

Our 62nd Year of Airstreaming

The Hillbilly



Publication of Watchung NJ Airstream Club

www.airstreamclub.org/watchung-nj August 2026

President's Message



Hello everyone!

I hope you are all doing well!

I think we are going through withdrawal here. It has been about 6 or 7 weeks since we have been camping, (due to unavoidable circumstances) and we are feeling the itch. Funny how before Airstream was a part of our lives, we didn't miss it and didn't even know what we were missing. Now, as I hear about the Croton Point Rally which we could not make, (thank you Sharon, Joe, Sheryl and Carl for what I hear was a great rally!), and other adventures of our fellow WAC members, we are anxious to get on the road again.

First up is the joint R1/R2 Sampson Rally. This will be our first time attending that large a region event and I am looking forward to some fun combined with a little R & R. They are expecting around 98 rigs, about 6 or so of which are WAC! We have a WAC happy hour and pot luck planned for the first night and a larger happy hour planned for Saturday with



all attendees bringing a beer or wine from their home region to share and taste.

(Looking ahead we hope to be signing up for the next R2 annual rally. It is scheduled to take place in Ocean City Md, May 13-16, 2027. Registration will be opening around August 1.)

By the time of this printing, the Cowtown rally will be coming up soon! It will be the first joint club rally (along with Keystone Club) that we will be attending and promises to be full of new experiences such as tailgating at a rodeo, attending a rodeo, and also including other fun things such as a chili cook-off. If you plan to attend the rodeo don't forget to purchase your tickets ahead of time as I hear they often sell out. Sharon and Andy Wright are co-hosting with the Keystone Club. We will also be holding our second general meeting of the year that weekend.

At this time we do not have a rally planned for September. It is not too late to try to find a place to host one if you are interested, so reach out for assistance if you'd like.

For October we are looking forward to the Janes Island rally hosted by the Kieseles and Ratliffs. We've never been there so we are excited to do so! We will also be holding our general meeting, and election of the new board that weekend.

This month in addition to club rallies, Brian and I are trying something new (to us). We have a two nighter planned near Cherry Springs State Park in PA, to watch the Perseid Meteor Shower. Cherry Springs is the ultimate East Coast Dark Sky site (an official Gold-tier International Dark Sky Park). On August 12 there will be a Moonless New Moon which brings optimal viewing conditions. The Perseid Meteor Shower is expected to have 50-100 meteors per hour, hopefully under clear dark skies.

The club flags have arrived! There may still be a couple available so if you are interested let George Kiesel know.

And the club sweatshirt sales are up and running as well and should be keeping us warm and comfy this winter!

As mentioned in my recent email, we will soon be electing our new Executive Board for 2027. New and established members are all welcome to volunteer. Please let me know if you are interested!

We hope to see you soon.

Happy trails...

Heidi 22024



Region 2 President's Message



It's so much more than rivets and aluminum. Let's give it some soul. We all have a story on how we got here. Here's mine.

The last two years have been very challenging for me in the health department. I hit a major milestone a couple of weeks ago. I pulled my very own trailer to a rally. Yes, a rally. It's that simple. How that simple act transformed my soul is the tale of this message. But I'm writing the ending first. Let's start at the beginning. I bought an Airstream because I felt like my heart had been ripped right out of my chest. But like broken rivets and dented aluminum, a trip to the shop will fix all that. My fix was rooted in a guy named Wally Byam. This club brought me back to life.

At the age of 58 in 2013, I had lost both my mother and my father. Mom hit me really hard, and in some ways, I was so lost, that being stuck was almost a relief. I knew I needed to do something bold. And camping with my parents and my siblings in a little 12- foot Apache pop-up in 1968 lay vivid in my mind as some of the happiest times of my childhood. Living an adventure out in the wild will do that to a rough and tumble, athletic girl. Sitting in the back of a station wagon at age 13, I noticed a silver, shiny thing whoosh by somewhere in the cornfields of Indiana. I was smitten. I knew then that I would have one. One day. It was destiny.

I really went down to Safford RV in Thornburg, VA on Memorial Day in 2013 just to look. Four hours later, it was mine to keep. A 2013, 23 ft. International Serenity. I was off and running. And I mean running. Key West. Prince Edward Island (to my Canadian friends, I am madly in love with the Maritimes, more on that later!). I was largely traveling alone and at every opportunity, spoke to Airstream owners during an after dinner walk in parts unknown, or at random rest stops on our nation's interstates. I saw those red numbers; and curiosity got the best of me. You see, I am a natural "joiner." A team player. I love a cool uniform. And these red numbers seemed to hold some kind of secret. Was there a handshake involved? Did I have to raise my right hand and take a pledge? If so, I was all in.

But something was holding me back. My shrink tells me I have commitment issues. And this was no exception!

This went on for four years. Some folks loved the club, others loved it for a short period of time, and moved on. But the consensus was that the right fit was out there, in the ether, for this kid from South Jersey now living at the doorstep of the Capital City. By now, I acquired the disease of needing a larger trailer and a new truck. I traded in the Serenity for a 2015, 25ft. Flying Cloud and a silver Ford F-150 to match. During rest stop chit-chat, strangers now tell me that they think my set up looks like Amtrak's Acela on I-95. I'll take that as a compliment! The summer of 2017 took me true north. It's hot in Washington, DC and former President Franklin Roosevelt had a house, now a memorial on Campobello Island in New Brunswick, CA (enter the Maritimes!). Being a lover of American History and despising summer heat, the decision was easy. Off I went. Snuggly secured in a small bayside campground in Lubec, Maine, the eastern most point of the continental United States, I sat in my lawn chair and



watched a convoy of vintage trailers roll in. Okay. This could be fun. As the story has been told through the ages, I was abducted by these feisty travelers. They were friendly. They took me under their wing. And there the interrogation started. Why was I still “single”? No big red numbers? Had they spoken to my shrink somehow?

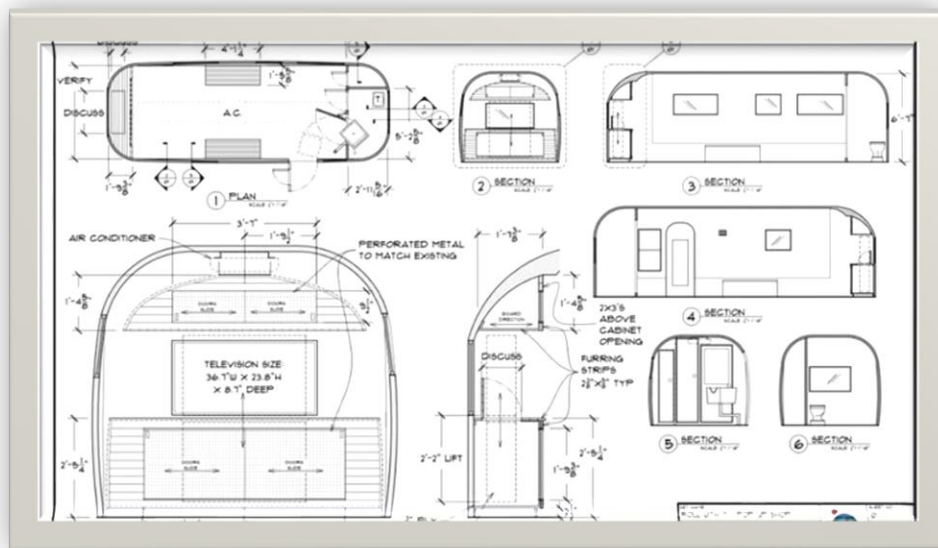
And in what seemed like a fleeting moment, their trusted leader, now in possession of my personal digits, pointed a finger directly in my face and said, “you are joining the Washington, DC Unit (the WDCU) and you will love Linda Moore.” Being an alpha female myself, and retired from federal law enforcement, I recoil from fingers being wagged in my face. It means something different when I’m in SWAT gear on the street. This was different. It was an invitation. Based out of love, commitment and tradition. I saw it in her eyes. And when Pam Bleakney of the New England Unit, dialed up Linda Moore of the WDCU and put her on speakerphone, I knew I had come home. The rest came quickly. Dues paid. My BRN number chosen (it is based on my ATF badge number, lots of us hold onto that!). Two strangers at one point of a long day. Best friends in the next. I have found my home in the WDCU. And when Linda, Pam and I finally united in person at the IR in Doswell, VA in 2019, it became crystal clear. This is where I belong. This is where I get to experience a sense of belonging. All wrapped up in some silver rivets and shrouded in shiny aluminum.

So, as I was rolling up St. Rt. 15 just past Gettysburg, PA a couple of weekends ago, I thought about all of it. Yes, joining the club was kind of like taking marriage vows, especially the part about sticking it out “through sickness and in health.” It’s a relationship. I broke the curse. I committed to something. Not just something, but to a group of people who I now call friends. I’ve experienced so much love and support these last couple of years, it brings me to tears when I lay awake at night.

I’m no accountant. But I do know a good buy when I see one.

It’s there for all of us.

Patti





Meet James Lorden, Region 2 Second VP



I am honored to have the opportunity to be the newly elected 2nd Vice President of Region 2, and I appreciate the chance to introduce myself more fully to our members.

I am 50 years old and originally grew up in Morris County, New Jersey. I attended Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey, and it was during those college years that I met my wife, Tina. After college, we relocated to the Philadelphia area, where I began my career in accounting. I am a CPA and have spent the past 27 years working in the investment company industry, first as an external auditor and later with one of the largest mutual fund companies in the country.

Outside of work, Tina and I have three wonderful daughters who are now either in college or high school. I am also an award-winning homebrewer and a terrible—but very committed—golfer. Like many Airstreamers, I enjoy hobbies that combine learning, travel, friendship, and just enough challenge to keep things interesting. My love of camping started well before we owned an Airstream. When our girls were young, we would tent camp a few times a year, and I always enjoyed the chance to slow down, be outside, and spend time together as a family. As the girls got older, however, they became a little less enthusiastic about “roughing it” than they had been when they were younger.

At the same time, I had fond memories from my own childhood of my grandparents, who were avid boaters and spent nearly every weekend on the water. I loved taking trips with them, and those experiences left a lasting impression on me. In many ways, Airstreaming felt like the perfect way to bring those two things together: the adventure and simplicity of camping, but with a bit of comfort and style. More than anything, it was a way to create lasting memories with our daughters while they were still growing up.

We purchased our Airstream around 2020, and we were hooked almost immediately. Our first trip after picking it up from Colonial Airstream in New Jersey was to Acadia National Park. Somehow, on fairly short notice, we managed to get a campsite at a KOA where our site sat right on the water. I will never forget opening the door that first morning and looking directly out at the bay. It was one of those magical moments that confirmed we had made the right decision. From that point forward, Airstreaming became an important part of our family life.

I did not join the Airstream Club immediately. It was not until I visited Jersey Shore Haven, which serves as a home base of sorts for the New Jersey Unit, that I began to fully understand what the Club could add to the Airstream experience. I saw that the Club was not just about owning a trailer; it was about community, friendship, shared experiences, and the opportunity to expand the enjoyment we were already getting from our Airstream. That was about three years ago, and it opened the door to a much deeper connection with the Airstream community.

My first major Club event was the International Rally in York. Tina and I volunteered as ambassadors, which gave us a wonderful opportunity to meet members, interact with Club leadership, and see the



larger organization in action. That experience inspired me to become more involved. After talking with friends in the New Jersey Unit, I decided to step forward and currently serve as President of the New Jersey Unit.

Serving as Unit President has been both rewarding and energizing. It has given me a deeper appreciation for the volunteers who keep this Club moving, the importance of communication and engagement, and the value of creating welcoming experiences for both longtime members and those who are new to Airstreaming. I am proud to continue serving the New Jersey Unit while also being willing to take on a broader role in Region 2.

My interest in serving as Region 2 2nd Vice President was inspired in large part by the current Region leadership. Since becoming President of the New Jersey Unit, I have had the opportunity to interact regularly with Region 2 leaders, and I have appreciated their support, encouragement, and commitment to the Club. When I learned there might be an opportunity to serve at the Region level, I saw it as both a challenge and a chance to give back.

I have had a lot of fun since joining the Airstream Club, but more importantly, I have seen firsthand how much the Club can mean to people. It creates friendships, strengthens local Units, connects members across states, and helps turn travel into community. I would be grateful for the opportunity to help support that work in Region 2 while continuing to serve the New Jersey Unit and its members.

Editor's note: this month's issue of The Region 2 Beat, from which this profile was excerpted, can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Have a photo for The Hillbilly?



Send to the [editor](#) and choose the medium file size when prompted by your email app.



Announcements

Sunshine Report

There were no cards sent from Sunshine this month.

Would you like to have a card sent to another club member to wish them well or mark a milestone? Please send a note to Linda Kiesel our Sunshine Director at lkiesel@ptd.net.



How to Find, Sign Up and Pay for an ACI Event Online

- Log on to <https://airstreamclub.org/>
- Click on the EVENTS tab
- A map of the US will be displayed containing pins for all the events for all the Airstream clubs. Just above the map on the right side of the screen is the **Clubs** box. Click on the down arrow to display the list of clubs then scroll down to **Watchung NJ Club**. Clicking on this will cause the map to display only Watchung club events.
- Find the event you wish to sign up for and click on the associated pin.
- A text box giving a brief description of the event will be displayed. Click on the arrow in the orange box that says **More**.
- A new page will be displayed. If a registration form has been created for the event this page will give you two options: online registration or mail-in registration using a download of the form. The online form allows payment via PayPal. If you prefer to pay via check download and print the form, which includes payment instructions. If there is no registration form available yet one will be at a later date.

This Month's Birthday

Anne Hargrave



Missed Something?

Past issues of *The Hillbilly* going back to January 2021 are online at

<https://airstreamclub.org/watchung-nj/newsletter-hillbilly>

Items for the newsletter?

Send them by the 25th of each month to: dconley1810@gmail.com

Interested in joining the Watchung NJ Airstream club?

Contact:

Membership: George Kiesel 068membership@gmail.com

President: Heidi Cullen (heidi.watch.air@gmail.com)



July Rally Report: Croton Point Park

Text and photos by Sheryl Skolnick

Hosted by Sharon and Joe Moran and co-hosted by Sheryl Skolnick and Carl Dashman, our club's July 9th -11th rally happened on a gorgeous, hot weekend that showed the park and the beauties of the surrounding landscape to its best advantage.

Kicking off with the usual Happy Hour on Friday night, with five silver lovelies surrounding a large central gathering space between the co-hosts, our group of experienced and relatively new Airstreamers and family members immediately connected and reconnected. Lively conversations flowed into a grilled dinner of burgers, hotdogs and fixings. Emily and Sharon Moran treated us to some of the best strawberry shortcake ever! Two stars of the show were, of course, Miss Fancy Pants (a welcome guest at any rally) and a 1970s hot tray that kept the food piping hot and fresh!



Standing from left: David Dereka, rally hosts Sharon and Joe Moran and their daughter Emily. Seated from left: Linda Dereka, Gail Lloyd and Gail's son Hunter, Hunter's guest Tamar Johnson, and Carl Dashman.



Friday night was the focal point of rally fun, as Sharon and Joe heated up the stove (no open fires at Croton Point) and we raffled off gift baskets to support STOMP OUT BULLYING and played camping bingo. Prizes of donated books were won, supporting Sharon's Reading mission, Joe's guitar came out and a great time was had by all.

Saturday began with a hot cooked breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausages, fruit and pastries. A huge shout-out and thanks to our grill masters, Joe Moran and Carl Dashman – they did a great job Friday and Saturday!

Then each rally member went off to explore on their own or to the Pleasantville Music Festival. Some joined a mini-caravan led by Carl Dashman to the



Raffle prizes wrapped and ready.



Miss Fancy Pants, club first VP Steve Germansky, Carl Dashman, Sheryl Skolnick. Photo: Cynthia Germansky

stunningly beautiful Croton Gorge Dam and Park. Carl, as many now know, grew up there and is a terrific tour guide. From him we learned that this 'new' dam is a masterpiece of human engineering, having been completed in the early 1900s (the old one was built in the 1840s) and is still, to this day, the largest stone edifice west of the Pyramids. It is part of the New York City Aqueduct system and this year was (no surprise given how much rain we had) flowing in all its glory. Sheryl, Carl, Cynthia and Steve Germansky and Miss Fancy Pants hiked up the trail and Joe and Sharon and Emily drove to top, where one can walk across to see the start of the spillway.

Saturday evening was casual and easy. One of the best things about this rally was that we each got to spend time really getting to know each other so much better. Large rallies are of course, fun, but this small gathering gave us the chance to make some lasting friendships within our club and gave the hosts and co-hosts a real appreciation for just how hard our officers and regular hosts work to put on these events!



Sunday morning breakfast was a light meal of yogurt, fruit and pastries, giving our grill masters a well-earned break.

This small rally was a huge success – it had everything that the Watchung Club represents – fellowship, generosity, camaraderie, camping traditions and fun. The hosts and co-hosts wish to thank everyone who guided these first timers through the process, but especially Lois Wagner, departing club treasurer, and Steve and Cynthia Germansky.

Left: The dam's spillway. Bottom: Visitors take in the Croton Gorge Dam.

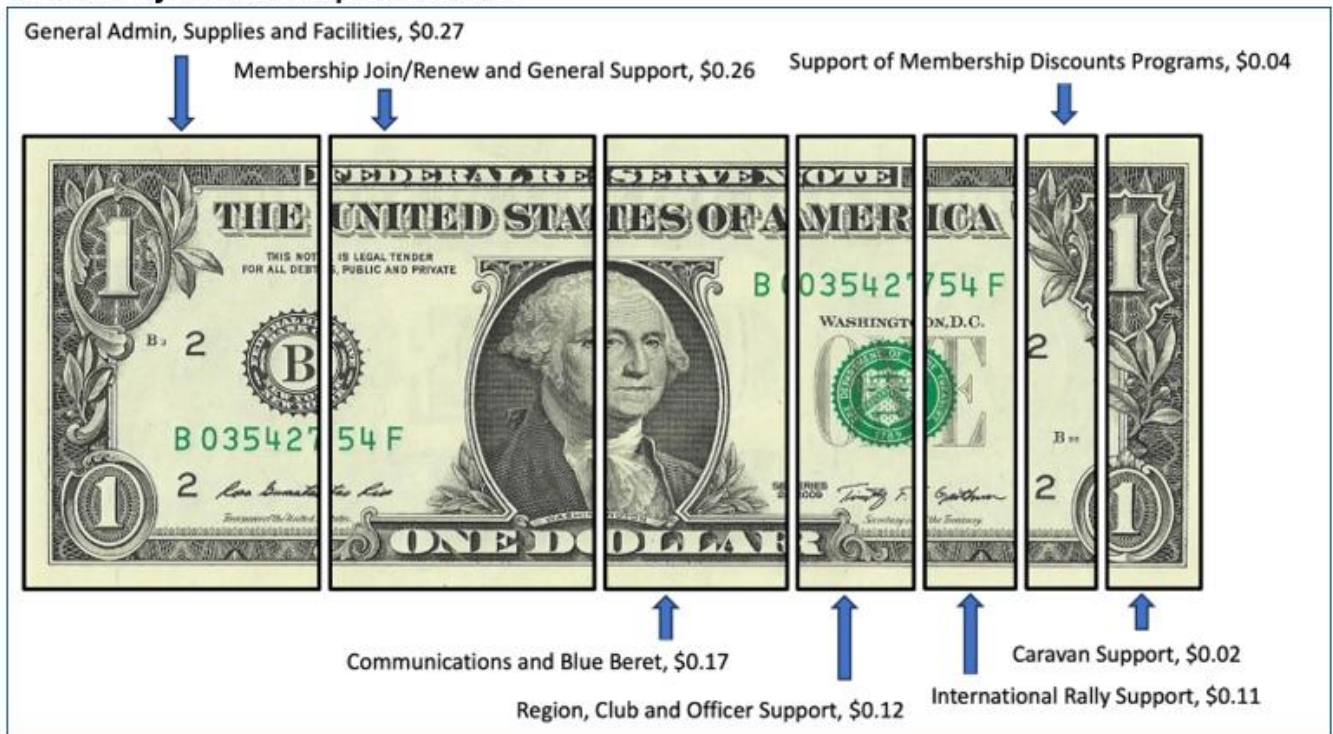




Watchung Club Events Schedule

DATE	WHAT/WHEN	HOSTS	COHOSTS	VENUE
August 2026	<i>Cowtown Rodeo Rally/Aug 20-23</i>	Keystone (PA) Airstream Club	Sharon and Andy Wright	Old Cedar Campground Monroeville, NJ
August 2026	<i>International Rally/Aug 22-27</i>	NA	NA	Minot, ND
September 2026	<i>Club Rally</i>	Host Needed	TBD	TBD
October 2026	<i>Club Rally and Business Meeting/October 9-12</i>	George and Linda Kiesel	Mark and Angie Ratliff	Jane's Island State Park, Crisfield, MD
November 2026	<i>Luncheon/TBD</i>	Barbara Taylor and Michael Koczwar	Lois Wagner and Derek Conley	The Little York Tavern Milford, NJ
December 2026	<i>Installation luncheon/Saturday Dec 12 1-4 PM</i>	Steve and Cynthia Gemansky	Heidi and Brian Cullen	Il Mondo Vecchio, Madison, NJ

How are my membership dues used?





August Joint Rally Keystone & WAC

The Keystone PA Airstream club and the Watchung Airstream club are co-sponsoring the 2026 Keystone PA Cowtown Rodeo Rally August 20-23 at the Old Cedar Campground in Monroeville, NJ.

This rally features Saturday night's "The Best Show on Dirt", the only professional weekly rodeo in New Jersey. [Check out the action here.](#)

Co-hosts: Andrew and Sharon Wright will be in site HD8 .

If you have booked a site please let Andrew and Sharon know: arw3rd@gmail.com. To reserve a spot in the campground, contact Phyllis at (856) 358-4881.

- Friday night will offer a chili competition for those interested in showing off their recipes. It's billed as being for fun and not "really" competitive. Small cups for tasting will be provided. There will also likely be other items being grilled and as always folks can bring a side or other dish to share.
- Saturday Morning will offer coffee and light breakfast items and Brian is looking into local trails that might be available for a group bike ride for those interested.
- Saturday afternoon will be a tailgate over at the rodeo grounds (in Pilesgrove, NJ) before the event, structured as a BYO plus something to share. The rodeo does offer food but may also allow food to be brought in as well (still TBD).
- At this time there does not seem to be a rally fee planned, but if that changes, the cost would be minimal.

For anyone interested in joining us for the rally it does look like there are still sites available for the weekend, and you can either call the campground directly or visit their website to book online. The info is: 856-358-4881 (ask for Phyllis). www.oldcedarcampground.com

Old Cedar Campground, 247 Richwood Rd., Monroeville, NJ 08343.

If you do decide to join us please let us know your site info, and whether or not you are planning to enter into the Chili Competition (we are!!)

For more information contact Brian Mulligan of the Keystone Airstream club at mulligansix@rcn.com.

For anyone interested in joining us for the rally it does look like there are still sites available for the weekend, and you can either call the campground directly or visit their website to book online. The info is: 856-358-4881 (ask for Phyllis). www.oldcedarcampground.com



October Club Rally: Jane's Island SP



Janes Island State Park Crisfield Maryland

When: October 11th, through October 13th, 2026. Come early, stay late.

Where: Janes Island State Park, 26280 Alfred J. Lawson Dr., Crisfield, MD 21817

Hosts: Mark & Angie Ratliff and George & Linda Kiesel

Come join us for a relaxing fun-filled weekend. Janes Island is set on the Chesapeake Bay with beautiful sunsets in a pine forest environment.

Friday: 3pm – Arrival and official campground check-in
5pm – Happy Hour
6pm – Dinner, hot dogs and hamburgers with fixings. Campfire weather permitting.

Saturday: 8:30-9:30am Breakfast, blueberry pancakes, sausage, coffee, juice.
5pm – Happy Hour
6pm – Dinner, **Thanksgiving in October.** Mark and Angie will provide smoked turkey for all to enjoy. Linda will make Mac and cheese. Please bring Thanksgiving side dishes to round out the meal. Campfire weather permitting.

Sunday: 8:30-9:30am Continental Breakfast 8:30-9:30. Annual club business meeting and election of 2027 officers.

Please bring your own plates, utensils and chairs to all meals.

Please do not bring your pet to Happy hour/mealtimes. Thank you.

Janes Island State Park prohibits alcohol.

Name _____ Email _____ Cell# _____

Rally Fee per adult: \$30.00 x _____ number of adults = \$ _____

Please indicate the side dish you will bring to Saturday dinner. _____

Please note we may need to ask you to change your side if we get too many of the same dish.

Make checks payable to: Watchung NJ Airstream Club or pay online

Mail checks to: Lois Wagner 29 Colony Court New Providence NJ 07974



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2026 Watchung Club Officers

President	Heidi Cullen
1 st Vice President	Steve Germansky
2 nd Vice President	Rebecca Glick
Correspondence Secretary	Brian Cullen
Recording Secretary	Richard Short
Treasurer	Lois Wagner
Directors	Nancy Deibert
	George Trunk
	Jay McCarthy
	Christine Kukel

Other Club Roles

Membership	George Kiesel
Sunshine	Linda Kiesel
Web Master	Mark Ratliff
Directory	Chris Forster
Newsletter	Derek Conley
Quartermaster	Jason Pomerleau

