

A community magazine serving the residents of Nutley

JANUARY 2023

NUTLEY NEIGHBORS

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Randall Kenneth
Photography

The Del Vecchio Family

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Feedback/Ideas/Submissions: Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 25th of each month.

Go to www.bestversionmedia.com and click "Submit Content." You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to: jcorey@bestversionmedia.com.

Content Submission Deadlines:

Content Due:	Edition Date:
November 25.....	January 1
December 23.....	February 1
January 25.....	March 1
February 25.....	April 1
March 25.....	May 1
April 25.....	June 1
May 25.....	July 1
June 25.....	August 1
July 25.....	September 1
August 25.....	October 1
September 25.....	November 1
October 25.....	December 1

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Letter to Residents

2023 will be _____!

Let's play my own version of Mad Libs to celebrate the new year!

If you're not familiar with the game, all you need to do is think of words that will be used to fill in the blanks.

For this version, I ask you to think of a noun, verb, and adjective. Go ahead, I'll wait.

Now, put your words in these sentences. In this new year, ____ (noun) ____ will be the most important thing in my life.

I plan to ____ (verb) ____ a lot this year.

2023 will be the ____ (adjective) ____ year ever!

How did those sentences sound with the words you put in?

The good thing about words is that since there are so many of them you can play this again and create completely different sentences.

On the cover this month is the Del Vecchio family. Theresa knows a lot about words and has creatively used them to write ten delightful children's books. We got a chance to talk about her books and the part of her life that she most treasures—her family and home here in Nutley.

To continue our literary theme, we spotlight another Nutley author in this issue, Michele Baumann. She used words to create an imaginary world with characters you will not find in our neighborhoods but who will be unforgettable.

But you don't have to be a writer to use well-placed words. Did you ever watch high school senior Brandon Lucia play football? I bet you said things like "wow" and "that was amazing." He is a very talented athlete—be sure to read our article about him and see the photos of him in action on the field.

As you read through this issue I hope you will say "aww" when you see the artwork in our Kids' Corner and "well done!" when you read about the Nutley Public Library dedicating the Children's Room to our own Anthony Iannarone.

There is a wonderful power in words. Let's fill in the blanks of this new year with all the nouns, verbs, and adjectives that we can.

And come December, I may ask you to fill in this blank.

The best part about 2023 was _____!



Joyce Corey

Content Coordinator



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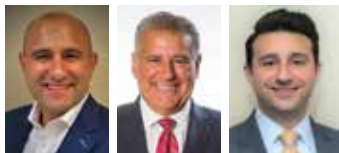
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Farm Nutley is a proud member of the Nutley Chamber of Commerce and serves as a Notary Public.



Featured Article

Raul Shah: From Johns Hopkins to the World Baseball Classic

By Mike Roberts,
BVM Sports Journalist

Baseball has taken Raul Shah through a journey only few are able to fully understand. Coming from a Division III program, the road to the highest level once looked much steeper starting at the very bottom. Now, the game is continuing to provide new opportunities that fuel his passion to continue on. Shah – who has gone through stints in both independent and MLB partnered leagues – will partake in what is certainly the most prestigious event of his ongoing professional career this March... Continue reading on the BVM Sports website.

[f](#) [t](#) [v](#) [y](#) [p](#) [i](#) [n](#) [t](#) [a](#) [t](#) [@BVMsports](#) [@bvm.sports](#)



Image Courtesy: Paul Stodart

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Homes Sold November '22

GSMLS Data: Single Family, Condominiums/Cooperatives & Town Homes during January-November 2022



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PROPERTY ADDRESS	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
134 Union Ave.	\$435,000	\$430,000	118
484 Harrison St.	\$575,000	\$560,000	96
25 Ravine Ave.	\$675,999	\$650,000	53
24 Tennis Pl.	\$565,000	\$565,000	24
36 Freeman Pl.	\$499,000	\$530,000	20
46 Glenview Rd.	\$599,000	\$599,000	35
119 Alexander Ave.	\$499,000	\$540,000	19
22 Howe Ave.	\$415,000	\$410,000	45
21 Fernwood Ter.	\$515,000	\$600,000	7
21 Briar Ln.	\$415,000	\$465,000	20
101 Myrtle Ave.	\$449,999	\$495,000	28
45 E White Ter.	\$499,000	\$530,000	13
47 High St.	\$569,000	\$561,000	48
147 Mount Vernon St.	\$525,000	\$575,000	10
131 San Antonio Ave.	\$524,900	\$555,000	12
177 Mountainview Ave.	\$499,000	\$515,000	14
59 Brookfield Ave.	\$699,900	\$715,000	12
31 Chadwick Dr.	\$449,000	\$495,000	14
81 Ellen St.	\$466,000	\$468,000	15
23 Kenzel Ave.	\$775,000	\$750,000	27
20 Carteret Pl.	\$899,000	\$952,000	18
91 San Antonio Ave.	\$525,000	\$585,000	17

Median List Price **\$489,000**

Median Sale Price **\$520,000**

Median Days on Market **19**

2022 BY THE NUMBERS*



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SOLD

3.58%

HIGHER THAN THE
LIST PRICE,
ON AVERAGE



69

CLOSED
TRANSACTIONS

INVOLVED IN

11.4%

OF ALL THE SINGLE
FAMILY HOME
TRANSACTIONS IN
NUTLEY



13

TOWNS
SOLD IN

*Data collected from 1/1/2022-12/4/2022



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The Del Vecchio Family Read Any Good Books Lately?

By Joyce Corey Photograph by Randall Kenneth Photography

A good book can take you anywhere—even to your own Nutley neighborhood! And if you check the bookshelves in the Del Vecchio home, you will definitely find one that tells the story of growing up here in town during the 80s and 90s.

"I grew up in the Conover Avenue and Harvard Street neighborhood," Theresa said. "I wrote *Down on Harvard Street* to share my cherished childhood memories of growing up there. We would play outside all day - whiffle ball, dodge ball, tag, choreograph shows and plays - and there was always a parent watching out for us. This was my inspiration to write my first book. I feel grateful for growing up there and for the memories made pre-technology!"

While growing up here in town, with her siblings Dennis and Melissa, made a lot of great memories for Theresa, watching her own children enjoy many of the same activities brought another level of happiness to their home.

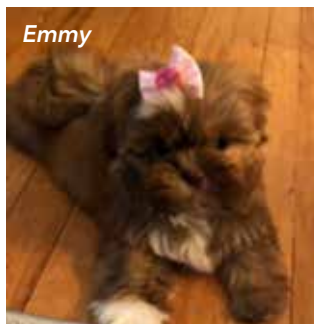
"After getting married, Michael and I bought a house on Newman Avenue about

10 years ago," she said. "We recently moved to Glenview Road which is only two blocks away. It's important for us to raise our family here. They say it takes a village to raise a child and we surely have one here in Nutley. We have my parents, Sharon and Dennis Quinn, who live here in Nutley to help out with the kids, but we also have our neighbors. The school community at Radcliffe is amazing! Everyone here treats our children like their own."

Both Theresa and Michael work in schools; she has been teaching in Millburn for 15 years and he works for the Madison School District in the maintenance department.

"I earned my master's in curriculum and instruction," Theresa said. "I absolutely love teaching language arts. I'm currently teaching 5th grade and I truly consider my students a part of my family. In the past 20 years I have taught Pre-K, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and middle school. In addition, I run a virtual fitness business and I'm a trainer at Max Challenge in Montclair."

Their children are busy exploring their own interests and interacting with other kids in town.



"Matteo (8) really loves real estate and designing his own houses," Theresa said. "He has been waking up and checking the listings since he was about 3 years old. He also loves art. Avianna (6) enjoys meeting other people and truly becomes friends with everyone. She likes gymnastics and wants to cheer."

Michael and Theresa volunteer their time in various activities in which their children are involved.

"Matteo plays baseball for Nutley American Little League," Theresa said. "My husband has been coaching for the past three years. Matteo is also very excited to play basketball this year and Michael will be one of the coaches there as well. Both kids are playing soccer now and somehow, I ended up coaching the kindergarten team. It has been extremely rewarding to watch their confidence blossom!"

As the author of ten children's books, the most recent being *Cocoa Calling* and *Snowflakes Falling*, Theresa understands the value of reading and what it brings to young lives.

"I run a free literacy program in the summer in one of Nutley's parks," she said. "I started it when my son was 3 years old because I felt it was important that all children have exposure to good books and social interaction with peers. The program has been a huge success. It takes place for four weeks in July each year. I also recently sold my books at the Fall Festival and loved connecting with our Nutley neighbors."

As a family, they enjoy trips to Manasquan and Point Pleasant in the summer and the farm in the fall, and they have a list of places to go and things to do in the future.

"We are trying to visit a different state each summer and really enjoyed Rhode Island," Theresa said. "Now that the kids are bigger, we hope to start a winter tradition



The family enjoying a vacation in Rhode Island

of snow-tubing."

Besides encouraging their own children, and those in the community to read, Theresa, Michael, Matteo, and Avianna contribute to the Nutley Family Service Bureau's (NFSB) food drive and the Blessing Box on Passaic Avenue.

"I was an active participant in the community since I was a child," Theresa said. "I remember volunteering at NFSB and in Dystonia Walkathons."

The many seasonal activities and events in town are making even more memories for this family.

"We are active with the Parks and Recreation Department and attend all of the lovely events this town has to offer," Theresa said. "These events have become traditions like Santa arriving in a helicopter, the tree lighting, 4th of July fireworks, Fall Festival, Holy Family feast, and Halloween at the police station."

Emmy, their two-year-old Shih Tzu shares their home as well as all the fun.

"We got her during the pandemic, and she is surely one of the family," Theresa said.

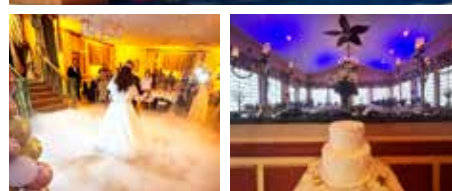
Being part of Nutley, both now and through memories, has connected the Del Vecchio family to the place they call home. They have high praise for their neighbors and the town.

"We are so grateful to be a part of this community," Theresa said. "If you ever need anything, just ask us, we are here." ■

We are always looking for fascinating residents to feature in *Nutley Neighbors*. If you are interested in being included or would like to nominate one of your neighbors please email jcorey@bestversionmedia.com.

5 Things the Del Vecchio Family Loves About Nutley

1. Parks
2. Restaurants
3. The fact that we can walk to most destinations
4. The sense of family-community in our neighborhood
5. The special events that have become traditions



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2023 Social Security Changes

Contributed by Michael, Salvatore, and Daniel Cocco of Beacon Wealth Partners

Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA): Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) from the third quarter of 2021 through the third quarter of 2022, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries will receive an 8.7 percent COLA for 2023. Other important 2023 Social Security information is as follows:

Tax Rate	2022	2023
Employee	7.65%	7.65%
Self-Employed	15.30%	15.30%

Note: The 7.65% tax rate is the combined rate for Social Security and Medicare. The Social Security portion (OASDI) is 6.20% on earnings up to the applicable taxable maximum amount (see right). The Medicare portion (HI) is 1.45% on all earnings. Also, as of January 2013, individuals with earned income of more than \$200,000 (\$250,000 for married couples filing jointly) pay an additional 0.9 percent in Medicare taxes. The tax rates shown above do not include the 0.9 percent.

If you have any questions regarding your social security benefits or other financial planning topics, reach out to Beacon Wealth Partners at 973-667-8436 or email Michael Cocco mcocco@beaconwealthpartners.com

Tax Year	2022	2023
Maximum Taxable Earnings		
Social Security (OASDI only)	\$147,000	\$160,200
Medicare (HI only)	No Limit	No Limit
Quarter of Coverage		
	\$1,510	\$1,640
Retirement Earnings Test Exempt Amounts		
Under full retirement age	\$19,560/yr. (\$1,630/mo.)	\$21,240/yr. (\$1,770/mo.)
Note: One dollar in benefits will be withheld for every \$2 in earnings above the limit.		
The year an individual reaches full retirement age	\$51,960/yr. (\$4,330/mo.)	\$56,520/yr. (\$4,710/mo.)
Note: Applies only to earnings for months prior to attaining full retirement age. One dollar in benefits will be withheld for every \$3 in earnings above the limit.		
Beginning the month an individual attains full retirement age	None	None
Social Security Disability Thresholds		
Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)		
Non-Blind	\$1,350/mo.	\$1,470/mo.
Blind	\$2,260/mo.	\$2,460/mo.
Trial Work Period (TWP)	\$ 970/mo.	\$1,050/mo.
Maximum Social Security Benefit		
Worker Retiring at Full Retirement Age	\$3,345/mo.	\$3,627/mo.
SSI Federal Payment Standard		
Individual	\$ 841/mo.	\$ 914/mo.
Couple	\$1,261/mo.	\$1,371/mo.
SSI Resource Limits		
Individual	\$2,000	\$2,000
Couple	\$3,000	\$3,000
SSI Student Exclusion		
Monthly limit	\$2,040	\$2,220
Annual limit	\$8,230	\$8,950
Estimated Average Monthly Social Security Benefits Payable in January 2023		
	Before 8.7% COLA	After 8.7% COLA
All Retired Workers	\$1,681	\$1,827
Aged Couple, Both Receiving Benefits	\$2,734	\$2,972
Widowed Mother and Two Children	\$3,238	\$3,520
Aged Widow(er) Alone	\$1,567	\$1,704
Disabled Worker, Spouse and One or More Children	\$2,407	\$2,616
All Disabled Workers	\$1,364	\$1,483



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On the Field with Brandon Lucia

By Joyce Corey

Brandon Lucia, Nutley High School senior who plays wide receiver and safety, brings a lot to football. He's also one of the team's captains, a position that defines him well. On the field, he is a blur of movement—being in the right place at the most opportune time and anticipating the opposition's moves with counter strategies.

While all of this looks easy from the stands, Brandon does a lot of work off the field.

First, he acknowledges the physical side of football, both the prep work and the recovery. "My biggest challenge is getting my body physically ready for games every week," he said. "Throughout the season, with there being a lot of contact, nagging injuries tend to linger, especially late in the season."

As anyone who has seen him play knows, Brandon thrives in this team atmosphere. "I love the contact aspect of my sport but also I love how each person has a specific job they must do in order for the team to be successful. Being



Photo credit: Frank DeBlasio



passes at halftime to make sure it didn't happen again and in the second half I scored a touchdown." While Brandon does a lot to prepare for the physical and mental aspects of the sport, when it's game day, he "listens to music and tries to relax" before running out onto the field.

He enjoys the social aspect of being a member of a team, both in football and baseball. Working out at the gym and hanging out with his friends also scores high with this senior.

Brandon's goals are to continue playing football in college and to earn a scholarship. And having his eyes on future

goals is also something he learned through football.

"One of my coaches said that the next play is the most important play. Football is a very fast game and if you spend time worrying about a previous play you might miss the opportunity to do something great on the next play."

With that mindset, nothing will stop Brandon Lucia's forward momentum. ■

Nutley Sports

a member of a team has taught me that it is very important to do the right thing because you never know who could be looking up to you and following your example."

Brandon Lucia also knows that some of the best plays aren't scripted but are mindsets that provide the right motivation.

"The best advice that I was given was 'to be the best, you must do what others won't.' To me that means I need to make time to do more than what is required instead of doing the minimum to get by."

These words have been the foundation of all that Brandon does and has accomplished. But, like every great player, there may come a time when even their best efforts fall short. In a case like that, Brandon is quick to learn something from it.

"A mistake I made in a game was when I dropped a pass in the end zone right before halftime. I overcame this by practicing catching

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From the Mind of Michele Baumann

By Joyce Corey

Write what you know is a standard piece of writing advice that I'm sure glad Michele Baumann didn't follow. In the two books she has written, it's safe to say she had no firsthand knowledge of the people and places in her stories. Rather, she unleashed her imagination to create a new world with unusual characters and a riveting plot.

Her *Mount Orion* series has two books so far: *After Life*, which was published in August 2021, and *The Orchard*, published in October 2022.

While the story is set in upstate New York, Michele creatively adds some otherworldly elements.

"The characters in the book, who are vampires, live at a compound called Mount Orion," she said. "Each book in the series follows their lives and is a complete story so you don't have to read them in order. But to fully appreciate the characters and events, reading them chronologically works better."

"The newest book, *The Orchard*, follows the life of Nadia Bishop who has been in hibernation for almost thirty years. She was awoken by a 500-year-old spirit named Tess who is desperate to be made flesh again. Nadia must fight to stop this spirit from killing her and taking her immortal body for herself. The story bounces back and forth between the present time and the past as Nadia remembers how Tess has wreaked havoc for most of her life."



The fantasy world with strongly defined characters and an action-filled plot will keep the pages turning and fulfill Michele's goal.

"My reason in writing these books is simple—to entertain," she said. "For years these stories have filled my head (and my computer) and now I have finally been able to share them with others. I love to write, and I feel blessed that I haven't run out of ideas yet."

In fact, she is already working on the third book in the series.

"Right now, I am in the process of editing the next book while also working on a new story which is barely in the first draft stage."

After Life and *The Orchard* are both available on Amazon. Because of the subject matter and content, the targeted audience is adults since there may be themes that are not appropriate for children.

We can't wait to see what the mind of Michele Baumann comes up with next! ■

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Nutley Public Library Honors Anthony Iannarone

By Linda Buset Photographs by Chris Oseja

On October 16, 2022, the Children's Room at the Nutley Public Library was dedicated to Anthony J. Iannarone for his 50 years of distinguished service. Mr. I as he is affectionately known, has served as library trustee for 50 years and is currently in his 36th year as library board president. His many years of service to the library and community is only surpassed by his genuine love of the town he calls home. ■



Mayor Joseph Scarpelli said, "Anthony, or Mr. I as he is known around the library, is an inspiration to all of us. After a tragic accident in his freshman year of college, through hard work and perseverance, he earned his law degree from NYU and became corporate counsel to Hoffman LaRoche. His passion for our library is legendary! Dedication the Children's Room in his honor is a fitting tribute to a man who has been a driving force on the board for 50 years."



Our commissioners came to present the proclamation and help with the unveiling of the plaque.

Liliana Van de Zilver, 10th grader at NHS and library employee, and Anais St. Amant, NHS alumna and an accomplished artist. When NHS art teacher Mrs. A. Melchionne asked the members of the National Art Honor Society who might be interested, Liliana jumped at the opportunity. The mural is beautiful and a great tribute to Mr. I for his many years of dedication to the library.



The Nutley High School Culinary Arts Department served elegant and enticing culinary delights to guests after the dedication.



The staff of the Nutley Public Library is honored to have celebrated this momentous achievement with Mr. Iannarone. The library has gained many resources under his leadership, which has allowed the staff to focus on providing excellent services to the community, and we thank him for his mentorship and 50 years of service (above). The Library Board of Trustees (left).



Mr. Iannarone's beautiful family was there to join in this great honor. His daughter Lisa said, "This is an absolutely beautiful mural, and we are so proud you chose to honor our father in this way. May his knowledge go forward, and his legacy continue."

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Library Corner

Nutley Public Library Encourages Children, Teens, and Adults to Experience "All the Feels" During the 2023 Winter Reading Challenge this January

By Deidra Garcia, Head of Youth Services

The Nutley Public Library is joining other libraries and schools around the world to once again challenge Nutley residents to read (or have read to them) at least 620 minutes in total (20 minutes or more a day) from January 1 through January 31, for the 6th Annual Winter Reading Challenge: All the Feels! This year's emoji-themed reading challenge encourages readers of all ages to experience how reading enlivens our emotions. The top-performing libraries and schools will be awarded book collections, virtual author visits from popular authors, signed copies, and more.

To participate, Nutley Public Library cardholders can register online starting Thursday, December 1 at nutleypubliclibrary.beanstack.org or on the Beanstack mobile app. Once registered, readers can log their minutes read from January 1 through January 31, to complete the challenge of reading 620 minutes. All reading during January counts, even if you register in January. Each reader who completes the 620-minute challenge will qualify for a chance to win a Grand Prize.

After February 1, readers who complete the challenge will be randomly selected from each of the age categories (babies/toddlers, grades K-5, grades 6-12, and adult), and Grand Prize winners will receive a gift card to a local Nutley business and their name honored with a bookplate in the library's collection. Children and teens will also earn a goodie bag for signing up, and all participants who complete the Winter Reading Challenge can collect a certificate of completion. All goodie bags and prizes are generously sponsored by the Friends of the Nutley Public Library. ■

For further information, please visit nutleypubliclibrary.beanstack.org, contact Deidra Garcia at deidra.garcia@nutley.bccls.org, or call the Youth Services Department at 973-667-0405 x2623. #WinterRead2023 #AllTheFeels

Pet Corner

Adopt Us!

Submitted by Christa Milici,
Yellow Brick Road Rescue NJ



Meet Macaroni aka Mac! Mac is a four-year-old male. He is very sweet and would make the perfect addition to any family. Mac was rescued from a local high kill shelter where he spent many months in a small, cold cage. He is safe and warm with us and just needs a family of his own now! He is cat and kid friendly. We are unsure about dogs, but he would likely be okay with a calm and mellow one. He is microchipped, FIV/FelV negative, stool tested, dewormed, UTD on vaccines, and neutered. \$150 adoption fee and application apply. ■

To apply for Macaroni: <https://yellowbrickroadrescueen.com/cat-adoption-application/> or email us at yellowbrickroadnj@gmail.com



Submitted by Nicole Milici,
Jersey Pits Rescue Inc.

Evie joined us from a local inner-city shelter after being picked up as a stray. She clearly just had babies although they were nowhere to be found. Evie is an absolute treasure; she is so sweet

and loves living in her amazing foster home! She is about two years old, and she only weighs about 40 pounds. Evie is super dog friendly and absolutely loves playing with other energetic dogs. She has been great with kids and loves to play. She can be a bit bouncy, so we'd recommend a home with children eight years and older. Evie would love a family that would take her on walks or adventures and then snuggle up together afterwards. Her foster shares: "Thankfully she is good on a leash, super friendly, playful, and sweet. No aggression at all with food and waits to be served. I was able to pet her as she ate, and she just soaked in the affection. Very energetic, athletic, and smart. She even likes her crate, and she is learning quickly!" ■

If you're looking to adopt Evie, please apply today at www.jerseypitsrescue.com.

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A New Year and Some New Masterpieces

By Michelle Palmer

As we welcome a new year, let's take time to appreciate some of the masterpieces our children created that made us smile. Their ability to learn something new with great enthusiasm and creativity brought lots of joy through the holidays.

Learning to make food is not only a skill but can be a form of art. Twins Peter and Angelina participated in an Italian cultural class at Emilio's here in Nutley. The finished product of the class was quite tasty. The kids got to be chefs for the day and were proud of their yummy creations.

Emma is only five years old, but already a super talented artist. She attended a party at Pinot's Palette and painted this beautiful canvas. She is very proud of her colorful project and her mom is amazed by how well she followed the step-by-step directions. Her painting will be a valued treasure to remember for many years.

Six-year-old Max combines his love for games with a passion for drawing. Roblox is one of his favorite hobbies and now he is enjoying drawing Roblox Doors figures. It is incredible to see how he can bring the characters from the screen onto his sketch paper.

Anna is six years old and loves dogs. She was inspired to draw her stuffed animal named Poodles. She carefully followed a YouTube directed drawing video to

make this sweet picture. The bright colors and adorable puppy face are guaranteed to brighten anyone's day.

Thanksgiving brought us lots of turkey inspired crafts to be thankful for. These children were challenged to use their imagination and fine motor skills in various projects. Michael is a second grader who crafted a turkey from stickers and a paper plate. Frank is a four-year-old who constructed a



Poodle perfection

Painting a masterpiece (left)
Young chefs at work (below)



dinner plate at school using sensory materials. Vienna is a first grader who had a fun time completing the classic "disguise a turkey" activity as a cheerful rainbow. ■

Michelle Palmer is the author of a children's book, *Brinco Finds His Way Home*, which is available at Amazon and Pretty Handy in Nutley.



A love for art and games



Thankful for art

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The Rooming House of Nutley Part 2

By David Wilson

The next stop on our rooming house tour is The Hillside House at 265 Hillside Ave., a 23-room, six bath, historic structure dating back to the early 1890s. Originally built by architect William A. Lambert as a recreation center and as part of his vision to create a community of neighborhoods. First named the Franklin Club, later called The Hillside, game rooms, meeting rooms, dance area, and billiard room were the order of the day. Lambert knew that diversions for working folks were needed and built another similar building called the Fortnightly Club at 642 Franklin Ave. that became the St. Paul's Parish House in 1920.

The building was adjacent to Lambert's real estate offices and West Nutley Train Station on the Erie Newark Branch. St. Paul's Congregational Church was growing and used it as their meeting hall prior to the Lambert designed church structure being opened in 1895. There is a gap in the tax



Photo Credits: John Demmer Town Historian (above), Nutley Historical Society (left)



records probably due to a fire at town hall that destroyed many early Franklin/Nutley documents. We can surmise that the building started

to be converted for short stay lodging sometime around 1900 for prospective property buyers touring Lambert's Nutley developments built from 1890-1920.

The building's use as a rooming house was a natural progression, fulfilling a need for transient housing and weekly renters. There was a period when meals were served as part of the tenancy agreement, but this was curtailed to maximize profits. It was operated under other names, but mostly known as the Plaza House or Gillies Plaza House, a nod to its location at the end of East Plaza. The Gillies family operated the business and lived there too. Numerous owners over the years resulted in the ebb and flow of the location as some reinvested the profits and others barely kept it maintained, even allowing it to go into foreclosure at times.

There were many long-term tenants holding jobs in local factories or stores. You may remember Don, a helpful store clerk at Gantner's Hardware. Other roomers included spouses that needed a cooling off separation or sons getting a little tough love from Dad. A schoolmate of mine, Richard, lived there for a time in the 70s at first in a one-room unit, then after a stint in California, returned to a first floor, \$30 two-room "luxury" unit with private door. Meals were purchased locally from Ralph's and nearby delis.

An extensive renovation included new electric, bathroom upgrades, subdivision of larger rooms, fire doors, and security system. Now, professionally run with an in-house manager, it is clean, smoke-free, and welcoming to 22 tenants. The \$185 electronically paid weekly rent includes a bed, table, chair, microwave, cable TV, refrigerator, shared bath, coffee maker, Wi-Fi, and window. A recent visit found all the historic interior features have been lost during renovations except for a grand staircase and railing that, if it could talk, would share stories of the many personalities who walked those stairs over the past 130 years. ■

David Wilson is the author of *Fire in Our Lives*, a book containing stories, experiences, and advice from his forty-year career in public safety. Available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Google Play.

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JANUARY EVENTS CALENDAR

Jan. 4, Wed.

Knitting and Crochet Club

@Nutley Public Library,
93 Booth Dr.

Share your love of knitting and crocheting with both beginning and experienced knitters. Meet fellow knitters, brush-up on your skills, and learn some new techniques. All levels of experience are welcome. Beginners will be guided by more experienced knitters. Bring your current projects or start a new one, and please bring your own supplies.

Time: 1-3pm For more information call 973-667-0405 or visit www.nutleypubliclibrary.org/calendar

Jan. 7, Sat.

Hot Chocolate Hike

@Essex County Environmental Center; 621-B Eagle Rock Ave., Roseland

For families. Join for a hike around the forest at the Environmental Center; build a winter campfire, sip hot cocoa, and make s'mores! Dress warmly. Meet at Garibaldi Hall.

Time: 11am-12:30pm Cost: \$30

per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult. For more information and to register call 973-228-8776 or visit www.essexcountyparks.org/facilities/environmental-center

Jan. 14, Sat.

Winter Tracking and Adaptations

@Essex County Environmental Center; 621-B Eagle Rock Ave., Roseland

For families. Do you know how frogs and tadpoles survive the winter? How about birds that don't migrate? Take a walk with an ECEC naturalist and learn all about forest life in the wintertime and how animals' furs and feathers help them survive the cold. Make and take a bird feeder from sticks and seed. Dress for the weather.

Time: 11am-12:30pm

Cost: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult

For more information and to register call 973-228-8776 or visit www.essexcountyparks.org/facilities/environmental-center

Jan. 18, Wed.

Manga and Anime Club

@Nutley Public Library,
93 Booth Dr.

For grades 6-12. Try Japanese snacks, watch anime, discuss manga, and talk about other pop culture media with friends! No registration required.

Time: 3:15-4:30pm

For more information call 973-667-0405 or visit www.nutleypubliclibrary.org/calendar

Jan. 25, Wed.

Video Game Club

@Nutley Public Library,
93 Booth Dr.

For grades 6-12. Play popular Switch games with friends on the big screen! All skill levels welcome! No registration required.

Time: 3:15-4:30pm

For more information call 973-667-0405 or visit www.nutleypubliclibrary.org/calendar

Feb. 4, Sat.

Winter Journaling

@Essex County Environmental Center; 621-B Eagle Rock Ave., Roseland

For all ages (children under 5 require caregiver supervision). Discover the joy of phenology, the cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena, especially in relation to climate and plant and animal life. Find a special place to write down and draw the winter discoveries and appreciate the cold and brisk change of the season, and maybe even partake in some winter birding! We will also hike the grounds to note the seasonal changes and beautiful discoveries as we make our journals here on site. Friends and family are encouraged to join. Dress warmly.

Time: 11am-12:30pm

Cost: \$30 per family (up to two adults and two children) or \$10 per child, \$12 per adult

For more information and to register call 973-228-8776 or visit www.essexcountyparks.org/facilities/environmental-center



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