

triCityNews

MONMOUTH'S NEWS & ARTS WEEKLY



AN UNCOMPROMISING ASBURY ELEMENT

INTENSIVE HIRING OF LOCALS WILL DISTINGUISH ASBURY OCEAN CLUB HOTEL **P.30**

THE GROWING VIBRANCY OF RED BANK'S TRAIN STATION DISTRICT

AN INNOVATIVE NON-PROFIT SPREADS YOGA TO THOSE IN NEED **P.32**



PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS



A LYRICAL COLLABORATION IN ASBURY PARK **P.34**

PRIDE IN RED BANK, LONG BRANCH AND ASBURY PARK **P.20**



Mary Ansell

THE GROWING VIBRANCY OF RED BANK'S TRAIN STATION DISTRICT

AN INNOVATIVE NON-PROFIT SPREADS YOGA TO THOSE IN NEED

RED BANK — This is a town on the move, with a growing community of creatives that people outside of Red Bank don't fully understand.

But we do.

Just like we chronicled the rise of Asbury Park, and all that was going on there years before anyone else believed it, we're doing the same for Red Bank.

Particularly in the area around the train station, there is a critical mass of the creative and the progressive. It includes the stunning architecture of the soon to be open rehabilitated Anderson Building by the progressive developers Metrovation, as well as the important arts venues there sponsored by Lambs and Wolves owner Glen Goldbaum.

And there's the writers incubator Project Write Now. Plus the studio of veteran Red Bank photographer Danny Sanchez. The remarkable — and expanding — Two Rivers Theater. Good Karma's vegan take-out. The creative marketing firm Sawtooth. A Sickles market coming to the Anderson building. A well-designed new development project by Denholtz Associates that will remake the south side of the train station area with new offices, retail and residential units.

What's additionally noteworthy over there are the progressive ser-

vice organizations, such as the JBJ Soul Kitchen, located in a beautifully minimalist structure, that allows those in need to volunteer at area non-profits and then sit equally with others for an excellent meal and fellowship. Nearby is the Parker Family Health Center that provides free medical and dental care for those without insurance, provided by volunteer health care professionals.

Obviously, this section of Red Bank is becoming a center for all types of innovation, from the arts to serving those in need. We've been on the story for years. Our job is always to encourage this stuff.

Which brings us to Open Heart Yoga, which opened on May 5 at 93 Shrewsbury Avenue a block away from the train station. Open Heart Yoga is a 501c3 non-profit organization, which matches the yoga classes purchased by attendees with a donation of the equivalent yoga classes to area non-profits for their clients. (Visit openheart-yoga-nj.org for more information and schedules. Prices range from \$20 for a single class to \$125 for a monthly unlimited. Schedules are also on the mindbody app.)

Open Heart Yoga features classes 7 days a week led by five experienced instructors including Open Heart Yoga founder Mary Ansell and Ann Yocum, a popular and well-known instructor in the area. The board of trustees is led by Robin Klein. So if you purchase a month's pass, for example, you then select from 10 community part-

continued on p.68

THE GROWING VIBRANCY OF RED BANK'S TRAIN STATION DISTRICT *continued from p.32*

ners where Open Heart Yoga will donate a month's pass. If you purchase a day pass, you'll choose where to have that day pass donated. Same with the weekly pass.

In the first month, 1615 days of yoga classes have been donated, said Ansell. The 10 non-profits whose clients receive the classes are pretty much all nearby, making it easy for their clients to attend. There are also Spanish-speaking instructors.

"Yoga is a wonderful resource to help people mentally, physically and emotionally, as well as provide healing," Ansell said. "Yoga provides healing for everybody."

"I always envisioned it being here," said Ansell of locating Open Heart Yoga on Red Bank's west side. "It's surrounded by a lot of these non-profits and charities. We just drop the yoga vouchers off. Just a couple we have to put in the mail box. The rest are just around the corner. A lot of the recipients can walk here and can get here easily."

The 10 community partners with Open Heart Yoga are 180 Turning Lives Around, The Beauty Foundation for Cancer Care, Bloom Again, Stephy's Place, The Parker Family Health Center, JBJ Soul Foundation, Lunch Break, VNA and the Tigger House Foundation. Count Basie Center for the Arts is also a partner as it reaches out to diverse communities in various types of arts and education programming it increasingly sponsors.

Open Heart Yoga isn't meant to draw people away from their current yoga studios or favorite teachers. This is a non-profit where those who understand the benefits of yoga can buy some sessions and have it paid forward to provide the same benefit to those who may otherwise not experience it.

"If you come here, you're supporting a cause that provides yoga and healing to people who couldn't necessarily afford it or have access to it," said Ansell "It can add to your routine. It doesn't have to replace your routine."

Others have contributed to Open Heart Yoga in other ways.

When she heard about the project, Rumson artist Kathleen Palmieri offered to create the art for the studio. Palmieri was going to create one big heart for the walls. She decided to do three: One for open, one for heart and one for yoga.

A former special education teacher, Ansell said she's never seen a non-profit like Open Heart Yoga set up to spread the availability of yoga in this fashion.

"We build a lot of qualities on the mat: focus, resilience, concentration, strength, flexibility of body and mind, balance of body and mind," said Ansell.

"It's not just about inside the studio, it's also about bringing your yoga off the mat and outside the studio," Ansell said. "It's living your yoga: Connecting to your breath whenever you need to. Being more mindful. Mindful movements. Mindful actions. Mindful responses. Mindful eating, speaking."

This is a non-profit where those who understand the benefits of yoga can buy some sessions and have it paid forward to provide the same benefit to those who may otherwise not experience it.