

The South Orange Gaslight



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

**January
February
2015**

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- S.O. Library marks 150 years of service
- Patrick Morrissy named January Villager of the Month

Irvington Ave. corridor gets new ID

**Uptown South Orange ...
Seton Village ... Irvana**

It came down to three final contenders in a neighborhood name decision. Which choice would best identify the South Orange section of Irvington Avenue?

The winner? "Seton Village," by a mile. The name acknowledges the proximity and impact of a major university and its symbiotic relationship to the entire Village of South Orange. It applies to the specific section of Irvington Avenue that runs between Prospect Avenue and Seton Place, a corridor chock-full of businesses and residences alike.

And, it's a name you're already seeing on banners hung from gaslights along the designated stretch of Irvington Avenue.

In early 2014, Village Trustees formed the Irvington Avenue Corridor Advisory Committee to focus on the area's economic improvement. They didn't set out to create another business alliance like SOVCA (South Orange Village Center Alliance). Instead, said Doug Zacker who chairs the advisory committee, the aim was "to create a thriving Irvington Avenue that attracts patrons, residents and the university community with diverse shops and restaurants, and a safe, attractive and vibrant neighborhood."

Zacker tells a lively tale of the Seton Village branding process.

"Simply referring to it as Irvington Avenue wasn't going to work," he said. "Irvington Avenue is long and winds through three towns. Simply being told that a store, restau-

rant or an event is happening on Irvington Avenue won't get anyone there. The area needed a name and a brand."

The marketing subcommittee began brainstorming and engaged the public through social media. A long list of suggestions was whittled to three finalists, then put to a web-based vote. Seton Village won in all demographic categories.

Next came the logo design. ITO, the same company that created the SOVCA identity, was chosen for the job. "We wanted to ensure there was a visual tie to the

SOVCA logo to reinforce the unified South Orange community," said Zacker. "After all, we are two business districts within one great town. I think we hit the mark." ▲

It's shoveling season. Do you know your duty?

Even if "winter wonderland" isn't in your vernacular, you can make the season more agreeable by knowing your rights and duties around snow removal. Here's what Village ordinances require:

- If you live on a public roadway, clear sidewalks abutting the road.
- Owners of commercial properties must remove snow and ice within four hours of daylight after a snowfall or ice formation, or by 12 noon, whichever is later.
- On residential properties, all snow and ice must be removed within 12 hours of daylight after a snowfall or ice formation.
- Do not push snow and ice past the curb line or driveway, and never deposit it on someone else's property without permission.



Senior bus schedule expanded



A fifth day of weekly bus service and Wednesday morning excursions to nearby towns have been added to the South Orange senior bus route.

Riders accustomed to the four-day schedule of stops within South Orange — supermarkets, drugs stores, banks, the library — were introduced to expanded service in November.

New Monday service, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., includes the normal route plus a stop at Pathmark on Valley Street for senior discount day.

In January, the schedule will further expand with rotating Wednesday morning trips to Essex Green Plaza in West Orange, Kings grocery store in Maplewood, and Target and Whole Foods in Union. The fourth Monday of every month will be reserved for an all-day trip to the "mall of the month."

Previously, the bus never traveled outside of South Orange.

All rides will remain cost-free. The senior bus is funded and administered by the South Orange Parking Authority in partnership with the South Orange Recreation Department.

Village seniors can get regularly scheduled pickups at senior complexes — 110 Vose Avenue and 219 South Orange Avenue — or they can call for pickup at their respective homes.

For information, contact the Recreation Department at (973) 378-7754. ▲

The Village aims to keep local business owners happy

What makes a town a good place to do business? Often, it's the climate of permitting, inspections and other regulations.

To ensure that South Orange Village is as business friendly as possible, a Business Code Review Task Force was formed in fall to assess the local climate of business-government relations.

Serving on the committee are Village leaders, business and property owners and representatives of two business groups: the South Orange Village Center Alliance, and the Irvington Avenue Corridor Advisory Committee.

So far, the task force has held two public forums with dozens of business owners, and conducted a survey on

business owner regulatory experiences.

Code review is a typical procedure in municipalities. South Orange's last review was in the 1980s.

"The main issues," according to SOVCA Executive Director Bob Zuckerman, "are signage, permits and the process of opening a business."

The task force identifies problems, finds solutions and streamlines inspection and permitting.

A final report to Village Trustees is due in the first quarter of 2015, along with legislative recommendations.

Once ordinances are revised, SOVCA will produce a comprehensive how-to on opening a business in South Orange. ▲



Are you ready for the challenge? The South Orange Health & Fitness Challenge

If rewards are what you need to stick by your New Year's weight-loss resolution, then say no more! The South Orange Health & Fitness Challenge, a new Village-wide initiative, starts Jan. 15.

A grand prize for the largest percentage of weight loss awaits the winner of the five-month event. The competition is open to any resident age 18 or older.

The 2015 challenge is a pilot program and only the first 100 people who sign up will be entered to compete. Contestants may register as individuals, as part of a team, or as a Seton Hall participant. The registration fee is \$20.

From Jan 15 through June 15, contestants will attend monthly weigh-ins. Winners will be determined by their percentage of weight loss. For team competitors, the percentage will be a group average.

No competitive sport-

ing events will be involved. Instead, contestants will devise their own fitness programs. But each month, motivational activities and incentives will be offered.

The fitness challenge was inspired by a similar event in Nutley Township. Dr. Hugh Snyder, a Village resident and primary care physician, brought the idea to the Board of Trustees and encouraged them to take a proactive role in public health issues.

October statistics released by the New Jersey Department of Health report that one out of four (26.3%) New Jersey adults are obese. Trustee Sheena Collum said, "South Orange is doing its part to help reverse the trend locally."

The South Orange Recreation Department will oversee the program.

For competition details and registration, visit www.southorangefitness.org. ▲

Put your dramatic writing skills to the test

New Jersey students age 13 to 18 are invited to compete in the 13th annual Young Playwrights Competition sponsored by The Theater Project of Maplewood. Winners earn cash prizes and a chance to see their work performed by professional actors.

A short play (10-30 pages) or an excerpt from a longer work must be submitted to www.TheTheaterProject.org by Jan. 20, along with a \$10 entry fee. Entry guidelines are online. Or call (908) 809-8865, or e-mail TheaterProject@aol.com.

Open your new business right here in S. Orange

The South Orange Village Center Alliance now offers online listings of available commercial spaces within the heart of town. Listings include address, square footage, parking notes, what's nearby (e.g., train station, park, Village Hall), a contact name and phone number. Check it out at www.sovillagecenter.org.

SOVCA annual meeting, Feb. 2

The public is invited to the annual meeting of the South Orange Village Center Alliance on Monday, Feb. 2 at Ricalton's Village Tavern, 19 Valley Street, from 7-9 p.m. Come discuss the state of the Village Center, review last year's activities and help outline priorities for 2015. Enjoy light food and a cash bar. Details at (973) 763-6899.



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Schoolhouse Rock Live! Jr.

Presented by interACT Youth Productions

Jan. 16-18 and 23-25

Get reacquainted with the Emmy Award-winning cartoon series of the 70s. "Schoolhouse Rock" taught us history, grammar, math, science and politics with clever songs like "Unpack Your Adjectives," "Just a Bill" and "Conjunction Junction."

The story revolves around a nerve-wracked school teacher who tries to relax by watching TV. Characters emerge from the set and show him how to win over his students with imagination and music.

Performances at the Black Box Theater at The Baird are 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and



Saturdays; 4 p.m. on Sundays.
All tickets are \$10.

Almost, Maine

March 6-8, 13-15, 20-22

The romantic comedy by John Cariani is one of the most frequently produced plays of the past decade. Comprised of nine short plays, it explores love and loss in a remote, mythical village called Almost, Maine.

Auditions at Morrow Church in Maplewood take place Jan. 5 and 7 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., with call-backs on Jan. 10 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Send inquiries and resumes to Nick Clarey, artistic director: nick@interactproductions.org.

Get involved in theater production

Visit the interACT website to learn how you can assist with the theater's administration, management, set design and construction, costume and prop design, graphic art and web design, or front of house.

Celebrate MLK Day in 3 local events



The South Orange Civic Organization will present its 45th annual Martin Luther King program at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 11 at South Orange Middle School (70 Ridgewood Road). The public is invited and admission is free.

Deborah Prinz, executive director of the Achieve Foundation of South Orange & Maplewood will be the keynote speaker. Prinz also founded the Achieve Volunteer



Deborah Prinz

Tutor Program, is a member of the NJ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission, and past president of the National Council of Jewish Women, West Morris Section.

This year, SOCO's Beloved Community Award will be given to three recipients, each recognized for leadership and service in the local community and beyond:

- Melissa Kopecky, director of the South Orange Public Library.
- Marvin E. Johnson, long-time Village volunteer and civic supporter.
- Kathleen Leventhal, deputy mayor of Maplewood.

The South Orange Library will hold a dual observance of MLK Day.

• Jan 19, MLK Jr. Day of Service, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Library seeks volunteers for local history - from scanning family photos to transcribing old documents. To get involved, e-mail volunteer@sopl.org, drop in or call.

• Jan 24, "Celebrating our Youth," an MLK Jr. program for all ages, starting at 2 p.m., with Genesis Voice choir and the Maria Priadka dancers.

The Community Coalition on Race will

host its 14th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration on Monday, Jan. 19 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church (767 Prospect Street in Maplewood). The interfaith service will begin at 2 p.m. in the sanctuary. The Greg Bufford Jazz Trio will perform and Voices in Harmony will lead songs. A volunteer fair and reception will follow at 3:30 p.m.

To prepare for the celebration, the Coalition is offering luminaria kits, so that Villagers can add to Dr. King's light. The luminaries will shine throughout the two towns on the eve of Jan. 19. Kits are available for pre-paid pickup or for a \$10 donation at the celebration. Place your order at www.twotowns.org/donate. Note "luminaria" as the purpose on the PayPal page. ▲

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Tae Kwon Do for Beginners. Ages 5-12. Students learn practical self defense while acquiring discipline, body conditioning, self-confidence and stress reduction. Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 7. Instructor Steve Safran.

Tae Kwon Do for Special Needs. Parents of children with autism learn how to work more effectively with their children, and everyone benefits from exercising. Saturday classes begin Jan. 4. Ages 6-10, 1-2 p.m. Ages 11 and up, 2-3 p.m.

US Sports Institute Programs. At The Baird beginning in January. Register at www.USSportsInstitute.com.

- **Tennis Squirts.** Ages 3-5. Indoors at The Baird, Mondays at 3:30 p.m., beginning Jan. 26; or Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 22.
- **First Play Tennis.** Ages 5-8. Indoors at The Baird, Mondays at 4:30 p.m., beginning Jan. 26; or Thursdays at 4:30 p.m., beginning Jan. 22.
- **Sports Squirts.** Ages 3-5. Multiple sports are introduced indoors at The Baird on Tuesdays at 3:30 or 4:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 20.

Spring Baseball and Softball

Registration for spring baseball and girls softball for girls will take place Saturdays and Sundays, Jan. 24 and 25 and Feb. 7 and 8, from 1 to 4 p.m., at The Baird in South Orange and at town hall in Maplewood.

South Orange Maplewood Baseball is affiliated with the Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth organization and is open to South Orange and Maplewood residents ages 5 to 15 (as of April 30, 2015). Get details and register at www.sombaseball.org.

MSO Softball is open to girls in grades K through 8. Details and registration at www.eteamz.com/msosoftball.

Spring Soccer

Registration for the spring season of South Mountain Soccer begins Feb. 1. South Orange Recreation sponsors the program, which includes professional training and competitive games for children in grades 3 to 8. The season begins in mid-March and runs through mid-June. Early registration is encouraged as some divisions fill quickly. Register online at www.thebaird.org or in person at The Baird. The deadline is Feb. 15 or when the program is fully enrolled.

Pierro Gallery

(973) 378-7754, ext 3 • www.pierrogallery.org
Gallery Hours: Monday-Thursday 11-4, Sat 1-4

11 Point Perspective

On display Jan. 21 - Feb. 15

- Opening reception: Jan. 21, 7-9 p.m.
- Art Talk: Feb. 4, 7 p.m.

South Orange-Maplewood public school art teachers who are also practicing artists will present new work in a range of media and styles. All have shown their work in New York City and other U.S. locations. The exhibit includes paintings, drawings, photography, installations and prints, all depicting unique ways of viewing the world. Admission is free.



Preschool at The Baird

Applications will be taken for the 2015-2016 school year beginning Jan. 2. Baird Preschool is a licensed learning center for South Orange and Maplewood residents ages 2 ½ through 4 ½. The pre-K curriculum includes educational and recreational activities. The school is located on the second floor of the Baird, 5 Mead Street. Details and registration at The Baird and online.

Cultural Arts

(973) 378-7754, x1 • www.thebaird.org

Affordable classes in visual and performing arts are offered for everyone from infant through adult beginning Jan. 12. Register online or in person. A \$10 discount applies on most classes for any South Orange resident with a current Recreation & Cultural Affairs ID badge.

Kids Classes

Clay Time

Saturdays, Jan. 17 - Mar. 21, 9:30-10:15.
Ages 3-7 years. Instructor Joan Tamasco.
\$99 + materials.

Comic Book Capers I

Tuesdays, Jan. 13 - Mar. 17, 4-5.
Grades 1-3. Instructor Vicki Arlein.
\$110 + materials.

Comic Book Capers II

Tuesdays, Jan. 13 - Mar. 17, 5:15-6:30.
Grades 4-6. Instructor Vicki Arlein.
\$138 + materials.

Advanced Photography for Teens

Wednesdays, Jan. 14 - Mar. 18, 6:15-7:15.
Grades 8-10. Instructor Jeremy Moss.
\$110. Bring your own SLR camera.

Drawing

Wednesdays, Jan. 14 - Mar. 18, 5-6:30.
Grade 6 to adult. Instructor Larry McKim.
\$165 + materials.

Dance Move Play: Move with Me

Thursdays, Jan. 15 - Mar. 19.
9:30-10:15 or 10:30-11:15.
Ages 6 - 36 months, with caregiver.
Instructor Michele Goldin, \$110.

Dance Move Play, In Spanish

Thursdays, Jan. 5-Mar. 19, 11:30 -12:15.
Ages 12-36 months, with caregiver.
Instructor Michele Goldin, \$110.

Funky Freestyle

Ages 3-4 years.
Instructor Shona Roebuck, \$99.
• Thursdays, Jan. 15 - Mar. 19, 3:45-4:30.
• Saturdays, Jan. 17 - Mar. 21, 1-1:45.

Pre-Ballet

Saturdays, Jan. 17 - Mar. 21, 12-12:45.
Ages 3-5 years.
Instructor Shona Roebuck, \$99.

Teens and Adults

Drawing

Wednesdays, Jan. 14 - Mar. 18, 5-6:30.
6th grade to adult.
Instructor Larry McKim, \$165 + materials.

Life Drawing

Wednesdays, Jan. 14 - Mar. 18, 7-9.
12th grade to adult, \$220 + model fee.
Instructor Larry McKim.

Art With A Master

Tuesdays, Jan. 13 - Mar. 17, 12:30-3.
For adults, with instructor Philip Sherrod.
\$275 + model fee.

Funky Fun Art: Guided Painting

Thursdays, Jan. 8 and Feb. 5.
10:15 -1:15.
Instructor Denise Hayden, \$12 /session.

Interact Activate Theatre Ensemble

Tuesdays, Jan. 20 - Mar. 17, 7-8:30.
High school students, \$132.

Fitness for Seniors

Six classes: Wednesdays, 10:15-11 and/or Fridays 10:15-11, \$36. Instructor Robin Webber. Free trial class by appointment. Details at (973) 378-7754, ext. 1.



We're 150 years old!

The South Orange Public Library has been the community center for reading, conversation and information for 150 years. Today, it's all that and more. With thanks to the Friends of the Library, donors, and other supporters, the library has expanded children's and teen resources, increased the audiobook and NJ collections, created "Take a SEAT" kits for explorers of all ages, and is working to improve library spaces. Community input and support is welcome as the library moves into its next 150 years.

Library Discussions

Thursdays, 1 p.m.

- Jan. 8 - Internationally acclaimed pianist Young Woong Cho.
• Jan. 15 - Actress/dancer Kelly Bishop, and radio/TV personality Lee Leonard present "Fun With Kelly and Lee."
• Jan. 22 - Meet New York Times investigative reporter Andy Lehren. Topic to be announced.
• Jan. 29 - "Nashville," with author and Drew University professor Jo Ann Middleton
• Feb. 5 - "Glimpses of prominent New Yorkers," with Budd Mishkin, host and reporter for New York 1 News.
• Feb. 12 - "Contemporary Politics: Prose and Poetry," with Seton Hall English professor John Wargacki.
• Feb. 19 - Meet film producer Ken Mandel. Topic to be announced.
• Feb. 26 - "Which of you doth love us most? Family Politics in Shakespeare's King Lear," with Rutgers English professor David Baker.

Recurring Events

- Book Review Group - Jan. 25, help choose the titles to be reviewed for the year. Feb. 23, "City of Thieves," by David Benioff. Both sessions at 7:30 p.m.
• Creative Writing Workshop - Jan. 14 and 28, Feb. 11 and 25, at 1 p.m. No experience necessary.
• Knitting Workshop with Nan Samons, Jan. 12, and Feb. 9 at noon.
• Wednesday Movies: Jan. 7 - "Magic in the Moonlight." Jan. 21 - "This is Where I Leave You." Feb. 4 - "And So It Goes." Feb. 18 - to be announced
• Foreign Film Series - "La Strada," an Italian classic, Feb. 24, 7 p.m., hosted by Gerard Amsellem.

Children's Room

- LEGOs (age 5 and up with adult) - 3:45 p.m. Mondays, Jan. 5, Feb. 2 and Mar. 2.
• Minecraft (age 7 and up with adult) - 3:30 p.m. Mondays, Jan. 12, 26, Feb. 9, 23.
• Toddler Storytime

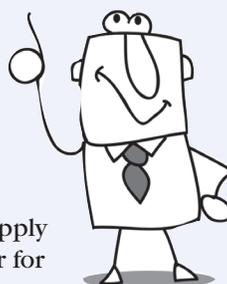
- (age 2 1/2 and up with adult) - Stories and craft with Ms. Keisha, 11 a.m. every Tuesday from Jan. 20 through Feb. 24.
• Books and Babies (newborn to 2 1/2 with adult) - 10 a.m. every Wednesday from Jan. 21 through Feb. 25.
• Music Storytimes - 11 a.m. Thursdays, Jan. 8, 22, Feb.

- 12, 26.
• Seton Stories, all ages - 10:30 a.m., Fridays, Jan. 30 through Feb. 27.
• Friday Drop-In Craft, all ages - Jan. 23 and Feb. 13, 3:45
• Read with Ruby, all ages - Wednesdays, Jan. 21 and Feb. 18 at 3:30. ▲

Bring a smart teaching idea to life



How can teachers spark their students' enthusiasm for learning? That's a question The Achieve Foundation asks every year when they invite local educators to apply for grants that turn great teaching ideas into reality. All South Orange and Maplewood educators may apply for grants. Awards are made in December for projects carried out in the spring.



This year, Achieve awarded 63 teacher grants, totaling \$66,717. But other proposals remain unfunded. Now, through the Direct Grant Funding program, community members are invited to review the list of unfunded teacher proposals and choose a project to support. Visit the Achieve website, www.AchieveFoundation.org, or contact Buena Chilstrom at buenabob@gmail.com or (973) 762-8274.

Be a host on 'Night of 100 Dinners'

It's not too late to become a host for The Achieve Foundation's Night of 100 Dinners on March 7. Simultaneous dinner parties will occur throughout South Orange and Maplewood, with guests donating \$50 or more per person to the foundation. Hosts create their own guest lists and determine their own style, whether candlelit dinners, theme parties, sushi or subs. All donations will support Achieve programs. To learn more, e-mail 100dinners@achievefoundation.org, or call (973) 378-2055.

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Assessor, x5
Finance, x6
Engineer, x7
Parking Auth., x8
Health Officer
x7710
Animal Control
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Fire Dept.
378-7751
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762-0230
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Cultural Affairs
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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

January Villager of the Month **Patrick Morrissy**

In a crumbling neighborhood, the key to redevelopment is identifying pivotal properties (like visible corner houses), restoring them and finding willing buyers. Do that enough and investors will follow.

That strategy has worked for Patrick Morrissy, the long-time Village resident who founded Hands, Inc. in 1986. The nonprofit community development corporation operates in Orange and East Orange and Morrissy still serves as executive director.

Hands was started a quarter-century after the city of Orange had been sliced in half by Interstate 280. The highway created white flight to the west and erosion to the east.

Hands identified 400 vacant and deteriorated houses. They brought together clergy and community leaders. They trained homeless people as carpenters' helpers and rehabilitated houses. By last year, Hands had renovated 170 properties and purchased defaulted mortgages on 47 vacant properties.

Along with housing rehab, Morrissy made a bet that the arts could ignite revitalization in Orange's old industrial neighborhood. Hands acquired abandoned properties to create spaces for a theater, restaurants, a café, artists lofts, painting studios, nonprofits and a young artists' center. Today, Morrissy considers the Valley Arts District to be his greatest accomplishment.

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Our honoree and his wife Jean Campbell have resided in South Orange since 1984. Their three children attended Village schools and Morrissy coached many of their teams, including, to his

delight, Sparkle Motion, the CHS girls Ultimate Frisbee team. He served on the Home and School Association and the South Orange Redevelopment Advisory Committee. Jean helped build the organization now known as the Achieve Foundation and still serves as treasurer of the Columbia High School Scholarship Fund.

So why does a guy entrenched in thriving South Orange put so much energy into the less privileged town next door?

"I'm a city boy," he says. "I grew up in Detroit and I think of myself as an agent of change, an activist."

"The important part is, we are one community, irrespective of municipal boundaries. And it's a relatively small community at that. There are not big distances between the neighborhoods of Orange and South Orange."

In Valley Arts, "I can feel the border melting. I see a lot of folks from South Orange at the galleries, at the Hat City Street Festival and at Luna Stage. There's a great sort of mixing going on that I think is wonderful."

Morrissy's pitch-in nature was grounded by parents who believed in equality across the

board. They taught him "to look out for those who have less."

After college he ran a program for high school drop-outs and later was drawn to Orange by friends organizing a tenants' association to fight for better housing conditions. It wasn't long before he moved into neighborhood revitalization.

Through decades of successful leadership, Morrissy has leaned on South Orange as his hometown model of community success. "Whenever I talk about how great South Orange is, one thing I point to is how many people volunteer for all kinds of community initiatives. That's something I learned as a kid," and fostered in South Orange. "Jean and I think we passed that on to our children." ▲

Selected Morrissy Credentials

- Former member, NJ State Planning Commission.
- Current national chair, Community Stabilization Committee for NeighborWorks America.
- Founder of "Shelterforce," a national community development magazine.
- 2014 recipient of the Preservation Award given to Hands, Inc. by the Victorian Society in America - NNJ chapter, for adaptive reuse of the 1902 Orange firehouse. The building now houses live/work artists' lofts and the Firehouse Gallery.

Free blood pressure screenings

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.

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