



Cultivating healing

Columnist Laura DePrado talks about bringing peace through planting

Local, B1

Courier News

Columnist Jenna Intersimone finds neighborhood connections in the Big Easy B1

A CARING COMMUNITY

PULLING UP TO A RECORD



KATHY JOHNSON/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kyle Gurkovich is shown on Saturday during his 24-hour pullup effort at Retro Fitness in Piscataway.

Piscataway math teacher does 4,234 pullups to support research in pediatric cancer

CHUCK O'DONNELL CORRESPONDENT

PISCATAWAY — Kyle Gurkovich finally allowed his body to surrender to exhaustion.

He wasn't lying down much as he was allowing his bones and muscles to pool on the ground. He had ice packs taped to his biceps, his skin glistened from newly applied ointment and a smudge of powdered chalk had caked onto his forehead.

Looking up at the ceiling, a weary

smile forced its way across his face.

Gurkovich had just finished doing 4,234 pullups between 8 a.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. Sunday. Pending verification from the Guinness people and their offices in England, this may be a world record.

And while unofficially no one has ever raised their chin over a bar more times over a 24-hour period, Gurkovich fell

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"If you're injured, you can still go on. If something's blocking your way, you can find a way around it."

KYLE GURKOVICH
PULLUP RECORD HOLDER

MORE ONLINE

Go to MyCentralJersey.com to watch a video about Kyle Gurkovich's race toward the record.

Apartment builder gets \$23M loan

Somerville complex in walking distance of downtown

MIKE DEAK @MIKEDAKMYCJ

SOMERVILLE — The developer of a 117-unit apartment building on Veterans Memorial Drive has received a \$23.6 million loan for the project, one of several expected to bring hundreds, if not thousands, of new residents into the Somerset County seat.

Weiss Properties, headquartered in New Brunswick, received the loan from Amboy Bank, based in Old Bridge, for The Cobalt, where site work began earlier this fall.

The site, a vacant lot backed by NJ Transit's Raritan Valley Line, once was

the site of an auto junkyard. In the late 1990s, it was seen as the possible site for a Somerville municipal complex.

"We are excited to be an integral part of Somerville's growing redevelopment plans," said Robert Weiss, president of Weiss Properties. "The residents of The Cobalt will be able to walk to the NJ Transit station, Main Street restaurants and the Division Street pedestrian mall."

The four-story Cobalt Apartments, approved in 2013 by the Planning Board, will have 13 studio apartments (500 to

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COURTESY WEISS PROPERTIES

An architectural rendering of The Cobalt Apartments. Weiss Properties has received a \$23.6 million loan for the Somerville project.

Rail group has big plans

Lobbying designed to help commuters

MIKE DEAK @MIKEDAKMYCJ

PLAINFIELD — After a year of major accomplishments, the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition may be turning some of its attention and energies to wider issues affecting New Jersey rail commuters to New York.

For 15 years, the coalition, a bipartisan group, has been advocating a one-seat ride on the Raritan Valley Line to New York. But because the locomotives on the line are diesel and the tracks to New York are electric, commuters had to change trains in Newark.

In March, NJ Transit introduced locomotives that are both diesel and electric, allowing a limited number of weekday off-peak trains to go directly to New York.

While the coalition will remain focused on pushing NJ Transit to expand the direct service to New York, in 2015 the group may lobby state officials to fund two major infrastructure projects that could improve the commute for all rail travelers to New York.

Portal Bridge and 'flyover'

The most important of these projects is the replacement of the Portal Bridge over the Hackensack River. Coalition Chairman and Somerset County Freeholder Peter Palmer, speaking at the coalition's meeting Monday morn-

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Want a match, or a hookup?

Dating apps change how we find love — and sex

SUSANNE CERVENKA @SCERVENKA

Lions are bountiful in the realm of online dating.

The photo of the first potential suit-or posed with the King of the Jungle evokes the image of an adventurous traveler, clearly on some sort of safari. Swipe right on your cellphone or tablet for yes.

After three dozen or so similar pictures, one gets the impression there must be some big-cat-petting zoo nearby. Or simply too many single men with too much time on their hands and mad Photoshop skills. Swipe left for no.

Same too for the Ferraris. Because seriously? How many eligible 20-, 30-something men actually own Italian sports cars? Swipe left.

While the kookiness of the photos

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COMICS	B4
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OPINION	A4
SPORTS	C1
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