

May 2023

Serving the Eight Villages of Franklin Township in Somerset County, N.J.

### **Township Council Amenable To** Partnering On Community Health Clinic



A HEALTHY IDEA – Fran Palm, Zufall's CEO, talks about the proposed partnership at the May 23 Township Council meeting.

The Township Council appears to be heading into a threeway partnership that could

result in a permanent community health center established at one of the Franklin Middle School campuses.

Council members spoke favorably of a proposal to contribute \$1.5 million of the \$7.7 million received

in American Rescue Fund money to build the center on the Franklin Middle School -Hamilton Street campus.

The building would be owned by the school district, which would make it available to Dover-based Zufall Health Services, the company that would provide the medical services.

The plan was laid out at the May 23 Township Council meeting by Fran Palm, Zufall's CEO, and John Ravally, the district schools Superintendent.

"I'm totally in support of this initiative," Councilwoman Kimberly Francois (D-At 🕨 Large) said after the presentation. "It's a good fit for the American Rescue Fund funding that we're going to get."

Palm told the Council that initially, medical services

Continued on Page 7. 2022.

### **Diversity In Franklin Township** Celebrated At School District Festival



Asian Awareness Club, who performed a dance routine; Liane Ingalls, who read an original poem entitled, "I Am;" the Phi Delta Kappa Sorority Xinos & Kudos, who performed a step show, and the Franklin High School Dance Troupe, who presented an Afro Beat dance performance.

The Media Center was

"It's a culmination of celebrations that bring together our community " – Daryn Plummer

Vol. VI, No. VII



PARTY EMCEE – Windy White, the Township Parks & Recreation Department's Deputy Director, speaks during the May 20 Franklin Township Youth Center's first anniversary celebration.

### Youth Center Throws First Birthday Party

The Franklin Township Youth Center threw itself a birthday party on May 20 to celebrate its first year of operation.

The Center officially opened its doors on May 14,

At the anniversary event, attendees heard from a variety of speakers and four major Center partners were honored.

Also on hand to celebrate the Center's anniversary was U.S. Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-12), who presented the Center with a \$1 million check from a federal program at its grand opening.

The Center "was a great concept, and its utility is obviously very important," she said. "Having opportunities for our children to be engaged in organization, inspiration and expectations is what happens here. Families get supported here."

Coleman said she stays in touch with what is going on in Franklin because "I think it's very important for us to have a close relationship with our communities to know exactly what they need. It might not be showing up in that big

list on (Capitol) Hill."

Speaking during the ceremony, Mayor Phil Kramer referenced the May 11 murder of a cab driver in Franklin, in which two Franklin teens and one from New Brunswick were charged.

"I'm wondering in the past year how many headlines we avoided because of this center," he said. "We'll never know how many lives you saved, have saved, and will save."

Township Councilwoman Kimberly Francois (D-At Large) noted that one of the teenagers charged in the cabbie's murder often came to the Youth Center.

"We have to look to the positive, we have to look to the fruitful and the positive about what's been going on here," she said.

Calling the Center a "wonderful, glorious, fantastic awesome place," Francois said, "This is a critical resource for our community. There have been a lot of activities at the youth center ... this is a safe place, and we will continue to do all that we can for our youth."

CULTURAL APPRECIATION NIGHT - Schools Superintendent John Ravally was one of many attendees for whom turbans were prepared by members of the Sikh Youth of Franklin group.

**T**ranklin Township's wealth of diversity was on display May 12 at the inaugural Diversity Night Festival at Franklin Middle School - Sampson G. Smith campus.

The event featured performances, food and crafts highlighting the varied cultures of township residents.

The event spring from the month diversity nights held at various township schools,

said Daryn Plummer, the district's Supervisor of Equity, Inclusion and World Language.

"It's a culmination of celebrations that bring together our community in a way that we can celebrate each other, learn about each other and just have a good time," he said.

"We collaborated with many different committee members from buildings

throughout the district to have crafts and activities for the kids, games from around the world," he said "So it's a great collaboration and culmination for the year."

Performances took place in the school auditorium, while food was served in the cafeteria.

Among the performers were the cast from the Franklin High School performance of The Descendants; the

home to a wide variety of displays, including by the Sikh Youth of Franklin Township Schools, whose members were outfitting attendees in authentic turbans.

Groups were also stationed throughout the school in hallways, showing off arts and crafts of their cultures.

"We have an opportunity, because we have so much diversity in our district, to really learn from each other," Plummer said. "This is a way Scan the QR Code with a to show community memmobile device to see an exclusive interview with U.S. Rep. bers, show students, that get-Bonnie Watson Coleman and ting together ... and learning about each other's culture is Beau Byrtus, director of the the way we want to operate as Parks & Recreation Depart-Franklin Warriors." ment.

Continued on Page 7.



Scan the QR Code with your mobile device to see the anniversary ceremony.

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### Planning Board Resumes Hearing Of B9 Schoolhouse Warehouses Application

The developer of two proposed warehouses at Mettlers and Schoolhouse roads took another shot at approval May 3 in a marathon hearing before the Planning Board.

Link Logistics presented a plan that has been scaled down from its original, with an emphasis on landscaping to shield the two warehouses from residents of adjoining Canal Walk and Summerfield 55-plus adult communities.

As they did when they were presented with the original plan during a January hearing, and under the watchful eyes of the more than 200 residents at the hearing, Planning Board members critiqued the project and presented the developer with their wish lists of things they'd like to see incorporated in the plans.

The developer's representatives – an engineer, architect and landscape architect – also came under sharp questioning from an attorney hired by a group of Canal Walk residents opposed to the project.

The project, known as B9 Schoolhouse Owner, has been the subject of months of criticism from Canal Walk residents and others. Lobbying by those opposed to the proposed development spurred the Township Council to enact a de facto ban on future warehouse development in the township.

The revised project presented to the Planning Board on May 3 was about 30,000 square feet smaller than the original.

Plans call for two buildings on the 20-acre lot, with the first building being 144,450 square feet and the second building measuring 70,970 square feet.

The first building will have 42 loading docks, while the second building will have 18 loading docks, the Board was told.

Peter Lanfrit, the developer's attorney, emphasized the landscaping plan in his questioning, attempting to show residents that they won't really see the warehouse when all of the planned foliage matures.

That assertion was met with skepticism by some Board members, who pointed out that illustrations of what different views would look like in 10 years, shown

of criticism from Canal Walk by the landscape architect, residents and others. Lobbying by those opposed to the proposed development and Winter.

> The developer's landscape architect, Brian Hanes, did not have an answer when he was questioned how long it would take for the planted landscaping to actually have an effect on shielding nearby residents from the warehouse buildings.

> Board members also told the developers what they would like to see incorporated into the design.

Board vice president Charles Brown said he would like to see sidewalk along School House Road, as an extension of that which is now on Mettlers Road.

Brown said he would also like to see a plan to allow employees to safely walk from one building to the other.

The developer's engineer testified that only the larger of the two buildings would be built to accommodate solar panels. Board chairman Michael Orsini said he'd like to see the smaller building built to be solar-ready, even though it's not required on buildings that size.

In response to an earlier

question about potential operating hours, Lanfrit told the Board that the Township's ordinance does not prohibit 24-7 operations, but he could not say what the hours would be because the warehouse as yet has no tenants.

"No ordinance is ever written that covers every possible thing that needs to be covered," Board member Robert Thomas said. "I think the fact that this is adjacent on two sides to very large residential areas ... (allows) consideration to a limitation of hours."

Stuart Lieberman, an attorney representing a group of Canal Walk residents opposing the development, also questioned the three developer's witnesses on their testimony

Lieberman's questions ranged from the suitability of the soil on that tract for development, to the types of trees planned to be planted, to what noise mitigation efforts were planned.

The next hearing on the application is set for 7:30 p.m. June 21 at the Board of Education administration building, 2301 Route 27.







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### Conerly Road School Team Wins District Invention Competition



**FUTURE INVENTORS** – Conerly Road School students Savannah Sewnarine, Amari Montas and Vihaan Patel and their teacher, Stephen Neely, after the winners were announced.

pions.

The winning Conerly

Road School team - Savan-

nah Sewnarine, Amari Mon-

tas and Vihaan Patel – creat-

ed a water-cleaning system

sea creatures that live in hot

watery flows that spring up

which they call "Process

Chemosynthesis Biomim-

icry," or PCB, uses a mem-

brane to mimic the process

of chemosynthesis - the

production of food using

organic energy rather than

isms use that process to cre-

ate their food, PCB uses it

But where living organ-

Tube worms are deep-

The group's invention,

inspired by tube worms.

from the sea floor.

sunlight.

team of 5th Graders from the Coner-Lly Road Elementary School won the district's second annual Invention Competition at Franklin High School on May 10.

Funded by the township-based Sodhani Foundation, the competition is designed to foster innovation and invention in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

Teams from the district's seven elementary schools and two middle school campuses competed internally earlier in the year.

The winners of those school competitions then went on to the May 10 event to crown the district chamto filter out and break down garbage found in streams, rivers and oceans.

In their presentation, the students said they chose their project "to make an invention that would filter out trash from water since we know much of sea life today is on the brink of extinction due to scattered plastic."

The students' science teacher, Stephen Neely, said he was proud of the team.

Vimal Sodhani, president of the Sodhani Foundation, said he wanted to inspire students to "bring name and fame to Franklin Township schools."

"I want all the younger generation to do some innovation," he said. "Some of the kids may become scientists, engineers, doctors."

Neely said he told the students about the tube worms, "how they lived at the bottom of the sea, and they just took off with it."

All three teams will be honored at a special Board of Education meeting on June 5 at Franklin Middle School - Hamilton Street campus.

# Plan For RVCC Satellite **Campus At Tulipwood Scuttled**

plan to convert an historic township **L**building into a satellite campus for Raritan Valley Community College was scuttled, mainly because of renovation price constraints.

The idea of converting the circa-1892 Tulipwood House on Hamilton Street into college classrooms was first broached in September 2021 by Township Councilman Ram Anbarasan (D-At Large). At the time, Anbarasan

estimated that renovation costs for the Township-owned building would be between \$4 million and \$5 million.

But Anbarasan said recently that the cost was much higher.

"The cost per square foot was prohibitive," he said. "Just for the 3,000-square-foot building is was north of \$5 million."

Also dooming the plan was the need for a small parking lot, he said.

The lot "had to go behind it, and there was no other expansion permitted," he said. "Very limiting due to the historic designation. Too bad."

All hope is not lost, Anbarasan said.

"So wee are working on finding RVCC alternate locations, including at the Consolata campus classrooms," he said, referring to the Board of Education property located on the former Consulate Missionaries property on Route 27.

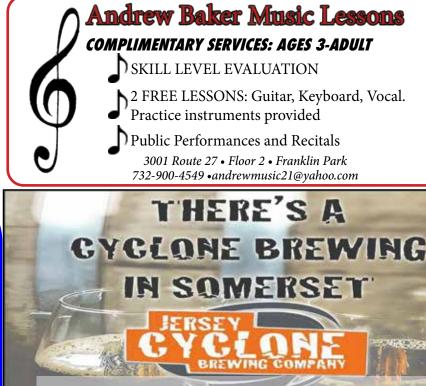
"Hopefully in the Fall, we will have some programs beginning," he said.

RVCC president Michael J. McDonough said through a college spokeswoman that the college is still interested in a Franklin location.

"Raritan Valley Community College is committed to serving the educational needs of our students and the entire community, including Franklin Township," he said in the statement. "The College continues to look at potential educational sites within the Township and explore ways to better serve the residents of Franklin Township."

Anbarasan said in 2021 that the types of courses that could be taught at a Franklin satellite location could include first-year courses and workforce training.

"Allied health care, English as a Second Language, perhaps GED, those kinds of programs that don't require big lab spaces," he said at the time.



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# New Homes, Apartments Approved By Land Use Boards Planning Board Approves 10 New Houses, Solar Array Near Wilf Campus



**TESTIFYING** – Jacqueline Jackson of Lilac Lane tells the Planning Board her thoughts on the Wilf application

plan to build 10 single-family homes and install a large solar array on land adjacent to the Wilf Campus for Senior Living on DeMott Lane was reluctantly approved by the Planning Board on May 17.

The project calls for the installation of the bulk of the

solar array - which will be used to provide electricity to the Wilf campus - on slightly more than 3 acres, and for the 10 single-family homes to be built on a 4-acre plot.

The application was largely conforming to zoning regulations for the R-20 zone in which the project will sit. The only variances

needed were those requested by members of the township's Technical Review Committee to move some of the single-family homes further away from wetlands.

The project also calls for the removal of hundreds of trees on about 7 acres of the roughly 34-acre tract, a fact which brought out neighbors worried about their properties flooding from hurricanes and other severe storms without those natural stormwater diffusers.

By law, a Planning Board cannot generally reject an application that is conforming to local zoning laws and a town's Master Plan. That was the dilemma the Board found itself in, according to Board chairman Michael Orsini.

"We could deny it if we wanted to," Orsini said of the application. "Then they would come back with a conforming application. The

application and what we are hearing tonight, is that ... it would not preserve the even more environmentally sensitive areas to the north."

"The issues we face tonight are not as clear cut as deny or not," he said. "It's a conforming application, but for those variances that staff asked them to apply for."

Under the plan, Berger Street would be extended into the property and end in a cul-de-sac. The 10 2,1600-square-foot houses would be arranged with three houses on one side of the street and seven houses on the other side.

A number of adjacent property owners showed up to speak against the project. Their objections centered on flood threats posed by the removal of hundreds of trees.

"I've lived here for over 18 years," Annette Shadiack of Buttonwood Drive told the

Superstorm Sandy; I've lived through Ida. My property has an easement on both sides for the underground storm drains. During Hurricane Sandy, during Ida, Buttonwood drive flooded because the storm drains could not carry water fast enough."

Lilac Road resident Louise Gurgui told the Board that she still remembers flooding in her backyard from Hurricane Gloria in the mid-1980s.

"The entire backyard up to our patio was underwater for several days," she said. "Manhole covers were dancing with the water that was flowing through."

Jacqueline Jackson, also of Lilac Lane, said land next to her property was left vacant "due to the severe flooding of Seeley's Brook."

"Proof of the impact of this flooding is evident in the recent damage of the Magnoley's Brook," she said. "Magnolia Road was closed from 2021 to 2022. That was due to the flooding damage after Hurricane Ida."

Magnolia Road resident Steve Gillooly told the Board that "I think there are better alternatives this developer can use for their property."

"This is unnecessary and destructive," he said. "It is not good for our community, it's not good for our township."

"I'm not opposed to solar, I'm opposed to destroying seven acres for the purposes of additional houses in a flood zone, and the additional loss of trees," he said.

Several Board members said they agreed with Orsini's comment when he cast his "yes" vote: If it's denied, he said, the applicant "could come back with a conforming application where we would have no leverage ... and it could be worse."

### lia Bridge that runs over Seeonly difference between that Board. "I have lived through 12-Unit Apartment Complex Approved By Zoning Board

Newark-based developer walked in to the May 18 Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting with an application for a

12-unit for-purchase townhouse development and left with an approval for a 12unit apartment complex.



stone 360, targeted the five-building development -And the changeover occalled Villas at Norma Park -

curred in a matter of minutes. at Norma Avenue and Frank-The developer, Blacklin Boulevard. The two-story units are

one- and two-bedrooms, with one- and two-car garages and basements.

The units have terraces and balconies, and are arranged around a cul-de-sac.

Among the variances the project needed was a use variance because the property lies in the Office/Professional zone, in which residential development is not allowed.

There were also several bulk variances needed, which caused some Board members to wonder aloud if Blackstone was trying to jam too much on the roughly 1.7-acre lot

The application was moving along when Board member Robert Shepherd questioned the viability of the Homeowners' Association which would be needed for the project.

Shepherd said the development in which he lives, and which has an HOA board, is comprised of 500 units and has enough people

to fill a board.

"I think making this a condominium association is going to lead to this project being a disaster," he said.

Peter Lanfrit, the applicant's attorney, then asked for a 5-minute recess while he spoke with his client.

When the hearing resumed, Lanfrit told the Board that his client had no problem with converting the project to a rental development.



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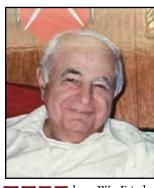
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## Life Stories

# Walter W. Friedberg, 93; Served In Army In Korean Conflict



alter W. Friedberg, 93, passed away on April 27 at his home in Somerset.

Born on June 13, 1929, in Brooklyn, New York, he was the son of Isador and (Pearlman) Friedberg. Ida Walter lived in Houston for a short period of time, before returning to Brooklyn and eventually finding his home in Somerset.

He honorably served in the Army during the Korean Conflict with the rank of Private First Class. After his service, Mr. Friedberg worked in sales before becoming a constable for the Somerset County District Court, where he served for many years.

He was a member of several organizations including the Cook College Parents Association and the Jewish War Veterans. Mr. Friedberg also served as past president and board member of the Tamiment organization.

One of Walter's favorite pastimes was restoring cars to their former glory, a hobby that brought him great satisfaction and allowed him to showcase his meticulous attention to detail. He enjoyed playing racquetball and paddleball where he spent time on the courts. Walter also loved the thrill of riding motorcycles. He owned several bikes over the years and loved nothing more than taking family and friends for rides. He also had a passion for barbecuing and was best known for his mouth-watering ribs. In addition, he enjoyed swimming but could also be found relaxing by the pool. He enjoyed nothing more than spending quality time and socializing with family, friends, and neighbors.

Walter will be deeply missed by his family and friends, who will always re-

Robert Bruce Hawkins, 77; Was New Brunswick Police Officer

member his kind heart, his giving nature, and his unwavering zest for life. His legacy will live on through the memories he created and the joy he brought to those who knew him.

Mr. Friedberg was preceded in death by his parents, Isador and Ida Friedberg; his brothers- and sister-in-law, Irving (Ruth) Friedberg and Bernie (Trudy) Friedberg; and his nephews, Stewie Futerman and Gerry Friedberg. He is survived by his lov-

ing spouse of 70 years, Marcia Friedberg; his daughters Joyce Friedberg and Ilissa Friedberg; his granddaughter, Nicole Grzybowski; his nieces and nephews, Corinne Futerman, Jeffery Friedberg,

Linda and Jeff Steinetz, Barbara and Allen Kurek, Randy and Janet Schneider, Leslie Schneider, Lisa Schneider, and many extended family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Jewish War Veterans at, www.jwv.org/give/donate or to the American Parkinson Disease Association at, www. apdaparkinson.org/1907d3l or to the Alzheimer of New Jersey at, https://www.alznj. org.

The family would like to express their sincere gratitude for the outpouring of love and support during this difficult time.

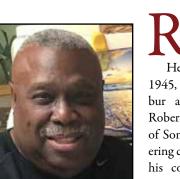
racing, fishing, and watching old westerns and police shows. During the holidays, he would honor the memory of black deceased police officers by putting flags on their graves and conducted interviews with the remaining members of the Buffalo Soldiers.

Robert was a man who gave back to his community in every way possible. He was a member of the after-school program "Play Safe," and the Masons.

Robert was preceded in death by his parents, Wilbur and Myrtle Hawkins, his sister Shirley Dixon, and his brother John Hawkins.

He is survived by his wife of 25 years, Alice Hawkins; his children, Andrea Hawkins, Tiffany Hawkins, his brother, Robert Ingram; and his uncle, Gilbert Hawkins. Also survived by his grandson, Derek Hawkins, his bonus children, Catina Long, and Shawn Long; his bonus grandchildren, Justin, Kaylyn, Cidney Tyler, and Savanna, and his great-grandchild, Levi.

Robert will be remembered as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, and friend, who lived a life of service to his community.



obert Bruce Hawkins passed away on April 28 at the age of 77. He was born on July 18, 1945, in Somerville to Wilbur and Myrtle Hawkins. Robert was a lifelong resident

of Somerset, and his unwavering commitment to serving his community made him a cherished and respected member of the New Bruns-

wick and Somerset area.

After serving honorably in the Army reserves from 1975 to 1981, Robert went on to work as a dedicated officer at the Middlesex County Sheriff's Department for 5 years. He then served as a police officer and detective for the New Brunswick Police Department for 25 years, where he made a last-

ing impact on his fellow officers and the community he served. After retiring from the force, Robert owned and operated Hawk Agency LLC, a private security business, before working for the New Brunswick School system for 18 years. Robert was also on the Board of Middlesex County Credit Union, where he dedicated his time

to making a difference in his community.

Robert was a gifted athlete, playing football and running track. He was inducted into the New Brunswick Hall of Fame and was a past president. Robert's love of football led him to be on the practice squad for the NY Giants. In his free time, he enjoyed Soap Box car





# Life Stories

# Christopher Zwingli, 68; Switched Careers From Dentistry To Autos

hristopher Zwingli, a loving husband, devoted father, and accomplished professional, passed away on May 14 at Care One in Bound Brook at the age of 68.

He leaves behind a legacy of determination, kindness, and a commitment to pursuing his passions.

Born on November 20, 1954, in Ridgewood, Christopher was the son of Carl

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Allen and Carol (Dooley) Zwingli. After growing up in Midland Park, he ventured to Oregon for college before returning to New Jersey. It was there that he continued his education at NJ College of Dentistry, earning his Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) degree. Eventually, he settled in Somerset, where he built his life and career.

For many years, Christopher dedicated himself to the

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field of dentistry, working as a dentist in New Brunswick and Raritan. His caring nature and expertise made a positive impact on the lives of countless patients. However, in 1999, he made the decision to change careers and pursue his passion for cars. He attended Chub Institute and obtained ASE certification, which led him to a fulfilling career in the automotive industry.

EDAR HILL

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Christopher's determination and ability to adapt to new challenges were evident throughout his life.

In his youth, Christopher achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, demonstrating his commitment to service and personal growth. Outside of his professional pursuits, he found joy in various hobbies. He was an avid reader and had a particular interest in World War II history and Old Western Shows. However, his true passion lay in

automobiles. Christopher was captivated by cars, their mechanics, and the thrill of the open road.

Throughout his life, Christopher was supported by the love of his family. He shared 40 years of marriage with his devoted wife, Jean Zwingli. Christopher will be deeply missed by his daughters, Mara Zwingli and Kristina Zwingli, whose lives he touched with his love, guidance, and unwavering support.

Christopher Zwingli was preceded in death by his parents, Carl Allen and Carol Dooley Zwingli, as well as his brother Michael Zwingli. His memory will forever remain in the hearts of his family and friends, who will cherish the moments they shared.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Lewy Body Dementia Association (Lbda. org.)

### Call 732-356-5400 to Lawrence Karlin, 89 book a tour today! awrence Karlin of and Seymour Karlin. Somerset passed away on May 3. He was 89.

He was predeceased by his wife, Lois, in 2017; parents, Michael and Jeanette Karlin; and brothers, Stanley

Surviving are his sons and daughters-in-law, Rabbi Gary Karlin of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Steven Karlin and his wife, Cynthia Hoftizer of Arlington, Virginia and Richard

Karlin and his wife, Ann Sulzberg of Millville, Delaware; and five grandchildren, Michal, Harris, Moshe, Hannah and Claire.

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### Faith Leaders Gather For 'National Day Of Prayer'



embers of the township's faithbased community and others on May 3 gathered at the Veterans' Memorial Park on DeMott Lane to pray together as part of the National Day of Prayer.

The event, now in its 71st year, is held annually on the first Thursday of May. Leading the program was Alex Kharazi, president of the Franklin Township Interfaith Coalition.

Representatives of the township's Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Bahá'í communities attended the event.

Members of the group took turns reading prayers for national, state and local officials and political leaders.

"The whole idea is to pray to pray together for the well-being of our nation's leaders, the country and peace in the world," Kharazi said. "The Founders were always in the belief that prayer has a meaning, and as all the

faith groups believe in that, prayer is important."

"It brings peace to heart, some hope for our future and hope for the nation," he said.

Kharazi said the Council also hopes that residents will pray in their homes.

"We ask people to pray in their homes and have a peaceful heart, because when you have a peaceful heart, you have a peaceful home, when you have a peaceful home, you will have a peaceful neighborhood, and if you have a peaceful neighborhood, you will have a peaceful community and township and nation eventually," he said. "That's how it goes."

### Youth Center Throws First Birthday Party For Itself

### Continued from Page 1.

Windy White, Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation, said that the past year has been one of learning.

"I think the thing we learned most importantly was the importance of community partnerships," she said. White introduced the four individuals representing groups that were honored: Derek Smith, executive director of the Franklin Food Bank; Lamyra Clarke-White, president of the Raritan Valley Chapter of The Links Inc.; Jim Schrager, of the Canal Walk Men's Club, and Ryan Brenner, general manager of Amazon's Somerset center.

Later in the afternoon, the center was opened to township youth for a festival, highlighted by games, food and other activities.

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# Township Council Amenable To Partnering On Health Clinic

Continued from Page 1.

would be available to the district's school children. The eligible population would then spread to parents and family of school children and then, eventually, to the community.

Students can't learn well if they are not healthy, Palm told the Council.

She said plans call the building call for four medical exam rooms, four dental exam rooms, two vision exam rooms and one office for behavioral health.

Zufall for some time has been providing limited health care services a couple days a week out of their mobile van at Hillcrest School.

The original plan was to refurbish a portable classroom at Hillcrest to serve as the clinic, but, Palm said, "Shockingly, the cost of that renovation seemed costly."

The decision was then made to build a free-standing clinic on the Hamilton Street campus, in a parking lot near the tennis courts.

"We have engaged an

architect to draw up some plans," she said. "The location is ideal because it is close enough to schools but also independent so that we don't have to have individuals going into the school buildings."

The clinic's main targets, she said, are "anyone who has trouble accessing health care. Low income is generally the main commonality among many of our patients."

Township Manager Robert Vornlocker said the Hamilton Street location is ideal because it falls in a census tract that qualifies for Community Development Block Grant funding.

"The focus of all of this ... is to serve the underserved part of our population, whether or not they live in Franklin Township is irrelevant," he said. "It certainly would be available in the future to people who don't live in Franklin Township."

Palm said that in addition to receiving grants, the clinics are funded by insurance reimbursements and payments from patients. She said the patient payments are calculated on a sliding scale and based on income.

"I think we need to go forward with it," Francois said. "I'm looking forward to the partnership that we have with the Board of Education and Zufall."

"For kids to learn they have to have food, they have to have safety and they have to be healthy," Mayor Phil Kramer said. "This is one arm of that."

"This could be a really wonderful thing for Franklin," Ravally said. Now, he said, Franklin sends its students to clinics in New Brunswick or Somerville.

"Making it available to the entire community is going to make for a healthier Franklin and just a better place," he said.



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