

Genealogical Society Offers Something For Beginners, Professional Researchers

For those who are interested in genealogy and family history, the Genealogical Society of the West Fields offers a variety of activities which are focused on one of the most popular hobbies in this country.

The society has about 150 members, 40 per cent of whom live outside Union County. The group's experience levels cover a wide range, from beginners to professional genealogical researchers. Dues are modest and anyone curious about family history is invited to join.

Objectives of the organization are three-fold:

- Research in the fields of local history, family history and genealogy.
- Promotion of general interest in these subjects.
- Addition of resource material to the Westfield Memorial Library.
- Members are involved in library research projects which include the gathering and printing of unpublished source material in the Westfield area, indexing useful publications to make research easier and answering genealogical queries submitted by members and other researchers who have an interest in families from the local area.

The society publishes a bimonthly newsletter, *Gleanings From the West Fields*, in an effort to disseminate results of the Society's research efforts and keeps mem-

bers informed of activities.

Donations of resource material to the Westfield library come from a variety of sources. Members and friends often make gifts of some of their own holdings or references that would be of interest to the local area. The Society, as a whole, includes in its annual budget funds for the donation of special interest material.

To further foster interest in genealogy, the Society holds monthly meetings, except in the summer, which feature programs about genealogy and history.

These are held either Thursday afternoons or Saturday mornings at the library and are open to the public. The group also sponsors field trips to important local genealogical resource centers.

Also, volunteers from the Society staff the library's Local History Room each weekday from 1 to 4 p.m., in September through May to assist patrons of the library in locating items of personal interests in the extensive genealogical collection.

Last year, the Society offered a biennial workshop entitled, "New Routes to Old Roots." The program was well attended by an enthusiastic audience. The next workshop is slated for May, 2000. For further information about the Society, please call Fred Bollinger, President, at (908) 232-6419.

The Westfield Foundation

The Westfield Foundation's purpose is to promote the betterment of the Westfield community and the enhancement of the quality of life for all of its citizens.

It fulfills those objectives by:

- Attracting charitable funds, chiefly in the form of permanent endowments, which are committed to meeting the needs of the people living in Westfield.
- Using those resources wisely and efficiently to address key concerns of the community, respond to its emerging and changing needs and sustain its agencies and institutions. In doing so, the Foundation serves as steward for the donors who have entrusted assets to its care.
- Providing leadership to the community, serving as a catalyst in identifying problems and opportunities, and shaping effective responses to them.

In developing the Foundation as a pool of capital permanently committed to the betterment of the community, high priority is given to attracting contributions which are broad in their charitable intent.

With those resources, the Westfield Foundation Board may use to the fullest its discretion and judgment in meeting the changing needs of the community.

As a vehicle for donors with varied philanthropic objectives, the Foundation also recognizes its role in managing funds including those which have been designated to benefit specific community institutions, endowment funds established by agencies themselves and funds which for a limited time are subject to the advisory recommendations of donors or their appointees.

Although the Foundation's funds are used principally as a source of grants to operating agencies which are serving the community, its resources will also be used to undertake studies and programs addressing community problems.

Criteria for Grant Applications:

Grant requests are reviewed in the spirit of the Foundation's goal of supporting the public well-being and improving the quality of life in the Westfield community. Each year, the Foundation receives many more worthy requests than it can support, and the Board of Trustees is forced to make judgments based on relative need and potential impact.

The Foundation favors grants:

- Primarily for the purpose of education; the arts and other cultural activities; civic, health and human services; community development; and the conservation and preservation of historic resources.
- Primarily for the community of Westfield, or groups serving the Westfield community that provide innovative responses to recognized community needs.
- For capacity-building activities that enable agencies/institutions to improve their services to Westfield and strengthen their relationship to their constituency.
- To increase the managerial and financial (resource-generating) capability of an agency, to increase its volunteer involvement and commitment, and to develop self-reliance and the ability to constructively address positive community change.

For information call (908) 233-1990 or send e-mail to foundation@westfieldnj.com.



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