



# THE BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG FALL / WINTER 2021

## FROM YOUR MAYOR

Greetings Watchung Residents,

A warm welcome to all of our new residents and families who now call Watchung home. I also want to greet and welcome the new businesses that have opened in Watchung during the past year. This spring and summer flew by with the reopening of many activities that were cancelled or delayed last year due to COVID safety measures. Our school graduations went forward and the joy to be able to gather together and share at events was truly appreciated and a welcomed part of the recovery. All Borough operations are fully staffed and working to assist our residents, businesses and visitors. We have again extended the rules to allow our restaurants in Watchung to continue with outdoor dining.

We are posting a survey on the Borough website and we invite our residents to provide feedback on the proposed uses and input on the future plans for Camp Endeavor (9 acres on Sequoia Dr) and the 20-acre former Ness Farm property on Mountain Blvd. The Ness property is an environmentally contaminated site. The Borough has engaged professionals to determine what remediation and clean up are required and the costs for the cleanup.

We recently held training for all volunteer Committees and Board members so that they can better understand the duties, responsibilities and processes when they assist in Borough activities and operations for our residents. I strongly encourage all residents to join our volunteer efforts throughout the Borough, whether on a Borough committee or supporting our school programs, community groups, the Watchung Rescue Squad or Watchung Chemical Engine Company.

Our new Borough Engineer/Public Works Director, James Hutzelmann, started serving our Borough residents and businesses in mid-August. He has a robust agenda for various road paving and resurfacing, culvert repairs, landscape maintenance, repairs and improvements for our various Borough buildings. We welcome our new Police Chief Andrew Hart and four new patrol officers who were added to our Police Department roster as Patrol Officers: Darren Calleo, Casey Breese, Alyssa Krum and Michael Bahadourian. We also promoted two new Lieutenants, Kenneth Boyle and Sherif Zaiton. We have continued to improve our technology and communications within the Borough and digitize records. The redesign of our Borough website is in progress so that we can improve communications and updates for our residents on activities and Borough information, as well as upgrade our operations. When we return back to in person Council meetings, we will.....

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**INSIDE THIS EDITION**

- 2 & 3.....
- Mayor and Police Dept.
- 4 & 5.....
- Fire and Rescue Squad
- 6 & 7.....
- OEM and Library
- 8 & 9.....
- Middle-Brook and BOH
- 10 & 11.....
- Fire Prevention and T&B
- 12 & 13.....
- Green Team
- 14 & 15.....
- Environmental
- 16 & 17.....
- Historical, DPW and Borough Events
- 18 & 19.....
- Clerks Office and Borough History

## From Our Mayor

continue to live stream and have zoom capabilities so more residents can stay engaged with our Governing Body and the matters we discuss and deliberate.

Our Historical Committee has been very active and opened the Texier House for tours on Memorial Day weekend. They will continue to hold more tours and events for school children, residents and visitors. The Historical Committee is also working with our residents to assemble the database and logistics for banners to display on the light poles honoring our Watchung home-town heroes who have served in the various branches of the military.

The Watchung IDEA Committee organized the inaugural Juneteenth celebration in Watchung bringing residents together and providing education, dance, food and design of a community quilt. I thank all of the volunteers who made this inaugural event successful. The Watchung Board of Health sponsored a patriotic Family Walk around Watchung Lake on July 4, with many of the volunteer organizations in Watchung participating in making it a nice family event. Our Recreation Commission held a successful summer camp, movie and music nights and activities for our children. We will continue Borough activities with the September 11 remembrance ceremony at 5:30 PM, and, provided we do not have further COVID restrictions, hold the Harvest Festival October 23.

We submitted our Library Grant application with the assistance of Christopher Korenowsky of our Somerset County Library System for the \$2.9 million State Library Construction Bond Act Grant. In addition to the regular library activities, the new library facility will contain space for the Watchung Arts Center activities and programs; technology programs; crafts and other community activities, and community center space. The existing Library is open and has many resources available to all of our residents. Our Library is truly a great amenity for residents in our Borough, so please stop in.

The Watchung Arts Center has held virtual events during the pandemic shutdown and we anxiously await the time we can gather together again for their great activities. A reminder to all to visit our Farmers Market which is open on Tuesdays 4:00-7:00PM in the parking lot next to the Police Station on Somerset Street.

The Watchung Chamber of Commerce was formed through a partnership with the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce and over one hundred businesses have attended meetings or expressed interest in membership since May. The Watchung Chamber is a wonderful organization for new and established businesses for networking, resources and opportunities to improve our community for all.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of our essential workers, first responders, volunteers and residents who have been so generous in helping in so many ways during the pandemic. The community truly has come together to help one another and all of those in need.

Please reach out with your ideas and interests to serve and volunteer within our community. If we all work together for the common good, we can improve the lives of all our residents in our community.

I thank you for the privilege and opportunity to serve as your Mayor and look forward to resuming as many activities and projects as we close the 2021 year and look forward to 2022.

God Bless you All,



Keith S. Balla, Mayor

# Police Department

## From the Desk of Police Chief Hart

Hello Watchung Community:

My name is Andrew Hart and as of June 1, 2021, I was sworn in as your new Chief of Police. I am proud and humbled to take office as your Chief. I am mindful of the great leaders this department has had in the past and I look forward to bringing new ideas that will propel this Department into the future.

The profession of law-enforcement has faced many challenges in recent times. I am confident in the ability of each and every member of this department to show compassion, dedication, and respect as they take on their day-to-day duties. To keep Watchung safe and the wonderful community that it is, we will all need to work together in partnership to face future challenges and obstacles.

I want to invite you to join me at our **Police Department Open House on September 18th from 12:00 to 4:00 P.M.** We invite you to meet the members of your Police department, those who protect and serve you every day. Come see and ask us any questions.

We remain in service to all of you, our community of Watchung, here to serve with pride.

Respectfully in service,  
Chief Andrew Hart (Andy)



# Fire Department



## IS THERE A **FIRE** IN YOU?

Become A Watchung Volunteer Firefighter Today!

The Watchung Fire Department is a 100% volunteer organization that is constantly in need of new members. Beginning at 16 years old, Watchung residents can join our Junior Firefighter program, which allows them to respond to emergencies under the guidance of experienced firefighters, as well as learn about the fire service and gain valuable knowledge and life skills. Our Active Firefighters and Associate Members are over 18 years old and come from Watchung and neighboring communities. Active Firefighters attend basic Firefighter training as well as other training courses, all paid for by the Department. Associate Members assist with non-firefighting activities such as Membership Recruitment and Retention, Fund Raising, and other administrative duties.

The Borough also offers an incentive plan as well as numerous other benefits to our Volunteer Firefighters, most importantly, the ability to be one of the heroes who helps their neighbors in a time of need.

If you or someone you know has a desire to be a hero in our community, please visit our website at [www.watchungfd.org](http://www.watchungfd.org), follow us on Facebook @WatchungFD, call us at (908) 756-0080 x250, email [watchungfire@watchungnj.gov](mailto:watchungfire@watchungnj.gov), or pick up information at Borough Hall! As always, we appreciate the support from our community in Watchung. Without your generous contributions and the dedication of our volunteers YOUR Fire Department could not continue to provide these invaluable lifesaving services.

# Rescue Squad



# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH THE WATCHUNG RESCUE SQUAD



Since 1950, the Watchung Rescue Squad has been supplying the borough of Watchung with volunteer emergency medical care. Today's medical technology has come a long way. The word volunteer unfortunately has disappeared from today's vocabulary. **THIS IS WHERE WE NEED YOU.** We are currently looking for **adult members** that can provide consistent and dedicated hours to a weekly shift. The Watchung Rescue Squad is always in need of a few extra hands. **Apply online on our website! Come help out your community, meet new people, make a difference, save a life.**

### Types of membership:

**Driver:** No experience necessary. CPR, basic first aid, squad equipment familiarization, drive training provided free

**EMT:** Free NREMT classes provided. Members with EMT certification provide direct patient care.

**Cadet:** Students of ages 16-18 participate in squad activities and also earn EMT certification. This program offers an opportunity to meet new friends and gain the satisfaction of helping others.

### WE OFFER

**FREE UNIFORMS**  
**FREE TRAINING**  
**FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES**  
**THE CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

### FOLLOW US!

**WEBSITE:**  
**WWW.WATCHUNGEMS.ORG**  
**FACEBOOK:**  
**@WATCHUNGEMS**  
**INSTAGRAM: @WATCHUNGEMS**

### CONTACT US!

**WRSMEMBERSHIP@GMAIL.COM**  
**10 STIRLING RD., WATCHUNG,**  
**NJ 07069**  
**9087551297**

# Office of Emergency Management

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, which allows them to focus on more complex tasks. Through CERT, the capabilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters is built and enhanced.



The CERT Basic Course training includes:

- Disaster Preparedness:** Addresses hazards specific to the community. Materials cover actions that participants and their families take before, during and after a disaster as well as an overview of CERT and local laws governing volunteers.
- Fire Suppression:** Covers fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards and fire suppression strategies. However, the thrust of this session is the safe use of fire extinguishers, controlling utilities and extinguishing a small fire.
- Medical Operations Part I:** Participants practice diagnosing and treating airway obstruction, bleeding and shock by using simple triage and rapid treatment techniques.
- Medical Operations Part II:** Covers evaluating patients by doing a head to toe assessment, establishing a medical treatment area and performing basic first aid.
- Light Search and Rescue Operations:** Participants learn about search and rescue planning, size-up, search techniques, rescue techniques and rescuer safety.
- Psychology and Team Organization:** Covers signs and symptoms that might be experienced by the disaster victim and workers, and addresses CERT organization and management.
- Course Review and Disaster Simulation:** Participants review and practice the skills that they have learned during the previous six sessions in a disaster activity.

Free CERT training is offered to Somerset County residents at the Somerset County Training Academy, Hillsborough, NJ. For further information, please email Watchung CERT at [watchungcert@watchungnj.gov](mailto:watchungcert@watchungnj.gov)



## NJ REGISTER READY – SPECIAL NEEDS REGISTRY

NJ Register Ready was created to help people with disabilities in times of emergency. NJ residents with special needs are encouraged to add their personal information to this special needs registry. The information provided will be shared with emergency response agencies so that responders will be better equipped to serve registrants in the event of an emergency or evacuation in their area. No one else will have access to the information.

To keep this registry current, registrants are required to update their registration information each year.

Need help registering? Dial 2-1-1 and a representative will assist you in the registration process.



# Watchung Library Advisory Board



\*September is *National Library Card Sign-up Month*. The American Library Association and local libraries unite in a national effort to encourage all students to sign up for their own library card. You don't have to be a student to acquire a library card; all are invited to obtain one! Stop by the Watchung Free Public Library or check it out online.

<https://sclsnj.org/>

\*The Somerset County Library Commission is discussing a proposal to eliminate many fines assessed for the late return of materials. Although the Watchung Library Advisory Board agrees with the *intent* of the plan, this small but steady source of income is used to improve our library. *The money that comes into the library through these fines is returned to the town in the form of purchases that benefit all patrons and help us improve our library.* The WLAB recommends a compromise. Encourage the timely return of all materials and continue charging the small fines incurred for overdue items so our advisory board--and all local library advisory boards-- retains funds that might otherwise have to be replaced by the town council. At the same time, offer one or more amnesty periods throughout the year for patrons who may be unable to pay their fines; they will be able to return materials without penalty. Through this compromise, LABs will still have access to funds and neither the SCLS nor town councils will have to budget additional funds for local libraries' needs.

\*The next meeting of the Watchung Library Advisory Board is scheduled to take place in person in the Bicentennial Room of the library on September 15, 2021 at 4PM. Members of the public are able to participate by visiting the borough website. All meeting information is periodically updated on the borough's website [www.watchungnj.gov](http://www.watchungnj.gov)

Submitted by Tamara Benc  
President of WLAB

# Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission

## COVID-19 IS STILL WITH US



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
MIDDLE-BROOK REGIONAL  
HEALTH COMMISSION

Unfortunately, and frustratingly, we are all still very much being impacted by the persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is successfully evolving allowing it to infect more and more friends and family members of many we know. The latest Delta variant is of particular concern because it is much more infectious and able to be passed from person to person than the original virus. In fact, the latest science indicates that even vaccinated individuals may be able to transmit the virus. For this reason, we are again recommending the wearing of masks when indoors or in crowded settings, especially when you do not know the vaccination status of those around you.

The good news is that the COVID vaccines are very effective against the transmission of the virus and even more effective at preventing serious illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. The health department strongly encourages all eligible individuals aged 12 and over to get vaccinated! It is our best defense against this deadly



virus. The CDC has recently recommended **a third dose for some immunocompromised individuals.** If you think you may be eligible please speak to your healthcare provider. Booster doses for others may be recommended in the future. The health department hopes to be able to offer vaccinations at fixed facilities in the very near future.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots

If you have any questions or concerns about COVID-19, please contact the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission at **732-968-55151** or by email at **[mbrhc@middlebrookhealth.org](mailto:mbrhc@middlebrookhealth.org)**. We are happy to hear from you and try to answer your questions, though please understand that the situation and available information are **constantly changing** so we may not have all the answers.

## FLU SEASON MEANS FLU SHOTS ARE NEEDED

Although we are consumed by COVID-19 it is very important to remember to get your annual flu vaccine! The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone over six months of age get a flu vaccine each year, but it is especially important that certain people get vaccinated either because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications.

For example, the following groups are at particular risk:

- ⇒ Pregnant women
- ⇒ People 50 years of age and older
- ⇒ People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- ⇒ People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- ⇒ Health care workers
- ⇒ Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu



**Protect yourself! Get your shots!**

# Board of Health

## RABIES CLINICS

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

Our **tentative Schedule** is as follows:

- ⇒ November 6, 2021 9:00 am to 10:00 am @Green Brook Municipal Building
- ⇒ November 20, 2021 9:00 am to 10:30 am @Finderne Fire House - Bridgewater
- ⇒ **December 4, 2021 9:00 am to 10:00 am @Watchung Fire House**



Due to the uncertainty around COVID-19 and the potential needs of our communities, residents are asked to call the Health Commission at **732-968-5151** in late September/October to confirm the dates, times and locations.

At the clinics all cats **must** be held in a carrier and all dogs must be leashed.

## RABIES

Rabies is caused by a virus that can infect both people and animals. It is virtually always fatal. While the majority of rabies cases in the state have been in wild animals such as raccoons, skunks and foxes, cats are also a relatively common victim of rabies. These cases can pose a significant threat to unvaccinated domestic animals, which can contract the virus from wild animals and transmit the infection to humans.

In addition, residents are reminded to take these rabies prevention measures:

- ◇ Immediately report a bite from a wild or domestic animal to the health department (so post-exposure treatment can begin immediately if needed)
- ◇ Immediately report any wild animal showing signs of unusual behavior
- ◇ Be sure all family pets and agricultural animals are up to date on their rabies vaccinations
- ◇ Animal-proof home and yard
- ◇ Do not feed or handle wild animals
- ◇ Avoid contact with stray animals or pets other than your own
- ◇ Try to prevent your pets from coming into contact with wild animals
- ◇ Screen off vents to attics and other areas that could provide shelter
- ◇ Call the health department if you find a bat in your home
- ◇ **License your pets!**

# Fire Prevention Bureau

## October is Fire Prevention Month

In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed the first National Fire Prevention Week. The week commemorates the Great Chicago fire, which began on October 8, 1871, and did most of its damage on October 9. Since then, it's been observed every year during the week of October 9.



## The 2021 Fire Prevention Week Theme is “Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety™”

The Watchung Fire Prevention Bureau is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) – the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 90 years – to promote this year’s Fire Prevention Week campaign “Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety” The campaign works to educate everyone about simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe.

“What do the sounds mean? Is there a beep or a chirp coming out of your smoke or carbon monoxide alarm? Knowing the difference can save you, your home, and your family.

The Fire Prevention Bureau encourages all residents to embrace the 2021 Fire Prevention Week theme and “Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety”.

A continuous set of three loud beeps – beep, beep, beep – means smoke or fire. Get out, call 9-1-1, and stay out.

A single chirp every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be changed.

All smoke alarms must be replaced after 10 years.

Chirping that continues after the battery has been replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and the unit must be replaced.

Make sure your smoke and CO alarms meet the needs of all your family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.

## Free Smoke Alarm!!

The Fire Prevention Bureau has partnered with Kidde, WABC Operation 7 Save-A-Life Program and the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety to distribute a limited number of 10-year sealed battery smoke alarms to residents in need.

The smoke alarms may be picked up from the Fire Prevention office during normal business hours.

The name, address and phone number of the resident receiving the smoke alarm is required.

One smoke alarm per resident please.

**Remember to test your smoke alarms monthly, enjoy the Fall Season and Be Fire Safe!**

## Traffic and Beautification Committee

Welcome, Fall!



The Traffic and Beautification Committee looks forward to decorating this season with pumpkins, cornstalks, and beautiful mums. This is the time of year when the air is clear, the trees are colorful, and the leaves become crunchy under our feet. We will soon be putting our gardens to rest, but not until we enjoy the fun of picking apples, meandering through corn mazes, taking a hayride, or enjoying the colors on a walk around our two beautiful lakes. Not long after, we will be beautifying for the winter months.

With the help of our DPW who watered our flowers, mowed the grass, picked up the trash, and weeded, weeded, weeded, our town looked lovely during the hot and wet summer months. Arthur Wright and the DPW staff completed planting cherry trees and flowers along the Somerset Street medians. Making this a pleasing entrance to Watchung. The final median, closest to the circle, should be completed this Fall. There will also be some additions to Spratford Park and Best Lake. We appreciate the cooperation of Council members Lindsay Goodloe and Pete Martino who helped bring our plans to fruition.

Traffic and Beautification appreciates the efforts of the ladies in The Garden Club of Watchung who also weeded the triangle on the circle. Matt Murphy, a Watchung volunteer, planted canna bulbs around the Tree of Remembrance at Watchung Square. He planted, watered, and helped weed the area throughout the summer.

Our townsfolk turned out for Operation Pride, our yearly Spring clean up to keep Watchung pristine. Council members, as well as the Knights of Columbus, scouts and school children picked up debris around our lakes, schools, and roads. The Environmental Committee distributed tree saplings with instructions on the planting and care of young trees. We all are aware that keeping a healthy forest of trees is our best defense against air pollution and to promote soil conservation. The Recreation Committee even provided fun activities for the children.

The Traffic and Beautification Committee thanks everyone who helps us keep Watchung **beautiful!!!**

Phyllis Julette  
Chair



## GREEN TEAM

The Green Team was established by the Borough Council to promote efforts to ensure Watchung is a sustainable community. Sustainable policies and practices seek the long-term viability of the Borough by saving tax dollars, conserving energy, reducing the community's carbon footprint and natural resource consumption, and providing for the health and safety of residents.

Members of the team review and recommend eco-friendly, cost-efficient projects designed to improve municipal operations. The team includes residents, and a variety of Borough officials, including representatives of the Environmental Commission and Finance Department. The team works directly with other Borough organizations and seeks public-private partnerships.

### Sustainable Jersey Certification

The Borough last achieved certification as a sustainable community in 2014. This certification illustrates that a municipality has taken steps to ensure the community remains prepared for, and healthy into the future. The Green Team began working towards recertification last year and submitted the application in June. Sustainable Jersey has approved 11 of the 21 action items submitted and is seeking clarification and revision on the remaining 10 items. The Green Team will be working on these items through the end of the summer as well as on additional items to raise certification from bronze to silver for submission later in the fall.

### Green Fair

Although last year's green fair was cancelled due to the pandemic, this continuing joint effort by the Watchung and Warren Green Teams will take place this year. The Green Fair will be held at the Warren Municipal Complex on **Saturday, September 25th** from **10:00 am to 1:00 pm**. The fair format will be modified from past events in response to the evolving nature of health and safety protocols related to COVID-19. There will be collections of some recyclables not picked up by the county, paper shredding, and a prescription medicine take-back, and donations of gently used books will be accepted. Information will be provided by Green Teams, Environmental Commissions, and Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs).

# SAVE THE DATE



Watchung - Warren 2021 Green Fair

Saturday, September 25 10 am – 1 pm

Warren Municipal Grounds 46 Mountain Blvd. Warren

# GREEN TEAM

## Farmers Market

One of the areas of sustainability that is included in certification is food security. The Green Team has worked to return a Farmers Market to Watchung. This project has been championed by Borough Council President and Green Team Liaison, Wendy Robinson and managed by Bill Hance, the Borough's CFO. Residents are encouraged to stop by the market and support the small businesses, some of whom are Watchung residents. The vendors include (more are being added all the time):



**Tuesday's 4-7 PM**

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Old Village Farm             | Lithuanian Bake                              |
| Bull N Bear Brewery          | Astof Apiary                                 |
| LuLu's Artisanal Lemonade    | Artisans Boutique Gallery                    |
| Barbara's Kitchen            | Forever Green                                |
| Wheelie Good Pierogi         | Souped!                                      |
| Gourmet Nuts and Dried Fruit | Clean Crunch                                 |
| Latin Bites                  | LL Pittenger Farms (pre-order meats & dairy) |
| Jersey Spirits               | Healthy Hummus Broad                         |

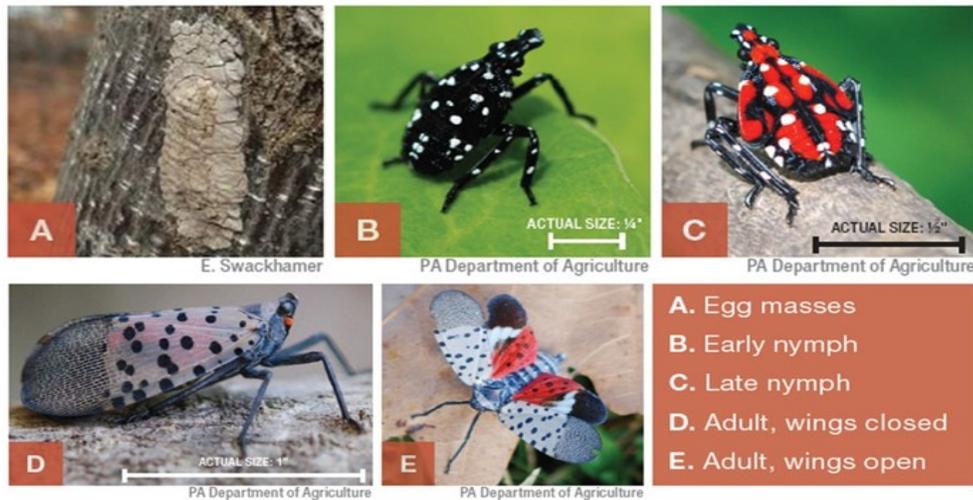
## Join the Team!

The Team currently is in need of active volunteers who, whether a community-minded individual or someone with expertise specific to the projects before us, can help us achieve some of the required tasks, assist with upcoming events and help improve our community. If interested, please contact Bill Hance at [bhance@watchungnj.gov](mailto:bhance@watchungnj.gov) for additional information.



# Environmental Commission

## SPOTTED LANTERNFLY INFORMATION



The invasive and destructive **Spotted Lanternfly (SLF)** has been seen all around Watchung this summer. Many residents are asking what to do if they see this colorful insect on their property. Here is some information about them and tips for dealing with them:

- ◇ Somerset County is already under quarantine for SLF so there is no need to report any sightings.
- ◇ Residents are encouraged to eliminate egg masses (Image A) that can be found on tree bark from September to May. Scrape them off the tree into a bag, destroy them, double bag and throw them away.
- ◇ The state wants residents to destroy adult SLF's (Images D & E) by squashing them or stomping on them.
- ◇ Trapping the insects by wrapping sticky tape around tree trunks is not recommended as it can cause injury or death to beneficial insects, butterflies, birds and small mammals that also get stuck in it.
- ◇ Spray nymph (Images B & C) or adult SLF's with insecticidal soaps, like Ortho Elementals Insecticidal Soap, or spray them with rubbing alcohol mixed with water.
- ◇ Hire a licensed professional to remove host trees, like Trees of Heaven, from your property and then apply herbicides to keep them from growing back.
- ◇ Google these additional resources: 1) NJ Dept of Agriculture Spotted Lanternfly; 2) Penn State Extension - SLF Management for Residents
- ◇ Help by making and installing your own SLF trap by following directions found on <https://extension.psu.edu/how-to-build-a-new-style-spotted-lanternfly-circle-trap>

# Environmental Commission

## STATEWIDE BAN ON SINGLE-USE BAGS STARTS MAY 4, 2022

Single-use plastic carryout bags will be banned statewide starting next May in all stores and food service businesses. Single-use paper carryout bags will also be banned in grocery stores larger than 2500 square feet. The ban is designed to reduce pollution and protect NJ's environment and economy for future generations. This poster explains the main points of the new law. Remember to bring reusable shopping bags with you to the grocery store and everywhere you go to shop. For further details, go to <https://nj.gov/dep/plastic-ban-law>, and let's **BAG UP, WATCHUNG!**

### New Jersey's Plastic Pollution Reduction Law Begins May, 2022



#### What bags are banned?



All single-use plastic carryout bags, like those found at restaurants, grocery and retail stores are banned. Single-use paper carryout bags are banned in grocery stores over 2500 square feet.

#### What bags are allowed?

The ban will not apply to the following bags:

- Reusable plastic carryout bags with stitched handles that can be used and cleaned multiple times
- Newspaper bags
- Laundry/dry cleaning bags
- Bags sold in packages intended for use as garbage, pet waste, or yard waste bags
- Bags used to wrap frozen food, meat, vegetables, and bulk items
- Bags provided by pharmacy to carry prescription drugs

#### Why are bags a problem?



Plastic bags are typically used for less than 12 minutes before they are discarded. NJ residents use 4.4 BILLION plastic bags annually.



Plastics in our natural environment are nearly impossible to remove and cause the death of wildlife and marine animals.



Plastic litter accumulates in landfills, waterways and neighborhoods. Blockage of storm drains can lead to localized flooding.



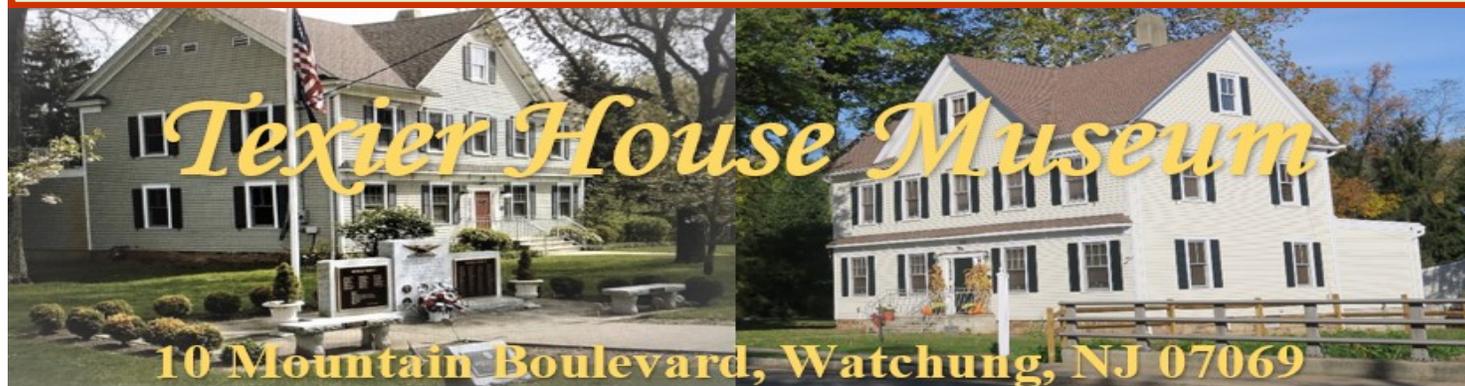
Paper bags require a large amount of wood, water, energy and chemicals to make and recycle producing a negative environmental footprint.

#### What bags are best?

**Reusable! Bring your own!**



## Historical Committee



Hello Neighbors,

Greetings from the Watchung Historical Committee! We are excited to announce that the Watchung Historical Committee will be participating in Weekend Journey Through the Past this fall on October 9<sup>th</sup> (10am - 5 pm) and October 10<sup>th</sup> (noon - 4 pm). This county-wide event was cancelled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but happy to announce we will be opening our doors to all of those interested in local history.

As a follow up to our spring newsletter, Robert Mayers, a prominent author, historian, and longtime resident of Watchung will be joining us on Saturday October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 only for a book signing of *Historic Tales of Watchung*. The book signing will occur at the Texier House Museum. A video preview of the book can be viewed at: [www.revolutionarydetective.com](http://www.revolutionarydetective.com). We are excited to announce that the Historical Committee has reinstated the Open Houses at the Texier House on the first and third Sundays of each month from 2pm to 4pm. Please feel free to join us for a visit and Tour!

Throughout the year, the Historical Committee has been hard at work updating some of the displays in the Texier House Museum, including digitalization of our displays and information. As we move to digitalize our documents and displays, there is continued discussion on the best way to organize this information and the appropriate platform to showcase this.

One of the largest updates is that related to World War I & II displays with a spotlight on World War II Veteran and Watchung resident Henry Long. Jason Ng, Eagle Scout candidate worked closely with scouts, historical committee members, and other local volunteers to create this impressive display. Our committee is very proud of the final product, look forward to working with Jason to see its completion, and excited to share the display and stories with local residents.

The Legend of Watchung Mural is still being conserved in Cape May, NJ by a fine art conservator. Conserving the painting means it will be cleaned and “touched up” to bring the painting closer to its original state. All funds used to save and conserve the mural have been through private charitable donations and grants - no Borough funds have been spent. We, as a committee, still plan to provide recommendations to the Council on a home, even if it is temporary, for the mural. The Historical Committee is open to ideas and suggestions on where this beloved mural could be placed. Donations for the final efforts can be made to the **Watchung Community Foundation**, a 501(c)(3) a charitable tax-exempt organization, please designate ‘**Mural Restoration**’ in the memo line. You can send or deliver a check to Watchung Borough Hall, 15 Mountain Boulevard, Watchung, NJ 07069

Christopher A. Vander Fliet  
Chair of Historical Committee

## Borough Events

As we work through the COVID pandemic, the Borough is **TENTATIVELY** working on preparations for the events listed below. Since this information is subject to change, please be sure to check the Borough website and social media accounts for the most up-to-date information.

### 9/11 Ceremony

September 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 P.M.  
Village Green



### Pumpkin Decorating



Scheduled for Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1:00pm - 4:00pm  
Mobus Field (Rain Date Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>)



### Veteran's Day Ceremony

November 11<sup>th</sup> - Time TBD

## Engineering/ Public Works Department

**The 2021 Leaf Pickup will commence on November 1, 2021 and continue throughout the month of November.** 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 PICKUP.** Pickups will not be scheduled for any specific time or location.

Leaf pickup is limited to high density areas located within the following 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 PAPER 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.



# Borough Clerk's Office

## GENERAL ELECTION DAY

Tuesday, November 2nd

Polls open 6:00 am to 8:00 pm

You can now choose to vote, in person, when it's most convenient for your schedule. In-person early voting enables voters to cast their ballot in-person, using a voting machine, from **October 23rd through October 31st**. Visit [Vote.NJ.Gov](http://Vote.NJ.Gov) or the Borough's website for more information on early voting locations.

**OCTOBER 12 IS THE LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE FOR THE 2021 GENERAL ELECTION** (21 days before election) N.J.S.A. 19:31-6

### ~ COMING SOON TO WATCHUNG ~

A **ballot drop box** is a secure, locked structure operated by election officials where voters may deliver their ballots from the time they receive them in the mail up to the time polls close at **8pm on Election Day**. Drop boxes will be under surveillance by security cameras and collected daily by County Election Officials. Once the drop box has been installed, we will update our website with the location information.



### KNOW YOUR VOTING LOCATION

Districts 1 and 4  
District 3  
Districts 2 and 5

Fireman's Exempt Hall: 31 Mountain Boulevard  
Bayberry School: 105 Bayberry Lane  
Wilson Memorial Union Church: 7 Valley Road

### ~ RESIDENT COMMUNICATIONS ~

Please consider registering for ALL notification services. Each one serves a different purpose to help keep you informed on a daily basis as well as when emergencies occur. Visit our website to subscribe to:

- ⇒ Resident emails
- ⇒ Social Media alerts
- ⇒ Phone & Radio Notifications (Nixle Alerts)

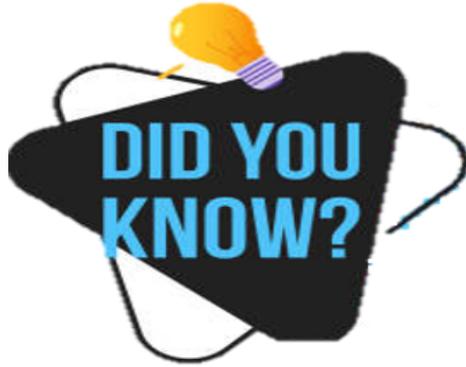


### ARE YOU PART OF A PRIVATE ROAD ASSOCIATION?

THE BOROUGH IS SEEKING CONTACT INFORMATION ON EXISTING PRIVATE ROAD ASSOCIATIONS IN WATCHUNG. PLEASE GIVE US A CALL AT (908) 756-0080 EXT. 0 OR EMAIL THE CLERK AT [EGIL@WATCHUNGNJ.GOV](mailto:EGIL@WATCHUNGNJ.GOV)



# Watchung History



Watchung has been called, variously Browsetown & Washingtonville. It was once part of Warren and later, North Plainfield, before being incorporated as the Borough of Watchung in 1926. Early businesses were focused on its natural resources: farming, copper mines, trapping and processing animal furs.

The **Watchung Lake** was drained for a short time at the end of each season during its time serving as a swim club.

Local children would scour the bottom of the lake while they had a chance looking for coins, jewelry, and any other possessions tourists might have lost during the summer.



Harlan Pratt began building a new home for his family in January of 1951, which would later become the future **Watchung Library**. One of the signature features of the home included a fire place mantel and adjacent paneling that pre-dated the revolutionary war. Harlan purchased the mantel and paneling from a residence that was located in Heights Town, NJ. The construction of the home, now library, was completed by



Labor Day of 1951 and had an original address of 30 Valley Road.

The Pratt home once had a sign in front of it with the text "Four Sisters," making reference to the daughters of the Pratt Family – Jane, Lauren, Deborah and Virginia.

## Published By The Borough Of Watchung

Watchung Municipal Building  
15 Mountain Boulevard  
Watchung, New Jersey 07069  
Phone: 908-756-0080  
Fax: 908-757-7027  
www.watchungnj.gov



Watchung Public Information Channel 15  
Watchung Radio 1610 AM

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*\*\*  
LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER  
Watchung, NJ 07069

### MAYOR KEITH S. BALLA

#### BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wendy Robinson, Council President  
Ronald Jubin

Lindsay Goodloe  
Pietro "Pete" Martino

Daryl Eisenberg Knegten  
Freddie Hayeck

#### Administration

James D. Damato, Administrator  
[JDamato@watchungnj.gov](mailto:JDamato@watchungnj.gov)

#### Police Department

Andrew Hart, Chief  
Non-emergency 908-756-3663

#### Fire Department

Albert DeSandolo II, Chief  
Non-emergency 908-561-9389

#### Borough Clerk

Edith G. Gil 908-756-0080  
[EGil@watchungnj.gov](mailto:EGil@watchungnj.gov)

#### Emergency Management

Carolyn Solon 908-756-0091  
[CSolon@watchungnj.gov](mailto:CSolon@watchungnj.gov)

#### Municipal Court

Jodi Mack 908-769-2265  
[jodimack@njcourts.gov](mailto:jodimack@njcourts.gov)

#### Chief Finance Officer

William Hance 908-756-0080  
[BHance@watchungnj.gov](mailto:BHance@watchungnj.gov)

#### Tax Assessor

Ed Kerwin 908-756-3366  
[ekerwin@watchungnj.gov](mailto:ekerwin@watchungnj.gov)

#### Tax Collector

William Hance 908-756-8333  
[BHance@watchungnj.gov](mailto:BHance@watchungnj.gov)

#### Engineering & Public Works Office

James Hutzelmann 908-756-0091  
[jhutzelmann@watchungnj.gov](mailto:jhutzelmann@watchungnj.gov)

#### Construction Official

Robert LaCosta 908-756-6093  
[RLacosta@watchungnj.gov](mailto:RLacosta@watchungnj.gov)  
Carolyn Taylor, Zoning Officer 908-756-6093  
[CTaylor@watchungnj.gov](mailto:CTaylor@watchungnj.gov)

#### Health Officer

Kevin Sumner, Middle-Brook  
Regional Health Commission  
732-968-5151

#### Watchung Fire Official

Chris Czuba 908-756-0091

#### Watchung Art Center

For information call 908-561-0190

#### Watchung Public Library

12 Stirling Road  
908-458-8455

#### Watchung Hills Regional High School

Grades 9 through 12  
108 Stirling Road – Warren  
908-647-4800

#### Bayberry Elementary School

Kindergarten through 4th Grade  
113 Bayberry Lane  
908-755-8184

#### Valley View Middle School

Grades 5 through 8  
50 Valley View Road  
908-755-4422