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Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

NJ

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TREE OF LIGHTS DEDICATED BARRY HUNSINGER & ALL VOLS

Submitted by Genevieve Nitzsche, President, Watchung Rescue Squad

On December 7th, 2024, the Watchung Rescue Squad hosted its 34th annual Tree of Lights celebration. Residents, friends, and families gathered together on the Village Green, to honor the life of Mr. Barry Hunsinger, a lifelong resident of Watchung and all volunteer committee and board members within Watchung. Barry's daughter, Dani, and wife, Adriana, spoke on his life and the importance of the Village Green to him. Dani Hunsinger announced due to her fundraising efforts, a memorial bench and tree will be placed on the Village Green in her late father's memory.

As the ceremony continued, one member of each volunteer board and committee came forward in honor of their respective group's efforts and their impact on the Borough of Watchung. The individuals were as follows: Phyllis Juette on behalf of the Traffic & Beautification Committee, DJ Hunsinger on behalf of the Board of Adjustment, Tamara Benc on behalf of the Library Advisory Board, Charlie Neiss on behalf of the Green Team, Carolyn Solon on behalf of the Community Emergency Response Team, Rachel Funcheon on behalf of the Environmental Commission, Tim Logan on behalf of the Historical Commission, Bill Jacques on behalf of the Recreation Commission, Diane Logan on behalf of the Board of Health, and Paul Ost on behalf of the Watchung Fire Department.

All other volunteers of the Borough were recognized, and other attendees were encouraged to become involved in their community by volunteering in any capacity.

The Mayor of Watchung, Ronald Jubin Ph.D, spoke and reiterated the importance of volunteerism in the community, also encouraging individuals to become involved. He also emphasized the value of the Rescue Squad and the services the Squad provides to Borough residents, free of charge.

Many local businesses, including Brandywine Living at Mountain Ridge, Miller's Ale House, Chick-Fil-A, M Square Real Estate, POURtuga, and the Watchung PBA Local 193 were present at the event and handed out various food and beverage items as well as other goodies for all attendees. The ceremony concluded with the lighting of the tree and a fireworks display by Garden State Fireworks that lit up the winter night sky.

The Tree of Lights ceremony is traditionally held on the first Saturday in December and the tree is lit in honor and remembrance of the lives lost at Pearl Harbor. This event is one of the Watchung Rescue Squad's biggest fundraisers, as well. Individuals make a tax-deductible donation and can dedicate a light on the tree in honor or remembrance of a loved one. Below is the list of dedications for the 2024 year.

Courtesy photo



Ashley's November Warren Market Update

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of sales

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Average Days on Market

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of houses on the market

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ANNUAL WINTER INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT

The Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Music Department recently resented its Annual Winter Instrumental Concert, a celebration of musical talent and holiday spirit. Under the direction of Allan V. Daleus, Director of Instrumental Music, the WHRHS instrumental ensembles, including the String Orchestra,

Symphonic Band, Concert Band, and Wind Ensemble, performed an eclectic program featuring classic holiday tunes, contemporary pieces, and traditional repertoire. Highlights of the evening included "The Night Before Christmas" being narrated by Mr. Peter Martin, a WHRHS teacher.



(above) The Winter Instrumental Concert featured the incredible talent and teamwork of Watchung Hills Regional High School students while fostering a sense of togetherness and holiday cheer.

Courtesy photos

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GREEN TEAM HONORED

Borough of Watchung

Congratulations and a giant thank you to the Green Team Advisory Committee for their achievement in earning Sustainable Jersey's Silver Certification. This accomplishment is a testament to the endless hard work and dedication of the Borough's Green Team! For the 2024 Sustainable Jersey application cycle, 28 towns

achieved certification at the more advanced silver-level to make a total of 68 towns that are silver-certified in the program. The Green Team focused on completing the Energy Tracking and Management, Fleet Inventory, and Prescription Drug Safety and Disposal actions. We are so proud that Watchung is amongst these certification recipients.

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WARRENBROOK SENIOR CENTER - DECEMBER CALENDAR

Warrenbrook Golf Course, 500 Warrenville Rd., Warren, NJ. Tel: 908-753-9440 • Open Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

New Year's Trivia

January 2, 11 a.m.

We will play New Year's resolutions word scramble, Word Search and learn some New Year Traditions from Around the World.

Snowy Snow Night Craft

January 3, 11 a.m.

with Karen Haake – We will create a snowy night scene inspired by the former artist Vincent Van Gogh. All materials will be provided. Pre-registration is required.

Tapping Solution

January 6, 11 a.m.

Part 2 of 3. Alicia Grey, a certified tapping practitioner, will offer a workshop to introduce you to this incredible self-help tool.

The Somerset County Traveling Library.

January 6, 1 p.m.

Sign up for a library card, get help troubleshooting technology, check out a book, or just share a book you are currently reading.

Jeopardy

January 7, 11 a.m.

Play Jeopardy in which categories include Winter Flavors & Treats, January Fun Facts, Little Foods, Winter Idioms, Hodgepodge.

Blood Pressure Screening

January 8, 10:30 a.m.

Visiting Nurse Association will meet with you individually and take your blood pressure and answer your questions.

Bingo sponsored by Kristina Bischof of Country Arch Care Center

January 8, 11 a.m.

Bingo is more than just an exciting activity.

Breathing techniques for mental wellness

January 9, 11 a.m.

Dr Prabha Srinivas will be teaching some practices that can be used to distract the mind and induce calm during an anxiety episode.

New Year's Musical Entertainment

January 10, 11 a.m.

As we kick off the new year, we will welcome the year 2025 by singing and dancing to the music provided by Lorri Woodward.

Musical Colors!

January 13, 11 a.m.

Discovery Orchestra staff will explore the seasonal landscape of "Autumn," one of Antonio Vivaldi's famous collection of violin concertos, The Four Seasons. The presentation will include a live performance and interactive audience experience.

Drum Circle with Anil Sachadev

January 13, 1 p.m.

Soothe the mind, body and spirit in this drumming circle.

Craft – Snowflakes with Parul

January 14, 11 a.m.

We will be creating simple, beautiful and stunning snowflakes. All materials will be provided. Pre-registration is required.

Monthly Book Club

(Hybrid) January 14, 1:30 PM

Meets Every Second Tuesday of the month.

Supporting Aging at Home

January 15, 11 a.m.

This presentation is designed to help older adults maintain their independence and quality of life while remaining in their own homes.

Penguin Paradise of South Atlantic (Video)

January 16, 11 a.m.

In the middle of the Antarctic Ocean, an entire mountain range arises from the water: South Georgia, the nursery of the Antarctic. Hundreds of thousands of penguins, elephant seals, fur seals and their young overcrowd the beaches.

Winter Adaptations

January 17, 11 a.m.

Explore how wildlife survives the long winter.

Closed in observance of Martin Luther King

January 20

Boggle

January 21, 11 a.m.

This is a challenging game that is played using a grid of letters.

Hearing Screening

January 22, 11 a.m.

A hearing screening is a brief test to detect if you have hearing loss.

Armchair Travels to China

January 23, 11 a.m.

China! We will visit the Great Wall of China and learn its secrets. We will watch the Chinese Dragon Dance and play China Trivia.

Brains n Games and Hand Bells with Adrienne Graubard.

January 24, 11 a.m.

Join Adrienne for some mind-tingling, brain-stumping word games and a fun-filled musical workout using hand bells.

Garden State:

Living Off the Land in 19th Century New Jersey

January 27, 11 a.m.

Explore the agricultural history of New Jersey.

Technology

January 28, 11 a.m.

Discover how simple tech tricks can help you. **Unleash Your Inner Dragon Artist! - with Parul**

January 29, 11 a.m.

Let's bring a mythical creature to life!

Chinese Bingo

January 29, 1 p.m.

Let's play bingo and discover the fascinating world of Chinese traditions and zodiac animals!

Bingo sponsored by Waypoint Legal

January 30, 11 a.m.

Bingo is more than just an exciting activity.

Blaxploitation – with Charlie Smith

January 31, 10:30 a.m.

Charlie will provide a review of the so-called "Blaxploitation" films of the 70s

Yoga with Kartika

Mondays, 10 a.m.

This class is open to all levels of skill.

Studio 60+

1st and 3rd Mondays, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Warrenbrook Seniors will meet twice a month to plan the events they are interested in.

Mahjong for Intermediate Players

Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

If you are an intermediate mahjong player then join us on Tuesday mornings.

Take control with Exercise

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

This is an exercise program, in video form.

Zumba Gold with Judith

Tuesdays, 10:15 a.m.

Get your blood pumping with some zesty music that will truly inspire a hearty workout.

Bridge Group with Ronnie

Tuesdays, 1 – 4 p.m.

Bridge is a mentally challenging card game that offers intellectual and social stimulation.

Geri-Fit

Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m.

Geri-Fit is a unique and evidence-based seated (standing optional) exercise program.

Line Dancing with Lynda Hyland

Thursdays, 9:30 – 10:15 a.m.

Increase cardiovascular and muscular strength as well as improve coordination and balance as you work through different moves.

Card/Table Games

Thursdays, 1 – 4 p.m.

Join in and play some of your favorite games such as Dominoes, Left-Center-Right, dice games, Rummikub, Canasta, Mexican Train.

Bridge

Fridays, 1 – 4 p.m.

Playing bridge regularly stimulates your brain and helps keep your memory active.

Tai Chi with Roger

Tai Chi can help reduce falls, especially for those with balance problems. This program can be practiced while either standing or sitting.

No class on January 24 & 31

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HICKORY TREE CHORUS WINTER SING-ALONG

Stay warm this winter by putting some music in your life in 2025! Join the Hickory Tree Chorus for a Winter Sing-Along, which will include a meet-and-greet, warm-ups and, of course, some wonderful singing. Dates are January 8 and 15, 2025, from 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. at The Shrine of St Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Road, Stirling, NJ. The chorus sings a variety of music, including old-fashioned love songs, Broadway, Disney, Beatles, and more, in a fun, supportive community. Come sing with us and share the joy of music together! Stay for friendship and fun!

And the event is free!

Hickory Tree is an award-winning women's chorus singing four-part a cappella harmony in the barbershop style. We are passionate about music, performance, fun and friendship. We believe every voice counts and encourage women singers of all ages, colors, ethnicities, and orientations to visit us and share our joy of music.

Please contact the Chorus for the Winter Sing-Along by email at info@hickorytreechorus.org. Find more information at hickorytreechorus.org.



(above) The Hickory Tree award-winning women's chorus is hosting free events on January 8 and 15, 2025, from 6:45 to 9:30 p.m. at The Shrine of St Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Road, Stirling, NJ.

Courtesy photo

GARDEN CLUB MAKES LIBRARY FESTIVE

The Garden Club of Watchung beautifully decorated the Watchung Library, and the results are like something out of Norman Rockwell. They have truly captured an old-fashioned

holiday spirit! The public is warmly invited to stop by to enjoy the Garden Club's efforts in the library's temporary location in the former Valley Furniture building off of the Watchung Circle.



Courtesy photos

THE KID FROM WARREN

Watchung Hills Regional High School

Watchung Hills Regional High School alum Daniel Edelman made waves on Saturday, December 7th, when he took to the field with the New York Red Bulls in the MLS Cup Final against the LA Galaxy, showcasing his talent on soccer's biggest stage.

Edelman, grew up in Warren Township attending Central School and then Warren Middle School to Watchung Hills Regional High School where he played soccer, Daniel Edelman has always been "The Kid from Warren".

The Warren community is thrilled to cheer on one of its own and extends heartfelt support to Daniel as he continues to represent his hometown with pride



(above) Daniel Edelman

Photo by Watchung Hills Regional High School



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CELEBRATING 75 YEARS NIGHT SKY GAZING

Amateur Astronomers, Inc (AAI) of Cranford, NJ celebrated their 75th Anniversary on Sunday, November 17, 2024, at The Westwood Caterers of Garwood, NJ. In attendance were 53 past and current members who range from teenagers to seniors.

AAI has always interested anyone who loves looking and learning about the night sky. Housed in the William Miller Sperry Observatory on the Union College campus in Cranford, the observatory is open to the public every Friday night with their twin domes looking at the heavens. One of the domes houses a 24-inch reflector and the other dome houses a 10 refractor, which was constructed by club members. Public lectures start at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays, they are on current topics in Astronomy.

Youth lectures are presented by the club at 7:00 p.m. to preregistered scout groups to help them earn their patches in science. If you are interested in preregistering a scout group, please contact info@asterism.org.

The club also celebrates celestial events such as eclipses by opening the Observatory and having numerous telescopes outside the building. For more information about AAI email, membership@asterism.org or visit asterism.org.

ASTRONOMY DAY - MAY 17, 2025

Amateur Astronomers, Inc. along with the North Jersey Astronomical Group, two amateur astronomy clubs located in New Jersey, are once again holding their annual Astronomy Day on Saturday, May 17, 2025. The event will be held in 2 locations: Trailside Nature & Science Center in Mountainside in the afternoon and at William Miller Sperry Observatory on the campus of Union College in Cranford in the evening. The theme is "Solar Max, Unlocking the Secrets of the Sun." This is a family friendly event that focuses on learning about our Sun and its impact on us, and also about astronomy and related sciences in a fun and easy to understand atmosphere. This event appeals to both children and adults. The event is free and open to the public and does not require preregistration. So, mark your calendars for Saturday, May 17, 2025, and come out to learn more about the Sun and our universe!



(above) AAI has always interested anyone who loves learning about the night sky. Housed in the William Miller Sperry Observatory on the Union College campus in Cranford, the observatory is open to the public every Friday nights. One of the domes houses a 24-inch reflector and the other dome houses a refractor. Public lectures start at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays, on current topics in Astronomy.

MERRYMAKING CONTINUES FOR THE DAR

Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) ended the year on a festive note as they gathered in December at the Somerset County Environmental Education Center in Basking Ridge to decorate a tree for the annual Festival of Trees. Their tree, "Celebrating America By Honoring Our Patriot Ancestors," featured the brief biographies of all 48 Revolutionary War ancestors of the current members of Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter.

The season of celebration will continue as the chapter observes its 129th anniversary on January 25 with members, prospective members, family, and friends attending a luncheon at Prezzo's Restaurant in Warren. New members will be sworn in, and a guest speaker will present a program on America's participation in the 1900 Paris Exposition. After a brief winter break,

monthly chapter meetings will resume in March.

Upcoming spring projects include a pet food drive for a local shelter, a service day to clean historic headstones, a program on Spain's contributions to the American Revolution, the N.J. DAR Spring Conference and making plans for the Semi quincentennial — America's 250th birthday — coming up in 2026.

The DAR is a nonprofit nonpolitical service organization open to women 18 and over who are descended from a patriot of the American Revolution. The organization promotes education, historic preservation, and patriotism. Based in Green Brook, Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter serves areas of Somerset, Middlesex, and Union counties. New members are welcome. Contact the chapter at ESCchapterDAR@gmail.com.



(above, l-r) DAR members pose with a tree honoring their ancestors: Front row: Holly Dunbar, Lynda Pasko. Back row: Beth Kavanaugh, Karen Miller, Nancy Stoll, Catherine Niemeyer, Ashley Salsano and Maryellen DeCoster.

Courtesy photo

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JOSEPH DOLL CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIFESAVING HEART TRANSPLANT

NJ Sharing Network

As we honored the brave men and women who served our country this Veterans Day, Joseph Doll, a Vietnam veteran from Green Brook, reflected on his own incredible journey - not only as a proud serviceman but as a heart transplant recipient who recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of his lifesaving transplant.

A decade ago, after battling advanced heart failure due to his service-related exposure to Agent Orange, Joseph received the ultimate gift - a new heart - thanks to the selflessness of an organ donor. Today, Joseph enjoys precious moments with his family, moments he once feared he would never experience. In addition, Joseph has become a passionate advocate for NJ Sharing Network, using his story to raise awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation.

“Organ donation gave me my life back and has allowed me to experience many incredible moments. I encourage everyone to register as organ and tissue donors. You can truly make a difference and save lives,” said Joseph.

From Vietnam Veteran to Heart Transplant Survivor

Joseph Doll’s battle with heart disease began early in life. At the age of 21, shortly after returning home from military service in Vietnam, Joseph was diagnosed with chronic hypertension. Despite undergoing multiple heart procedures over the years, including a triple bypass and valve replacements, his heart condition continued to worsen.

Joseph’s journey to transplant was fraught with emotional and physical challenges. In addition to his own medical battle, his wife, Harriette, was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. Their daughter Carrie and her husband Nathan were also expecting the birth of their first child at the same time.

On October 16, 2014, Joseph’s prayers were answered thanks to a successful heart transplant

at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center.

“Words cannot express the gratitude I have for my donor Steven and his family. They gave me the ultimate gift - a second chance at life. I honor them every day by living fully and appreciating every moment,” said Joseph. “Meeting Steven’s family in person at NJ Sharing Network was one of the most profound moments of my life. We are like family now.”

Adding to his many blessings, Joseph celebrated the birth of his first granddaughter, Reagan, just two days after his heart transplant. Joseph also shared the heartening news that Harriette had her cancerous thyroid removed seven weeks after his transplant and enjoyed many years of good health. Though Harriette is currently facing a new health challenge with uterine cancer, they remain hopeful and continue to support each other through every step.

Now, ten years after his transplant, Joseph remains active, shares his story to inspire others, and continues to advocate for NJ Sharing Network’s lifesaving mission.

“I’m not wasting a second. I go for long walks, I travel, and I spend as much time with my family as I can. Waking up every morning and knowing I get to be here for these moments is the greatest feeling,” said Joseph.

According to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), over 100,000 Americans are waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant, with nearly 4,000 of them in New Jersey. One organ and tissue donor can save eight lives and enhance the lives of over 75 others. However, the opportunity to give the gift of life is extremely rare - not everyone who registers as a donor is able to donate after they pass away. In fact, less than 1% of all deaths meet the specific medical criteria to be an organ donor. This underscores the pressing need for more registered donors.

To learn more about organ donation, get involved, and join the National Donate Life Registry, visit www.NJSharingNetwork.org.



At Center) Joseph Doll receives the Vinnie DiPane Award from the Vietnam Veterans of America - Chapter 233 for his commitment to the organization. Standing with Joseph Doll is (left-to-right) Robin Goodrich, Steven Leventhal, Joseph Doll’s granddaughter Reagan, Harriette Doll, and James Hixon.

(Photos Credit: Courtesy of NJ Sharing Network)



Joseph Doll with his granddaughter, Reagan, honor fallen heroes at the historical colonial cemetery of the First Presbyterian Church of Woodbridge.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT NEW JERSEY BLOOD SERVICES

New Jersey Blood Services (NJBS), a division of New York Blood Center, which provides blood for local patients, is looking for a few good volunteers. The blood drive volunteer is an integral member of our team whose tasks include assisting donors with registration and/or at the refreshment area. No medical background necessary. Volunteers should be outgoing to provide friendly customer service, be able to perform tasks as needed, must provide proof of COVID Vaccination prior to volunteering and must have transportation. All training is provided including additional precautions for the safety of our team and blood donors. For additional information call or text Sharon Zetts, Manager, NJBS Volunteer Services at 732-850-8906, Monday to Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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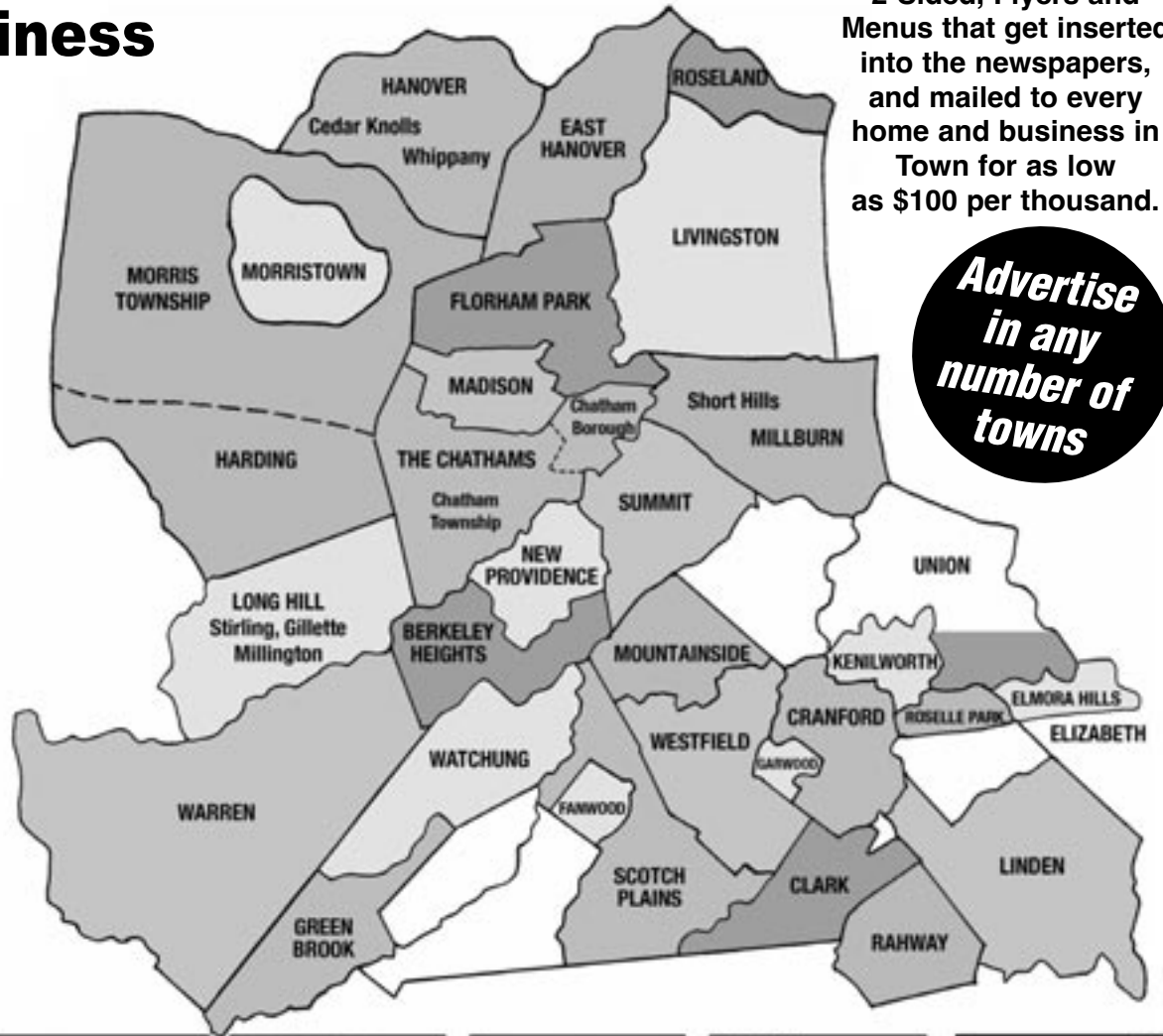
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Long Hill LEADER NJ Qty: 3,500 Zips: 07933, 07946, 07980	MADISON MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,300 Zip: 07940	Short Hills MILLBURN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 8,200 Zips: 07041, 07078	MORRIS TOWNSHIP TIMES NJ Qty: 13,500 Zip: 07960, Harding 07976	MORRISTOWN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 7,000 Zip: 07960	MOUNTAINSIDE NJ VIEW Qty: 3,000 Zip: 07092	New Providence NEWS NJ Qty: 5,100 Zip: 07974	OUR TOWN Rahway, NJ Qty: 13,100 Zip: 07065
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AN UNUSUAL GOOSE REHABBED AND RELEASED

The Raptor Trust

The Brant goose, with its compact size and striking black-and-white plumage, is a remarkable bird. Adapted to drink saltwater, these geese embark on long migratory journeys from their Arctic breeding grounds to coastal winter

habitats. Look for them in estuaries, mudflats, and saltmarshes, where they thrive throughout the winter months.

Recently, The Raptor Trust treated a Brant goose (Admit #21-4190) found in Long Valley with wounds from a predator attack. After intensive care, including suturing lacerations, treating an eye injury and parasites, this resilient bird was successfully released at Sandy Hook on November 2nd.

ABOUT THE RAPTOR TRUST

The Raptor Trust is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located at 1390 White Bridge Rd., Millington, NJ. They provide free care and assistance to injured, sick, or orphaned wild birds. They offer educational programs to the public about wild birds, especially birds of prey. They strive to provide a human example for others. For more information about upcoming events, to make a donation, and volunteer opportunities visit info@theraptortrust.org. To report an injured wild bird call 908-647-2353.



(above) We're thrilled to see this Brant goose take to the skies (or water) once more! It was a charming patient.

Photo by The Raptor Trust

NEW JERSEY YOUTH CHORUS TO HOLD AUDITIONS IN JANUARY

The New Jersey Youth Chorus, a program of Wharton Arts, will hold mid-year auditions in January 2025 for singers in grades 3-12. To register for an audition for one of its five auditioned ensembles, visit NJYC.org.

Special events this season for NJYC choristers include travel to Princeton and Philadelphia, choral festivals at Carnegie Hall and the University of Connecticut, and collaborations with the St. Louis Children's Choir and the Rhode Island Children's Choir. Additionally, Coriste and Camerata will embark on an international tour to Germany, Belgium, and The Netherlands. For more information, call (973) 998-5670 or email info@njyc.org.

Wharton Arts' mission is to offer accessible, high quality performing arts education that sparks personal growth and builds inclusive communities.

Wharton Arts' vision is for a transformative performing arts education in an inclusive community to be accessible for everyone.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center serving nearly 2,000 students through a range of classes and ensembles. The 5 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Chorus, an auditioned choral ensemble program for students in grades 3-12, encourage a love and appreciation of choral music while nurturing personal growth and creative development. The 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony, which serve over 500 students in grades 3-12 by audition, inspire young people to achieve musical excellence through high-level ensemble training and performance opportunities. Based in Paterson, the Paterson Music Project is an El Sistema-inspired program of Wharton Arts that uses music education as a vehicle for social action by empowering and inspiring young people to achieve their full potential through the community experience of ensemble learning and playing. From Pathways classes for young children to Lifelong Learning programs for adults, the Wharton Performing Arts School has a robust musical theater and drama program and offers both private and group classes for instruments and voice for all ages and all abilities. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable our students to achieve their personal best.

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