

# Business News

  
**HUNTERDON COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
*The Voice of Business*

November 2018

Volume 43, No. 11



## *Hunterdon Holiday Parade*

DECEMBER 9TH • 5:00PM

### *Have Your Business or Group in the Parade*

Mark your calendars! The Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce will be hosting the Hunterdon Holiday Parade on Sunday, December 9 at 5p.m. on Main Street in the County Seat of Flemington.

The Holiday Parade provides a wonderful opportunity for the entire community to have a festive time with family, friends, and neighbors.

The Chamber is also looking for volunteers to help decorate the parade route. Those interested should contact the Chamber at 908-782-7115.



The Chamber is once again excited to have businesses, non-profits and musical acts gather together to help jumpstart the holiday season and add some extra cheer.



Local businesses can participate by having a float in the parade or by becoming a sponsor.



A holiday theme must be present on each float. To have a float in the parade, the cost for businesses is \$100, and \$25 for non-profit organizations.



For more information on the Hunterdon Holiday Parade, please visit: [www.hunterdonchamber.org](http://www.hunterdonchamber.org)

# Hunterdon Chamber's 30th Hunterdon Business Expo Exhibitors Improve Booth Layouts



This year's EXPO was a huge success! The Chamber offered a complimentary marketing course to Expo exhibitors presented by Vicki Lynn Morgan of the NJ Small Business and Development Center out of Raritan Valley Community College and Audrey Kerchner of Inkyma.



Of those that attended the course, several redesigned their booth layouts to allow for more attendee interactions. goHunterdon, HomeTeam Inspection services and Anita's Angels were just a few of the exhibitors that modified their booth space to be more effective at the show.



Thank you to all that took advantage of this course to improve their displays and thank you to the presenters to offering this great resource!

## Business News

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# HUNTERDON HOLIDAY PARADE

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## JOBS! JOBS! JOBS!

### OUR JOB BANK HAS NEW POSTINGS!

View posted openings! Candidates can also submit their resumes to our resume bank and employers can review them.

Some of our members with active job listings:

Visit: <http://web.hunterdon-chamber.org/jobbank>

## Maximize Your Chamber Investment



**CHAMBER 101** Come out and learn about all the great services, programs and benefits membership has to offer!  
119 MAIN STREET  
FLEMINGTON

Chamber 101 is a great resource for anyone who wants to learn more about the programs and services the Chamber offers!

Chamber 101 happens on the third Thursday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at 119 Main Street in Flemington.

Members and non-members are welcome. Pre-registration required. Visit [hunterdon-chamber.org/events](http://hunterdon-chamber.org/events) to sign up.

## Chamber Happenings



The Annual Municipal Clerk's Luncheon was held outdoors at Alexandria Township Park this year.

The event provided CEU credits for the County Clerks. This year's speakers included Hunter County Clerk Mary Melfi, Robert Wilburn, and the Hunterdon County Health Department. Fired Up Flatbread's food truck provided lunch.

Thank you to Mary Melfi for helping to organize this event.

## Sharing Financial Wisdom With Your Kids

Parents often try to impart their values about money to help their children establish a strong financial foundation. If you are a parent, talking to your kids about money can help them learn how to be financially responsible, self-supporting adults. To get the discussion flowing, consider using these conversation starters depending on your child's age.

Begin with basics for your preschooler. Look for opportunities to teach values that will help your child develop positive financial attitudes and behaviors later in life. For example, the concept of sharing with others is something most young children can grasp. Talking about what you're thankful for and involving kids in philanthropy can help instill gratitude.

Explain financial building blocks to your elementary school student. As your child progresses through school, start introducing the difference between needs and wants. Present the concepts of cost and quality to teach your child how to discern value. Give your child the chance to make some simple financial decisions that involve delayed gratification, such as setting aside a small allowance to buy a toy.

Understand that your middle schooler may be watching more than listening. Kids tend to be peer-oriented in the preteen years and may be less receptive to parental advice. Keep talks short, but don't abandon the mission. Remember that your actions speak volumes about your values. For example, if your child hears you continually talking about a new car purchase or sees you frequently shopping, he or she may pick up similar behaviors toward material goods.

Consider involving your child in donations or charitable work you are passionate about, or encourage him or her to support a cause of their own.

Encourage your high school student to think about the future. Now is the time to discuss college costs and encourage saving for college expenses. Talk to your child about what you plan to contribute and what portion you expect them to pay. Discuss whether student loans will play a role and their potential impact down the road. Conversations about college and majors can include frank discussions about the job market and future income potential. Discuss day-to-day financial responsibilities as well, such as how to maintain a checking

account and debit card and how to protect accounts from fraud.

Help your college student prepare for independence. Counsel your child about the importance of living within their means and establishing and maintaining a good credit record. Explain how to use a credit card appropriately (and how to avoid fees and other credit troubles). As graduation nears, discuss your expectations for your child's transition from student to working adult. Offer yourself as a resource for guidance on how to seek fulfilling work, negotiate a good salary and navigate the world of employee benefits.

Inspire your college graduate to embrace adulthood. Once your child becomes financially independent, be thoughtful about how you approach money topics. Let your newly employed college graduate know you are willing to offer support and guidance yet steer clear of making decisions for him or her. Allow your child space to decide their financial goals. Continue sharing advice based on your experience, such as the importance of saving for retirement early, having appropriate insurance or creating an estate plan. Encourage your child to establish a relationship with a financial advisor who can provide an objective perspective and tools to create a financial plan unique to their goals.

It's worth it. If you want to help your child develop financial competence and independence, start the conversation early and keep it going. Sharing your financial values can enrich your relationship and bring lasting rewards.

###

Michelle L. Heide, CFP®, CRPC®, BFA™ is a Private Wealth Advisor with Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc. in Annandale, NJ. Michelle specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies and has been in practice for 25 years. You may contact Michelle at 908-713-4903. Michelle's office is located at 16 Leigh St. Units 1B & 1C, Clinton, NJ 08809.

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## Chamber Happenings



Anita's Angels hosted its annual Card Club on October 18th. Many new introductions were made at this event meant to facilitate connections between the membership in an informal setting. Tom Bay of Anita's Angels and his staff put together an impressive offering of food and beverage for the event while opening up their facility as a venue. Thank you to them for hosting this event!

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**\$200 Grand Prize!**  
Prizes awarded in multiple categories

The Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce and the Friends of the Library invite you to view the Annual Gingerbread Competition at the Hunterdon County Library Headquarters starting December 3rd!

Register for this year's Chamber Holiday Party! Come meet your fellow members and enjoy an evening of connections. Light refreshments will be served.

HUNTERDON COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

*Annual*  
**Holiday PARTY**

**Wed., December 19th • 5:30 - 7:30 PM**

**Stanton Ridge Golf & Country Club**  
25 Clubhouse Drive, Whitehouse Station

Bring your holiday spirit and an UNWRAPPED gift for the Hunterdon County YMCA Angel Patrol  
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*Bring a guest!*



Develop the business relationships that can improve your bottom line. Network, exchange business cards and present your business to other Chamber members.

*Admission is included in your Chamber membership.*

**Leads Exchange North**

**Date: Wednesday, Dec. 5th**  
**Time: 7:45 AM registration**  
**8:00 - 9:00 AM program**



Led by Tom Fitzgerald



**Holiday Inn**  
111 West Main Street  
Clinton, NJ

**Leads Exchange Central**

**Date: Wednesday, Dec. 19th**  
**Time: 7:45 AM registration**  
**8:00 - 9:00 AM program**



Led by Judy Gold



14-B Royal Road  
Flemington, NJ



## Chamber Happenings



Melanie Willoughby of the NJ Business Action Center gave an informative talk at Stanton Ridge Golf and Country Club in October. Melanie's agency helps companies of all sizes save time and money by getting answers from government agencies, directing businesses to appropriate officials and contacts, and facilitating meetings and follow-ups from regulatory agencies. Melanie answered personal questions from the attendees. If you are in need of assistance, please visit <https://www.nj.gov/njbusiness> for more information.



## Chamber Radio



Jack Cust and Jack Cust Jr. appeared on Jim Gano's weekly radio program 'Takin' Care of Business' to discuss the Courthouse Square Flemington redevelopment program. In the interview, they addressed some of the most common questions surrounding the project.

To see the program, visit <https://www.courhousesquareflemington.com/news>.

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## Meet Erin DeGeorge, Esq.

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# In Memoriam Karen E. Palotas

Karen E. Palotas, age 67 years, of Alexandria Township, NJ, died on Tuesday, June 26, 2018 at Center for Hope Hospice, Scotch Plains, NJ, with her loving husband Eric by her side. Born in New Brunswick, NJ, April 5, 1951, daughter of the late Marvin Rosen and Rita Rechtschafer Rosen, currently residing in Hallandale, FL, Karen was raised in Highland Park, NJ and had lived in Kingwood Township and Ringoes, NJ prior to moving to Alexandria Township twenty years ago.

A woman with a true magnetic personality, Karen lived life on her own terms and was fiercely loyal to family and friends. "No" was not in her vocabulary and the result was a woman who was inspirational, motivational and innovative in everything she did.

Humble, Karen's loving and giving personality shone through in all she did both personally and professionally. For many years she owned and operated MGx Promotions, Milford, NJ, and many will remember her, "Big Pink Trucks" that drove all over Hunterdon and the surrounding counties advertising for various companies and events. The most important thing she ever did with the truck, from her point of view, was to advertise and then be the lead truck that would start the CEA's (Center for Educational Advancement) annual "Turkey Trot" in Flemington, NJ each year. She was so proud to help support the CEA. Having a developmentally disabled daughter, she was a tireless advocate for the CEA and its mission; the CEA honored her as a recipient of their Benefactor Award.

Though never defining her, Karen's 18 year battle with cancer is something that must be written about. Written not to elicit sympathy, but to inspire others to never give up and always remember that, "Hope" is something that can never be taken away from anyone, ever. Diagnosed with Breast Cancer in 2000 and given a 5% chance to live no more than 5 years, Karen soon underwent a double mastectomy followed by chemotherapy and radiation. Before her cancer, Karen, in her own words, described herself as, "...a beach ball with teeth." She did not exercise and was extremely overweight. After what she described as a deep and meaningful soul-searching experience, she opened a Curves fitness center in Flemington. She soon lost 70 lbs. and went from a size 22 to a size 8. She believed diet and exercise was essential in her overall health and recovery.

Karen once said, "You have to care about your health when you are done with your treatment...you change things you're doing wrong and you look at it as a second shot at life. The day comes when you decide that you want to live

and grow old with your husband. To do that, you have to be willing to pick up where the Doctors left off."

Many women have commented that Karen literally saved their lives as she was non-judgmental and her caring and supportive manner helped them to achieve, and then surpass their goals. Her successes led to her opening two more Curves locations, open in Whitehouse and the other in Branchburg, NJ.



She won national recognition from Curves for her promotion and exercise/nutrition plans for those battling cancer and was written up in several newspaper and magazine articles as well as made several television appearances on the topic; all helping to inspire and support women as they challenged societal norms and became better versions of themselves.

After selling the Curves locations, Karen went on to assist her husband with one of their mutual loves: car racing. She was the manager for BB3 Motorsports, and was her husband's #1 fan and cheerleader.

The cars needed to be low, wide and fast in order to qualify for Karen's liking. From Porsche's to Corvette's to one of her favorite's, the Viper, Karen knew everything there was to know about the cars; from brakes to tires, she did it all. Her smile was the one that Eric could always spot in the grandstand, as it was always the biggest as she cheered her true love on.

Her hobbies were varied and she could be referred to as a true renaissance woman; she loved her cars, her business ventures and also enjoyed farming! In her early forties, she moved to a farm in Kingwood Township and soon found herself feeding the baby sheep with a bottle very early in the morning. There were not many things that Karen did not do and everything she did was always with an open and genuine heart. She enjoyed traveling, especially cruising, and had been to Europe, Canada, the Caribbean and many other places with family and friends. Her kindle

had over 1000 books on it, so calling her an avid reader would be an understatement.

Very involved in civic communities, it will always be said that Karen did all she did not for business gain, but rather because that's who she was; a longtime member of the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, she was the recipient of the Good Neighbor Award as well as the Chairman's Club award. She was vital in the creation and operation of the former Flemington-Raritan Business Association, receiving their Volunteer of the Year award. The PCA awarded her the prestigious Fowler Award for her countless activities in helping to organize charitable events. Additionally, she was awarded a certificate of appreciation for her activities with Hunterdon County Crimestoppers.

Because of her efforts with Hunterdon Prevention Resources, now known as Prevention Resources, the organization has just created the, "Karen Palotas Community Giving Award" in her memory. The award will be for community members who donate their time, passion and energy to reduce substance abuse.

As the organization stated, "Karen worked so hard for our coalition and never expected anything back. It's our small way to continue to be grateful she was in our lives."

To all those saddened that Karen's infectious smile and strong, but always heartfelt words of advice may be gone physically from this Earth, she would want you to simply pause when you need her, and follow your best instincts. As long as those instincts are rooted in genuine love and caring, they can not be wrong.

In addition to her father, she was preceded in death by her son, Eric Friedman on June 8, 2018, as well as by a brother, Barry Rosen.

Surviving are her loving and devoted husband of thirty-eight years, Eric Palotas, with whom she joined hands in marriage on June 6, 1980; her cherished daughter, Kim Friedman of Lambertville, NJ; her mother, Rita Rechtschafer Rosen; her siblings, Daniel and his wife, Ashley Rosen, and Cindy and her husband, Alan Behar; her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, John Palotas and his longtime partner, Judy Sypnewski and Anne Palotas; her mother-in-law, Marie Palotas; several nieces, nephews, cousins and extended family; and many dear friends.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Prevention Resources, Inc., 4 Walter E. Foran Blvd., Suite 410, Flemington, NJ 08822.



# Hats Off



**BKC, CPAs, PC's BikeMS Team, "Warner's Wheelers"**, had another very successful year with 18 cyclists, raising over \$23,000 for the National MS Society in the name of their MS Champion, the late Michael Warner. There was a great turnout September 30th at the finish line with family, friends and BKC employees cheering on the riders as they completed their 2 day rides from Cherry Hill to Ocean City, NJ. BikeMS had over 6,000 riders this year raising over \$4.4 million to find a cure for MS. Over the past 12 years, the Warner's Wheelers team has raised over \$265,000 towards the Bike MS, National MS campaign to Fight Against Multiple Sclerosis. Donald Reckenbeil, the musical director of the **Hunterdon Harmonizers**, was

recognized at the recent Mid-Atlantic District Convention in Reading, PA. for 30 years of service as a front-line director in



the Barbershop Harmony Society. Twenty years of his service has been spent as the director of the Harmonizers. Don was recognized in front of the Harmonizers on Tuesday, October 10, in our rehearsal hall at Stangl Stage. In the photo (left-to-right) are Rusty Williams (President and assistant), Don Reckenbeil (director), Christian Hunter (Immediate Past President and District Representative), and Mark Bentley (assistant). The Harmonizers are currently preparing for their upcoming holiday show, "The Secret of Christmas," which will be presented on December 8 at Hunterdon Central Regional High School. Show times are 3pm and 7pm. The show will consist of selections from the Hunterdon Central Pit Orchestra, under the direction of Will Magalio, the musical revelation of a Christmas Secret,

and the Harmonizers in concert, sharing Holiday music with our friends.

**Flemington Car & Truck Country and Somerset Patriots** chairman Steve Kalafer was honored by Raritan Valley Community College as a Civic Leader at their 50th Anniversary Golden Harvest Gala.



Congratulations to Joseph S. Colalillo of **ShopRite of Hunterdon County** for being awarded the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award by the Washington Crossing Council, Boy Scouts of America. The award is given Eagle Scouts who, after 25 years, have distinguished themselves in their life work and who have shared their talents with their communities on a voluntary basis.

Thank you for all you've done for Hunterdon County!

## New Members

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Contact: Gary Huntley  
gary@fesnj.com

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Contact: Jan Holmstrup  
jholmstrup@rvhabitat.org

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**fji**

**Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation** is organizing a bus trip to New York City to Rockefeller Center on Sunday, December 2nd. The bus will

depart from Deer Path Park at 8:30 AM and return at approximately 8 PM. All programs require pre-registration, to register, visit <http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/parks.htm>. For more information, call 908-782-1158.

# Chamber Foundation Unveils Business Hall of Fame Exhibit



The Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce unveiled its Business Hall of Fame Exhibit which showcases the inductees of the 2017 class.

Artifacts from Custom Alloy, ShopRite of Hunterdon County, Creter Vault, Justice Peter Veniero, The Large Family and the Red Mill Museum and Village are on display at the Chamber now through the end of the year.

The traveling digital kiosk was also unveiled at this event. The kiosk features informational videos about the history of the inductees and will be positioned throughout the County.

The next class of inductees will be announced in the spring of 2019.

To join the Business Hall of Fame Committee, contact [info@hunterdon-chamber.org](mailto:info@hunterdon-chamber.org).



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# Ribbon Cutting

Frutta Bowls Flemington held their Grand Opening Event at their new location 325 Route 202. Another great compliment to our health-minded community of Hunterdon County, Frutta Bowls offers healthy menu options like smoothies and bowls with fresh fruit ingredients. This event featured a DJ, giveaways and samples of their most popular menu items. Owner Andrew Jackowitz and his family cut the ribbon with Chamber President Chris Phelan. For more information visit <https://www.fruttabowls.com>.



(Top Row, 1 to 7) B. Flanagan, D. Makoski, M. Lyons, W. Rudnik, A. Fialk, J. Papay, B. Valliere. (Middle Row, 1 to 7) K. Lichtenstein, L. MacWilliam, T. Bussel, L. Parikh, D. Fredericks, J. Kopen, T. St. Angelo. (Bottom Row, 1 to 4) R. Ward, W. Goodwin, R. Cushing, M. Chazin, J. Manfreda.

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Tickets for the December 1, 2018 Stanton Holly Trail are now on sale. Started in 1962, Holly Trail is the longest running house tour in New Jersey. Evoking memories of hot chocolate around the decorated tree, and roaring fireplaces, the theme of the 2018 tour is Comfort and Joy. The day consists of touring five private homes elaborately festooned with hand-made Christmas decorations and abundant fresh greens. The ticket price for the traditional Saturday daytime tour is \$40. The ticket includes bus transportation to each home, complimentary tea and cookies in another elaborately decorated home, admission to the craft bazaar, and a musical respite offered in the sanctuary of the Stanton Reformed Church. There is an optional gourmet lunch available for an additional cost of \$15.

Patrons interested in seeing the homes by candlelight can join the Candlelight

Champagne tour held Friday evening, November 30. Tickets for the candlelight tour are \$150 each and include luxury bus transportation, a full course dinner at the legendary Ryland Inn, live musical entertainment, a champagne toast, and the gift of a Christmas ornament. The Ryland Inn is a new venue for the Friday evening tour this year. "We are delighted to be welcomed by the Ryland Inn," said Holly Trail co-chair, Suzanne Schwanda, "their decades long dedication to hospitality matches our own and their excellent reputation for fine food is unmatched in our area."

We are excited to announce two appearances by vintage lifestyle and Christmas expert Bob Richter. Bob is the author of the bestselling book *A Very Vintage Christmas*. He will be on hand at both the Candlelight-Champagne tour and the Saturday Bazaar (from noon-4 PM) selling and signing his book. In addition, on Saturday he will have some vintage ornaments from his collection for sale. Tickets can be purchased two ways. Patrons can visit [www.stantonhollytrail.org](http://www.stantonhollytrail.org) and either purchase tickets there or download a ticket form and mail it in. If

additional assistance is needed, call the Holly Hotline at 908-713-8111. Tickets for either day must be purchased in advance and are limited. Tickets are available on a first come, first serve basis.

The 2017 tour raised \$38,000 which was divided evenly between Brideside Adult Day Services, benefiting older adults and community outreach at Stanton Reformed Church which includes Starfish Food Pantry, Boy Scout Troop 1969, Safe in Hunterdon, Feed the Need, Good News Home for Women, as well as many other organizations. "We are delighted to announce that Stanton Holly Trail has now passed their one million dollar mark of donations," said Schwanda. "We are grateful to our patrons and sponsors who help turn our hard work into such a benefit for our community."

Stanton Holly Trail would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors: Provident Bank, Shop Rite of Hunterdon, Saunders Jewelry, Ryland Inn, Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, and Wells Fargo.

For more information and photos of past tours visit [www.stantonhollytrail.org](http://www.stantonhollytrail.org)

## HUNTERDON CENTER FOR DERMATOLOGY NOW OFFERS MOHS SURGERY The Most-Effective Treatment for Skin Cancer

**Mohs is a specialized form of skin cancer surgery.  
There are two main benefits of Mohs surgery:**

- It allows the highest cure rate out of any type of skin cancer treatment because 100% of the surgical margins are evaluated.
- It spares the amount of normal skin that has to be removed.

### **Adam Blechman, M.D.,**

Dr. Blechman, board certified dermatologist earned his medical degree from the University of Virginia and completed his fellowship in Mohs Micrographic Surgery and Dermatologic Oncology at NYU Langone. He was the recipient of the prestigious Theodore Tromovitch research award given by the American College of Mohs Surgery to one fellow annually.



**Hunterdon Center for Dermatology**  
63 Church Street • Flemington, NJ  
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# 2018 Annual Golf Classic Highlights



The Chamber's Annual Golf Classic on October 2nd was a great day for members to meet and participate in friendly competition between businesses. ExxonMobil took home the Hunterdon Cup again this year while the combined team of Northfield Bank and Hawk Point Golf Club was the runner up. Stan Prater of Jersey Central Power & Light won the Longest Putt Contest.



Heron Glen Golf Course provided a beautiful course, exceptional food and an impressive venue for the breakfast and lunch portions of the day. Elevation Fitness and Heath, Chick-fil-A and Costco joined in the fun for the day representing their companies with displays. Thank you to the volunteers who helped the Classic run smoothly and to the members of our Golf Committee who made this event a great success.



## tax tidbits

### Deductible Business Meal Expenses

The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act changed the law to deny income tax deductions for entertainment, amusement, or recreation expenses. However, the Act did not directly address the deductibility of business meals at the time of enactment. In response to this confusion, the IRS has issued interim guidance about the deductibility of business meals, until proposed regulations are released.

Under the interim guidance, the IRS will continue to allow 50% deductibility of meal expenses, if:

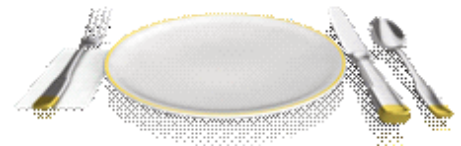
1. The expense is an ordinary and necessary business expense while the taxpayer is carrying out business.
2. The expense is not lavish or extravagant under the circumstances.

3. The taxpayer, or an employee of the taxpayer, is present when the meal is furnished.

4. The meal is provided to a current or potential customer of the business, and

5. For meals provided during or at an entertainment facility, they are purchased separately from the entertainment, or the cost of the meal is stated separately from the cost of the entertainment, on one or more receipts.

The 2017 Federal Tax Act was the biggest change in the Federal Income Tax Code since 1986 and due to its complexity, has caused much confusion. You will need expert professional advice to keep up with these new changes.



If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Ross, CPA of BKC, CPAs, PC at [adr@bkc-cpa.com](mailto:adr@bkc-cpa.com) or (908) 782-7900 x113. Visit our blog at [www.bkc-cpa.com](http://www.bkc-cpa.com) for more in-depth information, and other helpful articles and alerts.

This tax tidbit was provided by



# Ribbon Cutting



**Elevation Fitness and Health** opened its doors in Flemington at 30 Royal Road. Owner Jeff Hazard` cut the ribbon with Chamber President Chris Phelan, Raritan Township Mayor Mike Mangin, Deputy Mayor Karen Gilbert and Councilmen Gary Hazard and Lou Reiner. Elevation Fitness and Health provides custom training and wellness programs designed to help you reach your fitness goals.

For more information on their program of services, please visit:  
<https://elevationfitnessandhealth.com>  
or call 908-300-1024.

Happy Thanksgiving

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908.722.0700 | [www.norrismclaughlin.com](http://www.norrismclaughlin.com)



# *In Memoriam Dr. Catherine McVicker*

Dr. Catherine Hebson (McVicker) – The long time Executive Director of the Hunterdon Economic Partnership.

It is with great sadness that the family of Dr. Catherine Hebson (McVicker) announces her sudden and unexpected passing on August 23rd on Isabela Island in the Galápagos. She died as she lived, exploring and appreciating the wild beauty all around her.

Vibrant, bright-eyed, and vivacious, Catherine approached life as a miracle and each day as a new gift to open. She was born on April 17, 1943, in Jersey City, NJ, to the late James and Catherine (Haubert) Hebson. The eldest of six children, Catherine cherished being a loving big sister to her sisters and brothers.

Catherine was a passionate Renaissance woman. She loved music, reading, photography, dark chocolate, gardening, dancing, and whipping up imaginative culinary creations for friends and family. She spent over a half century of summers in her magical Adirondacks and had a deep love for mountains, lakes, and rivers. Spring was her golden time though she relished every season.

Mystical and ethereal, Catherine possessed a gift for finding beauty in the most hidden places. She and her late husband, Gary, shared an immense love for animals and filled the family home with lively menageries of rescue cats and dogs. She was a joyful and fearless travel companion, instilling in her children, Mercedes and Andrew, a love for exploring far and wide. A friend to so many, she thrived when bringing people together and created community wherever she went.

She and Mercedes were lifelong singing partners, from church choirs to walks in the woods to road trips. Her voice and her laugh were filled with song. Andrew's love for aviation

inspired her to explore a new frontier, and Catherine took flying lessons so she could spread her own wings. Melding maps, geography, and navigation, she delighted in solo flight and spent many blissful hours arcing about the skies in her trustworthy Piper. On a cross-country flight with Andrew to the West Coast, she spent the week aloft with a map spread across her lap and a camera in hand, eagerly documenting the landscape.

Catherine and family moved to Califon, nestled amongst the highlands of Hunterdon County, in 1983. From hilltop hikes to duck rodeos and Halloween parades, Catherine loved each and every day in Califon. Known for her morning promenades with the dogs along the South Branch of the Raritan River which weaves through town, she relished the connections she made with everyone throughout the bucolic borough and the rolling hills of the county beyond.

Catherine had a long and accomplished career in education and economic development. She earned a B.S. in chemistry from Chestnut Hill College; an M.A. in economics from the University of Wyoming; and a Ph.D. in regional economics from Rutgers University. She was a faculty member at Le Moyne College and Essex County College and taught at Centenary College, Raritan Valley Community College, and Rutgers University. She served as executive director of the Hunterdon Economic Partnership from 1994 until 2005. She was a president and executive director of the Economic Development Association of NJ.

Catherine was an ardent champion of accessible education. She was the first trustee appointed to represent Hunterdon County on the Board of Trustees for Raritan Valley Community College, where she served from 1986 until 2017. She served as Chair of the Board from



November 2011 through November 2013. Under her leadership as board chair, the College made a number of advancements, including graduating a record number of students and earning national honors. Catherine was also a member of the RVCC Foundation Board and the Executive Committee of the NJ Council of County Colleges. In addition, she served on the Hunterdon Art Museum board and the Chestnut Hill College alumni board.

Catherine lit up the world with her insatiable curiosity, sparkling creativity and intoxicating joie de vivre. Her life force was boundless and her optimism was sky high. She will be lovingly remembered by her children; sister, Joanne (Arthur) Higgins of York, ME; brothers, James Hebson, Jr. of Kearny, NJ, Richard (Susan) Hebson of Wellsboro, PA, and Charles (Margaret) Hebson of Falmouth, ME; brother-in-law, Walter Stutz of Wellsboro, PA; many nieces, nephews and cousins; and countless friends. She was succeeded in passing by her beloved sister, Rosemary Hebson Stutz.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Catherine's name to Raritan Valley Community College [www.raritanval.edu](http://www.raritanval.edu) and Best Friends Animal Sanctuary [www.bestfriends.org](http://www.bestfriends.org).

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