

The Jersey INSIDER

The Independent Leader in Local News

Vol. XII: No. 5

“Our Community... Your Stories”

May, 2016



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Rev. Thomas J. Suchon A Promise Made. . . A Promise Kept

By Jeffrey W. Pompeo, Esq.

When Paul VI Regional High School on Valley Road in Clifton (now the John Paul II Center) opened in September 1967, its first Director was a young Roman Catholic priest by the name of Thomas J. Suchon. He was 29 years old at the time.

Father Suchon died on May 8, 1976 at the age of 38. Cancer claimed his young life. Thereafter, I wrote an article in the local newspaper in which I promised to “keep his memory alive.”

May 8, 2016 marked the 40th anniversary of his untimely death. This article is in keeping with the promise I made.

Father Suchon was tall and solidly built with thick, wiry hair and a thin beard that outlined his face and mouth. He smoked cigars liked the New York Yankees and proudly wore his Paul VI high school ring.

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OPA!
*St George Greek Orthodox Church
Greek Festival
May 20, 21, 22*



For over 40 years, St. George Greek Orthodox Church, located at 818 Valley Road in Clifton, has hosted its annual Greek Festival. They will keep the tradition alive once again on May 20th thru May 22nd.

The church perched on a hill had the Theranixia (opening of the doors) of the new 8th Century Byzantine Style Church in

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Around Town Community Calendar...



We want to help your events to be successful! If you belong to a group or community organization, send us your information and news. We will include them in them in our Around Town Community Calendar. Send your event information VIA E-MAIL to: info@cliftoninsider.com. Please note, all submissions must include the name of the sponsoring organization, the date, time, and location of the event, and a person to contact for more information regarding the event!

Young at Heart Club • The Young At Heart Senior Club Will Meet The First and Third Tuesday of the month at the fellowship hall of The First Presbyterian Church on Maplewood Ave. at 12:00 pm. Refreshments will be served from 11:00am to 12:30pm. The next meeting for The Young At Heart Club will be Tuesday April 19th-Visiting Angels-fun filled games. The new time for all future meetings is now 12:00 noon. Come socialize, make new friends and play bingo. All are welcome to join the club. Be a guest for the day or go on our trips. Upcoming Trips For 2016 - 1. Wednesday May 4th, 2016-"Legends in Music"-Patsy Cline" a Comedian and Dancing-at Doolans/Spring Lake, NJ. - 2. Friday June 10th, 2016-Spring Luncheon & dancing at The Mountainside-AARP 4192 & Young At Heart Club. - 3. Wednesday June 15th, 2016-Jefferson House at Lake Hopatcong, NJ. "A Day with Elvis"-Boat ride,good food-fun day. - 4. Wednesday July 27th, 2016-Hunterdon Hills Playhouse-Rock & Roll & Soul. -5. Wednesday August 24th, 2016-Erhardt's/Lake Wallenpaupack,PA-"Murder on the LustBoat" -6. Wednesday Sept. 21st, 2016-San Gennaro-Stony Hill Inn-Hackensack, NJ. -7. Monday Nov. 7th, 2016-Hunterdon Hills Playhouse-Christmas Show. -8. Friday Nov. 18th, 2016-Camp Hope-Salute to Veterans Show. All trips leave from the Masonic Lodge at 1484-1510 Van Houten Ave. For more information & ticket prices call Lillian @ 973-779-5581.

EAST JERSEY TROUT • East Jersey Trout Unlimited, 33 W. Passaic St. (American Legion Hall), Rochelle Park, NJspeaker for it's Wednesday night June 8th meeting is David "Rock" Rockwell. His topicdiscusses the Salmon River Watershed. A brief history of the fishery, the 8 seasons of thefishery and what equipment to use on it's various fish, fly fishing techiques and fly patterns. Themeeting starts at 7:30, admission is free. For further information contact Christopher Henricksonat 347-581-6361.

ROAST PORK LUNCHEON • A Roast Pork Luncheon will be offered by St John Lutheran Church, Passaic, on Sunday, May 22 at noon. It will include spaetzle, green beans, red cabbage and dessert with coffee or tea. Bottled water and soda will be available for purchase. Cost will be \$20 per adult, \$5 for child between 5 and 10 years, and free for child under 5. Basket raffles and 50/50 will also be offered. For information and for advanced reservations which are advised, call Hilde at 973-868-8183. Our fund raisers benefit 7 local charities as well as the church which is located at 140 Lexington Avenue.

VALLEY SENIORS • The Valley Seniors Social Club meets the first and third Thursday of the month at 11:30 am at the Masonic Temple 1484 Van Houten Avenue. Refreshments are served prior to the meeting from 10:30 to 11:30 am. For more information contact Ethel at 973-706-6164.

CLIFTON CENTENNIAL PASSPORTS FOR ALL EVENTS • As a remembrance of all the events planned for the Clifton Centennial a passport has been created. The Passport will be available for sale for \$5 at the Clifton City Clerk's office.. The Passport can then be brought to the events the purchaser attends. The Passport will have a significant stamp for each event. The Passports will also be available for sale at all the events as well.

The Passport stamps for the numerous events planned by the Special Events Committee to celebrate Clifton's 100th Anniversary. Events will include: Ecumenical Prayer Service, International Cultural and Food Festival, Scavenger Hunt, trip to Ellis and Liberty island just to name a few.

Send Us Your Events!
We Can Help Get The Word Out!
Editor@InsiderNewsNJ.com

HOW TO REACH US

The Jersey Insider
Published by

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P: 973-865-7691
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The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

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Event	Date	Location
International, Cultural & Food Festival	October 15, 2016	Clifton High School
Bus/Ferry Trip to Ellis & Liberty Island	Fall 2016	NYC/NJ
Ecumenical Prayer Service	Fall/Winter 2016	Clifton High School
Passaic County Historian Lecture (Friends of the Library)	November 15, 2016	Clifton Main Library
Clifton's 100 th Birthday – Opening of the Time Capsule	April 26, 2017	Clifton City Hall
Centennial Parade	May 21, 2017	Streets of Clifton
Clifton Night at the Jackals	Summer 2017	Yogi Berra Stadium
Clifton Restaurant Week	Summer 2017	Clifton
Clifton Scavenger Hunt	Fall 2017	Clifton
Centennial Gala	November 30, 2017	Valley Regency

MANY MORE TO COME!

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"CELEBRATE CLIFTON'S 100TH"

Updated: 5/2/16

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Open for Business

by Nicholas J. Veliky

The Jersey Insider • May, 2016 • Page 3

The big reflective rectangles emblazoned with the universal symbol for bicyclist that have been popping up all over Passaic County and most recently in Clifton have drawn the attention and criticism of many area residents who all agree that bicycles and vehicular traffic in these high traffic areas just don't make for a safe mix. The bicycle lanes have been created as a result of a \$1million dollar grant approved two years ago. The bicycle path runs through Clifton, Paterson, Wayne, Little Falls, Pompton Lakes and Woodland Park. The project was planned and constructed on a feasibility study done over 5 years ago (lots more traffic now) in 2011. The project makes little if any sense at all, and the \$1million dollars probably could have been used in a much more efficient way.

Clifton's Centennial celebration kicked off with a beefsteak last month and a 99th birthday celebration on the steps of City Hall on April 26th, Clifton's actual "birthday". Great idea but apparently no one invited the hundreds of city employees who found out about the "Birthday Party" too late to attend. Besides the dedication and hard work of all the Centennial Committee volunteers, communication may be the key to a really great celebration year.

The Clifton Board of Education passed a \$163 million dollar budget bringing with it an \$83 dollar increase for an average home assessed at \$177,000. While the budget did contain a planned staff reduction of 49 positions, hopefully the number will be reduced through retirements and voluntary leave. It seems increases in health care costs (what ever happened to the relief that Obama Care was going to bring??) led the way to this financial quandary. Apparently the pleas to the state to take funds from the capital improvement account and move them into the general fund were denied. That solution would have only "kicked the can down the road" so to speak. It was rather interesting that some commissioners seemed surprised that funds were transferred into the capital improvement account. These transfers have to be voted on by the committee as a whole, so it is pretty unlikely that any "deals" were made when moving the funds. Perhaps this was done to clear a year-end budget so funds would not be lost and sent back to the state. One thing about Clifton's Board of Education is clear, the commissioners, to a person, are a dedicated group of volunteers, yes volunteers; you couldn't pay them enough for all they go through. They have the best interest of the students and the school system at heart, their approaches may differ, but their goal is the same.

It sounds pretty quiet on the local front in Passaic County considering it is an election year and a major one at that. There is a primary race on the Democratic side, and the battle between Hillary and Bernie may translate into Democratic candidates scrambling for ballot position if Sanders and his ticket beat Hillary. This is a distinct possibility and could prove very interesting . . . Word has it that the prosecutor is poking around one of the leading Democratic candidates campaign activity after allegations of financial impropriety surfaced. No guys, it isn't ok to ask that checks be made out to cash for campaign events, everyone knows that is a major no no and a minor league move. More on this as the story develops.



Nature in Your Backyard

BY DON TORINO

The Osprey Man of the Meadowlands

The Osprey, the “fish hawk” of the Meadowlands is one of New Jersey’s largest raptors and one that almost disappeared for good from New Jersey. According to the “Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey”, Prior to 1950, over 500 osprey nests were found along the New Jersey coastline. By 1974, only about 50 nests remained. Loss of nesting sites and widespread food contamination by persistent pesticides (mostly DDT) caused the birds’ decline in New

Jersey and throughout the eastern U.S. Consequently, the osprey was listed as “endangered” by New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife in 1974. Thanks to the outlawing of DDT, having cleaner water and wildlife management efforts of the New Jersey DEP, we were successful in restoring Osprey to the state, today there are over 500 nesting pair. The osprey is an incredible and magnificent bird that has returned to New Jersey and our Meadowlands.



Lucky for us there is a special man looking to help make sure these glorious birds of prey stick around for all of us to enjoy, Jim Macaluso, the osprey man of the Meadowlands.



From Mill Creek Point and Laurel Hill in Hudson County to River Barge Park and Overpeck Park in Bergen County, Jim Macaluso volunteers his time from early Spring to late Fall to keep tabs on all the osprey nests in the meadowlands area. “I have the one nest in Teaneck, one at River Barge Park, one on Berry’s Creek, one on the Hackensack River trestle, two at Dekorte, and a nest on the radio tower across from Mill Creek Point. So that is

six nests, all of which have either incubating birds on them or will be soon”, Jimmy Told me. “I also take the time check out reports from other birders on suspected nests, but many turn out to be false alarms.” Jim’s reports go directly to New Jersey DEP Division of Fish & Wildlife, which help determine how the osprey are doing and what help they may need to keep their population healthy and happy in the Garden State

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St. Philip the Apostle Knights Council 11671 Celebrates 20th Anniversary



St. Philip Knights of Columbus celebrated their 20th anniversary. The event held in St. Philip Auditorium, attracted well over 200. St. Philip's Council has been one of the most active Councils in the area and has sponsored many significant events. The event supported local veteran's groups and Clifton Cares, an organization that sends packages of needed items to service personnel overseas. Over the council has worked tirelessly to support various charitable endeavors throughout the community.

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GREEK FEST ON THE HILL



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“OPA!”

Lunch – May 20th (Friday)
11:30am – 2pm



May 20th (Friday) 5pm-11pm
May 21st (Saturday) 1pm – 12am
May 22nd (Sunday) 1pm – 8pm



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Annual Greek Festival

Continued from page 1

1974. The church has been a vital part of the Clifton Community since its inception.

Fr. John Orfanakos was the priest from 1967 till 2000. He was instrumental in the purchasing of the property on the hill and bringing the parish to its current location. Since 2009, Fr. Peter Sourit-zidis has been the presiding priest. He provide spiritual support and counseling to the faithful. The church of-fers over fourteen ministries addressing the needs of dif-ferent areas of the parish.

Besides the cultural exhibits and offerings at the festival, one of the most popular at-tractions is the authentic Greek food. Some of the of-ferings will include: Gyros, Traditional Pork Souvlaki and Chicken Souvlaki (meat on a stick) grilled over a char-coal fire. Traditional Spana-kopita (spinach pie) and Tyropites (cheese pie) home-made by the ladies of the par-ish, Homemade Moussaka and Pastitsio. Moussaka is a baked dish with ground beef, eggplant and potatoes topped with a Béchamel sauce. Pas-titsio is a baked dish with pasta, ground beef and bé-chamel sauce. Homemade lamb shanks over orzo one of the most popular items of-fered at the festival, one that everyone raves about.

The food prices are very rea-sonable and the portions are very generous.

Full bar service available in-cluding Greek wines and beer as well as the traditional national drink of Greece, Ouzo which is an anise-fla-vored aperitif.



In conjunction with the fes-tival, the church is having a car raffle for a 2016 Hyundai Tuscan. Tickets for the raffle are \$20 and the drawing will be held on Sunday, May 22nd at 6pm.

Under the leadership of Nick Marcopulos, the Parish Council President, planning for this year's festival began months in advance. The fes-tival brings together many parishioners who work with food preparations and the 3 days of the festival.

Attendees to the festival don't often realize that the parish-ioners make a majority of the food and desserts fresh. Anthoula Bozios, a parish council board member, re-calls "They came to me and asked where all the excel-lent food was catered from". "I proceeded to explain that the food and desserts aren't catered, but are made by our parishioners."

Angela Delaney, the parish secretary noted, "I have been participating in this festival for almost 40 years and it just gets better every year. We always have the best home-made authentic Greek foods,

the best youth Greek danc-ers and an infinite amount of "philoxenia" which in Greek means hospitality and gener-osity of spirit."

Nick Marcopulos, Parish Council President stated that "The St. George Greek Or-thodox Church is fulfilling the spiritual needs of Ortho-dox Christians in Passaic and Bergen counties". "Come visit us at our annual Greek festival for a weekend of au-thentic cuisine and a flavor of the Greek culture".

Fr. Peter, stated "In addi-tion to all the delicious food guests will have an oppor-tunity to tour the church. where the church interior, and the various ecclesiastical furniture and objects will be explained. Participants will have a chance to enjoy the remarkable Byzantine Ico-nography that decorates the Church of St. George on the hill. Members of the church Youth Group will demon-strate their traditional Greek dancing abilities through-out the event. Come have a taste of it, be Greek for the evening, we have prepared a great time for all".

Honor a Hero... Clifton's Avenue of Flags



Five times a year volunteers raise 1722 flags throughout the grounds of the Clifton Municipal Complex.

Citizens can honor a veteran by purchasing flag for inclusion in the display. The cost of \$110.00 and covers the flag, pole, sleeve, name plate and ground socket.

If you do not have someone to honor, but would like to sup-port the Avenue of Flags, a campaign is in underway to hon-or all the KIA(killed in action) listed on the monument in Main Memorial Park,with a flag. It is the hope of the Avenue of Flags committee that citizens will purchase a flag in their memory.

In order to honor a veteran with a flag, a form must be com-pleted and returned to City Hall. Visit www.cliftonnj.org click on LINKS and then click on Avenue of Flags. All the needed information is on the site and the form can be downloaded as well.

Flags are displayed on Memorial Day, Flag Day, Indepen-dence Day, Patriot Day(911) and Veterans Day. If interested in volunteering, please call John Biegel Jr. at 973 519-0858. The next raising is Monday May 30,2016 at 6AM and lower-ing at 7:00PM

Volunteers are also needed to do the behind the scene prepa-ration work that gives us this beautiful display. If you can vol-unteer some time please contact Mr. Biegel at 973 519-0858.



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The Osprey Man of the Meadowlands

continued from page 4

"I check on some nests almost every day" Jimmy said "from five minutes to an hour, once it appears that eggs have hatched I spend more time observing. The other nests I get to once or twice a week, again for a short time each or I will just sit down and watch for an extended period

of time. It is very relaxing. I start to watch in March, waiting for their arrival, and if they fledge young, I'll watch through October"

Volunteers like Jimmy are critical to the future of the osprey and other endangered species, he lets the state biologist's know right away of

any threats to the nest, and he is the first in line to protect and defend the osprey long before a state employee can respond

Jim told me besides the important data he is collecting he delights in just observing the osprey

"I really enjoy watching for new behaviors. One thing that I've noticed this year for the first time is that they will snap off branches from both living and dead trees on the wing and bring them to the nest. I observed this behavior from both the River Barge birds and one of the pair at Dekorte. Of course I love watching them fish and it's not unusual to have one pluck a fish out of the water right in front of me. I've seen eagles chase them to get them to drop a fish and then steal it. And they put on spectacular aerial displays when defending their nest from crows or other ospreys".

We cannot thank Jimmy enough for the all the days and hours he devotes to helping the osprey, "I think all that all the data the volunteers gather is important be-



cause not only do we need to know how this once endangered species is doing, but also because their success or failure gives us an idea of how well the environment is doing here in the Meadowlands area. Perhaps the reason for the Teaneck's pair's limited success is because there are not enough fish in Overpeck to support a larger clutch. Or it could be that there is just too much human interference in its hunting range (very probable). I've notice the Teaneck birds flying in from the direction of the Hudson with fish. That's

quite a long haul."

All Jim's observations are compiled on Osprey Watch for NJ Fish and Wildlife. He also keeps Gabrielle Bennett-Meany and Drew McQuade informed from the NJSEA on the all the nesting osprey in the Meadowlands region.

Volunteerism is a vital key to protecting and preserving our endangered species here in New Jersey. We are very lucky to have such a dedicated and devoted person looking out for the future of our osprey, the osprey man of the meadowlands, Jim Macaluso



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Rev. Thomas J. Suchon

Continued from Page 1

His powerful voice would resonate over the sounds of the crowd at Paul VI sporting events, plays and musical productions.

THE PROMISE: My first article about Father Suchon appeared on May 22, 1975 in The Beacon, a religious publication of the Diocese of Paterson (“Punchily Yours, TJS”); it was written shortly before my graduation from Paul VI High School.

My second article – also published in The Beacon – commemorated the 10th anniversary of his death (“Memories of Father Suchon,” May 8, 1986).

That was followed by articles in The Record (“Graduate Mourns Demise of School,” May 19, 1991); The Beacon, for his 20th anniversary (“A Friend Remembered,” May 2, 1996) and Clifton Insider, for his 30th anniversary (“Reverend Thomas J. Suchon: His Memory and Legacy Are Alive and Well,” May 5, 2006).

But perhaps the greatest part of the promise was the Rededication of Suchon Field in 2003.

Shortly after Father Suchon’s death, a group of Paul VI fathers, some of whom were contractors and builders, asked me to serve on a committee with them. The goal: to clear the open space behind Paul VI and build a field for sporting events to be named “Suchon Field.” The dedication, which included a large wooden sign bear-

ing the name “Suchon Field”, took place in 1977.

Years later, in the Fall of 2000, while watching my young cousin play soccer on Suchon Field, I noticed that the sign had been removed. There was no indication that the field had been named for Father Suchon. I was upset.

So I started asking my classmates and schoolmates to serve on a committee with me to “Rededicate Suchon Field.” I invited Nancy Eadie from the first Paul VI graduating class (1971); Rich Loftus (1972); Brian Shannon (1973); Bill Grau and Bob Gorman (1974) and Kathy Gallagher from my class (1975). Eventually, every class from 1971 to 1990 – was represented. (Sadly, the school closed in 1990.)

During our monthly meetings we entered contracts, reviewed financial budgets and, for 18 months, searched for every student, teacher, administrator, coach and staff member associated with Paul VI. Without Facebook and other social media tools, we used phone books, college directories, email and word of mouth.

REDEDICATION OF SUCHON FIELD

Clifton Councilman Frank Gaccione obtained a large stone from the Tilcon Quarry across the street from Paul VI; it is now the site of a large townhouse development. It was an ironic gift from the owner, since it was a common occurrence for blasting at the quarry to shake the

Paul VI building and interrupt our classes while we were students. The stone was 8 feet long, 4 feet wide and 2 feet deep; it weighed 10,000 pounds. Frank and his crew buried the stone on the side of the field, with 3 feet in the ground and 5 feet extending above the ground.

I hired an artist to create a three-dimensional drawing of Father Suchon’s face for the bronze plaque that we embedded into the front of the stone. It measured 30” by 18” and included the large words “SUCHON FIELD” and a saying from the Bible that was Father’s favorite: “And it is right that I should always feel this way about you . . . because I hold you in my heart.”

Suchon Field was rededicated on November 29, 2003. As we walked to the field from St. Philip Church, next to Paul VI, where mass had been celebrated for the Paul VI community, Rededication Coordinator Jim Benson (Class of 1978) had the Beatles song “In My Life” playing over the sound system. It was an emotional moment for me and many others.

What started as an idea to rededicate Suchon Field, blossomed into a Mass, Rededication and “All School” Reunion for all 20 graduating classes at The Venetian in Garfield attended by 750 people.

EPILOGUE

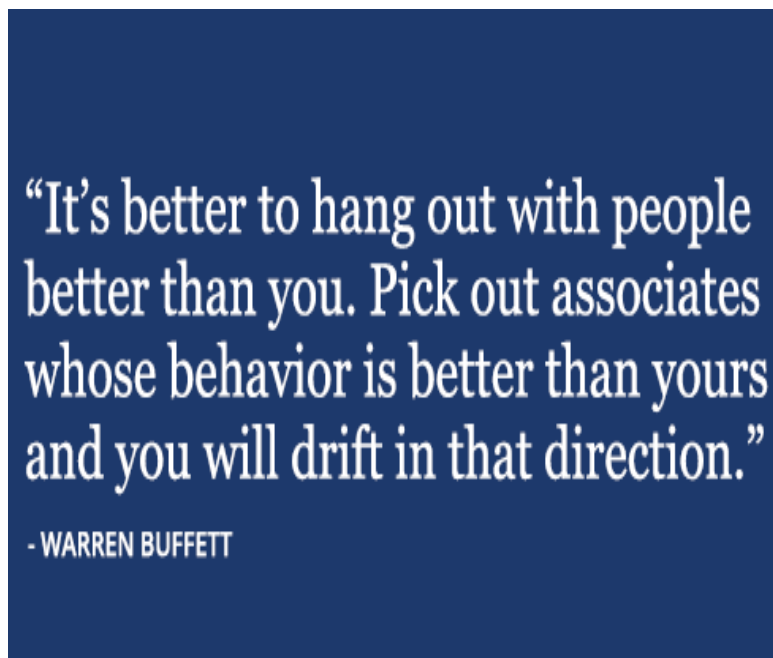
Twice each year since the Rededication in 2003, I visit the monument on Suchon Field to pull weeds and plant flowers. And I always smile, knowing that the 10,000 lb.



stone with Father Suchon’s face and his favorite saying from the Bible is not likely to be removed. And in the background, I can hear the Beatles singing . . . “There are places I remember . . . All my life though some have changed . . . Some forever not for better . . . Some have gone and some remain . . . All these places have their moments . . . With . . . friends I still can recall . . .”

A promise made . . . a promise kept.

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It is truly his privilege to serve the people of the 34th Legislative District.

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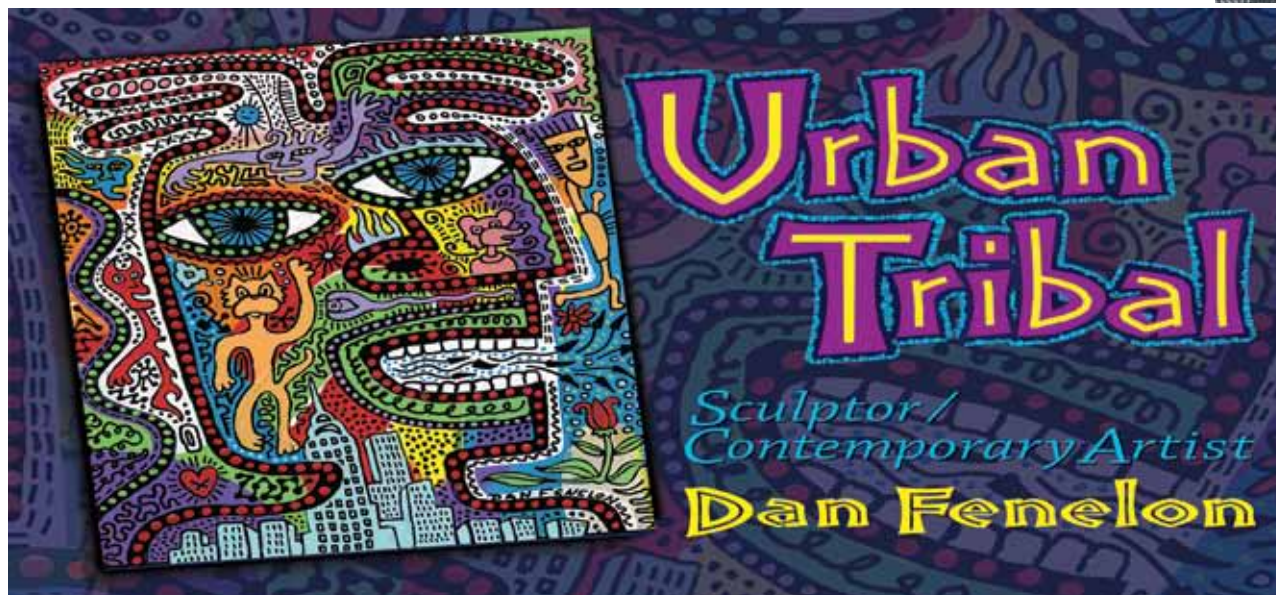
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Clifton Centennial Kickoff



The Clifton Arts Center presents Urban Tribal an art exhibit and sale of artwork by the sculptor and contemporary artist, Dan Fenelon. The show runs, May 4th, through May 28th.

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