

OPINION

For back-to-school, shop locally

EDITORIAL

August may feel as though it's the middle of the summer, but the beginning of school is just a few short weeks away. It will be upon us before we know it. Parents of very young children can be excused for being ignorant of the back-to-school traditions, although it wasn't so long ago they were living through it themselves. Parents of older children, however, should definitely know better. Rule No. 1 when getting ready to go back to school is not to wait until the last minute, so fill out a shopping list of essentials, grab your cash or credit card, gather your brood of children, load them into the car or van, and away you go!

To begin with, shop locally. Yes, the big box stores can offer you an amazing sale price on 10,000 sheets of paper or five boxes of pens, but when you want to appeal to both your financial side and your style side, no one knows you or your children as well as those mom-and-pop stores that still dot the streets of our hometown. They've been in this business long enough to purchase the items that are popular and avoid the ones that collect dust. Shopping at their stores will save you time and be more efficient. The shopkeepers often know your name, as you see them around town all the time. These merchants could be your neighbors, and the teens working the cash register or putting goods on shelves might go to school with one of your older children. If you can't find what you're looking for there, it's alright to search in one of the mega-stores, but try the local ones first. You may be surprised.

According to the National Retail Federation's 2017 Back-to-School and College Trends survey, while 27 percent of families will start shopping two months before school starts, 21 percent will wait until the last week or two. Which

one are you? Either way, you're not alone. And big money will be spent — according to the survey, back-to-school shoppers will spend \$10.2 billion on clothing; \$8.8 billion on electronics, such as computers and calculators; \$5.6 billion on shoes; and \$4.9 billion on school supplies, such as notebooks, folders, pencils, backpacks and lunchboxes.

The NRF says the last time spending was expected to be this much was 2012, a reflection of low unemployment, better wages and increased consumer confidence. Parents say they will spend an average of \$238.89 on clothing, \$204.33 on electronics, \$130.38 on shoes and \$114.12 on school supplies, according to a recent study. For parents of grade-school children, that amounts to about \$15 more per family. The NRF study also found parents will be shopping at a variety of retailers: 57 percent will shop at department stores, 54 percent at discount stores, 46 percent each at clothing stores and online, and 36 percent at office-supply stores.

But don't think of back-to-school shopping as a necessary burden. You'll be out with your children, something you may find occurring with less frequency as they get older and so much busier. Take advantage of this time. When you shop locally, make an adventure of it. Walk the streets of the shopping district. Pick a centralized and secure location to park so you can place your purchases in the car, without having to lug everything from store to store. Find a nice park or bench where you can sit and relax, especially after a busy morning or afternoon. Take advantage of local restaurants where you can enjoy a family lunch, perhaps even a family dinner. Shop locally and make memories that will last a lifetime.

Make time for hobbies at the library

LIBRARY MATTERS

BY KRISTEN JULIA ANDERSON

I have a confession — I'm an adult and I enjoy gaming ... board games and role-playing games. For my husband and me, our favorite way to spend a Sunday afternoon is playing a tabletop game, whether with just each other or a couple of friends. Once a week, I also meet up with a group of close friends to play the role-playing game Dungeons and Dragons. Some of us are also in a book club together that meets once a month. More than being fun pastimes, these are ways for me to spend quality time with people I care about and sometimes meet new people as well. Of course, not all my hobbies are necessarily always social activities; I also like, for example, writing and crocheting, which can be done alone or with a group. These are just a couple of my favorite hobbies. What are yours?

Let's be honest, there are so many responsibilities we have in our lives that it's easy to forget the importance of setting aside time for personal interests and unwinding. For many, having a creative outlet or hobby is a way to escape and relax after a stressful, hard week. Whether it's reading, collecting baseball cards, crocheting, playing board games, painting or any

number of other pastimes, these are the interests that we choose because we enjoy them. However, hobbies offer more than something for us to enjoy — they are ways for us to express ourselves, to learn, to create, to make, to share, to find connections and even to make new friends. There are the interests we've had since childhood and the ones that we discover in later years. Luckily, whether it's a book, a video or a workshop, the library provides various resources for the curious to self-teach and also learn from others.

Some of our more recent library programs were actually suggested by patrons. For example, our Crochet Club was started following a request from one of the moms who comes to our storytime sessions. Our teen Dungeons and Dragons campaign came to be because of a couple of persistent teens. Of course, we can't say yes to every patron idea, but sharing ideas is a great way for us to know where interests lie within our community. What do you need or

want and how can we help you reach those goals?

Hobbies, for many, are more than just a pastime — they are often an innermost part of who we are and how we express ourselves to the world. Still, for many, it's not always easy to find time during the week for these activities, which bring us such personal joy. Work, household and life responsibilities, errands and chores — the weeks can go by without us even noticing it's been a while since we picked up that sketch pad or the knitting needles. Sometimes a schedule, meeting or club help us set aside time for our hobbies. This is where the library can really help!

Do you enjoy reading but find yourself researching ways to renovate the kitchen rather than finish the book because reading, well, reading for fun can wait? Join our book club, doing so will give you a deadline for finishing the book and also a forum for sharing your thoughts about what you read. Do you have a teen in the house who likes anime and manga? Bring them to our Teen Anime Club, open to children in grades six through 12, where they can talk

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Explore your hobbies with the library

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about their favorite series with others or spend time drawing in a group. Did you start to crochet a few years ago only to never really finish a project? Then come to our Crochet Club and get re-motivated! We have two crochet meetings left this summer — on Aug. 11 and 25. Perhaps you love to crochet and you've been wanting to introduce your nephew to the hobby — bring him with you! Do you enjoy discovering new art? Then stop by the library each month to see the art on display in the meet-

ing room and remember to keep your eye out for free art workshops, too.

There are countless activities to explore at the library. Take the time to browse through our calendar of activities on our website at www.wopl.org, and the next time you visit the library, be sure to look at the flyers on our bulletin board. You never know what you might discover!

Kristen Julia Anderson is the teen librarian at the West Orange Public Library.

New Jersey's forests offer a good time

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your senses in the forest, is catching on here!

A few tips for enjoying the woods:

- Plan ahead by looking at trail maps and reading about the area's plants and animals. Be sure to bring a physical map along with you when you hike!

- If you're planning to venture deep into the forest, hike with a buddy or two. If you're hiking alone, stick to a well-traveled forest path.

- Bring along your fully charged cell phone. Few places are out of cell phone range in New Jersey!

- Carry a field guide for plant and wildlife identification or, even better, download an app onto your phone.

- Use common sense, stay on marked trails and keep a respectful distance from wildlife.

- To protect yourself from ticks, stay out of tall grasses and shrubs, wear long pants and pull your socks over your pants legs and/or spray your shoes and pants with tick repellent.

- Pack survival essentials in case of an emergency or sudden change in weather: a rain/wind jacket, first aid kit, compass, flashlight or headlamp, matches, pocket

Don't let a scary headline keep you out of the woods!

knife, whistle, and extra food and water.

To find great forest hiking trails, visit the NY/NJ Trail Conference website at www.nynjtc.org, the New Jersey Trails Association website at www.njtrails.org, or check New Jersey Conservation's interactive trailhead map at www.njconservation.org/recreation.htm. For information about state parks and forests, go to www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/parkindex.html.

And to learn about preserving New Jersey's land and natural resources, visit the New Jersey Conservation Foundation website at www.njconservation.org or contact me at info@njconservation.org.

Michele S. Byers is the executive director of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

IN MEMORIAM

- FULLER – Warren Oakley, formerly of West Orange; July 31. Educator.
- GELTZEILER – Burton L., of West Orange, formerly of Hillside; Aug. 1.
- JACKSON – Kenneth, of West Orange; July 25. Technology consultant, father.
- RANDELL – Neil A., formerly of West Orange; July 25. Univision executive, 86.
- STOYKO – Kathleen A., of West Orange, formerly of Hillside; July 27. Teacher.
- WRIGHT – Mary Loretta, of West Orange; July 31; Grandmother, 85.

In Memoriam is a weekly feature compiled by the news staff from various sources. We also provide the opportunity for families and funeral directors to publish a more extensive, special notice about their loved one called an obituary. These notices are published on our website immediately and then in the next edition of this newspaper. To place a paid obituary send an email to obits@thelocalsource.com or fax to 908-688-0401. Family and friends' submissions must include sender's name, address, phone and the name of the funeral home. Call 908-686-7850 for assistance.

Real Estate

ESSEX COUNTY HOME SALES

Sales are from July 26 to Aug 1, listing town, address, sale price and date of sale.

BLOOMFIELD

61	Haines Drive	\$510,000	7/28/2017
84	MAOLIS AVE	\$460,000	8/1/2017
505	Watchung Ave	\$460,000	7/26/2017
122	Raab Ave	\$421,000	7/26/2017
156	State St	\$375,000	7/26/2017
6	Bay Ave	\$370,000	7/27/2017
345-347	HOOVER AVE	\$355,000	7/28/2017
20	Warren St	\$350,000	7/27/2017
31	Golf Rd	\$323,777	7/31/2017
51	Overlook Ter	\$320,000	7/31/2017
30	Palmer St	\$301,000	7/28/2017
29	Haines Dr	\$290,000	7/28/2017
56	Lakewood Ter	\$272,000	7/28/2017
94	N Spring St	\$235,000	8/1/2017
172	Belleville Ave, A-203	\$95,000	7/27/2017

EAST ORANGE

32	Morse Ave	\$238,000	7/31/2017
10	Crawford St	\$225,000	7/31/2017
368	Elmwood Ave	\$95,025	7/27/2017

GLEN RIDGE

188	FOREST AVE	\$1,250,000	8/1/2017
3	Appleton Pl	\$906,000	7/28/2017
26	Appleton Rd	\$775,000	7/31/2017
190	Sherman Ave	\$755,000	7/26/2017
10	Mitchell Pl	\$750,000	7/26/2017
58	Essex Ave	\$703,000	8/1/2017
42	STEPHEN ST	\$700,000	7/31/2017
523	Ridgewood Ave	\$679,000	7/31/2017
42	Sommer Ave	\$470,000	7/27/2017

IRVINGTON

9	Cottage Pl	\$207,000	7/26/2017
15	Grant Pl	\$165,000	7/28/2017
1024	Sanford Ave	\$84,900	7/31/2017

MAPLEWOOD

11	WARNER RD	\$849,000	7/31/2017
6	Tower Dr	\$842,000	7/28/2017
15	Berkshire Rd	\$780,000	7/27/2017
650	Ridgewood Rd	\$750,000	7/31/2017
19	Evergreen Pl	\$734,000	7/31/2017
101	Oakland Rd	\$660,000	8/1/2017
19	Overlook Ter	\$532,000	7/31/2017
8	Rynda Rd	\$525,000	7/31/2017
147	Parker Ave	\$420,000	7/31/2017
66	Hughes St	\$400,000	7/27/2017
3	Cypress St	\$385,000	7/31/2017
34	Van Ness Ter	\$330,000	7/31/2017

NUTLEY

246	Rutgers Pl	\$600,000	7/28/2017
	Beech St	\$532,000	8/1/2017
	Beech St	\$466,000	7/26/2017
201	Raymond Ave	\$435,000	8/1/2017
144	FRANK ST	\$430,000	7/31/2017
113	Mapes Ave	\$425,000	8/1/2017
19	Lake St	\$395,000	7/31/2017
295	HILLSIDE AVE	\$386,760	7/28/2017
22	PRINCETON STREET	\$330,000	7/26/2017
599	Centre St	\$312,000	8/1/2017
358	High St	\$310,000	7/28/2017
458	Bloomfield Ave	\$285,000	7/27/2017
21	Willow Pl	\$275,000	7/27/2017

ORANGE

268-272	IVY CT	\$349,000	7/31/2017
438	Tremont Ave	\$260,000	8/1/2017
447	Alden St	\$106,500	7/26/2017

SOUTH ORANGE

57	SPEIR DRIVE	\$1,170,000	7/27/2017
510	Grove Ter	\$995,000	7/27/2017
29	Glenside Rd	\$770,000	8/1/2017
477	PROSPECT ST	\$705,000	7/31/2017
227	Garfield Pl	\$695,000	7/31/2017
313	Lenox Ave	\$667,500	7/26/2017
7	Kingsland Ct	\$655,000	7/28/2017
475	Page Ter	\$580,000	7/28/2017
360	Meadowbrook Ln	\$460,000	8/1/2017

WEST ORANGE

2	Donlavage Way	\$698,000	7/31/2017
10	Kovach Ct	\$695,000	7/27/2017
20	Cannon St	\$659,500	7/31/2017
46	Fairway Ave	\$578,000	8/1/2017
47	Colony Dr E	\$499,000	7/26/2017
28	Schindler Ter	\$445,000	7/31/2017
188	Zeppi Ln	\$440,000	7/26/2017
45	Lawrence Ave	\$430,000	7/27/2017
405	Digaetano Ter	\$425,000	7/28/2017
14	E Korwel Circle	\$422,000	8/1/2017
28	Old Salem Rd	\$401,709	7/26/2017
175	S Valley Rd	\$401,000	8/1/2017
51	Davey Dr	\$375,000	7/28/2017
40	Moore Ter	\$374,000	7/26/2017
2	Harvard Ter	\$369,000	8/1/2017
242	Crescenzi Ct	\$365,000	7/27/2017
491	Mount Pleasant Ave	\$335,000	7/31/2017
79	Vacca Dr	\$310,000	7/28/2017
14	Curtis Ave	\$300,000	7/28/2017

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BOTH Counties 1 Week \$45 / 30 Words

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Please check garage sale ordinances with your local town hall

