

The South Orange Gaslight



The Gaslight

is published six times a year for the residents and businesses of South Orange Village

January
February
2014

Village launches **SOConnect** *Interact with Village government online*

PublicStuff also provides an online 311 system for quick nonemergency municipal service.

The launch of SOConnect is part of the ongoing Village technology initiative, a series of improvements in the IT

infrastructure including the Village website, the emergency notification system, public safety radio communication and crime prevention surveillance cameras. (Learn more at www.southorange.org.)

SOConnect is a free application available now in the Apple app store and Google Play store. To learn more, visit www.PublicStuff.com. ▲

Beautification initiative announced

The Village is taking a pro-active approach to beautifying our neighborhoods this year.

Village employees will be working with residents to help keep all properties compliant with the new initiative.

As of Jan. 1, the Code Enforcement Department will begin inspecting the area from Scotland Road to Holland Road and Valley Street to Eder Terrace. Residents whose properties have fallen out of compliance with Village codes will be asked to abate the issues.

Residents who are physically or financially unable to complete required repairs will be encouraged to call the Village for information on assistance available through local nonprofits like the Community Coalition on Race.

For information, call Code Enforcement at (973) 378-7715, x7700. ▲

Take a ride in Picabo or Slovak **Zipcar comes to South Orange**

Don't have a car? Or want to reduce your car expense? The Village has an intriguing solution. Two Zipcars became available to Villagers in November. Drivers can rent the cars for \$12 an hour or \$84 a day, including gas and insurance.

Zipcar, the largest car-sharing service in the world, has placed two vehicles in downtown South Orange – a Toyota Prius named “Picabo” and a Ford Focus named “Slovak.” The cars are kept across the street from the NJ Transit train station in the firehouse parking lot at Sloan and First streets.

Village President Alex Torpey says car-sharing could save a person as much as \$6,000 a year because it allows them to get by without a car, or give up a second car. “That’s a cost-cut that no town will ever be able to make in a single year by only looking at property taxes,” he said.

To drive one of the cars, you must apply online for a Zipcard at www.zipcar.com. Membership starts at \$6 per month and is open to anyone age 21 or older. South Orange’s cars can only be rented by Zipcar members living in or traveling to the South Orange area.

Gas, insurance and 180 miles of driving per day are included in the cost of all reservations. Low week-day driving rates are available for businesses in the Zipcar for Business program. For details, visit www.zipcar.com. ▲



Inside

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Help your rescue squad

■ **Two notable Villagers recognized:** Michael Recce and Sam Sherl

■ **Three MLK events on tap in January**

■ **Shoemaker appointed fire chief**

■ **Zuckerman heads SOVCA**

■ **Peggy Farah named Villager of the Month**

South Orange is pleased to launch "SOConnect," the official online service request and 311 tool that lets Villagers access information, track service requests, and instantly report nonemergency issues.

Users can connect through the Village website or use a smartphone application. Instead of waiting to be directed to the right office using e-mail or telephone, you can use one simple portal to report any issue instantly. Village employees will take care of the rest.

The Village launched SOConnect in partnership with PublicStuff, a civic engagement platform that helps residents and local governments connect more easily to improve their communities.

If you have an issue, here's how it works:

1. Submit the issue online from the Village website, southorange.org, or use the customized mobile version of the application.

2. Appropriate South Orange staff will be notified through a back-end workflow management suite.

3. Staff will keep you in the loop with regular status updates.

The system supports more than 17 languages. Any request submitted in a foreign language will be translated automatically into English for Village staff. Service updates are then translated back in the resident's native language.

It's YOUR turn!

Help your rescue squad

It was a pinched nerve that caused the neck-down stiffness of the six-year-old South Orange boy. He awoke screaming in the

night in seeming paralysis, terror-stricken.

His parents called 911 and two South Orange Rescue Squad EMTs arrived, lifted the boy onto a gurney, mobilized him with a neck brace, and talked him and his parents into a calmer state.

Like many other grateful Villagers, those young parents are more than willing to give an annual donation to South Orange's all-volunteer emergency medical technicians. "They were there when we needed them and we're really thankful," said the parents.

Thirty members of the South Orange Rescue Squad receive 1,500 calls per year for medical emergencies in South Orange and surrounding communities. Every week, on a purely

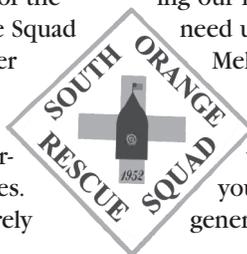
voluntary basis, each member rides one 12-hour week-day shift and one 12-hour weekend shift.

Standby crews stay close to home in case more than one emergency occurs at a time.

Residents are never charged for squad services and operations are funded entirely by community donations, never taxpayer funds. Members run two mail-in fund drives every year, in June and December.

"We are a community based organization dedicated to serving our neighbors when they need us most," said President Melanie Troncone.

When you see those envelopes from the Rescue Squad in your mailbox, please give generously. ▲



Notable Villagers

Michael Recce wins Edison Patent Award

Former Villager Michael Recce is the inventor of a patented handgun grip that prevents firing unless the grip recognizes the user's handprint.

It was Recce, a Ph.D at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, whose work earned the school a prestigious patent award from the Research & Development Council of New Jersey. More than 30 inventors and 12 New Jersey companies and universities were honored at the Council's 34th Patent Award Ceremony on Nov. 7. NJIT won in the emerging technology category.

Dr. Recce, who lived with his family in South Orange from 1997 to 2010, was a product engineering manager at Intel Corporation before moving on to NJIT. He holds six patents and was a recipient of the Innovator Award at the New Jersey Innovators Hall of Fame in 2005.

Sam Scherl named nation's best under-15 squash player

South Orange teen Sam Scherl was recently ranked the nation's number one squash player among boys under 15.

As a freshman at The Pingry School in Basking Ridge, Scherl led his team to the United States Middle School Boys Squash Team National Championships last January. He secured Pingry's 3-2 win over the top seeded Brunswick School, the four-time defending national champions.

A belated congratulations to Sam!

Free rabies clinic, Jan. 4

A free rabies clinic for cats and dogs will be held Saturday, Jan. 4 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Rescue Squad building, #4 Third Street. A licensed veterinarian will be on hand to administer the vaccines.

All dogs must be leashed and cats must be in carriers. Pet owners should bring vaccination renewal applications to the clinic.

If your pet's vaccination expires before Nov. 1, 2014, it is time for an update. Check your application renewal form for the expiration date.

The vaccination update will provide immunity for three years. First-time vaccinations will provide immunity for one year beginning 30 days after the vaccination.

Animal licenses can be purchased at the clinic. The tag will be mailed to you.

For information, call (973) 378-7715, x7711. ▲

Get involved in Village policy

Four Village boards and committees are seeking new members.

The Historical Preservation Commission needs one regular and one alternate commissioner to help consider home improvement applications in historic districts.

The Planning Board needs two regular members and one alternate to help develop policy

on zoning, site plan and subdivision ordinances.

The Board of Adjustments needs two regular members and one alternate to consider special exceptions to the Village zoning ordinance.

The Public Information and Marketing Committee needs members to help advise the Board of Trustees on information exchanges between the Village and its residents.

If you are interested in membership, submit your resume, cover letter, and completed volunteer application to the Township Clerk's Office, 101 South Orange Avenue, South Orange, NJ 07079. Volunteer applications are available online at www.southorange.org. For information, call (973) 378-7715, x7726. ▲

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Shoemaker rises to fire dept. chief

When he was a child in South Orange, John Shoemaker watched in awe as firefighters rushed into his family's smoke-filled home and took knowing steps to prevent a conflagration.

"I wanted to be like them!" he recalls.

On Nov. 25, Shoemaker surpassed his boyhood dream when took the oath as chief of the South Orange Fire Department. He had been deputy chief under predecessor Jeff Markey for nearly three years.

Shoemaker's start in firefighting was actually delayed for a time by a career as a registered nurse. For 23 years he worked in hospital emergency rooms.

But prior to nursing, he joined the South Orange Fire Department Auxiliary as a volunteer assistant to the paid crew. Midway through his nursing career, he passed a firefighter entry exam and was hired in 1985. Nursing suddenly became a part-time job, but one with significant parallel to his new career.

Today, Shoemaker leads a 33-man force and says his goal is to build on Markey's notable success. "I have a committee and we're plotting new directions, but the main goal is to maintain the already high level of service for the public." ▲



SHU boosts firefighter techni-bility

Seton Hall University has donated four Panasonic Toughbooks, two Windows 8 Laptops and two Windows 8 Tablets to the South Orange Fire Department. Firefighters will use the technology to access floor plans in emergencies, to expedite inspections and to record inspection data. The devices are resistant to heat, water and smoke. ▲

Celebrate at three MLK events

■ **South Orange Public Library** will host its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. presentation on Jan. 16 at 7:30 p.m. Amir Billups, a history teacher at Newark Central High School, will speak about "Social Justice, Social Injustice." The program also includes prose, poetry and music.

■ **The South Orange Civic Organization** will present its 44th annual MLK program on Jan. 12 at 3 p.m. at South Orange Middle School. The Rev. Dr. Terry Richardson, senior pastor of the First Baptist Church of South Orange, will deliver the keynote speech, "The Power of Community."

During the program, SOCO will present its annual Beloved Community Award to two recipients: Celia King of Maplewood and Shelley Slafkes of South Orange. Both are long-time participants and leaders in the civic life of the two towns.

■ **The South Orange/ Maplewood Community Coalition on Race** will sponsor "Making It More than a Dream," an interfaith observance and volunteer fair in celebration of Dr. King's birthday.

Congregation Oheb Shalom, 170 Scotland Road in South Orange, will host the combined events on Jan. 20 at 2 p.m.

Rev. Dr. M. William Howard, Jr., pastor of Bethany Baptist Church in Newark, will be the day's featured speaker. Howard is a product of the King era, active for decades in human rights advocacy in the U.S. and abroad.

Music and dance will be provided by the Greg Buford Trio, the Voices in Harmony choir and Columbia High School Special Dance company. Performer Kenny Vaughn will offer a Dr. King reenactment.

Following the observance, at 3:30 p.m., a volunteer fair will provide participants with real-time service opportunities plus information about ongoing community service. The fair

Turn to **MLK Events**, p6

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January

- Jan. 4, 8 p.m. – Leon Russell, singer songwriter, \$33-\$58.
- Jan. 5, 7 p.m. – Midtown Direct Rep in the Loft, new play reading/workshop, \$15.
- Jan. 10, 8 p.m. – Marc Cohn and Paula Cole, singer songwriters, \$40-\$65.
- Jan. 11, 8 p.m. – Josh Ritter, singer songwriter, \$30-\$48.
- Jan. 12, 7 p.m. – Jazz in the Loft, Greg Buford, \$15.
- Jan. 18, 8 p.m. – Greg Brown and Steve Forbert, singer songwriters, \$30-\$50.
- Jan. 23, 7:30 p.m. – True Blues, \$20-\$38.
- Jan. 26, 3 p.m. – Quartet Senza

Misura, presented by Juilliard, \$15-\$20.

- Jan. 26, 7 p.m. – Blues in the Loft, Lil' Bastard, \$15.

February

- Feb. 1, 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. – Hair! The Musical, \$25-\$50.
- Feb. 5, 10 a.m. – Poetry Out Loud, a regional competition, free.
- Feb. 8, 8 p.m. – Jane Monheit, jazz/cabaret, \$34-\$50.
- Feb. 9, 7 p.m. – Midtown Direct Rep in the Loft, new play reading/workshop, \$15.
- Feb. 15, 8 p.m. – Susan Werner and David Wilcox, singer songwriters, \$25-\$40. ▲

Sports & Fitness

www.thebaird.org (select "View Activities")

Tae Kwon Do for Beginners, ages 5-12 - practical self defense, discipline, and body conditioning will increase self-confidence and reduce stress. Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m. starting Jan. 8.

Tae Kwon Do for Special Needs - Parents of children with autism learn how to work more effectively with their children. Saturdays beginning Jan. 4.

- Ages 6-10, 1-2 p.m.
- Ages 11 and older, 2-3 p.m.

US Sports Institute Programs - Register at www.USSportsInstitute.com

- Parent & Me Tennis Squirts: ages 3-5, held indoors, Thursdays, 3:30 or 4:30 p.m., beginning Jan. 23.
- Sports Squirts, Ages 3-5: multiple sports are introduced indoors on Mondays at 3:30 or 4:30 p.m., beginning Jan. 27.
- Platform Tennis: for children and adults, held outdoors on Thursdays beginning Jan. 23.

Spring Baseball & Softball - Register Jan. 25-26 or Feb. 8-9, from 1-4 p.m., at The Baird or at the Civic House in Maplewood.

- Baseball - For South Orange and Maplewood residents ages 5-15 (as of April 30, 2014). Go to www.sombaseball.org.
- Softball - For girls in grades K through 8. Details at www.eteamz.com/msosoftball.

South Mountain Soccer - Register for the spring season starting Feb. 1. Professional training and competitive games for grades 3-8. Runs mid-March through mid-June. Register online at www.thebaird.org, or in person at The Baird. The registration deadline is Feb. 15 or when the program is fully enrolled.

interACT Theatre

(973) 544-8489 • info@interactproductions.org
www.interactproductions.org

"The Importance of Being Earnest," Oscar Wilde's comic masterpiece of witty wordplay, will run for two weekends at Baird Theatre, Jan. 17 to 19 and Jan. 24 to 26.

The play, set in 1895 London, features two young men who create alter-egos to escape unwanted social obligations, then pursue love interests until their falsehoods come to light.

Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$15 general admission, \$12 for students and seniors. Purchase online at www.interactproductions.org or at the theater. For information, call (973) 544-8489, or e-mail info@interactproductions.org.

Pierro Gallery

(973) 378-7754, ext 3 • www.pierrogallery.org

Four from Aferro On display Jan. 9 to Feb. 15

Four alumni of the Gallery Aferro Studio Residency Program will present installation-based exhibitions originally premiered at Gallery Aferro in Newark. Each project reflects the rigorous and often experimental studio work undertaken during a six-month residency. Featured will be: "Skinning The Image," Katrina Bello; "The Edge of Pause," Marcy Chevali; "Sowing Promise," Vikki Michalios; and "Toile News Project," Margaret Murphy.

- Opening Reception - Jan. 9, 7-9 p.m. at The Baird
- Art Talk with the Artists and Gallery Aferro Co-founder Emma Wilcox - Jan. 30, 7 p.m.

Booked 11

On display Feb. 22 to March 22

The annual exhibition of handmade books is presented by the Book Arts Roundtable. The opening reception will be March. 1, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Preschool at the Baird

Applications for the 2014-2015 school year will be accepted starting Jan. 2. The licensed learning center accommodates South Orange and Maplewood residents ages 2 ½ - 4 ½, and features educational and recreational activities on the second floor of The Baird. Drop by for information or visit www.thebaird.org.

Cultural Arts Winter Classes

Register now for courses in visual and performing arts. Classes begin Jan. 6. Details and registration at www.thebaird.org.

Kids

- Clay Time
- Advanced Clay
- Comic Book Capers I and II
- Drawing
- Eyes Through the Lens: Photography
- Intermediate Photography
- Pre-Ballet Creative Movement
- Pre-Ballet

- Funky Freestyle

- Ballet I

- Math Club!

Teens & Adults

- Art with a Master
- Life Drawing
- Watercolor Sketchbook
- Drawing
- Short Subject: Monoprint
- Flamenco!

Free Platform Tennis Clinics and Exhibition -

The American Platform Tennis Association will host a free clinic and exhibition on the courts at The Baird on Jan. 31. New and experienced players can learn from APTA pros. Advance registration is required. Call (973) 378-7754, x1. Clinic options:

- Juniors, ages 10-16, from 4-5 p.m.
- Adults, 5-6 p.m. or 6-7 p.m.

South Orange Library Events

(973) 762-0230 • www.sopl.org

Discussion Group

Thursdays, 1 p.m.

- Jan. 2 - "The Anthropology of Food: Why We Don't Eat Insects, etc.," with sociology professor Rosann Bar.
- Jan. 9 - "Are M.O.O.C. (Massive Open Online Courses) elevating higher education or dumbing down for the masses?" with professor Shawn Grain Carter.
- Jan. 16 - New York Times reporter Andy Lehren, topic to be announced.
- Jan. 23 - actress/dancer Kelly Bishop, and radio/TV personality Lee Leonard, in an encore performance.
- Jan. 30 - "21st Century American Poets," with English professor John Wargacki.
- Feb. 6 - singer, songwriter, educator and community organizer Peri Smilow, topic to be announced.
- Feb. 13 - anthropology professor Joslyn Cassady, topic to be announced.
- Feb. 20 - "Extreme Weather and Climate Change," with environmental studies and philosophy professor Judith Stark.
- Feb. 27 - professor Eugene Lieber, topic to be announced.

Black History Month Presentation

The South Orange and Maplewood libraries together present author Barbara Kukla speaking about her latest book, "America's Music, Jazz in Newark," Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m., at South Orange Library.

Let's Talk Oscars

Author and film critic Allen Barra will host a discussion of the 85th Academy Awards nominees on Feb.

27, at 7 p.m. Barra writes for American Heritage magazine, the Wall Street Journal and the Village Voice.

Winter Foreign Films

Educator, artist and filmmaker Gerard Amsellem will show animated and feature films from foreign countries, then lead discussions on them. Jan. 28, "Children of Heaven," (Iranian). Feb. 25, "The Triplets of Belleville" (French). Both at 7 p.m.

Recurring Events

- Book Review Group - Jan. 27, help choose 2014 book club selections. February, "Twelve Tribes of Hattie," by Ayana Mathis. Both sessions at 7:30 p.m.
- Creative Writing Workshop - Jan. 15, Feb. 12 and 26, at 1 p.m.
- Knitting Workshop led by Nan Samons. Changed to Mondays, Jan. 13 and Feb. 10, at noon.
- Wednesday Movies - Jan. 8 and 22, Feb. 5 and 19, at 1 p.m. Titles to be announced.

Children's Room

- LEGOS - Jan. 6, Feb. 3, 3:45.
- Minecraft - Jan. 13 and 27, Feb. 10 and 24, at 3:30 p.m.
- Stories with Ms. Keisha - resumes Jan. 21, 11 a.m.
- Books & Babies - resumes Jan. 22, 10 a.m.
- Book Bunch - Jan. 15 and Feb. 12, 4 p.m.
- Good Tymes String Band - Jan. 9 and Feb. 13, 10 a.m.
- Wilma and the Wingers - Jan. 23 and Feb. 27, 11 a.m.
- Drop-in Crafts - Jan. 10 and 24, Feb. 14 and 28, 3:30 p.m.
- Seton Stories - Resumes Jan. 24.

Bob Zuckerman heads Village Center Alliance



The former head of the Lower East Side Business Improvement District in New York City has taken the helm of the South Orange Village Center Alliance. Bob Zuckerman became executive director of SOVCA on Nov. 2, replacing Lisa Hackett who departed for another opportunity.

Zuckerman will be moving to South Orange from New York early in 2014.

Aside from the Lower East Side BID, Zuckerman also ran the Greenwich

Village-Chelsea Chamber of Commerce and the Gowanus Canal Community Development Corporation in Brooklyn.

Zuckerman started with SOVCA in November and immediately spearheaded its Small Business Saturday event as well as the first annual Shoppers' Oasis Lounge, which offered free gift wrapping, refreshments and live entertainment to coincide with Santa's arrival in the Village.

With his know-how in recruitment and retention, Zuckerman said he plans to "focus on retaining our great local businesses that are thriving and then recruit fabulous new retail, food and service businesses that will complement what's already here." ▲

Young filmmakers invited to compete

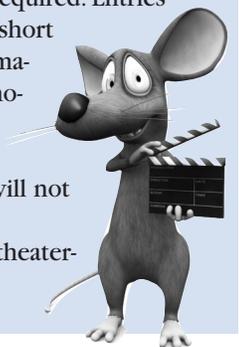
The Theater Project of Union, N.J., is holding a filmmaking competition for high school students. Submissions are being accepted now through March 1.

A public screening of all finalist films will take place in May when the winners will be judged and prizes awarded.

Films should be between 5 and 12 minutes long and must be submitted on DVD. A \$20 entry fee is required. Entries should include a cover letter containing a short biography of the filmmaker, contact information, school attended, and a statement authorizing a public screening at the festival.

DVDs can be mailed to The Theater Project, Box 101, Union, NJ 07083. DVDs will not be returned.

For more information, go to www.thetheaterproject.org, or call (973) 763-4029. ▲



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Clerk's Office, x1
Administrator, x2
Construction, x3
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Finance, x6
Engineer, x7
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Health Officer
x7710
Animal Control
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Fire Dept.
378-7751
Library
762-0230
Police Dept.
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Public Works
378-7741
Recreation & Cultural Affairs
378-7754
Rescue Squad
762-3410
Recycling Info. & Street Dept.
378-7741
Water Service
266-8869

To submit information for **The South Orange Gaslight**, send to Editor Robin Patric, rpatric@comcast.net, or call (908) 823-9001

Villager of the Month Peggy Farah

As each of Peggy Farah's four children reached the eighth grade, they received letters from the People to People Ambassador Program – letters offering educational travel chosen from a selection of 40 countries.

Peggy's daughter Kimberly took three trips during her high school years. The last one included so many students that another leader was needed.

Peggy answered the call. Thirteen years later, she's still traveling as part of a well-oiled team that challenges teens to expand their global awareness, discover new confidence and have a blast doing it.

As a volunteer for People to People, Peggy, along with three other leaders, jets off for three weeks every summer with 40 seventh and eighth graders from Essex, Hudson and Union counties. The destinations have included Fiji, China, Australia, Europe and more.

The year-long preparation for each trip is an unpaid part-time job that Peggy adores. In October and November, she interviews student applicants. In December she hosts a gathering where the selected students meet one another for the first time.

From January to June she plans and facilitates monthly meetings where students hear talks on history, politics and community service – all aspects of the trip ahead. The meetings require many hours of careful planning and a ton of paperwork.

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For Peggy, the rewards go far beyond the travel. As a classroom assistant in special education, she appreciates personal development, and that's what People to People is all about.

"It changes children's lives. It's amazing!" she says. "Your child will come back more responsible, knowing that the world is a much bigger place, and that people are the same everywhere.

"That's the point," she says.

Kids accepted into the program must have the right profile. "We're not looking for A+ students but for responsible young people who are involved in their communities – students who are curious about the world, other cultures, languages and people."

The program requires "wonderful ambassadors of our country," because they will be meeting with local government officials, staying with a local family, and participating in an on-site community service project. They'll rub shoulders with people from all over the world.

"Can you tell I could talk about this program forever?" asks Peggy.

Yes we can! And her enthusiasm is part of the reason that hundreds of kids in South Orange have participated in People to People over the years. Peggy's verve for the program is part of Village lore.

Albert and Peggy Farah have lived in South Orange for 36 years, ever since they were married. Their four children went

through the Village school system.

"We got involved in the community because of our children," said Peggy. "I couldn't wait to coach" and has been devoted to the Booster Club for many years. Peggy was a CCD teacher in her church, a PTA fundraiser, and a scout leader for 17 years. The couple also started a block party and a neighborhood watch group.

For Peggy Farah, People to People was a natural successor to her prior volunteerism. It is her innate ability to do good things for other people that makes her our globe-trotting Villager of the Month.

Free blood pressure screenings offered

Free blood pressure screenings for Villagers are offered by the South Orange Health Department on the first and third Thursday of every month, in two locations:

- First Thursday: 9 a.m.-10 a.m. at the Charles Bierman Home, 110 Vose Avenue.
- Third Thursday: 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m., at The Baird, 5 Mead Street.

Health counsel is provided by a public health nurse. For information, call (973) 378-7715, x7710.

MLK events from page 3

will cap a bundle of volunteer opportunities over the holiday weekend, Jan. 18 and 19.

Organizations interested in participating in the fair can contact Audrey Rowe at the Community Coalition: (973) 761-6116, x4 or info@twotowns.org. ▲

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