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Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

NJ

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PROFILES OF POSITIVE AGING SELECTS FOUR RESIDENTS

Seven individuals have been selected for the 2019 Profiles of Positive Aging recognition and were honored by the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders at a public meeting during Older Americans Month in May. The four Watchung recipients are:

LYNN FRANKLIN OF WATCHUNG

A member of the Overlook Hospital Oncology Advisory Board in Bedminster and president of the Kaleidoscope of Hope Ovarian Cancer Foundation, Lynn is dedicated to working with a support group for survivors of cancer. She is a member of the Watchung Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and is on the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission Advisory Board. Her other interests include exercising at the gym and rescuing dogs. Lynn was nominated by Ed Halper of Mountain Fitness.

FRANCES "FRAN" ELLIS OF WATCHUNG

She is often described as always on the go. Fran is a retired nurse whose medical background has been an asset to her community in Watchung, where she helps run a blood drive twice a year. She also serves as a member of the Watchung Board of Health and the CERT team. She was nominated by Watchung Mayor Keith Balla.

HELEN REBMANN OF WATCHUNG

When Watchung Borough needed volunteers, Helen was one of the first residents to sign up for CERT, and she continues to volunteer at the age of 86. She is a successful real estate agent who still manages to find time to volunteer at the town's community picnics and harvest festivals. Helen was nominated by Mayor Balla.

SONDRA "SANDEE" FECHTNER OF WATCHUNG

Described as a "spry" 90-year-old, Sondra is always on the go. Although she is retired from the Board of Education where she served for 30 years, she continues to give her former colleagues valuable advice. As a retired educator, she is actively involved in local municipal issues, which include supporting the local library. She is an active member of the Board of Adjustment where she has served for over 40 years. Sondra was nominated by Mayor Balla.

For more information about the awards or the county's programs for older adults, contact the Somerset County Office on Aging and Disability Services toll-free at 1-888-747-1122.

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(above) Seven individuals selected for the 2019 Profiles of Positive Aging Award were honored by the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders at a public meeting in May. Shown from left to right: Office on Aging and Disability Services Executive Director Joanne Fetzko; Profiles of Positive Aging recipients Helen Rebmann, Charles E. Windus, Frances Ellis, Lynn Franklin, Mike Schatzki, and Sondra Fechtner; Freeholder Brian D. Levine, center; and Eldercare Services Administrator Cynthia Voorhees, right.



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Watchung Post

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MONICA HOLMAN-POLITI HONORED BY YWCA

Submitted by Emily Mohr

Watchung resident Monica S. Holman-Politi, was among thirty-two women honored at the 40th Annual Tribute to Women and Industry Awards Celebration, sponsored by YWCA Union County at the Parsippany Hilton on May 16, 2019.

Monica Holman-Politi serves as Director, Global Operations for the Johnson & Johnson Supply Chain Data Management organization. In this role, Monica leads the Global team responsible for the daily execution and continuous improvement of J&J's Medical Device Data. More specifically, the team focuses on delivering an effective and efficient process to launch high-quality, innovative products to patients while aligning with and preparing the organization for a future, digital data strategy.

Monica joined Johnson and Johnson in 2006 as a Supply Chain Analyst and has since held positions of increasing responsibility throughout the Supply Chain organization. Most recently, Monica was Director, Transformation and Change, Systems Deployment. Here, she was responsible for ensuring that the business was operationally prepared for major system and business transformations. This included defining the communication, stakeholder engagement, change management, site readiness and end-user training strategies. In previous roles, she was involved in building J&J's current state Regional Customer Service team for Medical Devices and led the integrations of multiple Global Surgery companies into Customer Support Services. Monica is a graduate of Michigan State University and Stevens Institute of Technology, where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Applied Engineering Sciences (minor in Supply Chain) and a Master's degree in Technology Management, respectively.

Monica resides in Watchung, New Jersey with her husband Pete, and her two young sons, Peter and Brock. In her spare time, Monica serves as a Captain of the Johnson & Johnson Rowing Team, encouraging employees to "get fit" while raising scholarships for local, Rutgers student athletes.

YWCA Union County's Tribute to Women & Industry (TWIN) Award is a nationally-recognized honor for women. Since creating the

TWIN award 40 years ago, the YWCA has honored women in executive, managerial, and other professional roles who have made significant contributions in their fields. This important award recognizes successful women executives for their outstanding achievements and honors those companies that have provided opportunities for women to achieve their potential.

Proceeds from this event will benefit the YWCA Union County, which provides comprehensive services throughout Union County for victims of domestic violence and their children, providing emergency shelter, housing, legal services, children's services, counseling, advocacy, family justice center and more.

For more information on the 40th Annual TWIN Awards Celebration visit the website at ywcatwinmidjersey.org.



(above) Monica S. Holman-Politi with her award at the 40th Annual Tribute to Women & Industry Awards Celebration.

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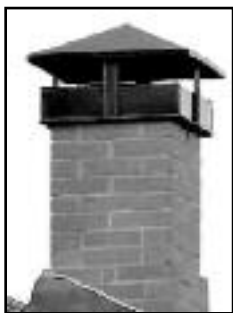
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NATIONAL ART HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION AND SPRING ART FEST

54 students were inducted into National Art Honor Society (NAHS) at Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS), on Wednesday, May 29, 2019. There were 20 new members, and 34 returning members.

A Artists Reception followed the induction. The exhibit of student art featured hundreds of pieces of art in a broad array of media generated by WHRHS Visual Arts students. The pieces of art in photography, fine art, painting, mixed art, crafts, weaving, jewelry, sculpting, fine woodworking, mask decorating, computer generated poster art, ceramics, and music tech

lab-computer mixed sound and music were displayed throughout the school's front atrium, PAC Lobby area, and up and down the corridors surrounding the PAC.

The newly inducted members are: Hamayoon Akram, Zuha Anjum, Julia Celeste, Michelle Chavanne, Katie DiOrio, Caroline Geib, Victoria Hangyasi, Samantha Hoffmann, Julia Kopell, Kaitlyn Linton, Jordyn Lippitt, Lucas Mammone, Julianna Miller, Fiona Mulvey, Amelia Randolph, Kathleen O'Mullan, Annabell Pu, Marianna Renda, Alexa Richmond, Nancy Rodriguez, and Eizabeth Wilcenski.

The returning members are: Anna Baitel, Christina Baratta, Sara Barrientos, Ruchi Biswas, Elizabeth Bruno, Katherine Chang, Hailey Crawford, Molly Davis, John Farley, Alysabeth Gaito, Emily Imiolek, Portia Jones, Anna Kaplan, Elizabeth Killeen, Sofia Kwon, Rachel Miller, Francesca Minervini, Elisabeth Morris, Arianna Rahimi, Catherine Ray, Aanika Sadana, Shefali Sahay, Cristina Sarrico, Annika Schmidt, Rebecca Sendon, Pramity Shah, Spencer Shao, Heather Sherry, Juhee Shukla, Jaemi Spaven, Brianna Titus, Megan Vetter, Jack White, and Sarah Young.

Photo album courtesy of WHRS



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IMAGINE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING

Imagine Leadership Council Members assembled for their annual meeting on Friday, April 26th, 2019 at Imagine. These community leaders lend their expertise and support to Imagine's mission and play a key role in their success. Imagine provides free, year-round grief support for children, families, and communities. Imagine is a free year-round peer grief support

center located in Mountainside and Newark New Jersey, serving children age 3-18 who have had a parent or sibling die, with concurrent support groups for their parents or guardians. Support for children and teens living with a parent or sibling with a life-altering physical illness is also available. Free year-round support groups are also available for young adults who have had a

friend, sibling, parent or other important person in their life die, or who have a parent, sibling or friend living with an illness. If you are interested in learning more about the upcoming trainings scheduled for July 26-29th, 2019 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily, please contact Mandi at Mandi@imagine-nj.org or visit imagine-nj.org to schedule a tour.



(above, l-r) John Toriello, Imagine Board Chair, Westfield; Jordan Glatt, Summit; Keith S. Hertell, Westfield; Assemblyman Jon Bramnick; Senator Tom Kean; Barbara Neal, Imagine Board Member, Watchung; Mary Robinson, Imagine Executive Director; Diana Jurtofski-Miller, Imagine Board Member, New Providence; Mayor Shelley Brindle, Westfield; Pastor William M. Williams, III, First United Methodist Church, Westfield; Alan Lieber, President Overlook Medical Center; Mayor Paul Mirabelli, Mountainside; Jeff Peris, Imagine Board Member, Scotch Plains; Stu Arnold, Imagine Board Chair Emeritus, Westfield; Father Anthony Randazzo, Holy Trinity Church, Westfield.
For more information on Imagine, visit www.imagine-nj.org.

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AUDIENCES TREATED TO A FETCHING PERFORMANCE OF 'FIDDLER ON THE ROOF' AT WHRHS

When audiences attended the four performances of the Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Spring Musical, "Fiddler on the Roof," they were treated to a fetching performance in which the actors, actresses, singers and dancers personified the characters of a poor, largely Jewish neighborhood of a farming village in 1905 Russia.

The Fiddler Cast, Orchestra, And Crew

The 39-member cast included: Sam Bouffard as Tevya; Claire Vickery as Golde; Emma Giordano as Tzeitel; Christine Tanko as Hodel; Arya Blow as Chava; Kyra Anthony as Bielke; Jordan Pincus as Shprintze; Kayla Martins as Yente; Scott Romanjow as Motel; Jack Melillo as Perchik; Andrew Moberly as Fryedka; Matt MacKrell as Avram, The Merchant; Summer Stuart as Fruma-Sarah; Will Broder as Constable; Massai Shuler as Lazar Wolf, The Butcher; Madeleine Johnson as Grandma Tzeitel; Spencer Acciarito as Rabbi; John Santucci as Mendel, his Son; Emma Golkin as The Fiddler; Kaelin Churchill as Shaindel, Motel's Mother; Caleb Parker as Mordcha, The Innkeeper; Christian Takleszyn and Paul Riedler as Russian Soldiers; Jackie Harrison as Naara, the Beggar; and as Villagers/Ensemble, Savannah Bellovin, Natasha Bird, Giovanna DiSanto, Angie Carrano, Nina DiNorscio, Malvika George, Calyn Goldberg, Maddie Leong, Francesca Infante-Meehan, Mia Hionis, Allison Karski, Olivia Kider, Erin Pinto, Ali Vatalare, and Dana Wasserman.

The 35-member orchestra included: Violins, Grace Alto, Emma Golkin, Harrison Lavelle, Dylan Le, Jenny Li, Gabriella Pontoriero, Luis Rodrigues, Alyanna Tam, Neha Venkatesh, Tyler Wu, Nadini Yellamelli, and Simon Zhang; Violas: Kaleigh Brunner, Catherine Cai, Jocelyn Wang, and Valerie Wang; Cellos: Madeline Dietrich, Daria Monti, Spencer Shao, William Wu, and Patrick Xin; Bass, Anjali Blow; Woodwinds: Ishika Agrawal, Flute/Piccolo; Jeremy Cui, Obioe/ English Horn; John Kolibachuk, Jeremy Shamai, Clarinet/ Bass Clarinet; and Elizabeth Baker, Bassoon; Trumpets: Ryan Branco, Elliot DeGaulo, Miah Manning, and Matthew Schaefer; Horn: Ben Watkins; Trombone: Cristina Sarrico; and Percussion: Shoili Banerjee, and Max Schwarz.

The 45-member production staff included: Prop Master: Rachel Krouk; Co-Heads of Costume: Sara Barrientos and Alison Wolf; House Manager: Elizabeth Chapleski; Sound: Krystyna Leski and Kayley Garcell; Light Board

Operator: Dani Costa; Props Crew: Becca Dickerson, Hannah Marszalek and Virginia Parks; Running Crew: Rhea Cariappa, Carolina DelValle, Nora Lange, Sophia Patti, Sofia Savchuk, Jaimie Wu, Elena Celeste, Andrew Espinosa, Melissa Miketen, Amelia Randolph, and Cat Teo. Rigging: Mike Sullivan, Connor Galloway, and AJ Tortoriello. Spot Light Operators: Adam Noble and Matthew Noble. Costume Crew: Maddie Goffredo, Lauren Quinn, and Erica Munoz. Hair and Makeup: Sophia Formisano, Genevieve Rust, Arianna Rahmi, and Hannah Stevens. Scenic Painters: Marianna Renda, Fiona Mulvey, Amelia Randolph, and Stephanie Ormaeche. Ushers: Michelle Chavanne, Max Dublirer, Skylar Paltjon, Valentina Squizziato, Emily Dec, Navya Menon, and Pavithra Ponnolu.

The Script and Cue Business Manager is Dianne Krutz. Giovanna DiSanto and Madeleine Johnson worked as promotional officers. Madeleine Johnson took head shots and group shots of cast. Juliet Leary is the Chief Financial

Officer. Megan Krutz designed the program cover art. Rachel Krouk designed the programs. Ali Wolf acted as the cultural consultant.

Fiddler on the Roof was directed by WHRHS Drama Teacher Douglas Eaton. Pit Orchestra was WHRHS Instrumental Music Teacher Paul McCullen. Vocal Director was WHRHS Vocal Music Teacher Angela DiIorio Bird. Choreography by Tara Catalina.

Kathleen O'Mullen was Chief Assistant Director. Portia Rowley was Assistant Director. Alexander Marten was Production Stage Manager.

Douglas Eaton did Set Design. Kate Griffin was Scenic Artist. Gail DeCicco was in charge of Costume Design. Chris Valenti was in charge of lighting design. Rick Clark was in charge of Sound Design. Mick DiNizio was Master Carpenter. Brianna Caetano was Lead Assistant Stage Manager. Julia Celeste was Assistant Stage Manager. Chris Valenti was Technical Director and in set of Set CAD (Computer-Aided Design) Layout.



(above) The cast of the WHRHS Spring Musical, "Fiddler on the Roof" raise their arms in triumph as they continue to intone the play's rousing song, "Tradition..." and accept the ovation of the audience. Four performances of the musical were performed in the school's Performing Arts Center, March 21-23, 2019.

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CASA SHAW VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT ON ERIKKA FLOYD

Erikka has been a dedicated CASA volunteer advocate who continues to make a difference in the lives of the children she serves. She lives with her family in Hunterdon County, where she works as a substitute teacher. She is also very proud to have two beautiful children of her own, ages 7 and 11.

When discussing her path that led her to CASA SHaW, she said, "about a year ago, I was looking for a volunteer opportunity and found CASA online. The CASA organization stood out above the rest. At the time, there was a lot of media coverage about families going through the opioid crisis and stories of children being taken from their homes. I have also seen the affects and stress on children who have gone through the foster care system throughout my time working in different schools and in speaking to people with this experience. I have always enjoyed working with children and the thought of any child being torn away from their parents, siblings and home and how afraid they must feel, is hurtful to me."

Erikka currently advocates for two siblings ages 4 and 6. They are bright, active, cheerful, loving children who enjoy reading stories, drawing, playing games and dancing around. As their CASA, she is an extra set of eyes and ears on their case to ensure their needs are met and that they are happy, healthy and cared for by their foster parent. Throughout their stay with the foster parent, she has formed relationships with counselors and teachers at the children's

school to ensure they continue to do well and don't fall behind. She has also formed a relationship with their biological mother, and has been there for her as she set and accomplished goals for herself so she could be the best mom she could be when the children go back home.

Erikka said, "I think part of being a CASA is being able to understand where people are coming from and where they need to go to be successful. It is about being a cheerleader for the parent in helping them overcome obstacles that have prevented them from being with their children. Simply being someone who is there to listen, to bounce ideas off of, or to vent to is often helpful to a parent. It is about being a consistent part of the children's lives. For many foster children, consistency doesn't come easy, as they are moved around and experience a lot of changes. The children need to know they have someone who is on their side and looking out for them."

Erikka continued by saying, "at CASA SHAW, I have a supportive and knowledgeable group of people to reach out to whenever I have questions or concerns. CASA has provided training opportunities to further my understanding of how children in foster care are affected and resources to use throughout my case to better help the family. I have attended family court and gained a new perspective on how DCP&P and the foster system works. I am grateful the children on my case are expected to

be reunified with their mother and look forward to helping another family soon."

We thank Erikka for all she has done as a volunteer advocate and her dedication to making a difference in the lives of those children who need a voice at this time in their lives.

Do you or someone you know want to volunteer to help make a difference in the life of a child in need? For more information visit casafnj.org.



(above) Erikka Floyd

CASA SHAW SEEKING ADVOCATES

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

CASA SHaW 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.

"Attending an information session is the first step in becoming a CASA volunteer advocate for a foster child who has been abused and neglected. This is where individuals learn about what it takes to become volunteer," said Tracey Heisler, Executive Director of CASA SHaW. 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 CASA SHaW information sessions scheduled for July 2019:

- Tuesday, July 9 - 5:30 p.m. at the PeopleCare Center in Bridgewater, NJ (120 FINDERNE AVE, BRIDGEWATER, NJ)
- Saturday, July 13 - 10:00 a.m. at the CASA SHaW office in Washington, NJ (150 BOULEVARD, WASHINGTON, NJ)
- Monday, July 22 - Noon at the CASA SHaW office in Washington, NJ (150 BOULEVARD, 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.

TAKE THE SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

The Somerset County Library System of New Jersey's (SCLSNJ) Summer Reading Challenge began on June 17 and continues through August 17, 2019 challenging Somerset County youths to read more. And, it doesn't matter what you read or how long you read - as long as you read every day.

During 2018's Summer Reading Challenge, SCLSNJ saw a 19 percent increase in the number of participants in comparison to 2017. Those participants read a combined 172,152 days - a 27 percent increase from 2017. SCLSNJ strives to increase County literacy even more in 2019 through the Summer Reading Challenge.

"Everyone knows that reading is fundamental to academic success and that too many things in today's world compete for our children's attention," said Brian K. Auger, county library administrator. "We're delighted to be one of those competitors, since one of our missions is to foster a love of reading.

"In addition to maintaining reading proficiency throughout the summer, SCLSNJ's Summer Reading Challenge provides children and teens with an opportunity to explore new possibilities through reading," said Karen Pifher, manager of branch services, young minds and family resources. "One of the most exciting experiences is when young readers discover new authors or genres to share with friends and family members."

Drawing tickets and prizes will be awarded at different reading milestones throughout the summer.

- At 10, 20, and 30 days participants will receive drawing tickets;
- At 40 days participants will receive a reading recognition reward;
- At 50 days participants will receive a Somerset Patriots prize pack of four complimentary baseball game tickets;
- At 60 days participants will receive a free book OR \$5 Barnes & Noble gift card and golden ticket entry.

Prizes are available while supplies last. For additional prizes and drawing tickets, SCLSNJ is introducing "Spin the Wheel Wednesdays" across all branches, from July 10 through August 14. Sign up: SCLSNJ.org/SummerReading.

JULY PROGRAMS AT SCLSNJ'S WARREN TOWNSHIP LIBRARY BRANCH

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Library hours are Monday to Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.,

Friday & Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

CHILDREN, TWEEN, AND TEEN PROGRAMS

- Baby/Toddler Storytime - Tiny Tot Time**
July 9, 10:30-11 a.m.
(ages 2 and up)
- Unique Creatures**
July 11, 10:30-11:15 a.m.
(entering grades K-5)
- Miss June's Room**
July 11, 4-4:30 p.m.
(ages 4-7)
- Bingo with Miss June**
July 12, 4-4:30 p.m.
(ages 4 and up)

ADULT PROGRAMS

- Mah Jong Club of Watchung**
July 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30;
1-4 p.m.
- Game Night**
July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; 7-8:45 p.m.
- The Space Race - 1957-1975**
July 8, 7-8 p.m.
- Special Needs Social Hour**
July 10, 2-3 p.m.
- Watchung Writers Group**
July 11, 18, 25; 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- The Canasta Group**
July 11, 18, 25; 1-3 p.m.
- Book Discussion: "The Eyre Affair,"**
on July 11, 7:30-8:45 p.m.

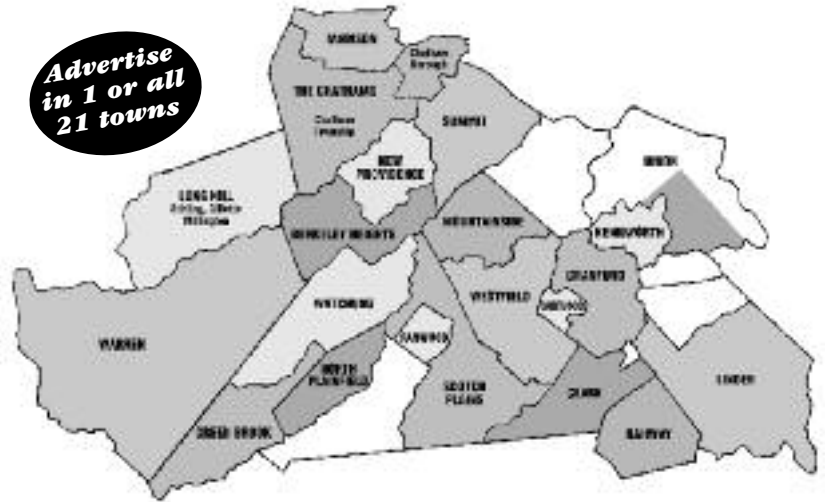
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REGISTER NOW FOR TEEN CERT TRAINING

The county Office of Emergency Management is accepting applications for the 2019 Teen CERT course to be held at the Somerset County Emergency Services Training Academy, July 8 through 12, 2019.

Teen CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) is a national Homeland Security initiative directed at making schools and communities safer by having educated and trained youth capable of preparing and responding to disasters and emergencies. Teen CERT is an integral part of the Citizen Corps Program, which emphasizes making our communities and our nation safer, stronger and better prepared.

It takes about 30 hours to complete the Somerset County Teen CERT program, but the

critical skills you learn will last your entire life.

DURING THE TRAINING YOU WILL LEARN TO:

- Extinguish small fires.
- Identify and anticipate hazards.
- Reduce fire hazards in the home and workplace.
- Help reduce survivor stress.
- Assist emergency responders.
- Assist those who are injured.
- Set up medical treatment areas.
- Conduct light search and rescue.

Teens entering grades 9 through 12 are welcome to apply. Participants must attend all classes to receive a certificate of completion. Registration is first come, first served, with a maximum of 25 students.

For registration information and an application form visit www.co.somerset.nj.us. For questions or more information, contact Carolyn Solon in the Office of Emergency Management at solon@co.somerset.nj.us or 908-725-5070.

SINGLE SENIOR WOMEN'S GROUP SEEKS MEMBERS SUPPORT, SHARE, SOCIALIZE, STAY ACTIVE

Single women age 60 and above are invited to join the Single Senior Women's Group for socialization and support. Female residents, who meet the age requirements and are single, widowed, divorced, never married, or married with an incapacitated spouse are invited to join.

The group is held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., on the second and fourth Thursday of the month at the Somerset County Senior Wellness Center at Bridgewater, located at 876 East Main St., Bridgewater.

Gather with other single female peers for support in a safe, friendly, informal and positive social environment. Listen to speakers, learn and share experiences. Join excursions such as shows, trips and other activities. This is a great opportunity for women to keep engaged and motivated to stay healthy.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Single Senior Women's Group, which was formed in 1989. In 1992, the program received an award for its exemplary contributions to healthy aging. The award was issued by the American Association of Retired Persons, and the U.S. Public Health Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

The Senior Wellness Center at Bridgewater is operated by the Somerset County Office on Aging and Disability Services and offers a variety of activities including educational programs, health and wellness information, as well as an interesting and inclusive social setting.

For more information about Somerset County Single Senior Women's Group, contact President Faye Dolan at 908-541-9473.

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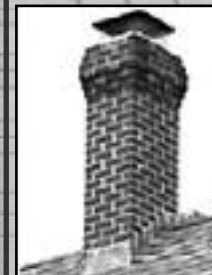
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