

# The Gaslight

**SOUTH ORANGE  
VILLAGE  
ACCESS IT ALL**

**ISSUE 11  
2023/  
2024**



**WINTER  
EDITION**



**IN TOUCH WITH  
VILLAGE GOVERNMENT**

**VILLAGE PRESIDENT**

Sheena Collum  
973.378.7715 x 2

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Bobby Brown  
Jen Greenberg  
Karen Hartshorn Hilton  
Bill Haskins  
Summer Jones  
Olivia Lewis-Chang  
973.378.7715 x 2

**ADMINISTRATION**

Village Administrator  
Julie Doran  
973.378.7715 x 2

**GENERAL INQUIRIES**

973.378.7715  
**Clerk's Office**, x 1  
**Building & Code**, x 3  
**Tax Collector**, x 4  
**Assessor**, x 5  
**Finance**, x 6  
**Engineering & Zoning**, x 7  
**Parking Authority**, x 2037  
**Health**, x 7710  
**Water Service** x 7760  
**Public Works**  
973.378.7741  
**Recreation & Cultural Affairs**  
973.378.7754  
**Fire Department**  
973.762.3200  
**Library**  
973.762.0230  
**Police, nonemergency**  
973.763.3000  
**Rescue Squad**  
973.762.5647  
**Animal Control**  
908.722.1271

# LETTER FROM THE VILLAGE PRESIDENT



Happy New Year to all!

As we bid farewell to the holiday season and usher in a brand-new year, I hope each and every one of you had a joy-filled and heartwarming celebration with your loved ones. I'm optimistic the days ahead will be filled with endless possibilities for our community members and beloved Village.

I'm excited to share that the renovation of our long-awaited Baird Community Center is complete and will open to the public this quarter. Undoubtedly, you will be impressed with our new programming spaces and enhanced offerings, a beautiful gallery, café leading to the second-floor porch, and a new field house constructed with a gymnasium that extends playtime for adults and children all year around.

Our South Orange Public Library has been relocated to 298 Walton Avenue while renovations are underway. The limited temporary space can accommodate the library's collection of materials while providing reduced but similar services. With an expected completion date of 2026, the "Building Connections Project" will double the existing footprint and feature a teen room, maker space, study rooms, and a computer lab, bringing our historic Connett Building back to life.

Some other updates include:

- Village Hall received an "Outstanding Project Award" from Preservation New Jersey for the incredible public-private partnership advancing adaptive reuse for an iconic building.
- The Co-Lab, located at Taylor Vose, has had its soft opening to rave reviews. The collaborative retail space was designed to allow local entrepreneurs the opportunity to incubate their businesses with a prime brick-and-mortar presence in the heart of our downtown.
- The beautifully designed Fourth and Valley redevelopment project by Meridia is now being leased, and we look forward to welcoming our new neighbors.
- The Water Utility Task Force has issued preliminary findings after over a year of work that will guide the Village forward in evaluating the best course of action for the future of our water system and customers.
- Preliminary negotiations are underway with NJTransit for a promising redevelopment project that could include a structured parking garage and better circulation for jitneys and pedestrians, market rate and affordable housing units, new retail space, completion of phase 3 of the River Greenway Project, and new municipal offices. More to come, as this could be a transformative project.

Our work always continues! To our staff, volunteers, and community members: you are the heartbeat of our collective journey. Your engagement, support, and enthusiasm have created an environment where ideas flourish, connections thrive, and positive change takes root. I'm eternally grateful and thrilled for our new year.

*Sheena Collum*

Sheena C. Collum  
Village President



# VILLAGE HIGHLIGHTS

The Trustee and advisory committees of South Orange Village are the talk of the town. These committees are actively seeking new members to contribute their ideas and events. If you're passionate about making a difference, consider joining an advisory committee today. If you are interested in learning more or joining any of South Orange's committees, visit [southorange.org/374/volunteering](https://southorange.org/374/volunteering). Here's a look at just some of our committees' accomplishments in 2023.



## COMMUNITY DAY 2023 COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Every autumn, the Community Relations Committee (CRC) throws the ultimate block party: Community Day! It's a chance for our town to come together, mingle, and really get to know one another. This year, more than 50 local organizations, elected officials, municipal staff members, and residents came together at Meadowland Park to exchange ideas and learn more about everything that makes South Orange special. In case you missed the event, take a peek at the 2023 Community Guide on the town's webpage or hop on over to the CRC Instagram page (@southorangecrc).



**FANTASY PARTY WORLD**



## WALK BIKE RIDE'S CRITICAL MASS BIKE RIDE

## WALK BIKE RIDE SOUTH ORANGE

The Walk Bike Ride South Orange Committee was recently awarded EZ Ride's Gold Award for its remarkable work fostering a safer environment for walking and biking in South Orange. The committee has been working hard to ramp up safety awareness, and it's paying off. It recently organized a Critical Mass Bike Ride from Maplewood Town Hall to Spiotta Park in South Orange to draw attention to its goal of safer streets for all. We eagerly anticipate the committee's upcoming spring events and encourage everyone to participate. To stay up to date, follow the committee on Facebook or Instagram (@WalkBikeRideSouthOrange).



**EL GRECO PIZZA**

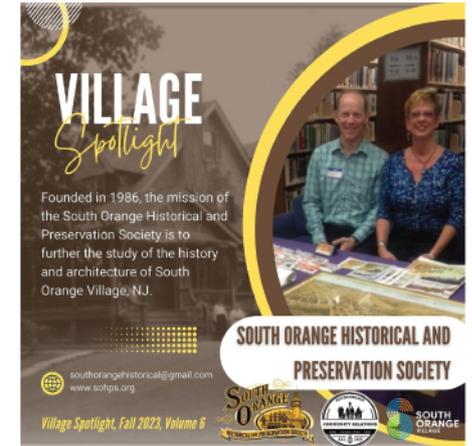
## SETON VILLAGE | NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION PROGRAM

If you've driven along Irvington Avenue lately, you may have noticed the upgraded facades and signage. Thanks to the hard work of our Seton Village coordinator, ErinRose Baldry, local businesses are looking better than ever. Take a moment to appreciate the beautification of the corridor from Riggs Place through Waverly Place, with businesses such as El Greco Pizza, Cleanway Car Wash, Fantasy Party World, and Guanaticos Restaurant taking advantage of the facade grant program. Follow Seton Village on social media to learn more (@setonvillageso).

# VILLAGE HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

## SOUTH ORANGE HISTORICAL AND PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Established in 1986, the South Orange Historical and Preservation Society (SOHPS) promotes appreciation for the history and architecture of South Orange. It disseminates information about preservation and architecture, supports preservation activities, promotes adaptive reuse of historical structures, and recognizes landmark buildings and historical neighborhoods. Notably, it worked to save the oldest section of the Squier House, and it provides historical information to individuals seeking knowledge about their homes or other historical subjects through programs. If you want to participate in SOHPS, check out its website at [sohps.org](https://sohps.org).



## BLANKET MAKING FOR THE CHILDREN OF ISAIAH HOUSE SOMA TWO TOWNS FOR ALL AGES

SOMA Two Towns for All Ages seeks to keep older residents in our community by adding to their quality of life, strengthening interactions with all ages, and providing support through information and networking. We look back fondly at the activities and programs the group offered in 2023, including:

- A Lunch and Learn event about sleep and aging held at SOPAC.
- A trip to Newark Art Museum.
- Special seating at both South Orange Downtown's Under Cover Music Festival and Maplewoodstock.
- Blanket making for the children of Isaiah House.
- A collage-making event for teens and older adults.
- An education session on the Senior Freeze and ANCHOR tax-reduction programs.
- A volunteer fair, health fairs, and the Repair Cafe.



If you are interested in volunteering or finding more information on resources, check out the group's website at [somatwotownsforallages.org](https://somatwotownsforallages.org).

To sign up for email blasts and for the newsletter, email [soma2towns@gmail.com](mailto:soma2towns@gmail.com) or call 973.558.0863.



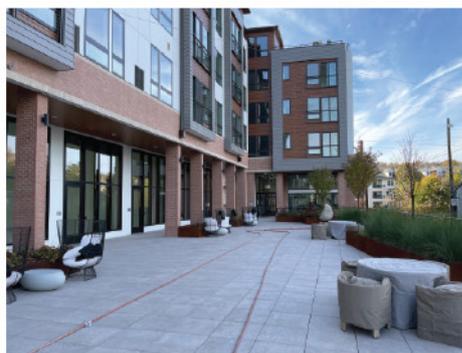
# VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT



## MERIDIA AT 4TH AND VALLEY

This 106-unit mixed-use development located at 4th and Valley is now open for leasing.

This development creates an attractive gateway to the Village Central Business District and contributes to the vibrancy and connectivity of the neighborhood with wide sidewalks, outdoor seating and activated commercial storefronts.



## Vehicle & Property Safety Announcement

From the South Orange Police Department

Over **95%** of vehicle thefts happen when the fob is left in the car\*

### Contact the SOPD for a home & property security assessment, at no cost

Basic home prevention methods can help protect your home & property

- NEVER leave your key fob in your car
- Lock doors, windows & vehicles
- Install the security devices, such as:
  - A home alarm system
  - Exterior illumination, including motion activated lighting
  - Doorbell or other security cameras
  - Anti-theft devices
  - Tracking devices, such as air tags or smart tags



Email [pdsecuritysurvey@southorange.org](mailto:pdsecuritysurvey@southorange.org) to schedule your home assessment

\*Within South Orange Village



## SOPD INITIATIVE HELPS CURTAIL AUTO AND OTHER PROPERTY THEFT

**HIDE**  
YOUR VALUABLES



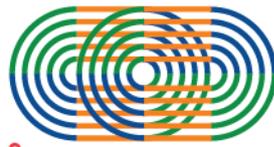
**TAKE**  
YOUR KEYS/FOB



**LOCK**  
YOUR VEHICLE



# VILLAGE CONNECTIONS



Want to know what's happening in South Orange? Here's how to stay connected with news, announcements, events, and more.



## EMERGENCY ALERTS

Are you receiving emergency alerts and nonemergency notifications from South Orange? Communication is key, whether it be during a global pandemic or severe weather event, or about a street closure. You can create an account at [southorange.org/610/SO-Alerts](https://southorange.org/610/SO-Alerts) and personalize your account so you receive only the alerts and notifications you want, the way you want them, be it by phone, text, or email.



## 'NOTIFY ME' SUBSCRIPTIONS

Create an account on our website and sign up for notifications tailored to your areas of interest, including calendar listings, news postings, bid postings, and employment opportunities. You can also subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter, The South Orange Digest, which includes updates about events, volunteer opportunities, government meetings, and changes to our municipal ordinances. Visit the "Notify Me" subscription page at [southorange.org/list.aspx](https://southorange.org/list.aspx).



## REPORT A CONCERN

You can report a nonemergency issue easily using either the "Report a Concern" link at [southorange.org](https://southorange.org) or the GovAlert app from your mobile device.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

We're active on both Facebook and Instagram: [@southorangevillage](https://www.facebook.com/southorangevillage).

ACCESS IT ALL	NEWS	EVENTS	VILLAGE HALL	FOOD	SPORTS	DOWNTOWN	ENTERTAINMENT
		<h1>WEEKLY DIGEST</h1>			WEEKLY UPDATES ABOUT ALL THE IMPORTANT & FUN EVENTS IN TOWN		
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	

## ADVERTISE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE GASLIGHT

The Gaslight is mailed directly to every home in South Orange, reaching just over 6,000 residences.

To reserve your space email [jdoran@southorange.org](mailto:jdoran@southorange.org) and use: GASLIGHT AD SPACE in the subject line.

# VILLAGE HAPPENINGS

## ANNUAL MLK OBSERVANCE, VOLUNTEER FAIR, AND LUMINARY LIGHTING

Join the South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race at its annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration on Monday, January 15. The event begins with an observance in the Columbia High School auditorium at 2 p.m., followed by a volunteer fair. Community members are invited to close out the day by participating in a luminary lighting, an uplifting and inspirational moment of reflection. Hundreds of households, businesses, and township sites, along with Seton Hall University, display decorated, candle-lit bags as a sign of solidarity with Dr. King's vision of the Beloved Community. Luminary kits will be available for a donation at local businesses and at the observance. Visit the Coalition's website for details: [communitycoalitiononrace.org](https://communitycoalitiononrace.org).



**'EVERYBODY CAN BE GREAT, BECAUSE EVERYBODY CAN SERVE.'**  
— DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Let's come together to recognize and celebrate the rich history, achievements, and contributions of the African American community in a meaningful way. In celebrating the history of African Americans and the arts,



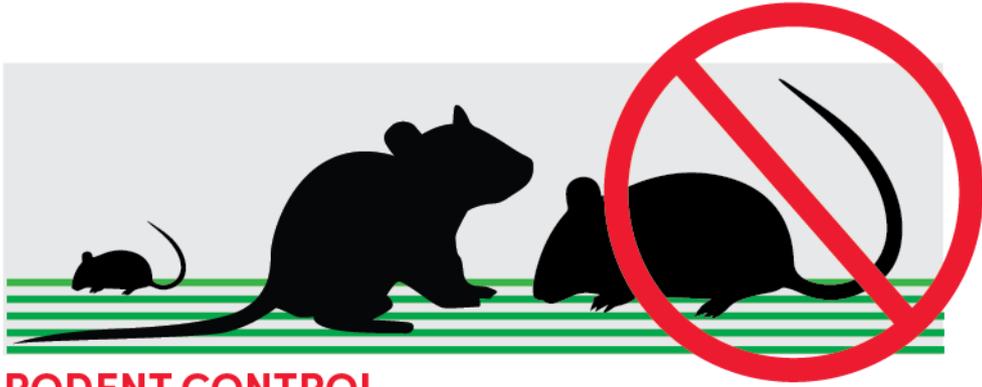
the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) spotlights the richness of the past and present with an eye toward what the rest of the 21st century will bring, with a focus on African Americans and the arts. For more information, visit [asalh.org](https://asalh.org). Check our website ([southorange.org](https://southorange.org)) and follow us on Instagram (@southorangevillage) and Facebook (SouthOrangeVillage) for information on local Black History Month events.

## SOMA CELEBRATES WOMEN: A MONTHLONG CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

This March, elected officials from Maplewood and South Orange join hands with township departments, divisions, and organizations to honor the contributions of women. We're hosting a series of events that emphasize education, empowerment, support, and solidarity. We aim to amplify women's voices and acknowledge their past, present, and future achievements. For a complete schedule of events, visit the SOMA Celebrates Women webpage at [somawomen.org](https://somawomen.org); it will be updated in late February and throughout March. To register for upcoming events or sign up for the coalition's newsletter, visit [communitycoalitiononrace.org](https://communitycoalitiononrace.org).

**SOMA**  
celebrateswomen

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES INITIATIVES



## RODENT CONTROL

Under the leadership of Trustee Olivia Lewis-Chang, chair of the Health & Public Safety Committee, and South Orange Health Officer Candice Davenport, South Orange Village recently updated a Health Department ordinance to address recent neighborhood rodent infestations. Now, anyone doing construction or demolition that will disturb the ground must adequately bait the premises five to ten days prior to beginning work.

In addition, the township's rodent brochure and information on best practices to help control rodent infestations can be found at [southorange.org/464/environmental-health](http://southorange.org/464/environmental-health).

Rats, like people, need a place to live and food to eat. If you eliminate their shelter and food, rat populations can be controlled. The key to a successful rodent-control program is knowing the signs and keeping your areas clean and rodent proof. It is important to remember to communicate and coordinate with your neighbors. Keeping neighborhoods rodent free requires a community effort. Early communication can help curb infestations before they expand.

If you believe your property may have rodents, you are advised to call a professional exterminator and notify the Health Department through the "Report a Concern" option on the [southorange.org](http://southorange.org) homepage. If you have any further questions, contact the South Orange Health Department at [sohealthdept@southorange.org](mailto:sohealthdept@southorange.org) or call 973.762.8120 x2006.

ATTENTION SOUTH ORANGE ARTISTS!

CALL FOR ART ENTRIES

WE'RE THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE AN OPEN CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR OUR FIRST GALLERY SHOW AT THE BAIRD. WHETHER YOU PAINT, DRAW, SCULPT, PHOTOGRAPH, OR CREATE IN ANY OTHER MEDIUM, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR WORK FOR CONSIDERATION. THE PIERRO GALLERY STRIVES TO BE AN INCLUSIVE SPACE THAT EXHIBITS ARTISTS OF ALL MEDIUMS AND STYLES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND DETAILS ON HOW TO SUBMIT, FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA: FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM: @SOUTHORANGEVILLAGE AND/OR CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.SOUTHORANGE.ORG

**DOES YOUR HOME NEED REPAIRS?**  
The Village invites you to apply to South Orange Village's **NEW HOME IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

**You can receive up to \$10,000 in repairs!**

If you live in South Orange Village, own your home, and your total gross annual household income falls below the income limit for your household size, you may qualify to participate in the program.

- There is no cost to apply and it does not affect your credit score.
- Funds are provided as a no interest (0%) ten-year forgivable loan.
- There is no monthly payment.
- A professional inspector oversees the process.

**ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS INCLUDE**

• Roofs	• Windows
• Foundations	• Insulation
• Heating	• Plumbing
• Electrical	• and more!

Household size	1	2	3	4
Maximum Income	\$69,344	\$75,251	\$80,157	\$99,063
Household size	5	6	7	8
Maximum Income	\$104,900	\$114,913	\$122,818	\$130,763

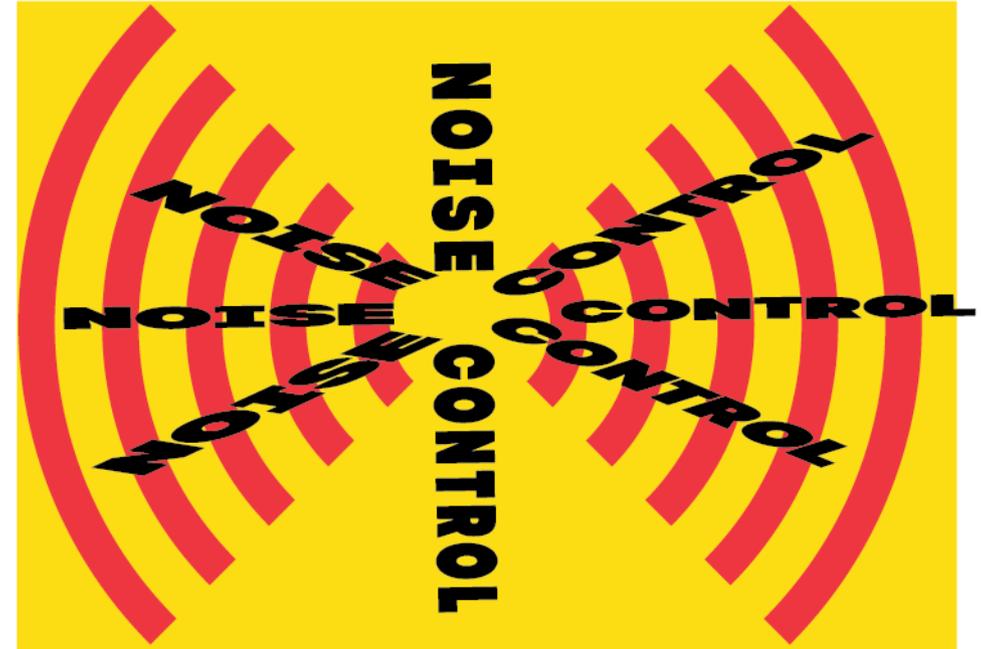
(income limits updated annually)

**FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED TAKE THE FIRST STEP!**  
[www.hip.cgph.net](http://www.hip.cgph.net)

This program is sponsored by the Village of South Orange and funded by collected development fees. Easily submit your preliminary application online!

If you have additional questions, or if you do not have internet access, call the Program Representative at (609) 664-2709 ext. 9. Funding also available for rental properties - Landlords to call for terms.

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES INITIATIVES CONTINUED



## NOISE CONTROL ORDINANCE UPDATED

Under the leadership of Trustee Olivia Lewis-Chang, chair of the Health & Public Safety Committee, the Village administration, the Planning & Economic Development Committee, and the Public Safety Committee worked together to craft and adopt an updated noise ordinance in November 2023. These changes are designed to enhance the quality of life for our South Orange residents.

Some highlights from the revised ordinance:

1. Sound from radios, TVs, phonographs, and live music that is audible at a distance of 50 feet from a building, structure, or vehicle is limited to the hours of 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. and should not be audible from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.
2. Yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling, or singing on public streets that disturbs the quiet is limited, especially between the hours of 11 p.m. and 8 a.m.
3. No person shall engage in any construction, excavation, or demolition, or use any power equipment in connection with gardening, landscaping, lawn service, or the like, within the Village except between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays.
4. No person shall make or permit the making of any loud, excessive, or disturbing noise in connection with the loading or unloading of any vehicle or trailer. Loading and unloading shall be confined to the hours between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., seven days a week.

The complete ordinance can be found in the Village Code, Chapter 207, and related fees in Chapter 143-15. The Village Code is available online at [southorange.municipalcodeonline.com](http://southorange.municipalcodeonline.com).



# RECREATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS



## COMMUNITY GARDEN

Are you ready to cultivate a green thumb and be part of our thriving community garden? Now's your chance to secure a plot in the South Orange Community Garden. The garden, consisting of 48 raised-bed garden plots, each measuring 4 by 12 feet, is located in a small portion of Riverside Park, on West Third Street near Church Street, adjacent to the west bank of the Rahway River's east branch. This recreational community garden is a place for the residents of South Orange to learn about and grow organic and sustainable ornamental and edible plant culture. Registration opens on January 1 and can be completed online or over the phone on a first-come, first-served basis. Proof of residency is required. Let's grow together and make our community garden flourish!



## BASEBALL REGISTRATION

Are your children ready to unleash their inner athlete, make new friends, and have a blast? The largest youth sports program in town is back, and it's better than ever! Our spring baseball program is available for children ages 5 to 15. Registration is open January 1 through January 31. The season will run from April through early June; each team will have two games per week. Additional details (including game days for each age group) can be found at [southorange.org](http://southorange.org). Registration can be completed online or over the phone. Spots are limited, so be sure to sign up early.



## YEARS OR OLDER

### ACTIVE OLDER ADULTS

Are you looking for an enriching and active lifestyle in a welcoming community of like-minded individuals? Look no further! We invite you to become a part of our vibrant active adult community, where an exciting world of classes and camaraderie awaits. Our Active Older Adult programming includes a variety of classes for anyone 55 years or older. Meet new people, be active, and tap into your creativity. Classes include yoga, tai chi, Zumba, arts, and writing programs. Classes are offered on weekday mornings and early afternoons. Check [southorange.org](http://southorange.org) for the dates and times of our February program sessions.

# RECREATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS

## CONTINUED



## RECREATION SUMMER CAMP

Get ready for an unforgettable summer full of adventure, learning, and fun at our Recreation Summer Camp. We are thrilled to share some exciting new changes that will make this year's camp a fun and enriching experience for children ages 4 to 13. In an effort to best accommodate the needs of our residents, the Department of Recreation has made following updates for summer 2024:

- Expanded hours of operation. In addition to the existing 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. program option, families will be able to register for a 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. program this summer. Extended-hour options, starting at 8 a.m. and/or continuing until 5 p.m., will be available at an additional cost.
- No more weather-related cancellations. Camp will operate rain or shine this summer, with campers shifting indoors during inclement weather.
- Weekly registration available. Residents will be able to pick the weeks that they would like their children to participate. A minimum of four weeks will be required.
- Special Ed programming. Group schedules will include a balance of organized free play and structured programming led by qualified specialists. Activities will include athletics, creative and performing arts, special events, and swim time.
- Earlier registration date. Registration will open on January 15 at 9 a.m.

We can't wait to welcome your children to a summer full of new adventures and lasting memories.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs is looking forward to another fantastic year of events in South Orange Village. In 2023, we produced and co-sponsored more than 30 events, starting with Black History Month in February and ending with the Love My Park celebration in November. We are working to create meaningful events in 2024 that reflect the enthusiasm, history, and cultural diversity of our community.

We are currently accepting volunteer applications for the Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Committee. The mission and vision of the committee is to support the development of arts and cultural affairs programming, promote cultural engagement, and provide outreach to the surrounding community. The committee serves in an advisory manner to the Village Board of Trustees. The committee has three distinct areas: arts, cultural affairs, and the Pierro Gallery. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Blake Smith, manager of Arts & Cultural Affairs, at [bsmith@southorange.org](mailto:bsmith@southorange.org).

To keep in the loop about Recreation & Cultural Affairs' latest news and events:

- See all upcoming events on the homepage at [southorange.org](http://southorange.org).
- Sign up for the recreation newsletter and other Village emails at [southorange.org](http://southorange.org).
- Follow the Village's Facebook and Instagram pages [@SouthOrangeVillage](https://www.facebook.com/SouthOrangeVillage).

If you have any questions or want more information, feel free to contact us at 973.378.7754 x2324.



We are currently accepting volunteer applications for the Arts & Cultural Affairs Advisory Committee.

**SOPAC**  
SOUTH ORANGE  
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

**BUY TICKETS  
TODAY!**

**MARTIN  
SEXTON**  
FRI, MAR 8  
AT 8PM



**BRIT PACK**  
FRI, JAN 19  
AT 8PM



**KIDS + FAMILY  
BUBBLEMANIA!**  
Comedy With A Drip!  
Featuring Casey  
Carle, Comic  
Bubble Artist  
SUN, FEB 25  
AT 1PM



**SOUTH ORANGE  
INTERNATIONAL  
BLUES FESTIVAL**  
Featuring Popa  
Chubby, Billy Hector  
& Blues People  
SAT, JAN 27  
AT 7:30PM



**VITALY: AN  
EVENING OF  
WONDERS**  
SAT, MAR 9  
AT 8PM



**WILLIE NILE**  
A Career  
Retrospective Show  
FRI, FEB 23  
AT 8PM



**TELMARY**  
FRI, MAR 22  
AT 8PM

**SOPACnow.org | (973) 313-2787**

SOUTH ORANGE  
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER  
ONE SOPAC WAY  
SOUTH ORANGE, NJ 07079



Made possible by funds from the  
New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner  
agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



**VILLAGE NEWS**

**MELISSA HODGE**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SOUTH ORANGE DOWNTOWN



**SOUTH ORANGE WINS TWO DOWNTOWN NEW JERSEY EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

Melissa Hodge was named the Individual of Excellence, and South Orange Downtown received the Excellence in Placemaking award for the Village Plaza Triangle. "Melissa is a talented and effective leader," says Village President Sheena Collum. "She worked hand in hand with the Village administration as we managed three new mixed-use developments downtown. Her ability to represent and communicate with our business owners, property owners, residents, and Village staff was invaluable to the success of these efforts. But perhaps most striking is the positive attitude, tremendous energy, and sense of fun she brings to everything she does. South Orange is a better place because of her."

Mark Hartwyk, co-chair of the South Orange Downtown beautification committee says, "The Triangle space was the perfect location to apply the Main Street New Jersey Transformation Grant funding we were awarded. The result is a vibrant mural depicting music and a sculpture depicting dance. The combination of the two brings together the two forms of art in a fun way that all ages can relate to and enjoy. The colors, lighting, seating, and landscaping all lend themselves to a beautiful public space."

**SOUTH ORANGE DOWNTOWN  
VILLAGE PLAZA TRIANGLE**





## YOU CAN NOW USE YOUR LIBRARY CARD AT 78 LIBRARIES

South Orange Public Library (SOPL) has joined the Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS), offering unprecedented information services to South Orange residents. A SOPL library card now provides access to more than 5,000,000 books and 65,000 digital materials, such as audiobooks, DVDs, and e-books.

BCCLS comprises 78 libraries. Patrons of BCCLS libraries may borrow and return materials at any of the 78 member libraries. Many services can be handled, via the BCCLS app, on your cellphone or other personal device.

Here are some of the key features of the BCCLS app:

- The ability to place a hold at any BCCLS library.
- A digital barcode reader, to quickly locate materials in BCCLS.
- A list of BCCLS libraries, sorted by distance, with contact information.
- A calendar of events and programs at all BCCLS libraries.
- Online databases, e-books, and audiobooks.
- Access to personal account details including holds, reviews, and the ability to renew borrowed materials.
- The ability to pay fines by credit card.



SOPL staff members are available to help with all BCCLS questions. For more information, visit [sopl.org](http://sopl.org), call 973.762.0230, or visit the library at its intermediate location, 298 Walton Ave.



**THE MEMORIAL ROCK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WAS LED BY EAGLE SCOUT CANDIDATE AIDAN SHERIDAN.**

## MEADOWLAND PARK CONSERVANCY GOLD STAR GARDEN & AMPHITHEATER PROJECT

The Meadowland Park Conservancy partnered with Maplewood Eagle Scout candidate Aidan Sheridan and South Orange Village to give the Memorial Rock area next to the pond its first improvement in decades. This was Phase 1 of the conservancy's Gold Star Garden & Amphitheater project, which will completely re-imagine the long-ignored space to make it a beautiful tribute to the South Orange lives that have been lost in service as well as a scenic and peaceful location for small performances, relaxation, and group activities such as yoga and tai chi. For more information on the conservancy, visit [meadowlandpark.org](http://meadowlandpark.org).



## TAX DEPARTMENT NEWS: THE REVALUATION IS COMPLETE

The Village-wide property revaluation is complete. All property owners should have received their revised assessment in late 2023. A Notice of Property Assessment for 2024 will be mailed in February. While these new property tax assessments are effective for 2024, they are not reflected in your billing until the latter half of the calendar year. Once all budgets (school, county, and municipal) are determined, the 2024 tax rate will be calculated and applied in the second half of the year. If you have questions regarding your new assessment, you may reach out to the assessor's office at [ellen@southorange.org](mailto:ellen@southorange.org).

The 2024 first-quarter tax payment is due February 1. Please note that postmark dates are not honored as dates of receipt, and postdated checks will not be accepted. As a reminder, tax payments are due quarterly, on February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1.

Taxes can be paid and verified 24/7 at [southorange.org/302](http://southorange.org/302). A 10-day grace period is granted every quarter. After 10 days, interest is charged from the original due date.

To receive text and/or email reminders prior to due dates, as well as other tax-related communications, visit [southorange.org/list.aspx](http://southorange.org/list.aspx) and select the "Tax Collector" and "Tax Collector News" options.

## CLEARING HYDRANTS OF SNOW SAVES LIVES

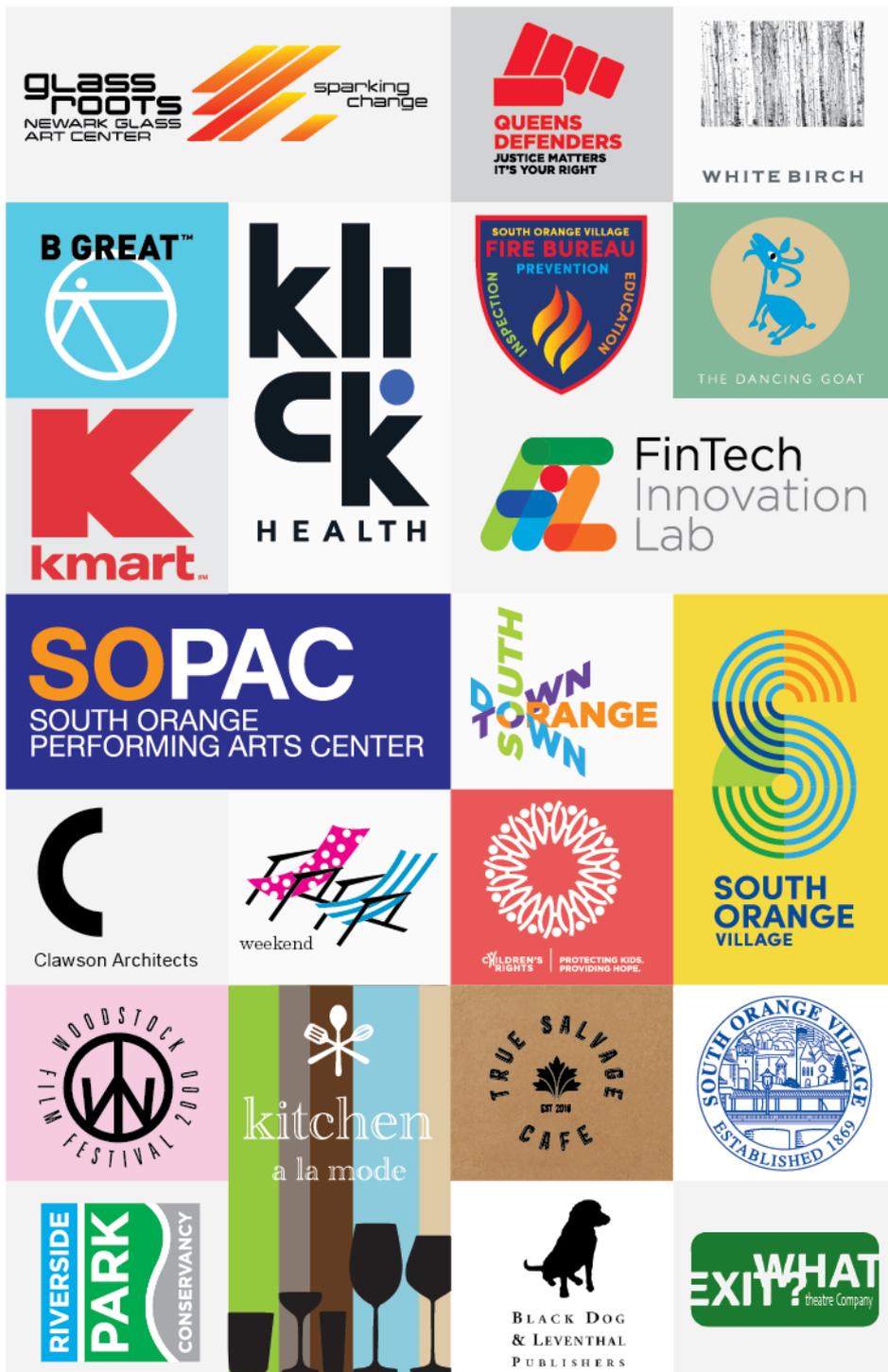


Clear at least 3 feet of sidewalk or pavement all the way around hydrants, to give firefighters full access. Clear a path from the hydrant to the street, allowing firefighters to get in and out easily and quickly.

## SOPL ANNOUNCES RELOCATION PLANS

South Orange Public Library (SOPL) is excited to move forward with the construction plans which will provide the community with a new Library almost double the size of the current facility. To allow for construction in the coming years, SOPL has temporarily relocated the collection, services, and staff to two public facilities in South Orange located at 298 Walton Avenue and inside the new Baird Community Center (opening date TBA).

Visit [sopl.org/moving-plans/](http://sopl.org/moving-plans/) for more information.



**DePaolis Design** is an independent brand strategy, experience, and design company that helps start-ups and some of the world's most recognized brands bring their purpose to life through design innovation.

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 Interested in discussing a project, please contact me by email or phone.

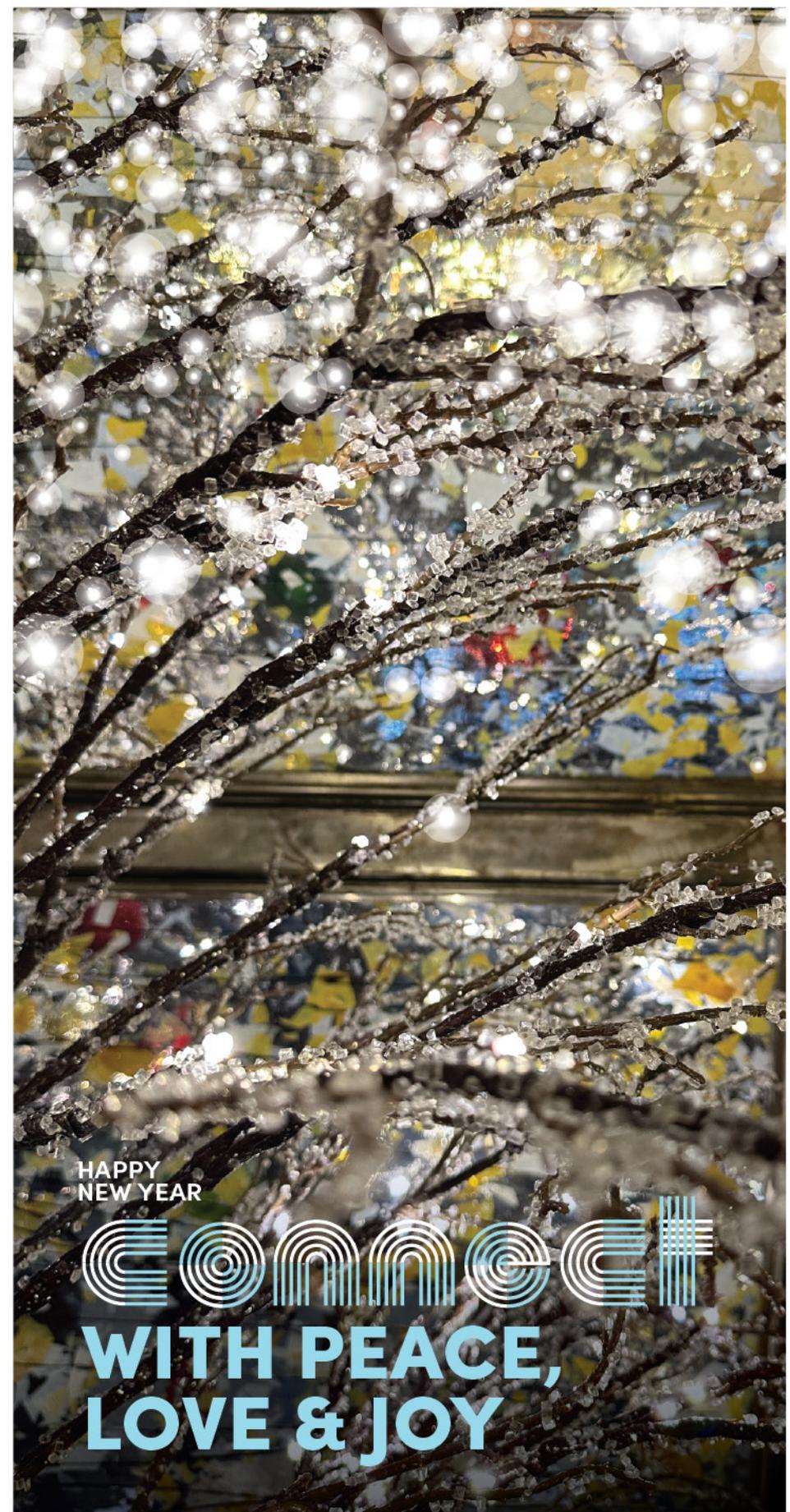


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HAPPY  
 NEW YEAR



**WITH PEACE,  
 LOVE & JOY**

## EMERGENCY ALERTS

ALERTS & NOTIFICATIONS SIGN-UP:  
[www.southorange.org/610/SO-Alerts](http://www.southorange.org/610/SO-Alerts)

Are you receiving emergency alerts and non-emergency notifications? Communication is key, whether it be during a global pandemic, for a severe weather event, or for a street closure. When you create an account, you decide how you would like to be contacted.



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