

Chatham Fire Dept. to hold open house Saturday

CHATHAM—The Chatham Fire Department will open its doors at 10 Hoffman St. to area residents 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday as part of the statewide RecruitNY initiative. The fire department will join volunteer fire departments all across the state at their respective firehouses for a unified recruitment drive.

Over the last several years, it has been difficult for many fire departments throughout New York state to recruit and

retain volunteers. Like most volunteer fire departments, Chatham needs to bolster its emergency responder numbers so it can continue to provide the optimum level of protection for residents, neighbors, friends and visitors.

Not only will RecruitNY be an opportunity to highlight the rewards and responsibilities that come with being a volunteer firefighter, it will also raise public awareness

about the need for volunteers. There are many ways to serve — as an interior or exterior firefighter, as a driver or fire police directing traffic around an incident, helping in the kitchen to prepare breakfasts or dinners or manning a booth during the annual fund-raising carnival. No experience is necessary and top-quality training is provided at no cost other than a time commitment based on an individual's availability.

Throughout the day Saturday, the Chatham Fire Department will conduct tours of the station and firefighter apparatus, allow visitors to try on firefighter gear and provide activities and informational opportunities throughout the firehouse. The fire department will discuss the requirements to be a volunteer, as well as conduct demonstrations, answer questions and let visitors know how to get involved in the fire department.

Applications will be available and coffee and refreshments will be provided.

During 2016, the all-volunteer Chatham Fire Department responded to 118 incidents including structure and chimney fires, alarm activations, motor vehicle accidents (some requiring use of extrication equipment) and brush fires. Average response time within Chatham's district was four minutes and 36 seconds, from dispatch to ar-

rival on scene. On average, 12 firefighters responded to each incident.

For more information or if interested in volunteering with Chatham, email RecruitNY@chathamfire.net.

The Stepentown Volunteer Fire Department, 396 Route 43, will also host an open house 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The department is recruiting volunteers age 16 and up and retirees too. Refreshments will be provided.

Performance of works by 'Yiddish Balzac' writer Chaim Grade

CHATHAM CENTER — Chaim Grade, who Elie Wiesel praised as one of the greatest Yiddish writers and who others have called "the Yiddish Balzac," created intimate novels and poems reflecting the rich panorama of Jewish life in Lithuania between the two world wars.

A selection of Grade's works will be performed (in English) by professional actors Robert Zukerman, Bernie Kukoff and Lucile Lichtblau 7:30 p.m. Saturday at The Chatham Synagogue, 1336 County Route 28, Chatham Center. The actors are all synagogue members.

Born in 1910 into a pious, poor Vilnius family, Grade was to become one of the leading Yiddish novelists and poets of the 20th century. His unvarnished portraits of both



Chaim Grade

of his religious education, he joined a group of Yiddish writers who strove to synthesize secular Jewish culture, progressive politics and influences from the world's great literatures. After losing both his wife and mother in the Holocaust, he emerged as a defining Yiddish voice of the postwar canon that would later become known as Holocaust literature.

Admission is \$15 and refreshments will be served.

Founded in 1999, The Chatham Synagogue/Netivot Torah is an inclusive, member-led congregation where all can participate equally in Jewish rituals, Jewish education and social action initiatives. For more information, call 518-392-0701 or visit www.thechathamsynagogue.org.

high rabbinic culture and the worldly life pulsating on Jewish streets depict the contest of ideas and moral impulses that defined his community during the interwar period.

Rejecting the harshness

Retreat at Abode to explore nexus of spiritual, elemental practices

NEW LEBANON — The Abode of the Message will host "Emerald Earth: An Alchemical Ziraat Retreat," a weekend retreat led by Muinuddin Charles Smith and Kainat Felicia Norton, May 5-7.

In a time when environmental protection is seen as an external agency rather than an internal calling, this retreat will anchor deeply into the soul the care and love for the earth through the spiritual teaching of Inayat Khan, while providing practices to engage more fully with the green globe. These elemental and earth-based teachings see the heart as a farm and the Abode is an ideal setting to move teachings from the head to the heart.

This retreat will plant, grow and cultivate a seed of love for the earth. Everyone will be en-



Kainat Felicia Norton and Muinuddin Charles Smith.

couraged to find themselves in the earth and the earth in themselves. The event will contain meditations in nature, will affirm the sacredness of nature and all of life and will aim at bridging inner awakening with the sacred task of participating in Earth's emerald beauty.

Rates for the weekend program start at \$120. Register at www.theabode.org/programs/ or call 518-794-8095. A pre-pro-

gram with Sufi class and introduction to Eco-Sufism is also available in the registration.

The Abode of the Message was founded in 1975 by universalist Sufi teacher Pir Vilayat Inayat-Khan as an experiment in living the teachings and practices of Hazrat Inayat Khan, the first Sufi teacher in the West. Set on 350 acres of the historic Mount Lebanon Shaker Village, the Abode offers sanctuary for Sufis and seekers and as an Eco-Sufi Village is spiritual in nature, universal in message and elemental in practice.

For more on this event or on the Abode, contact Ibrahim Pedrián, director of programs, at 518-794-8090, ext. 125 or programs@theabode.org or Al Bellenchia, executive director, at 518-794-8090, ext. 122 or al@theabode.org.

Battle

From A6

Middle school band director Bradley Eiser was the official timer and Physical Education teacher Lynn Fisher was the official announcer. Student volunteers were: Kline, Kelly, Sonam Verma and Ryan Graziano.

Prizes were donated by Columbia County STOP DWI and gift certificates were from Pizza Den and the Crandell Theatre. Additional teams were:

■ Eighth grade: The Labs — Brandon Davey, Sam Bartlett, Lauren Tacner and Anastasia Mateus; The Fantasy Flyers — Calliroe Barlow, Emma Crosby, Emma Witaszek and Hanna Spock.

■ Seventh grade: Sassy Snappers — Mia Porritt, Abby Taylor, Giovanna Allen and Katie Everett; Panthers — Jayson McKay, Chris Pritchett, Vinny Marasco and JP Collins; Winner, Clicking Dinner — Abby Prevatil, Allyson Engel, Erin Madsen and Izabel Fugman.

■ Sixth grade: The Buckle Bunnies — Hannah Pinto, Emily Mesick, Jillian Perry and Emma Braley; Mr. Bacon — Ednel Knapp, Matt Radley, Ryley Dikeman and Alex Chudy; The Belts — AJ Rayome, Anna Miles, Diana Castellanos and Aidan MacDonald; Lil Sons — Tyler Kneller, Archie Messinger, Noah Hutchinson and Jacob Bacaro; Warriors — Kenny Davey, Skyler Laurange, Chris Sorokey and Aidan Ketzler; Awesome Girls — Mackensie Roney, Kylie Lagerwall, Brittany Boughton and Hailey Schwartz.

Ramblings

From A6

The village of Chatham was incorporated in 1869. Enthusiastic citizens put together one heck of a centennial celebration for the village in 1969. Fortunately, it was all caught on film. Jim Mehan offered his father's 8mm footage taken of the centennial parade and it was enthusiastically accepted. It is awaiting viewing once it's converted to DVD.

Hats off to Chatham Village Historical Society trustee Alan Faulkner, who has taken on the task of locating and reclaiming lost bits of village history from the former Driftwood Museum. With Barbara Freidel's blessing, Alan has uncovered original photographs and collectibles that add to our knowl-

edge of Chatham's history. Just recently he shared a 12-inch by 18-inch cardboard backed photograph of a celebration honoring our Civil War veterans, dated 1911. The image adds information about the Woodman's Club that occupied the original Union School on School Street. When compared to the photograph that depicts Congressional Medal of Honor recipient John Blunt on horseback with the uniformed G.A.R. preparing for the 1905 Memorial Day parade, one cannot help but notice that the number of Civil War veterans had declined in the six years before the honorary dinner.

The Columbia County Historical Society granted the Chatham Village Historical Society monies to preserve the secondhand gifts and hand-downs that are offered or found that enrich the understanding

and appreciation for our community. Preservation is critical, a pre-requisite to sharing our found treasures with you. When the old Blinn-Pulver place opens, it will be my pleasure and that of the Chatham Village Historical Society trustees, to tell you all that we know about each gift.

Membership dues bring us closer to opening the house museum. Thank you VERY MUCH loyal members! Won't you consider joining?

CHATHAM IN ART

On June 3, paintings, posters and photographs depicting the charm and history of Chatham and its surrounding environment will be on display at The Chatham House. If you wish to contribute an image or artwork, call 392-9236 for further details. Visitors will be asked to vote for their favorites that Saturday.

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