

County Spring Garden Fair To Be Held This Sunday

MOUNTAINSIDE — The annual Union County Spring Garden Fair and Plant Sale will take place this Sunday, May 18, from noon to 5 p.m., at the Demonstration Garden, located by the Trailside Nature and Science Center, 452 New Providence Road in Mountainside.

Now in its 25th year, the Spring Garden Fair offers hundreds of plants for sale along with a full slate of family-friendly activities, educational presentations and free expert guidance on gardening. Admission and parking for the rain-or-shine event are both free. No pets are permitted.

"The Freeholder Board is very proud to support the Spring Garden Fair and the Master Gardeners of Union County," said Freeholder Chairman Christopher Hudak. "The Garden Fair is a popular spring tradition that provides hundreds of Union County residents with an opportunity to explore their interest in gardening while contributing to a good cause."

The Garden Fair is a project of the volunteer Rutgers Master Gardeners of Union County, a community service program of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension supported by the Freeholder Board. Proceeds from the sale support horticulture scholarships and many other Master Gardeners community projects.

Highlights of the plant sale will include deer-resistant, drought-tolerant, fragrant and easy-to-grow plants for beginner gardeners, as well as varieties of tomatoes for gardening in containers and other small spaces.

Also featured will be heirloom tomatoes and other vegetables, a large selection of herbs, hanging baskets, houseplants and annual and perennial flowering plants.

Other items for sale will include Rutgers soil test kits, garden crafts by Master Gardeners, gently used gardening equipment and books, and home-baked goodies and other refreshments from the "Cupcake Café."

Visitors to the Garden Fair will have an opportunity to tour the extensive Demonstration Garden and learn about the latest popular trends in gardening, including square foot gardening, rain gardens and rain barrels.

Master Gardeners will be on hand to provide free guidance on gardening and troubleshooting. Visitors are encouraged to bring plant and insect samples for free diagnosis.

Visitors also will be able to talk to personnel from the county's Mosquito Control Bureau for guidance on controlling mosquitoes, and get information about the Extension's 4-H Master Tree Steward community service program.

Free children's activities, including face painting, crafts and seed planting, will be offered as well.

Free parking is available adjacent to the Garden Fair, and at the Loop playground a short walk away. Visitors who plan to purchase plants are advised to bring a small wagon for ease of conveyance.

New Jersey Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who assist the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension in its mission to deliver horticulture programs and information to the public. Anyone with an interest in gardening can join. No previous education or training in horticulture is required.

For information on becoming a Master Gardener, contact Judi Laganga at the Extension office in Westfield at (908) 654-9854 or jlaganga@ucnj.org, or visit ucnj.org/rce.

Library Event to Feature Manhattan Lyric Opera

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Memorial Library will present an evening with the Manhattan Lyric Opera Company on Wednesday, May 21, at 7 p.m. The library is located at 550 East Broad Street.

Founded in 1998 by opera singer and Artistic Director Anne Tormela, the Manhattan Lyric Opera Company is devoted to presenting elegant, concise, user-friendly staged and concert versions of the classic operas, operettas and Broadway works.

A native New Yorker, Ms. Tormela specializes in bel-canto, operatic and early-music style. She will present highlights of the most beloved opera, operetta and Broadway classics for young

and old, opera experts and opera beginners alike. The evening's program will concentrate on arias from operas by Puccini, Verdi, Donizetti and Bellini; special requests also will be welcomed.

This program will be free and open to Westfield Memorial Library and MURAL cardholders. MURAL cardholders belong to libraries that are part of the Middlesex Union Reciprocal Agreement Libraries. To see if a library participates,

check the Westfield Memorial Library website, wmlnj.org. To register for the program, visit wmlnj.org and click on the Online Calendar, or call (908) 789-4090, extension no. 7951.



Anne Tormela

Temple Posts Activities For May 30

SPRINGFIELD — Temple Beth Ahm Yisrael will present a Kids' Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, May 30, a musical and active service for families with preschool-age children.

Shabbat services will be held at 8 p.m. Dr. Itzhak Brook, author of "A Physician's Account of the Yom Kippur War," will be the guest speaker. He will discuss the historical background of the Yom Kippur War and its effects on the Israeli society, as

well as his personal experiences and challenges as a battalion physician in the Sinai during the war.

He plans to speak on the physical and psychological traumas soldiers had to cope with, the effect of religion on them, the cost of war in human life and suffering, and the daily struggle for survival.

Temple Beth Ahm Yisrael is located at 60 Temple Drive in Springfield. For more information, call (973) 376-0539, extension no. 11.

Public Invited to Assemble Care Packages For Troops

WESTFIELD — The public is invited to join in the Support 4 Soldiers Packing Day event this Sunday, May 18, hosted by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the New Jersey National Guard Armory in Westfield and the non-profit organization Bonds of Courage, from noon to 3 p.m. at the Armory, located at 500 Rahway Avenue in Westfield.

The Packing Day event will include refreshments, entertainment, military vehicles and equipment to view, plus a chance to meet soldiers from the 1-102nd Cavalry Squadron.

"A package from home is a reminder that people care for you and are thinking of you," said Freeholder Chairman Christopher Hudak. "Support 4 Soldiers is a great way for the whole Union County community to pull together and show how much we appreciate the men and women who are serving our country far from their homes."

Support 4 Soldiers is a campaign created by high-school students, who have been rallying their schools, friends and neighbors to collect toiletries and other basic items for active duty military members overseas. On Sunday they will gather at the Armory to as-

semble the care packages for shipping. Thousands of items have already been collected and there is still time to donate. The Support 4 Soldiers collection is ongoing until May 15. More than two dozen distinctive "Support 4 Soldiers" collection boxes are in place at public buildings throughout the county. To locate a collection box, and to view the list of recommended items to donate, visit ucnj2.org/uc-step. Packing Day attendees also are invited to bring their donations to the Armory this Sunday.

Support 4 Soldiers was conceived by students who were brought together by the Union County Student Training and Enrichment Program (UC STEP) Summit last December.

UC STEP students organized their campaign with the support of the Freeholder Board in partnership with Bonds of Courage (bondsofcourage.org), based in Westfield. Bonds of Courage is celebrating its 10-year anniversary and moving into its new headquarters at the Armory this Sunday. For more information on Packing Day, Support 4 Soldiers and UCSTEP, visit ucnj2.org/uc-step, e-mail ucstep@ucnj.org or call (908) 527-4103.

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