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Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

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# WATCHUNG BOROUGH HOLDS JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

The Watchung Borough community gathered for the Juneteenth Celebration at Mobus Field, on June 19th, 2021. Activities, food, drinks, music and food were all available to those in attendance; as well as a special community quilt project.

Quilting is a long-standing tradition in African and American history. In the past, a quilt has been a way to represent messages, to celebrate and document events of the community. For this first Juneteenth Celebration, the Borough wanted the craft to represent the community. Several patterns of squares were available to color, and blank squares to create messages or pictures that represent the meaning of the day.

The Juneteenth Day Celebration was organized by the Watchung IDEA Committee with support from the Board of Education, PTO, Library, and students from Watchung Hills Regional High School and the Borough of Watchung.













Photos from this and other events can be found online at rennamedia.com and on the Watchung Post page on facebook.com Feel free to "Like," "Tag," and "Share."



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Although great care has been taken to ensure the information contained within is accurate, Renna Media assumes no liability for errors or omissions.

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# HOME SAFETY REPAIR PROGRAM DESIGNED TO HELP PEOPLE IN-NEED LIVE SAFELY AND

For many low-to-moderate income homeowners in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, resolving critical home safety repairs is financially impossible. There are a significant number of residents who are living with water leaks and cold drafts due to failing roofs, doors and windows. Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity (RVHFH) has developed a new Home Safety and Repair Program with these residents in mind. RVHFH is actively seeking qualified Somerset and Hunterdon County homeowners in need of home safety repairs to apply for this program.

This program focuses on helping local homeowners to continue to live independently, safely and comfortably in their homes. RVHFH's Home Safety and Repair Program serves low-to-moderate income homeowners of any age including veterans, people with disabilities and seniors. The program also assists non-profit organizations that offer permanent or temporary shelter.

Program projects have included: leaky roof repairs, weatherizing and increasing security of aging doors and windows, and home modifications and ramp installations for people with disabilities. One homeowner served by the program in Somerset says, "A volunteer installed a screen door and fixed the lock on my front door. Now my home is secure and water no longer comes in. I am so grateful and finally warm in my home."

Ramp installations are a crucial part of what RVHFH does for the safety of those in wheelchairs. A recent program recipient was a local non-profit organization that needed a ramp built for the people they serve. The Executive Director there commented, "We truly appreciate the professional work of Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity. They built a beautiful ramp to make our building accessible for all clients."

Other program services help senior residents "age in place." Most seniors want to stay in their homes but many need to make costly repairs or improvements in order to do this. According to a family served by our program, "The Raritan



Valley Habitat for Humanity team who came out to install grab bars for my mom were like angels sent from heaven."

"We truly appreciate the support we've received for this important program from volunteers and donors in our community, particularly Provident Bank Foundation and NJM Insurance Group, and look forward to expanding our impact in helping more people to have a decent place to live in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties," says Jan Holmstrup, Executive Director of RVHFH.

If you or someone you know is low-to-moderate income and in need of home safety repairs, RVHFH's website has specific income qualification criteria to review and a program application to fill out, at the following link: rvhabitat.org/projects-programs/home-safety-repair/. Interested program applicants can also leave a message at 908-704-0016, ext. 12 and a trained program volunteer will return the call.

This program and others like it could not exist without the support of people in the community. To make a donation to RVHFH, please visit rvhabitat.org or write a check payable to Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity and send to P.O. Box 6275, Bridgewater, NJ 08807.

Seeking to put God's love into action, Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity (RVHFH) brings people together to build homes, communities and hope. In 29 years, RVHFH has built 53 homes in Hunterdon and Somerset counties. The affiliate also operates a Habitat ReStore in Manville, which is a store that sells gently used household goods to benefit the building and repair of more homes in our community. To learn more, visit rvhabitat.org or call 908-704-0016.





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# LIBRARY SYSTEM SUPPORTS SENIOR HEALTH THROUGH COLLECTIONS, SERVICES

May 26 is National Senior Health and Fitness Day, a day that promotes the significance of physical activity for the aging population, as well as an opportunity for local organizations to demonstrate what they are doing to help to improve the population's health. Since U.S. Census data shows that 16.2 percent of Somerset County's population is aged 65 years or older, the Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) remains dedicated to serving this population through collections, services, and resources.

"Science has proven what librarians have known all along - reading is really good for you," said Jen Sulligan, civic services supervisor. "According to scientific studies, reading improves brain connectivity, helps prevent agerelated cognitive decline, reduces stress, and can extend your lifespan."

In order to connect Library customers to materials that can help improve their overall health and well-being, SCLSNJ's expert librarians have curated a booklist of titles that showcase the exploration of various exercises; health and wellness tips; and the science of longevity.

"This year marks the 28th annual commemoration of National Senior Health and Fitness Day," said Bob Helmbrecht, collection development librarian. "If you're interested in

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discovering ways to stay healthy and fit as you get older, we are excited to share some of our favorite titles with you that offer ways to keep you sharp, moving, and thriving."

#### **EXPLORE THE LIBRARY'S COLLECTION:**

- "Age Later: Health Span, Life Span, and the New Science of Longevity" by Nir Barzilai
- "Aging Joyfully: A Woman's Guide to Optimal Health, Relationships, and Fulfillment for Her 50s and Beyond" by Carla Marie Manly
- "Dynamic Aging: Simple Exercises for Whole-Body Mobility" by Katy Bowman
- "Just Move!: A New Approach to Fitness After 50" by James P. Owen
- "Keep Sharp: Build a Better Brain at Any Age" by Sanjay Gupta, MD
- "Lifelong Yoga: Maximizing Your Balance, Flexibility, and Core Strength in Your 50s, 60s, and Beyond" by Sage Rountree and Alexandra DeSiato
- "Natural and Home Remedies for Aging Well: 196 Alternative Health and Wellness Secrets That Will Change Your Life" by Bottom Line
- "Pilates for Living: Get Stronger, Fitter and Healthier for an Active Later Life" by Harri Angell
- "Running Until You're 100: A Guide to Lifelong Running" by Jeff Galloway

- "Stretching for 50-Plus: A Customized Program for Increasing Flexibility, Avoiding Injury and Enjoying an Active Lifestyle" by Karl G. Knopf
- And more: catalog.SCLSNJ.org.

"If you can't make it to the Library to reap the benefits of reading due to age-related, health, or other qualifying barriers, SCLSNJ's Home Borrowing Library Services (HBLS) may be able to help," said Sulligan. "Through this recently launched service, the Library will send qualified customers their choice of materials in the mail via the United States Postal Service, or help facilitate pickup with a carrier of your choice."

For more information about HBLS visit: SCLSNJ.org/HomeBorrowing.

#### **ABOUT SOMERSET COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM OF NEW JERSEY**

Somerset County Library System of New Jersey (SCLSNJ) partners with you to connect, to explore, to share and to discover. Together we enrich lives, expand knowledge and strengthen communities. SCLSNJ branches can be found in Bridgewater, Bound Brook, Hillsborough, Manville, North Plainfield, Peapack & Gladstone, Rocky Hill at Mary Jacobs Memorial Library, Somerville, Warren Township, and Watchung. Additionally, there are two SCLSNJ reading stations in Branchburg and Washington Valley. Visit SCLSNJ.org.





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# **NEWS FROM WATCHUNG'S HISTORICAL COMMITTEE**

# Submitted by Lisa Delventhal

After being closed for over a year during the coronavirus pandemic, Watchung Borough and the Watchung Historical Committee reopened the Texier House museum on Memorial Day, Monday, May 31, in coordination with the town's Memorial Day Ceremony. The ceremony and reopening event were adorned in patriotic regalia on the Texier House museum grounds, with members of the public gathered along with representatives from the Boy Scouts of America as well as Watchung's Police Department, Fire Department, and Rescue Squad. Local residents Adam Wexler and Scott Rose displayed vintage military vehicles in the museum's parking lot, an outdoor attraction coordinated by Councilman Pietro Martino, the committee's liaison.

At the conclusion of the borough's respectful ceremony, with remarks by Council President Wendy Robinson and committee Vice Chair John Malchow, residents were invited to tour the museum's collection of displays on Watchung's past. The Texier House museum offers exhibits dedicated to the Watchung lakes, Castle Elsinore, Wetumpka Falls, the Flood of 1973, Congressman Charles Eaton, the Pageant of the Legend of Watchung, 9/11, historic homes and businesses, sports heroes, Watchung's first responders and emergency services and more. A new book on local history, "Historical Tales of Watchung," authored by Watchung resident and historian Robert Mayers, was available for sale as members of the public toured the museum.

Longtime committee members who led the effort to found the museum attended the event. Dorothy (Diddy) Addario, a longtime historical committee member, and former chairperson said "I was so excited to step foot in a museum I call my second home, a place I'm so proud of," she commented. She was accompanied by longtime Historical committee member Betse Titus, who created several of the museum exhibits. Current historical Committee members offered tours of the exhibits during the event.

Newly completed exhibits include Watchung during the World Wars and a tribute to longtime resident Henry Long. Long served as a Technical Sergeant and Flight Engineer in a risky top secret WWII mission in 1944 that remained classified for 55 years. The mission was planned by the Office of Strategic Services, a forerunner to the CIA. For his part in the mission Watchung's Henry Long received The Golden Wings - The Honorary Wings of a Pilot of the Slovak Air Force, the Medal of the 50th Anniversary of Liberation of the Slovak Republic, as well as other honors. The display honoring Long's story is the work of Jason Ng of Scouts BSA Troop 32 for his Eagle Leadership Project. Ng worked closely with Historical Committee Chair Christopher Vander Fliet and a team of scouts to research and create the display on Long and the Top Secret Mission to rescue Slovak resistance leaders and downed Allied flight crews in Slovokia during Nazi occupation.

Many Troop 32 scouts assisted in the efforts through weeks of work sessions to create the exhibit. Adults also assisted, including Jason's father, Norman Ng, Scoutmaster Jay Stiles, Eagle



project advisor, Susan Tucker, troop committee member Kurt Weber, as well as Historical Committee members. "It was a very intense few weeks to create this exhibit before Memorial Day's museum reopening," said Vander Fliet, "But the result is exemplary and Jason is to be commended for his dedication and perseverance."

Vander Fliet and Tucker discussed the need for an area in the museum to honor other veterans and heroes with connections to Watchung. Part of the new display designates space to accomplish that goal, and the Historical Committee welcomes the public's input in assembling materials for the ongoing exhibit. To contact the committee, please email: historic@watchungnj.gov.

The Historical Committee will be working to reinstate Sunday tours of the Texier Museum, Chairperson Vander Fliet reported, following all state and Borough guidelines. Special openings during borough events and select weekends are also anticipated. Texier Museum is located on the Watchung Circle, across from the Municipal building, at 10 Mountain Boulevard, Watchung, NJ. "Watchung has a more fascinating and indepth history than most people expect. Please join us and learn about your town," concluded Vander Fliet.

The Historical Committee is delighted to announce two events at the Texier Museum this summer:

Sunday July 25th - Open House (2 pm - 4 pm) Sunday Aug. 15th - Open House (2 pm - 4 pm)



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# **CASA SHAW**

# Submitted by Jeff Warren

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties (CASA SHaW) recently held their first Healing HeARTS online fundraising gala and art auction that benefitted abused and neglected foster children in the tri-county region.

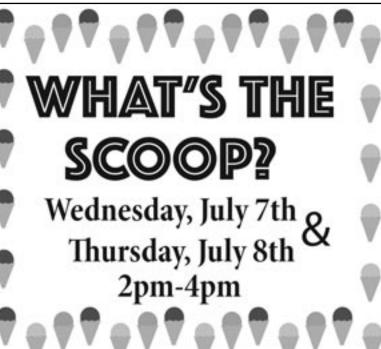
"We learned that so many individuals had created their own art during the pandemic to heal their heart as a therapeutic way to handle the emotional toll this past year has been, and our goal was to bring the community together through that art." said Tracey Heisler, Executive Director of CASA SHaW. "We are so grateful to the 32 artists who donated their art to our auction. All of the funds raised will help us continue our mission to help abused and neglected foster children in our region," said Heisler.

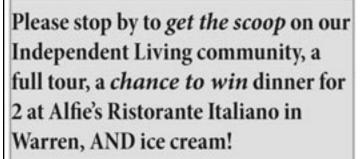
CASA SHaW is also grateful to the many individual, corporate and small business sponsors who donated to the Healing HeARTS gala. 23 sponsors from the community helped to make this event successful. CASA SHaW's donors help

the nonprofit to train CASA volunteers to advocate for foster children as they make their way through the New Jersey family court system.

"We displayed that even during a pandemic, we were able to bring the tri-county community together for a common purpose. We even had Joe Piscopo and Chris Sullivan from the hit TV show 'This Is Us' send messages of support to our CASA volunteers. It was a special evening that truly helped to heal hearts in our community," said Heisler.

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.





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# "SCOUTING FOR SUPPLIES" DRIVE SUPPORTS 2 LOCAL CHARITIES

#### Submitted by Paula Schmidt

Warren Township BSA Troop 228 recently held a Spring "Scouting for Supplies" drive to collect household items for two local charities. A total of 83 bags of supplies were collected from Scout friends, family, and neighbors, as well as from the broader Warren Township community. Supplies included kitchen and bathroom cleaning solutions, (such as sponges, wipes, sprays, disinfectants) as well as personal hygiene products (including soap, toothpaste, shampoo, lotion).

Approximately half of the supplies (weighing

240 pounds) were donated to Feeding Hands, in Somerville, NJ, a food pantry that serves the local community by providing food and supplies to veterans, working poor, disabled, seniors and unemployed. The remaining supplies were donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in North Plainfield, a non-profit volunteer organization who helps the local community by providing food, clothing, and other items. On Saturday, May 15, Scouts went onsite to St. Vincent's distribution center to assist Food Pantry personnel in sorting donations and distributing food to pantry visitors.

Throughout the COVID pandemic Troop 228 has remained active, holding weekly meetings at the Watchung Elks Pavilion through the Elk's kindness and generosity. The Troop has also participated in outdoor activities within COVID guidelines such as hiking, as well as a variety of service projects such as this drive to benefit the community. Troop 228 welcomes new scouts and no prior scouting experience is required to join.

For more information about the Troop and membership, contact Michael Minieri at scouting.minieri@outlook.com.



(above, l-r) Troop 228 Scouts Drew Connolly, Mateus Teepe, Ben Rosenberger, Arthur Andersen, Gideon Minieri, Mark Armento, Mikey Santoro, Kanav Desai, Landon Bush, Andy Shi, Marcello Gioia, Sean Gubitosi, Graham Schmidt, Alex Huang, Cole Klein, Nolan Brunner, Jason Yan, Tyler Shehady, Tej Jasti, Harrison Bush, Ethan Hammond, Michael Armao



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(above, l-r) Scouts and adults onsite at St. Vincent's: Loren Bush, Gideon Minieri, Landon Bush, Wolf Holczinger, Michael Minieri, Ben Rosenberger, Harrison Bush, Mikey Santoro, Graham Schmidt, Kayden Thursfield, Matthew Fogarty, Afsaneh Thursfield, Mike Fogarty

# MOMS HELPING MOMS AWARDED GRANT

#### Submitted by Meredith Carpenter

Moms Helping Moms Foundation (MHM), a New Jersey Baby Supply and Diaper Bank based in Warren, NJ was recently awarded a national Funds for Change grant via a competitive application process organized by The National Diaper Bank Network (NDBN) and the Alliance for Period Supplies.

The local nonprofit organization will use the \$2,500 grant to build community support including re-opening for volunteer sessions, a vital part of the operations that have been restricted since the COVID crisis began, and plan for new events to raise awareness about diaper need in NJ.

To earn a Funds for Change grant, a basic needs bank must match the award amount with contributions raised in its own community. Because of the help we received nationally and here at home, we were able to provide 633,915 diapers serving 101,000 individuals across the state of New Jersey. We increased our diaper distributions by 134% compared to 2019 and increased our partner network by 30 organizations to reach counties not previously served."

Founded in 2011, Moms Helping Moms provides low-income children with essentials like diapers, wipes, clothes, shoes, strollers and more. Since its founding MHM has distributed over millions of these essential items to families throughout New Jersey.

To learn more, or to donate, please visit momshelpingmomsfoundation.org.

#### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL DIAPER BANK NETWORK:**

The National Diaper Bank Network (NDBN) leads a nationwide movement dedicated to helping individuals, children and families access the basic necessities they require to thrive and reach their full potential...including clean, dry diapers, period supplies and other basic needs. Launched in 2011 with the support of founding sponsor Huggies®, NDBN is dedicated to creating awareness, providing assistance and building community to #EndDiaperNeed in the US. Its active membership includes more than 225 diaper banks, diaper pantries, and food banks serving local communities. More information on NDBN and diaper need is available at nationaldiaperbanknetwork.org, and on Twitter, Instagram (@DiaperNetwork) and Facebook (facebook.com/NationalDiaperBankNetwork).

#### **ABOUT THE ALLIANCE FOR PERIOD SUPPLIES:**

The Alliance for Period Supplies is an initiative of the National Diaper Bank Network (NDBN). Launched in May 2018, with the support of founding sponsor U by Kotex, the Alliance for Period Supplies raises national awareness of period poverty (#periodpoverty) and supports the development and expansion of period supply programs in communities throughout the country. The organization and Allied Programs collect, warehouse and distribute period supplies in local communities. More information on Alliance for Period Supplies is available at allianceforperiodsupplies.org, and on Twitter, Instagram (@PeriodSupplies) and Facebook.





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July 7, 4:30-5:15 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4883002.

# Tails and Tales - Music, Bubble, and **Biodiversity Dance Party**

July 22, 10:30-11:10 a.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4874519.

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July 7, 2-3 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4911064.

# **Explore Art - Animal Pattern Collage (grades 1-5)**

July 7, 3:45-4:45 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4908339.

# Family Storytime (families with children)

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July 7, 6:30-7 p.m.:

sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4927793.

July 14, 7-7:30 p.m.:

sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4914152.

# Felt Friends (grades 3-6)

July 9, 10-10:45 a.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4854740.

# **Baby Songs**

# (ages birth - 2 years and caregivers)

July 9, 11:30 a.m. - noon

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4928645.

# **RISE - Reach, Inspire, Serve, Empower** (grades 7-12)

July 9, 2-3 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4905249.

# **Learn to Play Dungeons and Dragons** (grades 4-12)

July 10, 2-3 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4871631.

# **SPEAKING OF STORIES** (GRADES 2-4)

**Pet Tales** 

July 13, 2-2:45 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4914042.

# **Animal Fun Facts**

July 27, 2-2:45 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4914017.

# **Bilingual English/Spanish Storytime** (ages 3-7 years and caregivers)

July 13, 5:30-6:15 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4847369.

# Mysterious Tales and Tails (grades K-3)

July 14, 2-2:30 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4908921.

#### SAT Strategy (grades 9-12)

July 15, 5-6:30 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4910228.

# **Dream Interpretation for Teens (grades 6-12)**

July 15, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4880926.

# **Mythological Mondays - Creature Creation** (grades K-2)

July 19, 2-2:45 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4914398.

# **Tween Trivia - Disney (grades 4-6)**

July 21, 3-4 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4925077. **Meet a Stop Motion Animator (grades 9-12)** 

July 21, 5-6 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4930898.

# Feed Yourself - Omelet (grades 9-12)

July 23, 3-3:30 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4858789.

# **Amazing Animals - True Facts and Trivia** (grades 3-6)

July 26, 2-3 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4902419.

# **Meet the Author - Katrina Moore** (Pre-K to grade 1)

July 28, 2:30-3:10 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4876289.

# **Teen Doodles and Drawings - Kawaii Kitchen** (grades 6-12)

July 28, 4-5 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4926506.

# VIRTUAL PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS The Story of Morven

Part One: July 1, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898392.

Part Two: July 8, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4899130.

# Hornets, and Wasps, and Bees, Oh My

July 6, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4888357.

# Philadelphia, A Revolutionary City

July 7, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4894633.

# Stress...the Enemy Within

July 9, 2-3 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898399.

# **History of the Jersey Shore**

July 13, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4894642.

# The Poetry of a New Nation - A Visit With **Annis Boudinot Stockton**

July 14, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898426.

# **Move Better, Feel Better Yoga Series**

11 a.m. - noon Register now:

July 15: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898431.

July 22: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898442.

July 29: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898450.

# **Trivia Night - Good Ole Summertime** July 15, 6-7 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4931205.

# **Meet the Author - Michael Birkner**

July 15, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898440.

# **Online Job Searching**

July 16, 11 a.m. - noon

# Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4908082. **Venmo, PayPal, Zelle, Payment Sharing Tools**

July 19, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898439.

# **Writers Group**

July 21, 2-3 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4894722.

# **Cooking With Herbs - From Garden to the Table**

July 21, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4894774.

# Gaming in 2021 - What's Next

July 22, 6-7 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4927917.

# **Governors Without a Script - The Challenges Faced by Alfred Driscoll and Richard Hughes**

July 22, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4898447.

# **Back to Bach - Presented by Barry Wiesenfeld**

July 27, 7-8:30 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4925092.

#### **Birds of the World**

July 28, 7-8 p.m.

Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4894793.

# Easy Cold Brew Tea/Té Fácil de Preparar en Frío

July 29, 7-8 p.m.

Bilingual Program/Programa Bilingüe

# Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4908417. **Virtual Book Discussion Salon**

July 28, 7:15-8:45 p.m.

"The Liar's Dictionary" by Eley Williams: Register now: sclsnj.libnet.info/event/4929182.

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