# WARREN MONTHLY NJ

**WARREN'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER** 

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## 3,000 ITEMS COLLECTED FOR OPERATION SHOEBOX

Warren Township Schools

4th and 5th-grade student leaders at Central School in Warren Township, NJ, organized and promoted a school-wide fundraiser in support of Operation Shoebox during the week of January 9, 2023.

Operation Shoebox is an organization dedicated to collecting donated supplies and shipping care packages to U.S. troops based in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other countries around the world.

To select the fundraising initiative, the Student Leaders discussed their top priorities. Conveniently, many students shared a desire to fundraise for Operation Shoebox. Ghina AlJadda, a 5th-grade student leader, shared, "It's an important fundraiser because we got to help American troops. It was cool to see our project help so many people.'

In an effort to promote the event, Student Leaders hung up posters throughout the school and made visits to classrooms to share the details of the fundraiser. To add a fun twist, Student Leaders sorted the items at recess and kept a running tally of the daily number of donations by grade.

5th grade came out victorious with over 500 items donated during the week.

On January 18, Rod Hirsch, the Executive Director of Operation Shoebox (NJ branch), picked up over 3,000 items from Central School, including deodorant, soap, batteries, sunscreen, toothpaste, socks, granola bars, and other essential items. Hirsch was thrilled with the quality and quantity of the donations and was eager to continue a partnership with the Central School community!

Group Leader Ms. Alyssa Pech would like to thank the amazing



(above, l-r) James Botte, Lorenzo Gramaglia, Mateo Torres, Max Sobin, Ms. Pech, Farrah Hassimi, Hayden Goldstein and Savannah Branco. Student Leaders prepare items to be stored for the next day's collection.



(above, l-r) Sorya Chen, Hayden Goldstein, Sevastian Hernandez, and Max Sobin. Student Leaders start putting items in a big bin to be brought to Operation Shoebox.

Photos by Warren Township Schools

families, students, and teachers who donated to the event. For more information on Operation Shoebox or to donate, visit their website at opshoeboxnj.org.



(above, l-r) Rod Hirsch, Savannah Branco, Leah Ferreira, Brandon May, Alisa Ianovska, Mateo Torres, and Finley Coon smile after successfully putting all the donations in the bed of the truck with a very grateful Mr. Hirsch.



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## WARREN MONTHLY

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### **WARREN CUB SCOUT PACK 182 UPDATES**

events to help our local community of Warren. Our first visit was at The Chelsea were the scouts sang a series of holiday classics to our local seniors! We also completed a Pack meeting to learn how to care, fold, and maintain the American Flag. The scouts also participated in a uniform inspection and understanding the importance of how we earn badges. Some of our

Over the past month Pack 182 had a couple scouts also did a wood working activity for our upcoming Pinewood derby car race!

For anyone interested in having their child join the Cub Scouts of Pack 182 please reach out to

Ryan Valentino rvalentino 86@hotmail.com or contact him at 732-983-1035.

Please feel free to visit our Facebook page: Cub Scout Pack 182 of Warren



Courtesy photos

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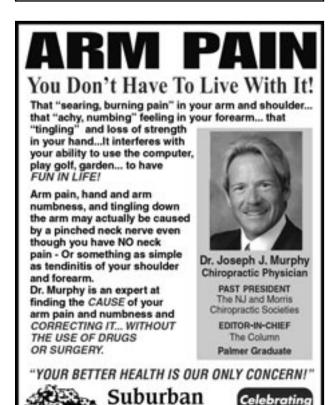
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500 Warrenville Road, Warren • Seniors aged 60 and older. Weekdays 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Please call 908-753-9440 for more information on the programs and lunch choices.

#### **Bach & Forth - Discovery Orchestra**

February 3 – 11 a.m.

In this 50-minute live presentation, The Discovery Orchestra staff member and violinist Michael Avagliano will explore how J.S. Bach creates a "conversation" of many voices out of a single instrument in his Sonata in G minor for Solo Violin. The presentation will include a live

performance of the sonata.

#### Heads up! Seniors – Anna Busler-Brain Injury Alliance of NJ

February 6 – 11 a.m.

The purpose of this workshop is to increase independence and decrease falls, along with discussing driving and pedestrian safety tips.

The workshop is fun, and interactive and designed to educate seniors on ways to be safe at home and in the community.

## Brains n Games and Hand Bells with Adrienne Graubard

February 10, 24 – 11 a.m.

Did you know that solving puzzles or challenging yourself with new mind-stretching activities like learning music can stimulate the brain and enhance your creative and critical thinking processes? Join Adrienne for some mind-tingling, brain-stumping word games and a fun-filled musical workout using hand bells.

#### Thomas Paine: Forgotten Founding Father – Marisa Bozarth

February 15 - 11 a.m.

When we think of the Founding Fathers we often think of names like Jefferson, Adams,

Franklin, and Washington; the list goes on and on. We rarely think about Thomas Paine. Paine's "Common Sense" inspired the idea of American independence and is one of the best-selling books of all time. Paine would go on to write several other pamphlets, some that would garner him fame and some that would leave him ostracized by the very people that praised him years earlier. This presentation will discuss Paine's early life, his many writings, his

Paine's early life, his many writings, his imprisonment in Europe, and why he should be remembered as a critical factor in our independence.

#### Stretch & Strength - Part 2

February 17 - 11 a.m.

Brandywine Living and Powerback
Rehabilitation present Fun, Fit & Fabulous:
Stretch and Strength. Join us for this interactive
program taught by a licensed physical therapist
to improve flexibility and mobility. A great way
to age without injury is to stretch and strengthen
the muscles so lace up those sneakers and let's
get moving!

## Fire Safety with the American Red Cross February 27 – 11 a.m.

We should all know about being prepared in the event of a fire, at home, or elsewhere. How much do you know about making your home fire-resistant and you and your family safe? Please join this program that will help you protect your family against fire. In addition, the Red Cross will install a free smoke alarm within your home. Please, be at ease knowing you



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## RELIEF FROM CHRONIC KNEE PAIN

FDA Approved Treatment to Avoid Surgery

#### DON'T BLAME THE ARROW FOR MISSING THE TARGET

Just like tens of millions of other Americans, you were looking for relief from your chronic knee pain. You thought Viscosupplementation injections might be the answer, but the results were disappointing and painful. Don't assume the treatment wasn't right. That could very well be like blaming the arrow for its path to the target when the problem might be the archer. If you didn't get the pain relief you were hoping for, chances are your injection treatment was off target. Unlike blind injections or even ultrasound targeted treatments found elsewhere.

Northeast Spine & Wellness Center uses diagnostic fluoroscopy to make sure the area that needs treated is the exact area where the injection goes. This is the most advanced method of delivering this pain relieving treatment with 95% accuracy to give you the results you're looking for. The use of Fluoroscopy guided injections sets Northeast Spine & Wellness Center apart. The end result is you living pain free from your chronic knee pain. You can avoid the lengthy and painful road of knee replacement surgery. You can avoid the endless trial and error assortment of potentially addictive prescription medications. This treatment, using fluoroscopy guided injections has seen a success rate of above 85% in those suffering from knee pain related to ostcoarthritis, and that includes people with bone on bone involvement. You've suffered from chronic knee pain long enough. Call Northeast Spine & Wellness Center now for a RISK FREE consultation.



#### If Knee Surgery Sounds Scary, It Should

Have you have been told you are facing knee replacement surgery? Have you been told about all the downsides you could be facing? First and foremost, there are NO guarantees that knee replacement surgery will be the answer to your pain,

- Surgery is costly, regardless of the percentage of services covered by insurance.
- Surgery requires lost time from work and typically requires a regimen of rehabilitation and medications.
- With surgery, there is always a risk for unwelcomed complications. And you could be back to where you started, or worse.
- Medications will be required for relief from surgery and you have been down that road before. Addictions to these pain medications can cause potential side effects, something you do not want to experience.
- · Rehabilitation can take years.

#### Consider This Alternative To Surgery

Northeast Spine & Wellness Center offers you a real opportunity and a painless way to say goodbye to your knee pain without any surgery. Here are just a few of the important benefits you should consider?

- · Diagnostic fluoroscopy accurately targets the pain, unlike blind injections
- · Guided fluoroscopic injections are virtually pain free, unlike blind injections.
- . No lost time from work or family.
- No expensive or time consuming rehabilitation.
- · No potentially addictive prescription medications.
- · Recovery time is almost instant, not months or years.

#### **How Does This New Treatment Work?**

Relief begins almost as fast as it takes to pronounce the treatment. It's called Viscosupplementation Therapy. To begin with, it starts with **Northeast** 

Spine & Wellness Center investing in the use of diagnostic fluoroscopy This enables them to target the exact location of your knee pain with pinpoint accuracy. What follows is a simple injection that causes little to no pain, especially when compared to what you may be living with daily. That explains what you will see on the surface of this revolutionary treatment. What's taking place below the surface is how and where the natural healing process takes place. The injection of a Hyaluronic acid called Hyalgan. This gel-like substance was approved by the FDA in 1996. Hyalgan is a natural substance that mimics the synovial fluid that is already produced by your body in your joints. Osteoarthritis sufferers in particular see a reduction in this much needed synovial fluid in their knee joints. Without that cushioning layer of protection, the cartilage in your knee can begin to wear away leading to the rubbing of bone on bone. Through Viscosupplementation Therapy, this natural substance immediately goes to work reducing the swelling and inflammation in the joint and adding a coating layer of protection. Think about Dorothy taking the oil can to The Tin Man. You'll begin to feel that same kind of relief and quite possibly feel like you're ready for a dance down the yellow brick road to recovery yourself. And with a success rate of over 85% in alleviating pain associated with ostcoarthritis, it's easy to see why this treatment is so readily covered by Medicare and by most major insurance providers. Diagnostic fluoroscopy to target the pain, Viscosupplementation Therapy to relieve the pain. Simple, fast and no surgery!

## Do you Suffer from any of these Symptoms?

There are a number of reasons why you developed Osteoarthritis pain. It can develop with age or because of heredity. It could be from repetitive stress from a job or some glory days in athletics. Of course your concern is with the symptoms you face daily and how to make them end, hopefully without surgery or the use of potentially addictive medications. Northeast Spine & Wellness Center understands the symptoms you have been

living with and can help. If you have any of the symptoms below, please call us today. Relief is a phone call away.

- Pain Whether it's a sharp aching or maybe a burning sensation, the pain can range from irritating to debilitating.
- Swelling This can cause tenderness and soreness to the entire knee area, making walking or going up and down stairs painful, getting in and out of bed or bathtubs difficult and dangerous just name a few activities affected by swelling.
- Stiffness Getting up out of bed or after sitting for a period of time gets more and more difficult. This loss of mobility can be more than a hindrance. It can be dangerous if you need to move quickly.
- Loss of muscle strength This can lead to balance issues and the strong possibility of falling.
- Joint deformity Not just unsightly, but painful as well.
- Creaking Joints Can be painful and a sign of more discomfort to come.
- Sleepless nights Losing sleep over your suffering is not just irritating, but potentially dangerous because of so many other health concerns that can be affected by loss of sound sleen.

#### Let Me Show You Targeted Relief From Your Knee Pain

Every day, I see patients suffering from knee pain due to arthritis, osteoarthritis, sports injuries or other conditions. Many have been told that they are in need of knee replacement surgery. Other patients say they have been prescribed various prescription medications to deal with the pain.

Something else I see almost every day, are patients that have tried viscosupplementation knee injections elsewhere and found it to be a painful and ineffective experience because the injections were not administered using fluoroscopic guidance. Instead of using the incredibly accurate diagnostic fluoros-

incredibly accurate diagnostic fluoroscopy we use at Northeast Spine & Wellness Center—these patients experienced a blind injection technique, which can be as inaccurate as playing pin the tail on the donkey

Once I am able to explain to my patients about the pin point accuracy of using diagnostic fluoroscopy and the amazing results viscosupplementation can provide, they are thrilled to get started. They are even more thrilled when they feel the relief. Please contact Northeast Spine & Wellness Center today to schedule your RISK FREE consultation.

Call 732-827-0800

Scot Paris MD, FACS

#### Here's what our patients have to say

"I'm dancing without pain. I can move with no problem whatsoever. I can go up and down steps with no pain." - Patricia G.

"Over 85% relief for the first time in 15 years, suffering with knee pain. My life is getting back to normal."

- Perry O.

"After only four visits, i have absolutely no pain! The staff is "top-notch."

- Quenton L.

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## LOCAL ARTIST CREATES HAND-CRAFTED RUGS

The Art Space at Somerset County Library System of New Jersey's (SCLSNJ) Warren branch has installed a new arts display to share with residents throughout the months of December 2022 and January 2023.

Fiber artist Lucy Walsh, of Clinton, has been creating hand-crafted hooked rugs in the traditional style since 1990.

"My rugs are all original designs and are born from a spark somewhere in my head or heart," said Walsh. "The goal is to capture a subject hooked in wool that has a special meaning to me, and which is aesthetically pleasing to others."

Continued Walsh, "I hope that you will find a rug that speaks to you and lights a spark in your heart, too."

#### **DISCOVER HOOKED RUGS:**

- "Modern Hooked Rugs" by Linda Rae Coughlin
- "Rug Hooking with Wool Strips: 20 Contemporary Projects for the Modern Rug Hooker" by Katie Kriner
- Or, email ask@sclibnj.org for additional librarian-curated resources.

The art display will be available to view during regular hours of operation. The Warren branch is located at 42 Mountain Boulevard in Warren. For more information, email Kathy DeCristofaro at kdecristofaro@sclibnj.org.



(above) Fiber artist Lucy Walsh. The Art Space at Somerset County Library System of New Jersey's (SCLSNJ) Warren branch has installed a new arts display to share with residents throughout the months of December 2022 and January 2023.

Courtesy photo



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## **SCHOOL STAFF PARTICIPATE IN MEDICAL MISSION TRIPS**

Warren Township Schools

Two Warren Township Schools' employees recently dedicated their time as volunteers on medical mission trips outside the country. Nurse Lisa Lontai traveled to Nairobi, Kenya, and French Teacher Kristen Boni to the Dajabon area in the Dominican Republic.

Lontai first heard about the Medical Mission trip with the organization Family Hope Charity from retired Watchung Hills Regional High



Photos by Lisa Lontai and Kristen Boni

(above) Warren Township Schools' Nurse Lisa Lontai with retired Watchung Hills Regional High School Nurse Nan Masterson in Korogocho, Kenya, during a medical mission trip.



(above) Warren Township Schools' French
Teacher Kristen Boni, Waves of Health
volunteer Martha Raimon, and Boni's niece and
volunteer Lilly Koerner in the Dominican
Republic during a recent medical mission trip.

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School Nurse Nan Masterson, who traveled with Lontai to Nairobi from October 14 through October 22.

Family Hope Charity is a non-profit organization that partners with specialized organizations around the globe to develop sustainable programs that help support impoverished children and young adults.

Boni completed her fifth medical mission trip with the Waves of Health organization from November 5 through November 13. Waves of Health is a non-profit medical organization that supports and educates individuals worldwide in underserved communities. Boni's husband, Dr. Christopher Boni, Internal Medicine, is a founding member of the organization.

Both Lontai and Boni were responsible for paying their airfare and travel expenses for their trips.

Lontai launched a fundraiser to help offset a portion of the trip's cost, and Boni received school supply donations.

Lontai's group saw as many as 1,000 patients, some of whom traveled up to sixty miles by foot to be seen by American doctors and nurses. Community members sought care for many ailments, such as sexually transmitted diseases, end-stage cancer, tumors, pregnancy, scabies, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), malnutrition, dental concerns, and more. Lontai was troubled by the extreme lack of preventative care. "Many patients suffered from illnesses we don't usually see in the United States because of timely care. The people of Korogocho are lucky if they can receive medical care once every six months."

Boni's team of volunteers provided primary medical and pharmaceutical care to approximately 800 patients in five communities on the border of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. "Patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension were provided with up to six months of medications," stated Boni. "All children and women of childbearing age were given multivitamins and a supply of basic over-the-counter medications." The group also

provided each community with clothing, shoes, toys, baby blankets, and school supplies that Warren Middle School students had donated.

When asked if this experience impacted Lontai as a Professional Nurse, she responded, "I feel more confident in my nursing skills; this experience made me aware of my abilities. We didn't have modern equipment like we would in America. It was essential to take accurate assessments. Many people were visiting the clinic with respiratory concerns, and without diagnostic tests available, I had to rely on my eyes, ears, and hands to assess patients and make diagnoses."

The experience, friendships, and service have left a lasting impression on Lontai. "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others; that is what the nursing profession is all about; serving others. This experience helped the residents of Korogocho, but it also taught me a lot about myself and gave me a true sense of humility."

Boni hopes her experience will help her students appreciate the importance of service to others. "As teachers, we are models for our students. At the beginning of the school year, I shared my plans to go on this medical mission, and I asked for donations of school supplies. From the generosity of the Warren families, I collected over 75 zip lock bags of school supplies to hand out to children who visited the clinics."

Boni's participation with Waves of Health has given her a unique perspective. "It makes me very thankful to live in the United States, to have access to quality health care and clean water, to have fresh food, fruit, and vegetables, to have a steady income and a roof over my head, and to have a stable family life. I am also thankful to teach in a school where there is ample access to the Internet, books, and school supplies."

Lontai and Boni exemplify the district's motto, "Shining Brighter Every Day." The school district thanks both educators for their compassion and devotion to those in need. Their service to others provides a wonderful example for the students of Warren Middle School.



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### **SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE**

wishing to apply for the Adele DeLeeuw Scholarship should obtain applications now from their school guidance office. Submission deadline is Wednesday, March 8th, 2023.

To date, the Adele DeLeeuw Scholarship Fund, a fund of the Plainfield Foundation, has provided over 1.4 million dollars in scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 over a twenty-seven year period. The awards are made in accordance with the terms of a bequest from Ms. DeLeeuw, author of 75 books, journalist and arts activist.

The Plainfield Rotary Scholarship Foundation, headed by Michael R. Townley, acts as selector for the scholarships. Eligible students are those who attend public, parochial or private high

The time to apply is now! High school seniors schools in Plainfield, North Plainfield, South Plainfield, Warren, Watchung, Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Edison. Applicants must major in one of the following areas of study: art, poetry, writing, journalism or engineering, and must also be accepted to an accredited college or university. They must demonstrate the scholastic aptitude and interest in the area of study and prove financial need.

> Interested high school students should consult their guidance counselors to obtain the necessary application information or go to the Rotary Club of the Plainfields website at rotarypnp.org/csadele-deleeuw-scholarship.php. Questions may be directed to Johanna Salvemini, Scholarship Administrator, at (908) 755-8098.

## **2023 SEWER BILLING UPDATE**

to advise sewer customers that the 2023 billing cycle will be changing this year. The bills will not be mailed out in January, as has been the practice, and they will not be due on February 1, 2023.

As a result of the dissolution of the Warren Township Sewerage Authority in July 2022, the • There will be a ten-day grace period for both. Township now manages the sewer function.

According to New Jersey finance laws, the Sewer Utility Budget follows the same schedule as the Township Budget, not the schedule of an Authority Budget.

As a result, the following will be proposed for 2023:

- The Warren Township Committee would like The sewer rates will be approved March 2023
  - The sewer bills will be mailed by April 10,
  - The first half will be due on May 1, 2023
  - The second half will be due on November 1, 2023

If you have any questions regarding the sewer bill change, please email Krisann Bintley at kbintley@warrennj.org or Laura Caliguire at lcaliguire@warrennj.org.

apologizes Township for any inconvenience this may cause you and appreciates your cooperation.

## **ANCHOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF**

The State of New Jersey has extended the deadline for filing your ANCHOR benefit application to February 28, 2023. The Affordable New Jersey Communities for Homeowners and Renters (ANCHOR) program will provide up to \$1,500 to homeowners and \$450 for the tenants.

To apply, visit the Division of Taxation's website: nj.gov/treasury/taxation/anchor The state has also established an ANCHOR hotline at 1-888-238-1233.

## **WOMEN'S GOLF ASSOCIATION LOOKING FOR MEMBERS**

The Rutgers Women's Golf Association at Rutgers University Golf Course, Piscataway, is looking for new members. The league plays 18 holes Thursday mornings from April through October.

Anyone interested in joining should contact membership chair Mary Cosgrove maryc20@msn.com or 908-507-4562.

## lick Thomas Guinness Irish Band Emerald Fire Irish Dancer Ciara Fox MARCH 11 MARCH 12 7:30 # BROOK # www.brookarts.org The Historic Brook Theater (ARTS CENTER) 732-469-7700 Bound Brook, NJ

## LIVE MUSIC AT THE **BROOK ARTS CENTER**

Catch these must-see live shows and concerts at the historic Brook Theater in Bound Brook! Tickets are available on the website (www.brookarts.org) or call the box office at 732-469-7700. Get your tickets early for the best prices and great seats! The "Special No Fee" offer on March Shows Only expires on January 31. The Brook Arts Center is located in downtown Bound Brook, NJ, one block from the Bound Brook Train station and minutes from Rt 28, 22, 287, and 78.

#### **FEBRUARY 19 AT 3 PM**

The Brook Orchestra, led by conductor Thomas Vacca, brings masterpieces from the 20th century to the present in this amazing concert on the historic Brook Theater stage. The Brook Orchestra has been in residence at the Brook Arts Center since 2016 with Vacca taking over the Music Director position in 2019. Since his arrival. the size of the orchestra has grown to over 70+ seventy members becoming a highly regarded regional orchestra - bringing beloved staples of the symphonic repertoire to Somerset County and beyond.

#### **MARCH 12 AT 3 PM**

An Afternoon with the Duprees" and special guests Tommy C "The Voice of Tribute" and Comedian Gina DiMaggio. The tradition and sound that made the Duprees a well-loved and successful group have echoed through time for more than 50 years. The Duprees still thrills audiences with their smooth harmonies and romantic sound as they revitalize their top hits for new generations. Tommy Petillo, Phil Granito, and Jimmy Spinelli continue to show their dedication and passion for the music that started on a Jersey City street corner and grew to something both classic and timeless.

#### **MARCH 11 AT 8 PM**

Celebrate St. Patty's day a wee bit early with The Irish Cabaret starring internationally acclaimed singer Andy Cooney and the Guinness Irish Band along with the finest in Irish entertainment showcasing the best of Ireland's music, song, comedy, and dance! With special guests Comedian Mick Thomas, Celtic Folk Singer Ciara Fox, and The Emerald Fire Irish Dancers, Cooney is one of the greatest singing sensations on the Irish Music scene today. Christened Irish America's Favorite Son by The New York Times, it is a title he richly deserves.



## **LIBRARY VIRTUAL PROGRAMS**

To join a virtual program by phone, dial 646-876-9923. After dialing, you will be prompted to enter a meeting ID, which is unique for every event. The meeting ID is the series of numbers at the end of the Zoom link posted for each event. Visit SCLSNJ.org.

#### **Black Scientists We Should Know**

February 1, 7-8:30 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6770636.

The Most Fascinating, Obscure Figure in **American History - Benjamin Lay, Abolitionist** 

February 6, 7-8 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6765075.

Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune -The Link to our Past, Present, and Future

February 7, 7-8 p.m.; https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6889393.

**Bessie Coleman - Fly! Bessie, Fly! Performed by Daisy Century from American Historical Theater** 

February 8, 7-8 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6916020.

The Legacy of Harry and Harriette Moore

February 9, 7-8 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6816281.

> **Chocolate Lover's Desserts -**A Virtual Bake-Along

February 13, 7-8:30 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6963073.

**Advanced Care Planning - Wills and Healthcare Proxies Made Simple** 

February 15, 7-8 p.m.; https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/7147236.

**Motown - Music That Moved the World** 

February 16, 7-8 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6836221.

**The Harlem Renaissance -Courage, Grace and Vision** 

February 21, 7-8 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6775462.

**Jesse Owens - A Life in American History** 

February 22, 7 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6911416.

**Overview of Atrial Fibrillation -February is Heart Month** 

February 23, 7-8 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/7086590.

The Food and the Folks of the Great Migration February 27, 7-8 p.m.

https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/6830532.

**Self-Care Advocate -**7 Steps to Prevent Chronic Disease

February 28, 7-8 p.m. https://sclsnj.libnet.info/event/7093964.

## **CERT MEMBERS ARE VITAL TO LOCAL DISASTER RESPONSE**

Somerset County

Somerset County's Office of Emergency Management graduated another seven local residents during the November 2022 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Basic Training. These volunteers spent twenty-six hours over seven days learning how to support their community and first-responders when disasters strike through a coordinated, team effort at the municipal or county level.

"The expansion of our CERT volunteer base means that our municipalities and Somerset County will be more prepared to respond to disasters in the future, including those caused by the increasing frequency and severity of storms here in Central Jersey," said Commissioner Doug Singleterry, liaison to the Office of Emergency Management. "We all owe a debt of gratitude to these volunteers who give their time and expertise preparing our communities to respond in crisis, and being the foundation of our response when crises strike."

November's CERT class included residents of Branchburg, Manville, Bernardsville, Warren, South Bound Brook and Peapack Gladstone and are eligible to join their local CERT programs. Local CERTs train and organize teams of volunteers to assist their families, neighbors, coworkers and other community members during

emergencies when professional responders may not be immediately available to provide assistance.

Following their full week of training in Disaster Preparedness, CERT Organization, Light Search and Rescue, Disaster Psychology, Terrorism, Fire Safety, Medical Operations and Sheltering Operations each participant must complete a written exam and practical exercise to graduate. The practical excises include "cribbing" to remove a person trapped under a heavy object using leverage, and a search and rescue simulation.

Before, during, and after disasters, CERT volunteer teams perform basic response activities, including checking in on neighbors, distribution of information to the public, supporting emergency operations centers, and helping to manage traffic and crowds. The deployment of CERT volunteers to perform these activities frees up professional responders to focus efforts on more complex, essential, and often life-saving tasks. CERT volunteers also support their communities by organizing, promoting, and participating in emergency preparedness events, activities, and projects.

For more information regarding the CERT program, please utilize the following link: bit.ly/SoCoCERT



(above) Somerset County's November CERT training graduated additional volunteers ready to jump into action to protect neighbors and free up first-responders when disaster strikes their local communities.

Photo by Somerset County





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## NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED CEO VISITS WARREN TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

The CEO of the newly merged International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Mr. Richard Culatta, made a special visit to Warren Township Schools on January 6, 2023, to observe Warren staff and students engaging in innovative educational practices with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Matthew Mingle.

Dr. Mingle assumed the role of Co-President of the organization's Board of Directors on January 1, 2023. He previously served on the ASCD Board of Directors from July 1, 2018, until the merger of two education nonprofits.

ASCD has over 75 years of experience working with educators from every level in all 50 states and more than 200 countries through the provision of professional learning opportunities and thought leadership. ISTE inspires the creation of solutions and connections that improve opportunities for all learners by delivering: practical guidance, evidence-based professional learning, virtual networks, thought-

provoking events and the ISTE Standards, which provide competencies for learning, teaching, and leading in the digital age.

Culatta has served as the Chief Innovation Officer for the state of Rhode Island and as the Director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology. Culatta made great strides to expand connectivity to schools across the country, promote personalized learning and develop the National Education Technology Plan.

The first stop on Culatta's tour began at Mt. Horeb elementary school. Upon arrival, Culatta and Mingle were greeted by Principal Scott Cook, grade 5 teacher Ms. Jill Andrews, and grade five students Harry Franco and Sonia Prabhakar. Franco and Prabhakar welcomed Culatta to Warren Township and briefly described their school and what to expect during the visit.

Culatta, Mingle, and Cook entered the 5thgrade social studies classroom of Mr. Christopher Schwallie and Andrews, whose students have been utilizing technology, specifically Google Earth, in their classroom presentations.

Grade 5 student Sophia McGlynn took the class and visitors on a virtual exploration of the life of Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon, while Divisha Choudhary took the class on a virtual trip along the Oregon Trail, making stops along the way using the Google program as a visual aid. The final presentation by Benjamin Armento allowed the students to discover and see real-life locations from the Underground Railroad that helped transport thousands of American slaves to freedom.

Culatta and Mingle then went to the library to meet with Library Media Specialist Ms. Christine Burkhardt, Technology Coach Mrs. Michelle Zgombic and the creative crew of grade five students producing movie trailers for books on their iPads. The students worked in pairs to select a book, create a script, pick out background music, and film the trailer. The movie trailers will be shared with the younger students to promote specific books and to build excitement and a love for reading.

Culatta was impressed with the students, staff, and the updated library, especially the seating!

After an inspiring morning at Mt. Horeb School, Mingle and Culatta traveled to Warren Middle School (WMS) to meet with Mr. George Villar, Principal, and Ms. Maria Mensinger, Assistant Principal. Villar directed the group to the library to meet Library Media Specialist Mrs. Myranda Shimko, who was observing a group of students engaged in a virtual reality engineering activity. Culatta commended Shimko for posting signs around the library to remind students of the importance of Digital Citizenship.

Villar then led Culatta and Mingle up the hallway to the classroom of Mr. Sean Convery, Unified Arts Teacher, who was actively teaching an interesting lesson on coding using Minecraft Education Edition. The students were thoroughly engaged in the activity, demonstrating creativity, verbal communication, problem-solving skills, and collaboration.

Villar showcased a few more classrooms before ending the tour in the Innovation and Design room of Mrs. Lynn Alger, where grade 6 students were working with SketchUp, a Computer Aided Design program that teaches the students how to program and create a scaled 3D drawing of a house. The second center in Alger's room was an Earthquake Tower. In this center, students were researching and learning about earthquake-resistant buildings and were working on creating a five-story tower out of balsa wood.

"Our staff members work hard to provide innovative educational experiences for our students and our students rise to the challenge time and time again," Mingle said. "Seeing the Warren Township student experience come alive through the eyes of someone with Mr. Culatta's breadth of knowledge reiterated the great things happening in the district. I was most impressed by our student leaders, who shepherded him through their learning experiences. It is always great to be able to celebrate the ways we are shining brighter!"



(above) Richard Culatta, made a special visit to Warren Township Schools on January 6, 2023.

Photos courtesy of Warren Township Schools





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## **SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS RECEIVE HIGH HONORS**

#### Warren Township Schools

Five teachers and five Educational Services Professionals from Warren Township Schools have been named recipients of the Governor's Educator of the Year awards. Three additional Warren teachers have achieved the coveted Exemplary Educator Recognition Award.

#### **TEACHER RECIPIENTS**

- Angelo L. Tomaso School Elena Marinello, Grade 1 Teacher
- Central School Sara Kolesar, Grade 3 Teacher
- Mt. Horeb School Deborah Yankowicz, Preschool Teacher
- Woodland School John Tsihlas, Health and Physical Education Teacher
- Warren Middle School Kristen Boni, French Teacher

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROFESSIONAL RECIPIENTS

- Angelo L. Tomaso School Alison Hales, Occupational Therapist
- Central School Emily Niclas, Speech Language Pathologist
- Mt. Horeb School Helen Moore, Paraprofessional
- Woodland School Jacqueline Fattell -Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant
- Warren Middle School Sarah Claxton -Paraprofessional

#### **EXEMPLARY EDUCATOR RECIPIENTS**

- Angelo L. Tomaso School Sanjita Livingston, Special Education Teacher
- Mt. Horeb School Rebecca Maag, Grade 1 Teacher
- Woodland School Adam Yenish, Grade 5 Teacher

All thirteen educators were met with a big surprise on the morning of December 6, when Superintendent of Schools Dr. Matthew Mingle, Board of Education President Mr. David Brezee, their respective principals, members of the Board Office, and other visitors made unscheduled popins to each of the district's five schools. The group briefly interrupted each staff member's class for the principal to deliver the exciting news and a beautiful bouquet of flowers. In each case, the award recipient received rounds of applause, as well as high fives and hugs from their students.

The Governor's Educator of the Year recipients were selected based on their exceptional skill and dedication to the students of Warren Township. All ten educators are known for their strong leadership skills, effective communication with their colleagues and families, and their ability to inspire all of their students to reach their fullest potential.

The Exemplary Educators program invites public schools to identify outstanding educators for special recognition. Each district is permitted to nominate three individuals. Warren Township Schools is pleased to announce that all three teachers that were nominated (Livingston, Maag, and Yenish) were, in fact, selected and will join one hundred and seventy-eight of their colleagues from around the state of NJ in this honor. The district's exemplary educators exhibit strong knowledge and skill, have an inspiring presence, and always have a positive impact on their students, colleagues, and the entire school community.



(above, l-r) Rebecca Maag, Deborah Yankowicz, and Helen Moore.



(above, l-r) Kristen Boni and Sara Claxton.



(abovem l-r) Sarah Kolesar and Emily Niclas.



(above, l-r) Elena Marinello, Sanjita Livingston, Dr. Allison Hales.



(above, l-r) Adam Yenish, Jacqueline Fattell, and John Tsihlas.

Photos by Warren Township Schools





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