

Watchung Post

Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

NJ

Published by Renna Media, On-line at RennaMedia.com

ISSUE 75 • JANUARY 2019

FOUR WHRHS ATHLETES SIGN LETTERS OF INTENT



(above) Four senior athletes-athletes at Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) signed letters of intent on Wednesday, November 14, "Fall Signing Day," to play sports for the Division I or Division II universities they plan to attend next year. The four who signed are (seated, l-r) Madelyn Murphy, Kelly Fitzgerald, Kaylee Donnelly, and Lindsay Wolf. Standing behind them are WHRHS Principal George Alexis, left, and Girls Soccer Coach, Brian Figueiredo.

Photo by WHRHS

Four senior athletes-athletes at Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) signed letters of intent on Wednesday, November 14, "Fall Signing Day," to play sports for the Division I or Division II universities they plan to attend next year.

"Congratulations to the WHRHS student-athletes who have signed their National Letter of Intent," said both WHRHS Athletic Director Daniel Root and Principal George Alexis.

The four who signed are: In Girls Soccer, Kaylee Donnelly, who plans to study at Bucknell University; Kelly Fitzgerald, at the University of Rhode Island; and Lindsay Wolf, at the University of Massachusetts (UMass), Amherst; and in Girls Lacrosse, Madelyn Murphy, at Monmouth University. Bucknell, URI, UMass, and Monmouth are all Division I schools.

"All student-athletes who have an NLI (National Letter of Intent) are being recognized during the Fall Signing Session, except football, which will be handled at the Winter Signing Day, Wednesday, February 6," said Athletic Director Daniel

Root. "Based on the NCAA's recommendation, student-athletes with a commitment to a Division I or Division II Institution that does not offer NLIs, for example the Ivy League and the Service Academies, will be invited to participate. The Fall Signing day will be for all sports, except football."

"All student-athletes who will be continuing their athletic careers at a Division III school will be recognized during the Spring Signing Day session on Wednesday, May 1," Root said. "In addition, Division I and Division II student-athletes who committed after the fall and winter signing dates will be invited to participate in May."

The last day of this kind of recognition will be Wednesday, June 5.

"In early June, a photograph of all future college student-athletes will be taken," Root said. "This will be a final celebration for all our student-athletes who will be competing in an NCAA sport at the Division I, II, or III level."

(continued on page 2)

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LETTERS OF INTENT (continued)



(above) Attending the Fall Signing Day ceremony at WHRHS on Wednesday, November 14, are Rob and Kathy Donnelly and their daughter, Kaylee, who plans to play soccer at Bucknell University.



(above) Chris and Terri Murphy, and their daughter, Madelyn, who plans to play lacrosse at Monmouth University.



(above) Tim and Nancy Fitzgerald, and their daughter, Kelly, who plans to play soccer at the University of Rhode Island.



(above) Gary and Meredith Wolf, and their daughter, Lindsay, who plans to play soccer at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Photos by Warren Hills Regional High School

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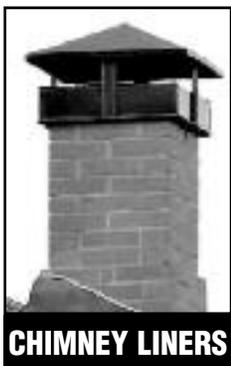
				
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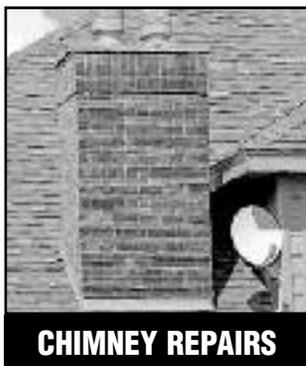
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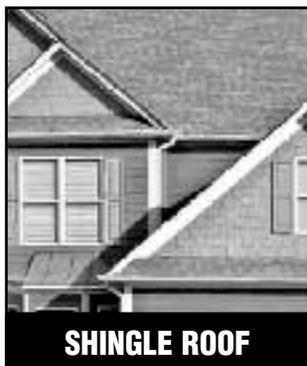
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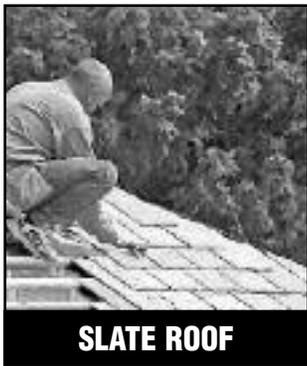
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WHRHS NEWS STUDENTS MEET AUTHOR OF SCHOOL-WIDE READ

One of the highlights of the first part of the 2018-2019 School Year at Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) was the opportunity for students to meet, hear from, and ask questions of novelist Hilary Reyl, author of the “school-wide read,” “Kids Like Us.”

Reyl, of New York City, spoke to students during assemblies held in the school’s South Auditorium this fall.

She also joined a group of WHRHS English teachers during the lunch period between the assemblies that day. Much like the sessions with the students, Reyl was forthcoming with her time and attention, according to English Department Supervisor James Aquavia. She shared her experiences and the unique perspectives and insights that went into both the writing of this novel and her other writings.

“For days after Hilary Reyl’s visit,” Aquavia said, “teachers dropped by to say how much they and their students appreciated the opportunity to hear her thoughts on what motivated the development of this novel – her experience, reading, research, imagination and craft – as well as her observations about the process of writing this novel, and of being a writer as a profession.”

Reyl also provided positive feedback to Aquavia about her visit to WHRHS, he said.

“My happiest moments as an author are moments of dialogue around my work,” Reyl said. “Seeing it refract differently in all kinds of minds and hearts is amazing. Interaction with readers is so nourishing and inspires my work going forward. And you have a terrific bunch of readers.”

Reyl’s appearance was made possible by Nicolle Anthony, a Community Business Development Manager with Barnes and Noble, Inc. It was she who suggested the possibility of having Reyl visit WHRHS to speak to students and teachers, Aquavia said.

Dealing With Being on the Autism Spectrum Kids Like Us is Reyl’s second novel, published in 2017 by Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing

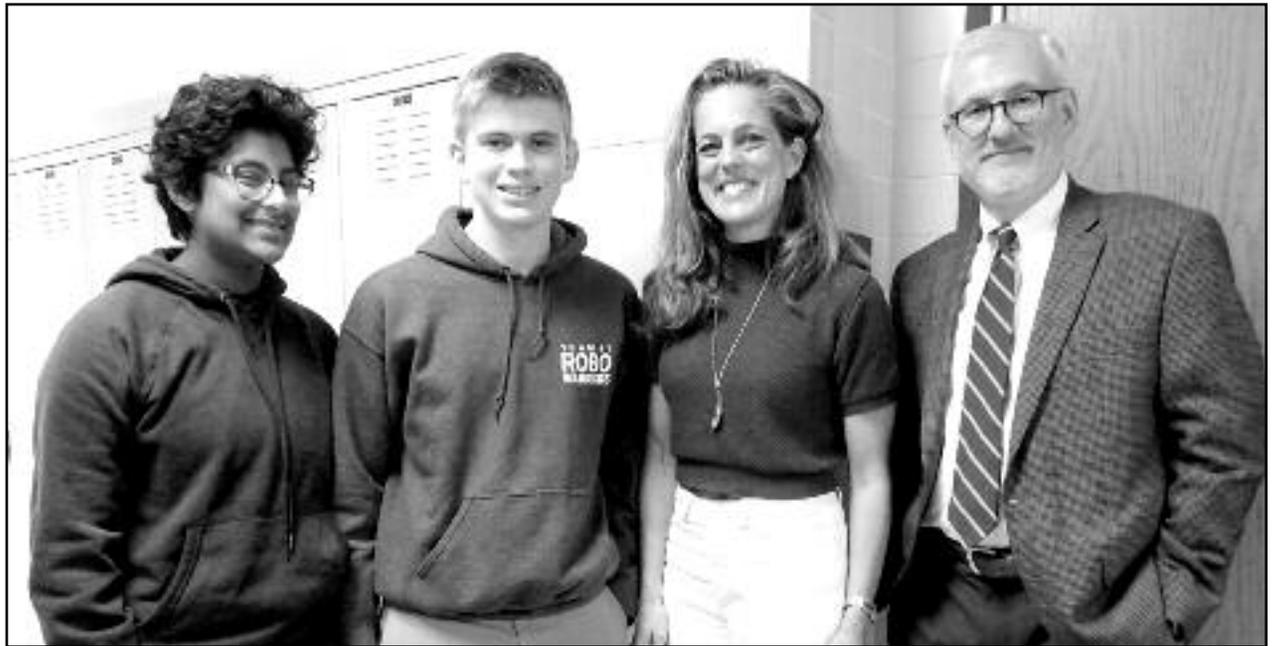
Group, New York.

Reyl started the student assemblies with a short talk about the experience of writing the novel. Then students Ian Martin of Warren Township and Shoili Banerjee of Millington were selected to start the lengthy question and answer session during the first assembly. Students in the audience at both assemblies were invited to ask additional questions, and they supplied dozens of questions.

The book was written as a diary by her protagonist, a high school-age student named Martin. The style of the writing is faithful to the perspective of being in the voice of Martin, who is on the Autism Spectrum. Reyl shared during her remarks the fact that one of her daughters is, like the character Martin, on the Autism Spectrum. She added that she included among the challenges faced by teens on the spectrum as well

as how their parents have a natural tendency to want their children to maximize their potential. As a mother, she understands how parents want their teens to stretch their communication and interpersonal relationship skills. They hold the notion of wanting their teens to “become all they can become.” As author, however, she also understands the equally important sense that teens like Martin want the complex assurance from their parents that they are loved by their parents for who they are now, not only for who they wish they may become.

This dichotomy is a theme addressed throughout the novel from a variety of perspectives and in a variety of characters, both teen and older, and both on the Autism Spectrum, and by those who are not. In the book, folks not on the Autism Spectrum are referred to as “neuro-typical.”



(above, l-r) Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) students Shoili Banerjee, of Millington and Ian Martin of Warren Township and WHRHS English Supervisor James Aquavia, right, welcomed Author Hilary Reyl to the school’s South Auditorium on Wednesday, October 17. Reyl wrote this year’s “school-wide read,” the coming of age novel, “Kids Like us,” and she spoke to students and staff, sharing her perspectives both on her book, and on writing as a profession, at two assemblies. The experience was one of the highlights of the first part of the 2018-2019 School Year at WHRHS.

Photo by WHRHS

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28TH ANNUAL TREE OF LIGHTS FESTIVAL

On Saturday, December 1st the 28th Annual Tree of Lights once again lit up the Village Green. The Rescue Squad was proud to illuminate the holiday tree, and thanks to Garden State Fireworks, the skies were lit with a spectacular fireworks show.

The names of honorees and remembrances will be posted on the illuminated display on the Village Green as well as on-line at watchungems.org/tree-of-lights.

Your contribution to the Tree of Lights is not only a symbol of your feelings of gratitude and love, but also serves to help the Watchung Volunteer Rescue Squad with major endeavors. This year, through the generosity of the residents and businesses, the squad continues to provide high-quality, excellent Emergency Service. Thank you in advance for your continued support and contributions.

This year's tree was dedicated to the memory of one of Watchung's finest.

Sean Whelan of Bernardsville, NJ, was a former Chief of Police and officer with the Watchung Police Department. Sean graduated from the National FBI Academy in Quantico, VA and attended the police academy in Sea Girt. Sean began his career as a police officer with the Watchung Police Department and rose through the ranks, becoming Chief of Police before

retiring in 2011. After his distinguished career in law enforcement, Sean was employed with Capital One, J.P. Morgan, and most recently First Data as a Vice President of Fraud Investigations.

Many Squad members remember Sean as a young officer who was always very helpful and ready to lend a hand on Squad calls. Sean would jump in to help lift a heavy backboard, assist with a rapid takedown, help carry a piece of equipment, go to get something from the ambulance for the crew's use, or help lift the stretcher into the ambulance. Sean took his role as a police officer on scene very seriously and ensured that the safety of the crew was of paramount importance, being very protective of the members and assisting where necessary. As Chief, Sean was always willing to listen to the needs and concerns of Squad members and officers and to help out wherever he could.

Sean Whelan is remembered fondly for his devotion to service, hard work, loyalty, and commitment. His deep and abiding love of family and generous spirit was evident in his years of public service and active participation in his community. It is with great honor that this year's Tree of Lights shall be dedicated to his memory.

THE 2018 TREE OF LIGHTS DEDICATED TO: CHIEF (RET) SEAN WHELAN

Watchung Police Department



TREE OF LIGHTS 2018 IN MEMORY OF

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- Barneyy, Stella
- Barrett, Ralph & Ruth
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- Bisignano, Albert
- Bisignano, Anna
- Brunskill, Angela & Trevor
- Buccarelli, Sally
- Burke, Charles R.
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- Carlough, William
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- Conte, Alfonso
- Conte, Dr. Ferdinando
- Cowan, Thomas & Marion
- Curiazza, Marion
- Devito, Raphael
- Devito, William & Yolanda
- Diem, Fred
- Dillon, Wish
- DiNardi, Rina
- Dworak, Winnie
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- Fogel, Mark & Rose
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- Goutsou, Panagiota
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ODE TO O'KEEFFE AT THE ARTS CENTER

During the month of January, the Watchung Arts Center will showcase the works of Hob'Art: Selfie-Reimagined and Richard Lear: Ode to O'Keeffe. An opening Art Reception will be held on Sunday, January 6 from 1 – 4 p.m. and the exhibits will be on display from January 5 through January 26. The reception and exhibitions are free of charge and open to the public.

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. The Galleries are open Tue – Fri noon – 5 p.m. and Sat 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. To obtain more information about upcoming performances, classes and workshops, and monthly art exhibitions, please visit WatchungArts.org or call 908-753-0190.



CASA SHAW THANKS ITS HOLIDAY PARTNERS

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties (CASA SHaW) has recognized holiday partners who have filled children's wish lists and, as a result, made a significant difference during the holidays for many foster children in our community.

"We are very blessed to have community partners who understand there are foster children who have difficult holiday experiences based on their family situation," said Tracey Heisler, Executive Director of CASA SHaW. "The holidays can bring grief and loss for kids in the foster care system, and the gifts our community partners have been able to generously provide means the world to these children," said Heisler.

CASA SHaW would like to recognize the following companies, organizations and individuals who helped to fulfill the wish lists of the children our organization serves: Asbury Coffee Mill, Bernardsville Girl Scouts, Brunswick Urgent Care, Falcon Engineering, Financial Resources, Fulton Bank of New Jersey, Goddard School, New York Life, Peapack Women's Club, Somerset County Library, Sts. Basilios and Gregorios Church, Wendy's

In addition to filling wish lists, CASA SHaW received donations of books from the Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The organization also received blankets, hats, gloves, scarves, gift cards, personal care kits, and First Night bags from local Women's Clubs throughout the region. Also, dolls and doll clothes from the readers of the Courier News were given, as well as toys and gift cards from Honor Yoga. Hats, gloves, and scarves were additionally provided by Nancy Verdun.

"When a community comes together for a common purpose, we see positive results," said Heisler. "Children who live their life waiting to be adopted often lose their sense of hope and magic you so often see in their eyes. They wait,

wondering if they will receive a gift from Santa or someone who cares. We thank our many community partners care because they've been such an inspiration during this holiday season," Heisler said.

CASA of Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties is part of a statewide network of community-based, non-profit programs that recruit, screen, train and supervise volunteers to "Speak Up for a Child" removed from home due to abuse or neglect. CASA is the only program in New Jersey that uses trained volunteers to work one-on-one with children, ensuring that each one gets the services needed and achieves permanency in a safe, nurturing home. To find a local CASA program in your county, visit casaofnj.org.



CASA SHAW INFORMATION SESSIONS

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties (CASA SHaW) has announced Information Sessions in January for individuals in our community who are interested in learning more about becoming a CASA volunteer advocate.

"Every month we hold three to four information sessions for members of our community and individuals who want to learn more about what it takes to become a CASA," said Tracey Heisler, Executive Director of CASA SHaW. "It's a great way to learn more about what we do and how people can help," Heisler said. Attending an Information Session is required for anyone interested in applying to become a CASA.

Below are the dates, times and locations for the upcoming information sessions:

- Tuesday, January 8 & Wednesday, January 23 - 5:30 p.m. at the PeopleCare Center in Bridgewater, NJ (120 FINDERNE AVE, BRIDGEWATER, NJ)

- Wednesday, January 16 - 5:30 p.m. at the CASA SHaW office in Washington, NJ (150 BOULEVARD, SUITE 1, WASHINGTON, NJ)

If any member of our community is interested in attending one of these information sessions, registration is required. Please contact our Volunteer Trainer, Karen Cassano, at karen@casashaw.org or by phone at 908-689-5515 if you plan to attend on either date.

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ALEXIS MORRAST TO PERFORM AT ARTS CENTER

Alexis Morrast, the recipient of “The Best Up and Coming Young Artist Award” in 2017 by Hot House magazine and winner of “Showtime at the Apollo,” is all set to dazzle and dazzle the audience at The Watchung Arts Center on January 19, 2019 at 8 p.m. The concert will be followed by a dessert reception and an opportunity to meet Alexis Morrast.

Singer/songwriter Alexis Morrast, the seventeen-year-old marvel and native of Newark, now residing in Plainfield, began singing at the age of three. Since that time she's performed on



(above) Alexis Morrast while performing at the Apollo for the televised “Showtime at the Apollo” hosted by Steve Harvey on Fox.

several stages: the U.S. Open in 2013; the 2015 Central Jersey Jazz Festival in New Brunswick, NJ, featuring trumpet player Sean Jones; NJPAC with Christian McBride; the world-renowned Apollo Theatre, where she emerged as two-time Amateur Night winner and later returned as their Special Guest; and Dizzy's Coca-Cola Club with jazz legend Barry Harris. Alexis’s resounding tone was also heard on the Millennium Stage of The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, and more recently abroad in South Africa and Austria. She’s worked with greats like Greg Pillinganes, Steve Jordan, Ray Chew, Lisa Fischer, Michael Feinstein and Tony Award winner Christine Ebersole to name a few.

Tickets for this performance are \$18 in advance, \$22 (\$20 for WAC members, \$10 for students) at the door. Purchase tickets securely through Eventbrite by going to watchungartscenter.eventbrite.com, or by mailing a check to the Watchung Arts Center. Please include an email address and phone number with mail orders. During our office hours, you may also purchase tickets in person.

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, or for our office hours, please visit WatchungArts.org or call 908-753-0190.

Watchung - Warren Rotary Club
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NORRIS MCLAUGHLIN WELCOMES NEW LITIGATION ASSOCIATE



The law firm Norris McLaughlin, P.A., is pleased to welcome Kimbrilee M. Weber as an Associate. She joins the firm's Litigation Practice Group, concentrating her practice on complex commercial litigation, including insurance coverage defense and subrogation matters.

Weber has represented clients in multi-million-dollar breach of contract, bad faith, and tort claims in state and federal courts in New York and New Jersey. Her experience litigating both plaintiff and defense matters informs her flexible, problem-solving approach to cases aimed at maximizing efficiency and positive outcomes for her clients.

Prior to joining the firm, Weber was an Associate at a boutique insurance litigation firm, where she assisted with representation of clients in all stages of litigation, from inception

through appeal. She clerked for the Honorable Susan L. Reisner, P.J.A.D, in New Jersey's Appellate Division, where she drafted case memoranda for review of Appellate Division judges and reviewed judicial opinions prior to their publication and dissemination.

Weber earned her J.D., magna cum laude & Order of the Coif, in 2015 from Seton Hall University School of Law and her B.A., highest honors, from Lehigh University. During law school, Weber was a member of the Seton Hall Law Review as both an Associate Editor (2013-2014) and the Editorial Board's Symposium Editor (2014-2015); her Comment was published in the journal's 45th volume. She was a student advocate in Seton Hall's Civil Rights and Constitutional Litigation clinic, and worked as a summer intern for the Honorable Claire C. Cecchi, U.S.D.J.

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WATCHUNG LIBRARY

12 Stirling Road in Watchung, behind the Watchung Arts Center.

For complete program registration information, please check the online calendar (www.somerset.lib.nj.us, then go to Events/Programs for Watchung).

Monday through Thursday, 9:30 am - 9 pm and Friday and Saturday, 9:30 am - 5 pm.

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January 2, 4:30-5 p.m.
(grades K-2)

Miss June's Room

January 3, 4-4:30 p.m.
(ages 4-7)

Bingo with Miss June

January 4, 4-4:30 p.m.
(ages 4 and up)

Teen Game Night: Super Smash Bros

January 7, 7-8 p.m.
(grades 6-12)

Baby/Toddler Storytime

- Tiny Tot Time

January 8, 10:30-11 a.m.
(ages 2 and up)

Preschool Storytime

- Just for You Storytime

January 11, 10-10:30 a.m.
(ages 3-5)

Music with Miss Donna

January 14
10:30-11 a.m.
(birth - 5 years)

Cookies, Cocoa, and Trivia

January 17
7-8 p.m.
(grades 6-8)

LEGO® Club

January 23
4-4:45 p.m.
(grades K-5)

ADULT PROGRAMS

Watchung Writers Group

Thursday, January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31;
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The Canasta Group

January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; 1-3 p.m.

Mah Jong Club of Watchung

January 7, 8, 14, 15, 22, 28, 28;
1-4 p.m.

PENGUIN VISITS LIBRARY

On December 1, 2018 more than 40 library patrons discovered the world of penguins at SCLSNJ's Watchung Library branch. Attendees explored penguin biology, learned how to care and feed penguins, and met a live penguin.



(above) Lyla Murray, 6, of Watchung, displays her penguin inspired art.



(above) Program presenter Jake of Jenkinson's Aquarium holds Dassen the penguin while telling the audience all about penguins.

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