

# The South Orange Gaslight



Start your New  
Year with a Bang!

2007  
**First  
Night**

Maplewood, South Orange

Gather the family and your collective good spirits for the Two Towns most celebrated party of the year! First Night 2007 offers a host of new and exciting performances and activities for the entire family!

The fun take place from 3 to 5 and 7 to 11 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 31, at South Orange Middle School and The Baird.

With the purchase of a First Night button, revelers gain admission to the best in music, comedy,

## 'Tis the season to drive safely

Local police are on high alert during the holiday season for motorists who choose to drive while impaired by drugs or alcohol. From Dec. 4 through Jan. 2, South Orange Police are stepping up impaired driving enforcement as part of the "You Drink and Drive, You Lose 2006 Year-End Crackdown.

In New Jersey, 34% of motor vehicle fatalities are alcohol-related.

dance, storytelling, arts and crafts.

Popular attractions will include The Long Island Ballet performing "Cinderella"; origami by Mary Kao; the rock, blues, jazz and funk sounds of The VooDUDES; storyteller Paula Davidoff; and the comedy of The New York Goofs. Revelers can also enjoy line dancing, magic shows, puppet shows and plenty of great food.

At 7 p.m., a short fireworks display will blast off at Flood's Hill, with just enough time to walk or drive to South Orange Middle School for festivities at 7:30 p.m.

Buttons are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door (free for children age 3 or younger). Advance purchase can be made at the South Orange Library, Rocket Ship & Print (71 South Orange Avenue), Baird Community Center, or The Goat Café (21 South Orange Avenue).

To learn more about this year's acts and artists, go to [www.first-nightmapso.org](http://www.first-nightmapso.org) and click on "Acts & Times" and "Performance Descriptions." ▲

## DeVaris leaves vacancy on Board of Trustees

Village Trustee Eric DeVaris officially resigned his position on Dec. 15 and soon will be moving to Washington, D.C. He was elected to a four-year term in 2005.

A municipal election to fill his unexpired term will be held in May. Until the election, remaining members of the Board of Trustees have the option of appointing someone to fill the vacant slot. By state law, they must do so within 30 days of DeVaris' resignation, or by Jan. 15. ▲

## MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

### Ambassador, activist G. Moten to speak Jan. 7



Cherish the ride "From Birmingham to Botswana" as civil rights activist and U.S. Liaison Gwen Moten uses song and prose

to relate her historic ventures, worldwide travels and memorable meeting with Dr. Martin Luther King.

An active participant in the civil rights movement and best friend to one of the girls killed in the Birmingham church bombing, Moten will be the keynote speaker at the 37th annual MLK celebration sponsored by the South Orange Civic Organization.

A Newark resident, she is a musician, performer and writer who also serves as a cultural specialist liaison to Africa, appointed by the United States Information Agency.

The free event takes place Sunday, Jan. 7, at 3 p.m., at South Orange Middle School. The public is invited.

**Related Awards** - In conjunction with the holiday event, SOCO will present its annual "Beloved Community" awards to individuals who have contributed significantly to their community and beyond. This year's recipients are Maplewood resident Barbara-Heisler-Williams and South Orange residents Sandra E. Johnson and Bradley Takahashi.

More MLK Events  
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*The Gaslight* is published 10 times yearly for the residents & business community of South Orange Village.

December  
2006

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## 31 grants awarded to local teachers

The South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation has funded 31 grants totaling \$28,600 for programs proposed by teachers and administrators in the district's nine schools.

Supplemental educational projects such as a writing workshop, a cooking-based nutrition program, and a comprehensive renewal of middle school library titles will be implemented this spring.

Also among the grants are two art-related projects at Columbia High School co-sponsored by the Pierro Foundation: the renovation of the Domareki Art Gallery, and a fine art/art history project devoted to the work of deceased South Orange sculptor Tony Smith.

This year, SOMEF received requests for 64 grants totaling \$173,000. Those approved but not yet funded have been placed on a wait list.

To grant more teachers' wishes, donors can sponsor unfunded programs listed at [www.somef.org](http://www.somef.org), or call (973) 378-2055. The "late funding appeal" ends Jan. 31. ▲

## Newcomers Club redefines 'New'

The Newcomers Club of South Orange and Maplewood is expanding its membership to include established residents.

Monthly events include progressive dinners, wine and scotch tastings, book and theater clubs, bunco, poker and sports nights, and home and garden events. There are also children's activities, playgroups and a new parents group.

General meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:45 p.m., at Morrow Memorial Church, 600 Ridgewood Road in Maplewood. Free babysitting and refreshments are provided. For information, visit [www.somnewcomers.com](http://www.somnewcomers.com), or send e-mail to [mail@somnewcomers.com](mailto:mail@somnewcomers.com). ▲



(973) 378-7754  
[www.thebaird.org](http://www.thebaird.org)

### ■ Jazz at The Baird

presents a jazz/pop vocal trio that brings fresh sound to the vintage music of groups like the Boswell Sisters, Andrews Sisters, and Mills Brothers. New arrangements are presented in bebop, big band, Brazilian and American pop. It's the perfect sound for a cold winter night—Saturday, Jan. 27, at 8 p.m.—with complimentary hot coffee, cakes and a chat with the stars! Tickets are \$15 in advance; \$17 at door; \$12 for Friends of the Arts levels 2 and 3. (Join The Baird Arts now and save money on tickets.)

### DREAMCATCHER

(973) 378-7754, x2228 • [www.DreamcatcherRep.org](http://www.DreamcatcherRep.org)

■ **Dreamcatcher Junior: The Hamlet Project**, Jan. 12-21. This unique re-imagining of Shakespeare's familiar play is based on an adaptation by director Dave Maulbeck and brought to life by an ensemble of young actors. It will delight and charm the whole family.

Showtimes are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. All tickets are \$10.

### PENNY PRETZEL PLAYHOUSE

(973) 378-7754

■ **Super Circus Stuff with Mr. Fish**, Thursday, Dec. 28, at 2 p.m. Mr. Fish, also known as John Lepiarz, blends circus skills, magic and music to amaze and amuse children, adults and occasionally cats. (You have to see the show!) Mr. Fish has performed in the ring of Big Apple Circus and theaters across the U.S., Canada and Asia. Tickets are \$8 each.

## THIS WINTER, GET ARTISTIC!

More than 35 cultural art classes, from dance and guitar, to drawing and jewelry-making, are available for the whole family through The Baird. All classes are taught by professionals in their fields. Winter classes begin the week of Jan. 7, and registration for many of them is still open. For details, call (973) 378-7754, or log onto [www.thebaird.org](http://www.thebaird.org).

## REGISTER FOR PRESCHOOL & KINDERENRICHMENT

(973) 378-7754 • <http://www.thebaird.org>

Applications for 2007-2008 Kinderenrichment and Preschool at The Baird will be accepted Jan. 22 to 25. A random drawing of applications will determine who registers for the space-limited programs. Details and applications are on The Baird Web site.

The Baird Preschool program combines educational and recreational activities. Small classes are offered twice a week for two-year-olds, three days a week for three-year-olds, and five times a week for four- and five-year-olds.

Kinderenrichment is available to South Orange children who will be entering kindergarten in the local school district next fall. Playful learning reinforces the kindergarten experience. Morning and afternoon sessions will be offered, two and three times a week.

## PIERRO GALLERY OF SOUTH ORANGE

(973) 378-7754, x3 • [www.pierrogallery.org](http://www.pierrogallery.org)

### *What's Beneath The Layers?*

Jan. 21-Mar. 4

Virginia Schaeffer Block, acrylic on canvas; Rachel Leibman, collage; Judith Plotner, mixed media collage; Kenneth Schnell, shaped paintings; Barbara Straussberg, acrylic/mixed media.

Opening reception: Sunday, Jan. 21, 3-5 p.m., preceded by an artists' discussion at 2 p.m. Gallery hours are Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 1-4 p.m.

**On Stage at SOPAC**

■ **The Grammy Award-winning Takacs String Quartet** (hosted by Seton Hall University) will perform works by Claude Debussy, Dmitri Shostakovich and Johannes Brahms, Jan. 23, at 8 p.m. Regular admission is \$20; seniors and alumni, \$15; students and SHU employees with ID, \$8. For more information, visit [artsci.shu.edu/artscouncil](http://artsci.shu.edu/artscouncil), or call (973) 313-ARTS, or visit [www.sopac-now.org](http://www.sopac-now.org).

■ **Seven-time Grammy Award-winning pianist Eddie Palmieri** has revolutionized the sound of Latin music in his 50-year career. Catch his act on Jan. 2 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$36. ▲

**Lighting your way to 2007**

While you're enjoying this year's First Night events, be sure to check out South Orange's spectacular show of community pride, *Illumination 2006*. Each New Year's Eve, Village volunteers create a symbolic pathway of lights to the new year, meandering through neighborhoods and public gathering places.

*Illuminations* is a fundraiser for South Orange Productions. This year's proceeds from luminary sales will be donated to South Orange Middle School for restoration of its historic exterior clock. For information, call (973) 761-5970. ▲

**Contemporary Chinese Artists**

From Jan. 15 to Mar. 9, artists from mainland China and Taiwan will display installations, sculptures, photography and video art at Walsh Library Gallery at Seton Hall University. Opening reception: Wednesday, Jan. 17, 5 to 8 p.m. Call (973) 275-20-33 or visit [library.shu.edu/gallery](http://library.shu.edu/gallery). ▲

**MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY**

**Habitat director to speak at Coalition's MLK event**

The South Orange Maplewood Community Coalition on Race will host its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration on Monday, Jan. 15, at St. George's Church in Maplewood. The free event begins at 3 p.m., and features an address by Hendricks Davis, executive director of Habitat for Humanity Newark, Inc. All are welcome. For information, visit [www.twotowns.org](http://www.twotowns.org), or call (973) 761-6116.

**King film at SHU**

A free film, "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., A Historical Perspective," will be screened at Seton Hall University on Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 6:30 p.m., in the Beck Room of Walsh Library. For information, call (973) 761-9385. ▲

LIBRARY LIBRARY LIBRARY

(973) 762-0230

**Lecture Series**

*Thursdays, 1 p.m.*

- Dec. 21 – Enjoy a holiday party with entertainers Jim and Christie Harrington.
- Jan. 4 – "Our Lifestyle Online," E.I.T. Marketing Professor Shawn Grain Carter.
- Jan. 11 – "Investigating the Amish Community," Drew University Behavioral Sciences Professor Joslyn Cassidy.
- Jan. 18 – "Illness Narrative: Orphan Genre," with Jo Ann Middleton, professor of English at Drew University and director of medical humanities at Raritan Medical Center.
- Jan. 25 – "Katrina and Iraq: The Personal Stories Behind the News," MSNBC Senior Producer Elise Warner.

**Help Pick 07's Best Reads**

The South Orange Book Review Group, a monthly reading club for adults, will meet on Jan. 8, at 7:30 p.m., to determine reading selections for the succeeding 12 months. Newcomers and veteran club members alike are welcome to provide suggestions.

**Regular Programs**

- Open Stage Teen Poetry Reading (9th grade and up) - Thursday, Dec. 21, 7 p.m.
- Children's Storytimes: Kindergarten, Mondays, 11 a.m.; Toddlers, Tuesdays 11 a.m.; Preschool, Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m.; Babies, Wednesdays 10 a.m.; Families, Wednesdays 2 p.m. ▲

**Library extends Web to vision & learning disabled**

Until recently, people with vision impairments, no vision, and learning disabilities could use only a portion of library materials, such as books on tape, while the vast world of digital information remained inaccessible. Now, South Orange Public Library offers a host of software tools designed to open access to everyone.

■ JAWS, a powerful screen-reading system, can navigate any computer document or Web page. It uses keystrokes, not a mouse, to perform tasks. It also synthesizes speech, adjusting for style and speed. Various keystroke combinations trigger audio access to anything on the screen, or to any Web link.

■ The Accessibility Suite, for people with low vision or learning disabilities, is mouse-activated. It scans documents for read-back, or uses a talking word processor or universal reader like JAWS.



Librarians Ellen Columbus, foreground, and Lindita Cani examine new software programs, JAWS and ZoomText, for patrons with vision impairments and learning disabilities.

■ ZoomText is a powerful computer-screen magnifier for people with low vision. It offers a variety of magnification levels and monitor display options.

More accessibility software is available at the library's assistive technology work station. There, special-needs users will find full Internet access as well as Microsoft Office programs for word processing, spreadsheets, and more. For information, call the library reference desk at (973) 762-0230 or send e-mail to [librarian@sopl.org](mailto:librarian@sopl.org). ▲

## Villager of the Month

# George Iversen

“When my wife and I do something we tend to jump into it,” says George Iversen. After they met, it took them one week to decide to marry, and their union still thrives after 31 years.

Early on, they lived in Chester, N.Y., and Iversen was controller for a large freight company at Newark Airport. Tired of the long commute, he asked a friend: “Where’s a good place to live in New Jersey when you’re working at the airport?” As soon as he heard about Maplewood-South Orange, Iversen drove to town and leased an apartment the same day.

Twenty-four years later he’s still here, still recognizing good ideas and still taking positive action.

Like the 15 years he devoted to the Parking Authority, six of them as chairman. “We definitely increased the parking over the years,” and “jitneys are a great advantage. Why have 20 people driving their cars and trucks downtown and parking them there all day? It makes more sense to have one vehicle pick up 20 people and bring them to the Village.”

Iversen devoted a dozen years to the Chamber of Commerce and chaired the South Orange Democratic Committee for six years.

Volunteerism is “just part of our being, to want to help other people in some way, and by doing so you help yourself,” he says.

In fact, Iversen’s four-page resume lists involvement in half-a-dozen civic groups; plus local, county and state political organizations, Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel and the national called Volunteers for Israel.

Through his long-time business, “We Got Movies,” Iversen has done even more community good. He registered voters for every election, through in-store fundraisers he contributed more than \$5,000 to the Children’s Hospital AIDS Project in

Newark, and he passionately promoted the Africa Fund, which sought the release of Nelson Mandela.

We Got Movies closed this year. It had been one of the oldest continuing independent video operations in the country, with six stores in northern New Jersey.

When he opened, “People said I was crazy because the Village was changing. They were right, it has changed – for the better. I found it a great place for my kids (sons Paul and David) and for my wife (Janet) and myself, and I probably met more people than the average person meets if they have to commute.”

Closing was a “heart-wrenching decision,” but, “You just don’t need a store like that any more. People download.”

These days, Iversen is an information technology and economics expert overseeing the electronic upgrade of the Essex County Surrogate’s Court.

He still recognizes a good idea when it wafts past his compassion sensor. At the Village Trustees meeting where he was presented with the Villager of the Month award, he heard about the South Orange Community Emergency Response Team. “I thought that was an absolutely great thing to do,” he said, and instantly, he asked the Village Clerk about signing up. ▲



## In Touch

with  
Village  
Government

### General Info.

(973) 378-7715

Emergency, 911

Clerk’s Office, x1

Administrator, x2

Construction, x3

Tax Collector, x4

Assessor, x5

Welfare, x5

Finance, x6

Engineer, x7

Parking Auth., x8

Health Officer

x2012

Animal Control

378-7775, x7745

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, c/o Village Hall

## Snow Removal will

begin in the Village when three or more inches of snow have fallen on Village streets. Public Works vehicles will make four passes on each street – two down the center and one near each curb. Depending on the volume of snow, roadways will be plowed more than once. Please heed the following guidelines:

- Park in driveways during snowfall to allow easier street cleaning.
  - Delay driveway shoveling until after streets are cleaned (to avoid violation of township ordinance).
  - Do not shovel or blow snow into the street (also a violation).
  - Tell private contractors not to pile snow in roadways.
  - Don’t let your vehicle protrude into the roadway or sidewalk.
  - Always shovel sidewalks within 12 hours of daylight after a snowfall.
- Important:** Walkway and driveway shoveling allow emergency services vehicles to access homes when there’s a fire, illness or public safety emergency. ▲

## Pay your taxes online

Villagers can now pay quarterly property tax bills online through their own bank accounts. (No credit cards accepted.) To check it out, go to [southorange.org/tax-payment.asp](http://southorange.org/tax-payment.asp).

## Township of South Orange Village South Orange, NJ 07079



Postal Customer  
Local 07079

Bulk  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 5  
South Orange, NJ

Village Web Site: [www.southorange.org](http://www.southorange.org)  
E-mail for Village Administrator: [jgross@southorange.org](mailto:jgross@southorange.org)