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Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

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ONE FINAL WARRIOR TEAM PHOTO

Some 30 student athletes from the Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Class of 2018 gathered on Monday, June 4, 2018, in the WHRHS Media Center for one last Warrior team photo before reporting to their intended respective colleges or universities in the fall.

Columbia, Yale and Princeton, Stevens, Rensselaer and M.I.T. are among some 27 other Division I, II, or III colleges that will be the new team colors for the soon-to-be WHRHS alum when the next school year rolls around.

The 30 Warrior student athletes plan to continue their matriculation while playing in the sports of: Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country/Track, Fencing, Football, Golf, Lacrosse, Softball, Swimming, Tennis, Volleyball, or Wrestling.

Three of 27 different schools, Drew University, Moravian College and Misericordia University, will be the home of two members of the WHRHS Class of 2018: At Drew, Henry Engel and Kyle Rokosny, both Fencing; at Moravian, Connor James in Football and Robin McCabe in Softball; and at Misericordia, Alyssa Galdi, Cross Country/Track and Sheldon Kohl, Swimming. Only Engel and Rokosny of WHRHS will continue as teammates in the same sport at their new school, Drew.

Throughout the 2017-2018 school year, there were three dates when high school students had deadlines for signing letters of intent to play at colleges: November 27, April 30, and June 4. On those days, most of the signing Warrior athletes gather in the WHRHS Media Center for a photo with

fellows signing WHRHS athletes, and then on Monday, June 3, all these student athletes were invited to gather together for this team photo.

The one student who signed on June 4 was Jillian Chan, who plans to play Volleyball at Rider University.

So, who else is going, in what sport, and to what school?

Marlene Tartaro, Golf, Columbia University; Marlise Moesch, Swimming, Yale University; Julia Cunningham, Basketball, Princeton University; Daniel Hold, Swimming, Stevens Institute of Technology; Brenda Peng, Tennis, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Daniel Pilsbury, Basketball, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Erin Bean, Softball, Susquehanna University; Julia Burton, Lacrosse, West Chester University; Katelyn Carrol, Lacrosse, Radford University; Genna Cicchetti, Softball, Muhlenberg College; and Christopher Clintock, Lacrosse, St. Joseph's University; Drew Furlong, Lacrosse, Binghamton University; Emma Gaffney, Softball, Fairleigh Dickinson University; Justin Hayward, Wrestling, Bloomsburg University; Jessica Hoffman, Cross Country/Track, University of Scranton; Tyler James, Lacrosse, Holy Cross College; Michael Murray, Baseball, Hofstra University; Brian Puccio, Football, Jacksonville University; and Tyler Riley, Baseball, University of Maine; Ryan Santos, Soccer, The College of New Jersey; Robert Saum, Wrestling, Millersville University; Jonathan Taub, Lacrosse, Rutgers University; and Zaneae Thome, Football, East Stroudsburg University.

Photo by WHRHS



(above, bottom row l-r) Erin Bean, Genna Cicchetti, Jillian Chan, Julia Cunningham, Emma Gaffney, Marlise Moesch, and Julia Burton; (middle row l-r) Principal George Alexis, Dan Pilsbury, Sheldon Kohl, Brenda Peng, Dan Hold, Kyle Rokosny, Brian Puccio, Rob Saum, Jonathan Taub, and Athletic Director Chris Van Vliet; (top row l-r) Drew Furlong, Ryan Santos, Alyssa Galdi, Henry Engel, Jessie Hoffman, Marlene Tartaro, Katie Carroll, and Robin McCabe. (missing): Christopher Clintock, Justin Hayward, Connor James, Tyler James, Michael Murray, Tyler Riley, and Zahveae Thorne.

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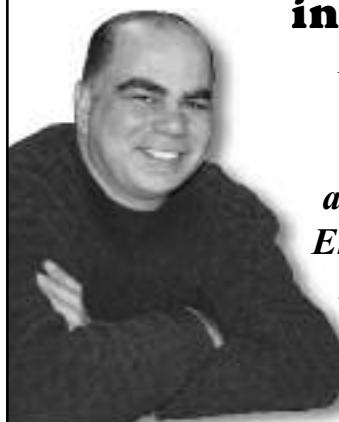
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Community service organizations and sports teams are encouraged to submit news of upcoming events or highlights and photos on recent events.

Organizations who are interested in submitting content can email

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IMAGINE CELEBRATES VOLUNTEERS AND PLANS FOR THE NEXT TRAINING

Submitted by Mandi Zucker

Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss, recently opened its doors to over 100 volunteers and supporters for their annual Volunteer Appreciation event. Cheese and chocolate fondue was served alongside lots of tasty treats to celebrate all the hard work and contributions made by volunteers over the past year. From committee members, board members, office volunteers, hospitality greeters, cleaner-uppers, setter-uppers to our facilitators Imagine would not exist without our volunteers. Our volunteer facilitators alone each donate over 100 hours annually to facilitate bi-monthly support groups for children, teens, young adults, and parents after a diagnosis of a life-altering illness or after someone has died. This yearly traditional volunteer appreciation event is one way Imagine shows its appreciation to our volunteers who make our mission possible.

If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please contact Imagine Program Director at mandi@imagineenj.org. To become a support group facilitator, volunteers must complete a 32-hour, four-day training and commit to one year of volunteer work. The next training will be July 12 to 15, 2018, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. For more information or to register, please contact mandi@imagineenj.org or call 908-264-3100.

Imagine is a free year-round peer grief support center located in Mountainside, New Jersey, serving children, teens and young adults who have had a parent or sibling die, with concurrent support groups for their parents or guardians. Support for families living with a life-altering physical illness is also available. For more information about Imagine, visit imagineenj.org or call 908-264-3100



(above) Imagine Volunteer Facilitators have fun celebrating their accomplishments at Imagine's Volunteer Appreciation Event on April 26, 2018. (back row, l-r): Mark Papa (Roselle), Nancy Stewart (Westfield), and Tarajee Russell-Wertz (Hillside). (front row, l-r): Veronica Ortiz (Imagine Program Associate), Rachel Furnari (Scotch Plains), Ann Furnari (Scotch Plains), Beth Alvero (Westfield), Aimee Jayinski (Scotch Plains), and Alyssa Farrell (Kenilworth).



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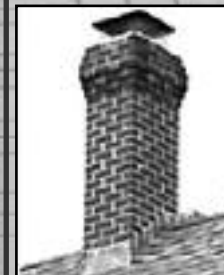
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GRASSROOTS COALITION TO SAVE WATCHUNG LIBRARY

Submitted by Margaret Ellis

Volunteers from the grassroots Coalition to Save Watchung Library talked with Watchung residents about the library recently at the Watchung Community Picnic. Activists from the group, all wearing shirts in the Coalition's signature bright purple, set up a table festooned with purple balloons.

Allison Baitel, coordinator for the group's participation in the event, said, "It was a great opportunity to talk to residents and collect signatures. I feel like our presence there today reignited interest for many who may have library fatigue after all these years." After the event,

Baitel observed "I believe that most of the community is behind us!"

Since the news broke about the Council's vote, Baitel says, "Many thought the library closing was a done deal or that it was already closed," but

Coalition Founder Margaret Ellis reports that the Borough has committed to keeping the library open through the summer and, further, that Borough Administrator Tom Atkins expects the library to remain open through 2018.



(above) Coalition to Save Watchung Library activists (from left) Hans Juette, Phyllis Juette, Tamara Benc, Allison Baitel, Margaret Ellis, Noah Baitel, and Rebecca Baitel greeted Watchung residents at a community picnic and asked for signatures on a petition to keep a library in Watchung.

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CUB SCOUT PACK 32 LEARNED OUTDOOR SKILL THIS SPRING

Submitted by Samantha Good

Leave electronics at home! Outdoor adventures with Pack 32 in May and June included spring camping in the rain and a regatta at the brook in Mobus Park, Watchung. The events offered by the Cub Scouts continue to encourage the youth of today to develop skills outside of those traditionally taught in school or in sports, and strengthen them as individuals and help develop leadership skills and team work. Scouting is about adventure, family, fun, character, leadership and so much more.

Scouts from Pack 32 joined other Packs for the Spring Camporee from May 11-13, 2018. The Cub Scouts from ages 6-10 packed their bags with tents, sleeping bags and other camping equipment and headed out to Camp Winnebago, Rockaway, NJ for at least one night of camping fun. It was not a sunny weekend but this did not stop the Cubs from fully embracing all of the activities. They started Saturday morning with an opening ceremony allowing Cubs representing more than 10 Scout Packs from all over NJ to introduce themselves to other Packs with a greeting of their choice. Following the opening ceremony, the cubs returned to Pack 32 base camp and started a campfire in the rain with little more than flint, cotton wool and Vaseline. The Scouts scoured the area for wood supplies to keep the fire going. Thank goodness for the resourcefulness and preparedness of these Cub

Scouts!

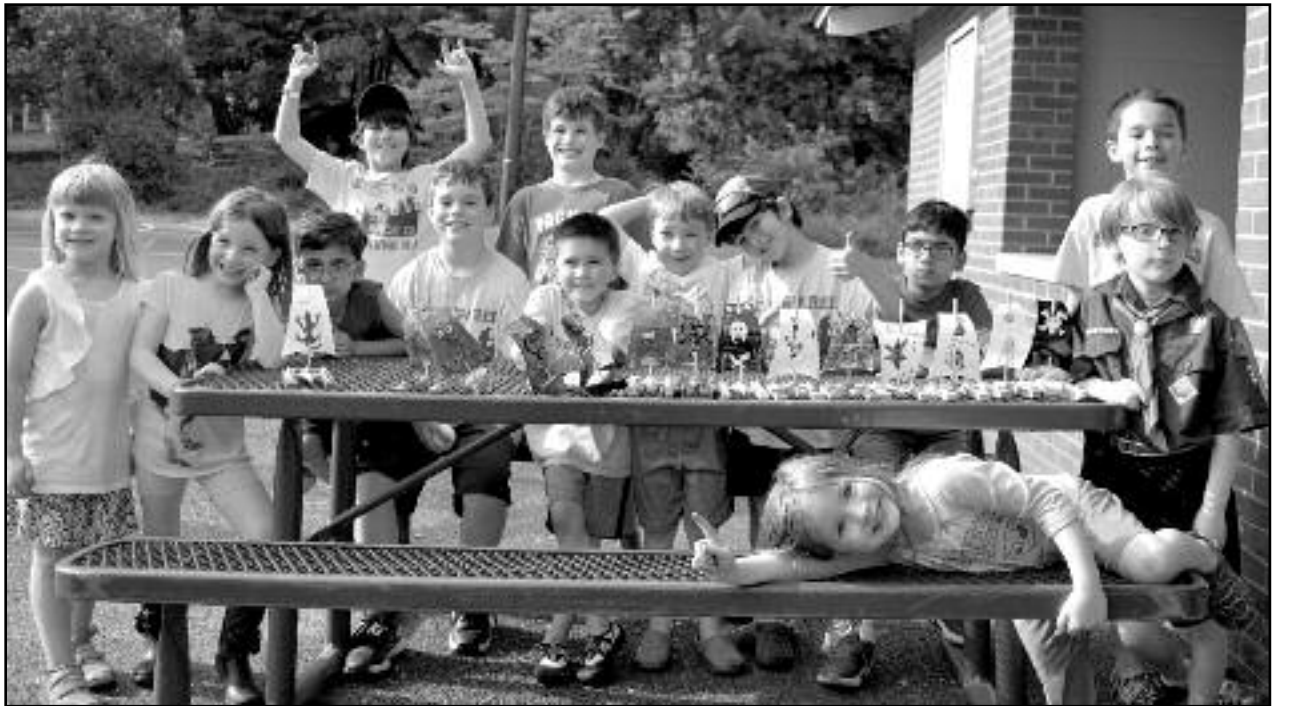
Scouts from Tigers (6 year olds) to Webelos (10 year olds) participated in many events over the course of the day including a fishing derby, BB guns, archery, rock throwing, whittling, go-carts and boating on Durham Pond. The Bears were able to learn how to use their whittling knife and achieved their whittling chip. The Webelos participated in first responder training and learned what to do in a medical emergency. This year, the stars of the show returned: Kotori and Samson from the wolves of Howling Woods Farms, Jackson, NJ made an appearance.

Back at base camp some of the Scouts prepared dinner and helped cook the food on the campfire whilst others climbed trees. The rain continued throughout the day and the Scouts realized that the rain was not going to stop. As a team they used some string and attached a tarpaulin to nearby trees. The resulting creation was a shelter to protect them from the rain and enabled them to pull out a pack of cards and continue their evening in the dry. The Scouts found their tents later that evening after cooking marshmallows on the fire and making smores for their parents. There was not an electronic to be

seen. The following morning Pack 32 packed up their equipment and ensured they left no trace at the base camp before leaving the campsite until next time.

In June, the boat "Armada" from Pack 32 was seen sailing down the brook in Watchung. The Scouts prepared their boats as a group ahead of the start of the race. There were catamarans and dinghies decorated in all colors of the rainbow. Den leaders Scott Meek and Darren Lumbard, Cub master Betul Ayvedi and the Pack Chair Kurt Weber were in the water as the Armada lined up at the start. Robyn Gibbs started the race and as the boats made their way down the 50-yard length of the Creek, the Scout leaders helped boats veer out of trouble. It was a close race and the top three boats were from Hansil P. (Bear), Carter W. (Tiger) and Daniel C. (Webelos). Pack 32's Armada will return in June 2019. Come on down and visit us to witness the Regatta.

For information on scouting please visit website beascout.scouting.org. If any boys and girls in Kindergarten through 5th grade are interested in joining the Cub Scouts of Watchung, please contact the Committee Chair of Pack 32 at pack32chair@gmail.com.



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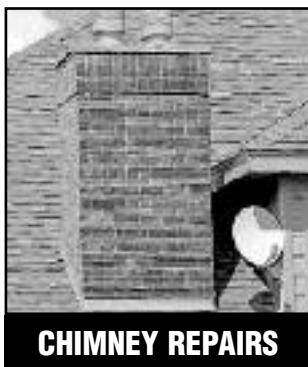




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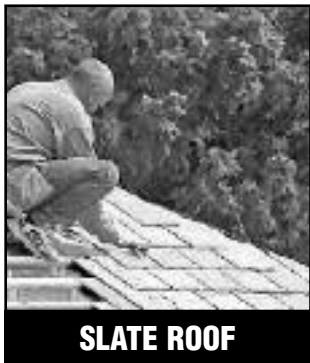
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SPEAKERS AT TEDXYOUTH ENCOURAGE LISTENERS TO PURSUE DREAMS OF ‘MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD’

Submitted by Denis Kelly

Eleven speakers, including 10 students and a teacher, presented personal testimonials about moments in their lives that inspired and empowered them to pursue dreams of “making a difference in the world,” at “TEDxYouth@WHRHS,” held on Monday, May 21, 2018 at Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS).

The event, which reflected the school-wide strategy to encourage, recognize and grow from interdisciplinary approaches to problem-solving and learning, was organized by a collaboration of the student Computer Science Club, the Accounting Club and the Culinary Club.

Faculty Advisors for the event included Math and Business Supervisor Dan Twisler, Business Teacher Dianne Krutz, and Culinary Club Advisors Susan Jaslove, Patricia Buzby and Stephanie Ormaeche, as well as volunteer and Watchung Public Schools retired teacher Elaine Chesebro. She had taught at Grades K-8 Watchung Public Schools for 18 years.

The event program explained that TEDxYouth conferences are geared for high school and middle school students who aspire to be dreamers, thinkers, makers and doers looking to make a difference in the world.

The TEDxYouth@WHRHS is an independently organized event designed to bring a TedxYouth-like experience to Watchung Hills, according to the event’s program. TEDxYouth events are designed to be student-organized events, where the living learning experience includes not just the subject matters of the conferences, but also the problem solving involved in all the aspects of organizing, promoting and assembling promotional materials. The students also actually run the conferences, according to the students who organized the event, as well as solicit, tabulate and report feedback from the event’s audience.

According to Faculty Advisor Twisler, TEDxYouth events have taken on a positive

reputation among today’s students and academics as “forward-thinking, cutting edge” living learning experiences. Student organizers, speakers and participants have taken to listing participation in such events on their resumes as signs that they are availing themselves of this kind of insider’s latest advancement in education.

Offering TEDxYouth events at WHRHS grew out of the community outreach and organizing committee discussions that included student participation as far back as 2015. Those discussions led to the adoption of the empowerment-inspired goals and objectives in the WHRHS “2015-2020 Strategic Plan, A Warrior Vision.”

Speakers Empowerment Experiences

Jordyn Arnel spoke about how she has developed a “passion for health and wellness.” She shared her thoughts and experiences about “the importance of self-discovery and its ability to empower young people.”

Abby Kotar, who is a veteran member of the WHRHS Dance Ensemble and the WHRHS Concert Band, where she plays flute, spoke about adding to her repertoire of performance experiences by successfully speaking at this conference. It was her way of “stepping out of her comfort zone and trying something new.”

Nicole Bell shared how she learned “how to embrace positivity despite the conflicting messages teenage girls receive from their families, magazines and the media.” She said next year, she plans on attending Boston University, where she said she will continue to spread positivity and self-love.

Lindsey Shi said that though she experiences the stress typical of a high performing high school student, she wanted “to give a talk about being happy.” She said she believes, “Taking care of oneself is most important,” and encourages everyone to do the same.

Kevin “K.C.” Whittmaack explained how his love of the Super Heroes that started as a seven-year-old “all-in fan” of “Spiderman” has turned into a possible career path. His passion for the Super Hero in society, inspired him to create his own Super Hero stories, leading him to find, develop, and self-teach his own skills in the art forms of drawing, coloring, writing, and storytelling in the “Comic Book” and “Graphic Novel” genre of literature. Along the way, he also discovered and developed other forms of expression, including film making, playing piano and guitar, as well as soccer. Now, he hopes to continue his self-exploration and self-expression next year in the Honors Program at Rutgers University, New Brunswick.

WHRHS English teacher Michael Porter, a graduate of Rutgers University and George Washington University Law School, is well known around WHRHS as the guitarist who is occasionally asked to add acoustic guitar accents as accompaniment to student singing performances. At TEDx, he shared how his other

unquenchable passion for long distance running has fueled his goal to qualify for official entry in the legendary Boston Marathon. That’s an achievement he finally reached in his 40s, and his decades of persistent training has led him to discover something else he loves: “ultra-marathoning.” Now he also runs races that make the marathon’s celebrated 26.2 distance seem short, for instance which asks runners: How far can you run in 12 hours?

Jordan Ginsburg, who said she enjoys debate and political discourse, and aspires to be a lawyer and elected official, spoke about “recognizing bias, both in others and oneself, and using that knowledge to become more open-minded in today’s politically divisive society.”

Matthew Canary, who plans to explore paths in humanitarian services, international relations and/or civil/environmental engineering next year at Northeastern University in Boston, spoke about his “long-term interest in how we all understand one another,” and his hope that his talk would “spark similar reflections about empathy in his audience.”

Niharika “Nina” Iyer spoke about the importance of youth protest in society today and reviewed various current issues that are now drawing the interest, the examination, the opinion and the input of young people. She shared how it has made a difference in the past and can make a difference now.

Spencer Acciarito, who is an aspiring comedian, shared his perspective that comedy is an often-overlooked tool that can be used to combat depression, help to overcome grief and the sense of loss. He said comedy should receive more attention as a valuable and powerful tool to empower people.

Ashil Jhaveri, who is currently President of the All-School Council (ASC), and who helped organize WHRHS participation in this year’s “National School Walkout,” discussed instances in the past when youth and young adults have made differences in fights against hate and violence. Young people, including school children, high school students, and college students, can be found in the history of the Civil Rights Movement on the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s in this country, for instance, as well as various other injustices here and throughout the world more recently. He urged the audience to pick an issue, protest injustice and be an advocate, “and don’t stop until you get a result.”

The last speaker about “making a difference” and empowerment, Jhaveri finished his talk and the conference by sharing the quote attributed Mahatma Gandhi, the legendary leader of India and one of the most iconic preachers of civic change and improvement through non-violent protests. Gandhi’s quiet yet effective “strength of the will” was likewise exemplified in Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he said. Channeling the words of Gandhi and King, Jhaveri urged his fellow TEDxYouth speakers and conferees: “Be the change you wish to see in the world.”



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TEDXYOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Photos by Watchung Hills Regional High School.



(above, l-r) Eleven speakers, including 10 students and a teacher, presented personal testimonials about moments in their lives that inspired and empowered them to pursue dreams of making a "difference in the world". The speakers were: (front row) WHRHS English Teacher Michael Porter, and students Nicole Bell, Lindsey Shi, Jordyn Arnel, Niharika Iyer, Jordan Ginsburg, and Abby Kotar; (back row) Ashil Jhaveri, Matthew Canary, Kevin Wittmaack, and Spencer Acciarito.



(above, l-r) Seated: Ella Walsh, and right, Marilyn Du; Standing: Matt McCracken, Davin Lui, Nicole Salk, and Megan Krutz.



(above, l-r) Volunteer and Watchung Public Schools retired teacher Elaine Chesebro, center, who had taught at Grades K-8 Watchung Public Schools for 18 years, had the inspiration of seeing eight of her former students attend TEDxYouth @WHRHS. They were Freshman Hans Parikh, Valley View School 8th Grader Shiv Goel, WHRHS Freshman Rahil Navani, Senior Kevin Huang, and WHRHS Freshmen Jacob Weber, Marshall White and Charlie Margulies.

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Submitted by Mike Ryder

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of its members; to quicken the spirit of American Patriotism and cultivate good fellowship."

Each year the Elks spend more than \$80,000,000 for benevolent, educational and community-minded services in areas such as patriotic programs, drug awareness education, help for special needs children, scholarships, scouting, athletics, veterans' works and physical and occupational therapy. Since its founding the BPOE has donated more than 4 billion dollars; last year alone, the national Elks organization donated approximately \$675 million in cash, gifts and time to make our communities better places to live. The Elks are one of the premier patriotic and charitable organizations in the United States of America with more than 1,900 lodges across the country and approximately 800,000 members.

Watchung Hills Elks Lodge #885, founded 56 years ago, is a thriving community service group

that each year contributes time and resources to organizations like "Food Bank Network of Somerset County," the Lyons and Menlo Park VA Hospitals in service to our veterans, Herren Project for Drug Awareness and the Elks Camp Moore for children with special needs. Additionally, last year we started supporting our local Cub Scouts, Warren's Pack 182.

We are located at 1 Elks Trail in Warren Township, situated on 6.5 acres including a pavilion, bandstand, picnic area, grotto, meeting hall and swimming pool. Our Meeting Hall and outdoor pavilion and picnic area facilities are available for Public use for an appropriate donation; non-profits at no charge.

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RECORD TIED AT ROTARY TRACK AND FIELD MEET STUDENT ATHLETES FROM VALLEY VIEW SCHOOL IN WATCHUNG COMPETE

With an overcast sky and pleasantly cool temperatures, young student athletes from area middle schools and one elementary school gathered for the 91st Annual Rotary Track and Field Meet, held June 6, 2018 at the Hub Stine Athletic Complex in Plainfield.

Vincent Rizzi, holder of the Meet high jump records for boys ages 12 and 13, tried valiantly to best the 14-year-old boys' record in the same event. Despite his best efforts, the record remained at 5' 10" for another year, but now is shared between Vincent of Valley View School in Watchung and Mitchell Webb from Maxson School in Plainfield. Mitchell set the record in 1999 and stood alone for nineteen years until Vincent's strong effort in 2018.

"We had three athletes participate in the Boys Group 3 High Jump - Vincent Rizzi, Christopher Ntim, and Jordan Gelin. Both Christopher and Jordan had never participated in the high jump, but performed well and were excited to receive their medals," said Meet Director Michael Townley. "These are just two examples of many first-timers who come out for our Track and Field Meet, hoping for and many times succeeding in earning an award."

The Rotary Club's meet has been held annually since 1924, with a three-year break during World War 2 and several meets cancelled due to weather. Started as an organized meet for elementary school students, the meet shifted to the high school level to provide a friendly competition for area students. Later, when high schools began competing through a statewide system of athletic events, the Rotary meet shifted to the middle school grades.

Invitations went out to area schools in early May, with nearly 250 students registered for the Meet. "This year we have students from North Plainfield Middle School; Valley View School in Watchung; and Cedarbrook Elementary School, Hubbard Middle School, Maxson Middle School, Queen City Academy, Plainfield Academy AAS of Plainfield," said Meet Director Michael Townley. "We thank all of our area school districts for allowing their student athletes the opportunity to participate and to earn individual honors. We especially thank the Plainfield School District for allowing us free use of the beautiful Hub Stine Athletic Complex."

"Over the years, we have had the privilege of hosting a number of young athletes who have gone on to set state and national records. One athlete, the late Milt Campbell, Olympic decathlon champion, even went on to win medals in Olympic competitions" said Meet Director Townley. "We look forward to seeing athletes like Vincent Rizzi achieve at least some of those accolades as they continue their athletic careers."

"But even more important than hosting future greats is our ability to give any interested student athlete the opportunity to compete against their peers, sometimes for the very first time. I have been doing this for over twenty-seven years, and one of the joys of that long history is meeting young men and women who tell me that they competed in our Meets when they were in high

school or middle school. Even in their thirties and forties and older, their smiles are just as big as the day they competed at the Rotary Track and Field Meet."

Members of the Club and their friends offered their services as officials and judges for an afternoon of friendly but determined competition by the young 12, 13 and 14-year-old athletes. They were supported by members of the Interact Club at North Plainfield High School who also filled key roles, such as judges, timers, and field event assistants. Interact is the youth-based service club sponsored by Rotary International.

"We are so grateful to our family members and friends and our Interact Club members who come out to help us with this youth service project," said Roberta Smith, president of the Rotary Club. "There are so many positions to fill that we could not do it without their help. And our Interact Club members and their adviser, Alexandra Pereira are just wonderful! We sincerely appreciate the support of the North Plainfield School District in allowing these students to participate in so many of our club's events."

Medals were awarded to first, second and third place finishers in all events except the relays, where ribbons were awarded to second and third place finishers. All participating schools took home medals or ribbons, with North Plainfield Middle School dominating with forty-eight total awards.

- Cedarbrook Elementary School
- 2 first, 2 second, and 5 third place awards;
- Hubbard Middle School
- 1 first, 1 second, and 15 third place awards;
- Maxson Middle School
- 10 first, 11 second, and 3 third place awards;
- North Plainfield Middle School
- 24 first, 18 second, 6 third place awards;
- Plainfield Academy of Arts and Advanced Studies
- 5 first, 3 second, 7 third place awards;
- Queen City Academy
- 2 first, 9 second, 10 third place awards;
- Watchung's Valley View
- 9 first, 5 second, 5 third place awards.

The Track and Field Meet was held at the Hub Stine Athletic Complex in Plainfield through the cooperation of the Plainfield Board of Education. "The groundskeepers at Hub Stine are just terrific," said Brian Townley, a friend of Rotary and the Clerk of Course for the running events. "They have the fields and track and tip-top shape every year, with tables and tents all set up and ready for us when we arrive. They help us bring our materials down to the Awards Tent area and help us pack up at the end. We truly appreciate their hard work." The Hub Stine Athletic Complex is named for a longtime member and secretary of the Rotary Club.

The Rotary Club of Plainfield-North Plainfield expects to offer the 92nd Annual Track and Field Meet next year at the Plainfield site on June 5, 2019. The Meet is always held on the first Wednesday of June. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend and support the young athletes.

Interested in serving others? The Rotary Club of Plainfield-North Plainfield welcomes visitors to any weekly meeting, 12:15 PM on Wednesdays at Giovanna's Restaurant in Plainfield, except the first Wednesday when they meet at The Coffee Box, 1354 South Avenue, Plainfield at 8:30 AM. Come as the club's guest and learn more about Rotary!



(above) Vincent Rizzi of Valley View School in Watchung ties the record for the 14 year old boys high jump with a jump of 5' 10".

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