

THE SPIRIT OF

Essex

Summer 2025

**Celebrate
the Outdoors!**

Visit and enjoy
Essex County's parks,
reservations, trails
and outdoor facilities.



Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.
Essex County Executive
and the Board of
County Commissioners



Daniel K. Salvante
Director of Parks, Recreation
and Cultural Affairs

PAGE 5



PAGE 6



PAGE 11



PAGE 17





A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Dear Friends,

Warmer weather has arrived and it's the perfect time to get out and explore all that our historic Essex County Parks System has to offer!

On June 14th, we will host our first "Celebrate the Outdoors" event. Our reservations – South Mountain, Eagle Rock, Mills and Hilltop – will be in the spotlight that day as we offer guided hikes and other family-friendly activities to show off the beauty of our natural spaces and promote interacting with nature.

If walking through the woods is not your style, enjoy the beauty of the 2.7-mile walkway around the reservoir at our South Mountain Recreation Complex or follow the rubberized paths in Branch Brook Park or Weequahic Park. If you are looking to burn some extra calories, try flexing your muscles on the parcourses (exercise stations) in Weequahic, Ivy Hill or Brookdale Parks.

Combine spending time outdoors with unique experiences at Turtle Back Zoo where you can feed giraffes, walk among a flock of budgies in our aviary, get a bird's eye view from the treetops on our Treetop Adventure Course or putt your way through our African continent themed miniGOLF course. Adventure and learning go hand in hand at our Environmental Center. Butterflies will take center stage July when we host our Butterfly Tent Safari and offer a month-long series of events to highlight these fluttery friends.

Finally, after a long day, cool off under the stars and listen to the sounds of music from some of our area's most exciting and talented bands. Our free concert series runs from June to August and offers something for every musical taste.

Together we will continue Putting Essex County First.

Joseph DiVincenzo, Jr.

Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.
Essex County Executive



Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.
Essex County Executive
and the Board of County Commissioners



Daniel K. Salvante
Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Carlos M. Pomares, *President*
Tyshammie L. Cooper, *Vice President*

Brendan W. Gill
Leonard M. Luciano
Robert Mercado
A'Dorian Murray-Thomas
Wayne L. Richardson
Patricia Sebold
Romaine Sermons



This program is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Essex County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs received an operating support grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.

Indicates the facility is handicap accessible. Please contact the facility directly for specific accommodations.



Celebrate Nature at Essex County's First Annual Get Outdoors Day!

Join the Essex County Parks System on Saturday, June 14th from 9am to 1pm for the first annual Get Outdoors Day, a free and family-friendly event that encourages everyone to reconnect with nature and enjoy the great outdoors.

Held in celebration to coincide with of the 20th anniversary of the Essex County Environmental Center, this exciting new event is part of the nationwide National Get Outdoors Day initiative, which promotes healthy, active outdoor fun and fosters appreciation for public lands.

"Our parks and reservations are wonderful resources for people of all ages to escape the concrete and asphalt, enjoy the outdoors, and take a deep breath of fresh air and relax. Join us in celebrating our open spaces by visiting one of our reservations to experience and discover the wonders of the outdoors," Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. said.



Families, friends, and nature lovers of all ages and ability levels are invited to explore the scenic beauty of four of Essex County's treasured green spaces: South Mountain Reservation, Eagle Rock Reservation, Hilltop Reservation and Mills Reservation. Whether you're looking to unwind with a peaceful self-guided stroll or dive deeper with a guided hike, there's something for everyone. Please note: guided hikes require advance registration at essexcountyparks.org.

This celebration offers the perfect opportunity to discover native plants, local wildlife, and scenic trails while enjoying quality time outdoors. It's a great way to kick off the summer with a healthy, eco-friendly activity for the whole family to enjoy.


The event is made possible through the support of local environmental partners, including the Essex County Environmental Center, Essex County Turtle Back Zoo, South Mountain Conservancy, Hilltop Conservancy, Branch Brook Park Alliance, New Jersey Audubon, New Jersey Sierra Club-Essex Chapter, Native Plant Society of New Jersey-Essex Chapter, New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, and New York City Department of Parks Greenbelt Native Plant Nursery.

Don't miss this chance to connect with nature, your community, and local conservation organizations. Mark your calendar for June 14th and get ready to explore Essex County's natural beauty! ■

ESSEX COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

Seasonal events sponsored by the Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

ESSEX COUNTY CODEY ARENA

560 Northfield Avenue, West Orange
973.731.3828 /
<https://essexcountyparks.org/south-mountain/codey-arena> 

Summer Figure Skating Camp – 7 weeks

- Basic 3 & above
- Ages 5-15
- Full & half day sessions
- Monday to Friday, June 23 to August 1

Learn to Skate Group Lessons – 6 weeks

- Monday to Friday, June 4 to August 6
- Ages 3½ to 12
- Snow Plow (Ages 3½ to 5)
- Basic 1-3 (Ages 6 to 12)

Public Skate Sessions Ages: 3½ to Adult

Adults - \$12 / Children 16 & under - \$10 / Seniors - \$10 / Skate Rentals - \$5

Adult Skate Sessions Ages 35 and older

Weekday sessions

Birthday Parties –

Reserve a party room to celebrate your child's birthday on the ice.

- \$125 - 3-hour party room
- Parties are held during public and private ice sessions.
- Group admission discount rates for 15+ skaters.

Ice Hockey Camps

- NY Sirens – PWHL Girls Hockey Camp
- Pro Ambitions Hockey Camp
- Brodeur Hockey School
- Erik Nates Euro Hockey
- Great Saves Goaltending
- Simply Defense & Shooting Camp

Night Moves

May 30

June 13

June 26

July 12

July 26

August 7

August 22


Evenings near sunset

Get a unique look at Essex County Turtle Back Zoo and its nocturnal animal collection! Night Moves gives you a guided evening tour of zoo exhibits where you will learn about different animal senses and adaptations. Guided tours are one hour. All ages.

\$10/participant.

For more information, visit
<https://turtlebackzoo.com/>.

ESSEX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

621-B Eagle Rock Avenue, Roseland
973.228.8776 / www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar 

Small Groups/Pods and Families

All ages. Summer topic selections include: Seasonal Nature Adventure, Lenape Village Tours, Backyard Birding, Wild Edibles, Frog Pond Science, Swamp Tromp/Wetland Biodiversity, *Fire Making and Hot Chocolate, *Camping 101. One group at a time with a limit of 10 people. Schedule your 45-minute time slot by calling the center at 973.228.8776. **Fee: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult.** *Where noted, additional fees apply.

LITTLE EXPLORERS

Mondays, June 9 and 16

For ages 2 and 3; 10am to 11am

For ages 4 and 5; 3pm to 4pm

Join us for explorations of nature as we

study plants and animals and observe the colors, shapes, textures, and sounds in the Environmental Center's forest habitat. Please come dressed for the weather; all classes include an outdoor adventure. All children must be walking and accompanied by an adult. Paths cannot accommodate strollers. Please be prepared for all weather conditions. Maximum of two children per adult. All sessions are limited to 10 children. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$15 per child per session**

FOREST FRIENDS CLUB

Thursdays, June 12; 4pm to 5pm

For children ages 5 through 10.

We'll explore the forest using nets, binoculars, magnifiers, and microscopes to investigate nature in our wooded wetland habitat. Together we hope to foster an ethic of stewardship and offer an opportunity to take part in hands-on conservation projects. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$15 per child per session**

FROG POND CLUB

Wednesdays, June 11; 4pm to 5pm

For children ages 5 through 9.

Uncover and discover ecosystem interactions at the frog pond. Explore with nets, magnifiers and microscopes to investigate what lives at the pond and learn from a naturalist what can be done to protect and conserve the pond inhabitants. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$15 per child per session**

GARDEN DISCOVERY CLUB

Tuesdays, June 10, 24; July 8, 22;

August 5, 19; September 9;

4pm to 5pm

For ages 5 and up. Together we'll grow food in our garden plot and learn about everything from soil to seeds along the way. Participants will get hands-on experience with planting, harvesting and cooking. Session themes include soil and composting, seed planting and labeling, thinning, weeding and watering, selective harvest, garden pests, healthy eating and more! This is a drop-off and pick-up class (children only). Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$15 per child per session**

Essex County Department of Parks and Recreation
& Rose Squared Art Shows Present



Rose Squared Art Show



36th Annual Rose Squared Art Show in Essex County Brookdale Park



473 Watchung Ave, Bloomfield/Montclair | Saturday, June 21 & Sunday, June 22
10am to 5pm
Rain or Shine

For info, directions, a gallery of participating artists and unique artisanal food visit
rosesquared.com

DINOSAUR DISCOVERY FAMILY FIELD TRIP

Tuesday, June 10; 5:30pm to 7:30pm

For families with young children

ages 4 and up. Meet at the end of Locust Avenue in Roseland and hike 1-mile total to explore this National Historic Landmark that is home to three-toed Grallator dinosaur tracks from the late Triassic age. Using clay, we'll make and take an impression of an existing track and leave the site undisturbed for future paleontological study. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**

FROG POND ADVENTURE OUTDOOR CLASS

Thursday, June 12; 6pm to 7:30pm

For families. This rrrribbettting program will take an up-close look at our pond ecosystem. Search and identify the life found in the pond through magnifying glasses, microscopes and field guides. **Fee: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

Saturday, June 14; 8:30am to 1pm

All ages. Celebrate National Outdoors Day with the Essex County Parks Department. A variety of hikes for all

ages and abilities are offered in select Essex County Parks locations, led by the Essex County Environmental Center, Essex County Turtle Back Zoo and our partner organizations: South Mountain Conservancy, Hilltop Conservancy, Branch Brook Park Alliance, NYNJ Trail Conference, Essex Chapter by Sierra Club and the NY Native Plant Society, the NJ Native Plant Society and New York City Department of Parks

Greenbelt Native Plant Nursery. For more information and to register, visit www.essexcountyparks.org. **FREE**

GROWING VEGETABLES USING INTENSIVE GARDENING PRACTICES

Saturday, June 28; 10am to 12pm

For adults. Claudia Urdanivia, Urban Agriculture Agent for Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Essex and



Deanna Miller, Juliette Simmons, and Mike Yildirim at the Garden Discovery Club at the Essex County Environmental Center



Butterfly Tent Safari at Essex County Environmental Center

Hudson Counties, will explain how to make the most of your vegetable garden plot by growing intensively and using best practices such as succession planting, interplanting, and crop rotation. For all garden levels. Meets in Essex County Environmental Center, Garibaldi Hall. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$15 per adult**

EVENING CANOE PADDLE ON THE UPPER PASSAIC
Thursday, July 17; 6:30pm to 8:30pm
For adults and children ages 10 and older. Take a leisurely paddle on the Passaic River! Paddlers will enjoy scenery and peacefulness as they paddle up the river and float downstream. Geared for beginners and children 10 and up accompanied by a parent or guardian. Meet in the Garibaldi Hall parking lot. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online at www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar. **Fee: \$30 per person**

BUTTERFLY TENT SAFARI
Saturday, July 12 to Saturday, July 26
Tent Hours ~ Monday through Friday from 12pm to 3pm
Saturdays, July 12, 19 & 26 from 10:30am to 1:30pm
For all ages. Featuring live butterflies and butterfly-themed programming for all ages. Must book a time slot; walk-ins accommodated when possible. Pre-registration required either in person, by mail, online or by phone. Call the Center to book a time slot. Fees collected go

to the Essex County Parks Foundation and directly back to Environmental Center programming. **\$8 per person (includes a take-away item per paid participant).**

THE VERY HUNGRY MONARCH CATERPILLAR
Saturday, July 12; 10:30am to 11:30am
Ages 3 to 5. Come dressed for a butterfly story walk around the trails to learn about a day in the life of the monarch. Meet at Garibaldi Hall. Advanced registration and minimum number of participants are required. Pre-registration and payment required either in person or by mail. This program is supported by the Essex County Parks Foundation. **Fee: \$15 per person (includes a visit to the live butterfly tent)**



Upper Passaic River Canoe trip from the Essex County Environmental Center

BUZZ INTO ACTION with INSECT EDUCATION
Saturday, July 19; 10:30am to 11:30am
Ages 5 and up. Love insects? Join us for a family-fun and hands-on presentation all about bugs n' butterflies. Meet at Garibaldi Hall. Pre-registration and payment required either in person or by mail. This program is supported by the Essex County Parks Foundation. **Fee: \$15 per person (includes a visit to the live butterfly tent)**

BUTTERFLY GARDENING WORKSHOP
Saturday, July 26; 10:30am to 11:30am
For families. Learn about butterfly gardening in this hands-on workshop. We'll create our own seed balls with native host and nectar plants to better support New Jersey butterflies in our own neighborhoods. Meet at Garibaldi Hall. Pre-registration and payment required either in person or by mail. This program is supported by the Essex County Parks Foundation. **Fee: \$15 per person (includes a visit to the live butterfly tent)**

INSECTS OF SUMMER NIGHTS
Monday, July 28; 5:30pm to 7pm
For families. Discover insects of summer nights, both the pesky and the pretty – they all have their place. First, we'll make our own natural insect repellent, and then together we'll explore in search of fireflies, ladybugs, aphids, moths and more before returning to make and take an insect mosaic craft! Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$15 per person**

EVENING CANOE PADDLE ON THE PASSAIC
Wednesday, August 6; 6:30pm to 8:30pm
For adults and children ages 10 and older. Take a leisurely paddle on the Passaic River! Paddlers will enjoy scenery and peacefulness as they paddle up the river and float downstream. Geared for beginners and children 10 and up accompanied by a parent or guardian. Meet in the Garibaldi Hall parking lot. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$30 per person**

BUZZFEST
Saturday, August 9; 10:15am, 11:30am or 12:45pm
For all ages. Have you ever wondered how honey goes from hive to jar? Come join our local beekeeper and see a real hive! You'll even get a sample taste. Learn about bees, their current challenges, and how we can help. Make-and-take bee themed crafts and activity stations included. Limited space per time slot; choose to book from one of three time slots. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **\$15 per participant (includes a take-away item per paid participant)**


FOREST MUSHROOMS 101
Thursday, August 14; 5:30pm to 7pm
For families with young children ages 6 and up. Fascinated by fungi? Explore the local forest for gilled, pored, ridged and toothed mushrooms. We'll learn their anatomy and create whimsical, yet realistic air-dry clay replicas of what we find. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**

FROG POND ADVENTURE OUTDOOR CLASS
Monday, August 25; 6pm to 7:30pm
For families. This rrrribbetting program will take an up-close look at our pond ecosystem. Search and identify the life found in the pond through magnifying glasses, microscopes and field guides. Pre-registration and payment required either in person, by mail or online. **Fee: \$12 per child, \$15 per adult**



David Alexander, Ned Dunbar, and Mike Yildrim at Buzzfest at the Essex County Environmental Center

2025 ESSEX COUNTY PARKS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST
Submissions are due by Wednesday, September 10, so grab a camera and visit an Essex County Park! Anyone with a camera is invited and encouraged to submit photos that capture a part of your visit to the County Park System. For rules and regulations, please contact the Essex County Environmental Center.

ESSEX COUNTY TURTLE BACK ZOO
560 Northfield Avenue, West Orange
973.731.5800 / www.essexcountyparks.org/calendar 

Berson Family Center at Essex County Turtle Back Zoo
973-731-5800 x236
<https://turtlebackzoo.com/education/>

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS
Hatchlings: June 15, July 13, August 17 at 10am
Tots: June 15, July 13, August 17 at 11:30am
Explorers: June 22, July 20, August 24 at 10am TBZ's Early Childhood programs encourage family learning and foster early environmental awareness. We invite young children to discover the natural world through gently structured play, art, stories, animal visits

and more. Age restrictions apply; pre-registration required; zoo admission not included. **Hatchlings (12-24 months), Tots (ages 2&3) and Explorers (ages 4&5) are \$25-\$30 per participant.** <https://turtlebackzoo.com/discover/early-childhood-programs/>

WONDERS OF THE WILD
Amazing Communication: Saturday, June 14 from 1pm to 3pm
Animal Tracks: Saturday, July 12 from 1pm to 3pm
Animal Training: Saturday, August 9 from 1pm to 3pm
Turtle Back Zoo is an amazing classroom! Our Wonders of the Wild program is an opportunity to participate in supplementary science and nature-themed programs and projects that facilitate scientific literacy and life-long environmental stewardship. Available to students ages 6-12. The programs include a visit to the South Mountain Reservation, reservoir, or zoo as weather permits; does not include zoo admission for after the program. **\$30/participant.** <https://turtlebackzoo.com/discover/wonders-of-the-wild/>

SOPHISTICATED SCIENCE SEMINARS
Tipping the Scales on Scales (Snakes): Saturday, July 26

from 1pm to 3pm
Wild Careers: Sunday, June 15
from 1pm to 3pm
Forest Forensics: Sunday, July 13
from 1pm to 3pm
Zoo Conservation and Stewardship: Sunday, August 3
from 1pm to 3pm

Sophisticated Science Seminars are conservation programs for audiences ages 13 to 103. Seminars run throughout the year and span topics such as animal anatomy, habitats and conservation, animal careers, and more. The programs are perfect for those interested in animals, science, conservation, and nature who want to learn something new in a relaxed atmosphere. **\$30/participant; includes a visit into the zoo, but not zoo admission for after the program.** <https://turtlebackzoo.com/discover/sophisticated-science-seminars/>

FAMILY NATURE CLUB: NATURE GUARDIANS
Prepping for Pollinators: June 22 & July 6 from 9am to 11am
Searching for Salamanders: August 3 from 9am to 11am

Nature Guardians is an FNC program focused on community engagement that connects families with local

conservation actions and citizen science research, shaping our understanding of the natural world. This season's programs will focus on pollinator conservation and a brand-new salamander research project at Turtle Back Zoo. **\$5/participant.** More info: <https://turtlebackzoo.com/discover/family-nature-club/>

FAMILY NATURE CLUB: NATURE ADVENTURERS
Woodland Wanderers: June 29 and August 17 from 9am to 11am
Pollinator Parade: July 27 from 9am to 11am

Nature Play is playing WITH nature, not just IN nature and is a great way to interact with nature no matter your experience level or play style. Run, climb, build, dig, or even just sit and experience the sounds, smells, and sights of the outdoors. Nature Adventurers visits different locations near Essex County Turtle Back Zoo; zoo admission not included. **\$15/participant.** <https://turtlebackzoo.com/discover/family-nature-club-nature-adventurers/>

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS & ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS
Sloth Socials: June 28, July 12, August 9 at 10am Join us for a deeper exploration into the care and conservation

of our animals! For 6 years old and over only; under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. All members of the party must have a ticket. Group sizes are strictly limited. No photographs are permitted behind the scenes; all attendees will sign a photo waiver prior to the tour. Attendees may be asked to wear face coverings at some locations. Tour and program guests do not enter exhibits or touch animals. Animal Encounters include bagels and coffee and an educational presentation. **\$50/participant.** <https://turtlebackzoo.com/discover/behind-the-scenes-tours/>

OTHER PROGRAMS AT THE ZOO OR CLOSER TO YOU
In-person and Virtual Programs, Outreaches, and more
Dates and Times Scheduled at Need
Join us for a dynamic and fun educational program that is focused on animals, conservation, and stewardship. We offer a variety of programs that satisfy many scientific benchmarks while also being engaging and informative. Programs can be adapted to age and ability; many can be adapted for outreaches to your school, senior center, etc. **Fees and restrictions vary per location.** <https://turtlebackzoo.com/discover/education-center-programs/> ■


Family Nights

Wednesday and Thursday nights in July and August

Essex County Turtle Back Zoo has extended hours to 8pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Enjoy the zoo when the summer temperatures are cooler and the workday is over. Last entry is 7pm.

<https://turtlebackzoo.com/>





Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.,
Essex County Executive
The Board of County Commissioners
And The Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs



“Our fishing derbies are excellent opportunities for children to enjoy the historic Essex County Parks System in a different and fun way. You’ll have a great time creating your own ‘big fish’ stories and spending some quality time with your friends and family in some of the most beautiful parks in the area. I invite everyone to come out, cast their lines and Experience Essex.”

Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.



Open to Children 15 years of Age and Younger 🐟 FREE TO ENTER 🐟 Win a Prize!

| FISHING DERBY DATES FOR 2025 | |
|--|---|
| DATE | SITE |
| Wednesday, May 28 | Irvington Park |
| Thursday, May 29 | Verona Park |
| Wednesday, June 4 | Weequahic Park |
| Thursday, June 5 | Grover Cleveland Park |
| *Saturday, June 7 | Monte Irvin Orange Park |
| Wednesday, June 11 | Branch Brook Park |
| Thursday, June 12 | South Mountain Recreation Complex |
| Weekday Derbies Registration: 5:00pm - 6:00pm Derby: 6:00pm - 7:00pm Awards: 7:15pm - 7:30pm | *Saturday Derby Registration: 8:00am - 9:00am Derby: 9:00am - 10:00am Awards: 10:00am - 10:30am |

- See www.essexcountynj.org for any cancellations due to weather.
- Children are encouraged to bring their own fishing poles.
 - There are no rain dates in case Fishing Derbies are canceled due to weather.
 - Prizes will be awarded in various age categories.



973.268.3500 / www.essexcountynj.org
Putting **Essex County** First

Be a Fan & Follow Us!



Essex County Park System

@essexparks



G'ART'BAGE ART CONTEST

The Essex County Environmental Center invited residents to contribute to a cleaner, greener world by creating art out of garbage!

Team and individual projects were welcomed in the following categories: Grades PreK-2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8 and Grades 9-12. Projects were required to withstand the elements as they were showcased in an outdoor display on the Essex County Environmental Center grounds during the month of April or Earth Month!



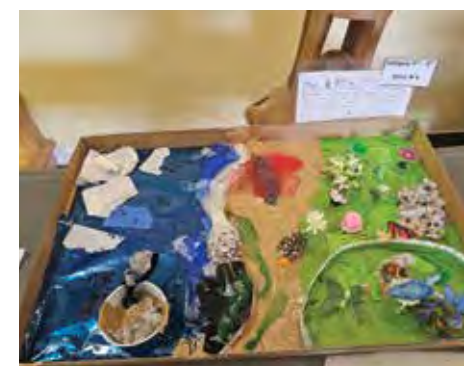
FIRST PLACE - PK-2ND GRADE CATEGORY
Charlotte Greenstein, Emma Petersen
and Eleanor Greenstein
(Ocean Plastics)



SECOND PLACE - PK-2ND GRADE CATEGORY
Nico Spatz
(Don't trash where we splash, save our seas!)



THIRD PLACE - PK-2ND GRADE CATEGORY
Kobe Romero
(Recycle Mountain)



FIRST PLACE - 3RD-5TH GRADE CATEGORY
Ursa Brondo
(Garbage harms nature)



SECOND PLACE - 3RD-5TH GRADE CATEGORY
Joahne Chao
(Spot the Positive Party Pup)



THIRD PLACE - 3RD-5TH GRADE CATEGORY
Sophia & Edina
(Ms. Kaplan's Class)



FIRST PLACE - 6TH-8TH GRADE CATEGORY
Milagros Alivo, Ariannis Nunez, Julieta Lopez
(Newspaper Dress)



SECOND PLACE - 6TH-8TH GRADE CATEGORY
Melihan Aquino, Gabriela Ramos, Ra'Niyah Gilbert
and Abigail Felix
(Homework Dress)



THIRD PLACE - 6TH-8TH GRADE CATEGORY
Elyas Anziani, Talia Washington,
Dylan Diaz, Kamonie Smith
(Octopus)



FIRST PLACE - 9TH-12TH GRADE CATEGORY
Isabel V. - Gramon School
(Red Glasses)



SECOND PLACE - 9TH-12TH GRADE CATEGORY
Mary K. - Gramon School
(Flowerpot)



THIRD PLACE - 9TH-12TH GRADE CATEGORY
Kibo. - Gramon School
(Music Instrument)



The Essex County Free Summer Music Concert Series offers a diverse lineup of performers who will take center stage throughout our historic Parks System. Pack a blanket, enjoy the cool evening breeze, and dance to the sounds of summer.

Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.
Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.
Essex County Executive

FIREWORKS SHOWS

All performances begin at 7:30pm

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Friday, June 27 • Branch Brook Park, Newark

STAGE REVOLUTION: A NIGHT OF ROCK

Tuesday, July 1 • Weequahic Park, Newark

THE INFERNO

Wednesday, July 2

Brookdale Park, Bloomfield/Montclair

ESSEX COUNTY BROOKDALE PARK

All performances begin at 7:30pm

SOUL MACHINE: A NIGHT OF R&B

Friday, July 11

AFTER SHOCK: TRIBUTE TO THE 90'S

Friday, July 18

MEN OF SOUL: AN EVENING OF MO-TOWN

Friday, July 25

PROMISED LAND: SOUNDS OF THE JERSEY SHORE

Friday, August 1

CAPTAIN JACK: TRIBUTE TO BILLY JOEL

Friday, August 8



LIVE AT YOUR LOCAL ESSEX COUNTY PARK

All performances at 7pm unless otherwise noted

1 WILD NIGHT: A BON JOVI TRIBUTE

Tuesday, June 24 • Belleville Park, Belleville

THE FIREFLIES: DOOWOP CLASSICS

Wednesday, June 25 • Verona Park, Verona

BIG BANG BAND

Tuesday, July 8

Veterans Memorial Park, Newark

LOS NUEVES

Wednesday, July 9 • Riverbank Park, Newark

ESTEEM

Tuesday, July 15 • Watsessing Park, Bloomfield

TRUE SOL

Wednesday, July 16 • Ivy Hill Park, Newark

BIG BEAT BAND

Tuesday, July 22 • Vailsburg Park, Newark

JAMAICA VYBZ

Wednesday, July 23 • Riverfront Park, Newark

TRIBUTE TO TAYLOR SWIFT

Tuesday, July 29

Grover Cleveland Park, Caldwell

BIG HIX

Wednesday, July 30

Cedar Grove Park, Cedar Grove

LIFTOFF BRASS: A NIGHT OF POP

Tuesday, August 5

Independence Park, Newark

JERSEY SOUND

Wednesday, August 6 • Yanticaw Park, Nutley

EDDIE BELTON BAND

Tuesday, August 12 • Irvington Park, Irvington

THEATER ROCKS: A BROADWAY REVUE

Friday, August 15 • 7:30pm

Eagle Rock Reservation, West Orange



HOSTED BY:

Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.,
Essex County Executive

the Board of County Commissioners, and
the Department of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs

PUTTING **ESSEX COUNTY FIRST**

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Carlos M. Pomares, *President*

Tyshammie L. Cooper, *Vice President*

Brendan W. Gill

Leonard M. Luciano

Robert Mercado

A'Dorian Murray-Thomas

Wayne L. Richardson

Patricia Sebold

Romaine Sermons

FESTIVALS

GOSPEL FESTIVAL

Saturday, June 28 • 12noon - 6pm

Rain Date: Sunday, June 29

Monte Irvin Orange Park, Orange

JAZZ FESTIVAL

Saturday, July 12 • 12noon - 9pm

Rain Date: Sunday, July 13

Monte Irvin Orange Park, Orange

CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL

Saturday August 9 • 12noon - 9pm

Rain Date: Sunday, August 10

Monte Irvin Orange Park, Orange

INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

Saturday, August 16 • 1pm - 9pm

Rain Date: Sunday, August 17

Ivy Hill Park, Newark

LATINO FESTIVAL

Saturday, August 23 • 12noon - 9pm

Rain Date: Sunday, August 24

Monte Irvin Orange Park, Orange

Festivals are co-sponsored by the Essex
County Department of Parks, Recreation,
and Cultural Affairs.

Concert schedule is subject to change.
Please check for updates and cancellations.

ESSEX COUNTY CULTURAL EXHIBITIONS

**The following events are offered for the public's enjoyment
by Essex County-based arts and history organizations.**

The Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs takes no responsibility for the content, accuracy, dates or times and whether or not non-County sponsored events listed in this magazine are held as scheduled.



Pride-Full at Heidi Gallery at JSDD

HEIDI GALLERY at JSDD

310 Eisenhower Parkway, Livingston
973.272.7148 / HeidiGallery@JSDD.org
Call for ADA accommodations, etc.

Pride-Full

May 29 to June 29

This is first Heidi Gallery exhibition to be held during the month of June to fulfill the gallery's mission of full community inclusion. Heidi Gallery is seeking works of art which celebrate identity, inclusivity

and love in all their guises. Opening reception is Thursday, May 29 from 6-8pm. Performance of Synesthesia & Sound is Sunday, June 6 from 2-4pm. RSVP required. Closing reception and Artist Walk & Talk is Sunday, June 29 from 2-4pm.

WAE to Evolve – Retrospective of 20 Years of Creative Exploration August 17 to September 21

This exhibit represents the work of
WAE Studio artists throughout the

past 20 years. The work represented includes acrylic, fiber arts, digital art, photography, mixed media in addition to more traditional materials. Evolution is inevitable and expansive and requires an open mind to methods, ideas and possibilities that we can't yet imagine. Picture Tapping Workshop is Sunday, September 14 from 2-4pm. RSVP required. Closing reception and Artist Walk & Talk is Sunday, September 28 from 2-4pm. ■

OUR SPONSORS:



RoseSquared.com





"National Park and Recreation Month is the perfect opportunity to highlight the beauty of our open spaces, the importance of recreation facilities and the positive impact they have on our wellness and quality of life. The area overlooking the Orange Reservoir provides a beautiful and unique spot to host a diverse lineup of activities to exercise, entertain and inspire you. We invite the public to celebrate with us and look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events"

Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.



**Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., Essex County Executive
and the Board of County Commissioners**
Invite You to

**Free
Events!**

Wellness on the Waterfront 2025

Essex County South Mountain Recreation Complex Clipper Pavilion, Cherry Lane

Essex County celebrates Parks and Recreation Month with free weekly activities at the Waterfront in the Essex County South Mountain Recreation Complex

Mondays **Yoga: July 7, 14, 21, 28 at 6:30pm**

All levels welcome! Please bring your own mat.

Tuesdays **Jammin' in July: July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 7pm**

Elevate your Waterfront experience with music. The schedule is as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| July 1: Maplewood Community Band | July 22: Peter & the Master Keys |
| July 8: West Orange Community Band | July 29: Sterling Sample; Island Music Steel Drums |
| July 15: Chatham Community Band | |

Thursdays **Full Body Work-Out: July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at 6:30pm**

Join us and get in shape!

Wednesday and Thursday Nights in July

Family Fun Nights at Essex County Turtle Back Zoo.

The Zoo has extended hours on Wednesdays and Thursdays to 8pm.
Last admission 7pm. turtlebackzoo.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT www.essexcountynj.org

| Putting **Essex County** First



ESSEX COUNTY SUMMER EVENTS

June 1: Watershed Literary Reading.

Now in its seventh year of programming, Watershed Literary Events, a spoken word series, promotes the work of a talented and diverse array of writers with a New Jersey connection. South Orange Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs, Baird Community Center, 5 Mead Street, South Orange. 3-4:30pm. Free. 973.378.7754. www.southorange.org

June 4 to 25: Skate House Sessions.

Enjoy acoustic music sets and a beer garden on Wednesdays in June. Meadowland Park Conservancy, North Ridgewood Road and Mead Street, South Orange. 6:30pm. Free. 973.378.7754. www.meadowlandpark.org

June 7: Essex County Anderson Park "Music Under the June Moon" Concert.

Bring a picnic and a blanket and enjoy the Chamber Music Society of North Jersey perform al fresco in historic Essex County Anderson Park. The concert features works by Beethoven, Dvorak and Rhiannon



Mr. Pablo discusses what the rings inside a tree cookie tells us, which is the age of the tree!

Giddens. The full program is posted on FriendsOfAndersonPark.com. Essex County Anderson Park, 274 Bellevue Avenue, Montclair. 7:30-9pm. Free. Rain date is June 8 at 7:30pm. Handicap parking information is on the Friends of Anderson Park website. Sponsored by Friends of Anderson Park and the Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs. Made possible by funds from the Essex County Division of Cultural Affairs, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and the Bravitas Group/Silver Family Foundation. (Check the Friends of Anderson Park Facebook page for weather updates.) 973.477.7207.

June 7 & 8: Riker Hill Open House.

The former US Army Nike Missile Base in Livingston was transformed into an art park in 1974. View over 30 artists working in the park, their studios perched high atop the mountain, with beautiful scenic views. Artists-in-residence work in various disciplines including painting, fine metal jewelry, ceramics, glassblowing, printmaking, photography, fiber arts, mixed media and sculpture. Essex County Riker Hill Art Park, 284 Beaufort Highway, Livingston. 11am to 5pm. Admission is free; artwork is for sale. 973.268.3500. www.rikerhillarts.org

June 8: Season Finale: Rachmaninoff and Shostakovich.

Russian fireworks to close NJ Symphony's season: Shostakovich's blazing triumph of a symphony written after a frightening threat to his life and Rachmaninoff's own triumph of the soul, his Piano Concerto No. 2, created as he recovered from a shattering setback. A beloved guest artist, pianist Conrad Tao, returns for Rachmaninoff's epic masterwork. New Jersey Performing Arts Center, 1 Center Street, Newark. 3-5pm. Tickets start at \$45. 800.255.3476. <https://www.njsymphony.org/>

July 13: How to Train Your Dragon in Concert.

A winner with audiences and critics alike, DreamWorks' How to Train Your Dragon is a captivating and original story that combines humor, fire-breathing action and epic adventure! Hiccup is a young Viking who defies tradition when he befriends one of his deadliest foes –



Conrad Tao at NJ Symphony's Rachmaninoff and Shostakovich



a ferocious dragon he calls Toothless. Together, these unlikely heroes must fight against all odds to save both their worlds. How to Train Your Dragon in Concert features this acclaimed film presented in HD, with composer John Powell's Academy Award-nominated score performed live to picture by the New Jersey Symphony in a thrilling experience for all ages. © 2010 DreamWorks Animation LLC. All Rights Reserved. New Jersey Performing Arts Center, 1 Center Street, Newark. 2-4pm. Tickets start at \$35. 800.255.3476. <https://www.njsymphony.org/>

June 14: Second Saturday Family Adventures: Tree Exploration. Join us for Second Saturday Family Adventures as we explore the wonderful world of trees! We will learn and appreciate all the species of trees that surround Greater Newark Conservancy through a variety of activities and crafts. Come ready to explore! Greater Newark Conservancy, 32 Prince Street, Newark. 10:30am to 12pm. Free. Registration required. Citybloom.org/events/

June 14: Livingston Symphony Orchestra: “Soundscapes.” This live concert program offers a vacation in sound! In Brahms’ “Hungarian Dances,” Chabrier’s “España,” Debussy’s “Iberia” and Enesco’s “Rumanian Rhapsody,” each composer is able to capture the

essence of people and places far from our home. Mt. Pleasant Middle School, 11 Broadlawn Drive, Livingston. 7:30pm. Adults \$25, seniors and students \$15, under 12 free. 973.980.1809. www.lsonj.org

June 20: Juneteenth Freedom Celebration. Celebrate Juneteenth with an evening of live music, powerful readings, delicious food trucks, and a spectacular fireworks finale! South Orange Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs, Flood’s Hill, North Ridgewood Road and Mead Street, South Orange. 6:30-9pm. Free. 973.378.7754. www.southorange.org

June 21-22, Brookdale Park Art Show. Celebrate creativity in the heart of Essex County as the 36th Annual Rose Squared Art Show returns to Brookdale Park on June 21 and 22. This beloved event features a dynamic lineup of fine art – including painting, art jewelry, mixed media, photography, and more – highlighting the incredible talent and diversity of the regional art community. Now a cherished tradition, the show offers a vibrant platform for established artists and fan-favorite exhibitors to share their latest work. Every piece tells a story, inviting attendees to connect, reflect, and be inspired. Essex County Brookdale Park, 473 Watchung Avenue, Bloomfield/Montclair. 10am to 5pm, rain or shine. Free.

June 21: Family Fun in the Kitchen. Join Chef Afi to learn knife skills, cooking tips and tricks, and how to make recipes such as Orange Cranberry Muffins, Tofu Stir Fry, Sweet Potato Fritters, Hoppin’ John, Jackfruit Empanadas, and more! Chef Afi will walk your family through every step and, at the end, you get to enjoy the dish you made! Greater Newark Conservancy, 32 Prince Street, Newark. 11am to 12:30pm. \$5 per person. Registration required. Citybloom.org/events

June 27: New Jersey Symphony at Branch Brook Park in Newark. Enjoy the sounds of the New Jersey Symphony under the stars! This free program features a medley of timeless classics, Broadway themes and patriotic favorites the whole family will love. The Symphony performs this outdoor concert amidst the majestic landscape of Branch Brook Park in Newark. Join us for great fanfare and spectacular fireworks following the performance! Branch Brook Park, Branch Brook Park Drive, Newark. 7:30-9:30pm. Free. 800.255.3476. <https://www.njsymphony.org/>

July 2 to 30: South Orange Summer Nights Concert Series. Every Wednesday in July, Flood’s Hill comes alive with the sounds of live music at the Summer Nights Concert Series! Enjoy incredible performances under the stars, plus a variety of local food trucks serving up delicious eats. South Orange Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs, Flood’s Hill, North Ridgewood Road and Mead Street, South Orange. 7:30pm. Free. 973.378.7754. www.southorange.org

July 9: Classical Favorites: Tchaikovsky, Beethoven and More! Enjoy a delightful summer evening of orchestral favorites featuring works from Pytor Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Ludwig van Beethoven and more! Conducted by New Jersey Symphony Colton Conducting Fellow Gregory D. McDaniel, this preview of the 2025–26 season delivers a lineup of beloved works you won’t want to miss! New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Victoria Theater, 1 Center Street, Newark. 7-8pm. Free. Registration required. 800.255.3476. <https://www.njsymphony.org/>



Families work together as they free objects that are frozen in blocks of water through a variety of methods!

July 12. Second Saturday Family Adventures: Nature Crafts. Join us for Second Saturday Family Adventures as we use what the Earth is offering at the Outdoor Learning Center to create natural crafts and mandalas! Greater Newark Conservancy, 32 Prince Street, Newark. 10:30am to 12pm. Free. Registration required; opens mid-June. Citybloom.org/events/

July 19. Family Fun in the Kitchen. Join Chef Afi to learn knife skills, cooking tips and tricks, and how to make recipes such as Orange Cranberry Muffins, Tofu Stir Fry, Sweet Potato Fritters, Hoppin’ John, Jackfruit Empanadas, and more! Chef Afi will walk your family through every step and, at the end, you get to enjoy the dish you made! Greater Newark Conservancy, 32 Prince Street,

Newark. 11am to 12:30pm. \$5 per person. Registration required; opens mid-June. Citybloom.org/events

August 3. Essex County Summer Players Orchestra Concert. Filling the gap in performance for both musicians and audience members alike, this year’s annual performance features a 3-piece suite by Elgar, a brilliant violin concerto by Saint-Saen’s, and Gliere’s richly scored Symphony No 1. Livingston High School, Robert Harp Drive, Livingston. 3pm. Free. ecspo@gmail.com. www.ecsponj.com

August 5: National Night Out, South Orange. National Night Out is a fun-filled annual event that strengthens police-community partnerships and brings neighbors together! Come out for a night



Essex County Anderson Park "Music Under the June Moon" Concert

of community, connection, and fun! Enjoy free food, inflatables, giveaways, and the chance to dunk a cop in the dunk tank! When the sun goes down, stick around for an outdoor movie screening of Dogman. South Orange Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs, Flood’s Hill, North Ridgewood Road and Mead Street, South Orange. 5-10pm. Free. 973.378.7754. www.southorange.org

August 9: Second Saturday Family Adventures: Wonders of Water. Make a splash with us this summer at the Second Saturday Family Adventures! Join us for a morning full of fun and learning about the wonders of water. Events include: Sinkers & Floaters: Discover which objects will sink or float and why; Boat Engineering: Get hands-on and build your own mini boat; Pond Exploration: Take a closer look at our pond to see what lives in and around the water; and Water Science: Learn about water properties through exciting experiments and activities. This event is perfect for families looking to explore science in a fun, interactive way while enjoying the great outdoors. It’s educational and a fantastic way to beat the summer heat! Greater Newark Conservancy, 32 Prince Street, Newark. 10:30am to 12pm. Free. Registration required; opens mid-July. Citybloom.org/events

August 13 to 27: South Orange Summer Nights Moonlit Movies. As the sun sets, the big screen lights up! Wednesdays in August, grab your blanket, family, and friends and enjoy a magical night of movies under the stars. South Orange Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs, Flood’s Hill, North Ridgewood Road and Mead Street, South Orange. 8pm. Free. 973.378.7754. www.southorange.org

August 16: Family Fun in the Kitchen. Join Chef Afi to learn knife skills, cooking tips and tricks, and how to make recipes such as Orange Cranberry Muffins, Tofu Stir Fry, Sweet Potato Fritters, Hoppin’ John, Jackfruit Empanadas, and more! Chef Afi will walk your family through every step and, at the end, you get to enjoy the dish you made! Greater Newark Conservancy, 32 Prince Street, Newark. 11am to 12:30pm. \$5 per person. Registration required; opens mid-July. Citybloom.org/events ■



Essex County Riker Hill Art Park is a former United States Army Nike Missile Base in Livingston, NJ that was transformed into an art park in 1974. Over thirty artists work in the park, their studios perched high atop the mountain, with breathtaking scenic views. Artists-in-residence work in various disciplines such as painting, fine metal jewelry, ceramics, pottery, glass-blowing, printmaking, photography, weaving, fiber arts, mixed media, and sculpture.

Riker Hill Art Park, 284 Beaufort Avenue, Livingston, New Jersey 07039



Come see the artists in action and their work on display. Admission is free.



Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.
Essex County Executive
and the Board of
County Commissioners



**COUNTY OF ESSEX DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS**
155 Prospect Ave, Suite 100
West Orange NJ 07052
973.268.3500 / www.essexcountynj.org
PUTTING **ESSEX COUNTY** FIRST

ESSEX COUNTY ONGOING PROGRAMS

BRANCH BROOK PARK ALLIANCE

973.969.1189 / www.branchbrookpark.org. Please call for ADA accessibility details

June 12: Clement A. Price Olmsted Lecture & Jazz Luncheon.

Essex County Branch Brook Park, Barbara Bell Coleman Welcome Pavilion on Concourse Hill. 10:30am to 2:30pm. \$150 per person. Advanced registration is required.

June 1 to August 31: Discovering Wellness in Essex County Branch Brook Park.

Join Branch Brook Park Alliance in the park for a series of free wellness events including Yoga, Zumba, Soul Line Dancing and Boot Camp. Prudential Concert Grove. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. 10am. Free. Advanced registration is required.

June 1 to August 31: Volunteer Stewardship in Essex County Branch Brook Park.

Join the Branch Brook Park Alliance team in ongoing stewardship efforts. Essex County Branch Brook Park, Prudential Concert Grove. Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. 9am to 1pm. Free. Advanced registration is required.

June 1 to August 31: Children's Story Time with the Branch Brook Park Alliance.

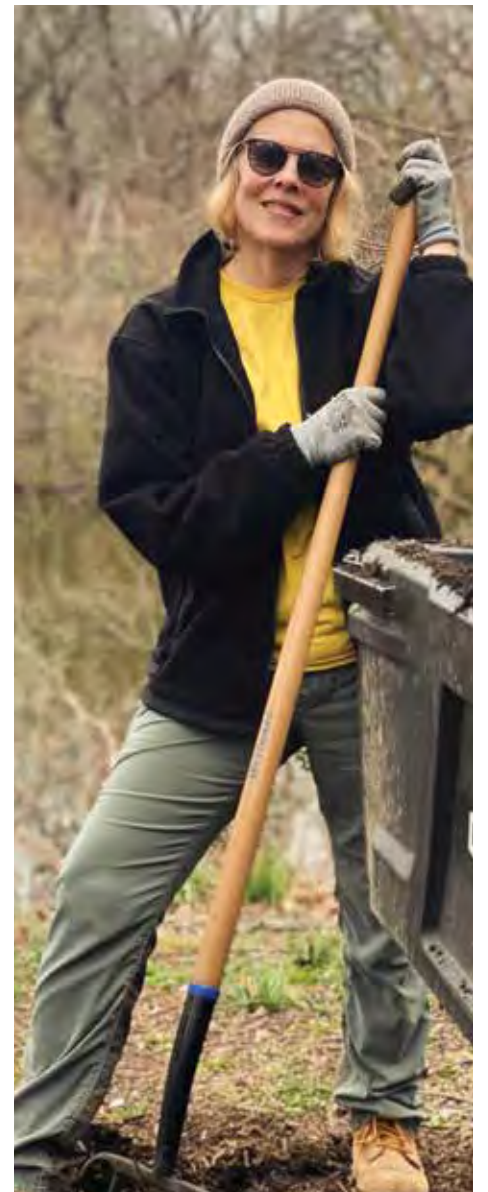
Gather 'round in the enchanting embrace of the Children's Garden with the Branch Brook Park Alliance for a story hour that sparks imagination and cultivates a love for nature. Essex County Branch Brook Park, Children's Garden and Playground, Cherry Blossom Welcome Center. Times and days vary. Free. Advanced registration is required.

June 1 to August 31: Eco Explorers of Essex County Branch Brook Park.

Join the Branch Brook Park Alliance Horticulturist for a dynamic fee-based program designed to engage young minds with hands-on environmental education and exploration within the park's natural wonders. Essex County Branch Brook Park, Children's Garden and Playground, Cherry Blossom Welcome Center. Times and days vary. \$15 per person. Advanced registration is required.

June 1 to August 31: Historic & Horticulture Tours.

Join the Branch Brook Park Alliance team for a 45-minute walking tour and learn more about the historical significance of Essex County Branch Brook Park and the formal gardens. Essex County Branch Brook Park, Prudential Concert Grove. Flexible dates. Flexible Times. \$15 per person. Advanced registration is required. ■



Margo Garrison is spreading mulch in the gardens of Essex County Branch Brook Park.



Plan to join us
at the Barbara Bell
Coleman Welcome
Pavilion and
gardens within
Essex County's
Branch Brook Park.



SAVE
THE
DATE



**Department of Parks,
Recreation & Cultural Affairs**
155 Prospect Avenue, Suite 100
West Orange, NJ 07052
www.essexcountynj.org

Be a Fan and Follow Us



Essex County Arts



@essexarts

THE SPIRIT OF ESSEX

For additional copies of this magazine,
to join our mailing list, or to submit events
for publication, please contact Terri P. Guess,
Marketing Coordinator, at 201.341.5786
or e-mail

essexarts@parks.essexcountynj.org

The Essex County Division of
Cultural and Historic Affairs

PUTTING **ESSEX COUNTY** FIRST

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER WITH SOY INKS.

Presorted
Standard
US Postage
Paid
Permit No. 360
Newark, NJ

SUMMER WITH THE SYMPHONY



Attend a **FREE** outdoor concert with New Jersey Symphony

Essex County Branch Brook Park

Friday, June 27 at 7:30 pm

Indulge in the magic of live music surrounded by nature with your New Jersey Symphony. Our talented musicians will delight you with classic favorites and movie themes. Bring a picnic blanket and your loved ones to enjoy the sounds of a summer evening under the stars.



This concert is sponsored by the County of Essex and is presented in collaboration with the Prudential presents North2Shore Festival.



Get ready for New Jersey Symphony at the movies

How to Train Your Dragon in Concert

Sunday, July 13 at 2 pm | NJPAC in Newark

The ultimate surround-sound movie experience: John Powell's Oscar-nominated score is brought to life by New Jersey Symphony while you watch the film on a large screen above the Orchestra!

For the summer concert schedule, visit:

njsymphony.org/summer

**NEW
JERSEY
SYMPHONY**



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

