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## CIVIL AIR PATROL CADET ANUSHKA KUMAR OF WATCHUNG

Cadet Anushka Kumar is a freshmen in High School from Watchung. She has successfully completed Phase I in the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program. This has earned Cadet Kumar the Wright Brothers Award which marks the transition of a cadet to the non-commissioned officer status in the Civil Air Patrol cadet program, and accompanies promotion to the grade of Cadet Staff Sergeant. This summer she also successfully completed a week-long cadet training called Basic Encampment where she attained important knowledge on Team Work and STEM.

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is a congressionally chartered and federally supported non-profit corporation that serves as the official "civilian" auxiliary of the US Air Force (non-combatant). The Cadet Program is open to youth 12 to 18 years and adults who wish volunteer service. Cadets progress through a series of achievements and awards that can be earned by keeping regular attendance, online or paper tests in leadership and aerospace. They also learn STEM concepts with hands-on activities, cyber security, electronics, robotics, etc. CAP has summer camps programs for cadets that they can attend in different parts of the nation and outside of the USA (learning flight, robotics, leadership,

cyber, para-rescue, engineering, and much more). Cadets can also compete for academic scholarships to further their studies. CAP is a volunteer civilian organization and the youth program goal is to help to construct good citizens and to motivate them to continue their studies in higher education. Although CAP is under Air Force, CAP's cadets are not obligated to join the military. However, 10% of the cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy get their start in CAP. In addition CAP's cadets that enlist in the Air Force or enroll in the Air Force ROTC college program will receive an advance promotion since they are recognized by the Air Force.

CAP served during WWII in US costal patrols against Nazi submarines. In the present CAP's Adult program performs search and rescue missions within the United States. In September 11, 2001, CAP provided the first aerial pictures of the World Trade Center site, "Ground Zero," and also flew transport missions bringing donated blood to New York City. CAP members responded in the aftermath of hurricanes Rita, Katrina, Sandy on the air and on the ground – helping with search missions, disaster relief and aerial survey flights.

For information about the Youth Program (Cadet Program), please email Ceti Vergara [ceti.vergara@njwg.cap.gov](mailto:ceti.vergara@njwg.cap.gov).

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(above) Cadet Anushka Kumar has earned non-commissioned officer status in the Civil Air Patrol cadet program.

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# Watchung Post

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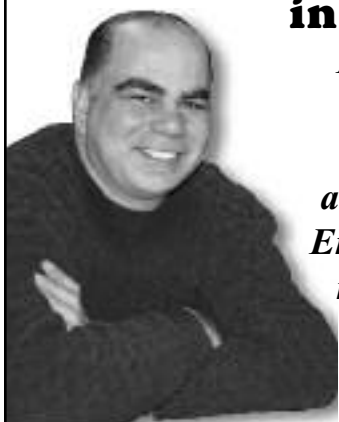
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## LOCAL WRITER BECOMES PUBLISHED AUTHOR

*The Watchung Writers Group is celebrating another book published by a member of their group, this time by longtime member Vivian Fransen.*

"Behold, my book is born!" says longtime Watchung Writers Group member Vivian Fransen, a resident of Scotch Plains. "It's nothing short of euphoria to hold my book in my hands. It's been a long road to write, 'revise, revise, revise,' and then prepare my book for publication. Naturally, I credit the Watchung Writers Group in my Acknowledgments for all the encouragement I've received over the years."

Her book, "The Straight Spouse: A Memoir," is a love story about a young woman who is

married to a man who turns out to be gay—and how she deals with the truth in unexpected ways. This story takes place in the early 1990s. Published by Open Door Publications this summer (2017), her book is available at Barnes & Noble or at amazon (<http://amzn.to/2vBgQdv>). For more information, visit her website at [straightspousememoir.com](http://straightspousememoir.com).

The Watchung Writers Group, meets weekly on Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the Watchung Library and is open to the public at no charge.



(above, front, l-r) Roy Jarmon (of Piscataway), Patricia Rydberg (of Bridgewater), Vivian Fransen (of Scotch Plains), Philip Lear (of Somerset). (back, l-r) Gregory Rendor (of Flemington), David Kaplan (of Gillette), J.R. Bale (of New Providence), Tom Melore (of Branchburg). Missing from photo are members Robert Mayers (of Watchung), Katie Taillon (of Watchung), and Alan Wohl (of Somerset).

Photo by Margaret Ellis.

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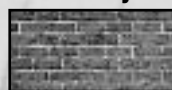
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## WATCH IT!

by Jyotsna Thapar, DPM

Performing a self exam on your feet can alert you to any potential signs of skin cancer. Addressing foot melanoma early on may catch the situation in time to tackle and cure it. Detecting melanoma in its early stages is critical. The soles, around or under the toenails, and between the toes are the most common locations of foot melanoma even though they typically do not get much, if any, sun exposure. Foot melanoma usually manifests itself with a freckle, mole, or spot that changes in configuration over a period of time. The resulting change in color, diameter, elevation, or border should be reported to your podiatrist immediately since those four factors are the indicators of foot melanoma.

The entire staff at ANKLE & FOOT SPECIALIST OF NJ, LLC, is pleased to welcome you to our column. Of considerable significance in caring for feet of any age, or any gender, is choosing the right podiatrist. Bearing in mind how much our feet do for us, the least we can do is to provide them with a comfortable environment, preventive care before problems occur, and professional care when they do. Comprehensive, compassionate foot care is available at:

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## OCTOBER EXHIBITS AT WATCHUNG ARTS CENTER

During the month of October, the Watchung Arts Center will present two photography exhibits. In the WAC's Heinz W. Otto Gallery, the Unique Vision Workshop, now in its nineteenth year, is pleased to present the work of nine photographers in "Connections XIX". Unique Vision's founder, Ross Wagner, will have his own exhibit, "Black on White" in the Lower Gallery. The opening reception for these two exhibitions will be held on Sunday, October 15 from 1-4PM. The reception and exhibits are free and open to the public.

Photo by Sherman Feller.



The Mission Statement of the Unique Vision Workshop, "encouraging photographers to search for their deepest visual connection with the world", is well represented in "Connections XIX", curated by Katherine Wagner. Each of these artists presents photographs representing his/her individual style. From Patricia Bender's intimate black and whites to Tom Dackow's spacious and moody color prints, the exhibit ranges far and wide, both geographically and artistically.

The photographers are: Sherman Feller, Tom Stillman, Patricia Bender, Ross Wagner, Joan Shyers, Tom Dackow, Ray Yaros, Bryan Murray and Katherine Wagner.

The theme of "Black on White" carries forward Ross Wagner's continuing fascination with black and white photography. Whether at the old Brooklyn Navy Yard, the Okefenokee swamp in Georgia, the mesas of the Southwest, or coastal Maine, Wagner has been alert to the simple drama of black on white. Threads of imagery can be traced through these photographs.

Wagner's photographic background includes images from Brigantine, the nature reserve near Atlantic City, which appear in his book "Brigantine", as well as ten years photographing for both Ski and Skiing magazines in Europe, Western USA and Russia, and the decade of photographing children candidly at home with black and white film in an early 35mm camera. This collection represents some of Ross's favorites.

The Watchung Arts Center, located at 18 Stirling Road in Watchung on the Watchung Circle, is a multi-disciplinary arts facility serving Watchung, the surrounding communities and the Tri-State Area. To obtain more information about upcoming performances, classes and workshops, and monthly art exhibitions, please visit WatchungArts.org or call 908-753-0190.

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## WEEKEND JOURNEY THROUGH THE PAST

The Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission, in collaboration with twenty-nine local historical organizations and tourism partners, has designated the weekend of October 14 & 15, 2017 "Weekend Journey through the Past." During this two-day period, twenty-nine (29) of the County's significant historic sites will be open from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Saturday and 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Sunday. This year's event features two newly participating historic sites: The Griggstown Bridgetender's House in Princeton and the Van Liew-Suydam House in Franklin Twp.

Participating historic sites have been grouped into three convenient tours by location: Northern, Central, and Southern Somerset County. A scenic route plan with driving direction has been prepared for each of the three tours (see link below). Admission to all sites is free.

For those who enjoy a challenge, a fun and educational detective investigation activity, What in the World is That? created for kids & the entire family, will test your powers of deduction to solve 29 mysteries complementing the various special exhibits, programs, and tours planned at each historic site (link available late September). This featured activity encourages a multi-

generational outing for parents and grandparents alike, sharing stories and experiences about "the old days" with their children and grandchildren as they enjoy traveling from one historic site to the next. One unique item from the past will be displayed and identified, along with its description, at each of the 29 participating historic sites during this year's weekend event.

This annual event is a perfect opportunity for a family outing. A visit to the County's historic sites offers a unique educational experience for all ages, as well as a chance to visit some of Somerset County's most picturesque and unspoiled areas.

Many of the sites have significant Revolutionary War histories which have contributed to the area's designation as the "Crossroads of the American Revolution State Heritage Area". Local historians will be on hand to share their knowledge and stories about Somerset County's history.

Come and enjoy learning more about the area's history. More information about this event, including a list of all 29 participating historic sites throughout Somerset County, a guide book, and map, can be found on the Somerset County website at [www.co.somerset.nj.us](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us).

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# WHRHS TEACHERS WELCOMED BACK WITH CONVOCATION AND BBQ

Superintendent Elizabeth Jewett, Principal George Alexis and Director of Human Resources Beth Scheiderman welcomed teachers back on Tuesday, September 5, to the 2017-2018 School Year Opening Day at Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS).

Following opening remarks at a Staff Convocation, the teachers were treated to a Luncheon BBQ in the south cafeteria, with burgers and hot dogs barbecued by members of the WHRHS Football Team and Touchdown Club. The teachers also attended two days of departmental meetings and breakout sessions on Sept. 5, and Wednesday, Sept. 6.

"It is truly a pleasure to be standing here in front of all of you this morning and it is my privilege to welcome you back for the 2017-2018 school year," Jewett said in addressing the school's teachers to start the speaking program at the Staff Convocation. "I truly enjoy getting to share with you all the progress we made over the summer as well as celebrate all of our district accomplishments and the role that you have played."

Highlights from the summer of preparation for this school year, Jewett said, included the kitchen expansion and modernization in the south cafeteria. This construction project was the last major project funded through the 2013 referendum. The voter-approved improvements have covered over the last several summers multiple other physical facility improvements to the WHRHS physical plant, ranging from refurbished parking lots to kitchen and bathroom upgrades and modernizations.

Other improvements this summer included the replacement of a large walk-in refrigerator in the north kitchen, replacement of the aging water boiler in the south building, replacement of ductwork in ceramics and photography rooms, remediation of sinks and fountains that had failed lead testing requirements with new fixtures and filters, and continued exterior work on the Mountain Avenue athletic field.

Jewett also listed the broad and numerous upgrades added over the summer in technology, including a website upgrade, a new 1:1 Chromebook Initiative which has provided more than 500 Chromebooks to the incoming Ninth Grade students, new teacher laptops, 11 new SMART Boards, server upgrades and more.

She also listed the numerous awards, championships, academic honors and community-based accolades earned last year by students, as well as distinctions, and ongoing academic and professional improvements pursued by faculty and staff over the summer and throughout the school year.

Among the academic achievements that stand out were the ongoing excellence by WHRHS students in Advanced Placement testing and National Merit achievement, Jewett said. The average AP Exam score last year for the 1,169 tests taken was 4.19 out of 5. Out of 68 recognized students in the class of 2018, 15 have been named National Merit Semifinalists, the most ever at Watchung Hills.

The district continues to implement the goals set out in the Board of Education adopted Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Jewett said she is excited to start the 2017-2018 school year. She also announced that WHRHS has been awarded a Bronze Certificate and an accompanying \$2,000 grant by the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program., which has been used to purchase new color-coded recycling bins.

"I look forward to an amazing year with all of you," Jewett told the staff. "Watchung Hills is truly a world-class learning community."

Human Resources Director Scheiderman introduced new staff at the opening convocation. They are: In the English Department, teachers Michelle Germinario, Sarah Sheridan, Michael Stultz, and Alicia Michalitsianos; in Math, Matthew Crawford; in Special Services, Danielle Esteves, Cynthia Sacco, and Douglas Graiver; in Guidance, Lauren Sagat and Patti Lampa; in Buildings and Grounds, Jennifer Zervopolous; in Transportation, Jannette Vega; and three student interns, Caelynn Robinson in Social Studies, Simone Waters in social work, and DeAnna LaSasso with the school psychology staff. Also welcomed back after leaves of absence are:

Nancy Suppin, Kyla Garcia, and Heather Guirguis.

Teachers recognized at the Staff Convocation for 25, 30 and 35 years of service at WHRHS were: 25 years, Bonnie Burgdorf, Laura Goodson, Courtney Griffith, Michele Lettington, and Daniel Root; 30 years, James Carden, Lydia Chu, and Thomas Loeffler; and 35 years, Laurie Shoemaker.

Numerous volunteers, staff, parents and students pitched in to help make the luncheon BBQ a festive return to the school year. Among those volunteering and contributing were members of the Football Team, under the direction of Head Football Coach Rich Seubert, members of the parent Touchdown Club, and numerous businesses in the community.

Local businesses who contributed to the event were: Pomptonian Food Service, Fairfield; Costco, North Plainfield; in Warren Township: Kings, Acme, Dunkin Donuts, Ciro's Pizza and Deli, and the Country Squire Restaurant; in Stirling: ShopRite and Blimpie; in Gillette, Starbucks and Primavera Regency; in Watchung: ShopRite and Dunkin Donuts; in Scotch Plains, Grillestone; and Stop and Shop, Corporate.

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(above l-r) #83 Wide Receiver Jake Riley, #2 Running Back Zahveae Thorns, #5 Wide Receiver/Free Safety Tyler James, Head Football Coach Rich Seubert, #7 Quarterback Connor James, #9 Middle Linebacker Shreyas Sagi, and #44 Defensive Line Frank Kane.



(above, sitting, l-r) Jack Melillo and Anchal Dhir; (standing, l-r) Ben Kosakowski, Sam Sinnott, Kyra Anthony, Ben Allgor, Will Johnson, Francesca Infante-Meehan, and Justin Horowitz.



(above) The 2017-2018 School Year Opening Day Luncheon BBQ in the south cafeteria on Sept. 5 was the place to be for teachers to find out what colleagues did on their summer vacations.



(above Among the teachers who sat outside courtyard next to the south cafeteria at the Luncheon BBQ are members of the English Department.



(left) Members of the WHRHS Cheerleader Squad joined the Football Team in volunteering at the Luncheon BBQ. With Football Team Defensive Lineman, #44 Frank Kane, center, are Jillian Mastrobattista, left, and Natalie Nitzberg, Cheer Captain.

(right) Among the staff happy to catch up after the summer by sharing a festive BBQ meal as the 2017-2018 School Year began, are, from left: Arts Supervisor Dan Bertelli, English Supervisor James Aquavia, Math Supervisor Dan Twisler, and Principal George Alexis.



(above) Providing musical entertainment at the Luncheon BBQ was guest guitarist and singer Nicholas Stevens, right, who is also the President of the Long Hill Township Board of Education. Joining him on some of the numbers are, from left, WHRHS Board of Education Member Chris Collins of Long Hill Township and WHRHS English teacher Mike Porter.

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In 1978, singer-songwriter Chip Mergott performed in concert at the Watchung Arts Center. Chip was backed by the members of the local band Bittersweet, including bassist Alan LeBoeuf. Almost 40 years later, the two

Watchung Hills Regional High School alumni returned to the Arts Center as a duo, for a performance held on Saturday, September 23. In the intervening years, each of these artists has had a successful career as a musician.



(above, left) Chip Mergott, a former resident of Watchung, was discovered by Bonnie Raitt, and subsequently signed to a major label early in his career. Raitt has described Chip as "one of my favorite songwriters." He is currently promoting his 18th release for Notebook Records, one of the country's longest running independent labels, which he founded. His "Mergott Music Minute" is currently heard on WDVR, WPRB ("Music You Can't Hear on the Radio"), among other stations, and is a weekly feature in The Bucks County Herald. He's been teaching music privately in Hunterdon County, NJ and Bucks County, PA for over 20 years, and has recently authored his first book "How to Play the Guitar in One Hour."

(above, right) Warren native Alan LeBoeuf was the original "Paul McCartney" in the 1977 Broadway production of Beatlemania, a role he performed for two years. Following that show, he was the bass player and vocalist for the Central New Jersey band "Bittersweet". In the early '80's "Bittersweet" relocated to Nashville as "Baillie and the Boys" where they gained recognition as songwriters and accomplished session players, with clients including Marie Osmond, Dan Seals and Randy Travis, as well as having several Top 10 country singles in their own right. In 1988, Alan left the band to tour with "Legends in Concert" and "Beatlemania", reuniting with the group ten years later. He continued performing and recording with "Baillie and the Boys", as well as having a career as a solo artist and backing vocalist.

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The Watchung Recreation Commission's Gerald M. Mobus Memorial Fishing Derby was held on Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017 at Watchung Lake. Watchung residents were invited to participate in this free event that included prizes, trophies, and refreshments.

*Photos from this and other events can be found online at [rennamedia.com](http://rennamedia.com) and on the Watchung Post page on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com). Feel free to "Like", "Tag" and "Share"*



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