

# Watchung Post

Watchung's Hometown Newspaper

NJ

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ISSUE 46 • SEPTEMBER 2016

**9/11  
MEMORIAL  
SERVICE  
SEPTEMBER 11  
9:00AM  
ON THE VILLAGE GREEN**

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**WATCHUNG  
HISTORY DAY  
Civil War  
Reenactment &  
Encampment  
SATURDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 24TH  
10:00am - 4:00pm  
ON THE VILLAGE GREEN**

## SOMERSET COUNTY LIBRARY CREATES COMMUNITY MURAL

By: *Edir Coronado*

With the landscape of education and research changing rapidly and the format in which society consumes needed information becoming almost exclusively digital, the public library has maintained its relevance, as Carolann DeMatos stated, as a "community cornerstone." DeMatos is the Director of Marketing and Public Relations at the Somerset County Library System; holds a Master in Science in Digital Imaging and Design; and is the visionary behind this year's traveling mural created by the community.

The mural was created with the purpose of reminding the community of the library's message and educational forum; connect, explore, share, and discover, through art. The art project was developed at this year's Somerset County 4-H County Fair held on August 10th. 4-H is a nationwide youth development organization. According to the Somerset County 4-H association, the yearly county fair is a showcase for visitors to see a wide variety of 4-H projects in action.

DeMatos announced before the 4-H fair that a blank canvas with four boards would be made available for all to stop by, fill their hands with paint, and leave their handprints or thumbprint. The event took about two hours and over 200 participants of all ages were involved. DeMatos was pleasantly surprised with the number of people that wanted to be involved in the venture and the different types of folks that wanted to participate. One of the important aspects of the project, which was stressed during the design, was the expression of everyone's artistic self.



(above) Children participating in the creation of the Somerset County Community Mural which will be on tour to all of the Somerset County libraries

The County Agricultural Department presented the same idea for a mural, which inspired DeMatos, except a professional artist was brought in for the task. This, DeMatos felt, might discourage people from participating, so she decided to simplify it by making the artwork about handprints. At one point a child had placed a blob across the boards causing the mother to apologize for what she believed was her child ruining the art. DeMatos assured the woman, that nothing was ruined, but instead her son had only enhanced the artwork. "Let him explore," expressed DeMatos. The Somerset County Library Mural Project, was meant to be easy going, in order to foster an environment where the community could be more involved with their library.

Partly because the Somerset County Library system wants to exert itself as, not just a place where you can read books; which is still an important part, but, a place where you can sit and enjoy a cup of coffee and feel safe. "We are the next best Starbucks, except we are free," stated DeMatos.

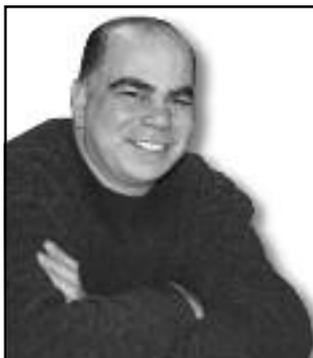
The Mural will be on tour to all of the Somerset County libraries, where it will be hung up for all community members to see. Its final destination is yet to be determined. A new mural project is in the works and because of the great turnout, a bigger canvas will be made available, so more people can be involved. DeMatos hopes that this project can serve as inspiration for local branches to create their own murals.

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# Watchung Post

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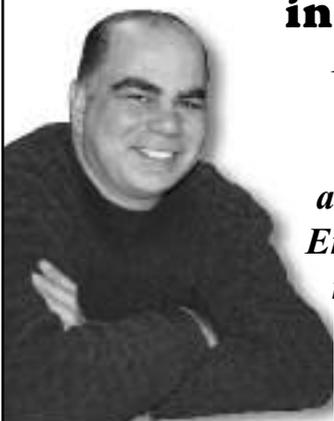
Community service organizations and sports teams are encouraged to submit news of upcoming events or highlights and photos on recent events.

**Organizations who are interested in submitting content can email**

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# BACK-TO-SCHOOL TIME FOR FOSTER YOUTH, TOO

*Watchung residents needed as child advocates*

Just as the kids head back to school, you may find yourself with more free time — and thrilled at the possibilities! How about changing the life of an area foster child? Train in Westfield later this month with like-minded locals and enjoy a light dinner, guest speakers and a team of trainers that equip you with all the tools needed to become a successful Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer. While many Watchung students happily settle into school routines, buoyed by active parents readying for Back to School Night, there are foster youth without that support system who face educational challenges. Your commitment to their success helps ensure access to an education that meets their specialized needs:

Five-year-old Samantha is severely autistic and almost completely nonverbal. Due to excessive violence in the family home, a concerned neighbor called for help and, after investigation, Samantha was removed from her parents' care and placed in foster care. Although primarily nonverbal, the two phrases Samantha does say graphically depict the violence she witnessed at home and confirm the trauma she endured. Since entering care, it has become clear Samantha also is a victim of educational neglect. At age three, Samantha was entitled to an Individualized Education Plan from the Department of Education to ensure continued in-home speech and behavioral services to move her toward enrollment in a half-day educational program. Unfortunately, Samantha's parents neglected to utilize these services and she is now two years behind others her age! A CASA volunteer can advocate for Samantha's

educational rights and needed services, among other things, and make recommendations to the family court judge that will ensure her best interests remain prioritized.

CASA of Union County is seeking Watchung residents to be the voice for one of the nearly 600 Union County youth, ages 0-21, in foster care through no fault of their own, as there are currently only enough volunteers to serve one-third of those youth. Trained CASA volunteers are sworn in by a judge and empowered to speak to foster parents, teachers, doctors, lawyers, tutors, therapists and more. They visit the youth regularly, incorporate findings into court reports and attend court hearings quarterly, working to ensure best interests are considered and a safe and permanent home is secured as quickly as possible. Although not required, there is a particular need for advocates who speak Spanish.

Fall training kicks off Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2016 and includes 10 sessions over several weeks. A swearing-in at the Union County Courthouse by a family court judge and luncheon follows. Training is 6 to 9 p.m. at the County Clerk Building, 300 North Avenue East in Westfield, across from the diner. A light dinner is provided.

Attend an information session to learn more: Evening sessions are Tuesday, Sept. 6 and Wednesday, Sept. 21 at the County Clerk Building in Westfield; morning sessions are 10 a.m. Sept. 9 and Sept. 23 at CASA's offices, 1143-45 East Jersey Street in Elizabeth. Watchung residents are encouraged to contact Lisa at (908) 527-7048 or lporis@casaoofunioncounty.org for details or to RSVP for an information session.



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Kids 3-6.....\$3.99	Kids 3-6.....\$5.99
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# FRIENDS OF THE WATCHUNG LIBRARY AT THE FARMERS MARKET

The Friends of the Watchung Library have been offering their movie and music CD collection for sale at the weekly Watchung Farmers' Markets.

The Friends have collected hundreds of movies and television shows on DVD, and thousands of music CDs.

The Farmers' Markets will be open Sundays through October 2nd from 10 am until 2 pm in the Best Lake parking lot, just down Valley Road off the Watchung Circle.

A wide variety of movies are in the collection, rated G, PG, PG-13, R or unrated movies for only \$2 each. The hundreds of music CDs include popular artists, and a varied selection of classical, jazz, folk, blues, rap, country and western, vocals,

and more - for only \$1.00 each. The collection also includes more than 100 selections suitable for children's listening.

Peggy Ellis, a volunteer for the Friends, explains that "Our former library director was a big fan of various film genres. And he amassed a wonderful collection of movies for Watchung Library - some rare and unusual movies.

Watchung Library was known for its film collection. But now, with space in the library limited, the staff has been forced to reduce the size of the collection. The bright side of the situation is that these wonderful, quirky, and unusual films are now being made available for private collectors." Ellis adds, "We also have some of the more popular movies - movies that

were duplicates in the Somerset County Library system. So there's something for everyone!"

Marcia Walsh, President of the Friends, has been working at the sales table at the Markets, and notes that customers are finding not just one but dozens of movies or CDs they want to take home. "There's only one copy of most of the items," Walsh says, "and sales have been brisk, so be sure to come and take a look early because when they're gone, they're gone."

Proceeds from sales benefit the programs and services of Watchung Public Library through the support of the Friends of the Watchung Library. This summer the Friends provided funding for five performance, educational, and informative programs open to the public.



(above) Volunteer Peggy Ellis manning the table.



(above l-r) Rebecca and Raul Aguilar; Raul selected a foreign film to share with a film club at Rutgers.

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# WATCHUNG ARTS CENTER TO HOST PHOTO EXHIBIT OF CUBA

Berkeley Heights photographer and tour director Nancy Ori, led several groups of photographers to Cuba over the past two years. She has chosen artwork from 14 workshop participants to exhibit in "Cuba: Working and Waiting" during the month of September at the Watchung Arts Center. The artists' reception will be September 11, from 1-4pm with talks beginning at 2pm. The exhibit and reception are free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. The arts center in Watchung is open Tues, Wed, Thurs, and Friday from noon to 5pm, and on Saturdays from 10-3pm.

Curator Nancy Ori said: "We learn a great deal by studying where we have been and the things that have challenged us and others along the way. The photographs presented in our exhibit have been collected from 14 participants who attended one of the several photography workshops that I have run in Cuba over the past two years. As a collection, the photographs paint a portrait of a group of people, symbolizing the life and spirit of their culture. The old, as well as the young are united by a look of life experience. The images reveal vulnerability and yet endurance. We were able to uncover a wonderful beauty in these observations. Many of the people featured appeared to be waiting for something, while others worked very hard using ancient tools to work the land".

"Our amazing journey around the island of Cuba included walking down dirt paths through fields of tobacco and sugar cane, meeting the farmers and photographing their homes, families and farms. It was an amazing experience of communication for everyone on both sides of the camera. We visited traditional colonial towns, with red tiled roofs and an array of pastel colored houses lining cobbled stone

streets. In Old Havana, we were overwhelmed with sights of antique American cars, children playing in the streets, views of the harbor, beautifully restored hotels or the paint peeling off dilapidated buildings. Early morning shoots allowed students to wander safely on their own to capture the sights off the beaten path. We also visited and toured Ernest Hemingway's former home."

The photographers participating in the exhibit are from all around New Jersey. They are: Ben Wolkowitz, Caryn Seifer, Bob Campbell, Jerry Dallia, Rosemarie Reinman, Denise Stagnari, Howard McGinn, Karen Bonislowski, Marilyn Menago, Frank Parisi, Rita Klachkin, Ron Stagnari, Robert Menago, Ken Curtis and Nancy Ori.

Ori has curated and juried numerous exhibits at a wide variety of locations including: The Morris Museum in Morristown; Rahway Arts Guild in Rahway, Liberty Science Center in Jersey City & Watchung Arts Center in Watchung. Ms. Ori's work has been widely exhibited in museums & galleries throughout the globe & has been chosen to participate in numerous grant projects and fine art exhibits including the prestigious New Jersey Fine Arts Annual. She is the owner of New Jersey Media Center, LLC in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey where she continues to do produce, portrait and event photography. She also enjoys teaching photography and painting workshops each year throughout the United States, New Zealand, Cuba and Europe as well as exhibiting her work. Nancy was taught by Ansel Adams and was then affiliated for many years with the Ansel Adams Workshop in California and in New Jersey. She is currently on the faculty of numerous museums and art centers as well as teaches privately.



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Mobus Members - C. Murphy, J. Pennett, M. Onuska, M.  
Weber, Alt. Member – D. Devine

## BOROUGH EVENTS

### 9/11 MEMORIAL SERVICE

September 11th 9:00AM  
On the Village Green

### WATCHUNG HISTORY DAY

Saturday, September 24th

Civil War Reenactment & Encampment  
10:00am – 4:00pm on the Village Green

### VETERANS DAY SERVICES

November 11th at 9:30 am  
At the War Memorial

### TREE OF LIGHTS CEREMONY

December 2nd

on the Village Green  
Fireworks on the lake, Food & Refreshments

# WATCHUNG ARTS CENTER CELEBRATES 95TH BIRTHDAY OF LOCAL ARTIST

Born in the early 1920's and still "roaring" to go, Robert Harnick will be enjoying his 95th birthday this September. To celebrate the occasion, the Watchung Arts Center is exhibiting his work throughout the month, beginning with an Art Reception on September 11th from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. The exhibition, in the Arts Center's Lower Gallery, will feature his early work from decades past, as well as a focus on his energizing output from more recent years. It may be that the life he brings to his canvas is the secret to his own longevity, or at the very least its quality.

"I enjoy creating artwork that I can share and give as gifts to other people. It brings me joy and I hope others will share in this visual pleasure." In that spirit, Bob and his family will be donating all sales proceeds to the Watchung Arts Center.

Bob was born on a farm in Caldwell, New Jersey. At the age of two he was blinded in one eye in a firecracker accident and he has viewed the world with a unique perspective ever since. His family then moved to Seagate, a section of Brooklyn, N.Y. where he spent most of his childhood and met his wife Sherry. Bob studied aeronautical engineering and geology at the University of Alabama and continued his studies at NYU, Fordham and Columbia.

Heeding his country's call during the Second World War, Bob enlisted in the United States Army. Due to his visual impairment, he contributed to the effort stateside, as a sergeant in charge of sending radio transmissions to the allies overseas. His mother henceforth considered his partial blindness a blessing in disguise, as he was spared when his entire battalion was lost in the Battle of the Bulge.

At the conclusion of the war, Bob followed an artistic, though decidedly practical pursuit as a commercial lithographer, establishing Golden Arrow Graphics in the printing district of downtown Manhattan. This remained his field of interest for the next 50 years, printing and designing for corporate clients such as Eastman Kodak, as well as classified work for the US government.

Never one to stagnate, over the years Bob found contentment in a remarkably diverse



collection of activities such as painting, photography, sailboat racing, flying a plane and going on pacer hunts. He loved horseback riding so much that he spent his weekends in the 1950's as an auxiliary policeman on horseback in Central Park, N.Y. In the 1990's when he retired, he volunteered giving tours in McArthur's Park, a nature preserve in Florida. Bob lived in Watchung for 25 years, near his daughter Jill Parker and her family, and currently resides in Basking Ridge, New Jersey.

Bob's artwork reflects his many interests throughout his life. The art exhibit will feature his love of nature and animals.

During September, the Watchung Arts Center will also host "Cuba: Working and Waiting", an exhibit curated by Mr. Harnick, in its second floor Heinz W. Otto Gallery.

The Watchung Arts Center, located at 18 Stirling Road in Watchung on the Watchung Circle, is a multi-disciplinary arts facility serving Watchung, the surrounding communities and the Tri-State Area. The Gallery is open Tuesday-Friday from noon to 5pm, and Saturday from 10:00am to 3:00pm. To obtain more information about upcoming performances, classes and workshops, and monthly art exhibitions, please visit [WatchungArts.org](http://WatchungArts.org) or call 908-753-0190.

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## CHELSEA AT WARREN CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY OF ANNE LAHOFF

Anne LaHoff, a former dance teacher who once danced with Fred Astaire, celebrated her 100th birthday at The Chelsea at Warren, 274 King George Road, surrounded by friends and family, on Monday, August 15, 2016.

Mrs. LaHoff, who was born in Jersey City and later moved to North Arlington, was a career employee of RCA in Harrison where she supervised the manufacture of vacuum tubes for radios.

The highlight of her second career as a ballroom dance instructor came in 1949 when she won the Viennese Waltz portion of the Harvest Moon Dance competition in New York. The prize was a dance with legendary performer Fred Astaire.

“Fred Astaire was a good dancer,” recalled Mrs. LaHoff, “but not as good as my husband.”

Mrs. LaHoff was joined at her Chelsea birthday party by her many Chelsea friends, nephews Michael Miller of Oradell, Robert Miller of Manchester, niece Maureen Stivale of Middletown and the Millers’ spouses, Eva and Elaine.



(above, center, l-r) Mrs. LaHoff makes a grand entrance into the party with family. (standing, l-r) Robert and Eva Miller, Michael Miller and Maureen Stivale, (seated, l-r) seated Mrs. LaHoff and Elaine Miller.



## ATTORNEY SETTLES HOME EXPLOSION LITIGATION FOR \$975,000.00

Berkeley Heights attorney David C. Bendush announced the settlement this week of a lawsuit arising from a home explosion in Hunterdon County in September of 2014. The blast was caused by a contractor who was converting the home of his clients, from oil to natural gas. The clients were in the home with their infant daughter at the time of the explosion and fire. Davis Heating and Cooling had recently installed gas lines inside the home, and the time of the blast was attempting without success to purge the new gas lines. Large amounts of natural gas were caused to accumulate inside the basement until the gas exploded, nearly levelling the structure and knocking the clients to the ground where they stood. Mr. Bendush litigated the liability issues aggressively, and attained the unusual result of summary judgment for plaintiff on liability based on the legal doctrine of res ipsa loquitur. The defense had little choice but to settle quickly and on favorable terms, in order to avoid a trial.

The initial blast lifted the house off the foundation, blew out windows and doors, and started a fire. Although the clients were tossed about by the initial blast, they sustained no serious or lasting physical injuries, other than emotional distress. Other losses claimed included lost time from work, loss of use of their family home, and damage to portions of a comic book collection which had been stored in the basement. Evidence demonstrated that many original rare and valuable comic books and other collectibles were either partially or totally damaged in the fire.

This litigation was also unique because the homeowners insurance carrier asserted a lien of \$715,000.00 for the damages paid out on behalf of the insured (to demolish and rebuild the house, etc.) , and that lien was reduced significantly with the carrier receiving \$287,500.00 of the overall settlement, leaving the balance to compensate the homeowners for emotional distress and other losses.

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All Somerset County-operated Senior Centers offer a nutritionally balanced lunch, Monday through Friday, for a suggested donation of \$2.50, for anyone 60 and above. Menu choices include a hot meat-based or meatless entrée or a cold meat-based or meatless boxed lunch. Please make reservations prior to 10:00 am the previous business day. Why not invite a friend or neighbor to join you for lunch! As an additional suggestion, why not come earlier in the day and enjoy one of the center's many programs.

**(NEW) Yoga with Jillian**

Tuesdays, 12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

\$40 for the 8-week program, session begins September 20th - Registration required, call (908) 753-9440 for information.

**(NEW) Dancercise with Sabina Hanriot**

Thursdays, 10:30 am – 11:30 am

Learn how to Salsa and Merengue! These two Latin dances will exercise all major muscle groups and improve your flexibility, balance and coordination while providing a fun and interesting aerobic workout. Sneakers required. \$40 for the 8-week program, session begins September 8th - Registration required, call (908) 753-9440 for information.

**Safari Special Event**

September 6, 10:30 am

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Dorothy and Irwin Vogel will take us on a safari that will focus on the migration of animals found in Kenya and Tanzania. Arrive a little early and have some fun with safari sightings.

**Tone and Flexibility Exercise Class,**

September 7, 14, 21 & 28 – 10:45 am

Enjoy an energizing class suitable for beginner and intermediate levels. Exercising with Sabina will boost your energy level, reduce stress, and help tone your body by using resistance bands, exercise balls and dance moves. Exercises can be done standing up or sitting down.

**"No Bake Energy Bars"**

September 9

with Jessica Guarnieri, Registered Dietitian, ShopRite/Wakefern, 10:30 am - Join us for this hands-on

nutrition program. As a group, we will make a generic energy bar batter and then each attendee will add an additional ingredient of their choice.

**"Carnival of Sound (Roman Carnival Overture)"**

September 12

by George Marriner Maull, Artist Director, Discovery Orchestra, 10:30 am - This overture was composed in 1844 and first performed at the Salle Herz, Paris, on February 3, 1844. A stand-alone overture intended for concert performance, made up of material and themes from Berlioz's opera Benvenuto Cellini, including some music from the opera's carnival scene-hence the overture's title. It is scored for large orchestra, is in the key of A major, and features a prominent and famous solo for the cor anglais. Join us as George takes us through the blueprint of this overture and teaches listening skills that will help the attendees to connect with classical music.

**"Active Shooter Safety Tips and Senior Scams"**

September 19

by Somerset County Sheriff's Officer David Daneker & his K-9 Partner, Apex - This program will have three parts. Part one will highlight safe ways to react if you are caught in an active shooter situation, part two will go over the latest scams and fraud schemes that are directed towards seniors and part three will be a demonstration by Apex, a canine narcotics dog.

**"Traveler Series on Germany and Austria"**

September 26

by Tracy Kaminski, Educator, Morris Museum, 10:30 am - Explore Germany and Austria with the Morris Museum Traveler Series. This program includes the viewing of photos taken by Morris Museum Staff Members and the exploration of objects representing the people and the culture of these two countries. Highlights of the program will include a look into the foods, clothing, local crafts, and festivals (Oktoberfest) that make these countries unique.

**"Managing Osteoarthritis Pain"**

September 27

by Dr. Ravi Patel, 10:30 am - Learn about degenerative joint disease and why it happens. This presentation will highlight why there is pain associated with it, how to manage the resulting pain and ways to prevent flare-ups. This program will offer tips on how to be as pain-free as possible.

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# TMC'S BOUTIQUE OPENS IN NEW PROVIDENCE

TMC's Boutique, formally located in Stirling, NJ for 6 1/2 years, has brought her unique store to New Providence and invites the public to celebrate a grand opening on September 17th at 2 p.m. Located on 1259 Springfield Avenue.

TMC was created by Linda Tribuna because being an artist herself she wanted to create a unique store selling the beautiful work of both local and national artists. Since Linda was part of many art shows she asked artists she met through the years to sell in her store. During her time in the Stirling location she sold the work of over 20 local and 10 U.S. artists.

Now here in New Providence, with a much larger location, Linda is representing 13 additional artists bringing her total to 30+ local and 10 national artists. TMC's Boutique carries

*(right) Linda Tribuna invites the public to meet local artists at the grand opening of her boutique located at 1259 Springfield, Avenue, New Providence on September 17th at 2 p.m.*

jewelry, handbags, frames, knitwear, bottle holders, bottle openers, lighted glass boxes, pottery and so much more!



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## HUGHES NAMED DIRECTOR OF LEARNINGRX

LearningRx in Warren is happy to announce that Ingrid Johannsen Hughes has been named the center's Director, as of August 1. Ingrid will now be responsible for day to day management of the center. Because she is an adept communicator, Ingrid will also play a bigger role in marketing and communications. Owner Mike DiCristino said, "Ingrid has been indispensable in helping the center to transition after I purchased LearningRx Warren in November, 2015. She continues to display an impressive ability to maintain and enhance the high quality service LearningRx Warren is known for, while also making the center an enjoyable and fun place to work."

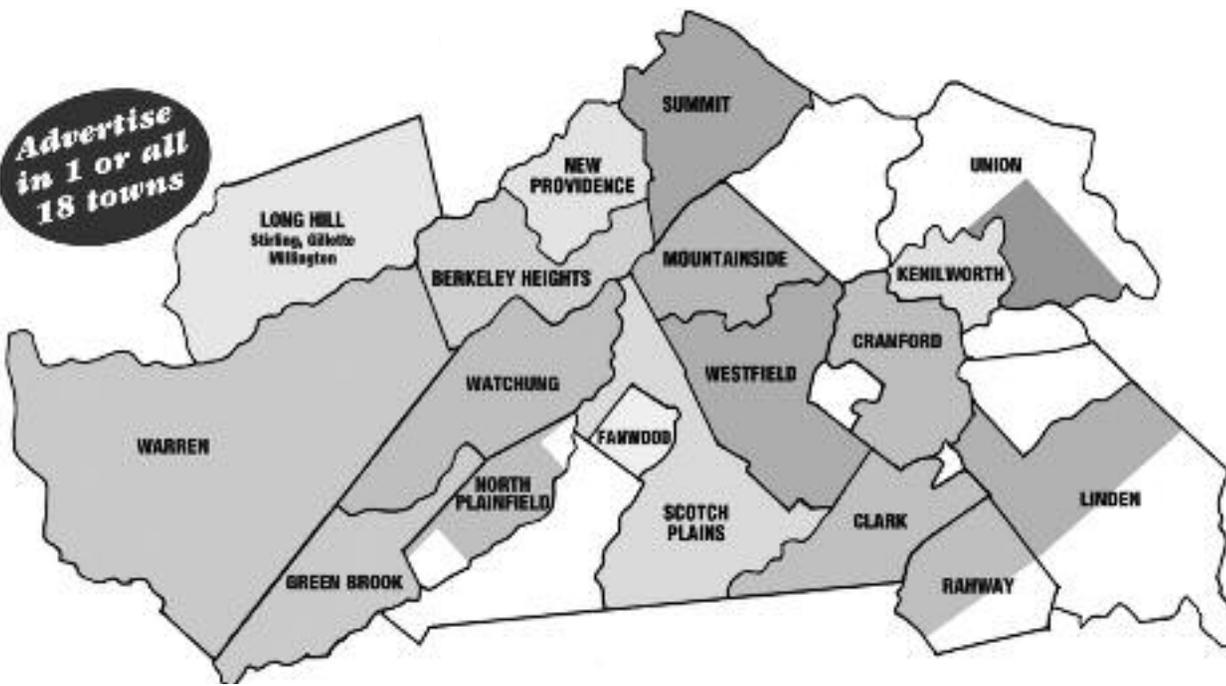
About LearningRx-Warren: At LearningRx, we target and train the weak cognitive skills that make learning and life harder than it needs to be for children and adults. Our programs work on the causes, not just the symptoms, of learning struggles. We use intense mental exercises, done with a personal brain trainer, to work on the skills the brain uses to think, learn, and perform. Come to our Center and take a cognitive skills assessment. The assessment will identify the root cause of your struggle and allow us to create a brain training program that's right for you. Schedule your assessment today!

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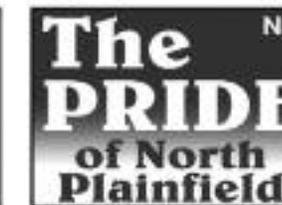
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# MCAULEY HALL HEALTH CARE CENTER CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Few things in our lives bring more joy than the realization of a good dream. Celebrating a dream and the anniversary of its realization is happening this year at McAuley Hall Health Care Center in Watchung, NJ. For the past 50 years this facility and a long procession of residents and staff have witnessed the evolution of history from their perch on the side of the Watchung mountains overlooking Route 22. Built to provide a home and loving care to aging members of the Sisters of Mercy of New Jersey, it has, over time, expanded its mission to welcome many in need of quality care in the Mercy tradition.

The story of McAuley Hall Health Care Center is deeply rooted in the legacy of Catherine McAuley, the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. Committed to caring for the poor women and children in 19th century Dublin, Ireland, Catherine McAuley opened the first House of Mercy in 1827. A few years later, Catherine founded the Sisters of Mercy, a religious community of women passionate about the care of the poor, sick and uneducated.

The dream that became McAuley Hall was born in the early 1960s when Mother Mary Patrick McCallion and Mother Mary Bertrand Miller were the elected leaders of the community. Several senior members of the community had emigrated from Ireland as Sisters of Mercy and came to the United States in their early twenties. Other sisters had come from New Hampshire and then from Bordentown, NJ and were, by mid-20th century, senior citizens. Initially, the older sisters were cared for at the Mount Saint Mary Motherhouse in Watchung, NJ. However, as numbers grew, the space offered atop the hill was no longer large enough to accommodate a growing need for a facility.

The vision of Mothers Patrick, Bertrand and others was a welcoming home for sisters in need of care, seeking wellness or preparing to meet their God. The mission was and continues to be providing life-giving care in an atmosphere of peace and joy and reflecting the spirit of Catherine McAuley.

McAuley Hall, as it was known until 1994, opened on August 28, 1966, with an initial population of 23 sisters and nine staff members. Three floors included a large chapel, dining room, 74 individual bedrooms and a wing that would later be used to house a small school for exceptional children. Sisters requiring skilled care and those needing what today we call assisted living were accommodated on different levels while sisters recuperating from illness, injury or surgery were assured of care appropriate to their needs.

Sister Margaret Mary San Antonio, a nurse at McAuley from its first day, reflected on what the years have brought: "The vision we had was much smaller than what it has become. We thought it would always be a home for our New Jersey sisters but we began to realize that Mercy is so much wider than "just us." Sisters of Mercy beyond New Jersey, sisters of other communities, family members, priests and associates had medical needs as well and McAuley was able to

serve them too. They became part of our family at McAuley and they continue to come and we welcome them as part of us."

On August 28, 1991, McAuley Hall celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary and remembered the many sisters, staff, friends and benefactors who had contributed to the history and success of a facility with a heartbeat that radiates happiness. Residents include sisters and priests from other communities and dioceses. Relatives of sisters in need of care were welcomed as beds were available and the staff grew to include many lay employees. Students from Mount Saint Mary Academy volunteered their services and Mercy Associates visited and provided special treats and events for the residents.

Sister Mary Roberts, who taxied the first groups of sisters from the third floor of the Mount to McAuley on the opening day, recalls, "The central focus then and now was providing the best holistic care, i.e. medical, psychological, spiritual and social services, to women who had given the best of their lifetimes to the works of mercy."

But much changed over 25 years and it was clear that it would soon be necessary to renovate the building and apply for a New Jersey State license as a Skilled Nursing Facility. Sister Irene Gormley, a Registered Nurse, Licensed Nursing Home Administrator and Director of Health Care for the Sisters of Mercy of New Jersey, explored the necessary requirements for licensing. She met with the NJ Department of Health and brought recommendations back to the then Community President, Sister Theresina Flannery. Once the affirmation of the community was provided, the facility was given a year to meet the state regulations. The months that followed were filled with hiring key personnel, composing policy manuals, providing staff education and overseeing renovations. Instrumental to the process was Jacqueline Ragin, RN the first Director of Nursing for McAuley Hall who, along with Sr. Irene Gormley, brought their skill and dedication to actualizing the vision. Each step of this new endeavor was infused with excitement and supported by the Sisters' prayer and enthusiasm.

On December 31, 1992, the application for licensing was submitted to the State of New Jersey and, on September 1, 1993, the successful licensing and Medicare/Medicaid Certification documents were received and posted at the entrance to the facility. The Department of Health, upon completing their first intense two-day inspection, named McAuley Hall "a model facility" with no recommendations and no deficiencies. With immense gratitude and a sigh of relief, the tower bell rang, the sisters and staff gathered and the celebration began at McAuley Hall.

Sister Irene Gormley, the first Administrator for the licensed facility and now Health Care Coordinator for the Sisters of Mercy, Mid-Atlantic Community, reflects on her forty years of service, "my life has been forever changed by the residents and staff who have walked with me

and supported the mission and values of McAuley Hall".

Life was exciting at McAuley Hall with celebrations of holidays, jubilees, anniversaries and special events such as concerts performed by the residents and staff at Christmas and tree plantings on Earth Day and an annual virtual cruise week. Social awareness programs and benefits for HIV/AIDS and other causes, observances of Nurses' Day and National Nursing Home Week offered opportunities for honoring staff, volunteers and benefactors.

As the median age and diminishment in the capacity for activities at McAuley Health Care Center evolved for many residents, the buildings continued to require extra care and more renovations. When McAuley School moved to new locations, expanded facilities for physical and occupational therapy were designed. In 1999 a revision to the admissions policy approved the inclusion of Mercy associates and their family members in need of skilled medical care.

McAuley Hall Health Care Center remains a licensed 74-bed Skilled Nursing Facility sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy. The Mercy spirit of hospitality and outreach is as vibrant today as it was fifty years ago when the first Sisters of Mercy traveled down the hill to their new home. From skilled nursing care to rehabilitation programs the staff at McAuley is committed to providing services to men and women that are centered in promoting the sacredness of each person.

Today, Sisters of Mercy and all those whose lives and efforts have played a part in its fifty-year history rejoice that the dream and original goals have been fulfilled, expanded, evolved and continue to benefit God's people in innumerable ways.

If you would like to learn more about McAuley Hall Health Care Center or wish to contribute to its mission, please visit [mcauleyhall.weebly.com](http://mcauleyhall.weebly.com) or call 908-754-3663.

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