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## JACKSON LIBERTY JAZZ ENSEMBLE STARTS SEASON WITH FIRST PLACE VICTORY



Jackson Liberty Jazz Ensemble recently started off the year with a first place victory, stealing all the awards for the night except two.

JACKSON - The Jackson Liberty Jazz Ensemble recently competed in their first competition of the year and came home with a first place victory, stealing all the awards for the night except two. Director Scott Katona said, "We've got another terrific group of kids this year whose hard work is already paying off."

Competing at their first competition of the year, the band not only received a superior rating and a first place finish, but also took home awards for best overall rhythm section, best overall trumpet section and all of the outstanding soloist awards, which included James Weeden on the piano; Justin Richards on the drum set; Josh Gonzalez and Kevin DeMoura on the trombone. Not only did Justin Richards receive a soloist award, but he also earned the outstanding musician award for the night.

The JLHS Jazz Ensemble has developed a reputation and has become one of the best

jazz bands in the entire state. The ensemble placed first in Ocean County the past two years, and in the NJ State Finals, finishing fifth place this past year and third place the year before.

Jackson Liberty High School will be host-

ing their own jazz festival on March 31 in the high school auditorium from noon to 5 p.m. Come out and support the band and enjoy some terrific jazz bands.

For more information, please visit [www.libertylionband.com](http://www.libertylionband.com).

## Caregivers Celebrate 10 Years Of Helping Those With Alzheimer's

By Judy Smestad-Nunn

OCEAN COUNTY - A celebration was held last week to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program (ARCP), which is part of Caregivers Volunteers of Central Jersey (CVCJ).

The party, held at the House of Hope on Chestnut Street, Toms River, also served as a meet and greet for ARCP's new coordinator, Toms River resident Valerie Johnson-Green, a registered nurse who works with psychiatric patients at Jersey Shore Medical Center.

CVCJ is an interfaith nonprofit agency, which provides free support and assistance to senior citizens.

Some 1,100 volunteers—who are mostly retirees—serve about 2,300 clients, providing transportation to medical appointments; help with grocery shopping; and visits to reduce loneliness for senior citizens.

ARCP provides volunteers who give four-hour weekly breaks to the primary caregivers of people who are suffering from dementia.

Lynette Whiteman, who is the executive director of CVCJ, said there are about 55 volunteers in the ARCP right now.

Whiteman introduced Johnson-Green to the dozen or so ARCP volunteers who attended  
*(Caregivers - See Page 3)*

## Freeholders Unveil 2012 Spending Plan

OCEAN COUNTY - The Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders unveiled its proposed 2012 spending package, keeping to its pledge of no surprises when it comes to the county's budget.

"The proposed 2012 spending package totals \$354,189,356. It covers the cost of providing services in a growing county while coming in \$4.1 million below a restrictive 2 percent spending cap," said Freeholder Deputy Director John C. Bartlett Jr., who serves as liaison to the Ocean County De-

partment of Finance.

The overall budget is up about \$1.4 million, or less than half of a percent.

"While property values dropped again in Ocean County, it is still important to remember we continue to be one of the fastest growing counties in the state with the largest population of seniors and veterans," Bartlett said. "This budget reflects the ongoing efforts of this board and its county departments to reduce costs and yet provide quality services and programs to our citi-

zens. This budget shows that this Board of Freeholders lives within its means."

Bartlett said the amount to be raised by taxation is \$300,026,643, up \$6.7 million, and the county property tax rate will go up by .0184 cents to 29 cents per \$100 of assessed property value.

"During the past few years, Ocean County has experienced substantial decreases in revenues and increases in nondiscretionary costs like insurance coupled with a sizeable

*(Plan - See Page 9)*

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