

# The South Orange Gaslight



## Want to make home repairs *without* incurring cost?

If you need home renovations but can't foot the bill, the Essex County Home Improvement Program may be able to help you.

Low-to-moderate-income homeowners who occupy 1-to-3-family homes may be eligible for special funding for a variety of repairs and improvements - interior, exterior and energy related.

The program provides deferred loans to any income-qualified homeowner who occupies a one-to-three family home. Funding comes through the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

If you are accepted into the program, a lien will be recorded against your property. Pay-off will not be required unless you sell or transfer ownership of the property within a 20-year period.

Examples of eligible improvements include:

- *Interior Repairs:* carpentry, windows and doors, electrical work, plumbing, heating, waterproofing, sump pump installation, smoke alarms.

- *Exterior Repairs:* siding, leaders and gutters, porch and steps, garage doors, cellar doors, chimney repair.

- *Energy Conservation:* insulation, pipe insulation, caulking, weather stripping, thermostat, retention burner, fire escape.

Applications are available from the Essex County Division of Housing and Community Development, 20 Crestmont Road, Verona. Hours are 3:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call Elvin Pereira at (973) 655-0200, x316. ▲

## 2010 Census 3 reasons why it matters to S.O.

1. **MONEY** - The federal government allocates more than \$400 billion to states and communities each year based on census data.

2. **DEVELOPMENT** - Census data determine locations for schools, hospitals, housing development, community facilities and retail stores.

3. **REDISTRICTING** - Census data determine boundaries for state and local legislative and congressional districts.

### 10 Minutes . . . 10 Questions

Census questionnaires will arrive by mail or hand delivery in March. Census-takers will visit households that fail to return the questionnaire to take a count in person. ▲

## Memory bench honors former Villager Eric Francis

Sitting and contemplating can sometimes bring a rush of happy memories, especially when it's your own park bench where you're sitting.

For Meredith, Melissa and Melanie Francis, a memory bench was the idea conceived to honor the 60th birthday of their father Eric Francis.

The businessman, philanthropist and former South Orange resident can now relax on his bench in Meadowland Park, preferably with his wife of 40 years, Frann, whom he met in seventh grade at nearby South Orange Middle School. He might even visit with his daughters and recall feeding the ducks in the duck pond.

"South Orange is just a special place," said Meredith. "My grandparents lived there many years and my sisters and I have so many great



Attention gardeners! The Village has established its first community garden, thanks to the South Orange Community Garden Association. Grow your own Jersey tomatoes, green peppers, cosmos, zinnias and more in an organic environment.

Volunteers are working with the Village to open the garden this spring. It will be located in the park south of Third Street, just west of the Rahway River and Gaslight Commons.

The garden will be open from May 1 through Nov. 1 for planting, cultivation and harvest. A limited number of 8x8 raised beds will be fenced and accessible only to resident community gardeners. An annual fee of \$50 per plot will help pay for fencing and upkeep.

So come along! Meet other gardeners, trade tips and develop your green thumb.

Plot availability is limited. The deadline for registration is Mar. 15. For more information, visit <http://southorange.org/communitygarden>. ▲

*The Gaslight* is published six times yearly for the residents & business community of South Orange Village.

March/April  
2010

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## New bicycle coalition aims for fun and utility

The South Orange Maplewood Bicycle Coalition wants to make our two towns the most bike-friendly communities in the state.

To do that, members are organizing community rides, improving bicycle signage, creating bike lanes, adding bicycle racks in public places and advocating for traffic rules enforcement.

"We want to help bicyclists commute, exercise, enjoy scenic rides, take children to activities, and go shopping," says the group's website, SOMbike.com. "We believe a bike-friendly South Orange and Maplewood is safer for everyone. Studies have shown that the mere presence of more bicyclists (and pedestrians) encourages motorists to drive with more caution and decreases accidents."

People ages 5 to 60 have been participating in free monthly rides since the coalition formed in October. All rides are family friendly. Short rides of 4 or 5 miles are usually offered along with a longer alternative of about 10 miles.

Four upcoming Sunday rides are scheduled: Mar. 14 and 28, and April 11 and 25. Cyclists gather in a local restaurant after each ride.

The coalition is also planning two special events:

- A Cherry Blossom Festival Ride in April at Branch Brook Park, in conjunction with Newark's Brick City Bike Collective.

- "Bike to Work Week," May 16 to 21. The week will kick off with group rides led by Village President Doug Newman in South Orange and Deputy Mayor Fred Profeta in Maplewood.

Monthly Bicycle Coalition meetings are held at The Baird to plan rides and discuss bicycle advocacy projects. For more information, check the website, [www.sombike.com](http://www.sombike.com). ▲



**S. Orange Recycling Center is open to residents:**

- Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 12 noon
- Closed Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays



### Signal Graphics

**15 Village Plaza**  
[www.signal-graphics.com](http://www.signal-graphics.com)  
Relocating from Millburn, Mary Jo DeFranco, owner of this printing and graphic design shop, offers a range of business marketing services.

### The Beaded Path

**9 Village Plaza**  
[www.beaded-path.com](http://www.beaded-path.com)  
The Beaded Path offers beads, tools and the latest trendy materials. Drop in and bead at a worktable, have a party or attend a class with the knowledgeable, friendly staff. Firing and repair services available.

## Lawn & Order

By Tom Riordan, Environmental Commission Chair

Our traditional, highly manicured, croquet-quality lawns are environmental cesspools. After mowing, we blow off every speck of organic matter with noisy, energy-consuming leaf-blowers, we gather it and the clippings up and have them trucked off to landfills somewhere, and then truck in new organic material to replace it — often adding fertilizer, herbicide, pesticide and large amounts of water to try to keep the vegetative vampire alive. Not only is every step in the process a serious environmental problem, it is also very expensive.

What is the nature of the aesthetic ideal that we serve in such costly ways? One big element is order — nature completely flattened, tamed, homogenized. Who's in charge here? We are! Yet, as most of us are aware, the idea of working hand-in-hand with nature rather than obliterating it has increasingly gained scientific and ethical support. It is high time we stopped being prisoners of an old aesthetic that is unsustainable even if we still view it as desirable, and to use our intelligence and creativity to envision and implement a new ideal.

Some homeowners are replacing part of their lawn area with low-growing, no-maintenance perennial plantings that also happily absorb whatever leaves fall on them from overhanging trees. Some simply mow their grass clippings, or even leaves, right back into the lawn. Some have composting pens where they toss leaves and grass clippings, later to withdraw mulch and compost as needed. Some, saying "no" to the dust-bowl, scorched-earth attitude of leaf-blowers, use old-fashioned rakes or sweepers to lift the leaves off the lawn without removing so much of the topsoil at the same time.

The result of these and many other behavior changes is a more relaxed, natural-looking landscape that is far less expensive to maintain

and far less damaging to the environment. Yes, many of us grew up worshipping at the feet of the manicured lawn — an apt description, given how many manicure practices actually degrade and destroy the fingernails. We really do need to let that particular god go, and create a new aesthetic ideal that serves us better: How can I manage my landscape so that it looks, and actually is, as natural as possible, while maintaining or increasing its beauty and other uses?

I'm not an extremist. I don't want to see any of you trying to play croquet in pachysandra, or practicing your putting in woodruff! I don't want any of you to "go jungle" and surrender all sense of order and control over your patches of green! Still, times have changed. The era of landscape imperialism is drawing to a close. As current chair of South Orange's Environmental Commission, I urge us all to re-imagine what we'll use to replace it. ▲

## Villager Gerard Andrews authors "Common Cent\$"



Need help getting in better financial shape? Villager and Merrill Lynch financial advisor Gerard J. Andrews offers down-to-earth help in his new book, "Common Cent\$: Getting Off the Financial Roller Coaster," from Zenjo Press.

Using stories of everyday people, Andrews helps small business owners, couples planning for retirement, parents sending children to college and more. He uses plain English and simple advice for common financial problems such as caring for an elderly relative or special needs child, digging out of debt, or protecting your significant other even if you're not legally married.

The book is available for \$12.99 at: [www.financialrollercoaster.com](http://www.financialrollercoaster.com). ▲

**PIERRO GALLERY OF SOUTH ORANGE**[www.pierrogallery.org](http://www.pierrogallery.org)**■ Booked 7***Through Mar. 13*

Handmade books and paper stretch the traditional definition of a book. Extended daily hours, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Book Arts Round Table members speak with visitors.

- Opening reception: Mar. 4, 6-9 p.m. Guest speaker Mary Taylor, book artist and digital printmaker.

- Silent Auction, "Tend Your Garden": Mar. 13, 2-4 p.m. Papier-mâché lunchboxes will be auctioned. Proceeds to a New Jersey food bank and Artist Proof Studio in South Africa.

For details, e-mail Karen McDermott at [bookartsroundtable@gmail.com](mailto:bookartsroundtable@gmail.com).

**■ Corporeal Connection***Mar. 21-April 17*

Three artists are showcased: 1. Bryan Christie of Maplewood uses digital prints and new technologies to peer into the body. 2. Kristen Woodward's clay prints juxtapose figures and symbols to suggest moral lessons or ambiguities. 3. Walter Zimmerman of South Orange uses mixed media and glass sculptures to reflect personal, environmental and societal crises.

- Opening Reception: Mar. 21, 3-5 p.m.
- Artist's Talk: Mar. 21, 2 p.m., preceding reception.

**■ Visual Alchemy: Narration of the Creative Spirit in African-American Artists***April 25-June 6*

Artists express their visual journey of spirit and creativity while occupying a particular "skin." Guest Curator: Janet Pickett. Opening reception: April 25, 2-4 p.m. A 4-color catalogue will be available and panel discussions are planned. The exhibition is partly funded by the NJ State Council on the Arts.

**New Gallery Initiatives**

- *First Thursdays Art Nite Out* - Pierro Gallery opens its doors on the first Thursday of each month from 7-9 pm. On Mar. 4, visitors can attend the opening reception of "Booked 7" at the gallery, then head downtown to shop or dine.

- *Pierro Downtown* - Local businesses have begun hosting artist exhibitions from Pierro. Currently, Mia Cose Bella on South Orange Avenue is featuring artist Deb Mell. Others will host artists selected from Pierro's juried archives.

- *Art Encounters at The Baird* - Free drop-in arts workshops for the whole family, age 7 to adult, will be presented this spring by professional artists. Sessions will run from noon to 3 p.m. on the last Saturdays of February, March and April, plus May 22. (Feb. 27 event: "Let's Make Books, 3 Techniques/3 Books.")

**The Baird will be closed**  
**Mar. 12, April 2**  
**and April 9**

**JAZZ AT THE BAIRD***Tickets: \$15 advance; \$20 at door***Bob DeVos Trio**

Mar. 27, 8 p.m. - Enjoy tight-knit jazz standards, rhythm and blues, ballads and hip compositions. Guitarist, composer and arranger DeVos is hailed as "the thinking man's guitar hero."

**Don Braden Organic Trio**

April 17, 8 p.m. - World renowned saxophonist and flutist Don Braden of South Orange performs with organist Kyle Koehler and drummer Cecil Brook III. Braden's harmonic and rhythmic sophistication give him a unique approach to improvising, composing and arranging. (He is also The Baird Jazz Master in the South Orange/Maplewood School District through a SOMEF grant.)

**PENNY PRETZEL PLAYHOUSE**

- *Bob Abadou, AKA Mr. Puppet*. Saturday, Mar. 20, 2 p.m. When Mr. Puppet performed at Penny Pretzel three seasons ago, some audience members fell out of their chairs laughing. Be careful, the fun is contagious.

- *Fun On A String Variety Show*. Thursday, April 8, 2 p.m. Marionettes perform unique tricks with black lights and a lively musical score. The audience helps Green Gus get the right eyes, nose and hair to make him look his best.

All tickets, \$9. Call for reservations.

**DREAMCATCHER REPERATORY THEATER**[www.dreamcatcherrep.org](http://www.dreamcatcherrep.org) • 973-378-7754, x2228

- *"Parallel Lives: The Kathy and Mo Show"* will be presented on weekends from Mar. 5 to 21. The all-female play by Mo Gaffney and Kathy Najimy is a playfully satirical series of sketches that achieved cult status Off-Broadway. From adolescence to midlife crisis to the golden years, *Parallel Lives* skewers sexual stereotypes and contemporary identities with wit and wisdom. Showtimes are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$27 adults, \$22 seniors, \$17 students.

- *Multiple Personality Disorder*, Dreamcatcher's improvisational comedy group, brings audience ideas to life before their eyes. It's unpredictable fun for the whole family, Saturday, April 17 at 8 pm. All tickets \$10.

**FAMILY ARTS CLASSES**

Starting the week of Mar. 21 or April 11, The Baird offers eight weeks of cultural arts classes for infant through adult. More than 30 classes are taught by professional artists in their fields. Creative arts classes include clay, art exploration, drawing, Art with a Master, PMC jewelry making and printmaking. Performing arts classes include guitar, sing-alongs, ballet, flamenco and Middle Eastern dance. Registration begins Mar. 1. For details, visit the website and click Classes/Workshops.

## AT THE BAIRD

(973) 378-7754 • www.thebaird.org

### SPORTS & FITNESS

**Adult Tae Kwon Do** - Learn practical self defense while acquiring discipline, body conditioning, self-confidence and stress reduction. Instructor Steve Safran. Tuesdays, 8 to 9:15 p.m. Fee \$155.

**Tae Kwon Do for Special Needs Children** - Parents of children with autism learn to work more effectively with their children, and both benefit from exercising. Ages 6 to 10, Saturdays, 1 to 2 p.m. Ages 11 to 22, Saturdays, 2 to 3 p.m. Instructor Jeff Jacobs. Fee \$125.

**Tennis Lessons** for children and adults begin the week of April 6. See the website for dates, times and fees.

**Jaguar Track, Ages 6-18**  
In-person spring registration begins at The Baird on Wednesday, Mar. 17, from 7:30 to 9 p.m., and Saturday, Mar. 20, from 10 a.m. to noon. For details, see the website or call Maurice Cooper (973) 763-0617, or Andrea Johnson (973) 762-0910.

**Preschool at The Baird** - Limited openings are available for the 2010-2011 school year. Baird Preschool is a licensed learning center for South Orange residents ages 2½ through 4½. The pre-K educational curriculum is combined with recreational activities. Sessions are held on the second floor of The Baird. Registration forms and program details are on The Baird's website.

**The Baird's Summer Playground Program** runs from June 28 to Aug. 13, with applications accepted from Mar. 1 to 15 at The Baird. Applicants must be South Orange residents with a current photo ID badge (see badge note above).

The half-day program is for children age 4 through 8th grade. Grouped by age and grade, kids meet daily in the Meadowland Park/Cameron Field complex for planned activities and supervised free time.

Details and applications are available at The Baird and online. Due to limited enrollment, a random lottery may be used to determine camp acceptance at some sites (details in program brochure). Applications submitted after Mar. 15 will be accepted on a space-available basis. ▲

### Renew your Recreation ID Badge now!

*Avoid the long lines and purchase your 2010 South Orange Recreation ID badge now! It's more than just a pool badge. Residents receive discounts on many department-sponsored classes and programs. Badges are issued at The Baird with two proofs of residency. New or updated badges are \$30 per year. Details online.*

## Library Events

(973) 762-0230 • www.sopl.org

### Lecture Series

Thursdays, 1 p.m.

• Mar. 4 - "Freedom of Speech in the Face of Adversity," with Stephen Schoeman, Essex County College political science professor.

• Mar. 11 - "Swimming the English Channel," with marathon swimmer Julie Sheldon.

• Mar. 18 - "Resistance: The Untold Stories of Jewish Partisans," a talk and film with producer Ken Mandel.

• Mar. 25 - "All Our Losses, All Our Grievs," with Pastor Doug Brandt.

• April 1 - "The Politics of the 1980s and its Legacy for Today," with Essex County College history professor emeritus Eugene Lieber.

• April 8 - "The World Orphan Crisis: Solutions," with Dr. Jane Aaronson, founder and CEO of the Worldwide Orphans Foundation.

• April 15 - violinist Kim Chiesa and students from Cali School of Music at Montclair State University perform chamber music.

• April 22 - "Racism in the Movies: America and Germany," with Seton Hall history professor Larry Greene.

• April 29 - "The Development of Law with Regard to the Supreme Court," with attorney Herb Zuckerman.

### Special Programs

• Welcome to Springtime - world-renowned pianist Mitchell Zeidwig performs Sunday, Mar. 21, from 3 to 4 p.m.

• Black Maria Film Festival - Tuesday, April 13, 7 p.m., hosted by founder and Director John Columbus.

• Academy Awards Preview - Thursday, May 4, at 7 p.m., with film critic and author Allen Barra.

### Adult Programs

• Wednesdays at the Movies - Mar. 3, 17 and 31, April 14 and 28.

• Wii Bowling on Game Day - Mar. 10 and 24, April 7 and 21.

• Knitting Workshop with professional knitter Nan Samons. Mar. 15 and April 19, noon to 2 p.m. Bring 8" or 9" knitting needles and worsted weight wool.

• S. O. Book Review Group - Mar. 22, 7:30 p.m., "Sex Wars," by Marge Piercy. April 26, 7:30 p.m., "Sarah's Key," by Tatiana de Rosnay.

### Children's Programs

• Tuesdays - Toddlers (with adult), 11 a.m., story and art project. Chess & Board Games, 3:30 p.m., all ages.

• Wednesdays - Books & Babies (with adult), 10 a.m.

• First Thursday, Ms. Marilyn, songs and stories, 10 a.m.

• Second Thursday, Dusty & Lucky, banjo music, 10 a.m.

• Third Thursday, Music in the Morning with Kathleen, 10 a.m.

• Fridays, Seton Stories, 10 a.m.

• Second Friday, Homeschool Drop-In, 11 a.m.

• Second Saturday, Drop-In Crafts, 11 a.m.

### Teen Programs

Pick up a schedule at the library or e-mail librarian@sopl.org ▲

### Essex County Recycling

Fleet Maintenance Garage  
99 West Bradford Ave., Cedar Grove  
(973) 226-8500

### Electronics Disposal Day

Saturday, May 15 • 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Permitted - Computer CPUs and monitors, printers, keyboards, mainframes, fax machines, scanners, telecommunications equipment, speakers, TVs, VCRs, stereos, DVD players, toasters, toaster ovens, irons, cell phones and fluorescent light bulbs.

### Household Hazardous Waste Day

Saturday, May 1 • 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Free to all Essex County residents with proof of residency. Not open to commercial or industrial companies. Watch for flyers and news articles from the county.

# RESIDENTIAL DPW SERVICES

Spring/SUMMER 2010

## Spring Clean-Up BRANCHES & LEAVES

**Curbside Placement Dates:**  
April 5 - May 17 (no overlap)

### ■ Branches

Must be less than four inches in diameter. For those measuring two inches or less, tie in bundles with cord or twine. Place on grass next to curb, not on street or sidewalk.

Not Permitted: roots, stumps or branches larger than four inches in diameter.

### ■ Leaves, Yard Clippings, Garden Rakings

Place in brown biodegradable paper bags only, on grass next to curb, not on sidewalk or street.

Do not rake leaves into streets for spring cleanup. Loose leaves and material in plastic bags will not be picked up.

Ignoring the rules is a violation of the Municipal Housing Code.

### ■ Grass Clippings

South Orange Disposal picks up grass clippings in plastic bags only, from April 1 to Nov. 1. Limit: two bags per week, 30 pounds per bag. Place curbside on the second garbage collection day of the week.

### ■ Humus, Shredded Wood

Limited quantities available.

- Humus - decomposed leaves, finely textured and dark colored. Used as a soil supplement in gardens or for soil for enrichment.

- Shredded Wood - hardwood mulch used as top dressing for gardens, flowerbeds, and around trees. May contain bits of rock. Not treated.

Ordering/Delivery: (973) 378-7741

Starting Tuesday, Mar. 23, DPW will begin making appointments for free delivery of humus and shredded wood. Actual delivery starts in April. One product per household per month. Products are delivered loose to the driveway.

**South Orange  
Department of Public Works  
300 Walton Avenue  
(973) 378-7741**

## SATURDAY CONTAINER DAY DROP-OFFS

April 24, May 22, June 26, July 24, Aug. 21, Sept. 25

8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.  
(no arrivals after 1:30 p.m.)

Special disposal containers are provided on site. To enter, two proofs of residency are required. The program is not open to commercial or industrial companies.

### Permitted

Furniture, mattresses, appliances\*, toys, small household items, tools, strollers, playpens, metal items. \*\*

\* Residents are encouraged to drop off metal during regular DPW hours: weekdays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon.

\*\* Separate metals and appliances from other household items and remove doors on refrigerators and freezers.

### Not Permitted

Paint cans (empty or not), propane bottles, hazardous chemicals or their containers, construction materials (such as tiles, plaster, sheetrock, paneling, wood with nails), roof shingles, grass clippings, household food items, car/truck parts, batteries of any size, stumps, root sections, branches measuring more than four inches in diameter, railroad ties, pressure-treated or painted wood, doors/windows with glass or hardware, or any electronic hardware.

No metal items or appliances allowed.

**Note:** DPW staff reserves the right to prohibit other items as necessary. Call in advance to ask about a specific item.

## 2010 ELECTRONIC RECYCLING DROP-OFFS

Villagers can drop off used electronic items in South Orange or Maplewood. Proof of residency is required.

### Saturday Drop-Offs, 8 a.m. to noon

March 27	South Orange
May 15	Maplewood
June 19	South Orange
July 24	Maplewood
September 4	South Orange
October 16	Maplewood
December 4	South Orange

### Drop-Off Locations

- South Orange Recycling Depot, 300 Walton Avenue, (973) 378-7741.
- Maplewood Public Works Department, 359 Boyden Avenue, (973) 762-1175.

### Permitted

Computer monitors, CPUs, keyboards, printers, mainframes, fax machines, scanners, telecommunications equipment, speakers, televisions, VCRs, stereos, DVD players, toasters, irons and old cell phones.

### Prohibited

- Commercial and large-quantity electronics users are not permitted.
- Electronics cannot be picked up by appointment.

### Alternatives to Saturday Drop-Offs

If circumstances prevent your drop-off on given Saturday, you may drop off the Thursday before in South Orange. Call first at (973) 378-7741. In Maplewood, drop off the Friday before, between 2 and 4 p.m. Call (973) 762-1175.

## At Seton Hall

arts.ci.sbu.edu/artsCouncil  
(973) 313-2787

### Poets Speak

Free events at Walsh Library, 7 p.m.

- Mar. 4, Eve Grubin, author of "Morning Prayer."
- Mar. 23, Sherod Santos, author of five poetry books.
- April 13, James Van Oosting, author of "The Last Payback" and "Electing J.J."

### Art Exhibits

- Aspects of Japanese Contemporary Art, Mar. 15 to April 9 at the Walsh Gallery.
- "Sight and Sound," the sixth annual exhibition of student artwork from the Department of Art and Music, in April at Walsh Gallery.

Admission to exhibits is free. Call (973) 275-2033.

## On Stage at SOPAC

SOPACnow.org • (973) 275-1114

- Mar. 7, 2 p.m. – The Spencers: Theatre of Illusion, magic for families, \$35/\$25.
- Mar. 13, 8 p.m. – The Celtic Tenors, classical crossover, Irish, pop, \$65/\$55/\$48.
- Mar. 18, 8 p.m. – Duncan Sheik, singer-songwriter, \$48/\$35/\$28.
- Mar. 19, 8 p.m. – Habib Koite & Bamada, Malian music, Afro-pop, \$45/\$35.
- Mar. 20, check for time and

ticket costs – Klea Blackhurst and Billy Stritch, music of Hoagy Carmichael cabaret.

- Mar. 21, 3 p.m. – Juilliard @ SOPAC: Afiara String Quartet, \$15/\$12/\$10.
- Mar. 23, 7:30 p.m. – Seton Hall University Jazz Ensemble, free.
- April 8, 7:30 p.m. – The Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, \$25/\$15/\$8.
- April 10, American Repertory Ballet, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Dance," a special family performance, \$30/\$25.
- April 16, 17, 23, 24 at 8 p.m.; April 18, 25 at 2 p.m.; April 16 at 11 a.m. – "The Foreigner," by Larry Shue, \$15/\$12/\$8.

## Why Good Schools Are Failing Black Students

Community Coalition on Race  
www.twotowns.org  
(973) 761-6116, x6

Join the Schools Committee of the South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race for "Community Conversation: Mind the Gap," a panel discussion with audience response featuring award-winning NPR reporter and Villager Nancy Solomon, Columbia High students, and local school district staff on Tuesday, Mar. 2 at 7 p.m., at South Orange Middle School library. Admission is free. To listen to the NPR radio program, "Mind the Gap," go to [www.nancysolomon.com](http://www.nancysolomon.com).

## Comedy Night at Marylawn

Marylawn of the Oranges presents Comedy Night with Chris Rich and Leighann Lord on Friday, Mar. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at the school at 445 Scotland Road. Tickets are \$25 including light refreshments. Seating is limited. Call Donna Zolli at (973) 762-9222, x12, or send e-mail to [alumnaeatmarylawn@gmail.com](mailto:alumnaeatmarylawn@gmail.com).

## Call for Artists

The SOMA Artists Studio Tour is June 6, 2010. All interested artists are encouraged to attend the Mar. 24 artists meeting, 7:30 p.m. at 1978 Maplewood Art Center, 1978 Springfield Avenue. For more information, visit [arts@southorange.org](mailto:arts@southorange.org).

## Adult School

[www.somadultschool.org](http://www.somadultschool.org)  
(973) 378-7620

■ **Celebrity Readings.** Award-winning actors Christine Ebersole (Grey Gardens, 42nd Street) and Anthony Chisholm (August Wilson Legacy, Gem of the Ocean) and radio personality Isaiah Sheffer (NPR's Selected Shorts) will offer an evening of short stories at "Celebrity Readings," an Adult School benefit on April 12 at the Maplewood Woman's Club. Actress Emily Zacharias, an



Actress Christine Ebersole

Adult School trustee, will serve as the evening's host. Proceeds will benefit the school's adult programs, the children's summer camp, and English as a Second Language classes. Tickets are \$35 in advance. Call or buy online.

■ Enrollment has begun for **classes starting in March and April.** Among the highlights: the popular Eva Samo Lecture Series (The Complexities of the Middle East), Monday nights beginning April 26; and College For A Day, stimulating classes in American literature, history and the Bible, Saturday, April 17. Go online for the Spring 2010 catalog.



Charlie Tamayo and Steve Coleman at last year's Cougar Golf Classic.

## Cougar Booster Golf Classic, April 26

The 12th annual Cougar Booster Golf Classic will be held on Monday, April 26 at Maplewood Country Club. All proceeds will benefit South Orange and Maplewood students who participate in extra-curricular activities at Columbia High School. Tickets are \$225 including buffet brunch, golf, cart and dinner. To sign up, go to [www.chscougarboosters.org/golf.html](http://www.chscougarboosters.org/golf.html). For information, contact Al Farah at (973) 762-6384 or [chsgolf-outing@aol.com](mailto:chsgolf-outing@aol.com).

## A Night on the Towns, May 23

A musical revue and dessert reception are being organized to benefit the restoration of the Columbia High School auditorium. The May 23 event, called "A Night on the Towns," also recognizes the 20th anniversary of the South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation, or SOMEF.

The revue, "Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance, Gotta Give," will feature Columbia High talent from the past, present and future. A pre-show cocktail party will be hosted by Villager Pat Bell at her home in the Montrose Historic District. After the show, the CHS Music Parents Association will host a dessert reception.

During the night, donors will be able to sponsor new auditorium seats, lighting, sound and stage improvements or performing arts programming. They can dedicate gifts to a student, teacher or special occasion on permanent plaques in the auditorium.

Invitations to the show and related events will be sent in late March. For advance information, visit [www.somef.org](http://www.somef.org).

## SOPAC offers after-school arts education

*TADA! Youth Theater* is a Drama Desk Award-winning musical theatre program that hones singing, dancing, and acting skills. Two Wednesday classes, Mar. 3 to May 19. Creative Musical Play, grades K and 1, 4 to 5 p.m. Musical Theater Skills Building, grades 2 to 5, 5 to 6 p.m. Cost: \$295 for new students.

*Lydia Johnson Dance Classes* - Weekly ballet and choreography for varying age groups, from pre-K/K to teens/adults. No prior dance training necessary. Each class ends with a public performance. Students accepted year-round.

*ArtWorks* is a performing arts industry training and leadership program. Weekly classes and workshops expose students to all phases of performance and theater production. Ten Tuesday classes, Mar. 2 to May 18, are facilitated by SOPAC staff. Ages 9 to 12, 4 to 5:30 p.m. Ages 13 to 17, 6 to 8 p.m. Cost: \$295 for new students.

For details on these and other arts education programs, visit [SOPACnow.org](http://SOPACnow.org) or call (973) 313-2787.

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## Meet Jonathan Factor, advocate for the disabled



Cerebral palsy has never stopped Jonathan Factor, even though it affects his whole left side. In fact, it was his disability that drove him to advocate for elevators in the South Orange Train Station.

Every day, Factor was taking a bus from South Orange to the Port Authority in New York to get to his job with the Long Island City schools. The bus trip was twice as long as the equivalent train ride, but he couldn't climb the steep stairs in the South Orange train station due to his disability.

Frustrated by traffic jams, Factor began a letter-writing campaign. Fortunately, his efforts aligned with NJ Transit's plans for retrofitting 35 train stations across the state. NJT installed the South Orange elevators in 2005.

On occasion, the elevators do break down and Jonathan continues to break up every disabled train rider in South Orange by being among the first to notify NJT. ▲

### Eric Francis

*Cont'd from page 1*

memories. We thought it would be a nice thing to take him there and bring back all those memories."

The bench, located near the Korean War Memorial bears a plaque that reads: "In honor of Eric S. Francis, a great dad, Jan. 8, 2010."

Eric Francis is president and CEO of CBMC, a janitorial building maintenance compa-

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ny in Washington, D.C. He and his wife now reside in Short Hills. Among his local philanthropic projects, Francis was a significant contributor to the South Orange Performing Arts Center and helped establish two senior citizen housing facilities while presiding over the Jewish Community Housing Corp. ▲

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Administrator, x2

Construction, x3

Tax Collector, x4

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Finance, x6

Engineer, x7

Parking Auth., x8

Health Officer

x7710

Animal Control

x7711

Fire Dept.

378-7751

Library

762-0230

Police Dept.

378-7775

Public Works

378-7741

Recreation &

Cultural Affairs

378-7754

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

## March Villager of the Month Katherine Crenshaw

Katherine Crenshaw knows who and what she loves and how to make time for all — family, friends, neighbors, community and of course, good design.

Among neighbors and downtown business owners, Katherine is known as a color maven and design guru. She can canvass a store's interior, examine its merchandise, talk to the owners and get a creative sense

of the personality that could be carried forward to the shop's façade — that all-important part of the store where signage, lighting, painting and awnings are used to entice a clientele.

It's a skill that dozens of shops have tapped since 2007 when Katherine became the volunteer co-chair of the Main Street South

Orange Design Committee. When shop owners apply through Main Street for Village FRONTS grants to upgrade their facades, or when a new business comes into town, Katherine and team are available to assess their design needs and offer advice.

"It's very emotional," says Katherine, "especially for a new business because they're incredibly busy. This is the last thing they work on and by that time, they're pretty exhausted. Sometimes it's nice to have somebody give direct feedback."

Katherine's expertise comes from a degree in textile design and working with textiles for fashion apparel. It is a career she has set aside for a time to raise two children, Lauren, age 7, and James, age 4.

Until 2004, when she and her husband Andrew moved to South Orange from Brooklyn, "We had only lived in apartments and now we had a house that needed painting. We'd never been allowed to do that before."

Katherine threw herself into the project as an extension of her professional work. "I really got into it,"



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### Villager of the Month Award: Honoring our selfless best

she said. "It was translating color principals to walls, but the volume is so much, it tricks you."

At the same time, she was meeting neighbors and talking about her home project in a studied way that no one had ever heard before. Soon, she became the neighborhood color expert, sought after for brainstorm-

ing on home interiors.

Her new friends led her to Main Street South Orange. "I thought maybe I could do the same thing for them." Turns out she was right.

"We really appreciate Katherine's passion and commitment," said MSSO Executive Director Carole Anzalone-Newman. "She has a great design sense plus the patience and understanding necessary to do this demanding job."

For Katherine, part of South Orange's attraction was its thriving downtown. "To me, all downtowns are special. It's important to get people down there shopping and eating, using public transportation and not being isolated."

"We try to shop locally as much as we can. I like the activity of walking into town and making it an outing and I always try to think first if there are places in South Orange and Maplewood" where the items she wants would be available.

Katherine's community awareness also led her to revive the Lenox Avenue block party in her own

neighborhood. "We have very nice neighbors on my block and lots of kids. Everybody wanted to do it. It was just a matter of getting it started."

Until Katherine resumes her design career, she will continue being the fresh eyes for business owners sprucing up and establishing their shops.

"It's working through the process," says Katherine. "It's how best to communicate the business and even if they don't agree with what I'm saying, sometimes talking about it helps them clarify what they do want." ▲

The Villager of the Month Award is given to individuals (and sometimes groups) who make significant contributions to the quality of life in South Orange and beyond. Send nominations to [lcucciniello@southorange.org](mailto:lcucciniello@southorange.org), or [ktjdz@aol.com](mailto:ktjdz@aol.com).

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