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The John Jude Liskowitz Foundation's mission is to provide financial assistance to local greiving families in need. Formed in 2023, the foundation has provided close to $200,000 in grants to 10 local families that have lost a loved one. The grants go for tangible needs such as housing, education, training and transportation. All recepients demonstrate a financial need due to the unfortunate and tragic loss of a loved one. The foundation was formed in 2023 in memory of John Jude Liskowitz, a Manaquan resident and the board members are all from the Manasquan area; Jason Grossberg, Lynn McCabe, Rob Maher, Megan Price and Stephanie Liskowitz. The foundation recently raised $40,000 at the annual golf outing which funded one years mortgage for the Hendricks family of Wall Township. This is a family of 6 children and young adults that have lost both parents and left on their own. This is one of many families the JJL foundation has touched. Real Families. Real Impact. Join us for the annual holiday party and fun night at the Manasquan Elks featuring the Ballistic Berry Band, and help griving families in need.

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SQUAN PLAZA/MAIN STREET

FRIDAY,
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6 PM
AGES 2-8



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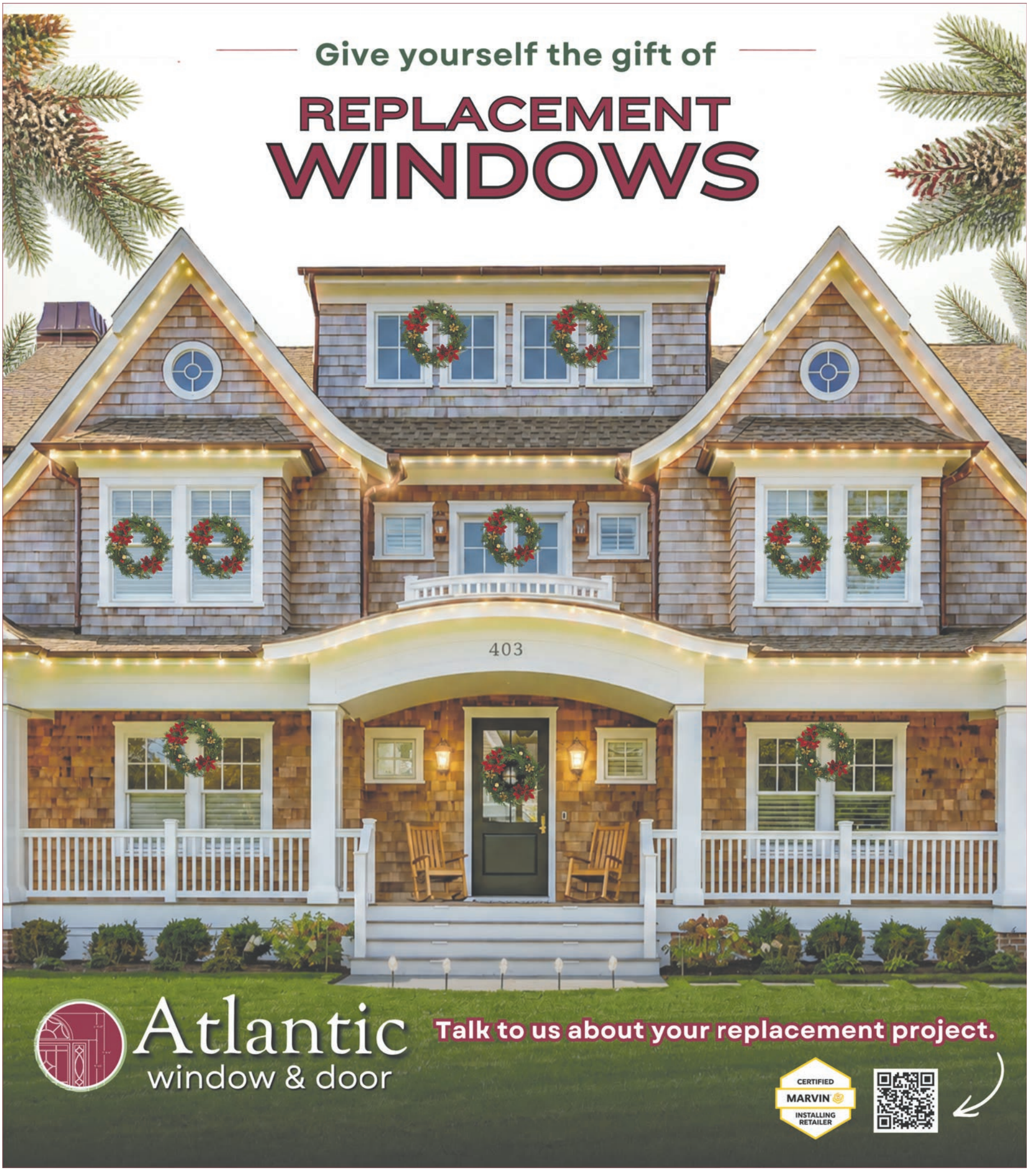
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Bay Head Christmas Walk returns for multi-day festivities

BY RYANE DEFALCO
STAR NEWS GROUP



FILE PHOTO STAR NEWS GROUP

BAY HEAD — Celebrations to kick off the holiday season will be in no short supply this year in Bay Head. Traditions including the annual Christmas Walk and Breakfast with Santa are just some of the ways residents of every age can get into the Yuletide spirit.

The fun begins with the coastal town tradition of the Christmas Walk, which is free and open to all, taking place Friday, Dec. 4, and Saturday, Dec. 5. The entire town will come together as local businesses host open houses while offering fun activities from merry music to tasty treats for the Christmas celebration.

The annual event is sponsored by the Bay Head Business Association and this year will mark the 45th iteration of the extravaganza, when everyone can ring in the joyous time of year while supporting local shops. The Christmas Walk will take place at various downtown locations from Bridge Avenue to Lake Avenue, Mount Street and Main Avenue.

On Friday Dec. 4 from 5 to 9 p.m., attendees can enjoy shopping, music and more. The fun starts with performances by students from Bay Head School, who will share classic holiday carols so all can sing along to their Christmas tunes.

This will lead into the lighting of the Christmas tree on Bridge Avenue by the clock tower. Then the jolly man himself, Santa Claus, will make his entrance, arriving by fire truck on Bridge Avenue and waving merrily through the town.

Candy canes provided by Manasquan Bank will be given to all. Snacks will be available at the Bay Head Fire House, 81 Bridge Ave., including cookies and hot chocolate donated by Bay Head Yacht Club and hot dogs from the Scouts. Stop in Mueller's Bakery at 80 Bridge Ave. for sweet treats and hot cocoa from 5 to 8 p.m. Grab some ice cream and seasonal coffee at Taylor Sam's, 58 Bridge Ave, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Attendees can stop by All Saints Church at 500 Lake Ave. to enjoy activities, crafts, snacks and carol singing. At 6 p.m., The Choral Bells ensemble of handbell ringers will perform at Andi's Boutique, located at 526 Lake Ave.

From 6 to 8 p.m., hear glorious horns and smooth sounds of the Holiday Brass Band at Diane Turton, located at 88 Bridge Ave. Guest artist Jules Duffy will be on hand, showcasing artwork, giclee prints and wooden puzzles.

At 345 Main Ave., enjoy dinner and a show at The Grenville Hotel and Restaurant, where singer and pianist Bobby Knee will perform live entertainment from 6 to 8 p.m. Cocktail-style appetizers will be offered.

La Luz Salon at 82 Bridge Ave. will have hours of holiday specials including custom gift sets from Aveda, 20 percent off accessories and handbags, a holiday raffle, giveaways and a popup of Beach Envy products.

Beach House Classic Board Shop, 517 Main Ave., will be toasting its 30th year in business in Bay Head with Cocoa and a Classic from 6 to 8 p.m., during which attendees can stop in for a tasty treat and the viewing of a beloved Christmas movie.

Charlie's of Bay Head, 72 Bridge Ave., will have activities for all ages as attendees can promenade through the ground floor to see the decorations or take a turn on the holiday train.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church will be at The Jolly Tar shop, 56 Bridge Ave., holding a Catholic Charities gift drive benefiting Providence House/Domestic Violence Services. Unwrapped items for kids, teens and adults will be accepted through Dec. 14. Baked treats and cocoa will be served from 5 to 8 p.m. and money raised will benefit the food sensitivity missions this year.

Santa returns on Saturday

The celebration continues the following day, Saturday, Dec. 5, starting at 10 a.m. The second day will include photos with Santa Claus, trolley rides, artistic holiday workshops and a scavenger hunt.

Breakfast with Santa, including delicious food and fun crafts, will take place at the Bay Head Fire House from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. to raise funds for Bay Head School's eighth grade class. Breakfast Includes bagels, bacon and eggs, choice of coffee or hot chocolate and a multitude of yummy baked goods.

Children will have an opportunity to create various holiday crafts and get photos with Santa. Kids can also enjoy a holiday workshop with trolley rides and a scavenger hunt. Local DJ Trish will be playing cheerful tunes. Tickets are cash only, sold at the door for $20 per person while kids 2 years old and under are free.

Children's author James Contreras will be hosting a book signing at the Beach House Classic Board Shop from 12 until 3 p.m. Those visiting the shop can also take the opportunity to give back by participating in the Fill The Wagon food drive, benefiting the St. Gregory Food Pantry.

From 12 to 3 p.m., everyone can enjoy quaint trolley rides through the town of Bay Head, provided by the Bay Head Business Association and Manasquan Bank. Stops include the Bay Head Historical Museum, Curtis Court (Main Avenue), the Grenville Hotel and Restaurant, the center of town at Bridge Avenue to gaze upon the newly lit Christmas tree and the corner of Lake Avenue and Mount Street.

Take the trolley to the Bay Head Historical Museum to celebrate The Magic of Christmas Past. The Bay Head Historical Society at the Loveland Homestead will be hosting a Victorian Christmas celebration from 12 to 4 p.m. Admission is free for all to enjoy arts, crafts and treats.

The night will conclude with a Christmas concert at Bay Head Chapel, when Tim Brey and his trio will sing numbers from Brey's new holiday album. Vocalist Liz Filios will also perform. Tickets are available for purchase online at Eventbrite for $30.

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Candy Cane Hunt returns for 36th year

BY NICOLE CHEMI
STAR NEWS GROUP



FILE PHOTO STAR NEWS GROUP

Santa will pay a visit to the children of Manasquan during the annual Candy Cane Hunt on Dec. 4.

MANASQUAN - The Manasquan Chamber of Commerce will host its 36th annual Candy Cane Hunt and holiday tree lighting on Friday, Dec. 4, bringing an evening of holiday festivities, entertainment and family fun to downtown Main Street. The rain date is Friday, Dec. 11.

The festivities will begin at 6 p.m. with Santa and Mrs. Claus arriving aboard a firetruck. Santa will join in by lighting the holiday tree at Squan Plaza, Abe Voorhees Drive, followed immediately by the distribution of numbered candy canes to participating children.

The annual Candy Cane Hunt is open to children ages 2 to 8, accompanied by an adult. A total of 1,500 numbered candy canes will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, with no preregistration required. Four separate distribution lines will be available to help move families through the process at Squan plaza.

Following the tree lighting, children will make their way along Main Street to search participating business windows for a paper candy cane bearing the number that matches their own. Once they find their matching number, children can enter the store to receive a gift from the participating merchant.

Main Street will be closed to vehicle traffic until 8 p.m. to provide a safe environment for children and families participating in the hunt.

The evening will feature plenty of holiday entertainment, including a performance by the Manasquan High School Band during the tree lighting ceremony, Christmas music from a DJ, strolling Disney characters sponsored by Bouquets to Remember and appearances by the Grinch and Max on their motorcycle.

Local dance and music groups will also take the stage along Main Street, including Ocean Dance Force of Manasquan and Grace Kelly Studio of Brielle,

Sunnyside Manor is sponsoring refreshments, with assistance from the Committed Pig. The Manasquan Boy Scouts will help serve refreshments at the two locations along Main Street. The Manasquan PBA will also distribute hot cocoa and cookies from its trailer in front of Manasquan Bank.

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be available to visit with children throughout the evening in front of K + Co Living, 126 Main St., at the corner of Main Street and Pearce Avenue.

The chamber said the annual tradition would not be possible without the support of its members and the community.

Community organizations and volunteers helping make the event possible include Manasquan Elks BPOE 2354, Manasquan Tourism Commission, Women's Club of Manasquan, Manasquan Seniors, Manasquan Beach Improvement Association, Manasquan PBA, Manasquan Firehouse No. 2, Manasquan Hook & Ladder, Manasquan First Aid Squad, Manasquan Boy Scouts, Manasquan High School Key Club and Manasquan High School Band.



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Winter wonderland awaits at Windward Beach Park

BY ALEXANDRIA CARVALHO
STAR NEWS GROUP

BRICK TOWNSHIP — Brick Township will kick off the holiday season with its first-ever Winter Fest on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 1 to 5 p.m. at Windward Beach Park.

Mayor Lisa Crate, the township council and the Brick Recreation Department have invited residents and families to attend the free holiday celebration, which will feature seasonal activities, entertainment and opportunities for holiday shopping.

The event will include a Holiday Makers' Market, where visitors can browse handcrafted gifts and other items created by local artisans. Additional activities will include holiday music, a Christmas train ride and a synthetic-surface ice skating rink. The celebration will also feature a Christmas tree lighting and a special visit from Santa Claus.

The event is open to families and residents of all ages.

The Brick Recreation Department is also seeking local artisans interested in participating in the Holiday Makers' Market.

Artisans who create unique, handmade items are encouraged to submit photographs of their work to rmeyers@bricknj.gov for consideration.

Applications will be reviewed, and selected artisans will be invited to participate in the event.

The vendor fee is $40, and each selected artisan will receive a 10-by-10-foot space. Vendors are responsible for providing their own tents and tables.

Local businesses interested in sponsoring Winter Fest can contact the township at 732-262-4781.

For additional information about Winter Fest, contact the Brick Recreation Department at 732-262-1088.



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Bradley Beach tree and menorah lighting

BY NICOLE CHEMI
STAR NEWS GROUP

BRADLEY BEACH – The borough will kick off the holiday season with its annual tree lighting on Friday, Dec. 4, from 5 to 7 p.m. in Riley Park, followed by a menorah lighting on Sunday, Dec. 6, at 4 p.m. for attendees to enjoy.

Both events are free, family friendly and for all ages.

For the tree lighting ceremony, this year's event includes live entertainment, street performers and Santa's grand entrance.

Attendees may enjoy festive performances from Neptune High School's acapella group, Scarlet Sound, and a festive dance show presented by Motion on Main.

Complimentary hot chocolate and cookies will also be available for attendees to enjoy.



COURTESY OF **AMY BAKER**

Bradley Beach's annual tree lighting event plans to be bigger than any previous year. Attendees can expect music, food, unique entertainment and a visit from Santa Claus on Dec. 4.

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Spring Lake lights up season Nov. 28

BY LAUREN DEFELICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

SPRING LAKE - The borough will hold its annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony in downtown Spring Lake, 300 Madison Ave. According to the municipal calendar, the event is set for Saturday, Nov. 28, at 6 p.m., with carols provided by David and Kate Duo beginning at 5 p.m.

The program includes music and dancing, a Christmas train display at the Duggan Building and photo opportunities with Santa and Mrs. Claus. The tree lighting itself is scheduled to mark the official start of the holiday season for the borough.

The Christmas Train Village, presented by Clayton Limousine Service, begins Nov. 28 and ends Dec. 31. Open Wednesday through Sunday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m., with extended hours on Nov. 28, 12 to 7 p.m. Visitors can stop by Duggan Hall, 313 Washington Ave., to view the display.

Attendees are encouraged to arrive by 5 p.m. to enjoy pre-lighting activities and secure viewing space. The event is free and open to all community members.

For further details, visit the borough's official website; https://springlakeboro.org/government/news/381-christmas-tree-lighting-2 lists the event and provides updates.

Tree lighting and toy drive

BY LAUREN DEFELICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

AVON-BY-THE-SEA - Lights are being wound around the tree in preparation for the tree lighting at the Avon Municipal Building, 301 Main St., on Nov. 28 at 4:30 p.m.

The community can gather together to celebrate the beginning of the holiday season. Once the tree is lit, Santa will fly in on his sleigh and visit to see who is naughty and who is nice. A festive hay ride will be held, weather permitting, for visitors to bump around town.

Neptune High School's Scarlet Sound Choir will perform carols, and visitors can nibble on cookies and sweet treats while enjoying the glow of the lights.

In addition, the Avon Police Department is hosting its annual toy drive to benefit kids in need and the event is held in conjunction with Small Business Saturday.

The event is free to the public. For more information, visit the borough's Facebook page.

Wall's annual tree lighting celebration set for Dec. 4

BY MALLORY BRENNAN
STAR NEWS GROUP

WALL TOWNSHIP — The Wall Municipal Complex courtyard is expected to be filled on Friday, Dec. 4, as residents come out for the township's annual Christmas tree lighting.

A winter wonderland will be created for the festivities from 6 to 8 p.m. near the parking lot of the complex. Refreshments, crafts, face-painting, dessert trucks, vendors, performances and more will fill the night.

Performances will be taking place to keep the beat of the night, and an inflatable slide will also be available for kiddos. Of course, Santa will also be making a very important stop at the tree lighting to cap off the night.

Visitors can also get information from organizations that help Wall function year-'round, including the Wall Township Police Department, the Wall Youth Center, the Wall Community Alliance and more.

For more information, call the Wall Youth Center at 732-681-1375.



Lake Como's tree lighting turns borough hall into a holiday marketplace



COURTESY OF **AMY BONEY**

Belmar Elementary PTO displays treats and other goods at a vendor table during a past Lake Como Tree Lighting and Small Business Saturday celebration. This year's event is scheduled for Nov. 28 at Lake Como Borough Hall.



COURTESY OF **AMY BONEY**

A group poses in front of Lake Como's illuminated holiday tree during a previous tree lighting celebration. This year's event will include live music, children's activities and a visit from Santa.

BY ALEXANDER HELLER
STAR NEWS GROUP

LAKE COMO - Lake Como will welcome the holiday season with a day of local shopping, live music and family activities before lighting its towering evergreen at borough hall on Saturday, Nov. 28.

The annual Tree Lighting and Small Business Saturday celebration will run from 3 to 8 p.m. at borough hall. Vendors and music will get underway at 3 p.m., with the tree lighting ceremony starting around 6:30 p.m. The tree is expected to be lit at about 7 p.m.

Borough Clerk Amy Boney said the event is in its fourth year. It grew from an idea to bring two holiday traditions together, she said: "Let's bring together Small Business Saturday and the tree lighting and make it one big festive day here in the borough."

About a dozen small businesses have signed up so far, offering shoppers gifts, handmade items, food and treats. Live music will continue through the afternoon, including performances by a local youth band, Lake Como residents and a school choir.

Children can make crafts, enjoy a bounce house and write letters to Santa to place in a special mailbox. "All the events for the kids are free," Boney said.

Santa is scheduled to arrive by firetruck after the tree is lit, then greet children inside borough hall. Families can take free photos with him. Boney said the setup makes the celebration feel "just like a Hallmark movie night."

The borough will illuminate the building and the clock out front as vendors fill the parking lot. "We have lights on the entirety of our building," Boney said. "We have a clock out front that gets all lit up."

The tree is a living evergreen planted on the borough hall grounds when the building was constructed in 2003. Boney estimated it has grown to about 25 feet tall. Public works employees have decorated it and were preparing to add its topper.

For more information, call Lake Como Borough Hall at 732-681-3232. Admission is free.

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- **Published, state-board-approved curriculum developer:** my training is built to a regulatory standard.
- **Corporate trainer:** I teach what employers actually look for, not theory.
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Cherie Cattanach, SPHR/AIT
HR Insider Coach
Phone: 732-829-2199
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Point Boro to celebrate Christmas with shopping, sparkling lights and more

BY RYANE DEFALCO
STAR NEWS GROUP

POINT PLEASANT — The borough's annual tradition of Christmas tree lighting and Market in the Park will be back again this holiday season for all to enjoy. Attendees have their pick of food vendors and shops where they can put a dent in their Christmas shopping list, all while gazing upon the twinkling lights that look like they've been taken straight from a Christmas movie and placed right into Community Park on Bridge Avenue.

The fun-filled festivities, happening Dec. 5 from 4 to 8 p.m., are helmed by Mayor Robert Sabosik, the borough council and the chamber of commerce. In the event of rain, the Christmas tree lighting and Market in the Park will occur on Dec. 6.

The Point Borough Recreation Preschool will perform at 5 p.m., right before jolly St. Nick makes his arrival. The event will be filled with holiday entertainment, including Christmas numbers from Extensions Dance Center, student performances by Red House and a DJ playing classic and beloved Christmas tunes.

Delicious food and fun art projects will be abundant, supplying tasty treats and creative crafts that everyone can partake in. There will also be children's amusements plus horse and carriage rides for the whole family to savor together.

For those who want to keep the Christmas cheer going, the Point Boro Recreation Center will be hosting a New York City Holiday Lights Tour on Monday, Dec. 14, beginning at 11:30 a.m. The first stop is lunch at LaNonna Restaurant in Little Italy. Then, the full scope of New York Christmas magic will be discovered through a guided bus tour of Manhattan to see the dazzling lights and impressive decorations.

Attendees will enjoy viewing the legendary light displays along Fifth Avenue, a shopping stop at Bryant Park, the iconic tree at Rockefeller Center and much more. The bus will return to town at 9:30 p.m. Location of bus departure will be announced at a later date. Registration is now open. Tickets cost $125.



FILE PHOTO STAR NEWS GROUP

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Belmar lights up the sky for the holidays

BY ANDREW RICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

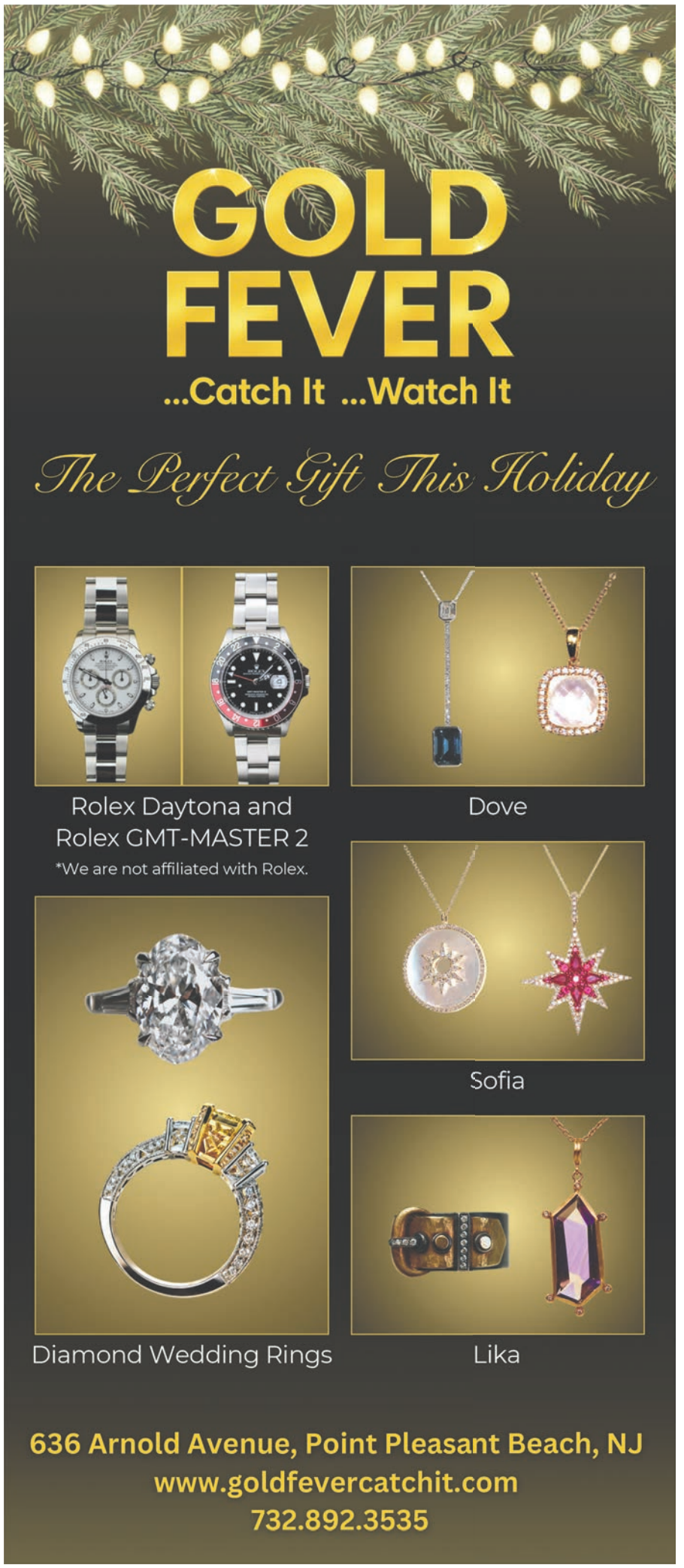
BELMAR — Belmar will kick off the holiday season with a Christmas tree lighting in Pyanoe Plaza on Thursday, Dec. 3, at 6 p.m.

To celebrate the season's holidays, the tree lighting heads up the month, with a lighting of a menorah also taking place in Pyanoe Plaza on Monday, December 7, at 6 p.m., which is the fourth day of Hanukkah. Hanukkah this year begins at sundown on December 4, extending through Saturday, December 12.

For additional information on holiday events in the borough, visit belmar.com.



FILE PHOTO **STAR NEWS GROUP**
Crowds gather in Pyanoe Plaza in 2024 for Belmar's Christmas Tree Lighting.





Brielle to host annual Holiday in the Park celebration

BY ANDREW RICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

BRIELLE — Holiday in the Park will return to the borough for the Christmas season on Saturday, December 5, at 2 p.m. in Brielle Park, 610 South St., next to the Brielle Library. The event will include several different activities, all leading up to the Christmas tree lighting at 5:30 pm.

Starting at 2 p.m., the pony rides, petting zoo and vendor village will open for the day. At 3 p.m., there will be a reading of holiday stories at the library. At 4:30 and 5:15 p.m., there will be back-to-back dance performances by the East Coast Dance Company and the Grace Kelly Dance Studio.

Finally, at 5:30 p.m., it will be time to usher in the holiday season with the lighting of the tree.



FILE PHOTO **STAR NEWS GROUP**

Holiday in the Park's annual Tree Lighting returns to Brielle on Saturday, Dec. 6.



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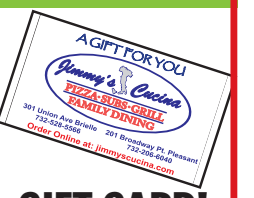

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Point Pleasant Beach tree lighting to welcome Santa

BY ALEXANDER HELLER
STAR NEWS GROUP

POINT PLEASANT BEACH — The Point Pleasant Beach Chamber of Commerce will kick off the holiday season Friday, Nov. 27, with a Christmas tree lighting in downtown on the whole of Arnold and Bay Avenues, followed by Santa's arrival by fire truck and an evening of family activities.

The celebration begins at 5:30 p.m., when the community tree is set to be lit. Santa is expected to arrive by fire truck shortly afterward, bringing one of the evening's biggest holiday moments for children and families. Visitors will also have a chance to take pictures with Santa at Ocean County Music at 619 Arnold Ave.

The event will continue until 8 p.m., giving guests time to enjoy the activities and festive entertainment throughout the evening. Horse and carriage rides will offer a seasonal way to take in the celebration, while fire truck rides will give children another opportunity to join in the fun.

Refreshments and activities for children are also planned. DJ Paul Backstage Entertainment will host karaoke, adding music and a chance for guests to take part in the entertainment. Together, the tree lighting, Santa's arrival, rides and children's activities are planned to make the evening a lively start to the borough's holiday season.

Held the day after Thanksgiving, the gathering gives residents and visitors a chance to come together as holiday preparations begin. Families can watch the tree light up, greet Santa and spend the evening enjoying the festivities along Bay Avenue.

For more information, visit https://www.pointpleasantbeachchamber.com/event/tree-lighting-and-santa-arrival/ or call the Point Pleasant Beach Chamber of Commerce at 732-899-2424. Admission is free for all.



COURTESY OF **POINT PLEASANT BEACH BOROUGH FACEBOOK**



Tree lighting set to bring holiday fun Dec. 3

BY MALLORY BRENNAN
STAR NEWS GROUP



FILE PHOTO STAR NEWS GROUP

Spring Lake Heights is gearing up for the holidays on Dec. 3 with the annual holiday tree lighting, sure to brighten up the community and spread joy throughout the night.

SPRING LAKE HEIGHTS — The borough will once again host its annual holiday tree lighting in partnership with the fire department, an event sure to bring the community together and officially kick off the season.

The tree lighting is set for 6 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 3, at borough hall, 555 Brighton Ave., and is a classic annual stop to create memories as in years past.

The event includes light refreshments as always, activities for children and surprise special guest appearances from classic holiday icons, maybe even jolly Saint Nick.

Mayor Christopher Campion, the borough council and Independent Fire Company 1 of Spring Lake Heights are set as hosts of the event and invite the community to attend.



Holiday Light Show returns to Belmar

BY ANDREW RICE
STAR NEWS GROUP



COURTESY OF **DANIEL BRATERIS**

Crowds converge on Belmar's Pyanoe Plaza for Raising4's 2025 Holiday Light Show.

BELMAR — Raising4, a non-profit organization based in Belmar that organizes free community events to raise money for charitable causes, is teaming up with the borough to host a free holiday light show. The show, which is scheduled for two dates, 6 p.m. Friday, Dec. 18, and 6 p. m. Saturday, Dec. 19, will be a 30-minute, concert-style show that includes thousands of lights, lasers, fog, and real flame effects synced to music.

While admission to the event is free, Raising4 will be collecting donations for RallyCap Sports, an organization that runs sports programs for kids with disabilities. According to Dan Brateris, president of Raising4, the suggested donations are $15 per adult or $25 per family.

Brateris said the show, which has been an annual event since 2004, is intended to be like a rock concert, only this time it involves Christmas lights. However, to keep things fresh, the show is newly programmed each year, so each event is different from the last.

"When we started, we wanted to see if a Christmas display could feel like a rock concert. It still does, and every year it brings the whole town out into the cold together for a great cause," said Brateris in a press release.

In addition to the light show, event-goers will be able to meet Santa and his Elves.

The event, which is organized entirely by volunteers, will take place on both days at 6 p.m. in Pyanoe Plaza, 700 9th Ave.





FILE PHOTO **STAR NEWS GROUP**

The Sea Girt Holiday Market offered local vendors of all kinds in every year prior.

Sea Girt holiday market and tree lighting set for Dec. 5

BY LAUREN DEFELICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

SEA GIRT — The holiday season will shine bright in Sea Girt at the sixth annual Christmas tree lighting scheduled for Friday, Dec. 4, at the Library Plaza.

Residents and visitors from across the Shore area are invited to celebrate the start of the holiday season with an evening of shopping, music and community cheer under the twinkling lights. More than 40 vendors will offer a wide variety of handcrafted and locally made gifts–from wooden toys and home decor to soaps, candles, art books and clothing.

At 5 p.m., the holiday markets open for visitors to browse the many treats, trinkets and wares for sale. At 6:45 p.m., the Sea Girt Elementary School band will perform. At 7 p.m., the tree lighting ceremony begins, and at 7:15 p.m., Santa will arrive for photos and Christmas wish lists.

The event is free to attend, and hot cocoa will be served by Ray's Cafe. For more information, visit seagirt-nj.gov/home/events/22156.

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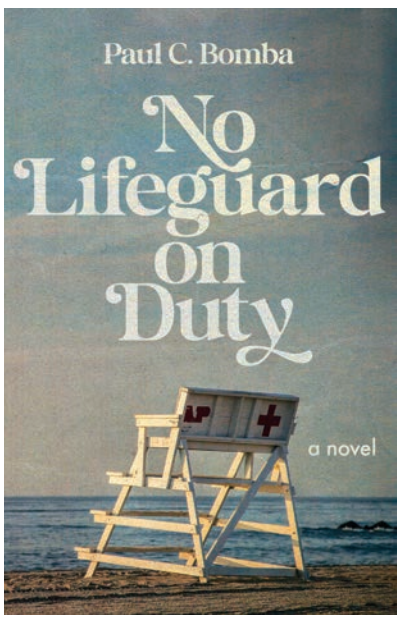

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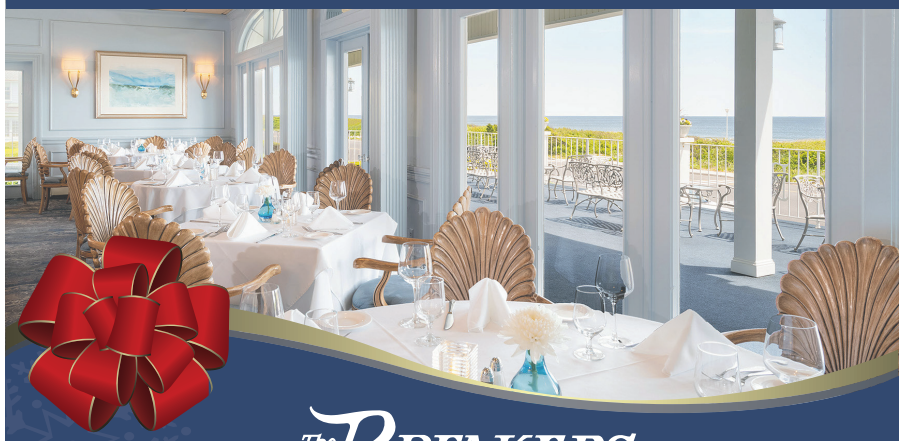

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FILE PHOTO STAR NEWS GROUP

The Candlelight Carol Sing is an annual event at Holy Trinity Church in Spring Lake.

Candlelight Carol Sing returns Dec. 5

STAR NEWS GROUP

SPRING LAKE — Holy Trinity Church will host its annual Carol Sing by Candlelight at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 5. The event is free to the public.

The hour-long program will feature a competitive singing of the "Twelve Days of Christmas," a variety of traditional and contemporary carols, a brass ensemble and a concluding performance of "Silent Night" by candlelight. All That Brass, a brass ensemble led by church organist David Citron on the tuba, will perform as part of the program.

The Carol Sing is open to participants of all ages and faith traditions. Holy Trinity Church is at the corner of Monmouth and Third avenues in Spring Lake.

In addition to the Carol Sing, Holy Trinity will hold its Christmas Eve service at 5 p.m. on Dec. 24. For more information about the Carol Sing or other church events, visit holytrinityspringlake.org.



FILE PHOTO **STAR NEWS GROUP**

Santa to visit Brielle homes with fire company

STAR NEWS GROUP

BRIELLE — The Brielle Fire Company will be escorting Santa on Saturday, Dec. 19, during his visit to participating homes in the borough.

Santa will begin his ride at 4 p.m. According to the fire company, Santa will not have a prescribed route, will not be able to stop at individual houses at specific times and can make only one stop at each house.

The fire company will not have registration at the firehouse on the day of the event. Those interested in having Santa stop by their house can fill out the form at https://shorturl.at/NdKE4

According to the Brielle Fire Company, only the party host should fill out the form if they want Santa to visit. All reservations must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 17.

Those who sign up will receive an email confirmation immediately after they submit the application. If no confirmation email is received, please look in junk/spam mail. If it is not in the junk/spam mail, please email brielle.firehouse.santa@gmail.com.

Only houses in Brielle will be visited.



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Holiday house tour returns to borough

BY NICOLE CHEMI
STAR NEWS GROUP

MANASQUAN — Presented collaboratively by the Manasquan Tourism Commission and the Woman's Club of Manasquan, the Manasquan holiday house tour returns for this year's season of greetings.



The event is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 12, from 4 to 8 p.m.

Following well-received tours in 2019, 2022 and 2024, organizers assembled a new roster of stops full of holiday cheer for this year's event.

The tour offers a festive look into a variety of Manasquan residences, pairing holiday decorations with seasonal bites from local eateries, drawing hundreds of neighbors and visitors into town.

Starting at the Manasquan Woman's Club, 62 Main St., participants will enjoy a festive tour around town, visiting beautifully decorated homes.

Tickets for this event are now available at participating stores, including: Bouquets to Remember, K and Co Living, Weston Gallery, Yellow Daisy and online on Community Pass. Tickets are priced at $45 if you pay in advance on Community Pass, or $50 at the door of participating businesses.

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Old-fashioned Christmas at Allaire Community Farm is a holiday escape

BY MALLORY BRENNAN
STAR NEWS GROUP

WALL TOWNSHIP — The Allaire Community Farm is set to ring in the holiday season three days a week through Dec. 23, providing visits with various animals all over the farm, Yuletide wagon rides, hot cocoa and an abundance of extravagant holiday displays throughout all 25 acres.

The event runs from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights starting Nov. 27 through Dec. 20, with special final nights open Monday, Dec. 21, through Wednesday, Dec. 23.

The farm is all set up for the holidays, with tens of thousands of lights and plenty of activities for the whole family. The holiday season is the biggest fundraiser for the operating expenses of the nonprofit farm that utilizes rescued animals and a working farm environment to nurture through nature. The farm is focused on helping special needs adults and children, teens facing mental health issues, veterans with PTSD and families battling cancer through its many programs, according to owners Jo Ann and Sean Burney.

During this month-long event, the front barn will be operating as a farmer's market where visitors can purchase admission tickets surrounded by a holiday village display. Feed bags for the animals, Yuletide wagon and Polar Express rides, model train displays, a lifesize Christmas village and, of course, hot chocolate will be on site. Santa will also fly in for pictures and wishlists from 5 to 7 p.m. each evening.

Admission is paid upon arrival, priced at $6 for children 18 and under, $14 for adults, and free for babies under the age of 1. Tickets can be purchased online in advance at allairecommunityfarm.org or bought night-of on the farm. Cash is preferred, and credit cards are accepted only in the front market.

Feed bags are also available for $3, as well as Yuletide wagon rides for $3.

Holiday decor will be decking the halls of all animals, big and small, including alpacas, llamas, pigs, horses, chickens, goats and more. Holiday movie presentations and both indoor and outdoor petting zoos will also open to visitors.

Attractions also include a tree lighting every evening, with a mini "Main Street" on the farm lit up with fresh "snow" blowing.

The farm also has a museum filled with historic artifacts and trinkets that, during the holiday season, will be decked out with lights and Christmas decor, with free pictures with Santa available, but donations appreciated.







FILE PHOTO **STAR NEWS GROUP**

Kid racers took their mark at last year's race in 2025, with tiny sneakers pattering across the pavement.

Christmas 5K planned for Dec. 6

BY LAUREN DEFELICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

SPRING LAKE — The annual St. Catharine School Christmas 5K will ring in some holiday cheer on Saturday, Dec. 6, with a 9 a.m. kids' race and a 9:30 a.m. 5K race (no rain date).

Runners will loop around Spring Lake and raise money to support St. Catharine School programs, athletics and enrichment programs. Kids will also race a short run before the 5K. The races both start and end in front of the school at 301 Second Ave.

"I love seeing our community come together at the start of the Christmas season to support our wonderful school," organizer Megan Christopher said. "Kids of all ages look forward to this race, and between Santa and the DJ playing all your favorite Christmas tunes, it's such a fun way to kick off the holiday season."

St. Catharine students will perform a Rudolph dance. This year, Mike's Deli food truck will be serving hot breakfast sandwiches, coffee and hot chocolate.

To sign up to run or sponsor, visit scslakers.com/christmas5k. Registration for the 5K costs $35 and registration for the kids run costs $25. Sponsors will have their logo placed on race signs and on the back of the race shirt.





COURTESY OF **LUIS PULIDO**

Sinatra style singer Zack Alexander.

Library Winter Holiday Concert returns to Belmar

BY ANDREW RICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

BELMAR — The Belmar Public Library will hold a Winter Holiday Concert featuring Zack Alexander with a three-piece live band on Thursday, December 10, at 6 p.m. at Taylor Pavilion, 500 Ocean Ave.

The concert is free and open to the public. People can register to attend on the library's website, www.BelmarLibrary.org.

Alexander is a jazz vocalist who specializes in the style of Frank Sinatra and The Rat Pack. As the winner of the 2016 "Sinatra Idol" competition in Hoboken, he is dedicated to bringing the Great American Songbook to life for current and future generations.

Alexander's performances have been heard at a wide variety of venues--ranging from concert halls to restaurants--and for a multitude of special events. He is currently accepting engagements for weddings, private parties and corporate events.

"The Belmar Public Library is thrilled to welcome back Zack Alexander for our Winter Holiday Concert. Bringing the timeless style of the Great American Songbook to our community is a wonderful way to celebrate the season, and we invite everyone to join us for what promises to be an entertaining and memorable evening," said Library Assistant Luis Pulido.

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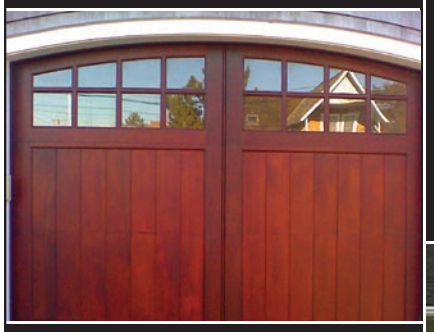



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FILE PHOTO **STAR NEWS GROUP**

Shop 'til you drop: Spring Lake's annual holiday soirée

BY LAUREN DEFELICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

SPRING LAKE - Spring Lake will host its Holiday Shopping Soirée on Thursday, Dec. 3, beginning at 5 p.m. and ending at 8 p.m. The event starts at 313 Washington Ave. and takes visitors throughout downtown Spring Lake.

The evening invites attendees to "Sip & Shop 'Til You Drop" with in-store specials, refreshments and hors d'oeuvres. Local shops will be open for holiday shopping, and live music will help set a festive atmosphere throughout downtown Spring Lake.

Guests also have the chance to take home gift baskets, with pre-registered attendees eligible to win additional gift baskets. The event is part of Spring Lake's 2026 holiday programming, which also includes the Christmas tree lighting and the Christmas Train Village.

For more information and to pre-register for gift basket opportunities, residents can visit the borough's official Chamber of Commerce page at springlakechamber.org.

Holiday giving drive gives back to borough

STAR NEWS GROUP

BRADLEY BEACH — The Bradley Beach Business & Community Alliance (BBBCA) will hold its 7th Annual Holiday Giving Drive through Dec. 13, bringing residents and local businesses together to brighten the holidays for families of Bradley Beach Elementary School.

Through the community's generosity, the drive has provided thousands of gifts to school families over the years.

Returning Co-Chairs Dana Malanga and Katie Saldutti Sorensen are once again leading the effort.

"Watching our community come together year after year makes this drive so special," said Malanga, Holiday Giving Drive Co-Chair. "We're grateful to the residents, businesses and volunteers who continue to make this tradition possible."

Residents can participate by visiting the Holiday Giving Drive wish list on SignUpGenius, selecting an available gift request and signing up to fulfill it. Requested items include clothing, toys, games and books.

"Every gift is a thoughtful reminder to a local family that their neighbors care," said Saldutti Sorensen, Holiday Giving Drive co-chair. "By fulfilling a wish, donors can help make the holidays brighter for our school families."

Gifts should be new and unwrapped, placed in a bag and clearly labeled with the family number listed on SignUpGenius so volunteers can organize and distribute donations to the correct families.

Collection bins will be available at participating locations throughout town, including: borough hall, the library, the post office, Jersey Shore Fitness, 301 Main, Kearny Bank, Murray's, Stockroom Modern General, Perfect Perk, Green Lotus Yoga, Idle Hand Barbershop, On Site/Pokemon, The Bev Shack and FINS.

The town-wide Holiday Giving Drive drop-off will take place on Saturday, Dec. 12, from noon to 2 p.m. at The Perfect Perk. Anyone who drops off a gift during the event will receive a complimentary cup of hot cocoa. Gift donations will continue to be accepted through Sunday, Dec. 13.

The Holiday Giving Drive reflects the alliance's ongoing commitment to bringing local businesses and residents together to support the Bradley Beach community.

For more information about the drive and to view the Gift Registry Wish List, visit bradleybeachalliance.org or email connect@bradleybeachalliance.org.

Savor the Shore Holiday Trolley Tour

BY LAUREN DEFELICE
STAR NEWS GROUP

SPRING LAKE - Join the Greater Spring Lake Chamber for the Savor the Shore Holiday Trolley Tour, a festive afternoon of shopping, tasting and exploring on Sunday Dec. 13, from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Starting at The Shore Club, 700 Route 71, attendees can hop on and off the trolley while visiting participating restaurants, retailers, shops and local businesses throughout the Greater Spring Lake area. Along the way, enjoy food and beverage samples, discover local shops, take advantage of holiday specials and search for more than 25 hidden Golden Tickets for a chance to win prizes at The Shore Club.

Participating businesses (so far) are: Nick & Sons Bakery, Spring Lake Tap House, Spring Lake Pizza, The Shore Club, Sun & Waves, Drew's Market, Coffee at Noon, St. Stephen's Green, Amelia's By the Sea, Tom Bailey's Market, Maree and Spring Lake Seafood. The event is open to ages 16+, lasting about 4 hours. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. and free parking is available.

More than 25 Golden Tickets are hidden at participating businesses; each has a prize number for a prize at The Shore Club. Winners must be present at The Shore Club to claim, limit one prize per person, and prizes are handed out after the final trolley returns. No refunds. The event will be held rain, snow, or shine.

For more information or to register as a participating business, contact 732-449-0577 or greaterslcoc@gmail.com, or visit www.springlakechamber.com.





From the Shore to the city's Christmas glow

BY ALEXANDER HELLER
STAR NEWS GROUP

LAVALLETTE — A day beneath Manhattan's holiday lights will begin with neighbors boarding a bus at the Shore as Lavallette's Christmas in NYC trip returns Saturday, Dec. 12, offering a $30 transportation fee and the freedom to spend the day exploring.

The bus will leave the first aid parking lot at 8 a.m., with stops at Times Square and Rockefeller Center. The return trip to Lavallette will depart New York at 7 p.m., giving travelers a day to build their own holiday outing.

For Councilwoman Anita Zalom, who said she started the trip about 30 years ago and ran it for many years, the appeal has always been as much about the company as the destination.

"It's wonderful that we supply transportation to New York for a good price, and everybody going together on the same bus," Zalom said. "So it's a lot of fun."

Once passengers arrive, the itinerary is their own. A show, a museum visit, shopping or a meal can become the centerpiece of the day, with travelers choosing how to spend their time before gathering for the ride home.

"What we planned is, we're going to take you," Zalom said, recalling how she organized the outings. "You plan what you want to do for the day."

That flexibility, she said, allows people with different interests to enjoy the same trip. Families can make plans around their children, while friends and neighbors can head off to the places they most want to see.

Zalom remembers arranging to see a show and going out to dinner during one of her own trips. Before boarding the bus home, she shopped at the Amish Market, where the group met in those years, and carried her purchases aboard.

Other passengers returned with their own stories, turning the ride back to Lavallette into a chance to compare adventures.

"It's just a chance to do everything that you want to do in New York and then come back and share it with your neighbors and your friends," she said.

This year's advertised stops place travelers at Times Square and Rockefeller Center, giving them starting points for a day in the city during the Christmas season.

For Zalom, the formula remains simple: Travel together, spend the day as you choose and bring a few stories home.

To sign up or obtain more information, contact Jim Borowski at 732-330-4559. The cost is $30 per person.

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Mantoloking to hold annual tree lighting Dec. 11

BY ALEXANDER HELLER
STAR NEWS GROUP

MANTOLOKING — Mantoloking will kick off the holiday season with its annual tree lighting ceremony at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, at the borough's municipal building, 202 Downer Ave.

Residents and visitors are invited to gather for the ceremony and celebrate the start of the holiday season. After the tree is lit, light refreshments will be served in the Steve Gillingham Meeting Room. Santa Claus is also expected to make a special appearance.

Allaire Historic Village to offer holiday evenings

BY MALLORY BRENNAN
STAR NEWS GROUP



COURTESY OF HISTORIC VILLAGE AT ALLAIRE

Many historical buildings will be available for the public to explore, to get a feel of what the holidays may have been like back in the 19th century.

WALL TOWNSHIP — The Historic Village at Allaire offers plenty of holiday-themed events to get attendees into the festive spirit, with upcoming Christmas celebrations for this holiday season.

LANTERN TOURS

For the Christmas season, Allaire Village once again is hosting its lantern tours on Fridays and Saturdays, Dec. 11, 12, 18 and 19, beginning at 4:30 p.m. Guests can spend the evening strolling through the Historic Village at Allaire by candlelight while they enjoy the rich history of Christmas in the 1800s.

The VIP Village Christmas Lantern Tour is a 90-minute evening lantern tour with an interpreter who leads visitors to historic buildings on site. Tickets must be purchased for a time slot on eventbrite.com.

Guests are guided through decorated locations like the Chapel, Bakery, Blacksmith's Shop, Allaire Residence and more, bringing alive the spirit of Christmas past. There's Christmas music and history, all while guests get to see the village at night, a "rare experience" as said by the village staff.

Advance ticket purchase is required for this event as capacity is limited. Each tour is an outdoor walking tour, with various stops/walk-throughs of the historic buildings along the way.

HOLIDAY EVENING STROLLS

The village also provides holiday evening strolls from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays Dec. 11, 12, 18 and 19, which are self-guided tours through Allaire Village as candles and lights illuminate the paths. A Christmas tree lighting at 7 p.m. each night outside the Allaire Mansion is also sure to set anyone's eyes aglow.

Visitors can explore the lit-up historical buildings like the Row House, Foreman's Cottage, Carriage House and more exquisite sites, all bright and joyful with holiday decor. The village's Light Up Ladies will also be roaming around the village to spread holiday cheer.

The Allaire Bakery will be open for holiday treats, along with the General Store for gift options for the whole family.

Admission is $12 per person 4 years and up.

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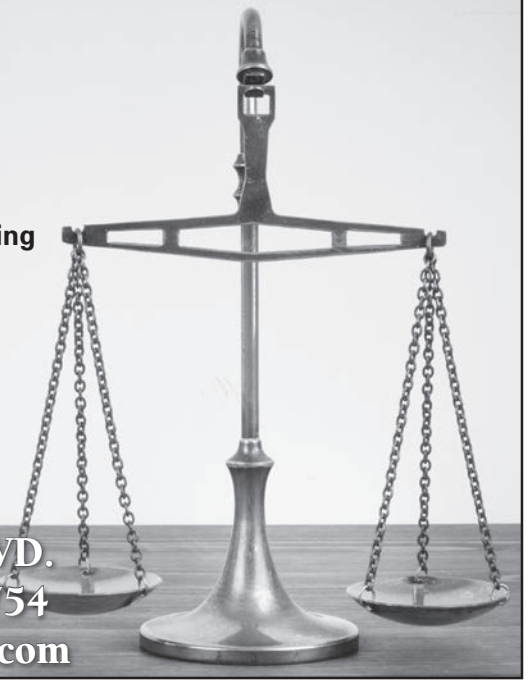

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