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Watchung, New Jersey 07069

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Watchung Radio 1610 AM

Visit us on the Web  
[www.watchungnj.gov](http://www.watchungnj.gov)

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

**MAYOR KEITH S. BALLA**

**Wendy Robinson, Council President**  
**Daryl Eisenberg Knegten**

**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Steve Black**  
**Ron Jubin**

**Lindsay Goodloe**  
**Pietro “Pete” Martino**

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[Watchung Art Center](#)  
For information call 908-561-0190

[Watchung Hills Regional High School](#)  
Grades 9 through 12  
108 Stirling Road  
Warren, NJ 07059  
908-647-4800

[Police Department](#)  
**Emergency** 911  
**Non-emergency** 908-756-3663

[Emergency Management](#)  
**Carolyn Solon 908-756-0091**  
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**Ed Kerwin** 908-756-3366  
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[Construction Official](#)  
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Carolyn Taylor, Zoning Officer 908-756-6093  
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[Watchung Public Library](#)  
908-561-0117  
(Closed Saturdays during July and August)

[Bayberry Elementary School](#)  
Kindergarten through 4th Grade  
Bayberry Lane  
908-755-8184

[Fire Department](#)  
**Emergency** 911  
**Non-emergency** 908-561-9389

[Municipal Court](#)  
**Jodi Mack 908-769-2265**

[Tax Collector](#)  
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[Valley View Middle School](#)  
Grades 5 through 8  
Valley View Road  
908-755-4422

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**THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER  
FOR THE BOROUGH OF  
WATCHUNG  
SPRING/SUMMER  
ISSUE 2020-01**

**FROM YOUR MAYOR**

Greetings Watchung Residents,

2020 will certainly be a year for the records for municipal activity in the Borough of Watchung. Since January we added Charles Gunther to our Public Works leadership which has brought new vibrancy and energy and brightness to our community. We conducted a search for a new Borough Clerk to fill the position of retiring Clerk Michelle DeRocco. We thank Michelle for her 17 years of dedicated professional service and wish her good health and happiness in her retirement. We welcome our new Borough Clerk Edith Gil who comes to us after serving 10 years in the City of Newark Clerk’s office.

Our world was presented with a challenge with the COVID 19 pandemic. The pandemic caused us to adjust our personal behavior and social interactions. As social beings, this has been extremely difficult. The love and physical social interaction we typically had was relegated to video, voice and computer interaction. Unfortunately, the computer isn’t like a hug and face to face physical interaction for sharing in celebrations and providing comfort in sorrows. Our condolences go out to the 14 families of the Watchung residents who passed as a result of COVID 19. On March 17, 2020 a Declaration of Emergency was signed to address matters to protect the public health safety and welfare due to the rapidly evolving spread of COVID 19. This declaration promulgated regulations to protect the residents of Watchung. The restrictions in compliance with Governor Murphy’s Executive Orders serve to protect the public and slow the spread of the virus. I commend all of our residents for their compliance, patience and understanding in working together as a Watchung family to do all we can to help and protect each other. Our Watchung family of residents and businesses have come together to help each other and be a positive encouragement during these difficult times. I am certain Watchung’s Governing Body has never had as many meetings and timely communications in its history than we have had over the past few month. We have conducted 30 Council meetings since January 1 as well as numerous committee meetings to address the concerns and issues while improving the quality of life and protecting our residents of Watchung. We held several Budget hearings and reviewed every department to look for savings opportunities and approved a lean budget for 2020 and are working to obtain an AAA bond rating which provides advantages for our Borough.

Our Recreation Committee due to COVID 19 had to unfortunately cancel many of the wonderful programs and events for the entire community, which would bring our residents together for fun and relaxation. Linda Monetti and Councilman Black did however organize several new events to showcase the talents and gifts of our residents with a photo contest, art contests and music contest. The 2020 summer camp program for our children is on hold pending NJ State approval to move forward with opening more activities. We are eager for continued progress to provide activities and events to bring our residents together and celebrate the great Borough of Watchung. I have been meeting with residents one and one to share ideas and welcome the input and experienced help from both the residents and employees. We have also had discussions in planning a community Garden and Charitable Farm at Camp Endeavor.

We conducted an exhaustive search of all properties in Watchung for the best location for the new Watchung library building. We entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Exempt Fireman’s Association to acquire their interest in the lease for the exempt property as the most suitable site on February 4, 2020. The Ad Hoc committee has worked diligently with the Watchung Library Advisory Committee, the grant writers and architect to complete the NJ Library Grant application for matching funds of \$2,872,000 for the new library. This is truly a once in a life time opportunity where the grant funds if awarded coupled with the sale for redevelopment of the old library and arts center properties would provide most of the needed funding for the new facility. I especially thank Amy Fiorilla, Stella Couchells and Nina Leach for their extraordinary work and efforts in compiling the information and data needed for the grant application.

Our volunteers and businesses provided the materials, labor and installation of the walkway at the 9-11 Memorial. The brick pavers and plantings are also being installed. Thank you Seth Alexander, PJ Panzarella, Robert Adams, Galbraith, and Weldon Concrete and all of the volunteers.

Department of Public Works will be overseeing selected resurfacing of roads over the summer, of which the costs are being covered by the NJ Department of Transportation grant. Preliminary analysis of the Lake sediment was performed and the plan is to perform a raking process to remove a limited amount of sediment to enable the deferment of dredging Watchung Lake.

I introduced a pending ordinance in the best interest, welfare and safety of its residents and the general public to lower the speed limit on Mountain Boulevard, Valley Road, Hillcrest Road, Stirling Road, and Somerset Streets. I plan to meet with Somerset County officials to garner their support to adopt this ordinance to provide safer streets for our residents.

I have had a number of discussions with our School Superintendent and look forward to more collaboration and shared services and assistance between the Borough, Schools and residents involvement.

I had established regular office hours on the second Monday of each month from 7:00-9:00 pm to meet with residents. I have also been meeting with residents on a regular basis who have ideas and interests to better our community usually at 7:00am or 7:00 pm at the Mayor's office in Borough Hall. Please reach out with your ideas and interests to serve and volunteer within our community. If we all work together for the common good our community will be greatly enriched.

I thank you for the privilege and opportunity to serve as your Mayor and look forward to resuming all the activities and projects for the fall and winter.

God Bless you All,



Keith S. Balla, Mayor

- Tip: Include the number of an out of town relative on your pet's ID tag.
- Think about "microchipping" your pet. These permanent implants help locate your pet following a disaster.
- Tip: Keep your pets' microchip registration info current so you can be contacted if your pet gets lost in a disaster.
- After a disaster, don't allow your pets to roam loose. Landmarks may have been changed & your pet could become disoriented.

**MITIGATION**

**What is Mitigation?**

Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. In order for mitigation to be effective we need to take action now—before the next disaster—to reduce human and financial consequences later (analyzing risk, reducing risk, and insuring against risk). It is important to know that disasters can happen at any time and any place and if we are not prepared, consequences can be fatal.

Effective mitigation requires that we *all* understand local risks, address the hard choices, and invest in long-term community well-being. Without mitigation actions, we jeopardize our safety, financial security and self-reliance.

- Disasters can happen at anytime and anyplace; their human and financial consequences are hard to predict.
- The number of disasters each year is increasing but only 50 percent of events trigger Federal assistance.
- FEMA's mitigation programs help reduce the impact of events—and our dependence on taxpayers and the Treasury for disaster relief.

FEMA's Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration (FIMA) manages the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and implements a variety of programs authorized by Congress to reduce losses that may result from natural disasters. Effective mitigation efforts can break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. FEMA's mitigation and insurance efforts are organized into three primary activities that help states, tribes, territories and localities achieve the highest level of mitigation: Risk Analysis, Risk Reduction, and Risk Insurance. Through these activities and FEMA's day-to-day work across the country, communities are able to make better mitigation decisions before, during, and after disasters.

**The National Flood Insurance Program**

The National Flood Insurance Program aims to reduce the impact of flooding on private and public structures. It does so by providing affordable insurance to property owners, renters and businesses and by encouraging communities to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations. These efforts help mitigate the effects of flooding on new and improved structures. Overall, the program reduces the socio-economic impact of disasters by promoting the purchase and retention of general risk insurance, but also of flood insurance, specifically.

<https://www.floodsmart.gov/>

For further information on Mitigation and The National Flood Insurance Program – visit [www.watchungnj.gov/departments/emergencymanagement/mitigation](http://www.watchungnj.gov/departments/emergencymanagement/mitigation)



"Register Ready – New Jersey's Special Needs Registry for Disasters" allows New Jersey residents with disabilities or access and functional needs and their families, friends, caregivers and associates an opportunity to provide information to emergency response agencies so emergency responders can better plan to serve them in a disaster or other emergency.

The information collected here is confidential and will not be available to the public. The information will be held securely and only used for emergency response and planning. For more information and a link to the signup page, visit <http://bit.ly/NJRegisterReady>.

For help registering, dial 211 (toll free) and an operator will assist you. Registering on this website will not guarantee that responders will be able to assist you in an emergency, so personal preparedness also is strongly encouraged.





Office of Emergency Management

## Disaster Preparedness – Preparing Makes Sense

Being prepared for disasters starts at home. Everyone can be part of helping to prepare for emergencies. Young children and teens alike can be a part of the process. As a parent, guardian, or other family member, you have an important role to play when it comes to protecting the children in your life and helping them be prepared in case disaster strikes. Do you know preparedness planning should include planning for your pets? Emergency Preparedness also includes planning for potential storm damage or flooding to your home. For further information:

### Pet Emergency Preparedness:

#### General

- June is National Pet Preparedness Month. Include your pets in your family emergency plan: [www.ready.gov/pets](http://www.ready.gov/pets)
- Don't forget to include your pets in your family's emergency plans.
- Download, share or print @Readygov's Pet owner's planning guide with your community: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90356>
- Don't forget to make a plan for large animals & livestock before a disaster. Tips: [www.ready.gov/animals](http://www.ready.gov/animals)
- Your pets can't make their own plans for #SevereWx but you can. Learn how to plan ahead at [www.ready.gov/pets](http://www.ready.gov/pets)
- Are you traveling with your pets over the summer? Pack a few emergency items for them too! [www.ready.gov/pets](http://www.ready.gov/pets)

#### Emergency Kit

- Take time to refresh your pets emergency kit-check water, food, & make sure their favorite toy is included to reduce stress [www.ready.gov/pets](http://www.ready.gov/pets)
- Pets need an emergency supply kit too. View what items should go in it: [www.ready.gov/pets](http://www.ready.gov/pets)
- A pet supply kit should contain the basics for survival like pet food and water.
- Put a favorite toy, treats or bedding in your pet's emergency kit to help reduce their stress.
- Add extra pet food & water to your grocery list to update your pet's emergency kit.
- Food, water, collar, veterinary records are some items for your pet's emergency kit. More at: [www.ready.gov/animals](http://www.ready.gov/animals)
- Take care of farm friends in an emergency. Pack emergency items for them too, including vehicles and trailers.
- Keep your pets' vet's name and vaccination records handy in case of emergency.
- Don't forget a pooper scooper, cat litter, or plastic bags in your pets' emergency kit!

#### Evacuation

- Practice evacuating in the car with your animals, so they're more comfortable if you need to evacuate in an emergency.
- If officials tell you to evacuate before a storm, don't leave pets behind! <https://www.ready.gov/animals>
- Get your pet familiar with their carrier before #severewx hits in case you need to evacuate with them quickly.
- Animals left behind in a disaster can easily be lost or injured--always take them with you if evacuate.
- If you evacuate your home take your pets & their supplies with you. [www.ready.gov/pets](http://www.ready.gov/pets)

#### Shelter

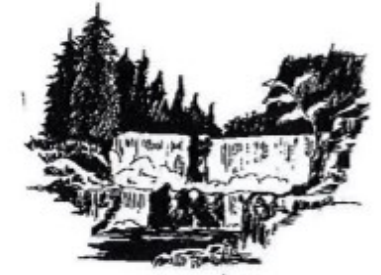
- Make a list & check it twice. List the address & number of all the places you can take your pet in an emergency.
- Find out in advance where you can take your pets when an emergency happens in your community <https://www.gopetfriendly.com/>
- Identify pet shelters now before the next emergency: <https://www.ready.gov/animals>
- Pets displaced by a disaster are frequently kept in shelters or held by local orgs. Find a contact ahead of time.

#### Identification

- Keep that cute selfie of you & your pet in your emergency kit to prove ownership.
- Does your pet have ID? Put your name and contact information on your pet's ID tag in case you're separated in an emergency.
- A picture is worth a thousand words. Take a current photo of your pet in case you get separated during a disaster.

## BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG OFFICE OF FIRE PREVENTION

Christopher Czuba  
Fire Official



## Spring and Summer is the perfect time for outdoor cooking and grilling!

**FACT:** July is the peak month for grill fires. Almost half of injuries involving grills are thermal burns. Protective gloves should be worn while grilling.

- Propane and Charcoal Grills should only be used outdoors.
  - The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat build-up from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- **Never** leave your grill unattended.
- Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting it.
- If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least 5 minutes before re-lighting.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the Fire Department.
- When you are finished grilling, allow the coals to cool completely before discarding.
- Keep charcoal lighting fluid out of reach of children and away from heat sources.

### Do your part to reduce exterior fires:

- **Remove flammable materials** (firewood stacks, propane tanks) within 30 feet of your home's foundation and outbuildings, including garages and sheds. If it can catch fire, don't let it touch your house, deck or porch.
- **Move any flammable material** away from wall exteriors – mulch, flammable plants, leaves and needles - anything that can burn. Remove anything stored underneath decks or porches.
- Clear **vegetation** from around grills and propane tanks.
- Clean roofs and gutters of **dead leaves**, debris and **pine needles** that could catch fire.
- Remove dead **plant** and **tree** material.
- Remove **vegetation** adjacent to storage sheds or other outbuildings to reduce the risk of fire.
- Don't let debris and **lawn cuttings** linger. Dispose of these items quickly to reduce fuel for fire.

**Remember to test your smoke alarms monthly, enjoy the season and be fire safe!**



*What is*

## STORMWATER

Stormwater is the water from rain or melting snow that can become "runoff" flowing over the ground surface and returning to lakes and streams.

*What's the problem?*

As stormwater flows over streets, parking lots, and lawns, it can pick up and carry many kinds of materials that get washed into nearby streams and lakes. This leads to stormwater pollution and localized flooding.



*Where do these pollutants come from?*

Stormwater picks up contaminants that come from all of us:

- Fertilizers
- Pesticides
- Bacteria from pet waste
- Eroded soil
- Road salt
- Grass clippings
- Litter

These pollutants wash into ditches and storm drains, eventually ending up in local waterways.

*For additional resources:*

## CHECK OUT

Rain Garden Manual of New Jersey  
by visiting  
<https://issuu.com/rutgerswater>

-or-

Rain Garden App



by visiting  
<http://nemo.unconn.edu/tools>

For more information and technical assistance, contact:

**Christopher C. Obropta, Ph.D., P.E.**  
Extension Specialist, Cooperative Extension  
Water Resources Program  
[obropta@envsci.rutgers.edu](mailto:obropta@envsci.rutgers.edu)  
<http://www.water.rutgers.edu>

-or-

**Your Cooperative Extension County Office**  
by visiting/calling:  
<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/county/>



Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

## Introduction to RAIN GARDENS



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.

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



Include host plants to support butterflies. Milkweed and Sedum are great examples. You must be willing to tolerate the caterpillars eating the leaves. The plants will look a bit unsightly but they will come back. Most of all remember to have fun!



Pollinator photos courtesy of Unsplash.

The Trex Plastic Bag Recycling Challenge is currently suspended and will start again once everything reopens.

Announcement of the program restarting will be made on the Watchung Borough website and Facebook page.

In the meantime, please collect your soft, stretchy plastics at home. When collection restarts, the bins will be in

4 locations: 1) Borough Hall, front-ground floor; 2) Cupa Café, on the circle; 3) Wilson Church; 4) St. Mary's

Church (parishioners only, please).

**Thank you for recycling and helping to keep Watchung green!**

The Watchung Environmental Commission has a limited number of stylish new reusable bags to give away. They are made of 100% recycled plastic bottles. Residents can pick one up at the counter upstairs in Borough Hall once it reopens.



## What is a RAIN GARDEN

A rain garden, or bioretention system, is a landscaped, shallow depression that captures, filters, and infiltrates stormwater runoff. The rain garden removes nonpoint source pollutants from stormwater runoff while recharging groundwater. A rain garden serves as a functional system to capture, filter, and infiltrate stormwater runoff at the source while being aesthetically pleasing. Rain gardens are an important tool for communities and neighborhoods to create diverse, attractive landscapes while protecting the health of the natural environment. Rain gardens can also be installed in areas that do not infiltrate by incorporating an underdrain system.

Rain gardens can be implemented throughout communities to begin the process of re-establishing the natural function of the land. Rain gardens offer one of the quickest and easiest methods to reduce runoff and help protect our water resources. Beyond the aesthetic and ecological benefits, rain gardens encourage environmental stewardship and community pride.

### PLAN Choosing a spot

Rain gardens can be designed to catch water from a roof or even a driveway. When choosing a location for your garden, pick an area that is relatively flat or that has a slight slope. Keep the following considerations in mind:



- For buildings with a basement, a rain garden should be located a minimum of 10' from the building; for buildings without a basement, a rain garden should be located at a minimum of 2' from the building.
- Do not place a rain garden within 25' of a septic system.
- Do not site a rain garden in soggy places where water already ponds.
- Avoid seasonally high water tables.
- Consider flat areas first for easier digging.
- Avoid placing a rain garden within the dripline of trees.

### PREPARE How big?

The size of your garden will depend upon three factors:

1. The size of the drainage area
2. The type of soils on the site
3. The depth of the garden

A typical residential rain garden ranges from 100 to 300 square feet.



#### Ready to dig?

- Use rope or a garden hose to outline the shape of your garden.
- On a slope, more digging will be required on the uphill side. Use extra soil to build a berm on the downhill side.
- The bottom of the garden must be flat and level.
- Don't forget to make an overflow for heavy rain events.

### PLANT Plant selection

Choose plants that have a variety of heights, textures, and bloom times. It is important to select plants that can tolerate both wet and dry conditions and that are suited to the sun/shade exposure of your garden.



#### Planting pointer!

Dig each hole twice the width of the plant plug. The hole should be deep enough so that the crown of the plant is level with the ground.



# Behind the Lights and Sirens

Since responding to their first call on December 31, 1950 the Watchung Rescue Squad has welcomed members from all backgrounds. Whether it be students or engineers, doctors or nurses, residents or nonresidents, most members choose to volunteer as of a desire to give back to the community and help people in need. However for some, the passion and desire is far more personal.

Meet Jeiner Betancourt-Quintanilla, a 20-year-old nursing student and currently Captain of the Watchung Rescue Squad. As soon as Jeiner knew he wanted to commit to a career in the medical field, he was in search of ways to start experiencing patient care first hand. It was then that he stumbled upon the idea of joining the Rescue Squad. Jeiner explains that his decision to volunteer came about, "as my father had just been diagnosed with end stage renal failure and I felt like I needed to do something to help others with medical issues as well." From the beginning, Jeiner's eagerness and dedication did not go unnoticed. He worked with various committees and officers to experience as much about the operations and administrative aspects of the Squad as possible. Jeiner recently became the youngest member to hold the position of Captain, but his leadership and EMS skills are that of a veteran.



The Watchung Rescue Squad has endured almost 70 years of emergency response thanks to the countless volunteers who have committed their time to helping others, and the consistent support from local residents. As described by Jeiner, "the amount of gratitude I have received from the people who I have helped makes this one of the most rewarding things I do on a consistent basis".

Join Jeiner and our other volunteers at the Watchung Rescue Squad by helping your community and becoming a part of something bigger than yourself. Visit our website at [watchungems.org](http://watchungems.org) to learn more.



## Support Local Ecology with Native Pollinators

Consider planting a pollinator garden. Bees, butterflies, beetles, other insects, and even bats are pollinators. They all depend on native plant species for survival. When planning your garden, be sure to add native plants. Start by determining if your garden will be in full or partial sun or even shade. A little bit of planning and research can provide you with a rewarding and often low maintenance garden as well as attract many beautiful and endangered birds and insects. If deer are a concern, plant highly scented varieties in the perimeter of your garden to deter them. Lungwort is an excellent example as well as White Spirea, Creeping Juniper, Trumpet Honeysuckle, Eastern Blue Star, Butterfly weed, and Spotted bee balm to name a few. Many native plants are perennials, so a well thought out pollinator garden will return and grow in its beauty each year.



## Here are some ways you can encourage pollinators.

Start with a reputable nursery and tap into their knowledge. Avoid hybrid flowers, especially those with "doubled" flowers. When breeders create these varieties, they often lose the pollen, nectar and fragrance.

Choose native plants that will grow at varying heights and plant them in clusters, this creates a "target" for the pollinators. If you're not ready for a garden, try hanging plants, or container gardens.

Reduce or eliminate pesticides. When applying, remember to do so in the evening after the bees and other insects are not active. Never apply on a windy day as the chemicals can travel. Read the labels carefully and be mindful when applying any type of pesticide. Alternatively, there are many organic "recipes" on line so you can make your own.

## Support local bees and beekeepers!







The Borough of Watchung requires a tree removal permit when cutting a live, dead and/or diseased tree. A tree replacement of a 2 ½ inch in diameter or greater is required when removing a live tree.

\*\*\*\*\* BE ON THE LOOK OUT \*\*\*\*\*



Spotted Lanternfly nymphs, present in spring and summer months. (Images from Park et al. 2009)



Adult Spotted Lanternfly, present in autumn months.

If you find any of these life stages of the spotted Lanternfly, remove, devitalize, and place in a sealed bag and dispose of bag in the garbage.

REPLANT    REPLANT    REPLANT    REPLANT    REPLANT    REPLANT



Our woods are losing 20% - 30% of our trees. The Ash trees have been killed by the emerald ash borer. Our land needs help. Do your part to stem global warming. Trees are one of Watchung's most valuable assets.

### PLANT NATIVE TREES

For Additional Information visit our website: [Watchungnj.gov](http://Watchungnj.gov)



## Traffic and Beautification Spring 2020 Newsletter

Hello Watchung Residents!

The members of the Traffic and Beautification Committee are committed to keeping Watchung a beautiful place to live. Each year we decorate our town for the fall and winter seasons. In the spring we plant flowers on the triangle in front of Borough Hall, and with the help of the DPW, at the triangle on Somerset Street. We also plant at the side of the building, in front of the Watchung Sign at Spratford Park, at the bottom of Hillcrest road, and in front of the library. We have been working with the DPW to beautify the medians along Somerset Street by planting trees, shrubs and flowers. There are plans to improve the areas around Best Lake and the Blue Star Memorial located in front of the canon on Somerset Street.

Traffic and Beautification also sponsors Operation Pride in the spring. Scouts, residents, students and the Knights of Columbus gather behind the Texier House to volunteer their time and service to keep Watchung Clean and beautiful. They pick up a trash bag, plastic gloves, a T-shirt, and a bottle of water, sign up for a designated area in town, and head out to various areas to collect debris. We applaud the volunteers who show up each year to do their part for our community.

Watchung is a Borough with a cozy, homey and colonial atmosphere. Let's keep it that way! Come join us to plant and plan for the beautification of Watchung. We usually meet twice a month on Monday morning at 10:00 at Borough Hall.

Phyllis Juetter-Chair





Dear Neighbors,

There is nothing in Watchung history that has prepared us for the devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Facing the vicissitudes of life we must remember that we will get past this together as a community. Due to the current situation the Texier house Museum is temporarily closed until further notice. Find us on Facebook for more information at TexierHouseMuseum.

The Watchung Historical Committee preserves Watchung's history as well as documents and records current happenings that shape our future. Storytelling and archival documentation can bring solace during the most painful times. As we experience this historic time together the Committee seeks to share and preserve your stories through documenting life in Watchung during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Historical Committee wants to gather community narratives, images, records, art, and other forms of response to the impacts of COVID-19. How is this affecting your life, family, or business? What are you doing during the stay-at-home order? Is there an essential employee you would like to recognize? We want to hear from you, be a part of history, and share your experiences with the Historical Committee of Watchung.

**Ways to share your story:**

- Write: Journaling, write poetry, pen a script, notices of canceled events, etc.
- Artwork
- Start a video blog or speak into a recorder
- Take photographs or video of your environment/community/life in quarantine
- Upload records from your business that document how it responded to the crises (social media graphics, e-mail or mail correspondence, business announcements, etc.)
- Save your social media posts (*We encourage the donation of photographs and other media as file uploads, rather than as links to online posts.*)
- Physical artifacts-- signage, anything showing life during this pandemic (for now, please send only photos and descriptions of these)

In gathering your thoughts and stories, please adhere to all issued safety precautions such as social distancing, to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Warmly,

Amber Murad

Chair of Historical Committee of Watchung

To fill out a submission form please visit [http://www.watchungnj.gov/historical\\_committee.html](http://www.watchungnj.gov/historical_committee.html) or e-mail [historic@watchungnj.gov](mailto:historic@watchungnj.gov) for more information.

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\***

## **IMPORTANT VOTING INFORMATION**

### **PRIMARY ELECTION DAY**

**Tuesday, July 7th**

**Polls open 6:00 am to 8:00 pm**

**As per Executive Order #144, the following changes will be implemented for the Primary Election**

- The County will mail all active Democrat and Republican Voters a "Vote-By-Mail" Ballot
- All non-active and unaffiliated Voters will be receiving an application for a "Vote-By-Mail" Ballot
- If you choose to Vote in-person on July 7<sup>th</sup>, you will be voting via a Provisional Ballot which is a paper ballot
- Only "certified visually impaired" Voters will be allowed to Vote in a machine
- No "sample ballots" are being mailed
- The Borough will be utilizing only one polling location for walk-in Voters and that location will be: Exempt Hall

### **VOTING DISTRICT LOCATION**

**EXEMPT HALL  
31 Mountain Boulevard**

**- DISTRICTS 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5**

**June 16<sup>th</sup>      Last day to register to vote for the Primary Election**

Voter Registration forms, Vote by Mail forms, Change in Party Forms, are all available at Borough Hall, or on our website: [www.watchungnj.gov](http://www.watchungnj.gov) or [www.co.somerset.nj.us/elections](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/elections)

