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Published by Renna Media, LLC. On-line at RennaMedia.com

ISSUE 39 • DECEMBER 2016

**WINTER
CONCERT
FRIDAY
DECEMBER 16TH**

7:00pm

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CALVIN KHIDDEE-WU AND JAGDEEP BHATIA WIN NATIONAL STEM VIDEO GAME CHALLENGE

by Katy Svehaug

Two students from Green Brook, NJ have been named winners of the National STEM Video Game Challenge. Calvin Khiddee-Wu and Jagdeep Bhatia were among 24 middle school and high school winners recognized at an award ceremony held at National Geographic in Washington, DC, on November 14, 2016, with top original video games and game design concepts selected in 18 categories from nearly 3,000 entries.

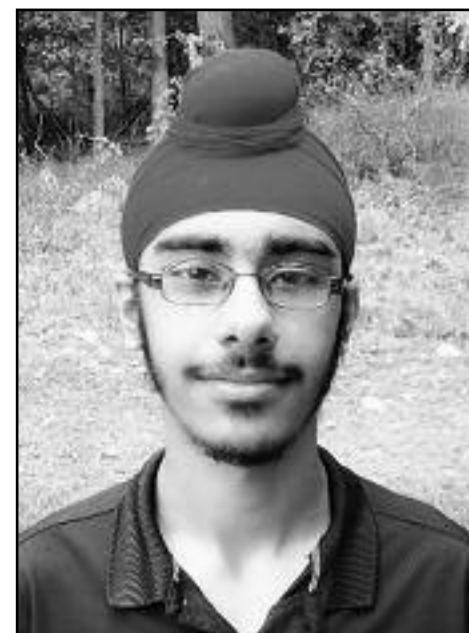
Presented by the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop and E-Line Media, with founding sponsor the Entertainment Software Association (ESA), the STEM Challenge aims to motivate interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) among youth by transforming their natural passions for playing video games into designing and creating their own video games.

The STEM Challenge conducted nearly 60 game design workshops and events across the country in 2016. The Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has sponsored more than 20 workshops at libraries and museums nationwide for students and mentors.

Each winner receives a cash prize of \$1,000, as well as a subscription to Gamestar Mechanic from E-Line Media and Curiosity Boxes from Vsauce. STEM Challenge winners can also designate \$2,000 to a school or non-profit organization as an institutional award recipient.

"The National STEM Video Game Challenge promotes vital new skills like coding and systems design that all young people will need to compete and collaborate in a digital and global world," said Michael H. Levine, Executive Director, The Joan Ganz Cooney Center. "We are thrilled to honor these students and their outstanding games."

Teammates Calvin Khiddee-Wu, 14, and Jagdeep Bhatia, 14, of Green Brook, New Jersey knew from the start that they wanted to design a video game with an apocalyptic setting, and ultimately decided to use their game to tell a story of survival in the wake of nuclear fallout. Their



(above) Calvin Khiddee-Wu and Jagdeep Bhatia.

original video game design, Reconstruct, won the Middle School Team Open Platform category of the 2016 National STEM Video Game Challenge after they were encourage to enter the competition by their middle school computer teacher. In Reconstruct, players fight off enemies while attempting to rebuild society after a nuclear apocalypse.

A major source of inspiration for Calvin is his mother, who grew up in rural Thailand before moving to the United States. "She inspires me because she is persistent, bold, and never gives up," says Calvin. When he's not developing new games, Calvin enjoys drawing, playing piano, playing video games, and browsing on the internet. In the future, he hopes to study electrical or computer engineering.

"When I get older I hope to become a computer scientist," says Jagdeep, whose additional hobbies include running cross country and playing the tabla. Jagdeep's interest in making video games goes all the way back to elementary school, when he was introduced to programs like Kodu Game Lab and Scratch before teaching himself JavaScript this past summer.

"The most valuable lesson I learned was to keep the end goal in mind," says Calvin. "Though many problems and obstacles may delay or block production, the end product is worth the struggle." Jagdeep also encourages aspiring designers to think carefully about their plan for production from the beginning. "Planning helps your game be more unified," he explains. "It helps you to have a clear theme so that you do not waste time adding aspects to your game that do not make sense, and creates a clear timeline of everything that needs to be done."



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THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

Green Brook has a cooperative agreement with the Somerset County Park Commission Therapeutic Department to provide Therapeutic Recreation programs and services to Green Brook residents who need specialized/adapted recreation programs or inclusion support services.

The Therapeutic Recreation (TR) Department is dedicated to providing year round recreation and leisure opportunities for people with developmental disabilities. The goal of the TR department is to promote an active leisure lifestyle that improves social, physical, cognitive and emotional functioning and health while enhancing each participant's abilities. With highly qualified staff at programs, participants can register for many types of programs. By providing a variety of social, cultural, artistic, and culinary programs, as well as sports, fitness, community outings, horticulture, and special events, participants can recreate in the day, evening, or weekend.

Benefits to participation may include improving social skills, enhancing self-esteem, improving overall health and well-being and physical ability, enhancing communication skills,

constructive use of leisure time and eliminating boredom, and reduction of stress and anxiety. Come discover the benefits with us.

Programs are offered for the following age groupings: Adults 31 and older, Young Adults 18-30, Teens 13-17, Children 6-12

With this approach to programming, participants can now attend programs with peers that share more common interests. We work to ensure a fun and trusting environment for you or your child that is conducive to learning while engaging in recreation activities.

This season program offerings include Pasta Making, Born to Jive music and dance program, Dining Out, Body Shop Fitness, Out and About, Seasonal Botanicals, Holiday Party, Fall Formal, and much more. Kids Yoga is back for both children and teens. There will be more craft, cooking, and enrichment programs offered. Call the TR office to find out what programs are being offered for your age group. If you have questions or if you want to receive a flyer/brochure, please call the TR department at 908 526-5650 or visit us on the web at www.somersetcountyparks.org. Individuals with speech or hearing impairments, please call the Relay Service @ 711.

PROMOTE YOUR COMMUNITY EVENT

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 editor@rennamedia.com or call 908-418-5586



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CUB SCOUTS HIKE AND LEAVE NO TRACE AT THE DESERTED VILLAGE

On Sunday November 13th fifteen Cub Scouts and their families from Warren Cub Scout Pack 182's Den #6 Webelos and Den #7 Bears met at Watchung Reservation's Deserted Village parking lot.

During a 2.5 hour hike, the Webelo boys completed requirements to earn the Walkabout Adventure pin and the Bears earned their Whittling Chip and Bear Claws Core Adventure.

The Cubs learned about the Leave No Trace pledge and The Outdoor Code. Throughout the hike the boys performed various Hike leadership roles; Navigator, Denner, First Aider and Snack Leader.

The Bear Cubs learned about knife safety, different types of knives and how to carve and whittle using wood and soap bars.

Cubs also performed a "trash bash" service project filling a two of bags with trash from the trails and disposed of them properly on their return to the parking lot. They really did leave no trace!

Cub Scout Pack 182 in Warren Township serves the local community and surrounding towns. To join Cub Scouts or find out more about Pack 182 visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/Pack182WarrenNJ/ our website warrenpack182.org or by contacting us at membership@warrenpack182.org.



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Troop 65023 of Green Brook are proud of their earned Bronze Award. The girls choose Puppy Mill Awareness and learned how most pet stores sell dogs bred in deplorable conditions and they promoted a program "Adopt- Don't Shop."

They also hosted the Director of the New Jersey Humane Society, Brian Hackett, to speak to the community.

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(above l-r) Andrea Y, Kaitlyn Z, new member Catherine Z, Keira L and Grace G. The troop is currently Cadette level Girl Scouts.

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Firehouse Burger	5.97
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Southwest Burger	6.75
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THE GREENBROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY EXPLORES LOCAL HISTORY

During the past two months, we talked about "The Path" (Cardinal Lane), where General Washington was led up to a lookout referred as Washington Rock. In the mid-1800's, the same path was used as a stagecoach route to bring guests from the city to the Plainfield Train Station and then by stage to the Washington Rock Mountain House hotel across from the Rock.

Although surprising, the top of the Watchung had many fresh water springs. In the late 1800's, the Berliner family had the foresight to buy acreage in Washington Rock State Park on the west side of what is now Rock Road East. In the 10 years or so before 1900, the Berliner family formed the Watchung Spring Water Bottling Company and commenced operations on two productive wellheads on the property. Many of the bottles produced had raised lettering saying "Washington Rock Spring Water Bottling Co." For over 10 years, they were able to fill small and large glass bottles with the crystal clear quality spring water. There were no cars or trucks in those days, so how to get the product down to the public, was the question. The bottles were too heavy to carry by hand. The common transportation back then was the wagon. And so, water was hauled by wagon down the Lane. If one looks carefully, the wagon trail can still be detected across the picnic area to where it connects to Cardinal Lane. Spring water was then

brought to local distribution points or to the Plainfield Train Station for transport.

But all good things must come to an end. In about 1903, when the wellheads slowed down their flows, operations ceased.

When visiting Washington Rock, the two acres surrounding the monument is all that there is to the property. However, the current park is actually 51.3 acres - 26 acres to the west of Rock Road East and 25 acres to the south, including the side of the mountain. Charles McCutcheon of Plainfield was both patriotic and wealthy. Just before 1900, he realized that Mr. Garretson, who owned the quarry that can be seen when driving up Washington Avenue to the left, had designs on quarrying the front side of the mountain, including the historic Washington Rock. That was unacceptable, so he got to work.

In 1911, he was able to get the NJ Legislature to allocate \$5,000 to the Washington Rock Commission to purchase up to 100 acres to start

a State Park. McCutcheon was highly regarded and he got his friends to donate 28 acres to the project. For the princely sum of \$11, it included the acreage of the now dormant wells of the Berliner family. As an update, the Watchung Spring Water Bottling Company is alive and well. After several moves, they are located in Lakewood, where they distribute Poland Spring Water and other products.

For more information about the Green Brook Historical Society, visit



(above) Washington Rock Spring Water Bottles

WINTER CONCERT SET FOR DECEMBER 16TH

The Watchung Hills Regional High School Choir welcomes everyone to their Annual Winter Concert on Friday December 16th at 7:00pm in the Watchung Hills Regional High School Performing Arts Center located at 108 Stirling Rd, Warren, NJ.

Directed by chorus teacher Angela DiIorio-Bird, the chorus will be singing songs ranging from classical to all-time favorites including "Let It Be" by The Beatles, "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" by Pyotr Tchaikovsky, a "Disney Movie Magic" medley, and many more. Plus, admission is free! We hope everyone is able to attend!"

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR BLOOD DRIVES

New Jersey Blood Services, a division of New York Blood Center, which supplies blood products and services to 60 hospitals throughout the state, is in need of volunteers at blood drives. The blood service volunteer is an integral member of the collection team whose task it is assist donors with registration, escorting and canteen duties, and to watch for post donation reactions. Volunteers should have the ability to relate to the public, be able to perform different jobs as needed and have the willingness to follow the rules. For additional information contact, Manager of Community Relations, R. Jan Zepka at 732-616-8741 or rzepka@nybloodcenter.org.

DUNELLEN PUBLIC LIBRARY UPCOMING EVENTS

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The following is for the Dunellen Public Library. All programs require registration unless otherwise stated.

Book Bunch

December 6, 10:30 am

Themed stories, active play, crafts.

Ages 2-5 with an adult caregiver

Paper Gingerbread House Craft

December 6, 4:00 pm

Ages 3 & up

Alphabet Express Featuring the Letter D

December 9, 11:30 am

Story, craft and the occasional game or activity focusing on early literacy.

Ages 2-5 with an adult caregiver.

A Cozy Concert with Miss Lynn

December 9, 6:30 pm

Family Event

Bookworms: An Elementary School Book Discussion

December 12, 4:00 pm

Come having read the book, The Last Holiday Concert by Andrew Clements.

Snacks provided. Grades 3-5

Cookie Cutter Fun

December 13, 10:30 am

Come play with play dough, cookie cutters, rolling pins and more! With an adult caregiver

Christmas Ornament Craft

December 13, 4:00pm

Ages 3 & up

Christmas Craft (non-religious, no Santa)

December 15, 4:00 pm

Ages 3 & up

Story & Snack: Cookies

December 16, 4:00 pm

A Story time with a cookie theme. Cookies and juice will be served. Ages 3 & up

STEAMtrain

(Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math)

December 17, 11:00 am

This program will feature activities that help enhance STEAM skills.

Bookaholics: A Middle School Book Discussion Group & Movie Screening

December 19, 5:00 pm

Come having read the book Hoot by Carl Hiassen

Grades 6-8

Food will be provided.

Counting Caboose featuring the #4

December 20, 10:30 am

Books, crafts, games and activities that focus on aspects of math.

Numbers, matching, sorting, measuring, patterns and more.

Ages 2-5 with an adult caregiver

Holidays Around the World

December 21, 4:00 pm

Discover the magic of how other countries celebrate the winter holidays as well

as popular holidays in many of the world's cultures.

Games, craft, stories

Grades K+

Alphabet Express Featuring the letter E

December 23, 11:30 am

Story, craft and the occasional game or activity focusing on early literacy.

Ages 2-5 with an adult caregiver.

Live Action Hungry Hungry Hippos

December 23, 2:00 pm

Grades K+

Snow Play

December 28, 3:30 pm

Come play in the "snow"

All ages (under 3 must be accompanied by an adult.

Candy Bingo

December 29, 2:00 pm

Come play American's beloved game with a candy theme.

Candy will be given as prizes.

Ages 3 & up (parents of younger children are encouraged to stay and help)

Just Dance

December 30, 2:00 pm

Play the popular game in a group setting. Please bring a labeled water bottle with you.

Ages 3 & up

(should be willing to dance in front of others)

Mother Goose

Thursdays 10:30 am

An interactive music program for children 0-5 with an adult caregiver.

This program is followed by optional free play.

No registration required.

Imagination Station Story Time

Wednesdays 4:00 pm

Afternoon story time for children 3-7 years of age.

No registration required.

GREEN BROOK SCOUTS COLLECT FOOD FOR THOSE IN NEED

One of the cornerstones of the Boy Scouts of America is service to one's community. This was demonstrated on November 19th as Boy Scouts Troop 129 and Cub Scouts Pack 129 worked together to gather food donations for the needy. Each Autumn the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts run their "Scouting for Food" drive throughout Green Brook. Through the generosity of the people of Green Brook much needed dry goods and children's toys are collected and provided to Fish,

Inc- Dunellen Area for distribution to those in need. Cub Scouts Pack 129, based in Green Brook, is open to all grades K through 5th. For information about Pack 129 you may contact Brent Cheshire at info@greenbrookpack129.org. Boy Scouts Troop 129, also based in Green Brook, is open to boys aged 11-18. For information about Troop 129 you may contact John Schmitz at jschmitz67@optimum.net



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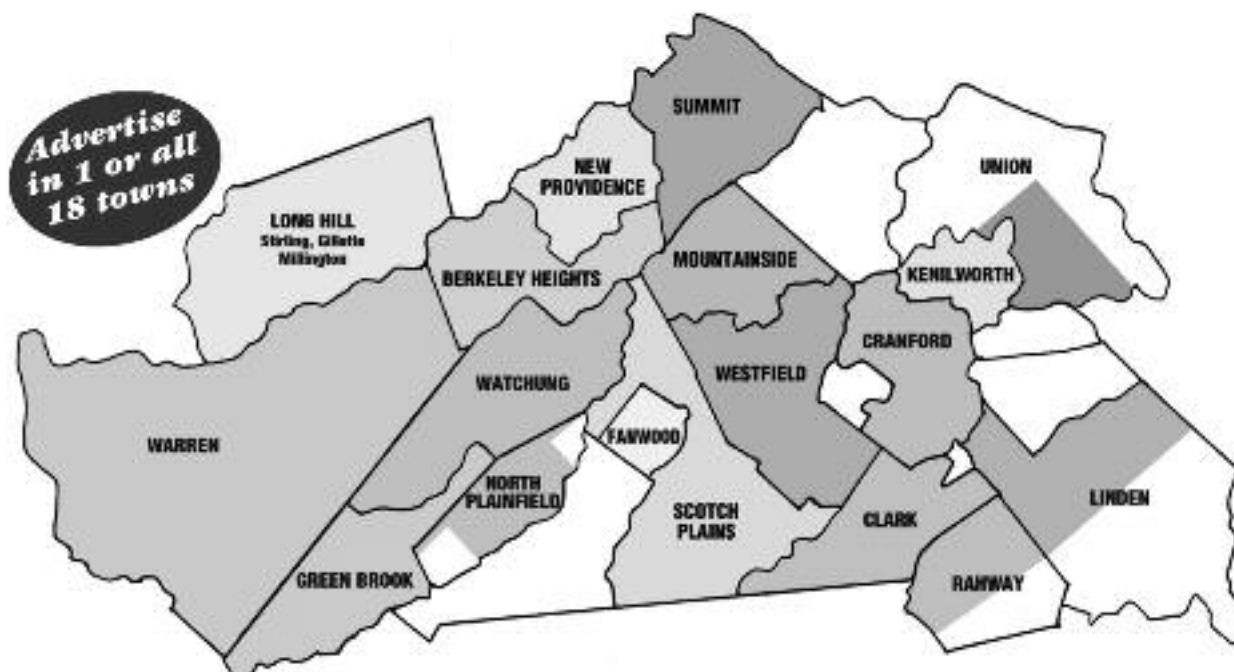
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17 **Watchung Post**
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5. Green Brook Gazette	15. Spirit of Union
6. Kenilworth Business Life	16. Warren Monthly
7. Life in Linden	17. Watchung Post
8. Long Hill Leader	18. Westfield Monthly
9. Mountainside View	19. Peterstown Newspaper
10. New Providence News	

Have a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Thank you,
Joe and Tina Renna

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WARRENBROOK SENIOR CENTER

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"The Fog of War" by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Robert Vaucher, December 12, 11:00 am

This presentation will highlight his 117 combat missions in the Pacific theatre and his "full week" of missions in the United States of America and "wild week" after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. He was also selected as the "lead" pilot for the 500 plus B-29 "show of force" flyover of the USS Missouri at the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Harbor. If you ever have the chance to see a video of the surrender ceremony please note that as General Douglas MacArthur stands up after signing the document that officially ended the war Bob's B-29 was directly over the General's head. A masterpiece of timing since Bob had flown to the harbor from the Island of Tinian almost 1000 miles away.

State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) December 30

a counselor will be available to provide Free help to New Jersey beneficiaries who have problems with, or questions about their health benefits. SHIP is a statewide program by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. **Please call (908) 704-6319 to schedule an appointment**

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