

BOROUGH OF

WATCHUNG

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER - FALL/WINTER 2026



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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Residents,

Watchung was built on tradition and an independent spirit. That spirit led our forebears to break from industrialized North Plainfield to protect their rural, farming identity, much as the colonists joined together for our nation's independence 250 years ago. That same community pride lives on today, and it was only fitting that we celebrated together in 2026.

What a Centennial year it has been! The celebrations and infrastructure improvements will make 2026 a year we remember for a long time. Let's pause to honor the dedication of Watchung's employees, volunteers, and my fellow Council members, who turned a shared vision into reality. To everyone who volunteered, donated, or joined us: Thank you.

Behind the scenes, our community's passion for local history turned great ideas into memorable events. I am deeply grateful to the members of my ad hoc committees. Centennial Committee co-chair Mike Departo and vice-chair Sue Tucker, who also serves as Borough Historian, worked closely with the 250 Committee to bring those ideas to life. The committee also includes Historical Chair Karen Jubin, Vice Chair Chris Vander Fliet, Council members Christine Ead and Rob Gibbs, and our Municipal Clerk, Colleen Lange.

Events take tremendous work, and I am indebted to our Administrator, Jim Damato, who led the way alongside Colleen, Deputy Clerk Gloria Rivera, and our wonderful Recreation Coordinator, Damaris Quinones-Gray. They made it happen for all of us. I also want to thank our first responders, including OEM Coordinator Carolyn Solon and our Police, Fire, Rescue Squad, and Public Works departments, for keeping every event fun and safe. The Centennial concert and fireworks, Founders Day, and the Centennial Golf Scholarship Outing celebrated our past while giving back to our community. More volunteers deserve thanks than I can name here, and I am grateful to each one of you.

Honoring our values. We honored our founders by carrying their values forward preserving Watchung's rural character and limiting overdevelopment and its environmental impact. This year, new celebrations also raised funds for our school-aged children. The Centennial concert and fireworks event brought in several thousand dollars for the Watchung Educational Foundation and our PTO. The Centennial golf outing at Watchung Valley Golf Club created a new college scholarship fund for Watchung Hills Regional High School. Giving back matters deeply to me, and I hope it shows our children what it means to care for their community. I thank all those businesses and residents that donated generously to these important causes.

Founders Day Celebrations. Founders Day was unforgettable, and I am deeply grateful to our Grand Marshals, Sondra Fechtner and Al Ellis, who have each devoted decades of service to our Borough. For the first time since 1976, Watchung held a parade with floats. Our first responders, Scouts, schools, civic groups, and residents marched with pride and joy from the Police parking lot to Best Lake. Then came the Mayor's Regatta canoe race—and what a finish! Scout leaders Jay Stiles and Curt Weber narrowly edged out Public Works Director Anthony Nappe and Council President Curt Dahl in a photo finish. Hot dogs served by the Recreation Commission volunteers and the old-fashioned Good Humor ice cream truck served classic cool treats that helped bridge the 1976 to 2026 vibe on that hot June day. All this led up to the day's main attraction, the opening of the 1976-time capsule. It was magical watching the young children eagerly peering in the front row with adults behind, many who actually came back (from near and quite far) having placed letters in the time capsule

Continued on page 3...



Mayor Jubin



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Office:

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michael.bisk@outlook.com



David A. Goldberg, D.M.D. Adam S. Goldberg, D.D.S.

176 Cedar St.
North Plainfield NJ 07060

908-756-7619

*Thank
you*

Watchung Borough would like to thank the businesses that appear in this newsletter and to recognize them each as supporters and cornerstones of our community. For it is with their contributions that this newsletter has been produced at no charge to our residents. The Borough would like to further request that citizens, in response, patronize these businesses first when given a choice as these businesses are saving each citizen tax dollars.



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13TH ANNUAL MAJOR SPEAKER

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October 20th, 2026 | 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM



Union Catholic High School,
1600 Martine Ave., Scotch Plains, NJ 07076



In-Person and virtually



\$25 per ticket (Students Free)



Register: www.msmhope.org or scan the QR code
(Note: At-door payment available.)



Continued from cover... **MAYOR'S MESSAGE**

50 years prior. What an honor for my wife Karen and I watching the memories return through letter recitations and friendships renewed.

Building for the future. In 2026, we also made long-needed infrastructure improvements. Through the leadership and insight of our volunteers, employees, and Council, we began addressing challenges that had lingered for decades. Camp Endeavor, the East End fire facility, Phillips and Mobus Fields, and the library had all fallen into disrepair.

Camp Endeavor redevelopment will remain in its natural state, enhanced with new trees, an ADA-compliant parking area, and an accessible walking path. Thanks to a grant we secured through Somerset County, it will become a quiet oasis for everyone to enjoy.

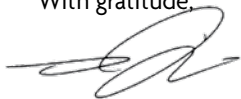
New East End fire facility. We are grateful to the Connell Group and Weldon Quarry for donating the land and building.

Our recreation parks, which are especially close to my heart, continue to improve. The **Phillips Field** snack shack has been revitalized, while **Mobus Field** received upgrades to its playground, tennis and pickleball courts, basketball courts, pavilion, and parking lot paving and striping. It brings me joy to gather for my Monday evening wellness walks and see families playing at Mobus and strolling around the lake.

What's still to come? This year's Harvest Festival falls on Halloween, so wear your costumes and get ready for extraordinary family fun! The Historical Committee recently held its third themed event at Wilson Memorial, honoring our Scouts. Current and former Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts turned out in great numbers, and another event is being proposed for later this fall. Weather and construction schedules permitting, the Endeavor trail, East End fire facility, and refurbished Watchung Community Connection/Centennial Library are all moving steadily toward completion. Sign up for alerts on the MyWatchung app to stay informed and to plan to join us at their respective grand openings.

What an amazing year 2026 has been for Watchung. My heartfelt thanks go to the local businesses that generously supported these events, to our employees and volunteers, and to each of you who came together to celebrate the place we proudly call home—our Watchung.

With gratitude,



Ronald Jubin, Ph.D.

Mayor of Watchung Borough



Wilson Memorial Church



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10AM
or online at www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org

7 Valley Rd • Watchung • NJ
908-755-5020



FALL EVENTS



Oct 11: Blessing of the Animals - 11:30am - Animal Shelter Collection

Oct 25: Blood Drive - 8am-2pm - Watchung Exempt Hall

Oct 31: Enchanted Forest 11am-1pm

Nov 8: Interfaith Service - 4pm - Wilson Church

Dec 5: Advent Dinner & Tree Lighting

Dec 24: Christmas Eve Services at 5pm and 9pm



Visit our website for more details: www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org



FROM THE DESK OF THE BOROUGH CLERK

INTRODUCING BOROUGH CLERK COLLEEN R. LANGE

Dear Watchung Residents,

It is a privilege to introduce myself as your new Municipal Clerk. Over the past three years, I have truly enjoyed being part of the Borough of Watchung, getting to know our residents, and working alongside the dedicated staff and volunteers who make Watchung such a special place.

I greatly appreciate the guidance and support of former Municipal Clerk Edith Gil and appreciate the knowledge she shared with me during our time working together.

Gloria M. Rivera is now serving as Deputy Municipal Clerk, where her warm demeanor, strong work ethic, and efficiency are already making a positive impact in Borough Hall.

We are also pleased to welcome our new Administrative Assistant, Mallory Helmes, to the Borough team. We look forward to the contributions she will bring to our community.

Although there have been changes within the Clerk's office, one thing remains constant: **our office is always here to serve the residents of Watchung.** We are committed to being a welcoming, accessible, and dependable resource for the community.

I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to continuing to serve the Borough of Watchung and its residents for years to come.

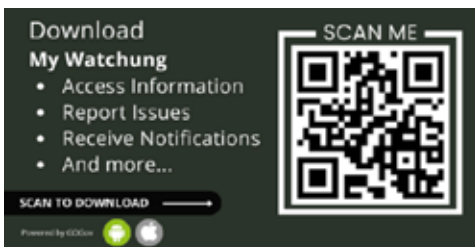
Sincerely,

Colleen R. Lange

Borough Clerk

Get Involved: Board, Committee & Commission Applications Opening Soon

We'll soon begin accepting applications for upcoming vacancies on the Borough's various boards, committees, and commissions. Serving is a great way to get involved and make a meaningful impact in our community. You can access the fillable application form online—no need to print, scan, or mail it back.



My Watchung App

Wondering how to quickly and easily find out what's going on around the Borough of Watchung?

Look no further than the My Watchung app to receive the latest alerts on upcoming events, alerts, and so much more!

We are always working to bring live the ideas and suggestions of our Governing Body and to strengthen communication with residents. We are proud to bring to you the MyWatchung app available in google and apple stores.

Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming Important Dates

- **September 30 – Rental Property Registration Due** Landlords must register rental properties by the end of September each year. The annual registration and inspection fee is **\$150**.
- **October 13 – Voter Registration Deadline** Last day to register to vote in the upcoming General Election.
- **October 27 – Deadline to Apply for a Mail-In Ballot By Mail** Be sure to submit your mail-in ballot application by this date to vote by mail.
- **November 3 – General Election Day** Polls will be open from **6:00 AM to 8:00 PM**. Make your voice heard!
- **December 31 – Dog License Expiration** Dog licenses expire annually on this date. State law requires renewal every year. Subscribe to our borough emails to receive renewal reminders! Renewals begin January 2027.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTION

October 13th - Voter Registration deadline to vote in the upcoming General Election

October 27th - Deadline to apply for a Mail-In Ballot by Mail for General Election

November 3rd - General Election Day. Polls open 6am - 8pm.

POLLING LOCATION

Districts 1 and 4 - Fireman's Exempt Hall, 31 Mountain Boulevard

Districts 3 - Bayberry School, 113 Bayberry Lane

Districts 2 and 5 - Wilson Memorial Union Church, 7 Valley Road



Watchung Municipal Building

15 Mountain Boulevard, Watchung, New Jersey 07069

Phone: 908-756-0080 • Fax: 908-757-7027
www.watchungnj.gov



Mayor Ronald Jubin, Ph.D.

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Curt S. Dahl, Council President

Christine B. Ead, Paul Fischer, Paolo Marano,
Sonia Abi-Habib, Roberts Gibbs

Administration

James Damato, Administrator
908-756-0080

JDamato@watchungnj.gov

Borough Clerk

Colleen R. Lange 908-756-0080 ext. 210
clange@watchungnj.gov

CFO/Tax Collector

William Hance 908-756-0080 ext. 216
BHance@watchungnj.gov

Engineering Office

Vincent J. DeNave, P.E. 908-756-0091 x225
engineer@watchungnj.gov

Watchung Fire Official

Thomas McNulty 908-756-0091 ext. 235
fireofficial@watchungnj.gov

Police Department

Chief Scott Anderle 908-756-3663

Emergency 911

Non - Emergency 908-756-3663

Fire Department

Chief Albert DeSandolo 908-756-0080 Ext. 250

Volunteer 908-585-1272

Emergency 911

Non - Emergency 908-756-0091

Emergency Management

Carolyn Solon 908-756-0080 ext. 239
CSolon@watchungnj.gov

Municipal Court (N. Plainfield)

263 Somerset Street, N. Plainfield, NJ 07060
Court Administrator, Jodi Mack 908-769-2265

Tax Assessor

Ed Kerwin 908-756-8333 ext. 224
ekerwin@watchungnj.gov

Tax Clerk

Kathy Vilarino 908-756-8333 ext. 223
taxclerk@watchungnj.gov

Construction Official

Daniel Niro 908-756-0080 ext. 228
constructionofficial@watchungnj.gov
Carolyn Taylor, Zoning Officer/TACO
908-756-0080 ext. 219
CTaylor@watchungnj.gov

Public Works Manager

Anthony Nappe
dpw@watchungnj.gov
908-756-0080 ext. 214

Watchung Arts Center

For information call 908-753-0190
18 Stirling Road, Watchung, NJ 07069
(Closed Saturdays during July and Aug.)

SC Public Library - Watchung Branch

Temporary Location
20 Stirling Road, Watchung, NJ 07069
908-458-8456

Watchung Seniors

Tony Perrucci 908-963-1748
Mary Osborne 908-625-8959

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Watchung Hills Regional High School

Grades 9 through 12
108 Stirling Road, Warren, NJ 07059
908-647-4800

Valley View Middle School

Grades 5 through 8
50 Valleyview, Road, Watchung, NJ 07069
908-755-4422

Bayberry Elementary School

Kindergarten through 4th Grade
113 Bayberry Lane, Watchung, NJ 07069
908-755-8184

Council's Corner

Dear Watchung Residents,

What a special year it has been for our Borough! As we celebrate Watchung's 100th anniversary alongside the United States' 250th birthday, we have so much to be proud of—and so many wonderful reasons to come together as a community.

Our Farmers Market has been a great success, bringing neighbors together and supporting the vendors who help make each gathering special. Movie Night gave families an opportunity to relax and enjoy time together, while our concert at Phillips Field, capped off with fireworks, was a memorable highlight of this milestone year. Seeing residents of all ages enjoying these events reminds me how fortunate we are to call Watchung home.

And there is still more to look forward to! Our upcoming Harvest Festival will offer more opportunities to gather, celebrate, and make memories with family and friends. I hope you will join us and be part of the celebration.

This is also a year of meaningful progress. The groundbreaking for construction at Camp Endeavor marks an exciting step forward, and each day brings us closer to the finish line for our Community Connection and Library. These investments will create places for residents to learn, connect, and enjoy for generations to come—a fitting legacy for our Centennial year.

None of this happens without the dedication of so many people. To our first responders, thank you for keeping us safe and answering the

call when our community needs you. To our hardworking Department of Public Works, thank you for the tremendous effort you put into caring for our Borough and helping our events run smoothly. To our Borough office employees, thank you for the essential work behind the scenes that keeps Watchung moving forward.

And to our volunteers: your time, energy, and love for this community make an extraordinary difference. Whether you help organize an event, serve on a committee, coach our children, or lend a hand to a neighbor, you are part of what makes Watchung so special.

As our children settled into the school year, I wished all our students a happy and successful year filled with learning, friendship, and new opportunities. Thank you to our wonderful teachers, school staff, and families for all you did—and continue to do—to support and encourage our students each day.

It is an honor to serve this community and share this remarkable year with you. Together, we are celebrating our history while building a future we can all be proud of.

God bless you, God bless Watchung, and God bless the United States of America.

Curt Dahl

Council President



WATCHUNG VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



The Watchung Fire Department is a dedicated 100% volunteer organization committed to serving our community. We are always looking for new members to join our team. Our active firefighters are over 18 years old and come from Watchung and neighboring communities.

Join us and receive comprehensive training, including basic firefighter courses and other specialized training—all paid for by the department. We also offer an incentive plan and various benefits, with the most rewarding being the opportunity to serve as a hero and help neighbors in times of need.

If you're interested in making a difference, visit our website at www.watchungfd.org, follow us on Facebook @WatchungFD, email us at recruitment@watchungfd.org, or pick up information at Borough Hall. We greatly appreciate the support from our community.

Additionally, after extensive and tireless research efforts, we are excited to announce the acquisition of a new high water rescue vehicle, obtained through the New Jersey State Police via government surplus. This vehicle was acquired at little to no cost to the borough and is currently being modified to be response-ready for future flood incidents. It will help protect Watchung during floods and assist our first responders in performing their duties safely.

The department continues to explore grant opportunities and works with borough grant writers to secure funding for much-needed equipment replacements and updates for our aging apparatus, aiming to minimize costs to taxpayers.



2026 FALL/WINTER EVENTS

NOV 11

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

9:30am *Texier House War Memorial*
Join us in honoring our veterans.
**Rain location is in Borough Hall.*



NOV 13

PEACE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

6:00pm - 7:30pm *Watchung Lake*
Share a personal message on your lantern
before releasing it on Watchung Lake.



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WATCHUNG'S ANNUAL HARVEST Festival

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WATCHUNG RESCUE SQUAD

The Wilsons' 15 Years of Service to Watchung

By Sarah (and Denise) Wilson, Watchung Rescue Squad

Between the two of us, we have spent a combined 25 years with the Watchung Rescue Squad: 15 for my mom, Denise, and 10 for me. Those years hold more memories than we could ever fit on a page.

There have been hurricanes and snowstorms, Harvest Festivals and Mayor's Regattas. We've dug out cars, navigated flooded roads around the lake and met neighbors new and old at community events. We've seen quite a lot more than just medical calls and definitely at all times of day and night. But the moments that have stayed with us most aren't necessarily the dramatic ones. They're the ones that taught us what it really means to show up for people.

For our family, that started with my mom.

Denise decided to take up a new pastime in her 40s. Not many people can say they started something brand new at that point in their lives – let alone something they would do for free, on call, sometimes at 2 a.m. – but that's exactly what she did.

Growing up, whenever my mom saw an ambulance pass, she would say a quiet prayer and hope whoever was inside was going to be okay. So when she told me in 2011 that she was joining the Watchung Rescue Squad, I thought she was even more of a superhero than I already did.

Before long, the squad became part of our family's life.

I grew up learning basic medical skills around the same time I was learning algebra. I learned about community before I even understood the greater meaning behind the word. Most of all, I learned the importance of giving back to the people and places that raise you.

So much of my childhood happened at the squad building: bonfires, chili cook-offs and the occasional round of Guitar Hero. During the storm standbys at the building, we would make food for the crews and restock the ambulances. My little brother was mostly thrilled by the lights and sirens, and the prospect of convincing whichever cadet was nearby to play Legos with him.

In between all of it, I would watch my mom leave for a call and come home a few hours later, tired but smiling and ready to give us a big hug. Sometimes she even came home with snacks from the

hospital break room.

The squad was simply part of our family. So, naturally, I joined the Watchung Rescue Squad myself on my 16th birthday.

Over the years, I've had mentors, classmates, neighbors and community leaders at the squad who helped shape the person I am today. And now, ten years, a pandemic, two degrees and four apartments later, I still drive back to Watchung every week to serve the community that raised me.

There is a lot to love about Watchung, but one thing I have come to appreciate more as I've gotten older is the value this town places on the people who show up for it.

Volunteering isn't always convenient. Sometimes it means leaving dinner halfway through. Sometimes it means getting out of bed in the middle of the night. Sometimes it means showing up when the weather is bad, the roads are worse and everyone else has been told to stay home.

But when your hometown is as special to you as Watchung is to us, you show up anyway.

After 15 years for my mom and 10 for me, that may be the most important thing the Watchung Rescue Squad has taught us: taking care of a community is really just taking care of one another. Learning life skills to not only help ourselves, but also to help others feel healthy and safe in their homes.

We're grateful Watchung gave us the chance to do both.



About Denise Wilson

Denise moved to Watchung in 1999 and has stayed put ever since. In 2026, she celebrated 15 years with the Watchung Rescue Squad, was recognized as a Woman of Watchung and joined Mayor Jubin in efforts to support the health and well-being of the Watchung community. Her son, Ellis, graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and will be attending Durham University this fall for his masters. Denise has a full and a part time job and enjoys spending time with her family, friends and dog, Maverick.

About Sarah Wilson

Sarah grew up in Watchung and attended Watchung public schools before attending the University of South Carolina Honors College and later earning her master's degree from Rutgers University. She works full-time in public relations and still bartends at the Stirling Hotel. She lives in Morristown with her boyfriend and two cats and continues to make the drive back to Watchung to serve with the Rescue Squad.

Please feel free to reach out to Denise and Sarah if you have any questions about their time on the Watchung Rescue Squad.

Interested in becoming a member or having additional questions? Please reach out: <https://watchungems.org/>

FROM THE WATCHUNG CHIEF OF POLICE

This year marks an incredible milestone for our community as the Borough celebrates its 100th anniversary. Along with that historic occasion, the Watchung Police Department also turns 100 this year. Over the decades, we have operated from several different headquarters, worn a variety of uniforms, and worn three distinct patches. I would like to extend a special note of gratitude to Captain Sherif Zaiton, who dedicated significant time to researching and updating our history so we could preserve these milestones on the Watchung Police Department website.

In May 28, 1926, when the Watchung Police Department was officially formed. Councilman Richard L. Bellis was appointed as our very first Chief, a role that was volunteer-based and comparable to today's Police Commissioner. Councilman Bellis requested the purchase of 25 police shields and 50 summons books, which the Council unanimously approved. By June, local resident Emile Perrett generously offered a Model T to the Mayor and Council for just one dollar a year to serve as Watchung's first police car. Because that initial patrol car had no radio, we relied on Mrs. Texier, who lived across the street from Borough Hall. Whenever a call came in, she would switch on her porch light, signaling officers returning from their half-hour rounds to stop by her home and pick up the details. Later that year, on December 26, 1926, the council officially passed an ordinance establishing a police department to regulate and control a dedicated force.

As the town grew, so did the need for a full-time presence. At the 1927 reorganization meeting, Mayor Corey requested the creation of an actual force with paid officers. However, it wasn't until 1935 that Watchung hired its first two paid officers: Sergeant Al Schmeyer, who earned \$27 per month, and Patrolman Elmer Nunn, who earned \$25 per month. In March of 1937, Elmer Nunn was appointed Chief with a salary increase to \$1,200 per year. Chief Nunn led the department until October 1941, when poor health forced his resignation, leading Sergeant Schmeyer to take the reins. That same year marked a leap forward in technology for us, as the department purchased its first patrol motorcycle for \$125 and installed a two-way radio in the patrol car.

Ralph Barrett assumed the role of Chief in 1952 after serving on the force since 1936. Under his leadership in 1965, police operations moved across the street to the Texier House. Frank Wright then took over as Chief in 1968, and throughout the 1970s, the Mayor and Council actively discussed finding a more suitable, permanent home for our growing department. Donald Laing was named Chief in 1976, followed by Richard Ryan in 1977.

Following the tragic and untimely passing of Chief Ryan in 1984, George King became Chief. By 1989, an ordinance passed to allocate funding for a new facility, and an architect was hired to design an addition behind Borough Hall. Unexpected circumstances soon altered those plans when a fire struck the Texier House in 1991. The department temporarily relocated to a vacant building at the Lockheed site on Route 22, which accelerated the push for a modern headquarters. After public pushback sent planners back to the drawing board and the eventual demolition of the Lockheed site, officers operated out of temporary trailers next to the fire department. Meanwhile, the Somerset Street property became available in 1993, setting the stage for progress. Under the leadership of Chief Robert S. Reilly, who took the helm in 1997, our current headquarters on Somerset Street was officially built in 1999.

The turn of the century brought new divisions, honor, and deep sacrifices. John Frosoni became Chief in 2001 and established our Traffic Safety Division. During his tenure, our department suffered a profound loss on March 8, 2006, when Officer Matthew J. Melchionda was killed in the line of duty while responding to a call for service. His memory and sacrifice remain a sacred part of our department's legacy.

Sean Whelan took over as Chief in 2007, and in 2008, our police patch was updated to proudly incorporate the official Borough Seal. Tim Wenzel assumed the Chief's role in 2010, guiding the department through its first rigorous accreditation process, which was officially awarded in 2013. Joseph Cina then became Chief in 2013, overseeing the expansion of the Traffic Safety Division to include a Sergeant position in 2014. When Chief William Kelly took over in 2020, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic required our officers to quickly adapt with modified response policies to keep the department operational and the public safe.

Our recent history continues to focus on safety, partnership, and cutting-edge technology. Andrew Hart became Chief in 2021, the same summer our officers were equipped with Body Worn Cameras for the first time. Following Chief Hart's retirement in 2023, Scott Anderle took the lead as Chief. That autumn, the Borough and Police Department partnered with the Watchung Board of Education to assign a dedicated School Resource Officer to our local schools, strengthening our bond with Watchung's youth. Most recently, in January 2025, the Watchung Police Department was proud to become one of the very first agencies in the State of New Jersey to transition to the Next-Gen 911 System.

From porch light signals and a one-dollar Model T to state-of-the-art emergency communications and dedicated school officers, the Watchung Police Department has evolved dramatically over the last century. What has never changed, however, is our devotion to protecting and serving the people of Watchung. As we celebrate our centennial alongside the Borough, we thank you for a century of support, and we look forward to serving you for the next hundred years.

Chief Scott Anderle

WATCHUNG HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Hello Neighbors,

Greetings from the Watchung Historical Committee!

As Watchung celebrates its 100th Anniversary, we are excited to share updates on the events, programs, and projects that have brought our community together throughout 2026 - and the many activities still ahead. Your enthusiasm and participation have made this milestone year truly special!

Centennial Events & Community Highlights

- **Founders Day Parade and Mayor's Regatta:** The Borough's first Founders Day Parade was a wonderful success. The Committee came together and constructed a float featuring historic photographs of Watchung landmarks, and we were delighted to celebrate alongside 18 participating groups and so many enthusiastic residents. We are now planning a new exhibit to showcase the contents of the 50th Anniversary Time Capsule - stay tuned for details.
- **Journey Through the Past:** We are thrilled to announce that we will once again participate in Somerset County's *Journey Through the Past*. The **Texier House Museum** will be open **Saturday, October 10th** (10 AM – 5 PM) and **Sunday, October 11** (12 PM – 4 PM). This countywide event is a fantastic opportunity to explore local history. More information is available at somersetcountynj.gov.
- **Special Themed Texier Open Houses:** This year's themed open houses have been a highlight of our centennial programming. Our March open house featured *Lessons & Legacy* and showcased Watchung's education history and welcomed many visitors, including our Superintendent, Mayor, and local students. In May we opened the Museum following the Memorial Day Ceremony and welcomed several special guests. We will debut the special **Dupont Meteorite Collection**, now on permanent loan to the museum and proudly display the **Folk Art Rug** woven by Ellen Beeson over seven years in the early 1990s. It depicts many structures in the Borough including the Beeson family home. Thanks to Bruce Heyman for expertly installing this delicate wool piece using a custom wooden rod and protective sleeve.
- **Valley View Middle School Project:** This summer, Valley View students completed an interdisciplinary project designing a 3D model of Watchung's future. On July 22, we hosted an Open House to support their work and introduce many of the students to the Texier House Museum for the first time. We hope class trips to Texier will become an annual event to allow all our children to learn more about our rich history.
- **Reflections of Watchung: A Historical Journey:** Our centennial lecture series continues through 2026, with each session featuring a 30minute historical film followed by a community discussion. Our March program, *Lessons in Legacy*, highlighted Watchung Schools and brought together current and former teachers, students, and residents. In May, *The Places That Shaped Us* highlighted landmarks and cherished locations throughout the Borough. September's session explored Scouting, and our upcoming program will spotlight our First Responders. We invite all residents to join these warm, engaging conversations, meet neighbors, and celebrate Watchung's history.
- **Watchung History Website:** We encourage you to visit watchunghistory.org, our ever-growing website for Watchung's history. Along with our YouTube channel of historical videos and curated playlists, it's a great way to learn about our Borough's past at any age.
- **Holiday Ornament Program:** Our 100th Anniversary ornament featuring the Tree of Lights is nearly sold out. We are excited to continue this tradition - now in its 7th year - with a brandnew design crafted by Laurie Wood of Woody Signs and Designs. Details will be announced soon.
- **Watchung Trivia:** All year long, we've posted Watchung trivia questions on the digital sign outside Borough Hall. Enjoy this fun activity with friends and family as you walk around the lake.

Preserving and Archiving Watchung's History

After this year's festivities, we will resume cataloging and digitizing the historical materials housed at the Texier House Museum. More than 500 photos have already been scanned and described. We are exploring ways to make this growing database accessible to the public through the new Library within the Watchung Community Connection and welcome volunteers interested in helping with this ongoing project.



Residents gather on Founders Day to witness the opening of the 50th Anniversary Watchung Time Capsule at Best Lake. A new capsule will be buried in late 2026 and opened in 2076.



The Watchung Historical Committee float from the Founders Day Parade.



Participants compete in the Mayor's Regatta on Best Lake.



Display from *The Places That Shaped Us* film night on May 12, 2026.



Committee members reviewing the contents of the 50th Anniversary Time Capsule.

Visit the Texier House Museum

Located at the heart of the Watchung Circle, the Museum is open the first and third Sundays of each month. Check watchunghistory.org or the Borough website for updates, special guests, and upcoming events.

Get Involved

If you're interested in volunteering or learning more about Watchung, we invite you to visit <https://watchungnj.gov/boards/historic> or email historic@watchungnj.gov to explore ways you can support our mission. We also welcome historical photos, artifacts, and personal stories. Items may be contributed directly to the Museum or uploaded through the Borough website. Your involvement helps preserve Watchung's legacy, and we would truly love to hear from you.

-The Watchung Historical Committee



The newly displayed Folk Art Rug woven by Ellen Beeson at the Texier House Museum.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Watchung Joins National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge



The Environmental Commission is proud to announce Watchung's participation in the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) Mayors' Monarch Pledge, joining communities across the country committed to protecting monarch butterflies and restoring vital

pollinator habitat. The Environmental Commission and Green Team are working in tandem to help implement this initiative.

In May 2026, Watchung officially joined the program, reaffirming our commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable land management. To launch the initiative, Mayor Jubin issued a formal proclamation at the May 21, 2026 Mayor and Council Meeting, recognizing the importance of monarch conservation and encouraging residents to take an active role in protecting monarch butterflies and other native pollinators.

The NWF Mayors' Monarch Pledge is a national initiative that encourages local governments to create and enhance monarch habitat, educate their communities, and implement conservation practices that support monarchs throughout their annual migration while strengthening overall pollinator populations.

Watchung Takes Action

As part of its pledge, Watchung has already begun expanding monarch and pollinator habitat through several initiatives:

- Restoring the Watchung First Aid Squad rain garden with native swamp milkweed and perennial nectar-producing plants that provide essential breeding habitat and food sources for monarchs and other pollinators.
- Planting native swamp milkweed at Best Lake within the riparian buffer, enhancing ecological diversity while expanding habitat for monarchs.
- Distributing free milkweed saplings and seeds to residents at the Watchung Farmers Market, to help residents establish pollinator-friendly gardens at home.
- Educating residents about the importance of native plants, pollinators, and simple actions that can make a meaningful difference for monarch conservation.

- Evaluating additional conservation opportunities for 2027 on Borough-owned properties to further increase native habitat, improve biodiversity, and support the long-term conservation of monarchs and other beneficial wildlife.

Why Monarch Habitat Matters

Monarch butterfly populations have declined significantly in recent decades due in large part to habitat loss, changing land use, pesticide use, and other environmental pressures. Native milkweed is essential to monarch reproduction because it is the only plant on which monarch butterflies lay their eggs and the only food source for their caterpillars.

By increasing the availability of milkweed and native nectar-producing plants, we are helping create a healthier landscape for monarch butterflies, bees, birds, and other wildlife.

Residents can play an important role as well. Even small garden spaces planted with native milkweed and nectar-producing flowers can provide valuable habitat and contribute to a connected network of pollinator-friendly landscapes throughout the community.

Through participation in the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, Watchung is reaffirming its commitment to environmental leadership and community engagement. We look forward to working with residents, schools, community organizations, and volunteers to build a more resilient, biodiverse, and pollinator-friendly community for generations to come. Community members who are interested in volunteering with this initiative are encouraged to contact the Environmental Commission at environmental@watchungnj.gov.





WATCHUNG LIBRARY, A BRANCH OF THE SOMERSET COUNTY

Discover SCLSNJ's Premier Digital Offerings This Fall

There is no better time to retreat indoors with a hot beverage and explore the library's robust suite of digital databases. Whether you're preparing for holiday gatherings, launching a year-end fundraising campaign, or catching up on local news, here are some of the standout digital offerings available to SCLSNJ cardholders.

1. Nonprofit Grant Seeking & Year-End Philanthropy Candid (only available in the library)

Patrons can search profiles of over 1.9 million nonprofits and 304,000 grantmakers. It is an invaluable tool for:

- Grant Seekers & Nonprofits: Finding funders, corporate giving programs, and foundation opportunities aligned with your mission.
- Volunteers & Donors: Researching local charities and community resources to ensure your end-of-year giving makes the greatest impact.

2. Smart Holiday Shopping

ConsumerReports.org

Before making any big purchases on electronics or home appliances, consult SCLSNJ's complimentary access to ConsumerReports.org. Unbiased ratings, side-by-side product comparisons, and detailed reviews ensure you get the best product for the best value.

3. Seasonal Crafting

Creativebug

When chilly weather keeps you inside, Creativebug is great for maker inspiration. Offering award-winning video classes taught by top design experts and artists, Creativebug covers:

- Fall & Holiday Décor: Hand-knit blankets, autumn wreaths, and custom table setting crafts.
- Handmade Gifts: Leatherworking, quilting, embroidery, and soap-making tutorials ideal for personalized holiday gifts.
- Baking & Entertaining: Decorative cake icing, festive card design, and papercrafting.

4. Family Roots

HeritageHub, HeritageQuest & Ancestry Library Edition

The holiday season is the perfect time to explore your family tree.

- HeritageHub & HeritageQuest: Search U.S. obituaries, census maps, and historical family records dating back to 1704.
- Fold3: Discover your family's military history from the Revolutionary War onward.
- Ancestry Library Edition (only available in the library): Access billions of global records in branch locations to piece together your ancestors' journeys.

5. Autumn Reading

Libby, Press Reader & Digital Newspapers

- Libby: Stream audiobooks or download the latest bestseller directly to your phone or e-reader.
- The New York Times: Enjoy complimentary digital access to daily editions, extensive back-article archives, and full digital reporting.
- PressReader: Browse digital full-page layouts of over 7,000 national and international newspapers and magazines, including The Economist, USA Today, and global press.
- Local & Regional Coverage: Search full digital image editions of local favorites like the Courier News (1961-present) and The Star-Ledger Collection.

You can find all this and more at <https://sclsnj.org/books-and-more/online-resources/>

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



Leaf Pick Up

The 2026 Leaf Pickup will commence on October 30, 2026 and continue through December 21, 2026. All leaves must be in **BIODEGRADABLE PAPER BAGS** and placed on the grass area close to the road. **NO**

PLASTIC BAGS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR PICK UP. Pickups will not be scheduled for any specific time or location.

Leaf pickup is limited to high density areas: Brookdale, Stirling and Hillcrest Roads North to Evergreen Lane; Mountain Blvd. from Washington Drive to Rock Ave.; Johnston Drive to the water tower including Upper Drive and Johnston Drive Extension.

All residents are urged to utilize their leaves as compost; however, should any resident in a rural area desire pickup of leaves in **BIODEGRADABLE BAGS ONLY**, call the office of **Public Works at 908-756-0080, ext. 214**. Due to the State's Stormwater Regulations, the Borough has an ordinance prohibiting placement of leaves in the street.

Residents:

Please remember to comply with snow removal regulations. Snow removed from driveways or any other place shall not be placed on any public street or right-of-way! §Chapter 17-3.3, §Chapter 14-45.1

Snow and Ice Removal from Sidewalks and Driveways

The owner or tenant of real property abutting, adjoining, or bordering any public street shall remove all snow and ice from the abutting, adjoining, or bordering sidewalk and driveway within the public right-of-way, of said public street, within 24 hours of the snow having fallen or the ice having formed thereon.

Check the borough's website for full regulations or call our **Public Works Dept. with any questions, 908-756-0080 ext. 214**.



MIDDLE-BROOK REGIONAL HEALTH COMMISSION

111 Greenbrook Road, Green Brook, NJ 08812
732-968-5151 x 1
732-968-5331 (fax)



mbrhc@middlebrookhealth.org (e-mail)
Kevin G. Sumner, Health Officer/Director
www.middlebrookhealth.org

Rabies Clinics 2026

Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission plans to offer several rabies clinics in the fall to ensure the availability of free rabies vaccines for our cat and dog owners.



Here is the **Tentative** Schedule:

- November 7, 9am - Green Brook, NJ
- November 21, 9am - Bridgewater, NJ
- December 5, 9am - Watchung, NJ

As we are still working to coordinate all the moving pieces to make these clinics happen, residents are asked to call the Health Commission at **732-968-5151** or scan the QR code to view the **Commission's Calendar** in late September/October to confirm the dates, times, and locations. All cats must be held in a carrier and all dogs must be leashed.

Don't Wait. Vaccinate!

Vaccines protect ourselves and others from infectious disease. When vaccinated, it is less likely that we will get sick and make others sick. They also protect us against severe illness when we do get sick. This upcoming holiday season, do your part and get vaccinated!

The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission and Green Brook Family Medicine will be providing the following vaccines at the upcoming community clinic:

- Flu vaccines for ages 5 and older
- Senior Flu vaccines for ages 65 and older
- Pfizer COVID vaccine for ages 12 and older
- PCV20/21 Pneumonia vaccines (one time dose recommended for ages 50+)
- TDAP (Adult Tetanus Booster) for ages 11 and older

Wednesday, October 21, 2026 from 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM at the Warren Township Courthouse, 46 Mountain Blvd, Warren 07059.



Pre-registration is requested. To register, scan the qr or visit: warren-vax.timetap.com/ questions about insurance eligibility, please contact Ann at Green Brook Family Medicine via email: insurance@greenbrookfamilymedicine.com



For more information about the clinics, please call 732-968-5151 ext. 3.

Staying up to date on vaccinations is an effective way to protect ourselves, others, and those most at risk of severe illness. Talk with your healthcare provider to make sure you are caught up on all immunizations you need.

If you are planning to travel, check your destination on CDC's Travelers' Health page for location-specific health risks and safety concerns. You may need to take additional steps to protect yourself and your loved ones.

For more information, visit: nj.gov/health/vaccines/

Do your Part, Be Septic Smart!

The importance of caring for and maintaining septic systems. Proper septic system use and routine care are vital to protect public health, preserve our highly valued groundwater, lakes, streams, and waterways. It can also avoid costly repairs that can result from neglect. Remember these helpful tips in the home and in the septic field:

In the home:

- Be mindful of your water use.
- Leftover cooking oil, fats, and grease should be disposed of in sealed containers in the trash.
- Paper towels, diapers, wipes, disposable period products, and anything other than toilet paper should not be flushed.

In the field:

- Be mindful of where you plant trees and shrubs to avoid root intrusion into pipes.
- Minimize soil compaction in the disposal area by ensuring cars and livestock do not pass over it.
- Most septic systems should be professionally pumped every 3-5 years. Some advanced systems require more frequent maintenance.

For additional information, visit: epa.gov/septic

Connect with Us!



TAX OFFICE

Friendly Reminder . . . Taxes are due quarterly on: November 1st

Any accounts delinquent as of December 2025 including sewer accounts and Special Assessments will be included in our Tax Sale this fall. Balances can be viewed and paid online at www.watchungnj.gov.

Please note that if you use Bill Pay through your bank, it may take a week or more for the Tax Office to receive the payment. Even though your bank account shows the money being withdrawn on the date that you initiate the bill pay, the bank prints and mails a check to the Borough which delays the process. For this reason, we recommend using the payment process provided on our website or dropping a check off at Borough Hall. If you leave a payment in the drop box outside of the Tax Office, the payment will be credited to your account the next business day.

Thank you.



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FALL/WINTER 2026



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