

BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER - SPRING/SUMMER 2026



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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Happy and Healthy Birthday(s) to my fellow Watchungers!! – Two-thousand and twenty-six! The USA is celebrating our 250th and our Borough is turning 100! Birthdays and New Years are times of remembrance as well as opportunities for new starts. Well, we are going to be doing both this year in Watchung and I want you to be involved and engaged as much as possible. There will be many individual and unique opportunities to participate and enjoy our rich history in the great charm and beauty of Watchung. In regards to new starts, I wish this to be a healthy year for all of you too and we will ramp up our healthy activities throughout the year.

Sound interesting? Want to learn more? I sure hope so. It pains me if a resident tells me "Oh, I wish I had known about the block party, my kids would have loved it." We are all inundated 24/7 with spam email and texts & social media post after post; it is hard to filter what is important to you and your family.

Do you wish there was a simpler and better way to stay informed here in Watchung?

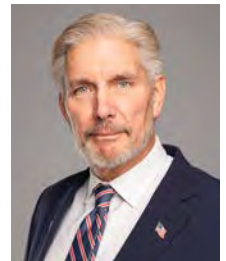
If the answer is YES! The **My Watchung** App is your way to capture the Borough's up to date information and alerts through one app. You can set up notification alerts for specific categories like "Events" or "Messages from the Mayor"! Are you becoming intrigued and excited? I hope so. Just download the App from the Apple Apps or Google Play stores – it's free. Nixle will remain separate for emergency announcements so make sure you are signed up for all communication channels to stay informed and up to date. I want to thank our Municipal Clerk Edith Gil for her commitment to improving our electronic upgrades including the app.

Back to the Fun – We still go on vacation even though we can see the entire world from our phone. Why is that? Because life needs to be experienced, not just viewed from afar. The Watchung 2026 events will be exciting experiences to celebrate our rich history! Sign up for the My Watchung App to have all event details at your fingertips and on your calendar. One upcoming event, Founder's Day, will be a new annual event that will take place this June 13th. The day will feature a patriotic parade from Exempt Hall to the east end of Best Lake, the Mayor's Regatta, and will wrap up with hot dogs, snacks, and the opening of the Time Capsule installed in June 1976.

What a snowy winter we have had! But that hasn't stopped us from having fun. I congratulate the winners of our patriotic snowman contest. Continuing the winter theme, our Historical Committee held a "Wintertime in Watchung" thematic open house at Texier house in January that was followed by a film history event "Growing up in Watchung" at the Arts Center. Both were huge hits and I want to thank Karen Jubin and Chris Vander Fliet for leading these standing room only events. Since these events were such a big hit, the Historical Committee will continue these events throughout the year with themes including "Lessons in Legacy" going to school in Watchung, "Summertime in Watchung" and more. For all events, big or small, please sign up for the My Watchung App to stay up to date.

Mayor's Wellness Campaign (MWC) shifts into high gear for '26. I have truly enjoyed the healthy events that started four years ago including the Mayor's Monday Wellness Walks, yoga in the park and at the Arts center, health demonstrations at the Harvest festival, and CPR training by our Rescue Squad have been great successes. Let's elevate it further for our birthday year. I will be forming an ad hoc MWC committee with Sonia Habib-Abib as Council liaison, Denise Wilson, Emma Jubin, and Seth Weingarten as the inaugural volunteer members.

Continued on page 5...



Mayor Jubin

SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
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Visit us at www.watchungnj.gov





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the free app

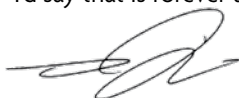


Continued on page 5... **MAYOR'S MESSAGE**

We will work across all volunteer groups and with you, our residents, to develop fun and healthy activities to make Watchung a more enjoyable and healthier place to live. I have to give a huge shoutout to Damaris Quiñones-Gray, our Recreation Coordinator and Board of Health Secretary, for all the dedication to our recreation and health events. I congratulate Colleen Lange for her promotion to Deputy Clerk and we welcome Gloria Rivera, our new administrative assistant. We have such an amazing team here in Watchung and it's only through their hard work could we accomplish so much for all of you.

Infrastructure Upgrades for a Healthier Watchung - I'm so excited to update you on our two big projects that will be completed this year. The Camp Endeavor redevelopment project will include an ADA compliant parking and walking trail loop that's funded through multiple county grants exceeding \$366,000. We are grateful to them for sharing our vision of increased accessibility for peace and tranquility around the centennial walking loop trail. I've saved the biggest for last, the Watchung Community Connection! The work continues at an expeditious pace so we may open the facility in our celebratory year. There will be so many opportunities to enrich both mind and body at the Centennial library and our community rooms. Yoga in the morning, health talks in the afternoon and a musical quartet in the evening - we are only limited by our imagination for the great events that will happen at the WCC. Thanks to our Business Administrator Jim Damato for his leadership in these restorations to keep them both on time and in budget.

In closing, I am so grateful and honored to be your mayor in this historical year and I want to ask each of you, and your families, to be involved by attending these events. I know you will be aware of all them through the My Watchung App (please sign up!). We are planning to photograph these amazing events dedicating a section of our website with pictures and videos of these celebrations. It would be amazing for our children to be able to see themselves and reflect the fun that was had in Watchung in 2026 as they grow up. This sentiment of establishing future nostalgia also includes the installation of a new time capsule outside the Community Connection to be opened in 2076! I'd say that is forever away, but that's how I felt in 1976 and well, here we are.



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



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

March 29- Palm Sunday

Easter egg hunt and Brunch after Worship

April 2- Maundy Thursday 6pm

April 3- Good Friday

Self-guided prayer time (open sanctuary) 12-1pm

April 5- Easter 10am

We are hiring! Looking to fill the Music Director position.
Visit our website to see the full details.



FROM THE DESK OF THE BOROUGH CLERK

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!

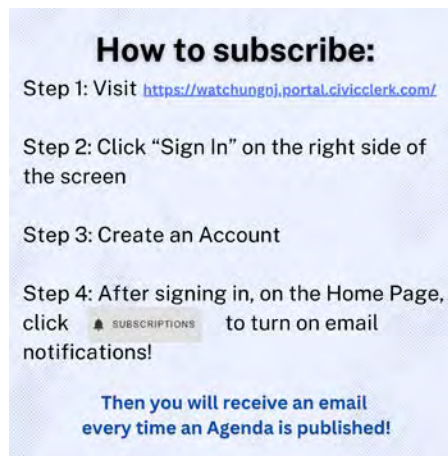
We are always working to bring live the ideas and suggestions of our Governing Body and to strengthen communication with residents. We are proud to bring to you the MyWatchung app available in google and apple stores.



Agenda Management System

Last year our office launched a new agenda management platform—Civic Clerk—designed to make it easier for residents to stay informed and engaged. This system provides convenient access to Borough Council meeting videos, agendas, minutes, and voting items, all in one centralized location. This year, we are working to bring this platform to the Borough's Board of Adjustment and Planning Board meetings as well. Please be patient with us as we work to merge our information together!

If you subscribe to our borough emails or follow us on social media, you may have already seen announcements about this new tool. If not, don't worry—you can find instructions on how to access Civic Clerk below.



Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming Important Dates

- **April 31 – Cat License Expiration** Cat licenses expire annually on this date. Borough ordinance requires renewal every year. Subscribe to our borough emails to receive renewal reminders! **Renewals due by May 31st**
- **June 2 PRIMARY ELECTION DAY** Polls open 6am to 8pm
- **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**.

I'm proud to work with a dedicated team that keeps our borough moving and our residents supported. Their commitment drives everything we do, and we're here whenever you need guidance or support.



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

Edith Gil 908-756-0080 ext. 213

EGil@watchungnj.gov

CFO/Tax Collector

William Hance 908-756-0080 ext. 216

BHance@watchungnj.gov

Engineering Office

Robert Hunter 908-756-0091 ext. 225

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

Robert Lacosta 908-756-0080 ext. 228

RLacosta@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

Celebrating 100 Years of Watchung — and the People Who Make It Special As we proudly celebrate Watchung's 100-year Centennial, there is so much to be excited about — and even more to be grateful for.

Behind the scenes, our borough has been working tirelessly to make this milestone year truly unforgettable. From securing critical funding — including the \$300,000 grant awarded for Camp Endeavor — to planning a full slate of community events, the dedication and teamwork across Watchung has been nothing short of remarkable.

Residents can look forward to an incredible lineup of Centennial events, including:

- The Women of Watchung celebration
- Community concerts and gatherings
- An Open House with our Police Department, Fire Department, and Rescue Squad
- And many more events that bring neighbors together and honor our shared history

Amid a season of unpredictable and challenging weather, I also want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our Department of Public Works and all of our first responders. Their professionalism, hard work, and commitment — often under difficult conditions — keep our community safe, moving, and resilient every single day.

This year is especially meaningful as our Centennial coincides with another historic milestone: the 250th anniversary of our great nation. It's a powerful reminder of the values we share — service, community, and pride in where we live.

Watchung's story is built on the dedication of its people — past and present — and this year we honor them all.

God Bless Watchung, and God Bless America

Curt Dahl

Council President



ONLINE PUBLICATION PSA

On June 30, 2025, Governor Phil Murphy signed S-4654 into law, which amends the legal notice requirements under the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). Beginning March 1, 2026, public entities must publish their legal notices on their website, rather than in newspapers.

Until March 1, 2026, public entities can comply with OPMA either by posting notices in a newspaper or on their website. In a proactive approach, the Borough of Watchung will begin phasing into this process.

In addition to posting on the Borough website (watchungnj.gov), the Borough uses TAPinto for any required legal advertisements and notices can be viewed:



https://www.tapinto.net/towns/north-plainfield-slash-green-brook-slash-watchung/legal_notices

← Scan here



WATCHUNG'S FARMERS MARKET

EVERY TUESDAY
3PM – 7PM
Best Lake Parking Lot
Valley Road at Watchung Circle

Live music too!

OPENING DAY
JUNE 2, 2026

Come by and support our local vendors!

Join us every week for fresh produce, handmade baked goods, gourmet pickles, and more!

Reusable Bag Collection!
Please bring reusable bags to the Farmers Market for donation to local food pantries!

Scan for list of vendors and more information!

Check the Borough's website and social media for a list of vendors and updates.
www.watchungnj.gov/farmers-market

2026 EVENT SCHEDULE

- ARIL 1** | **SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION**
Open to surrounding towns and ends May 23
- MAY 25** | **MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY**
Rain or Shine
- MAY 30** | **BENEFIT CONCERT**
Rain Date: May 31
- JUNE 13** | **MAYOR'S REGATTA & PARADE**
Rain Date: JUNE 14
- JULY 4** | **PATRIOT WALK**
Rain Date: n/a



- SEPT 18** | **MOVIE NIGHT**
Rain date: TBD
Movie to be shown - TBD
- SEPT 11** | **9-11 MEMORIAL CEREMONY**
Rain or Shine
- SEPT 26** | **FISHING DERBY**
Rain Date: Sept 27
- OCT 5** | **CENTENNIAL GOLF OUTING**
Further details will be shared soon
- OCT 17** | **CENTENNIAL GALA**
Further details will be shared soon



100 years strong! Let's celebrate with unity, joy, and lots of fun!



Don't forget to check our website often for the latest updates on these and other amazing events happening around town!

www.watchungnj.gov

This schedule is subject to change.



You deserve to treat yourself!

Established in 1991, YY Beauty Spa is the ideal place to go for those wishing to rejuvenate and restore their skin. It is not just for the fancy and high-end person, but for anyone looking for a relaxing experience. The environment at our spa is friendly, while maintaining a homey look.

As the skincare industry evolves, so do we. We use the latest technology, techniques and quality products to maximize the overall effectiveness of the service, and to provide you with a better experience. Relax and start your journey in renewing your skin's natural beauty! Or treat yourself to a well deserved massage!

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- 60 min Bio lifting facial \$89 (Reg. \$165)
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60 Minutes \$79 (Reg. \$120)

Massage • Facials • Scalp Therapy

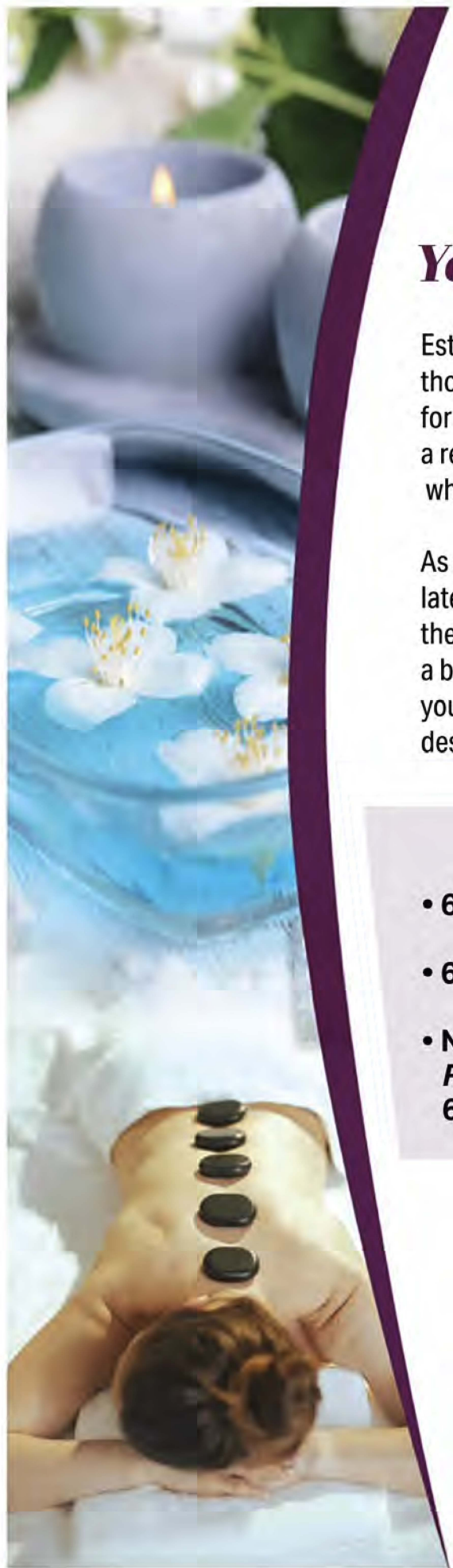
28 Johnston Drive • Watchung, NJ 07069
(Between Watchung Ave & Somerset St)

Tel: 908.756.3502

Mobile 908.398.8880 (Text to Schedule Appts)

Hours: Mon-Sun 9:30am-7:30pm

www.yybeautyspa.com



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Bulk Waste Collection

Bulk waste collection organized by the Borough of Watchung, typically runs during the first 2 weeks in June. Please sign up for Borough Communications to participate this year!

The Borough will send out alerts via email and social media closer to collection date with sign up directions.



Department of Public Works Summer Hours:

Beginning May 26, 2026 through September 4, 2026

Monday – Friday, 6:00am to 2:30pm

Leaf Pick Up

The 2026 Spring Leaf Pickup will commence on March 30, 2026 and continue through May 1, 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.

MEET OUR NEW PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR!

Meet Anthony Nappe, the Borough's new Public Works Director. Nappe has been working with the Borough since 2014. With over a decade of service under his tool belt, he has been the unsung hero in making our little corner of the world a more fabulous place to live.

Nappe was promoted to Director in 2025 and has already navigated the Borough through some treacherous storms!

His commitment to excellence and continuous improvement has been instrumental in the borough's development, ensuring it remains a vibrant and thriving community for all residents.

When you see him out with his crew, be sure to say hello and thank him for his hard work!



TRAFFIC AND BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION



Welcome Spring to Watchung's 100th Anniversary! We've come through floods and snowstorms to celebrate the arrival of Spring and to find Watchung ablaze with yellow daffodils!

Through the combined efforts of our DPW, Traffic and Beautification liaison, Christine Ead, and our T&B volunteers, Terry DeFilippis, Vonnie Mott, Janine Riedinger, Gail Tafaro, and Phyllis Juetter, 275 daffodil bulbs were planted all over Watchung. Watch for them around the fence at the Town Square, the 911 Memorial, Spratford Park, Town Hall, the flagpole at Best Lake, and the Texier Museum.

Lights were kept on through Valentine's Day to brighten the winter darkness. Large hearts and the Hill of Hearts continued to show Watchung residents how much they are loved!

Once again T&B will sponsor its community clean-up. The Watchung Community Clean-Up will take place on Saturday, April 25, 2026 from 9am to 12pm. We meet at the Texier Museum garage (10 Mountain Boulevard, Watchung). Come as individuals, families, or with a group of friends and neighbors. The Knights of Columbus, Scout Troops, students and residents have been loyal supporters. We appreciate these volunteers who each year show up to do their part to keep Watchung beautiful!

Start thinking about the Scarecrow Stroll coming again in September. Friends and neighbors enjoy strolling along the walkway on the Village Square to take pictures of the wonderful creative ideas on display. Watchung has talent! A contest with prizes is offered and refreshments will be served!

T&B welcomes all who would like to join or donate some time to our Committee. Leave your name and the number you can be reached at Town Hall and someone will contact you.

Best,

Phyllis Juetter-Chair

FROM THE WATCHUNG CHIEF OF POLICE

Mail Theft and Fraud



As your Chief of Police, I want to address a pressing issue that is affecting citizens across the country, including our own here in Watchung. Mail theft and related fraud is nothing new, but incidents like this have increased recently. Over the last two years, Watchung residents have reported several incidents of theft and fraud associated with mail and packages. These aren't isolated events; they often lead to bigger problems like identity theft or financial losses that can disrupt lives. Drawing from resources provided by the United States Postal Inspection Service, I'm sharing some key trends and practical steps you can take to protect yourself. Our goal is to empower you with knowledge so we can reduce these crimes in our town.

One major trend we're seeing is the theft of paper checks from the mail, followed by a scam known as check washing. Criminals steal checks from mailboxes, blue collection boxes, or even directly from letter carriers. Once they have a check, they use common chemicals to erase the ink, allowing them to alter the payee's name, the amount, or other details. They then deposit or cash the changed check, stealing money right from your account. The Postal Inspection Service recovers more than one billion dollars in fraudulent checks and money orders every year, which shows just how widespread this is. If you've mailed a check that got paid but never reached the intended recipient, it could be a sign of this kind of theft. Fraudsters target outgoing mail because it's easy to access if left unsecured, and they often look for envelopes that might contain valuables like credit card information or personal details.

The good news is that simple habits can make a big difference in preventing these thefts. Start by getting your mail as soon as it's delivered each day, and never let it sit in your mailbox overnight. This reduces the window for thieves to strike. If you're going out of town, contact your local post office to hold your mail until you return—you can do this online or in person. Another helpful tool is signing up for Informed Delivery on the USPS website. This free service sends you daily emails with images of incoming mail and packages, so you know what to expect and can spot if something's missing. If you don't receive expected mail, reach out to the sender right away to check on it. When sending mail, especially anything valuable, use the letter slots inside your post office instead of outdoor boxes. Consider using security envelopes that hide the contents, making it less obvious if there's a check or important document inside.

When it comes to protecting checks specifically, a few extra precautions go a long way. Always use pens with indelible black ink, which is harder for criminals to wash off with chemicals. Avoid leaving any blank spaces on the payee line or the amount sections, as thieves can fill those in. Never write sensitive personal information on checks, such as your Social Security number, driver's license, credit card details, or phone number—that just gives fraudsters more to work with if they get hold of it. Switch to digital options where possible, like e-checks, ACH automatic payments, or mobile apps, to avoid mailing paper checks altogether. If you do mail checks, follow up with the recipient to confirm they arrived safely. Regularly log into your online or mobile banking to review account activity, statements, and copies of cleared checks for any errors or alterations. If your bank offers images of paid checks, take a close look at the back to verify the endorsement matches the intended recipient, as sometimes thieves deposit them without changes.

If you think you've been a victim, don't wait—act quickly to limit the damage. First, contact your bank and ask for copies of any fraudulent checks so you can see what's happened. File a report with us at the Watchung Police Department by calling 908-756-3663 immediately. We'll work with you to investigate. Also, report it to the United States Postal Inspection Service online at uspis.gov/report or by calling their hotline at 1-877-876-2455. The sooner we all get involved, the better we can track patterns and catch those responsible. Remember, if you see any suspicious activity around mailboxes, letter carriers, or blue collection boxes—like someone tampering or loitering—report it to us right away at 908-756-3663. Your observation could prevent the next theft.

Our department is always here to help, and we appreciate your partnership in keeping Watchung safe. If you have questions, don't hesitate to reach out.

Chief Scott Anderle

Watchung Homeowners...

THINKING OF SELLING? I CAN HELP



★★★★★ Highly likely to recommend

Local knowledge:	★★★★★
Process expertise:	★★★★★
Responsiveness:	★★★★★
Negotiation skills:	★★★★★



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michael.bisk@optonline.net


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7 Mt. Bethel Rd., Warren NJ 07059

Mr. Michael Bisk
Broker / Salesperson
Member:
Garden State MLS • All Jersey MLS

WATCHUNG VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Watchung Fire Department is a 100% volunteer organization that is constantly in need of new members. 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, follow us on Facebook @WatchungFD, email at recruitment@watchungfd.org, or pick up information at Borough Hall! As always, we appreciate the support from our community of Watchung.



@WATCHUNGFIRE

WATCHUNG RESCUE SQUAD

MEET OUR MEMBER



VICE PRESIDENT NICOLE SESE



WHO IS NICOLE?

When Nicole joined the Watchung Rescue Squad in November 2024, she had no background in medicine. She had spent years working in IT, earned a bachelor's degree, and even held a corporate role with a casino company in Las Vegas—but she wasn't fulfilled. "I didn't love what I did," Nicole says. After leaving Las Vegas and moving to New Jersey, Nicole explored several creative paths, including art school, working in a photo studio, and selling stained glass. While each experience taught her something new, none felt like the right fit.

Everything changed after her mother suffered acute heart failure and required an emergency pacemaker. Nicole flew out to help during her recovery and watched medical teams work together to save her mother's life. "My dad had such reverence for how they worked like a well-oiled machine," she recalls. "The idea of doing something like that myself was really tempting."

Soon after, a personal turning point pushed Nicole to rethink how she wanted to help others. That's when she found the Watchung Rescue Squad. "There weren't any prerequisites to joining," she explains. "I didn't need another degree just to try. I figured if it wasn't for me, it would at least point me in the right direction."

At the time, Nicole was nearly ten years removed from college and had no medical background. She didn't know how she would react to emergencies or to seeing people at their most vulnerable. But she showed up anyway. What happened next surprised her.

"The things I thought would freak me out were almost cathartic to experience," she says. "You're so engaged in your part of the effort that the fact that someone's banged up or really sick is just part of the problem you're there to solve."

Just a few months after joining the squad, Nicole enrolled in EMT school. The work clicked immediately. She found herself surrounded by people who inspired her, doing work that felt meaningful and fulfilling. Now, she's in paramedic school—fully committed to a career she couldn't have imagined for herself just a year earlier.

"I seriously can't thank the difficult things that happened to me enough," Nicole reflects. "They helped me land in a spot where I think I've actually found a home." Her message to others is simple: "You never know what you'll enjoy if you don't venture out of your comfort zone to try something new."

The Watchung Rescue Squad is always looking for volunteers. No medical background required—just the willingness to want to help others and a desire to learn. If you are interested in joining visit www.watchungems.org!



TAX OFFICE

Friendly Reminder . . . Taxes are due quarterly on: February 1st, May 1st, August 1st, and November 1st

Please remember that Sewer Bills are due in July and are typically NOT paid by your mortgage company. Any accounts delinquent as of December 2025 including Special Assessments and Sewer Bills 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.



WATCHUNG HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Hello Neighbors,

Greetings from the Watchung Historical Committee!

Watchung is celebrating its 100th Anniversary and our nation will mark its 250th anniversary in 2026!

The Watchung Historical Committee has been hard at work preparing for this important milestone, and we hope our community is just as excited about celebrating as we are! We'd love for you to get involved and join us at the 100th Anniversary events that the Borough will be hosting throughout this year.

Exciting Museum & Website Updates

Special Themed Texier Open Houses: The Watchung Historical Committee will have special themed Open Houses throughout 2026! We strongly encourage you to visit the Museum to celebrate our Borough's History. Our first open house on February 1st was a huge success! We were thrilled to welcome students of all ages to explore Watchung's History! Children enjoyed learning about our past and even posed for photos with the Mayor, becoming part of our living history. WHRHS students had the opportunity to hear from Mayor Dr. Ron Jubin, town historian Susan Tucker, and Historical committee Vice Chair Chris Vander Fliet, gaining deeper insight into our Borough's rich heritage.



Students from WHRHS visited the Texier House Museum on February 1st, 2026 to learn more from Mayor Dr. Ron Jubin, town historian Susan Tucker, and Watchung Historical Committee Vice Chair Chris Vander Fliet

We were thrilled to see so many children exploring our Museum, asking the Mayor for a photo, and becoming part of Watchung's living history!



Watchung History Website: We encourage you to visit watchunghistory.org to see our ever-growing website dedicated to all things Watchung History! Maureen Greenbaum continues to work tirelessly to build and maintain this wonderful and impressive database. This website, like our YouTube Channel (featuring historical videos and playlists), is important not only in preserving our history but also as a tool in educating adults and children alike. We will continue refining the site over the coming years to improve navigation and further organize its expanding collection of pages.

Reflections of Watchung: A Historical Journey: As you may have seen advertised, the Watchung Historical Committee is hosting a special film series at the Arts Center. This themed hybrid program includes historical films followed by community discussion on a particular subject or subjects in town. Whether you are new to

the Borough or a long-time resident, we ask that you come out to enjoy this warm community discussion. It offers an opportunity to meet your neighbors, share and hear cherished stories, and learn about Watchung History!

Watchung Trivia: As you walk around Watchung Lake, we hope you are enjoying brand new trivia questions provided by the Committee on the digital sign outside of Borough Hall! We encourage you to participate with friends and family in this activity while walking around the lake!

Artifact Photography: In late 2025, the Historical Committee once again worked with a professional to photograph prominent artifacts throughout the Texier House Museum. Some of these photos have been incorporated into the watchunghistory.org website and will allow those who may not be able to visit the Museum to see what we have on display. This project also helps with our ongoing preservation efforts in digitizing artifacts in the case of an emergency.

Holiday Ornament Program: The 100th Anniversary ornament, featuring the Tree of Lights, is still on sale at Borough Hall! We encourage you to purchase one if you have not already done so. These Watchung themed ornaments have been a staple in the Borough since 2019 are the creation of Laurie Wood, owner of Woody Signs and Designs.

Preserving and Archiving Watchung's History: We will continue working behind the scenes to categorize, digitize, and provide descriptions to hundreds of historical photos, articles, and documents housed at the Texier House Museum. This is no small task and is incredibly labor-intensive. We thank all those who have contributed to this effort.

Please reach out to the Watchung Historical Committee if you have an interest in helping with this project. We are exploring ways to share this incredible resource with the public so our residents can also do their own research on the Borough of Watchung!

Visit the Texier House Museum: Located at the heart of the Watchung Circle, the Texier House Museum is open on the first and third Sundays of each month. Please visit www.watchunghistory.org or the Borough website for updates, special guests, and upcoming events. We will once again participate in the Weekend Journey Through the Past in October and hope to have some special events/reenactments associated with this fall event. Stay tuned!

Get Involved in Watchung's 100th Anniversary: Interested in volunteering or learning more about Watchung's 100th Anniversary? Visit our webpage <https://watchungnj.gov/centennial-celebration> and/or email us at historic@watchungnj.gov to learn about volunteer opportunities and ways to support our mission. We also welcome you to share your historical photos, artifacts, and stories by contributing to the Museum's collection or uploading them through the Borough website as part of the Centennial Celebration. Your involvement helps preserve Watchung's legacy and brings this historic milestone to life for future generations. We would love to hear from you and welcome your involvement in this historic celebration!

The Watchung Historical Committee



WATCHUNG LIBRARY, A BRANCH OF THE SOMERSET COUNTY

The Watchung Library is currently operating at 20 Stirling Rd., (formerly Valley Furniture Store) while the building at 12 Stirling Rd. is undergoing extensive renovations. Any questions about the library may be directed to watchung@sclibnj.org. The Watchung Library offers open hours (Monday - Friday from 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m.,) a full calendar of events, and a well curated in-house collection for all ages.

Too often, libraries are the best-kept secrets for saving money on subscriptions. Take for example just two of the products offered free of charge to SCLSNJ cardholders:

Unlock Free Access to Consumer Reports and Udemy

The Somerset County Library System (SCLSNJ) is proud to offer our cardholders access to two of the most powerful tools for smart shopping and lifelong learning.

Consumer Reports:

Get unbiased ratings and expert recommendations on thousands of products before you buy. Whether you are looking for a fuel-efficient car, a reliable dishwasher, or the safest crib for a nursery, Consumer Reports has you covered.

Categories Include: Appliances, Cars, Electronics, Home & Garden, Health, and Personal Finance.

Pro Tip: Check out their "Best Time to Buy" guide to find the deepest discounts on everything from mattresses to cameras.

Note: Free access is available exclusively through the library's portal.

Udemy:

Level up your career or hobby with over 20,000 on-demand video courses. From coding to creative leadership, Udemy provides top-tier instruction across 75 distinct categories.

Featured Courses: 100 Days of Code (Python), Executive Leadership Styles, Social Media Marketing Masterclass 2026, and Critical Thinking Strategies.

Self-paced learning in business, technology, and personal development—all at no cost to you.

How to Get Started

- You can access both platforms for free by visiting SCLSNJ.org:
- Navigate to the "Books and More" tab.
- Select "Online Resources."
- Scroll down to find Consumer Reports or Udemy in our digital repository.

Need a hand? If you need help navigating these resources or logging in, we're here for you! Reach out to our team at watchung@sclibnj.org, and our librarians will gladly assist.

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS*:

**Unless otherwise noted, programs will be held at the 20 Stirling location. Program registration is required for most of the events listed below due to their popularity.*

CHILDREN:

Paint and Snack: Spring Tulips

Tuesday, April 7 • 4:30 - 5:15 p.m.

Pre-packaged snacks and drinks will be available.

Rolling Weather Bus

Ages 6 and up (4 sessions available starting at 4:30 p.m.)

Friday, April 24

Explore a mobile, hands-on science lab complete with interactive weather mapping, real-time data collection, and simulations of extreme weather events. Explore topics like storm safety, climate zones, and forecasting tools, all while engaging with real meteorological instruments. It's like Nickelodeon meets National Geographic—a high-energy, immersive experience that turns science into a full-sensory journey. Presented by The Weather Pros.

Music with Miss Donna

Ages birth - 5 years and caregivers Mondays, April 27 & May 18
10:30 - 11:00 a.m. • Wilson Memorial Church

Bond with your children while making music in this interactive session. Enjoy music, fingerplays, and playing instruments.

STEAM: KEVA Plank Roller Coaster

Grades K-5 Tuesday, April 28 • 4:30 - 5:15 p.m.

Break up into teams and build a roller coaster using KEVA Planks.

Paint and Snack: Cinco De Mayo

Grades K-5 Tuesday, May 5 • 4:30 - 5:15 p.m.

Paint step-by-step using watercolors. Pre-packaged snacks and drinks will be available.

Mini Medical School: Brain Hemisphere Craft

Presented by Club SciKidz Grades K- 2

Tuesday, May 26 • 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Learn about the brain and explore what each side is often responsible for, like language, logic, creativity, and emotions. Then we'll create a wearable brain hemisphere hat! It's hands on, super visual, and a fun way to introduce basic neuroscience in an age appropriate way.

ADULT PROGRAMS:

Diamond Art

Saturday, April 4 & Thursday,
April 9 • 10:30 a.m. - noon

Make a diamond art picture. Start it at the library, and take home all the supplies needed to complete your picture.

Relief Carving Workshop

Presented by Smriti Sangal

Saturday, May 2 • 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Embark on a sculptural journey featuring the tactile and expressive medium of plaster.

Introduction to Eco-Therapy

Presented by Alexa Burgess

Saturday, May 16 • 10:30am - 12:00pm

Experience a welcoming and engaging introduction to Eco-Therapy—a holistic approach that supports mental, emotional, and physical well-being through intentional connection with the natural world.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

How You Can Help improve our Lakes

Our community is fortunate to be home to two treasured lakes—Watchung Lake and Best Lake. These lakes enhance the beauty of our borough, support wildlife, and are important indicators of our environmental health. What many residents may not realize is that everyday activities around our homes play a direct role in how healthy—and how long-lasting—these lakes remain.

One of the greatest threats to lake health in New Jersey is stormwater pollution. Unlike wastewater, stormwater is not treated before it enters our waterways. When it rains, water flows over lawns, streets, and driveways, carrying fertilizers, pesticides, grass clippings, pet waste, oils, and sediment into storm drains that discharge directly into Watchung Lake and Best Lake.

When “Perfect” Lawns Harm Healthy Lakes



Many homeowners aim for a lush, uniform lawn, but the pursuit of a “perfect” lawn can unintentionally damage our lakes. Excessive fertilizer and chemical use—especially before rain or on saturated soil—often washes into storm drains.

Once in a lake, these nutrients trigger a process known as eutrophication. Eutrophication occurs when excess nutrients fuel algae and plant growth. As these plants die and decompose, they consume oxygen, harming fish and other aquatic life. Over time, this process also causes sediment and organic matter to accumulate on the lake bottom, effectively making the lake shallower and causing it to fill in more quickly.

Why This Matters: Long-Term Costs

As eutrophication accelerates, lakes require more intensive and costly management. This can include:

- Increased algae control measures
- Reduced recreational and ecological value
- More frequent expensive dredging to remove accumulated sediment

Reducing stormwater pollution at its source is one of the most effective ways to slow eutrophication and extend the life of our lakes.

Lake-Friendly Lawn Care: Simple, Effective Choices

The Environmental Commission encourages residents to consider these environmentally responsible practices:

- **Use less fertilizer—or none at all.**
 - Most lawns require far less fertilizer than commonly applied.
- **Choose slow-release, organic, or natural fertilizers.**
 - These reduce nutrient runoff and are less harmful to waterways.
- **Plant native species.**

Native plants are adapted to local conditions, require less fertilizer and water, and have deep roots that absorb runoff before it reaches storm drains.

- **Leave grass clippings on the lawn.**
 - Clippings act as natural fertilizer and reduce chemical needs.
- **Create natural buffer areas.**
 - Native plantings or un-mowed areas help filter pollutants before they reach the lakes.

Everyday Actions That Make a Difference

- Dispose of yard waste properly—never in streets or storm drains.
- Help keep storm drains clear of leaves and debris.
- Clean up pet waste promptly.



- Prevent erosion with mulch, stones, or plantings.
- Pick up any litter or debris near your property. Even small amounts help prevent trash and pollutants from migrating into our lakes and stormwater system.

What Not to Do

- **Don't overapply or overwater lawns.**
 - Excess watering increases runoff, carrying nutrients and sediment into storm drains and accelerating eutrophication in our lakes.
- **Don't blow or sweep leaves and grass clippings into streets or storm drains.**
 - Organic debris adds nutrients to lakes and contributes to sediment buildup, shortening lake life and increasing dredging needs.
- **Don't feed wildlife.**
 - Feeding wildlife increases animal waste, which adds nutrients and harmful bacteria to Watchung Lake and Best Lake.
- **Don't put anything but rainwater into storm drains.**
 - Storm drains flow directly to our lakes and are not designed to handle chemicals, wash water, or other discharges.

See Something? Say Something.

If you notice illegal dumping, erosion, or stormwater pollution concerns, please report them promptly. Early action helps protect Watchung Lake and Best Lake and reduces long-term costs.

The choices we make in our yards collectively shape the future of our lakes. By embracing native plants, low-fertilizer, and organic lawn practices, we can slow eutrophication, reduce dredging needs, and protect these important community resources for generations to come.

Healthy lawns lead to healthy lakes—and a healthier Watchung.

— *Watchung Environmental Commission*

*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.

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

E-Bike Safety: Every Ride, Every Time

The Board of Health encourages e-bike riders to follow these safety tips to prevent accidents:

- **Wear a properly fitted helmet** to help prevent serious head injuries.
- **Use a bike light** when riding at night.
- **Use an audible signal**, such as a buzzer or bell, to alert pedestrians and other cyclists.
- **Follow traffic laws**, ride on the right side of the road, maintain safe speeds, and avoid distractions while riding.
- **Practice safe battery charging and storage** by following the manufacturer's instructions.

By taking precautions, riders can help keep themselves and our community safe. Be careful, stay visible, and enjoy the ride! For more information, visit: watchungnj.gov/boards/health/recommendations-for-e-bike-guidelines

Health Advisory: Kratom

Kratom is a tropical tree which originates from Southeast Asia and has a long history of traditional use in a number of cultures. In recent years, kratom has also become widely available in the United States in forms such as powders, capsules, teas, gummies, and extracts.

While some people use kratom for pain or fatigue, kratom can

have stimulant- and opioid-like effects and may cause serious health risks. Adverse effects have been reported with both routine use and overdose. **It is important to know that Kratom is not FDA-approved for any medication use.** Learn more about the risks associated with kratom use at poison.org/articles/kratom.

- Here are health and safety considerations:
- Speak with your healthcare provider before starting **any** new supplements.
- Keep medications and supplements out of reach of children and pets.
- Know the signs of poisoning or overdose, which may include trouble breathing, extreme drowsiness, seizures, or loss of consciousness.

New Jersey Poison Control: do not guess, make the call. For immediate answers — call the line, explain your situation/symptoms, and have any product names or containers ready. To connect with a trained expert, call 1-800-222-1222, text 973-339-0702, or chat at njpies.org/online-chat/.

If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1.

Follow the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission on Social Media!



ENGINEER - SILO AND PHILIPS FIELD BRIDGE STORIES

The Borough of Watchung has recently completed two stream and bridge stabilization projects.

As a result of Hurricane Ida, a sanitary sewer manhole located behind 636 Valley Road—situated on the embankment of the East Branch of Stony Brook—became exposed and was at risk of collapse. In response, the Borough, through its engineering consultant, Remington & Vernick Engineers, Inc. (RVE), conducted a site survey and prepared a design to stabilize the exposed manhole.

Due to the project's location within a regulated area, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Flood Hazard Area and Freshwater Wetlands Individual Permits were required. The Borough submitted all required documentation to NJDEP, and the permits were issued in Fall 2025 following a lengthy review process. In accordance with NJDEP requirements, the project design and construction



incorporated a combination of hard armoring (gabion baskets) and bio-engineering techniques (brush mattresses). Construction began in Fall 2025 and was completed in early December 2025 by T. R. Weniger, Inc.

The original Philips Field Bridge collapsed several years ago and was subsequently replaced with a temporary military bridge installed over the former bridge location. The bridge is located on a tributary of Stony Brook very close to Brookdale Road. While the Borough of Watchung's long-term goal is to construct a permanent replacement bridge at this location, funding constraints have posed a significant challenge over the past several years. In the interim, the Borough of Watchung secured FEMA funding to stabilize the existing bridge.

In response, the Borough, through its engineering consultant, Remington & Vernick Engineers, Inc. (RVE), conducted a site survey and developed a design to stabilize the bridge abutments, as well as the upstream and downstream areas of the bridge.

Due to the project's location within a regulated area, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Flood Hazard Area and Freshwater Wetlands Individual Permits were required. The Borough submitted all required documentation to NJDEP, and the permits were issued in Fall 2025 following a lengthy review process.

In accordance with NJDEP requirements, the project design and construction incorporated a combination of hard armoring (gabion baskets) and bio-engineering techniques (brush mattresses). Construction began in Fall 2026 and was completed in early December 2026 by T. R. Weniger, Inc. Maintaining continuous access across the bridge to serve the Philips Field community throughout construction was a key challenge of the project.



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SPRING/SUMMER 2026



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