Trails Advisory Committee

Municipal Building, Large Conference Room, 7:00 p.m./Remote
July 10 • August 14 (R)

INDEPENDENCE DAY
FIREWORKS
JULY 3
6:00 - 9:00PM FOOD & FUN
9:15PM FIREWORKS

RAIN DATE
JULY 5

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
FRANKLINTWPNJ.ORG

Calling All Animal Lovers
Second Chance for Animals Needs You!

Second Chance
For Animals
Since 1998

**VOLUNTEER
DONATE
ADOPT!**

Franklin Twp. Animal Shelter
475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ
732-873-2500 x6255

OPEN Tuesday to Friday 12 Noon - 3 PM
Saturday 12 Noon - 6 PM CLOSED Sunday & Monday

SECONDCANCEFORANIMALS.ORG

Franklin DAY
Saturday
September 28
12:00-5:00pm

**COLONIAL PARK
KNOB HILL GROVE** FREE

Main Stage Performers
Valerie Adams & The Dimensions
and
SABROSO

Premier Sponsor
GiViS ORGANIZATION
DEEPLY ROOTED IN OUR COMMUNITY

www.FranklinTwpNJ.org/FranklinDay
Franklin.Day@franklinnj.gov
(732) 873-2500 x6428
Sign up for event alerts: TEXT FranklinDay to 888777

COMMUNITY FOOD MUSIC FAMILY FUN

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT **COPS & Community**

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Our summer **Cooking with Cops** program is back at the Community Relations Bureau. Children will learn food and kitchen safety, food preparation, proper food storage, and exposure to a variety of cooking methods. They will make simple, but flavorful meals which will be enjoyed at the end of each class. on July 5, 12, 19, 26 (Fridays in July), August 6 and 9th from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm. **Registration deadline is June 21, 2024**

Thursday, July 11-19, 2024, the Franklin Township Police Department will hold its summer Youth Academy. Kids from 8-12th grade will experience a mini police academy while learning about various law enforcement careers and participating in group exercise each morning. Space is limited so register early at www.franklintwpnj.org/crb.

Tuesday, August 6, 2024, the Franklin Township Police Department will host **National Night Out** in the Municipal Complex from 6:00 pm -8:30 pm. Come out and enjoy food, fun, music, and games with your fellow Franklinites!

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

The first Wednesday of every month we partner with Franklin Food Bank, YMCA, and Community Food Bank of New Jersey to deliver fresh produce to those facing food insecurity. The food is distributed on a first come, first served basis at First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens at 771 Somerset Street beginning at 11:00 am until all the food is distributed. Quantities limited.

Know any high school students interested in learning more about a career in law enforcement? Have them join our **Cadet Academy**. Sign up at www.franklintwpnj.org/crb. The cadets meet twice a month after school from October - June.

Please call the Community Relations Bureau at (732) 873-5533 x 3124 with questions about these or any other fun and exciting programs that we offer! Check us out at www.franklintwpnj.org/crb

2024 Youth ACADEMY SIGNUP
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP POLICE

JULY 11-12 & JULY 15-19
Orientation 7/9 @ 495 DeMott Lane
0800-1500 hrs
Franklin Middle School, SGS Campus

30 Cadets will be accepted into the program.

Join us and make a difference!
<https://franklintwpnj.org/youthpoliceacademy>

CENTRAL JERSEY HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER (CJHRC) FREE COUNSELING SERVICES & WEBINARS!

Central Jersey Housing Resource Center (CJHRC) is a HUD certified housing counseling agency in Somerville, NJ offering **FREE** counseling programs including rental, pre-purchase, financial literacy, post purchase, foreclosure and homeless resources/referrals, as well as numerous virtual webinars on a variety of topics. Call a CJHRC Counselor at 908-446-0036 for more information on our counseling programs or upcoming webinars below.

2-day Virtual Homebuyer Webinar June 25 & June 27, 2024

5:30 pm to 8:15 pm

Attendees are required to complete both days of the webinar and comply with requirements to get certificate.

If you want to purchase a home but don't know where or how to start, begin by registering and attending CJHRC's FREE pre-purchase counseling and obtaining a certificate. Why does getting a pre-purchase certificate matter? **Below are some benefits of getting a certificate:**

- Almost always it is required for down payment and closing cost assistance grants
- For certain reduced rate/first time homebuyer mortgage products it is a requirement
- Some attorneys will reduce their fee
- You gain knowledge so that the homebuyer process may be less overwhelming

Go to www.cjhrc.org and click on Virtual Counseling Programs tab then click on Virtual Homebuyer Workshop and register for the webinars. The links are near the bottom of the page.

Make sure you like us on Facebook (Central Jersey Housing Resource Center) or follow us on Instagram (@cjhrc_housing) to get important housing announcements, resources and information. CJHRC posts weekly on our social media accounts.



Your Shade Tree Commission Update

Tree Maintenance: What can you do to prepare your trees for a healthy season? The Arbor Day Foundation has a great list of tips at <https://www.arborday.org/trees/tips> including:

- 1. Check Your Trees:** Your deciduous trees should all be leafing out or budding, and your evergreens, well, should be green. During your early summer inspection, look for the following:
 - Cankers (dead sections of bark on branches or tree trunks)
 - Oozing sap (trees eject sap to cover and protect wounds)
 - Signs of infestation (adult beetle exit holes)
 - Signs of disease (blackened and curled twigs)
 - Structure (odd, crossed, or unwanted growth patterns)

- 2. Provide Water for Your Trees:** Water is the most important thing for healthy tree growth.
 - Soil around the tree should be well-drained (doesn't pool up and stay)
 - Soil should be consistently moist to the touch (not wet)
 - Deep water your tree once weekly (let the water soak to a depth of 12 to 15-inches, this encourages roots to grow deep)
 - Use soaker hoses or buckets to irrigate your trees (buckets with holes drilled in the bottom are great for deep waterings)

Tip: Increase watering frequency during times of drought and decrease it in unusually wet times.

- 3. Mulch Your Trees & Gardens:** Applying mulch to your trees and garden helps regulate both soil temperature and moisture. Here's how to do it right:
 - Apply a 3 to 6-inch layer of mulch to the entire area within the dripline of your trees (needles, wood chips, or compost)
 - Keep mulch pulled back 2 to 3-inches from the tree trunk (this avoids excess moisture and insect trouble around the root flare)
 - When the mulch compresses, fluff it up and add more when needed

- 4. Plant Lots of New Trees:** Early spring is a great time to plant a tree. Both evergreens and deciduous trees will be coming into their growing season and have the time to "harden" new growth before the arrival of the next winter season. Observe the following:
 - Determine the proper tree species by your USDA hardiness zone map and our Frankling Township Recommended Tree List at <https://www.franklintwpnj.org/committees-commissions/shade-tree-commission/resources/trees-to-plant>
 - Determine which species is the right tree in the right location <https://www.arborday.org/trees/index-choosing.cfm>

What's that little blue tag on my tree? During a survey of trees along roadways that was done in 2018, trees were tagged with numbered blue metal badges to help keep track of which ones became infested with Emerald Ash Borer beetles. If you take down a tree with a blue badge, or if you see one that has fallen, please call the Township Department of Public Works so that the inventory can be updated. Do not cut down a tree with a blue badge until you check with the DPW at (732)873-7299. For more information on the blue tags, go to: <https://www.franklintwpnj.org/committees-commissions/shade-tree-commission/resources/blue-tree-tags>

IMPORTANT - Before trimming or cutting a tree: Is there a tree along the side or front of your property that you were thinking of trimming or removing? Please make sure that it isn't a Township-Owned Tree to avoid any issues. Trees near public roadways, parks, schools, and other Township owned areas can only be trimmed or removed by Township DPW professionals. How do you know if it's your tree or not? Just call the Township and a crew will come out and check. Call (732)873-7299 and the DPW will be happy to help!

Join the Shade Tree Commission! We have two alternate member positions open on our Commission. Please consider joining to help us preserve and expand the tree canopy in our Township, and to make Franklin a Tree City community for years to come! For information about the Shade Tree Commission and how to join www.franklintwpnj.org/shadetree!

Flood Safety Tips

- **Do not walk through flowing water.** Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths. Currents are deceptive; six inches of moving water knocks you off your feet.
- **Do not drive through a flooded area.** More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Do not drive around road barriers, the road or bridge may be washed out.
- **Stay away from power lines and electrical wires.** The number two cause of death after drowning is electrocution. Report downed power lines to the utility company.
- **Turn off your electricity.** Some appliances keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Don't use appliances that have gotten wet unless they have been cleaned and dried.
- **Look out for animals, especially snakes.** Small animals flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Turn things over with a stick before picking them up.
- **Look before you step.** After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris. Mud-covered can be very slippery.
- **Avoid wading through the flood water.** Oils, chemicals and even raw sewage mix with flood waters creating unsanitary and even hazardous conditions.
- **Be alert for gas leaks.** Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don't smoke, use candles or open flames unless you know for sure that the gas has been turned off and the area ventilated.

The Engineering Department can answer your questions or can perform a site visit to review surface flooding problems and explain ways to help minimize flood damage. They can be reached at (732) 873-2500 ext. 6230 or stop by any weekday from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM.



Franklin Township Canal Road

WALK & ROLL

NORTH

SUNDAY, JULY 28TH
10:00 AM - 4:00PM

Canal Road closed from East Millstone to Butler Road





SOUTH

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25TH
10:00 AM - 4:00PM

Canal Road closed from Griggstown Causeway to Route 518

Canal Road closed to motor vehicles. Residents within these locations will have vehicle access to and from these areas so please proceed with caution!

For more information: 732-873-1991, Option 4

COMMUNITY IN UNITY

2024 WEEK OF THE PEOPLE

Back-to-School Festival

WHEN:
Saturday, August 17th, 2024

TIME:
1:00 PM TO 7:00 PM

WHERE:
Naaman Williams Park

42 Matilda Avenue
Somerset, NJ 08873

FEATURING • Live Music • Games • Activities for Children • Food • Retail Vendors • Pony Rides • Prizes • And more!

Help us give our children a better start to school with results that last all year long by supporting this event!

WWW.WEEKOFTHEPEOPLE.ORG

53rd YEAR CELEBRATION
FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE

SPONSORS



A&T MECHANICAL



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call: 732.910.1280 – Percy Sanders

Email: WeekofthePeople@gmail.com



What's Happening with The Meadows Foundation

2024 is continuing to be a busy year for The Meadows Foundation in Somerset, with plenty of activities and opportunities for everyone. The Board of Directors has been hard at work to schedule programming that appeals to a wide audience. They also welcome and encourage input from the public as to what type of programs or activities they would like The Meadows Foundation to offer. So far, 2024 has seen a great increase in membership and participation from the public, which has been fantastic for everyone. We intend to continue this period of growth and engaging more of our community.

The Meadows Foundation is pleased to announce that January 2027 will be the Foundation's 50th anniversary! Since 1977, when The Meadows was formed to steward the Van Duyn-Van Wickle House, many members of our community worked selflessly to restore and maintain historic sites in Franklin Township. The Board of Directors would like to thank the many donors, Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission, the Franklin Township Mayor & Council, and Department of Public Works who have, over the years, made it possible for us perform this service to our community.

To celebrate and help prepare for this golden anniversary, we invite you to participate in our time capsule project! The Meadows is pleased to announce that it is putting together this unique endeavor for those who live, work, go to school, or recreate in the area, or are interested in making their historical mark. The time capsule will be opened in 2077 – fifty years from when it is sealed. This will coincide with the 100th anniversary of The Meadows. Between the times it is sealed and opened, the time capsule will be on display for all to see, in person or online, with a group photo and the names of participants.

Why is this time capsule unique? YOU. The capsule will be made up of smaller capsules, which may be purchased by you – as individuals, families, groups, or organizations. Each capsule purchase entitles the purchaser to tips, tricks, and suggestions of what to include for a successful time capsule, two tickets to the sealing party to be held in January of 2027, and two tickets to the opening party in January of 2077. Full information is available on The Meadows' website.

The Board of Directors is also pleased to bring to your attention that much-needed restoration work is currently being done on the Van Liew-Suydam House, at 280 South Middlebush Road (on the hill at the intersection of South Middlebush and Blackwells Mills). The Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission awarded us a grant to bring this gem of a historic home back to its full shine. The completion date is not known as of this writing, but when it is done we will have a celebration, presentation, and tour of the house to show her off. Keep an eye on the Upcoming Events page of our website for details or send us an email to be added to our email list: tmf.org.1289@gmail.com.

We also have many programs and activities scheduled for this summer. Additional information and links to tickets for the following events can be found on the Foundation's website: www.TheMeadowsFoundation.org.

- **Wednesday, July 10, 6:30 PM-8:30 PM – Club Meadows:** Location to be noted on the Events Calendar of The Meadows Foundation's website. FREE.
- **Sunday, July 14, 1:00 PM-4:00 PM – Wyckoff-Garretson Second Sunday Museum Tours**
- **Sunday, August 11, 2:00 PM-5:00 PM – Mysteries at the Meadows:** You are a fledgling private detective, and to get your license you must help solve a murder mystery. Work individually or in teams to find clues, decode messages, break alibis and ultimately determine who did the sinister deed. Location and specific theme to be determined. \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members.
- **Sunday, August 11, 1:00 PM-4:00 PM – Wyckoff-Garretson Second Sunday Museum Tours**
- **Wednesday, August 14, 6:30 PM-8:30 PM – Club Meadows:** Location to be noted on the Events Calendar of The Meadows Foundation's website. FREE.
- **September – December:** We have many more plans in the works. Later this year you can look forward to our participation in Franklin Day, some spooky offerings for October as well as our inclusion in Somerset County's Weekend Journey to the Past, and the annual favorite for the kids – Sinterklaas.

Finally, we would like to invite you to become a member (if you aren't one already). We are also seeking individuals to actively take part in our Board of Directors. The only skill requirement is a desire to see these irreplaceable historic locations preserved for the educational and recreational fulfillment of future generations. If you wish to help us Give the Past a Future, please send us an email. Again, our email is tmf.org.1289@gmail.com, and our website is www.TheMeadowsFoundation.org. Have a wonderful summer, and we hope to see you soon!

Franklin Township



Cultural Arts Council

Exciting Upcoming Events for the Franklin Township Cultural Arts Council!

Franklin Township Cultural Arts Council is seeking volunteers to help fulfill our mission of "Bringing the community together through the arts." The Arts Council is organizing future events in visual, literary, and performing arts. Our meetings are at 6:30 pm on the second Wednesday of the month. For info on how to join, please email the Council at ftcac@franklinnj.gov.

FTCAC Call for Musicians: Always dreamed of joining a jazz band? We're looking for you! The Franklin Township Cultural Arts Council is seeking volunteers to join the community band. Adult musicians who read music, bring your instrument and join us for some fun! Thursday night rehearsals at SGS Middle School: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM. Performances throughout the year! Register at Franklintwp.recdesk.com.

Upcoming Event Dates

Summer Concert: August 9th
Franklin Performance Gazebo

Franklin Day Cultural Stage Auditions: June 26th
Community Senior Center

Youth Talent Show Auditions: August 28th
Community Senior Center

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
NATIONAL NIGHT OUT!
TUESDAY, AUGUST 6
6:00-8:30PM
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
732-873-5533
SPONSORED BY: CompoSecure

RAIN DATE 8/13

Hello Franklin!

Join us as we explore some of the wonderful places and faces that make up our community of Franklin Township.

“Don’t let fear or shame keep you from seeking the help you need!”

That is one of the messages that the recently formed Franklin Township Stigma Free Council hopes to spread across our community.

In a groundbreaking initiative, Franklin Township, in conjunction with the Mayor’s Wellness Campaign, is joining the fight against mental health stigma and substance use disorder (SUD) stigma. One of the Council’s missions is to encourage individuals, businesses, schools, non-profits, public safety personnel, houses of worship, and more to commit to being stigma-free. Creating communities of care and support is easy, and the benefits are immeasurable. Whether an individual or an established organization, small steps can make a big impact. Supporters can sign the Franklin Township Stigma-Free Pledge, support community education about stigma, and/or share and post reputable resources from organizations like NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), New Jersey MentalHealthCares, and SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration).



Among the many goals that the Council has identified are:

- Make it easier for residents to know where to turn for help, by posting resources on the Franklin Township website, our libraries, food bank, businesses, and other key locations.
- Offer more educational opportunities for our residents about mental health and substance use disorder and how to help those who are affected.
- Support all youth, but especially those who appear isolated, struggling emotionally, acting out behaviorally or are going through high stress/trauma/grief situations.
- Publicize the school, youth center, 4-H, scouting, faith-based programs that already exist so more youth can take advantage of them.
- Offer programs for parents to understand how to determine if a child/teen needs professional assessment, and how to talk to kids about their concerns.
- Create safe spaces for people with mental health or substance issues to get together and receive peer-to-peer support.
- Find solutions for our senior citizens who are isolated, dealing with depression and anxiety, but often do not know where to turn for help.
- Implement best practices from around the state about what works to reduce stigma.
- Create and publish personal narratives about how stigma interfered with recovery and/or the road to health as a way to reduce stigma.
- Engage representatives from our diverse community in the effort since it is true that stigma can be stronger in some cultures than others.



As one can see from the list above, these are significant and challenging goals, and they won’t be achieved overnight, but steps have been taken since the first meeting in February. Check out the following:

- Resource sharing and education about stigma by volunteers at the St Matthias Health Fair (youth driven event) in March and the Franklin Twp. Public Schools Diversity night May 3.
- Adult Mental Health First Aid Training has been scheduled for June 10, 2024. Youth Mental Health First Aid Training has been scheduled for September 30, 2024.
- Nita Velanki and Donna Sozio spoke passionately at the April 25 Franklin Township Board of Education meeting about the harm of stigma and asked the BOE to approve a resolution pledging to strive to reduce stigma in our schools.
- Lit up the Franklin Twp. Gazebo in green* for May-Mental Health Awareness month in conjunction with Mental Health Assn. of New Jersey.
- Franklin Twp. Council issued a proclamation for May is Mental Health Awareness month, renewing its commitment to a stigma-free community.
- Commendations for teens from Franklin Township who have initiated mental health and stigma awareness events were issued to students from Franklin High School, St. Matthias and Thomas Edison Energysmart Charter School at the May 14 Franklin Township Council Meeting.

*Why green, you might ask? Green is often associated with concepts like new life, renewal and growth in nature. This symbolism is intended to represent the idea that people with mental health and substance use disorder challenges can experience recovery, healing and personal growth.



SAVE THESE RESOURCES

988 is the number to call if you or someone you know is in a mental health or substance related crisis.

Need a counselor or doctor but you haven’t been able to find one? Somerset County Behavioral Systems Navigator Stephanie Billitz can help. Call (908) 203-6130 or email her at sbillitz@co.somerset.nj.us.

Interested in getting involved with the Franklin Twp. Stigma-Free council? Email your name and phone number to stigmafree@franklinnj.gov. The meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm at the Community Senior Center, DeMott Lane, Somerset. Newcomers are always welcome!

Wildlife in Franklin



The Summer months are fast approaching which means more of us will be outside! These sunny days are also a greater chance to encounter wildlife. Franklin Township is home to many species of wildlife from raccoons to coyotes. Wildlife in general, do not want to interact with humans and will flee. Below are some tips and general information to happily coexist with wildlife.

Tips to keep wildlife out of your yard!

- Cover garbage/clean up after outside dining. Wildlife will be attracted to any food source. Bird feeders will attract wildlife and bring them closer to your home.
- **DO NOT** feed outdoor cats! This is one of the biggest issues that not only results in a larger feral cat population but will attract wildlife.
- Plan out your garden! The use of chicken wire or fencing will help keep wildlife away. A nice garden is a big attraction for wildlife.

What to do if you see wildlife in your yard!

- There is no need to call the police or animal control to report wildlife passing through a yard or crossing the street. Fox, raccoons, possum, and even coyotes are native to Somerset.
- At times some animals that are normally nocturnal will come out during the day. Especially after a big rainfall or other inclement weather. If the animal is circling, wobbling, foaming/excessive saliva from the mouth or falling down call Animal Control or after hours the Franklin Township Police.
- If wildlife becomes a nuisance to your property such as a groundhog digging holes it is the responsibility of the property owner to have them removed via a licensed Wildlife Control Removal Service. More information on wildlife relocation can be found on The NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife website. <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/>
- Wildlife that may enter the home such as a bird in a stove vent or raccoons in a crawl space must be removed by a licensed wildlife control removal service.
- If wildlife is in distress/injured and cannot flee Animal Control will intervene. This excludes deer. The Franklin Township Police Department should be contacted at 732-873-5533
- **Deer carcass removal is set up by Franklin Township Police Department NOT Animal Control.**

Property Tax Relief Programs

Senior/Disabled \$250 Deduction: Annual deduction of up to \$250 from property taxes for homeowners 65 or older or disabled who meet certain income and residency requirements. This benefit application can be picked up at the Tax Assessor’s Office.

Veteran \$250 Deduction: Annual deduction of up to \$250 from property taxes due for qualified war veterans or a veteran who served in peacekeeping missions and operations. This deduction is also available to a surviving spouse/civil union/domestic partner who has not remarried. This benefit application can be picked up at the Tax Assessor’s Office.

Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans: Full exemption from property taxes on a principal residence for certain totally and permanently disabled war veterans and veterans who served in peacekeeping missions and operations. This exemption is also available to a surviving spouse/civil union/domestic partner who has not remarried. This benefit application can be picked up at the Tax Assessor’s Office.

Property Tax Reimbursement (Senior Freeze): State run program that allows seniors, 65 or older, or receiving federal Social Security disability benefit payments, who have lived in New Jersey for at least 10 years and who have owned their home for at least 3 years for a reimbursement for each year from the base year who meet certain income requirements. This reimbursement will be in the form of a check to the applicant. For an application please call 1(800) 882-6597 or visit <https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/ptr/index.shtml>.

Affordable New Jersey Communities for Homeowners and Renters (ANCHOR): Applications are mailed to the property or can be requested by phone to 1(888) 238-1233. Homeowner must meet certain income and residency requirements to qualify for the credit against property taxes. Eligibility requirements can be accessed at <https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/anchor/index.shtml>.





**Franklin Township
Parks & Recreation
Community/Senior Center
505 DeMott Lane
Somerset, NJ 08873**

**Office Hours:
Monday-Friday,
8:30am-4:30pm
732-873-1991, Option 4**

**Website:
www.franklintwpnj.org/rec**

Editor, Mayra L. Jimenez



Community/Senior Center



Franklin Youth Center

MISSION STATEMENT

Volume 4, Issue 2

The mission of the Department of Recreation, Community Celebrations & Park Administration is to improve the quality of life in the community by providing a wide range of services to meet the recreational needs of the public, and by providing and preserving open space and parkland for all to enjoy.

2024 SUMMER PROGRAMS

YOUTH Programs

Tennis @ Inman Park, Leupp Lane

Monday, June 17 through July 22

**Rally Racquet
Super Servers**

**6:00-6:55pm
7:00-7:55pm**

**Ages: 5 & 6
Ages: 7 - 9**

**\$69
\$69**

Wednesday, June 19 through July 24

**Amazing Aces
Teen Titans**

**6:00-6:55pm
7:00-7:55pm**

**Ages: 10 - 12
Ages: 13 - 17**

**\$69
\$69**

Saturday, June 22 through July 27

**Teen Titans
Rally Racquets
Super Servers
Amazing Aces**

**8:30-9:55am
10:00-10:55am
11:00-11:55am
12:00-12:55pm**

**Ages: 13 - 17
Ages: 5 & 6
Ages: 7 - 9
Ages: 10 - 12**

**\$99
\$69
\$69
\$69**

A developmental program designed to provide fundamental instruction and low-level competitive tennis games. Participants must supply their own racquet. Sneakers required.

Flag Rugby

Thursdays, June 6-7/18 (NO CLASS JULY 4)

6:30-7:30pm

\$110

Ages 5-14 , Grades 1-5 & K-9 (entering those grades in the fall)

Middlebush Park

In flag rugby, everyone gets to run, pass, and score. Every player is involved and essential to the team. Our program encourages players to learn running, passing, and sportsmanship in a safe and fun environment. Teams are run by experienced and patient rugby coaches who are dedicated to helping kids succeed in a new sport, feel welcome to the group and most of all have fun!

*For Youth and Adult program questions contact:
Ken Jacobs, Recreation Program Coordinator
Kenneth.Jacobs@franklinnj.gov
732-873-2500 x6350*



YOUTH CENTER Programs

Open to youth in grades 6-12 ♦ Membership is required

Visit our registration website @ franklintwp.recdesk.com for start dates and membership information.

All programs take place at the Franklin Youth Center, 429 Lewis Street, Somerset, NJ 08873 ♦ Main Telephone: 732-873-7292

Boys Basketball Clinic

May 7th- June 18th
Skills and Drills

3:30-5:00

FREE-Members only

College Readiness Workshop

May 13th and May 20th
College Application Fundamentals (FAFSA, State Aid, Applying and College Board

4:00-5:00

FREE-Members only

Sports Plus+

May 2nd- June 6th
Sports Plus+ is a program designed to utilize the Township Youth's love of sports and use it to teach important life lessons, introduce the youth to other adults that care, and begin to help them create a professional network.

Thursdays 5:30-7:00

FREE-Members only

CRB Basketball

May 6th- June 10th
The mission of the Franklin Township Basketball Program is to build relationships between the youth, parents, community, and police department to develop productive and active leaders through its programs and events. FTPD will provide girls and boys, ages 10 and up, the opportunity to learn and play the game of basketball while also learning about teamwork and sportsmanship.

Monday and Wednesday, 5:30-7:30

FREE-Members only

*For Youth Center program questions contact:
Mawiyah Holliman, Youth Center Program Manager
Mawiyah.Holliman@franklinnj.gov
732-873-2500 x7022*



Register: <https://franklintwp.recdesk.com> 1



THERAPEUTIC Programs

What is the Therapeutic Recreation Program?

While our recreation programs are inclusive and accommodations are made for disabled citizens to participate without structurally changing the program or activity, therapeutic recreation programs are different in that they are designed and adapted to meet the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive needs of our participants. This allows the recreation department to have symmetry of both inclusion services alongside specialized therapeutic recreation programs providing an all-encompassing recreational offering to our community.

Friday Night-Drop In

Every, Friday June 14 & 28, (No session on 6/7, 6/21, 7/5), July 12, 19, 26, 7:00p-8:30p

Ages: 13-35

\$10

Friday Night Drop In is a chance for neurodiverse and therapeutic participants to hang out and have fun while enjoying different themed activities each week. Some activities include parties, games, karaoke, and crafts.

"The Voice of Parents" Forum

This free, parent led forum will take place one Friday a month, June 14, July Date TBD; 7:30pm-8:30pm

As a part of the Franklin Township Recreation Therapy Program, we recognize the crucial need for parents to feel a sense of belonging and community just as much as their children and loved ones with disabilities. These monthly parent forums provide a platform for connection, sharing experiences, and accessing resources. We are seeking parent volunteers to assist in facilitating these sessions, and we welcome suggestions for speaker topics you would like to hear or speak on. If you are interested or would like to send suggestions for speaker topics please email maria.duenas@franklinnj.gov

Therapeutic Recreation program questions contact:
Maria Dueñas, Therapeutic Recreation Program Coordinator
Maria.Duenas@franklinnj.gov
732-873-2500 x6357



ADULT Programs

Zumba

Community/Senior Center

Tuesdays & Thursdays, June 4 – August 13 (No class 6/18, 6/20, 6/25, 6/27, 7/4) 7:30-8:30pm Ages 16+ \$64 residents

Take the "work" out of your workout, by mixing low & high intensity moves for an interval style, calorie burning dance party. The fusion of Latin and international music will make you forget you're working out while becoming a healthier you. Invite your friends & family to be part of the Zumba Fitness Party - you'll love the results!

Summer Tennis

Inman Park Tennis Courts (Leupp Lane, Somerset)

Wednesdays – June 19 - July 24

7:00-7:55pm

Ages: 18 +

\$69 residents

Saturdays – June 22- July 27

8:30-9:55am

Ages: 18+

\$99 residents

A developmental program designed to provide fundamental instruction and low-level competitive tennis games. Participants must supply their own racquet.

For Youth and Adult program questions contact:
Ken Jacobs, Recreation Program Coordinator
Kenneth.Jacobs@franklinnj.gov
732-873-2500 x6350



FOREVER 55 ACTIVE ADULT Programs

Open to residents ages 55+ ♦ Online registration required

Visit our registration website @ franklintwp.recdesk.com for start dates and more information.

All programs take place at the Community/Senior Center, 505 DeMott Lane, Somerset

Forever 55 Programs (Year Round)

Knitting and Crochet Club	Mondays	12:00 PM	Free
Dancing with Friends	Tuesdays	1:30 PM	Free
Functional Fitness	Mondays	2:15 PM	Fee Required
Pilates	Mondays	3:20 PM	Fee Required
Chair Yoga	Wednesdays	2:00 PM	Fee Required
Guided Meditation	Tuesdays	9:00 AM	Fee Required
Line Dancing with Ginger	Wednesdays	9:30 AM	Fee Required
Functional Fitness	Thursdays	11:00 AM	Fee Required
Pilates	Thursdays	12:15 PM	Fee Required
Tap Dancing with Ginger	Fridays	11:30 AM	Fee Required
Gentle Mat Yoga	Fridays	9:00 AM	Fee Required
Chair Yoga	Fridays	10:15 AM	Fee Required
Qi Gong	Fridays	9:30 AM	Fee Required
Swingin' Singin' Seniors	Fridays	1:30 PM	Call for rehearsal schedule
Walking Club	Thursdays	9:30 AM	Call for current schedule

Senior Citizen Clubs Open to residents ages 55 and older. Clubs meet weekly at the Franklin Township Community/Senior Center, 505 DeMott Lane in Somerset. Members enjoy weekly meetings, host guest speakers, parties, trips, bingo, and socializing.. Join one or all three clubs. Not sure which club to join, we recommend that you visit all three clubs and then decide to become a member.

Parkside Senior Citizens Club	Mondays	10:30 AM
Franklin Township Senior Citizens Club	Tuesdays	10:00 AM
Franklin Park Senior Citizens Club	Wednesdays	12:00 PM

Free Educational Workshops (go online for additional information)

Nutrition Workshop	Thursday, June 13 th	1:30 PM
Sandwich Generation Workshop (Skilled Care)	Wednesday, June 12 th	6:30 PM
Financial Literacy	Thursday, September 12 th	1:30 PM

Swingin' Singin' Seniors: This chorus group entertains locally and practice at the Community/Senior Center on Fridays at 1:30PM. All levels welcome. Open to residents ages 55+ and caregivers.

For up to date information, monthly educational workshops, and program additions, please visit franklintwp.recdesk.com.

Parks & Recreation is always looking to add more enrichment programs geared towards active adults. Specifically looking to add art, language, creative writing, and Zumba Gold instructors to add to our current offerings. If you would like to apply for a Part Time Seasonal instructor position, contact 732-873-1991 Option 4 for more information.

For Forever 55 Active Adult program questions contact:
Marianne Regan, Senior Citizen Program Coordinator
Marianne.Regan@franklinnj.gov
732-873-2500 x6347



Register: <https://franklintwp.recdesk.com> 2



SPECIAL EVENT Programs

Franklin Township Parks & Recreation strives to present thoughtful and engaging events for all ages to help build and foster a sense of pride in our wonderfully diverse community. Please "Save the Date" for our 2024 events below.

FRANKLIN DAY Auditions! Wednesday, June 26
6:00-9:00pm
Community/Senior Center
505 DeMott Lane, Somerset

ARE YOU A PERFORMER looking to showcase your talent for all of Franklin to see? Help us show the beautiful diversity of our Township by performing at the 2024 Franklin Day Cultural Stage on September 28th at Colonial Park.

Register at FTCAC@franklinnj.gov
732-873-2500 x6428

Registration is required for all auditions. Please note auditions should be no more than 2 minutes in length. NO BANDS PLEASE.

INDEPENDENCE DAY FIREWORKS
JULY 3

RAIN DATE JULY 5

6:00 - 9:00PM FOOD & FUN
9:15PM FIREWORKS

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
FRANKLINTWPNJ.ORG

Franklin DAY Saturday, September 28
12:00-5:00pm

COLONIAL PARK, KNOB HILL GROVE

Interested in being a food vendor, exhibitor or sponsor?

For an application visit:
www.franklintwpnj.org/franklinday
Franklin.Day@franklinnj.gov
(732) 873-2500 x6428

COMMUNITY FOOD MUSIC FAMILY FUN

For Special Event program questions contact:
Mayra L. Jimenez, Recreation Program Coordinator, Special Events
Mayra.Jimenez@franklinnj.gov
732-873-2500 x6340

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PARKS & Recreation

SUMMER CAMP
INDOOR/OUTDOOR
FULL AND HALF DAY CAMPS
JUNE 24 - AUGUST 2, 2024
RESIDENT REGISTRATION
OPEN NOW!

REGISTER ONLINE:
FRANKLINTWP.RECDESK.COM

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PARKS & Recreation

Williams Park Pool OPEN SWIM
Starts June 24, 2024
Monday-Friday: 4:00-8:00pm
Saturday: 1:00-6:00pm
Open to all Township Residents

Register:
franklintwp.recdesk.com

Parks & Recreation Department



RECREATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

INCLEMENT WEATHER: In case of inclement weather, announcements regarding cancellations will be available by calling (732) 873-1991 & press Option 1. If schools close due to inclement weather, all programs held at schools are automatically cancelled.

INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING: We welcome individuals with or without disabilities to participate in all recreation programs and activities. In accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please contact us to discuss any modifications needed for you or your child's successful participation in programs

MAKE-UPS: Make-ups are only offered for programs cancelled by the Recreation Dept. due to weather or other circumstances. In some instances, credits will be issued in lieu of makeup classes. Make-ups are not given for absences.

FEES: ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED UPON REGISTRATION. Program fees are not prorated for late registrations.

RESIDENCY: All fees listed are for Township residents. The Recreation Dept. reserves the right to limit registrations to Township residents for any programs. Non-residents may enroll in a program 7 days prior to program start date and at double the listed fee.

REFUNDS/CREDITS: No refunds/credits will be given after a program begins. Refunds will only be approved if: 1. Recreation Dept. cancels an activity. 2. A written request is received at least 7 days prior to the start of the program. 3. A medical issue arises which will require submitting a doctor's note for consideration.

FEE REDUCTIONS: Income guidelines are established for fee reductions for certain Recreation programs. Call the Recreation Office for information.

EMAIL: Email is used for program confirmations and communications. Please note that Franklin Recreation does not share e-mail addresses.

For more information on programs, please visit:
www.franklintwpnj.org/rec

TOWNSHIP SPORTS CLUBS & LEAGUES

The following organizations run *independently* of the Recreation Department and administer their own programs:

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP SOCCER CLUB/TOP SOCCER (SPECIAL NEEDS)	
www.franklinsoccer.com	
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP BASEBALL LEAGUE	732-649-8068
www.ftblbaseball.com/ftblsomerset@gmail.com	
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP/S. BOUND BROOK LITTLE LEAGUE	732-469-7761
www.leaguelineup.com/ftsbblittleleague.com	
POP WARNER FOOTBALL/CHEERLEADING	
www.ftpw.org/ftpwnj@gmail.com	
ADULT SLO-PITCH SOFTBALL	609-395-9167

SCAN WITH YOUR DEVICE
TO REGISTER ONLINE!



Register: <https://franklintwp.recdesk.com> 3

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

40 Churchill Avenue, Somerset, NJ 08873

Monday – Friday • 7:00 AM – 2:45 PM • 732.249.7800, ext. 6290

RECYCLING INFORMATION

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP CONVENIENCE CENTER

(corner of School Ave. & Berry St.)
732-249-7800 ext. 6290

2024 CALENDAR

Saturday Schedule 8:00am – 2:45pm

July 13	October 12
August 10	November 9
September 4	December 7

Monday Schedule (Tuesday in case of holiday) 7:30am – 11:30am

June 3, 17	September 9, 23
July 8, 22	October 7, 21
August 5, 19	November 4, 18
	December 2

TO PURCHASE A PASS:

You must be a resident of Franklin Township
Driver's license required for proof of residency.

PLACES TO PURCHASE A PASS:

Public Works Building

40 Churchill Ave.
Monday thru Friday: 7:00am – 2:45pm

Township Clerk's Office

475 DeMott Lane
Monday thru Friday: 8:30am - 4:30pm

TRIP PASS FEES

Car: \$15.00 per trip/ 6 trips for \$75.00
Description – has 1 or 2 seats with a trunk

Station Wagon/SUV/Crossover/Mini Van
\$35.00 per trip/6 trips for \$175.00

Description – A vehicle with a factory-installed rear bench seat or captain chairs, upright and in place, directly behind the driver's seat and has a cargo area.

Passenger Van/Cargo Van
\$65.00 per trip/ 6 trips for \$325.00

Passenger Van description: a vehicle designed, modified, or otherwise capable of being configured to carry not less than 8 passengers and no more than 15 passengers, including the driver.

Cargo Van description: A vehicle that has space for two passengers and the remaining area is used to haul cargo.

Trailer - \$75.00 per trip – PLUS vehicle fee IF the vehicle also has debris.

\$75.00 per trip/6 trips for \$375.00

Description – Can not be longer than 8 feet; closed in trailers are not allowed.

NOT ALLOWED

Rack Body/Flat Bed/Dump Truck

Cube Van/Closed in Trailers

Commercial or Rental Vehicles

TRIP PASS REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING ACCEPTABLE ITEMS:

Household items to include furniture, old toys, rugs, etc., appliances (refrigerators; freezers; air conditioners dehumidifiers require an additional fee)

\$15.00 per freon appliance (drop off only)

\$7.00 per tire (All tires)

NO PASS REQUIRED

Newspaper; Cardboard; Metal cans; Glass Bottles; Light Metal; Motor Oil; Appliances (washers; dryers; stoves; ovens; dishwashers; hot water heaters) Recyclable electronics; Brush – Shrub trimmings, Hedge clippings

Branches – no larger than 4" in diameter and/or 4 feet in length

Leaves – must be in biodegradable bags (**leaves cannot be dumped out of bags**)

PLEASE DO NOT PLACE DEBRIS IN LEAF BAGS! THEY ARE MULCHED AND GIVEN BACK TO THE COMMUNITY. WHAT YOU PUT IN IS WHAT YOU RECEIVE BACK.

NOT ACCEPTED/NOT ALLOWED

Renovation; remodeling/ Construction Materials
Debris - sheetrock; tiles; concrete; brick; asphalt; rocks, etc. **

Railroad ties or treated wood.

Household garbage; food waste; cooking oil.

Hazardous materials – pesticides; oil-based paint; all chemicals

Propane Tanks**

**Note: Somerset County holds five Household Hazardous Waste Days each year (See schedule under Somerset County)

LARGE METAL APPLIANCE PICKUP

Freon appliances - **\$25.00 each for pickup**

Washers; dryers; hot water heaters; stoves; ovens - **\$10.00 each for pickup**

June 17	July 22
August 19	September 23

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP MEDICINE DROP OFF

Residents can dispose of unwanted, expired or unused prescription and over-the-counter drugs in the drop-off box located in the lobby of the Franklin Township Public Safety Building at 495 DeMott Lane.

SOMERSET COUNTY RECYCLING SCHEDULE

<https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/recycle.html>

Franklin Township & South Bound Brook

June 13, 27
July 11, 25
August 8, 22

Franklin Park & Griggstown

June 14, 28
July 12, 26
August 9, 23

Society Hill I & II, Whitehall Manor, Beacon Hill & surrounding areas

June 3, 17
July 1, 15, 29
August 12, 26

Canal Walk, Somerset Run & Summerfields

June 7, 21
July 5, 19
August 2, 16, 30

Household Hazardous Waste Days

9:00am – 2:00pm

June 15, 2024 – South County Public Works Garage – 410 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough 08844

September – Branchburg Township Public Works Garage, 34 Kenbury Road, Branchburg 08876

October 19 – Branchburg Township Public Works Garage

410 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough 08844

POLYSTYRENE Packing Peanuts

Polystyrene packing peanuts can be taken to your local **MAILBOXES ETC., POSTNET OR UPS** stores, where they will be reused in future packing shipments.

Somerset County Recycling Center

40 Polhemus Lane, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

First Saturday of the month drop-off:

8:00am – 2:00pm

July 6
August 3
September 7

Occupants should remain in their vehicles at all times. Recycling employees remove the material from the vehicles.

(Electronic Waste & Textiles are not accepted at the Center)

ELECTRONIC RECYCLING

1st Saturday drop-offs: 8:00am – 2:00pm located at 410 Roycefield Rd., Hillsborough, NJ 08844.

MEDICAL WASTE DISPOSAL

Sharp needles and other similar medical waste should never be recycled.

Needles and syringes can be dropped off at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset located at 110 Rehill Ave. in Somerville, NJ Monday thru Friday, from 9:00am to 5pm.

Call 908-685-2200 for more additional information on the Safe Syringe Disposal Program.

Operation Secure Shred Schedule 2024

9:00am – 1:00pm

June 22, 2024

South County Facility
410 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough

July 20, 2024

North County Facility
411 Chimney Rock Road, Bridgewater

August 17, 2024

South County Facility
410 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough

September 21, 2024

South County Facility
410 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough



FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS



FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

2301 Route 27
Somerset, NJ 08873
(732) 873-2400

A Message from Dr. John A. Ravally Superintendent of Franklin Township Public Schools

As we prepare the Spring/Summer Edition of the Franklin Times, the staff and students of Franklin Township Public Schools are looking forward to the completion of another successful school year. In this edition, we spend time focusing on some of the wonderful staff members who have made significant contributions to our district and to showcase a few of our unique programs that have contributed to the continued success of our schools.

Case in point, please read on for a salute to this year's Educators of the Year, staff members chosen by their peers to be recognized for their dedication to our students. We have also highlighted a few staff members who have contributed greatly to various programs in our district. Though some of these Franklin Warriors are retiring from the district, they have left a strong foundation for others to build upon.

Also, in this issue, we report on the expansion of our Aviation Program at Franklin High School and hear all about the achievements of one of the program's graduates. We celebrate the success of our Warrior Filmmakers and see how the district's community partnerships improved the health, wellness and the smiles of our students during this school year.

Please enjoy reading about some of our incredibly talented students and staff members. It is with great Warrior Pride that we share their stories. For more Warrior News, please visit our website at www.franklinboe.org or follow Warrior News on Instagram at [wnews_ftps](https://www.instagram.com/wnews_ftps).

My best wishes for a safe and happy spring and summer season to you all.

Until next time, Go Warriors!

The Sky's the Limit for FHS Aviation Students

It was a beautiful spring afternoon on the campus of Franklin High School, with just enough wind to keep things interesting. Students from the Aviation Club and the Introduction to Aviation course took their places holding on to ropes as the hot air balloon and basket settled before "flight." Next, the students, as well as several district staff members and guests, took their turns alongside balloon pilot Keith Sproul to rise over fifty feet, well above the roof of the school. As they returned to the ground several minutes later, the next set of travelers stood ready to carefully swap places with those in the basket. "What a great opportunity," said one of the observers that day.

Opportunity is a word often associated with the Aviation Program at Franklin High School which began as an afterschool club during the 20/21 school year. At that time approximately 12 students met with their advisor and were able to practice simulated flight experiences using authentic flight simulation software. Working with pilot Khaled Chebli, a driving force behind the Program, students were given the opportunity to take to the skies and take over the controls of a plane themselves. Since then the Program has provided some students the opportunity to gain valuable flight time which is necessary to earn a pilot's license. One student from that first group, Cyprianni Stewart, FHS Class of 2022, was able to earn his private pilot's license while attending FHS. Mr. Stewart has gone on to study at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University where he has been able to "truly dive head first into my craft." He has continued his training with a single mindedness that has led to his now becoming, at the age of 20, an Instrument rated Commercial Pilot, Certified Flight Instructor and Advanced Ground Instructor. He says this about the Aviation Club, "Joining the Aviation Club has been undoubtedly one of the most influential and important decisions I've ever made in my life. I mean this wholeheartedly when I say, I would absolutely not be where I am in life had I not joined the Aviation Club."

Today's Aviation Club continues to influence students. It is "an enthusiastic student-led group where students come together to share their love for aviation and learn from each other," says the club's current advisor Sarah Montanari. The Club's executive board and Ms. Montanari plan their meetings which feature activities such as paper airplane aerodynamics challenges; a plane accident investigation escape room; field trips and guest speaker events which have included pilots from major airlines and the military as well as aerospace engineers. "Every single aviation industry professional I have met so far over the past two years has been enthusiastic about working with students to introduce them to aviation," says Montanari.

New in the 23/24 school year is the Introduction to Aviation class, which is the first course in a proposed 4-year high school STEM curriculum. The course focus is to introduce students to careers in aviation, the history and principles of aerodynamics, and engineering design. Ms. Montanari, an English teacher who completed additional course training in order to teach the class, describes it as, "a really fun hands-on class in which students often collaborate in teams to complete aerospace investigations. Some of our investigations have challenged students to build and launch their own hot air balloons, design heavy lift rockets, and construct and test wind tunnels and airfoils."

Ms. Montanari's enthusiasm for aviation and her students is impressive. She is pursuing her own pilot's license having passed the FAA Private Pilot Knowledge test. Her next step is to begin flight training this summer. Ms. Montanari is also pursuing an Advanced Ground Instructor certificate, which she says, "will improve my instruction and allow me to offer more to our students." She has this to say about her current students, "I have to shout out

the phenomenal accomplishments of our students so far this year: six of our students in the class/club are actively in-flight training; one of our students is currently interning at Central Jersey Airport; next year, one of our seniors will be attending a college engineering program while another senior will be attending Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University for aerospace or aeronautics. Some of our students have also applied for prestigious aviation summer programs."

So, what is next for the Program? For now, the second year of the aviation curriculum has been approved for next school year. But when Ms. Montanari looks to the future, she envisions a four-year program; dual enrollment college credit; a drone pilot component; and much, much more.

After all, for this program at FHS, it looks like the sky's the limit.



The hot air balloon is inflated on the FHS campus.



FHS aviation students assist wrapping up the hot air balloon event.



FHS alumnus Cyprianni Stewart's future continues to soar.

A Note from Ardaman Singh,

Franklin Township Board of Education President - 2024

Over the first few months of my tenure as President of the Franklin Township Public Schools Board of Education, I have been fortunate to witness the collaborative spirit and Warrior Pride of my colleagues. I would like to thank my fellow Board Members for their trust in choosing me to lead the Board this year. I would like to welcome the new members of the Board, Erika Inocencio and Jimmy Parker, to their first term and thank Board Member Nancy LaCorte for her leadership as the past President of the Board. I share a commitment to the students of FTPS with those individuals as well as Board Vice President Sami Shaban and Board Members Bill Grippo, Dennis Hopkins, Walter Jackson and Laurie Merris. I believe that together with Dr. Ravally and his team, we can continue to move the district forward.

When I came to the United States, I stepped foot into Franklin Township in 1998 and have called it home ever since. I entered the school system as a substitute teacher, and after having two children, started volunteering as a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) mom. Over the years I was able to serve as President of the PTO which led me to making great friends who are parents, teachers and board members in the district. In 2017 I was elected to the Board of Education, also serving as their Vice President from 2018 - 2023. A passion to volunteer and the support of my family has brought me to where I sit today as the FTPS Board President and the Somerset County School Boards President.

Through the roles I have had in the district, from serving as the parent representative on a hiring committee to sitting on the curriculum committee as a board member, I have learned and continue to learn more and more about our schools and have actively participated in the changes to the education of OUR children. I invite you to become involved as well.

Follow FTPS on social media or the district website and celebrate the success of FTPS alumni who are nominated for a Tony award after making their debut on Broadway; touring with another Broadway show; appearing on reality television; earning their commercial pilot and certified flight instructor licenses; producing graphics for the Super Bowl and pursuing successful careers in medicine, business, engineering and education. Cheer the accomplishments of our current staff members such as Instructional Technology Coach Ted Samaras, who serves as an Ambassador to NASA or Dr. Wendy Bordeau, who was named this year's Counselor of the Year for Somerset County by the New Jersey School Counselor Association. See our students succeed in athletics and extracurricular competitions and gain acceptance to prestigious colleges and universities.

Join us by learning more about our district, programs, staff and students. There is a place for everyone here. After all, we are a melting pot of diversity in Franklin and proud of it.

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ardaman Singh, *President*

Sami Shaban, *Vice President*

William Grippo

Dr. Dennis Hopkins, Jr.

Erika Inocencio

Walter Jackson

Nancy LaCorte

Laurie Merris

Jimmie Parker



Information for Parents/Guardians of Children Who Are Experiencing Delays

Project CHILD FIND is a program from the NJ Department of Education to assist in the identification of unserved or underserved youth, from birth through age 21, with a delay or disability. Call 1-800-322-8174 for more information on Project CHILD FIND.

Franklin Township Public Schools provides, through its Department of Pupil Personnel Services, educational services to students who have been identified as having educationally debilitating conditions.

If you are a resident of Franklin Township and suspect that your child is having learning difficulties or if a health care provider has indicated that your child should be evaluated, please contact the **Department of Pupil Personnel Services** 2301 Route 27, Somerset, New Jersey 08873. (732) 873-2400 Ext. 203.

FHS Filmmakers Meet *The Challenge*



FHS students celebrate their award.

Picture it. A room filled with your peers: a stage; a podium; an announcer who says... [drumroll please] "The best film award goes to....."

These are the words that filmmakers everywhere long to hear, as these words signify recognition for their work, their art and in many cases, the embodiment of their dreams,

Members of the Franklin High School Aspects of Video Program were able to hear those words on March 21, 2024 when Robin Kampf, digital media producer at the New Jersey School Boards Association [NJSBA] announced that their film, *The Challenge*, had won in the New Jersey Hometown Documentary Short category in the globally recognized Garden State Film Festival. The announcement was made at a student workshop in Asbury Park at the beginning of the Festival.

The workshop at the Garden State Film Festival was such a great experience," explains PJ Bracco, television and film production teacher at Franklin High School. "We were sitting in a room filled with around 400 students and filmmakers from all over the state, listening to some of the top people that facilitate the business of filmmaking in NJ." Then, the students' reaction when we found out we won the award, "that was classic! Everyone kind of jumped and started screaming. It was truly exciting."

Mr. Bracco, a film producer and director in his own right, has taught at Franklin High School [FHS] for two years. He has been attending the Festival since 2012, both as a filmmaker, with work featured in the Festival, and as a supporter of independent films. Having a film chosen to air at the Festival in the High School Films Category is significant in itself and Mr. Bracco recalls when the student who had submitted the film was able to share that news with his classmates, "Aryan was beside himself," Mr. Bracco continues, "I remember telling the class, 'This is when it all starts... you're filmmakers!'"

The Challenge is a behind the scenes look at a master video class which took place in November of 2023 in collaboration with the students of Linden High School. Michael Pinnix, veteran television and production teacher at FHS who is also a filmmaker by trade, explains, "Every year our Aspects of Video class participates in various Master Classes on video production. This Master Class challenged our students to collaborate with students who they did not know, to work in teams: write; film; edit and finalize a short film...in three hours." The results of that day were three short films. The behind the scenes footage of that day, along with much more editing, interviews and a voice-over script became the mini documentary, *The Challenge*. "Inspired by an already successful workshop where they put their heart and soul all into creating films, they took that to create something new, something different and told a story about the story," said Mr. Bracco.

That story fit well with the criteria of the NJ Hometown Documentary Short award, which is sponsored by the NJSBA. As a mini documentary that tells a story having to do with the hometown of the student(s) and which focuses on some aspect of the arts, music, history, culture, a person or place, *The Challenge* will be featured at the NJSBA Workshop in Atlantic City this fall. The award also included a prize of \$500 for the Aspects of Video Program.





FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DISTRICT EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR

2023-2024



Annually school districts in New Jersey are invited to name their best and brightest teachers and educational services professionals for recognition at the district, county and ultimately the state level. In the past these programs were called Teacher of the Year Program and the Governor's Teacher/Educational Services Professionals Recognition Program. Today it is referred to as the Governor's Educator of the Year Program. The process for this recognition begins early in the school year. Staff are invited to nominate an individual, and then a committee chooses two individuals from each school, one a classroom teacher and the other a professional in a support area. These educational services personnel would include a school counselor, special education child study team member, or paraprofessional. Criteria for nomination include expertise in the field; the ability to collaborate with stakeholders to create a strong culture of respect and success, as well as leadership and innovation in educational activities. ***We are very proud of our 2023-2024 Franklin Township Public Schools (FTPS) District Educators of the Year.***

School	Teacher	Educational Services Professional
Franklin High School FHS	Ted Jones, Mathematics Teacher , has been a math teacher at FHS for his entire educational career, which spans over 22 years. He loves math and being surrounded by his students who "teach me about their world everyday." A favorite quote from one of his own teachers, "The enemy of the best, is the good enough."	Dr. David Goldstein, Transition Coordinator , has also spent his career in education at FTPS, as a Child Study Team member and, for the last 13 years as Transition Coordinator. He works with classified students developing skills to assist them in life after high school.
Franklin Middle School @ Hamilton Street Campus HSC	Mildred Arrieta, Bilingual Math Teacher , has served the bilingual community of FTPS for 20 years. She loves math and feels satisfaction seeing her students succeed, knowing that she was part of that success. She is an advocate for her students. A favorite quote from José Martí, "The only way to be totally free is through education."	Melissa Langan, School Counselor , began her tenure at FTPS teaching mathematics before becoming a school counselor. Growing up, she was inspired by teachers and advisors and loves the Franklin community and the amazing students she has the "privilege of working with each year."
Franklin Middle School @ Sampson G. Smith Campus SGS	Cherilyn Strand, Dance Teacher , has served the students of FTPS in six of the ten district schools over her 20 years in the district. She notes that the performing arts program at FTPS is "one of a kind." She credits dance for opening the door, allowing her to become an educator. She hopes it will continue to open more avenues for her in the future.	Sujata Gandhi, Paraprofessional , has worked for the district for four years, at HIL, FHS and now SGS. She says being a para is rewarding and satisfying and loves the amazing staff she works with. A favorite quote, "Be the change that you wish to see in the world," - Mahatma Gandhi
Claremont Elementary School CES	Ebony Blissett, 3rd Grade Teacher , has been with FTPS for 17 years. A favorite teacher inspired her to pursue education. Working for "one of the most diverse school districts in NJ," she feels the district embraces that title and appreciates and honors that distinction. She aims to constantly improve the way she addresses the needs of her students.	Elizabeth Reichbart, Paraprofessional , has worked in education for 22 years, the last six as a para for FTPS. She has primarily worked with students in the preschool autism program. She says, "There is something special about the little ones!" It is their small accomplishments and big victories that she finds rewarding.
Conerly Road School CRS	Stephan Bennett, Resource Room Teacher , has worked as a Special Education teacher in various setting in the district since 2014. He says, "It fills me with joy when I see a student end the year having advanced far past what they thought they were capable of reaching." He loves being part of a dedicated team of professional educators.	Linda Perry, Paraprofessional , has worked for FTPS for 12 years, returning to work after her son began school. She thoroughly enjoys her work as a para assisting students with special needs and feels that living in Franklin helps her relate to her students. They are pleased to see her in the community, she says.
Elizabeth Avenue School EAS	Christa McLaughlin, 2nd Grade Teacher , has worked in education for 20 years, the last nine in FTPS. She loves to learn and collaborate with her colleagues. She cherishes the diversity of the community and enjoys learning about the cultures of her student families through their eyes. A favorite quote, "Education is not preparation for life: education is life itself!" – John Dewey	Saiju (Sage) Patel, Math Coach , has been with FTPS for 13 years, as a teacher and now Math Coach. She originally considered a career in medicine but decided to become a teacher because of her love of learning and her desire to make an impact. She values the diversity of the district and meeting students from all walks of life.
Franklin Park School FPS	Jacqueline Pilgrim, 5th Grade Teacher , has spent 22 of her 25 years in education at FTPS. She comes from a long line of teachers and decided it was also her calling after serving as a dance instructor. Her classroom motto, "Come <i>prepared</i> with a <i>positive perspective</i> while working through the <i>process</i> to help you make <i>progress</i> with reaching your full <i>potential!</i> "	Terri Hrapsky, School Counselor , started as a kindergarten teacher at FTPS before becoming a School Counselor 17 years ago. As a proud FHS alumna and second-generation Franklin resident, she finds it fulfilling to "pay it forward" and give back to the school system that played such a big part in her life.
Hillcrest School HIL	Patti Bernstein, In-Class Resource Teacher , has worked in the education field for 20 years, the last six at FTPS. She has served in a variety of settings helping students with special needs. Teaching is her second career, having left the corporate world, to pursue her passion, with a desire to help students learn to read.	Lisa Capelli, School Counselor , has served the students of HIL for the past six years. She often goes above and beyond her regular duties to serve as an advocate for her students promoting their social and emotional development along with their academic achievements.
MacAfee Road School MAC	Dayna O'Connor, Academic Intervention Services Teacher , has been with the district for over three years. One of her teachers inspired her to become an educator, and she strives to "pay it forward" every day in her own teaching practice, to be a source of inspiration and support for her students.	Debra Abramo, Paraprofessional , has worked for FTPS for 20 years and serves the district's youngest Warriors as a Pre-K para, making their first experience in school extraordinary. She finds that teaching in her hometown allows her to build a strong connection to the community.
Pine Grove Manor School PGM	Kristin Calhoun, Science Specialist , has worked in FTPS for 15 years, first as a fifth-grade teacher and in the last five years, as a Science Specialist. She has always loved teaching children, even in her youth, teaching swim and dance. She says, "I love seeing the moment students have that "ah-ha" moment and the lesson, the teaching pays off."	Ted Samaras, Technology Coach , began his tenure in FTPS 18 years ago as a computer teacher. As an Instructional Technology Coach, he finds it rewarding to work with teachers, helping to support their ideas and the great work that they do, and to work with emerging technologies on a local, national, and global scale.

Franklin Township Public School Students Show Their Smiles

Franklin Township Public School students had the opportunity to smile a little brighter this school year thanks to services and special events provided by Zufall Health and two chapters of the not for profit organization, the Links, Inc.

Zufall Health is in its second year of partnership with FTPS. The organization provides medical and more recently, dental services to district students through their school based mobile health center. This vehicle, which is equipped with exam rooms and necessary medical equipment, visits the Hamilton Street Campus of Franklin Middle School [HSC] twice a week. The majority of students seen at the health center attend the Hamilton Street Campus, but students from all district schools can be seen by appointment. This year a total of 603 appointments were made, serving 300 individuals.

The majority of the appointments this year were for physicals and vaccinations. But Zufall Health also offered dental services and was able to provide 100 dental appointments to students. Zufall Health also sponsored a special event at HSC in conjunction with Give Kids a Smile Day in February. At that event, 22 students were signed up for dental services, which could include a screening, cleaning and/or fluoride treatment. Other students at the event were provided education activities around oral health at the Hamilton Street Campus.

Student families in all district schools are encouraged to learn about Zufall Health and utilize their medical and dental services. President & Chief Executive Officer of Zufall Health, Frances Palm says, "In our second year of school-based care at the Franklin School District, Zufall Health continues to deliver high quality, affordable health care services to the district's students and families, regardless of income or insurance." Ms. Palm continues, "School-based care is a win for everyone! It reduces barriers for busy families related to transportation, missing work, and disruptions to learning. Most importantly, our partnership allows students to focus on their education and healthy development, all within the safe, convenient location of the school district community. We look forward to improving health/educational outcomes for the district students and continuing to serve the Franklin community."

That Franklin community will continue to grow. Through a partnership between Zufall Health, the Township, and the school district, plans are underway to construct a permanent free-standing school-based health center building adjacent to the Hamilton Street Campus. When that location is opened, it will be available to not only Franklin students but all community members.

"The construction of the permanent health center, during this next phase of our partnership with Zufall Health, will provide a great resource for our students and all of their family members," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. John Ravally.

Earlier this school year, some 758 students from the district's seven elementary schools were given a dental screening in the Colgate Dental Van through the Bright Smiles, Bright Futures Program. This program was a collaborative effort of the Central Jersey and Raritan Valley Chapters of The Links, Inc. The Links, Inc. is an international, not-for-profit corporation and one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer service organizations with a mission to enrich, sustain, and ensure the culture and economic survival of African Americans and other persons of African ancestry.

"There are ongoing disparities and inequities in oral health among adults and children. We wanted to teach youth about proper oral care. The Bright Smiles, Bright Futures program provides Links chapters the opportunity to impact their communities by: helping families become knowledgeable on how oral health affects the body; providing children free education and screenings, via their partnership with Colgate Palmolive - Colgate Dental Van; providing families referrals to dentists willing to provide services for free and/or at nominal costs and helping families become knowledgeable about how diet affects dental care," explained Constance Pizzaro, The Links representative.

Ms. Pizzaro worked with Ms. Quiyon Peters, Supervisor of School Counseling K-8 and together with school principals and District Head Nurse Terri Giorgianni and Assistant Head Nurse Kim McNee, they put this "Dental Van Tour" of the district's elementary schools on the road.

Ms. Peters commented, "I was elated to support the coordination of the program to ensure our elementary school aged students and families had "access" to the services provided." She continued, "Students' health can definitely impact their academic and personal / social growth."

What did the students think? Ms. Peters observed, "Some were a little reserved at first but after being received with warmth, care and explanation of the screenings, they participated and enjoyed the experience. Many asked, 'When are you guys coming back?'"



Maybe as soon as next fall as plans are underway to bring the organization back next school year. Ms. Pizarro states, "My hope for the event in the future is that we are able to engage more students. The earlier you expose children to good dental habits, you have a greater chance that they will continue throughout their lifetime. They will also teach others, like their peers and their parents."

And that is definitely something to smile about.



Students learn good brushing skills at FPS.

FTPS Leaders Strengthen Their Community with Restorative Practices

Over the past two years, Franklin Township Public Schools has added restorative practices to their teachers' tool box. The strategies of this approach provide a way for teachers and administrators to better connect with their students, provide their students with a better sense of belonging, and address student behavior issues in a positive way.

Put very simply, using this approach, teachers proactively develop relationships and build a community in their classroom. All community members come together to establish agreements with the rights and responsibilities of the community members defined. When an individual does not abide by the agreement, the teacher will ask questions to determine the reason behind the behavior and try to refocus the student. This response may also include others in the community who will listen with empathy, explain how the behavior of that individual has impacted them, and the community at large, and offer suggestions. An emphasis on shared expectations allows students to feel comfortable expressing how they feel. At times the behavior may also be addressed with the participation of an administrator or the student's family.

The Student Code of Conduct now outlines how this approach can be used to address the different levels of student offenses and staff members have been invited to participate in Professional Learning Communities which focus on this approach. This year and going forward, these staff members will become leaders and share their knowledge with their colleagues during professional development sessions and faculty meetings.

Let's hear from some of those leaders on what they think of this approach.

"Restorative practices allow us to find new ways for students' voices to be heard and validated as well as provide opportunities for students to learn and grow rather than receive negative consequences," said Angela Pape, Vice Principal of Claremont Elementary School.

"Restorative practices provide a way for students to understand how their actions and behaviors affect others and themselves," adds teacher Cynthia Gaspar of Pine Grove Manor School.

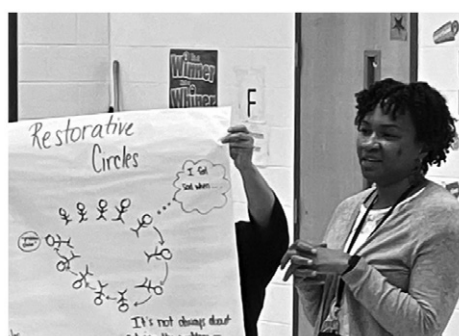
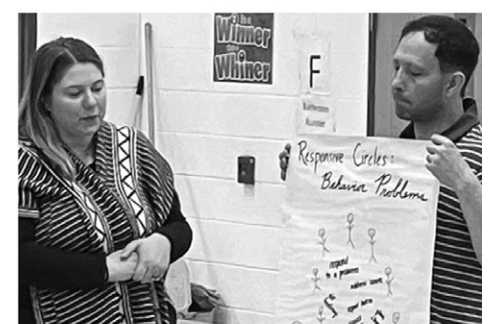
"Restorative practices have given our students an opportunity to share their voice and develop empathy for each other," explains Corey Cohen, Hamilton Street Campus Dean of Students.

"Learning about restorative practices helps us, not just as an educator but as an empathetic human being!" adds Samantha Lewis, teacher at Pine Grove Manor School [PGM].

Added benefits of using the approach include more open student discussions in class, noted PGM teacher Jodi Dawson and additional insights into the student's lives, mentioned another PGM teacher Lorena Gonzalez.

Finally, PGM Principal Genesi Miles describes the use of the restorative practices this way, "Restorative practices have impacted how I, the school administrator, and other school team members communicate and seek to understand students. We get ahead of any issues by forging relationships with students. This lays the foundation for us to be able to confront students and have honest conversations when challenges arise."

The district is tracking how the implementation of Restorative Practices will impact school discipline data. Early reports indicate that Restorative Practices has decreased the number of office disciplinary referrals, that is behavior which results in the student being sent to see an administrator.



Moving On - But Leaving a Legacy Behind



JROTC leadership prepares for their next adventure.

Several of our seasoned district staff are retiring at the end of this school year. We asked some of them to reflect on their role as educators, on how their programs have changed over the years and on their plans for the future.

The leaders of the district's Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps [JROTC] - Major (Ret.) Jacqueline Vazquez and Sergeant First Class (Ret.) Samuel Bobe-Gonzalez have a combined total of 33 years at Franklin High School in this program, the purpose of which is to motivate Young People to be Better Citizens. What these leaders have done in practice is so much more. "We create leaders," says Maj. Vazquez who founded the program at FHS 20 years ago. "JROTC has helped students gain character attributes, leadership, and life skills they can apply in their education, career, and life. We provide students with the strength, inspiration, and guidance to succeed in accomplishing their goals in life." Beyond guidance, there is another level of support to the program, Sgt. Bobe elaborates, "The FHS JROTC Warrior Battalion is a family-oriented class in which cadets feel a sense of belonging. Where they learn skills for life, where they enjoy, laugh, cry, and learn to resolve, in a passive way, their personal and social problems." This feeling of family can also be seen when alumni of the program, who are now parents, encourage their own children to join JROTC. What makes these leaders proud? Maj. Vazquez shares that in addition to the various awards the Drill, Raider, Color Guard, Academic, and Leadership Teams have won at JROTC annual competitions, the FHS JROTC Program was awarded the "Honor Unit with Distinction" during its first JROTC Program for Accreditation (JPA) inspection in 2007. This recognition is the highest award a program can earn in JROTC. She is also very proud that the Program has maintained its Honor Unit with Distinction status in subsequent reviews. What are their plans for the future? Among other things, Major "Abuelita" plans to step in when duty to her grandchildren calls and Sgt. Bobe plans to continue his worldwide travel with his family and looking for other ways to serve humanity.



Julie Ochoa looks forward to continuing to help teachers.

Julie Ochoa, retiring Supervisor of English as a Second Language (ESL) and Bilingual Programs, grew up in a bilingual household, where being bilingual, biliterate and well-educated was highly valued. She says those values, along with her need to feel useful, drew her to a career in education. Ms. Ochoa has been with the district for twenty years and has served the students of FTPS as a bilingual teacher, instructional coach and then as the Supervisor of ESL and Bilingual Programs since 2009. Serving and advocating for her students has truly been her mindset. "I have always said that although I am employed by Franklin Township Public Schools, I work for our children and their families," she explained. Her advocacy and dedication have led to the NJ Department of Education granting Model Program status to the FTPS elementary bilingual and several ESL programs in the past. FTPS was also the first in the State to provide ESL services through Science and Social Studies at the elementary level, a practice many other districts have followed. "In order for any student to succeed in school, they have to have a sense of belonging and simple compliance [with the law] doesn't foster belonging; it takes embracing our students, their backgrounds and their needs with commitment," says Ms. Ochoa. She says it brings her joy when she sees other staff members embracing that commitment, with something as simple as suggesting a flyer be translated into another language. She has worked toward providing a feeling of belonging for her students by focusing on program cohesion and expanding supports to the students who are newest to learning English. This may take the form of providing opportunities for collaboration through co-taught classes at the secondary level or using the Sheltered Instruction model, which focuses on not only increasing English fluency but on higher academic content. After retirement, Ms. Ochoa plans on continuing to work in the area of Sheltered Instruction, providing support for other educators. Traveling with her family is also on her future agenda with upcoming stops in Guadalajara, Mexico; New England and Norway to see the northern lights.



Michael Pinnix gets ready to produce his next chapter.

Michael Pinnix, filmmaker and veteran Television Production teacher at Franklin High School will be retiring at the end of the 23/24 school year. Mr. P, as he is sometimes known to his students, has built a legacy at FHS. Through teaching and mentoring his own students to facilitating the production of a weekly video news spot (WANT TV); an annual gala award show (the AVA's) and the district's Focus on Franklin video news magazines, his dedication and creativity have truly made a difference to the Franklin community. He came to the district with a background in broadcasting to help develop and write a curriculum for what is now the Aspects of Video Program. The Aspects Program, Mr. Pinnix says, "started as an after-school program by retired math teacher and track coach Mr. Terrell, who had a love for videography." The Program, which introduces students to all aspects of the television and digital media industry, has grown to include a Career Technical Education (CTE) component with a sequence of courses and an opportunity to pursue college credit, participate in work-based learning opportunities (internships) and receive Adobe Certification in editing by senior year. Technology

has changed over the last twenty years, so has the focus of the classroom, from a more technical approach of camera angles to learning how, "to create content instead of just viewing content." As for the evolution of Franklin High School's annual video award show, Mr. Pinnix credits his Emmy nomination for Best Videography and his attendance at the Mid Atlantic Emmy Award ceremony in Philadelphia as inspiration for the AVA's. "I knew I wanted to plan an annual event that would highlight my students' hard work in developing films during the school year," he says. The traditional award shows in the early 2000's were popular but the birth of MTV, BET, and Hip-Hop award shows also provided a new light on how we celebrate the arts community with a new generation of youth," explains Mr. Pinnix. "I wanted to duplicate that look but also that feeling of excitement and the feeling of being special for that one night." The show has grown to include live entertainment from current FHS Warriors and recognition of Aspects alumni who have returned to be honored at the show. Many Aspects alumni who Mr. P has mentored have kept in touch with him over the years and some have returned to share their knowledge and experience with his current students. Mr. Pinnix hopes that the alumni network will continue to flourish after he leaves FHS. As for his personal plans...Mr. Pinnix plans on continuing as a freelance producer/director/videographer and editor and to work on some other projects. But spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren will come first.



Jackie Schneider a true Franklin Warrior retires.

A final word about another dedicated district employee who retired earlier this school year. A fond farewell to Ms. Jackie Schneider, a true Franklin Warrior who graduated from FHS and whose three children also graduated from Franklin schools. Ms. Schneider served the faculty and staff of FTPS district for more than 15 years in various leadership positions in the Human Resources Department. Ms. Schneider has recruited, supported, celebrated, consoled and guided countless staff members from onboarding forms through retirement filings. She has left the district to spend more time with her own family but she will always be a part of the FTPS family.