Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

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WATCHUNG FIREFIGHTERS HONORED GUESTS AT TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF ITALIAN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Watchung residents and long time volunteer firefighters, Rosebud and Pietro "Pete" Martino were honored guests at the tenth anniversary of the Isola Bergamasca Vigili Del Fuoco (Fire Department) in the Bergamo Province of Italy in December of last year.

On December 13, 2008, the Martino's were part of a delegation of firefighters who were chosen by the Plainfield's Chapter of UNICO national, an Italian American civic organization, to represent them at the departments inauguration.

"It was amazing to see the establishment of a volunteer fire department in this day and age," stated Pete. "As more and more volunteer departments are disappearing in the United States, this Italian Fire Department is just starting." Ten years later they are still thriving but they are also struggling with the same issues we have here in Watchung, low volunteer membership.

Pete stated, "The Italian firefighters were great and have a deep respect for their American brothers and sisters." Since Pete is a first generation Italian/American the experience was even more emotional.

Rosebud began her volunteer firefighter career with the Green Brook Fire Department in 1987. She served for over 20 years and is an exempt member. She also joined the Watchung Volunteer Fire Department in 2010.

Pete joined the Watchung Volunteer Fire Department in 1981 as a junior firefighter at 16 years old. He rose through the ranks and served as Fire Chief in 1996-1997. He also served as the borough's fire inspector, served on the office of emergency management, and as a deputy member of the Watchung Rescue Squad in the 1990's. In 1996 Pete was appointed to the Plainfield Fire Division where he currently serves as a Battalion Fire Chief.

Pete has lived in Watchung since 1979, and in 1993 he and Rosebud decided to purchase a residence and make Watchung their permanent home. They raised their four children, Siena, Bianca, Mario, and Angelo here. Siena even



(above) Rosebud and Pietro "Pete" Martino in front of a vintage Italian Fire Truck at the Isola Bergamasca Vigili Del Fuoco in the Bergamo Province of Italy last December.

joined the Watchung Fire Department and attained her Firefighter 1 certification in 2016.

"I feel volunteering for your community is the best service you can provide, it allows you to help your fellow neighbors, friends, and family," stated Martino.

Volunteers are always needed for our community, from the fire department and rescue squad, to the recreation department and library committee. Please stop by city hall and pick up literature on how you can help our community by volunteering or call the borough clerk at 908-756-0080 or go to watchungnj.gov.

"Together we can make Watchung a better place to live," the Martino's stated.

CALL TODAY TO ADVERTISE IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Call Tina today to reserve the space in this or other Renna Media publications.

Each month 2,800 newspapers are printed and

mailed free to every home and business in Watchung.

Reserve space in the next issue. Call Tina today at 908-418-5586 or email info@rennamedia.com Watchung Post • Page 2 • April 2019

Watchung Post

Watchung Post is published by Renna Media. 3,000 newspapers are printed monthly and mailed to every business and home in Watchung, NJ and the balance are distributed for free pick-up throughout town.

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Renna Media welcomes the comments and concerns of its readers put into writing and sent via fax or email to:

Renna Media, LLC 202 Walnut Ave. Cranford, NJ 07016 Phone: 908-447-1295 Fax: 908-709-9209 Email: joerenna@rennamedia.com

PROMOTE YOUR COMMUNITY EVENT

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 editor@rennamedia.com or call 908-418-5586

MEET ANGEL QUIROS, A 25-YEAR-OLD AND CAPTAIN OF THE WATCHUNG RESCUE SQUAD

Angel joined the Squad in July of 2016. Shortly after, through hard work and dedication, he received his EMT certification. Angel consistently looked for additional opportunities for training and responsibility, stepping up to hold various leadership positions within the organization, until he reached the pinnacle with his unanimous election to Captain of the organization.

When describing his passion for volunteer EMS, Angel explains that it goes beyond the

desire to help other people: "I needed a boost in my life and wanted to be involved in something bigger than me, that I can be proud of at the end of every day of my life. I love telling people I do this voluntarily and seeing that their impression about me changes instantly."

You too can help your community and become a part of something bigger than yourself, join Angel and the other members of the Watchung Rescue Squad today. Visit our website at watchungems.org to learn more.



(above) Captain Angel Quiros (center) and members of the Watchung Rescue Squad.



UGLY HOMES WANTED FOR TELEVISION PROGRAM IN THIS AREA

We need 30 Ugly Homes with Ugly Kitchens, Bathrooms, Siding, Window, etc., Inside or Outside that need fixing or Remodeling. We will Repair and Remodel them and shoot video for training film and future TV show on Home Remodeling Work.

Must Sign Release, for purpose of filming job! This must be a complete remodeling job, not just patch up work. This remodeling is to be specially priced out of work, with compensation back to the homeowner for signed release.







meets every Tuesday at 12:00pm Prezzo's Restaurant

50 Mount. Bethel Road Warren, NJ For information about the Rotary club contact Bob Aznar

908-755-8724 or email rara1055@optonline.net Guests & Prospective Members Welcome







2018/19 INTRAMURAL BASKETBALL CHAMPS

Submitted by Amanda Altavilla

The 2018/19 Warren Rec Basketball Champions have been crowned for the Freshmen-Sophomore and Junior-Senior Divisions. Watchung Hills Regional High School teachers Joe Ascolese and Jon Bedi have been running this successful program for over ten years.

Rutgers is the 2019 Freshmen-Sophomore Warren Rec Basketball Champion. Team members include Justin Drews, Frankie Gaffney, Adam Cardoza, Luke Malfetti, Justin Defuria, Nikhil Mavinkirve, Christian Beisler, Blake Kominsky and Gene Chung. Rutgers defeated Stanford 61-48 for the Championship! Congratulations to both teams a well-played season.

UNC is the 2019 Junior-Senior Rec Basketball Champion. Team members include Ben Ant, Brad Pinho, John Seyda, James McKenna, Andrew Martins, Chris Meireles, Brendan Langenauer, Sebastian Leon, Evan Bujnowski, and Kevin Ryan. Undefeated #1 Seed UNC held off #2 Miami 55-53 in a very competitive backand-forth championship game which came down to the wire with Miami missing a potential game tying shot with under a second left in the game. Congrats to both teams on a fun and exciting season!



(above) Team UNC, the 2019 Junior-Senior Rec Basketball Championship winners.



(above) Team Rutgers, the 2019 Freshmen-Sophomore Warren Rec Basketball Champion team.





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STUDENTS ENTERTAIN ON THE 'SMALL STAGE' AT WINTER CABARET

Submitted by Denis Kelly

The Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Drama Department's Script and Cue program sponsored its 2019 Winter Cabaret on Tuesday, February 5, in the intimate, coffee-house-inspired "Small Stage" configuration of the school's Performing Arts Center.

Several of the WHRHS cast members of "Fiddler on the Roof," the 2019 Spring Musical performed in March on the big stage in the WHRHS PAC, were among some 15 student performers at the Winter Cabaret where they exhibited their range of skill, singing a variety of songs as soloists and in duets, some accompanied by music, others A Cappella.

Students Kayla Martins and Francesca Infante-

Meehan acted as hosts for the evening. They also thanked student Giovanna DiSanto, who is the promotional officer for Script and Cue, for being so instrumental in organizing the event.

The line-up of performers at the Cabaret were: Paul Riedler, singing "Sunflower," by recording artist Post Malone; Giovanna DiSanto and Nina DiNorscio, singing "For Good," from the Broadway Musical, "Wicked"; Christian Takleszyn, singing "Perfect," by recording artist, Ed Sheeran; Massai Shuler, singing "I Met a Girl," by country music recording artist, William Michael Morgan; and Giovanna DiSanto, singing "Fly Into The Future," from the Broadway Musical, "Vanities."

performed two songs, "Moondance," by Irish recording artist Van Morrison and "I Saw Her Standing There," by the legendary British recording artists The Beatles. The House band this night included, Ben Kosokowski, William Broder, Thomas Dardis, Altay Kabukcu, Sam Bouffard.

Kayla Martins sang "So Big So Small," from the Broadway Musical, "Dear Evan Hansen." Dana Wasserman sang "Happy To Keep His Dinner Warm," from the Broadway Musical, "How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying." Summer Stuart sang "My Daddy's Son," from the Broadway Musical, "Ragtime." And Olivia Kider and Jack Melillo sang "Falling Slowly," from the Broadway Musical, "Once."

After an intermission, the House Band



(above) Students Kayla Martins, left, and Francesca Infante-Meehan acted as hosts for the 2019 Winter Cabaret.



(above, l-r) Giovanna DiSanto and Nina DiNorscio



(above) Christian Takleszyn



(above) Summer Stuart Photos by WHRHS





Dr. Jyotsna Thapar

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SOMERSET COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM PARTNERS WITH ROLLING THUNDER TO HELP PRESERVE VETERAN MEMORIES



(above) Zabohonski (second from the left) in 1968/1969 in Bình Định Province, Vietnam alongside fellow military comrades.

Faith Lutheran Church a worshiping and serving community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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908-464-5177 • family.faith@verizon.net THE REV. JANE MCCREADY, PASTOR LENTEN MIDWEEK EUCHARIST Wednesdays - March 13 thru April 10 Spoken Liturgy at 12:00 noon Sung Candlelight Liturgy at 7:30 p.m.

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP Passion/Palm Sunday, April 14 Eucharist with Procession at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Holy Thursday, April 18 Spoken Liturgy with Eucharist at 12:00 noon Liturgy with Rite of First Communion at 7:30 p.m. Good Friday, April 19 Ecumenical Community Service at 12:00 noon Tenebrae Service with Stripping of the Altar at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 20 A Day of Silence and Meditation

Easter Celebration, April 21 Memorial Garden Service at 7:00 a.m. Festival Services with Processional and Eucharist at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

WE SHARE AN OPEN COMMUNION TABLE

The Somerset County Library System of New Jersey partnered with Rolling Thunder®, Inc., an organization that focuses on advocacy for prisoners of war and persons missing in action, to help preserve the collective memories of veterans and their families through a digitization event made possible through a grant from National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

"We have been honored to work with Artie and Elaine Muller to preserve the history of Rolling Thunder®, Inc., the organization, and of the members of their community," said Rebecca Sandoval Sloat, grant coordinator and SCLSNJ technical services manager. "In preserving the history of our veterans we are bringing honor to their memories and paving a way for their stories to live on for future generations."

Thirty-two items were digitized or photographed during the meeting including: an award from the French president, an oversized group shot of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. members in front of the Lincoln Memorial, and the Taekwondo gi (uniform) of a veteran who was awarded for his skill in the martial art. The digitized items will be integrated into SCLSNJ's common heritage initiative which will make the contributed items available for research and use by future generations by adding these items to Rutgers University's New Jersey Digital Highway, by making them available in our Library's online catalog, and by submitting them to the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA).

In addition to partnering with Rolling Thunder®, Inc. for this special event, the Library will continue to host monthly digitization days. During the digitization days Somerset County residents are encouraged to add their family's most prized possessions to the Library System's catalog including: historic photographs, letters, or documents; sketches, paintings, or other artwork; family heirlooms including recipes; jewelry or decorative arts; textiles such as quilts, samplers, flags, or uniforms; antique toys; or something uniquely your own.



(above) Pictured is a side-by-side photograph of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. member Ted Zabohonski in 1968/69 in Bình Định Province, Vietnam (left) and Zabohonski on February 17, 2019 at the Rolling Thunder®, Inc. meeting.







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FRIDAY - SATURDAY

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Adult\$7	.99 Adult.	\$1	1.99
Kids 7-10\$5		-10\$'	7.49
Kids 3-6\$3		-6\$	
2 & UnderFR			

SUNDAY ALL DAY DINNER

11am - 1	
Adult	
Kids 7-10	
Kids 3-6	\$5.99
2 & Under	FREE!

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COMMUNITY JIGSAW PUZZLE AT WATCHUNG LIBRARY



(above) Watchung resident Martin Carroll adds a few pieces to the Community Jigsaw Puzzle in the Puzzle Corner of the Periodical Room at the Watchung Library. The Community Jigsaw Puzzle is a new activity at the library, sponsored by the Friends of the Watchung Library. Library patrons can stop by and place a piece or two, or sit down and really working on solving the puzzle. As each puzzle is completed, a new puzzle will take its place. Residents are invited to come help with the puzzle any time the library is open!



WARREN TOWNSHIP RECREATION SPRING & SUMMER 2019 PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Programs/Events fliers are available on our website at warrennj.org/recreation

Adult Coed Volleyball

Mondays 7-10 p.m. from September to June at Warren Central School. Warren, Watchung and Green Brook residents welcome. Contact Mike Rotolo at michael.rotolo1@gmail.com.

Adult Men's Basketball

Mondays 6-10 p.m. from September to June at Warren Middle School. Warren, Watchung and Green Brook residents welcome. Email Eric Cheshire at echesh37@aol.com.

Spring Tennis Lessons

The second session of 6-week classes will start the week of May 13. These lessons are open Warren, Watchung and Green Brook residents ages 4 to adult and costs \$100 per session. The deadline to register is May 13 at 10 a.m.

Annual Fishing Derby

will take place on May 18 from 11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (hard rain date only May 19). This is a free event open to Warren Residents only. Prizes for ages 5-14. Free hats for the first 200 participants by Warren PBA and free food provided by the Warren Blue Ridge Sportsmen's Club. NJ Fish & Game will be bringing the Show & Tell Tank.

Summer Camp registration

begins April 1, 9 a.m. for Warren residents. Warren residents who register early will receive a \$10 discount on the Summer Playground Program & Teen Camp until May 6, 11 a.m. Watchung and Green Brook residents may register after May 6, 11 a.m. Register early as camps fill up fast! No refunds.

Jr. Field Hockey Clinic

Sunday's, June 2, 9, 16, 23. Grades 1-4 from 8:30 a.m. - 9:20 a.m. and Grades 5-9 from 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at Duderstadt Field. Cost is \$50 grades 1-4 and \$75 for grades 5-9. This clinic is open to the residents within the sending district of Watchung Hills Regional High School.

Summer Playground Program

June 25 - July 27 M-F 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Monday's 12 - 3 p.m.

\$235/5wks for Warren Residents and \$325 for Watchung & Green Brook Residents.

Summer Teen Camp

July 1- August 2, Monday-Friday, 8:45 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.;

3 trips a week. Register by the week. Warren residents each week \$225 (Week 1: \$215) and Watchung & Green Brook Residents \$250 each week (Week 1: \$235).

/eek (week 1: \$255)

Little Kids Camp

August 5-9 for 4-6 year olds 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.; \$85

Legos Camp

August 12-16 - 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. ages (6-12) \$200

Summer Concert Series

Bob Marino & Barbara Harris (June 19); Fabulous 50's Night featuring The Keynotes (June 26); Lost in Place (July 10); Ross Griswold & The Second Line (July 17). All concerts take place at the Warren Municipal Pavilion Area and start at 7 p.m.

Residents of Watchung and Green Brook are welcome to participate in the following Warren Township Recreation programs.



SCLSNJ'S WATCHUNG LIBRARY BRANCH

Somerset County Library System New Jersey's (SCLSNJ) Watchung Branch, is located at 12 Stirling Road, Watchung, New Jersey. All programs listed are free. Registration is required unless otherwise indicated and programs are subject to change; visit SCLSNJ.org or call the library at 908-458-8455 for more information and to register.

ALL AGE PROGRAMS

Mini-Maker Art Space (families) April 1, 15, 29; 9:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

CHILDREN, TWEEN, AND TEEN PROGRAMS

Toddler Storytime - Tiny Tot Time (ages 18-36 months) April 2, 10:30-11 a.m. **Creative Hands** (grades K-2) April 3, 4:30-5:30 p.m. **Preschool Storytime - Miss June's Room** (ages 36-60 months) April 4, 4-4:30 p.m. **Bingo with Miss Jun** (ages 4 and up) April 5, 4-4:30 p.m. **Preschool Storytime - Just for You Storytime** (ages 36-60 months) April 12, 10:30-11 a.m.

Music with Miss Donna

(ages birth - 5 years) April 15, 10:30-11 a.m. Make Your Plate Great (grades 2-4) April 23, 4-4:45 p.m. Teen Board Game Night

(grades 6-12) April 25, 7-8 p.m.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Mah Jong Club of Watchung April 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30;

> 1-4 p.m. Game Night April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; 7-8:45 p.m.

The Canasta Group April 4, 11, 18, 25; 1-3 p.m.

Watchung Writers Group

April 4, 11, 18, 25;

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Mindful Meditation Techniques April 13, 11 - noon

WATCHUNG SENIORS OFFERS FUN AND ACTIVITIES

WATCHUNG SENIORS 55+ MEET THE 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

(except the summer months) from 11:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. Meetings are held at the Fireman's Exempt

Hall, lower level, 57 Mountain Boulevard, (next to Borough Hall) Guest speakers, trips, and fun parties are planned throughout the year. For more information call 732-968-7843.

BUS TRIP MISS. LOTTA LUNCH CRUISE

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Cruising aboard the Miss. Lotta Paddle Boat, truly a unique experience on Lake Hopatcong. Trip includes round trip bus transportation. Buffet lunch inside dining cabin or roof deck.

Cash bar. Bus departing 10:00 a.m. sharp, from Best Lake, Watchung. Returning approximately 3:30 p.m. Cost: Members \$45.00. Guests \$55.00. For more information call 908-561-1932

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DON'T FALL FOR SCAM CALLS AND EMAILS IMPERSONATING IRS

suspicious individuals claiming to be from the IRS.

Thousands of people have lost millions of dollars and their personal information to tax scams. Scammers use the regular mail, telephone, or email to set up individuals, businesses, payroll, and tax professionals.

Scammers and cyberthieves continue to use the IRS as bait. The most common tax scams are phone calls and emails from thieves who pretend to be from the IRS. Scammers use the IRS name, logo, fake employee names and badge numbers to try to steal money and identities from taxpayers.

Taxpayers need to be wary of phone calls or automated messages from someone who claims to be from the IRS. Often, these criminals will say taxpayers owe money and demand payment right away. Other times, scammers will lie to taxpayers and say they're due a refund. The thieves ask for bank account information over the phone. The IRS warns taxpayers not to fall for these scams.

BELOW ARE SEVERAL TIPS THAT WILL HELP FILERS AVOID BECOMING A SCAM VICTIM.

IRS EMPLOYEES WILL NOT:

• Call demanding an immediate payment. The IRS won't call taxpayers if they owe taxes without first sending a bill in the mail.

WE NEED YOU! **SAFE+SOUND SOMERSET** SEEKING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE **RESPONSE TEAM (DVRT)** VOLUNTEERS

Submitted Joe Godby

In collaboration with local police departments in Somerset County, Safe+Sound Somerset's Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) volunteers provide immediate support to domestic violence survivors and information regarding the law, safety options, and available resources at the moment of crisis.

DVRT volunteers empower survivors of domestic abuse by:

- Decreasing the emotional trauma experienced by victims;
- Educating survivors about the dynamics of domestic violence; and
- Increasing survivors' awareness of community resources and legal options available to them.

Safe+Sound Somerset is currently accepting applications from individuals interested in becoming DVRT volunteers. All applicants must pass a comprehensive criminal and motor vehicle background check and the Domestic Violence 40hour training, including specific training components to be a DVRT volunteer.

If you are interested in becoming a DVRT Volunteer, submit a Volunteer Inquiry Form online at safe-sound.org/support/volunteer or call Deanna Keller, Volunteer Associate, at 908-359-0003, ext. 202.

- The IRS is urging the public to be aware of Demand payment without allowing taxpayers to question or appeal the amount owed.
 - Demand that taxpayers pay their taxes in a specific way, such as with a prepaid debit card.
 - Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
 - Threaten to contact local police or similar agencies to arrest taxpayers for non-payment of taxes.
 - Threaten legal action, such as a lawsuit.

If taxpayers don't owe or don't think they owe any tax, and they receive an inquiry like this. they should:

- · Contact the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. Use TIGTA's "IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting" web page to report the incident.
- Report the incident to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the "FTC Complaint Assistant" on FTC.gov. Add "IRS Telephone Scam" to the comments of your report.

DATE: April 18, 2019

LOCATION: Small

office (10th floor)

2 Gateway Center

Newark, NJ 07102

Corner of McCarter Highway &

Market Street, one block from

REGISTER: https://www.

gwaccnj.com/events/

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April 8.

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In most cases, an IRS phishing scam is an unsolicited, fake email that claims to come from the IRS. Some emails link to sham websites that look real. The scammers' goal is to lure victims to give up their personal and financial information. If the thieves get what they're after, they use it to steal a victim's money and identity.

FOR THOSE TAXPAYERS WHO GET A PHISHING EMAIL, THE IRS OFFERS THIS ADVICE:

- Don't reply to the message.
- Don't give out your personal or financial information.
- Forward the email to phishing@irs.gov. Then delete it.
- Don't open any attachments or click on any links. They may have malicious code that will infect your computer.

For more information visit www.irs.gov or call your local police department nonemergency number.

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

Participants will discover how communicating with customers regularly can help a small business stay connected, and generate increased referrals, repeat sales, and unwavering customer loyalty. Attendees will learn best practices and proven strategies and will have plenty of time to ask questions, share experiences and network with peers.



Renna Media loe has been in business since 1984 supplying businesses with a full array of marketing and advertising services. From developing



Michael Pilla. **Pilla Creative** Marketing

Michael has built his career on achieving business objectives

by combining the best of art and technology, creating "Micro Celebrities" helping clients to

build a targeted, loyal, online community of fans and followers, customers and clients.

After working for several online agencies, Mr. Pilla founded Pilla Creative Marketing in 2003 to bring the power of online marketing to businesses and organizations -- creating branding, websites, social and email marketin for companies in Arts & Entertainment, Food and Beverage, and Professional Services.

Participants will learn how to start and build a strong permission-based customer list, get their audience to open, read and act on their email, and leave with real-world insights and knowledge they can put to work immediately to help their business succeed.



Westfield Chamber of Commerce 212 Lenax Ave, Westfield, NJ 07090 908-233-3021 www.GWACCNJ.com



business and marketing plans to multimedia production, Renna Media has focused on the needs of the local business owner offering customized, affordable, advertising opportunities for every size

Mr. Renna's presentation will address the different aspects of building a marketing

Participants will leave with the information to guide them in developing a plan that will get them the best return for their marketing budget. The presentation will encourage questions from the audience and will addresses specific challenges facing their business.

business. plan and tuning up existing ones.

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Joe Renna, TIME: 9:00 am - Noon **Business Administration**

NEWARK BAIT AND FLYCASTING CLUB ANNUAL YOUTH FISHING DERBY



(above) The Annual Youth Fishing Derby will be held on Saturday April 13, 2019 at Echo Lake in Westfield, NJ.



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Contact 908-322-0253 designsbycolorscapes@gmail.com The Newark Bait and Flycasting Club Annual Youth Fishing Derby will be held on Saturday April 13, 2019 at Echo Lake Park in Westfield, NJ. The event is free for children under 16, and \$10 for adults who wish to participate. Sign up is early morning. Tagged Fish will be stocked that day so the children can see them get stocked. Prizes are awarded for different species of fish. You may donate and sponsor a fish for this event. Download our form online at nbfcc.org or we can mail one to you.

The Newark Bait and Flycasting Club was founded in 1907 and remains the oldest fishing club in the nation. We are listed on Amazon Smile and are a recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit. We provide outings to support veterans, adults and children as well as people with disabilities which focus on environmental education, fishing knowledge and practice.

We are always looking for new members, donations, and volunteers if anyone would like to get involved.

Our monthly meetings are held at the Kenilworth VFW, located at 33 S. 21st St., Kenilworth, NJ, on the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. (except July and August). There is no fee to attend a meeting.

For more information visit nbfcc.org or contact Bob Jones: BJonesJRNJ@hotmail.com, 908-272-3545.

GARDENING IN THE AGE OF ELIZABETH: BRING THE BARD TO YOUR YARD

The Garden Club of Watchung welcomes Garden Historian Lesley Parness for a very special lecture, "Gardening in the Age of Elizabeth", on Wednesday April 3, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. The presentation will take place at St Mary's Stony Hill Church, Mountain Blvd, Watchung.

The author's talk will include horticulture, gardening techniques, botanical literature and how to tips for creating a Shakespeare garden and lots of juicy tidbits about Elizabeth I and her gardens.

According to Lesley, "History's greatest playwright was also one heck of a gardener. The age of Elizabeth I provided William Shakespeare with a rich and varied plant palette, both from England' s considerable bounty and foreign introductions. Learn Elizabeth I's role in the advancement of English horticulture and peruse Elizabethan garden elements including mounts and mazes, spouting sundials, fantastical topiary and the pleached bower to add to your garden. Explore some Tudor and Shakespearean gardens in the UK and the USA to visit for inspiration. Turns out, the world's not only a stage, it's also a garden!"

Lesley Parness recently retired from her position as superintendent of horticulture education at the Morris County Park commission, and with four decades of teaching environmental science and garden education, her focus now is garden history.

APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN ENDING CHILD ABUSE

Submitted by Tracey Heisler, Executive Director CASA of Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties

I read an article today about a 9-year-old who was murdered by her mother's boyfriend and stuffed in a backpack. Yesterday there was a family at Olive Garden whose children had been abused and a caring bystander called in a report; the day before that a man here in Jersey had child porn on his computer.

It's easy to become overwhelmed by stories like these and to close your eyes. I get it. But what if, instead of shaking our heads and feeling powerless, we ask the question, "What can I do to make a difference?"

The answer is you can do a lot. We all can. Everybody can play a role in preventing child abuse and neglect by becoming advocates for children. We just need to do it.

For some, it's taking a formal role in a child's life. Teachers, child care workers, health care providers and others who come into daily contact with children can be vigilant for signs of abuse and neglect. Their actions to report suspected abuse or to offer extra time and attention to fragile children can do more than make a difference. It can save lives.

For others, it's paying attention to kids in the neighborhood or kids at school. Are there signs that something is amiss? Are they dirty, wearing clothes that don't fit, have untreated medical issues, or are hungry? Are they on their own with absent parents? Families with challenges shouldn't lose their kids because they aren't perfect. However, sometimes kids need real help and protection. You can provide it.

In my world, CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate) volunteers stand up for abused and neglected children, giving them a voice in a child welfare system that is sometimes hard-pressed to meet their individual needs. A CASA volunteer can ensure that he or she will not just survive foster care, but thrive.

Not everyone can be a CASA volunteer, but everyone can be an advocate. Here are some steps you can take to make our community safer for our children.

- Keep the toll-free child abuse hotline number close at hand, 877/NJ ABUSE. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, you can report your concerns confidentially.
- Donate to or volunteer with a social service agency that helps children who are at risk, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Middle Earth, CASA, or your local school.
- Educate yourself and others about child abuse and neglect and how to report it. Be an upstander who supports vulnerable children who need protection.

We all have a role to play in addressing and preventing child abuse. What will yours be? Find out more at www.casashaw.org.

INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR APRIL

Do you or someone you know want to volunteer to help make a difference in the life of a child in need?

The best way to learn about becoming a CASA and the steps one needs to take to embark on the journey is to first attend an Information Session. Sessions usually last approximately 45 minutes. Below is a list of upcoming sessions you, your family and/or friends can attend in April.

- Tuesday, April 2 5:30 PM at the Phillipsburg Library in Phillipsburg, NJ (200 Broubalow Way, Phillipsburg, NJ 08865)
- Monday, April 8 5:30 PM at the PeopleCare Center in Bridgewater, NJ (120 Finderne Ave, Bridgewater, NJ 08807)
- Saturday, April 13 10:00 AM at the Somerville Public Library in Somerville, NJ (35 West End Ave, Somerville, NJ 08876)
- Wednesday, April 17 Noon at the PeopleCare Center in Bridgewater, NJ (120 Finderne Ave, Bridgewater, NJ 08807)

RSVP and registration is required to attend an Information Session. Please contact Karen Cassano at karen@casashaw.org if you or someone you know plans to attend.

Feel free to share our upcoming information sessions within your network!

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