

Craig High School Presents:

OUR WEIRD WORLD

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MAILING ADDRESS:
CRAIG HIGH SCHOOL
310 Lathrop Ave.
Boonton, NJ 07005
TELEPHONE 973-334-1234
HOME OF
THE BADGERS
AND
THE BOMBERS

A collection of weird and strange tales from around the world!

As part of our learning circle with iEARN, we proudly present our Places and Perspectives publication.

WEIRD NJ STORIES COLLECTED BY CRAIG STUDENTS

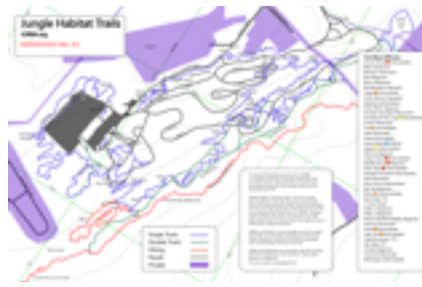
THE JUNGLE IN WEST MILFORD

by Luke Neumann

In the town of West Milford, there is a place called Jungle Habitat. It is an abandoned zoo which was originally part of the Six Flags family in Jackson, New Jersey. This was sponsored by Warner Brothers. The park opened in the summer of 1972, but was closed four years later in the fall of 1976. During its brief time open, people could drive through the park and see animals such as elephants, lions, and baboons, many of which would approach or climb on the cars. After it was closed, people reported seeing kangaroos, monkeys, and other non-indigenous animals in the Northern New Jersey region. Most of this information was false rumors, but people did find dead bodies of animals in the forest. Today, people can enter the zoo through the main gate, which is still standing, and walk around the park safely. They can even see the empty cages and food stands that the people of Six Flags left behind. There are about twelve miles of trails in the park which are open to foot traffic or bicycle use.



The sign over the entrance to Jungle Habitat.



A map of the property.



Jungle Habitat was the first attempt by Warner Brothers to create a drive-thru safari park.

The Jersey Devil Lurks...



Supposed image of the New Jersey Devil.

THE NEW JERSEY DEVIL PART ONE

by Evan Foulds

There are lots of things that are weird about New Jersey. One of the most commonly known stories from New Jersey is the New Jersey Devil. The myth is that there was a woman, Mrs. Leeds, who had twelve kids. She was pregnant with her thirteenth child. This is in 1735. Then as the child was being born, the mother yelled, "oh, let this one be a devil!" Then when the child was delivered, it had a head of a horse and bat-like wings. Then it yelped, flew up the chimney, and disappeared. They lived somewhere in the Pine Barrens forest. It was never seen clearly again. It has been seen by some people, but no one knows if they are telling the truth or not. There has never been any evidence to prove the existence of the New Jersey Devil, like real photographs or anything of that nature. There was a short documentary about it on the History Channel, and in the end they thought that they saw it. I don't think that the creature they saw matched the description of the devil. So keep your eyes open in the Pine Barrens; you may see it.

THE NEW JERSEY DEVIL PART TWO

by Lauren Hahn

In the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, it is said that there lives what is often called a Jersey Devil, or sometimes Leeds Devil. There are many variations of what it is said to look like, but the most common description is a kangaroo-like creature with the head of a goat, bat-like wings, clawed hands, hooves on its feet, and a forked tail. It also lets out a loud, distinct scream. The Jersey Devil originates from Native American folklore of the Lenni Lenape tribes, where they called the area where it lived Popuessing. However, there are other stories on how it originated. One of the most popular ones is where the Jersey Devil is the thirteenth child of a witch and the devil himself. The child was born normal, but then it changed to a creature with hooves, goat's head, bat wings, and a forked tail. It then flew out of the house and around villages before going into the Pine Barrens. It wasn't seen again until 1890. The Jersey Devil has also made its way into popular culture, and the name of New Jersey's National Hockey team is, of course, the New Jersey Devils.

The New Jersey Devil: Legends trace back to native American folklore and stories of a witch's child. The story of the New Jersey Devil has influenced our culture and our hockey team.

Strange Sites and Statutes

NEW JERSEY'S FREAKS AND CREEPS

by Scott C. Baxter

New Jersey is home to many strange and dangerous places. Read below to see just a few of the strangest.

☼ Action Park in Vernon, New Jersey is considered to be one of the most dangerous amusement parks in North America. Most of the rides are unsafe, such as the Alpine Slide and Tarzan Swing. There were little to no rules here, and if there were any, they certainly weren't enforced. [Click Here](#) (online version) to see the BuzzFeed List of Accidents.

☼ The Pine Barrens is an uninhabited forest in New Jersey that locals claim is the home for a creature called the New Jersey Devil. It is said to look as if it is half horse, half goat, and 100% dirty Satan spawn. Organizations like the KKK are also known to hold meetings in the forest. [Click Here](#) to read more at weirdnj.com.

☼ New Jersey is also home to Clinton Road. People call it the most haunted road in the world. People believe this road to be haunted because of the turn known as Dead Man's Curve where many cars have crashed. [Click Here](#) to read the legend of this curve.

☼ The Atco Multiplex Plex is said to be haunted. People supposedly see apparitions and hear voices from the back of the theater. [Click Here](#) to read a thread of comments about this theater.

☼ The Devil's Tree is another well known legend from New Jersey. The story states that a man killed his wife and children, then proceeded to hang himself from the tree. Anyone said to successfully cut down the tree will meet with an unpleasant and

untimely end. There are many axe marks left from those who try. [Click Here](#) to read the weirdnj.com reports on this tree.

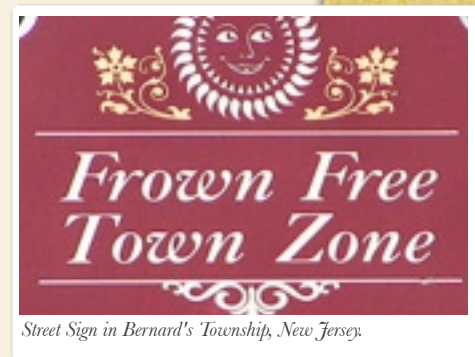
☼ In Allamuchy, New Jersey there is a road called the Shades of Death Road. Rumors say if you were to drive down this road at midnight, you will ride through a patch of fog. Once you are through the patch, you will find human footprints on your windshield and the roof of your car. [Click Here](#) to read the NY Daily News report and view a video of the road.

CAN THESE BE LAWS?

by Cameron Tallau

There are quite a few laws that you just abide by in New Jersey, and anywhere else for that matter. But there are some laws on the books that you would not expect. Read below to see some of New Jersey's odd laws.

1. It is against the law for a man to knit during the fishing season.
2. If you have been convicted of driving while intoxicated, you may never again apply for personalized license plates.
3. It is illegal to delay or detain a homing pigeon.
4. It is illegal to wear a bulletproof vest while committing a murder.
5. In Bernard's Township, it is illegal to frown, as the town is considered a "frown-Free Town Zone."



The articles in this publication contain hyperlinks to online stories and videos.



Please view our website to read this publication on the web and visit the links provided.

It's a Man-Eater!

BY EJ LALLY AND ETHAN WUKOWITZ

If you are from New Jersey, you probably spend a lot of time during the summer down the shore. I spend most of my summer there. Did you know that the New Jersey Beaches were the inspiration for the movie *Jaws*? Please read the following article, taken from weirdnj.com, to learn more about the real life shark attack.

Nearly 60 years before Peter Benchly's novel *Jaws*, a real man-eater lurked the waters of the New Jersey coast. It was July 1, 1916, and in Beach Haven the tourist season was in full swing. The beaches were filled with sunbathers and the ocean with

swimmers. Everything seemed like just another hot July day. But this day would be different from any other. A young Penn graduate named Charles E. Vansant, a resident of Beach Haven, dies after having been attacked by a shark while out swimming. A lifeguard pulled him in and tried to stop the profuse bleeding, but Charles could not be saved. Scientists of the area write this off as a singular freak occurrence. They could not have been more wrong. Five days later the shark would strike again, 45 miles to the north, near the Essex and Sussex Hotel in Spring Lake. Bellboy Charles

Bruder would become the second fatality. He was swimming out beyond friends when he was heard screaming, "A shark bit me! Bit my legs off!" These were the last words Charles would ever utter. Mesh barriers went up almost immediately around swimming areas. Still, it was too late to save the rest of the tourist season. What would happen next would elevate the panic to a new level.

To find out more about what happened, [click here](#) to read the rest of this story on weirdnj.com.



Newspaper headlines from real life shark attack in 1916.



Photo of the rogue shark and his killers.

Most Haunted House in USA?



The Spy House in Port Monmouth

You may not believe this, but at the Atlantic Highlands Memphis Pig Out, which is held every year, there is a ghost named Bubba. He shows up and scares people. You can learn more about it from the weird NJ magazine.

-Kyle Beyrent

OUR WEIRD WORLD

We hope you enjoy reading these weird stories. We enjoyed learning about them!

THE MOST HAUNTED HOUSE IN AMERICA?

by Tyler Czubachowski

Would you be interested in visiting a house that has been around since the Revolutionary War? What if this house were haunted? That is the history of the Spy House, or the Seabrook-Wilson Homestead, located in Port Monmouth section of Middletown, New Jersey. This house used to be just an old house with its own farm; it sat on 300 acres of land. It later got taken over by the Park's Commission and tours were given. Many locals would visit this house because it was listed as a historical site, but there were also ghost stories told about the house. Some people say there is a boy who sits up in the window and can be seen from cars passing on the road. You can tour the Spy House and see for yourself if this really is the most haunted house in America. To read more about the Spy House, [click here](#) to visit an article from weirdnj.com.

OUR WEIRD WORLD

Weird Stories from Moldova, New York and Pennsylvania

We also collected
some stories from
our partner schools.
Enjoy their local
legends and
legendary people.

CAUSENI CHURCH

by Gheorghe Taran and his students in Access
Causeni, Moldova

The Causeni Church is where an ancient architectural monument of a particular artistic and historical value is situated. This church was built in 1763. The walls of the church are fully covered with antique frescoes. It seems that the church is lost among the centuries.

The fact that makes this church unique is its construction. The church is half-buried into the ground. The reason for this comes from a legend that dates back to time when the Tatars were living on the territory. The Tatars are a mainly Muslim group that can trace its origins to the days of Genghis Kahn. It is said that the Tatars admitted the construction of a Christian church with the condition that it would be the height of a man riding a horse. The only way to accomplish this was by burying a portion of the building.



Frescoes cover every surface inside the Causeni Church.



The outside of the church.

The Causeni
Church, built in
1763, has a
beautiful and
interesting history.



Letchwood Village: History within our town

BY THE STUDENTS OF NORTH ROCKLAND HIGH SCHOOL

under the guidance and supervision of Sydney Valerio

Letchwood Village, located in Rockland County, New York, opened in 1911; it was established to meet the needs of the physically and mentally disabled of all ages, from newborn to elderly. It consisted of 130 buildings, stretching upwards of 2,362 acres, as well as housing a network of secret underground tunnels. This facility was thought to have had great potential and was a great improvement from prior facilities.

The grounds surrounding the buildings were very large and created lots of space for patients to roam. Until the 1960's, the able-bodied patients labored on communal farms, raising enough food and livestock to feed the entire population of the

Village. The patients grew their own crops and tended cows, pigs, and chickens. They also made toys and sold them at Christmas.

Conditions at the Village quickly went downhill. Reports of inadequate funding and improper care of residents, children included, were present dating back to the 1920's. Residents had been found unclothed, unbathed, often unfed, and neglected. There were also reports of unhealthy medical practices conducted at the Village. However, some lifesaving medical practices also took place here. On February 27, 1950, the first trial case of the polio vaccine in the USA was given to an 8-year old patient. When she suffered no side effects, 19

more patients were given the vaccine. Despite the medical advances and malpractices, the government refused to give more funding to the Village, resulting in overpopulation and worsening medical care.

In 1996, Letchwood Village closed up shop, marking the permanent completion of the thousands of mistreated patient's horrific experiences. The buildings were left as is to sit and rot. The buildings continue to decay, and it is said that the souls of the mistreated patients roam the halls. In the summer of 2011, the institutions were featured on the Travel Channel's *Ghost Adventures* TV series.

To read more about the Village, please [click here](#) to see our presentation.



The buildings are being overgrown in the Village.



One of the abandoned hallways.

Local Legends from Pittsburg

by Hannah Schoeppner, Hannah Grachen, JaQuay James, Ben Knoebel, and Corinne
under the guidance and supervision of Scott Tuffiash at Avonworth High School

ROBERTO CLEMENTE MUSEUM

Roberto Clemente was a famous baseball player who died in a plane crash. He has a museum, bridge, and statue dedicated to him. The museum is called the Roberto Clemente Museum and is located at 3339 Penn Ave. The museum holds the world's largest exhibit of baseball artifacts, art work, literature, photos, and materials that focus on Clemente, his teammates, his personal life, and his humanitarian work.

When visiting the museum, one will find it full of pictures, newspaper articles, baseball bats, stadium seats, cleats, hats, and baseball jerseys. It is very educational and full of inspirational stories. It also has lots of places to sit if you get tired.

I had the opportunity to visit the Roberto Clemente museum, and I had such a great time learning about such a wonderful man and an interesting sport. This experience inspired me to play softball. This caused me to meet inspirational friends who I know I will be friends with forever. To put it simply, my life was drastically changed due to my experience at the Roberto Clemente Museum.

GUS AND YIA YIA'S

Gus and Yia Yia's is known by everyone in Pittsburgh for their delicious icy balls, and his popcorn is better than the movie theater. You can find Gus in front of the tennis court on the North Side. They have every flavor you can think of! Gus will mix and add as much flavor as you want; his prices are the cheapest around! I hope that if you ever come to Pittsburgh you come in the summertime so you can try Gus' wonderful treats.

The owner is a funny, sweet, and nice elderly man; I have known him since kindergarten. One time after school on a very hot day, I decided to cool down with an icy ball, but I forgot my money. I was an irresponsible seven year old. Gus saw me without an icy ball sitting on the bench with all my friends from school while they all enjoyed his wonderful treats. Gus, knowing I always order a banana icy ball, was such a sweet guy he made one and gave it to me for free! The sweet, cold, banana flavor tasted perfect on that hot summer day. It was the perfect way to end my summer night.



Owner of Gus and Yia Yia's will treat you right in the summer.



The Roberto Clemente Museum is sure to inspire you.

Pittsburg is full of local history. The people of Pittsburg really make the history come alive. The famous, and not so famous, make this a special place to live.