

# OUR ROBBINSVILLE

DECEMBER 2016

*We love it here!*



## *Meet the McLaughlins*

**Christmas  
Traditions Abound  
at Robbinsville Tree Farm**

### *Inside:*

- Tree Lighting at Friendly's
- Students Show Their School Spirit





**Joseph L. Cavone**  
Publisher, *Our Robbinsville*  
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862-223-1992

*Holidays a  
time for sharing,  
and giving thanks*

– Jennifer, Tammy and Tom – in extending our personal thanks to our readers, sponsors and partners in the Robbinsville community. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve you and to help bring the people of the community closer together through positive content.

Thank you for reading *Our Robbinsville*, for sharing your stories and photos with the community, and for being part of this wonderful community. The mission of *Our Robbinsville* reflects our vision – a monthly publication that focuses on positive news, information and content that is written by, for and about the community. Thank you for helping us realize our vision.

The month's issue features the McLaughlin family and their Christmas tree farm. Please enjoy this issue, and keep those emails and letters coming to us. We encourage you to submit photos and brief stories of how you spend your holidays and what makes Robbinsville a wonderful community. *Our Robbinsville* is your magazine to share what is important to you. It's written by you, for you and about you.

We dedicate the December issue to the readers of *Our Robbinsville* and the opportunity to understand and appreciate our multicultural world this holiday season.

To our families and church community, we wish you a Merry Christmas. To our Jewish friends, Happy Hanukkah. To African-Americans, Happy Kwanzaa. To Buddhists, Happy Bodhi Day. To everyone, may the season bring joy and happiness.

**Season's Greetings.**

*All the Best!*



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Bundle of Paws Photography



#### ADVERTISING

Advertising in *Our Robbinsville*: . . . . Joe Cavone  
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##### Feedback, ideas and community content submissions:

Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 25th of each month. Go to [www.bestversionmedia.com](http://www.bestversionmedia.com) and click "Submit Content." You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to: [jcavone@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:jcavone@bestversionmedia.com). Please include your name and contact, information including phone number.

February magazine deadline: . . . . December 25

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Owner, Sheena Potts, with Chris Winter of Winter Auto Repair and Legendary Exotics

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# OUR ROBBINSVILLE *Expert Contributors*

These business leaders are regular contributors to *Our Robbinsville* by providing written features that help readers live a better life.

To learn more about the benefits of becoming an Expert Contributor, businesses can contact Joe Cavone at 862-223-1992.



## Joe Clemente, Dolce & Clemente's Italian Gourmet Market

As the chef-owner, Joe brought his vision and passion of quality Italian gourmet foods to Robbinsville in 2008. His store has become synonymous for Brooklyn-inspired Italian specialties and exceptional customer service. Joe recognizes the importance of family, the value of community involvement, and has been honored by several Robbinsville organizations for his generosity to non-profit groups. [www.dolceandclementes.com](http://www.dolceandclementes.com)



## Lindsay Vastola, Body Project Fitness

Lindsay is the founder and CEO of Body Project Fitness, a women's fitness, lifestyle and empowerment company. Lindsay is also the editor of the fitness business publication *PFP Magazine*. She is a public speaker and consultant for several national organizations on work-life balance, training for a success-driven mindset, and healthy strategies for the working professional. [www.bodyprojectfitness.com](http://www.bodyprojectfitness.com)



## Tom Myers, Bundle of Paws Photography

Tom is the owner of Bundle of Paws Photography, a boutique photography service based in Robbinsville. Tom is also the photographer for *Our Robbinsville* and takes all of the cover photos of the featured neighborhood family. After completing his master's degree and working for more than 15 years in higher education, Tom turned his passion for photography into a business. His photos have been published in a variety of magazines and media channels internationally and awarded recognition through HeARTs Speak, an association of artists who volunteer to help save the lives of homeless animals in their local communities. [www.bundleofpawsphotography.com](http://www.bundleofpawsphotography.com)



## Frank Mancino, Finance of America Mortgage

Frank is a vice president and branch manager with Finance of America Mortgage, a full service residential mortgage lender and a member of Blackstone Group Family. Frank has been involved in all aspects of the mortgage industry and has more than 25 years of experience helping homeowners in the Mercer County real estate market. A lifelong resident of the area, Frank belongs to several industry-related associations including the Mercer County Realtor Association, and he is an active community supporter of many local charities. [www.financeofamerica.com/fmancino](http://www.financeofamerica.com/fmancino)



## Stephanie Bellanova, ERA Central Realty Group

Stephanie is a partner of ERA Central Realty Group and office supervisor of the Robbinsville branch, located at 20 Main St. Stephanie and her mother, Ann Davis, have been an integral part of the central New Jersey real estate landscape since 1986. Sharing her mother's vision of fostering a culture of teamwork, education and giving back to the community, Stephanie and her team have created a brand that is recognized as the No. 1 ERA Real Estate company in New Jersey and is ranked in the Top 25 ERA brokerages in the U.S. [www.eracentral.com](http://www.eracentral.com)



## Chris Winter, Winter Auto Repair

Chris is the owner of Winter Auto Repair, a full service auto repair and preventative maintenance center. Chris has been involved in automotive excellence for more than 25 years as an accomplished mechanic and technician, race car driver and expert rebuilding classic Mustangs. Chris prides himself on getting the repair done once, done right and guaranteed. [www.facebook.com/WinterAutoRepair](http://www.facebook.com/WinterAutoRepair)



## Ron Kaiser, Legendary Exotics

Ron is the co-owner of Legendary Exotics, offering day, weekend and weekly exotic car rentals in Ferraris, Lamborghinis and others. Legendary Exotics provides the ultimate driving experience for enthusiasts – both private and corporate accounts – who want to experience a thrill ride either around town or on a professional racetrack. [www.LegendaryExoticsNJ.com](http://www.LegendaryExoticsNJ.com)



## Paul Rubin, The Law Offices of Paul Rubin

Paul is an attorney specializing in Estate Planning and Administration, Elder Law and Real Estate. He was awarded a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University, a Juris Doctor degree from Southwestern School of Law and a master's degree from Boston University. He has been a resident of Robbinsville for more than 25 years. [www.prubinlaw.com](http://www.prubinlaw.com)



## Brian Wagner, B. Wagner Contracting

Brian Wagner is the owner of B. Wagner Contracting, which provides plumbing, mechanical and excavating services for residential, commercial and industrial customers. Brian holds a New Jersey Master Plumbing and NJ Contractors licenses. He has been serving the greater Robbinsville area for nearly 10 years.



## Jeff Wagner, JS Wagner Electric

Jeff Wagner is the owner of JS Wagner Electric, a full service electrical contractor serving residential, commercial and industrial customers. Jeff is a licensed electrician who has been serving the greater Robbinsville area for more than 15 years.



## Kevin Tindall, Tindall & Ranson Plumbing, Heating and A/C, Inc.

Kevin, owner of Tindall & Ranson, and has been providing Comfort You Can Trust since 1993 through their plumbing, heating, air conditioning, geothermal and energy audit services. Kevin has more than 40 years experience helping homeowners create comfortable and efficient home systems. His passion for improving the industry led him to serve on many board seats within the Plumbing, Heating & Cooling Contractors Association on a local, state and national level including national president in 2015. Kevin's innovative and sustainable home solutions earned him IAPMO's Green Contractor of the Year and Contractor Magazine's Contractor of the Year awards. [www.tindallranson.com](http://www.tindallranson.com)



## Stephanie Howe, Comfort Keepers

Stephanie Howe, RN, is the owner of five Comfort Keepers home care franchises including one in Town Center in Robbinsville. She has been elected by her peers to the National Advisory Council to represent other franchisees at the corporate level and currently runs the largest Comfort Keepers agency in the country. [www.robbinsville-613.comfortkeepers.com](http://www.robbinsville-613.comfortkeepers.com)



## Kit Underwood, Farmers Insurance

Kathleen "Kit" Underwood has been a licensed insurance professional for more than 15 years and started Underwood Insurance Agency in 2012 with Farmers Insurance. Her office is located at 2365 Route 33 (rear building) near Main Street across from Centro Grille. Kit's approach is straightforward and personalized and her knowledge and experience helps customers understand and obtain the best coverage for their home, auto, rental property, business insurance and more.

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## December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### Daily through March

**Mercer County's Public Ice Skating Center**  
The rink offers private lessons, hosts high school games and is available for private parties. The Skating Center has a full snack bar, fireplace and lounge area, dining tables, vending machines, skate rentals, a skate sharpening service and lockers.  
@Mercer County Park  
1638 Old Trenton Road  
West Windsor, NJ  
Time: 10am-3pm weekdays  
7:45-10pm Fridays  
1-3:30pm, 5-7pm and 8-10pm Saturdays  
1-3:30pm Sundays  
Times for Senior Skate (age 62 and older): 8:30-10am Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
Times for Adult Only Skate (age 21 and older): 8:30-10am Tuesday and Thursday  
Cost: \$8 adults age 12 and under, \$6 age 11 and under, \$6 seniors 62 and older, \$6 military personnel  
Skate rental \$4 per pair; skate sharpening \$8 per pair  
Five-week group skating lessons are \$70. Group, private and semi-private lessons available on the weekends.

Birthday parties are \$175 for up to 10 people; two-hour private parties are \$500.  
Frequent skater passes and season passes also available.  
For more information, visit [www.mercercountyparks.org/facilities/ice-skating-center](http://www.mercercountyparks.org/facilities/ice-skating-center) or call 609-371-1669.



### Every Saturday

**A FEW Pet Adoption Days**  
Meet the dogs and cats of Animal Friends for Education and Welfare (AFEW) animal rescue that are waiting for their forever homes. All spay/neutered and vaccinated.  
@ CornerCopia Farm Nursery  
619 Mercer Street, Hightstown  
Time: 10am-2pm  
For more information, visit [www.afewpets.org](http://www.afewpets.org) or email [afew\\_pets@comcast.net](mailto:afew_pets@comcast.net).

### Saturdays, Dec. 3, 10 and 17; Sundays, Dec. 4, 11 and 18

**Christmas on the Farm**  
Pictures with Santa Claus and Olaf from "Frozen," holiday lights display, holiday music, Christmas trees, farm market.  
@Oasis Family Farm  
3 Circle Drive  
Robbinsville, NJ  
Visit [www.oasisfamilyfarm.com](http://www.oasisfamilyfarm.com).

### Sunday, Dec. 4 Designer Handbag Bingo

The Robbinsville High School Parent-Teacher-Student Association will hold an event including 16 designer handbags as bingo prizes, a 50/50 raffle and raffles for additional handbags that will benefit the RHS-PTSA Class of 2018 Post Prom Event. Dessert and coffee will be sold but outside food is welcome; alcohol will not be permitted. Attendees must be 18 or older.  
@Robbinsville High School  
155 Robbinsville-Edinburg Road  
Robbinsville, NJ  
Time: 5pm doors open  
6pm games begin  
Cost: \$25 per person in advance  
\$30 at the door  
Tickets include one bingo card for each game; additional games will be sold at the door.  
Make checks payable to RHS PTSA.  
To reserve, email Nicole Grembowitz at [jgrebo@aol.com](mailto:jgrebo@aol.com) or Melanie Van Duren at [mvandure@yahoo.com](mailto:mvandure@yahoo.com).

### Tuesday, Dec. 6 St. Nicholas Day

### Wednesday, Dec. 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

### Thursday, Dec. 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

### Thursday, Dec. 8 Bodhi Day

**Friday, Dec. 9  
Comedy Night**  
Featuring local comics, to be announced.  
@Take5 Gourmet  
Foxmoor Shopping Center  
1065 Washington Blvd.  
Robbinsville, NJ  
Time: 7:30-9pm  
Cost: Free admission  
For more information, call 609-443-6800.

### Friday, Dec. 16

**Second annual Holidays at Foxmoor**  
@ Friendly's  
Foxmoor Shopping Center  
1031 Washington Blvd.  
Robbinsville, NJ  
The brass quintet from Robbinsville High School and the Pond Road Middle School Choir will take part in the Christmas tree lighting ceremony and visit by Santa Claus. Shoppers and guests will be invited to participate.  
Time: 6pm  
Cost: free  
For more information, contact Lee Paroly of Friendly's at 609-426-9203.

### Wednesday, Dec. 21 December solstice

### Sunday, Dec. 24 Hanukkah

### Saturday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve

### Sunday, Dec. 25 Christmas Day

### Monday, Dec. 26 Kwanzaa

### Saturday, Dec. 31 New Year's Eve



## Robbinsville students to perform in second annual Holidays at Friendly's Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

By Lee Paroly, Owner-Operator of Friendly's

Students from Robbinsville High School (RHS) and Pond Road Middle School are the highlight performers at the second annual Holidays at Friendly's Christmas Tree Lighting and seasonal musical performance.

The free outdoor and indoor performance will be held at 6pm Friday, Dec. 16, at Friendly's in the Foxmoor Shopping Center.

The event also features a Christmas tree lighting, a visit by Santa Claus and a selection of holiday music performed by the students.

The event is sponsored by Friendly's, the music departments at RHS and Pond Road Middle School and *Our Robbinsville* magazine.

A brass quintet from the high school and choir members from the middle school will entertain shoppers and guests with holiday favorites. The event will include a sing-along and shoppers and guests are requested to bring their singing voices.

This is a wonderful opportunity for everyone in the community to come together and share in the holiday spirit. We encourage Robbinsville residents to attend this free performance and enjoy and participate in this event with our talented students from the high school and middle school. The performance is under the direction of Birch Wilson, director of Bands at RHS, and PJ Heckman, choral director of the Pond Road School.

### Key Facts:

**Event:** second annual Holidays at Foxmoor  
**Date and time:** 6pm Friday, Dec. 16  
**Location:** Friendly's at Foxmoor Shopping Center, Robbinsville  
**Performers:** Brass quintet from Robbinsville High School and Pond Road Middle School Choir  
**Performance:** Holiday and seasonal selections. Shoppers and guests will be invited to participate.  
**Cost:** free  
**Contact:** Lee Paroly of Friendly's, 609-426-9203.

*We want to hear from you.*

Send your calendar events to [jamato@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:jamato@bestversionmedia.com). Include your name and contact information along with the name of your event, date, location, time, cost and pertinent information and we'll help publicize your important event. *We love it here!*



## Holidays at Friendly's

Christmas Tree Lighting  
Visit by Santa Claus  
Robbinsville High School Brass Quintet  
Pond Road Middle School Choir



Sponsors: Friendly's  
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**Parents of students attending Robbinsville High School and Sharon Elementary School donated \$2,000 to the Make-A-Wish Foundation during Back to School Night.**

## Pond Road Middle School has been celebrating the school community's commitment to living a drug free life.

Seventh graders Cara Alban and Maddie Pike, left, dressed in patriotic colors for Red Ribbons Week. Other themes included wearing team colors and clothing and brightening the hallways and classrooms with an array of florescent and brightly colored clothing.



## Things To Know About Changes To The SAT

Sweeping changes to the SAT exam have been made to more closely align it to what is being learned in the classroom. Students will be tested on the knowledge and skills that research shows they need to succeed in college and eventually, their career. Changes include an optional essay, no penalty for wrong answers, a focus on everyday vocabulary, the option to take the test on traditional paper or digitally, the requirement to cite evidence in the reading and writing portion, fewer math topics and a limited use of calculators.

### The following information is for the 2016-17 SAT test:

Test Date	Normal Deadline	Late Registration
Jan. 21	Dec. 21	Jan. 10
March 11	Feb. 10	Feb. 28
May 6	April 7	April 25
June 3	May 9	May 24

### The following information is for the 2016-17 ACT test:

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
Feb. 11	Jan. 13	Feb. 22
April 8	March 3	April 18
June 10	May 5	June 20

SAT and ACT test prep is offered at the Sylvan Learning of Hamilton. For more information, visit [www.sylvanlearning.com/hamiltontownshipnj](http://www.sylvanlearning.com/hamiltontownshipnj).

*Information courtesy of Matt Kance, executive director of the Sylvan Learning Center in Hamilton*

## Student celebrates birthday in Kenya

*By Baraka Adera, Robbinsville High School*

This summer I turned 18 and for my birthday, my parents gift was a trip to Mombasa to visit my aunty. While there, I had the privilege of visiting and serving at Green Olive Children's Home in Mtwapa, Mombasa, Kenya. The home was started in 2004 by its current director, Esther Kyendo. Currently, there are 42 children at the home, aged between 3 and 15. There are two 3-year-old children who came to the home when one was two weeks old, and the other only a day old.

As long as a child is in danger, or homeless or orphaned, Mama Esther finds it hard to say no. Most children are referred to the home by the police or by the Children's Office (the Kenya Department of Children Services).

There is a school connected to the orphanage but it was vacation time when I was there so I did not see the school. Some of the children at the orphanage go to the school but there are children who go to school who do not live at the home. Those other children's parents pay tuition fees which help to buy food and other necessities for the children. There are five adults who work at the school. They help with cooking and taking care of the children. Some of the older children help too and the home also needs volunteers. Volunteers can help with the big jobs like repair work, painting, and any heavy work that needs to be done. For example,

when I visited, I was able to help with changing the children's bedding and cleaning the dormitory. Unfortunately, we did not have enough to go around. The home depends on donations a lot.

The children are so kind and so much fun. Even though they have little and in most cases nothing, you never hear them complain. When I was there, we played and colored and had fun at the beach. They even helped me celebrate my 18th birthday and it is one of the best birthdays I have ever had.

**The Robbinsville High School Parent-Teacher-Student Association will hold Designer Handbag Bingo on Dec. 4 at the high school,** 155 Robbinsville-Edinburg Road. Doors open at 5pm; games begin at 6pm. There will be 16 designer handbags as bingo prizes, a 50/50 raffle and raffles for additional handbags. Dessert and coffee will be served but outside food is welcome; alcohol will not be permitted. Tickets are \$25 per person in advance or \$30 at the door; attendees must be age 18 or older. Tickets include one bingo card for each game; additional games will be sold at the door. Groups of 8-10 may reserve a table in advance. Make checks payable to RHS PTSA. To reserve, email Nicole Grembowitz at [jgrembo@aol.com](mailto:jgrembo@aol.com) or Melanie Van Duren at [mvandure@yahoo.com](mailto:mvandure@yahoo.com). All proceeds benefit the RHS PTSA - Class of 2018 Post Prom Event.



**Bella Bascara, left to right, Julianna Bottoni, Mr. Gizzo, Ava Sullivan and Lauren Bondoc strike a pose for Red Ribbon Week.** inspired by the life and work of Drug Enforcement Agency Special Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena.

**Brendan Barca, a 2013 graduate of Robbinsville High School, was recently named Homecoming Ambassador at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.** Ambassadors are nominated by faculty members and voted on by the student body. Brendan is a vice president of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity on campus, an orientation coordinator and a member of the Student Government. He will be graduating in May with a degree in Psychology/Philosophy and plans to attend graduate school for school psychology/counseling. Pictured are: Kim, left to right, Brendan, Philip and Phil Barca.



## Gourmet Internet Café



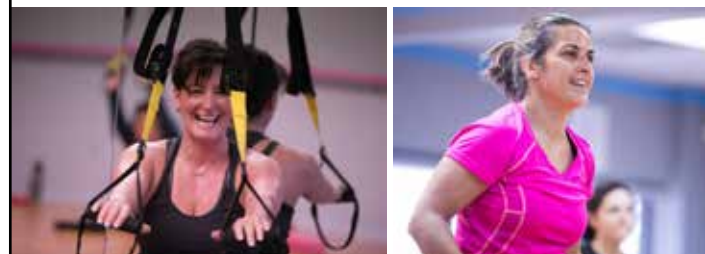
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Debra McLaughlin makes a decorative wreath.



**McLaughlin Tree Farm:** 1312 Old York Road, Robbinsville • 609-259-8122 • [Intrees.net](http://Intrees.net)

**Hours of Operation:** Open through Dec. 24 Monday/Thursday/Friday: noon to 5pm Weekends: 9am-5pm

**Activities:**

- Visit with Santa from 11am to 1pm Sundays.
- Walk the 40-acre farm or take a hayride through the paths and trails.
- Ask a customer service representative for a map for a Tree-Sure Hunt. Completed maps receive prizes.
- Complimentary hot chocolate made fresh daily, freshly popped popcorn and homemade spiced cider from a family recipe.

*Story idea submitted by Robbinsville resident Nelly Thomas.*



Abigail McLaughlin with Lucy the goat.

## McLaughlin Family

*Spruces Up The Holiday Season For Robbinsville Residents*

### Tree farm offers selection of live trees, décor, family-friendly activities

By Jennifer Amato  
Content Coordinator, Our Robbinsville  
Photos by Tom Myers

As first generation farmers, Greg and Debra McLaughlin did not inherit or acquire their business through prior family endeavors. Instead, the couple decided it was their dream to have a Christmas tree farm of their own after working on a tree farm throughout college. They began farming in 1991 on land that was leased and eventually met a farm owner who was ready to retire, gradually phasing in their own operations.

"In 1999, we moved into a double-wide mobile home on the farm that had previously been used for seasonal farm labor housing. After a number of years we were able to construct our own home and a pole barn," Greg said.

However, the 39-acre farm, situated along the New Sharon Branch of the Assunpink Creek, had been unmaintained for a number of years. There are currently about 15,000

trees under cultivation. In the spring, workers plant 3,000-4,000 new seedlings that requiring pruning, mowing, weed treatments and insect/disease protection throughout the year.

"During the spring, everyone helps with planting and in the fall and at Christmas it's all hands on deck," Greg said. "While I manage the field and harvest operations, Debbie manages the production of wreaths and grave blankets and welcomes customers. The kids (Zach, Gabe, Matthias and Abigail) clean and maintain the barn and serve complimentary refreshments and assist customers. My sister, brother and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews help out as well, and often Robbinsville High School and Pond Road Middle School students are trained and put into service."

Debra added, "The farm is not only a business but a true way of life and something that is in the blood of our family members. It is a life that we love and it has many benefits but at times it requires extraordinary work and sacrifice from Greg and me, the children, extended family and the community. For example, during the Christmas season, the children get off the bus and work the snack stand or assist customers in the barn. The children balance their schoolwork and contribute full days of activity on the weekends from Thanksgiving through Christmas. As for the community, countless members volunteer to pickup and drop off our children so they may engage in extracurricular activities. I cannot tell you how many lovely people in Robbinsville come to get their tree and send over baked goods and hot coffee or deliver pizzas for our staff."

*"We always strive to make our town - our Robbinsville - a better place to live and work..."*

In the same vein, Greg said the tradition of selecting, harvesting, setting up and decorating a Christmas tree - especially the very popular Douglas fir or Norway spruce - is a ritual that bonds and builds family traditions.

He said choosing a live tree instead of a pre-cut or artificial one has many advantages, especially since most families make a tradition of coming to the farm to enjoy all of the festivities. Some weekends include Santa Claus visiting and/or a live animal display.

"Many often spend several hours enjoying the outdoors, sipping hot chocolate by the fire or going on a hayride," he said.

There are also other "artistic masterpieces" such as mixed-green wreaths, kissing balls, door swags, framed Christmas trees, mistletoe, grave blankets and homemade garland.

Debra said that overall, their home is a revolving door for five weeks, welcoming the community into their lives and traditions.

"I can recall a Christmas Eve where customers were inside our home having the Christmas cookies that we were baking with us. I have invited people in for stew and soup and have even ran out mittens and hats for people that were cold. In some instances, a customer will specifically ask for a family member and we send them directly to the house. It is for these relationships that I enjoy the work. Finally, my two nephews Logan and Avery sleep over on weekends. At times we have had snowstorms and the majority of our staff have slept over. These are good times and life memories," Debra said.

Greg shared the same sentiments.

"We always strive to make our town - our Robbinsville - a better place to live and work and deeply appreciate the great and continued support of the community," he said, noting that during the Christmas season, the McLaughlins support local charities and other initiatives, such as fundraisers for local schools and donating trees to the Senior Center, Town Center, Girl Scouts, Homefront and Trees for Troops.

"I can't say enough about our community," Debra added. "Friends have volunteered to deliver fliers for us and have substituted for us during sickness or so I could study for an exam for graduate school. I have seen the friends of Matthias sweeping the barn and cleaning the snack stand. In a day and age when the majority of our communication is via text or FaceTime, this business is a gem."

## The McLaughlin Family

**Greg:** assistant state fire warden with the N.J. Forest Fire Service; owner of McLaughlin Tree Farm.

**Debra:** case manager, New Horizons Treatment Services; owner of McLaughlin Tree Farm; graduate student at The College of New Jersey.

**Zach, 19:** sophomore studying biological systems engineering at Virginia Polytechnic University; member of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity.

**Gabe, 16:** sophomore at Robbinsville High School; volunteers with Food for the Homeless; is a therapy dog trainer.

**Matthias, 13:** eighth grade student at Pond Road Middle School; member of Mercer FC Celtic travel soccer team.

**Abigail, 11:** fifth grade student at Pond Road Middle School; member of Girls on the Run, Robbinsville lacrosse and the Girl Scouts.

**Family dogs:** Alfie and Little Puff.

**Favorite family activities:** Fishing and crabbing.

**Favorite holiday tradition:** cookie making on Christmas Eve - baking, laying on the couch and eating cookies while welcoming anyone who arrives; and "pickle present" - the German tradition of hiding a pickle ornament to win the chance to open the first present.

**Favorite holiday memory:** Taking a family walk on Christmas Day and watching a movie in the afternoon.

**Favorite holiday meal:** Christmas Eve "Feast of the Seven Fishes."

**Type of Christmas tree in the home:** Tree changes yearly; each family member has his/her favorite.

**Favorite holiday decoration:** Homemade wreaths from different greens including boxwood and holly.

**Favorite part about winter:** Light snow coating the branches of the Christmas trees and the still calm of a cold and starry night.

**Favorite thing about Robbinsville:** The great sense of pride and spirit of community that is fostered throughout schools, sports, business and among strangers.



Matthias, left to right, Debra, Abigail, Zach and Gabe McLaughlin with their dog Alfie.

*So what's your story?*

*Send it to us and we might choose you to be our next cover feature. We're looking forward to hearing from you and reading about you and your nominations. Suggest stories for Robbinsville Neighbors to [javone@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:javone@bestversionmedia.com) or to [jamato@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:jamato@bestversionmedia.com).*



## Business Snapshot: Brian Wagner



### About Us

By Jennifer Amato

B. Wagner Contracting provides plumbing, mechanical and excavating services, including installation, repair and service, water heaters, interior/exterior demolition, sump pumps and snow plow services for commercial, industrial and residential customers.

The company offers 24-hour emergency service, and is a licensed HVAC contractor.

Owner Brian Wagner holds a New Jersey Master Plumbing and NJ Contractors licenses, as well as a 901A waste haulers permit. He has been serving the greater Robbinsville area for nearly 10 years, and is the chief of the Plainsboro Fire Company.



### ESSENTIALS:

Owner: Brian Wagner

Phone: 609-897-1015

Email:

B.wagnercontractingllc.com

Website address:

www.facebook.com/B-Wagner-Contracting-LLC-452878634727404/

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## Business Snapshot: Jeff Wagner

### About Us

By Jennifer Amato

Jeff Wagner is the owner of JS Wagner Electric, a full service electrical contractor serving residential, commercial and industrial customers. Jeff is a licensed electrician who has been serving the greater Robbinsville area for more than 15 years. His company offers kitchen upgrades, panel upgrades, repairs and services and backup generators. Jeff also offers 24-hour emergency service, as well as a one-year guarantee on all parts and services.

#### Recent projects include:

- Installing LED lighting for an indoor pool to replace the existing 250-watt metal halide bulbs in the recessed lights, and installing a 4-foot LED replacement bulb for the fluorescent lights around the upper cove in order to save money on operating costs and eliminate maintenance costs.
- Installing a conduit for Verizon FiOS cable, excavating a trench from the pole that Verizon is bringing in the FiOS line around the corner of the property to existing conduits, as well as installing an in-the-ground junction box as a pull point to join the conduits and allow access for Verizon to pull the new cable.
- Upgrading parking lot lights from metal halide to LED, installing an RAB 400 watts equivalent fixture which operates at 105 watts, greatly reducing operating costs and maintenance costs because of its rated 100,000 life span.
- Repairing street lighting at a condo complex by installing a ½-inch rigid steel conduit to re-feed the lights which had a damaged direct burial cable.
- Installing CREE LED lights in a condo community clubhouse.
- Repairing damaged underground electrical service for a customer whose underground service cable was damaged, causing a partial voltage loss. Because of the depth of the existing cable it was more cost effective to install a new cable. JS Wagner hired Century Drilling to install a conduit with a directional bore. After the conduit was in, the contractors pulled in the new cable and connected it.



### ESSENTIALS:

Owner: Jeff Wagner

Address: 488 Stagecoach Road,  
Clarksburg

Phone: 609-936-1978

Email: JSW15398@gmail.com

Website address: www.jswagner-nj.com or  
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## By Kathleen “Kit” Underwood Farmers Insurance, Robbinsville

Bad weather, ice and snow can be damaging to your home during the winter months. Many claims made between January and March involve frozen pipes, ice claims, heavy buildup of ice or snow, water and power outages.

As an industry we rely heavily on history to predict the future. This is true regarding weather as well. This year we will likely see the peak of the latest “El Nino” cycle. Most areas of the country will experience unusual weather. The Northeast is predicted to see wetter-than-average conditions with possibly higher-than-average temperatures – but I’m not a meteorologist.

**Whether El Nino brings us the predicted weather cycle there are steps you can take to keep your family and your property safe.**

### 1. Frozen pipes

- Insulate all exposed pipes. Keep temperature at 55 degrees or above to prevent freezing. If you have no flow of water at a faucet, try to identify the blockage and use a hairdryer to free the icy blockage.

- Make sure you unhook the garden hose.

### 2. Ice dams

- Keep gutters clean. Blockages prevent drainage.
- Inspect the attic insulation. Fix gaps or thin spots.
- Prune trees that overhang the roof.

- Heating cables can be added to the base of the roof along the gutter. When turned on they can prevent snow or ice buildup.

### 3. Weight of ice or snow

- Damage accumulates over time. Gutters become loose at fascia boards.
- Keep roofs clear of accumulated snow.
- Remove snow from top of hot tub covers and pools covers. Use extra care, of course.
- Brush off snow from decks. They are generally not built to the same standard as the home.

### 4. In New Jersey, one of our top 5 claims is water.

- From snow melt to burst pipes, the potential for water damage is high during the winter months. Water claims increase by 80 percent and account for one third of all homeowner claims.

- Not all water damage is covered. Do you have or need flood insurance?

- Seal any cracks or gaps in your foundation.

- Make sure your gutters are clean to ensure proper drainage and sufficiently away from the foundation.

- Check fences and walls around your property. Will they withstand wind gusts?

### 5. Power outages

- Do you have a generator in case of power outages?

- Unplug electronics and major appliances. Surge protection may not be sufficient.

- Keep flashlights and fresh batteries ready.

- During outages don’t open refrigerator/freezer doors.

- Does someone in your household require special medications or medical equipment?

**Talk to your insurance agent about what to do to keep yourself and your family safe during this winter season.**



*Kathleen “Kit” Underwood is the agent-owner of Underwood/Farmers Insurance Agency in Robbinsville. She is an Expert Contributor to Our Robbinsville.*



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# 10 Care Car Tips for Winter

## By Chris Winter, Winter Auto Repair

As temperatures drop heading into winter, there are several steps that car owners can take to protect their vehicle.

**Here are our best car care tips to make sure your vehicle is in good shape in the winter months ahead.**

**1. Battery.** Have your technician test your car battery for proper charge and good cranking health. Any corrosion on the battery cables or posts should be removed. Most failures happen in extreme hot and cold temperatures.

**2. Oil.** Change the oil and filter to protect engine life.

**3. Wiper blades.** Visibility is the key. Inspect wiper blades for wear and tear and replace at least twice yearly.

**4. Windshield washer fluid.** If you’re stuck behind a truck you’ll need to constantly wash your windshield to see where you’re going. Remember to have fluids topped off.

**5. Tires.** Drivers face a greater risk of sliding on ice, sleet and snow with tires that are not properly inflated or lack proper tread life. Have your tires checked for uneven wear or worn treads. Replace if needed and make sure tires are properly inflated.

**6. Brakes.** It takes longer to stop on wet or ice-covered driving surfaces. Driving on worn brakes decreases stopping power. Have your brakes checked.

**7. Belts and hoses.** Have your technician check belts and hoses. Replace if they are worn, cracked or soft.

**8. Air conditioner.** That’s right, check your AC. Did you know that your air conditioner controls your windshield defroster, eliminates moisture from your windshield and keeps your windows from fogging up? Also make sure your climate control is working properly to maintain comfort and safety.

**9. Radiator and fluid levels.** Your coolant does more than keep your engine from overheating. It prevents interior corrosion. Have your technician check your radiator to make sure there are no leaks and to check the antifreeze to ensure there is a proper mix of coolant and water. If your system has too much water, it can freeze causing severe damage to the radiator or engine.

**10. Gas tank.** A full gas tank prevents water from accumulating and potentially freezing your fuel lines. A full tank of gas adds weight to your car helping in snowy conditions as well. Fill your tank before it reaches ¼ full and before any expected snow storms.



*Chris Winter is the owner of Winter Auto Repair and is an Expert Contributor to Our Robbinsville.*



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# OUR ROBBINSVILLE Bulletin Board



**Lifetree Community Church held its 6th annual Birthday Bash on Oct. 7 at Take5 Gourmet.** Pastors Dan Greco, Kevin Hold and administrator Shaina Ciacchio were the spirit behind the evening. Mayor Dave Fried and Councilpersons Dan Schuberth and Chris Ciacchio attended the event.

**Doc of Hamilton Radio is trying to secure a headcount of all people interested in a Hamilton Radio guidance class in broadcasting.** You will hear from professional broadcasters in the business and get tips and stories as well as work live shows and learn the pre-workings of computer-based broadcasting software. Learn marketing and more from business professionals and professional technicians who were with real rock performers. People from stage and screen, the radio industry and TV will be available as co-pilots. The fee will be determined based on the number of participants. For more information and to register, email [admin@hamiltonradio.net](mailto:admin@hamiltonradio.net). Visit [www.hamiltonradio.net](http://www.hamiltonradio.net).

**Foxmoor resident Regina Arcuri, center, has been appointed as a U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Operations School honorary commander** at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. Also pictured are Major General Christopher Bence, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center commander, left, and Kenneth Artega, U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Operations School deputy director.



**Mayor Dave Fried presided over the official swearing in ceremony for new Fire Chief Dan Schaffner on Sept. 28 at the Senior Center.** Schaffner has entered his 19th year with the Robbinsville (formerly Washington Township) Fire Department, including the last four as its deputy chief. He served as acting lieutenant during an extended absence of a career captain early in his career and received two citations for his accomplishments during emergency incidents from 1998 to 2001. The chief is responsible for all administrative and operational aspects of his department, including incident command, policy, budgeting training, discipline, emergency planning and staff supervision. Schaffner also has gone above and beyond to minimize the burden on taxpayers by writing countless grants, including 14 approvals for a total of \$1.2 million.



**Robbinsville Township Police Chief Chris Nitti, left, speaks with a resident during the Robbinsville Police Department's second "Coffee With a Cop" event at the Foxmoor Clubhouse on Oct. 7.**



**From left to right, Robbinsville Police** Lt. William Swanhart, and Sgts. Adrian Markowski and Peter Galazka were sworn in on Sept. 28 at the Senior Center. Swanhart will mark his 10th year with the Robbinsville Police Department (RPD) this month. During his tenure, he has been assigned to the Patrol Division, Traffic Enforcement Unit and the Criminal Investigations Unit. He was promoted to sergeant in July 2013 and was named Officer of the Year in 2011. Markowski was hired by the RPD in February 2009 and has been assigned to the Patrol Division and the Criminal Investigation Unit. He also has served as a field training officer, evidence officer and an Internal Affairs officer. Markowski was named one of three R. Peter Hodge Valor Award winners by The 200 Club of Mercer County in 2015, and was the RPD Officer Of The Year in 2012. In January, he was assigned to the Mercer County Homicide Task Force, where he served as both support and lead detective on numerous murder investigations resulting in arrest. Another former RPD Officer of the Year, Galazka joined the department in January 2002 and was assigned to the Patrol Division. He later moved to the Detective Bureau and has been working in the criminal investigation unit for the past nine years, where he has received multiple commendations. Galazka has also is a former Robbinsville school resource officer and was an integral part of the district's D.A.R.E. program for many years.



**Township Council President Ron Witt, left to right, Sharon DeVito, Mayor Dave Fried and the guest of honor, Rebecca DeVito, joined close to 300 other guests at the Friends Making a Difference (FMAD) benefit dinner at The Stone Terrace by John Henry's on Oct. 12.** FMAD, led by founder Tom Goodwin, raised more than \$13,000 to help Rebecca and her family with mounting expenses during her battle with an extremely rare form of cancer. To make a donation, send a check to Friends Making a Difference, c/o Tom Goodwin, 4621B Nottingham Way, Hamilton Square 08690.

**Bohren's Moving & Storage**, 3 Applegate Dr., Robbinsville, an agent of United Van Lines, has been honored for exceptional professional achievement, receiving the President's Club Award at the \$11 million level, honoring agents who have generated at least \$1 million in sales for the United system during the past year.

**Angeline Despagne of Robbinsville received a Rookie of the Year award** from Preferred Home Health Care & Nursing Services, a company that provides home care for individuals in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The award for certified home health aides for less than two years who have already exhibited excellence and growth in their role was presented at the Home Health Aide Recognition Day, sponsored by the Home Care & Hospice Association of New Jersey at the Sheraton Eatontown Hotel in October. She received an award and a keepsake book with tributes about the contributions home health aides make to the care and safety of their clients.

**There were 89 runners who participated in the 23rd annual Tomm May 5K & Fun Run in October.** The top overall male and female winners were Jeff Knoll (19:46) from Pennington and Briann Mannuccia (23:08) of Wrightstown, respectively. Top Fun Run finishers at Tantom Park were Matt Barker, Jerome Pravanthattil, Kate Kratz and Kendall Franke.



**The Robbinsville Police Department and Detective Scott Kivet introduced Quori, the department's new K-9, to the community** during the Robbinsville High School home football game vs. Lindenwold High on Oct. 14. Kivet and Quori were trained in narcotic detection by the Penn Vet Working Dog Center in Philadelphia.



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*Messages celebrating life's milestones are also limited to 40 words.*

*Honor a Robbinsville resident by celebrating a birthday, accolade or accomplishment. Celebrate engagements, weddings, anniversaries or a new baby announcement. Simply email your listing to [jamato@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:jamato@bestversionmedia.com) with the subject line BULLETIN BOARD. You will receive an email confirmation.*



# OUR ROBBINSVILLE

## Real Estate Transactions

Information provided by Mary Theresa Weil of Keller Williams Real Estate.  
Real Estate listings sold within the last three months.

Address	Beds	Baths	Sq. Ft.	Sold Price	Address	Beds	Baths	Sq. Ft.	Sold Price
624 Walden Cir.	2	1/0	N/A	\$142,000	70 Hillside Dr.	4	2/0	1,940	\$360,000
621 Walden Cir.	2	1/0	894	\$150,000	18 Endsleigh Pl.	3	2/1	1,896	\$362,500
253 Andover Pl.	2	1/0	1,120	\$150,000	22 Ivanhoe Dr.	3	2/0	1,718	\$379,000
357 Andover Pl.	2	2/0	1,280	\$159,463	135 Heritage St.	3	2/1	1,848	\$410,000
254 Andover Pl.	2	1/0	1,120	\$172,000	101 Richardson Rd	3	2/0	2,096	\$419,900
1 Emily Ct.	3	2/1	1,968	\$200,000	34 Windswept Dr.	3	2/1	2,200	\$425,000
12 Francis Ct.	2	1/1	1,547	\$219,000	41 Newtown Blvd.	3	2/1	1,998	\$434,000
23 Abby Ct.	3	1/1	1,677	\$220,000	19 Tindall Road	4	2/0	2,104	\$435,000
4 Stratton Ct.	2	1/1	1,192	\$224,000	1110 Lake Dr.	3	2/1	1,966	\$435,000
10 Francis Ct.	2	1/1	1,664	\$229,000	38 Eldridge Dr.	3	2/1	1,807	\$450,000
16 Chippin Ct.	3	1/1	1,408	\$242,000	1126 Lake Dr. E	3	2/1	2,469	\$450,000
11 School Dr.	3	2/1	1,596	\$244,000	111 George St.	3	2/1	2,390	\$465,000
27 Chadwick Ct.	2	1/1	1,232	\$261,000	66 Amberfield Rd	4	2/1	N/A	\$465,000
2346 Rt. 33 #206	2	2/0	1,326	\$262,000	1172 Lake Dr. E.	3	2/1	2,224	\$469,900
146 Robbinsville-					181 Burnet Cres.	3	2/1	2,512	\$475,000
Allentown Rd.	3	2/0	1,768	\$320,000	28 Burnet Walk	4	3/0	2,972	\$485,000
1 N. Commerce Sq.					4 Malsbury St.	4	2/1	2,546	\$485,000
Unit #311	2	3/0	1,791	\$325,000	31 Newtown Blvd.	4	2/1	2,318	\$495,000
24 Tasley Ct.	3	2/1	1,594	\$329,900	1305 Park St.	5	3/0	N/A	\$507,500
15 Hadley Dr.	3	2/1	1,776	\$335,000	33 Cottage Place Dr.	4	2/1	2,901	\$509,900
101 Church St.	3	4/0	N/A	\$335,000	28 Jared Dr.	3	2/1	2,250	\$520,000
217 Waverly Ct.	3	2/1	1,760	\$335,000	10 Milburne Lane	4	2/1	2,232	\$525,000
14 Christina Lane	3	1/1	1,604	\$344,000	22 Newtown Blvd.	4	2/1	2,984	\$530,000
6 Moorsleigh Way	3	2/1	1,786	\$350,000	2 Jonathan Dr.	4	2/1	3,451	\$530,000
150 Hankins Rd.	4	3/0	2,046	\$355,000	1 Sundew Way	4	3/1	2,236	\$555,000
1 N. Commerce Sq.					3 Gerson Road	4	2/1	2,573	\$565,000
Unit #307	3	3/0	1,944	\$356,500	30 Wildflower Trl.	4	2/1	2,906	\$590,000
					8 Saxony Ln.	5	3/0	3,153	\$590,000
					216 Garden Pl.	4	3/1	2,664	\$595,000
					29 Milburne Lane	5	3/1	3,300	\$608,500
					1342 Park St.	4	2/2	3,396	\$625,000
					12 Anderson Lane	4	2/1	2,797	\$630,000
					16 Patriot Dr.	4	2/1	3,744	\$652,000
					36 Pickering Dr.	4	2/1	3,112	\$654,900
					44 Pickering Dr.	4	3/1	3,435	\$666,000
					15 Stillwell Ct.	4	3/1	3,550	\$770,000
					5 Truman Ct.	4	3/1	4,294	\$845,000
					25 Emerald Road	5	5/1	4,128	\$890,000
					18 Windflower Ct.	4	3/1	4,024	\$999,990

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## Team ERA Central Realty participated in the 3rd Annual MCAR Volleyball Tournament hosted by the Mercer County Association of Realtors that raised \$4,200 for the GI Go Fund.

Established in 2005, the GI Go Fund provides assistance to all military veterans, with a focus on veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, by helping them find employment, access housing and secure their education and health benefits.

"Caring for our veterans is very important to us," said Stephanie Bellanova, partner at ERA Central Realty Group and head cheerleader for the volleyball team. "Far too many veterans return home to an emergency situation, and GI Go Fund is their best advocate. It is our honor to do our part in helping those who served our country."

For more information, visit [gigo.org](http://gigo.org).



At ERA Central Realty Group, we are family-owned, and we are proud that our brand is synonymous with **Family Serving Families.**

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Public Works: ..... 609-259-0422

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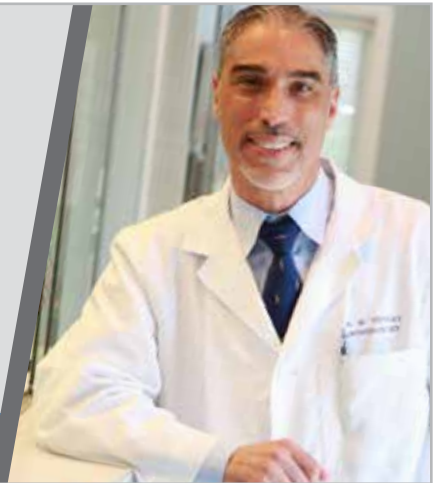
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