



Friends & Neighbors:

I want to thank everyone that came out and participated in the **Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony on Monday**. The weather on Memorial Day can vary; last year it rained and the Parade was cancelled. This year, we were fortunate to have a sunny day so that we could honor those brave souls who lost their lives in service to our nation with a Parade and service at the War Memorial. For those who weren't able to join us, please scroll down to the end of this message to see my remarks made at the ceremony.

Demarest Family Accomplishments

This past weekend, Demarest resident **Konner Jiang** competed in the Little Mozart Competition, an annual music competition at Carnegie Hall. It's not an easy task to qualify for the competition, but Konner qualified; and I am proud to announce that Konner came in first place in his group! **Congratulations to Konner and his proud parents Councilman David Jiang and Hilde Cho!**

I want to offer my **congratulations** to all of our Demarest residents graduating High School and College this year! I want to give a shout out to the following members of our Demarest family who will be celebrating this month.

Katherine Haight, daughter to our Technical Assistant to the Construction Official, **Dot Haight**, graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of New Hampshire with a degree in nutrition and she will be continuing as a Grad student to pursue a Masters in Nutrition and Dietetics.

Our Deputy Tax Collector, Andrea Johe's son, Marcel Johe, graduated from Northeastern University in Boston with a BS in Science in Business Administration and is following in his mom's footsteps with a concentration in Finance.

Alex Collins, drum major and child of **Councilmember Adam Collins** is graduating NVD this year and will attend Temple University to study Music Therapy. Alex led the NVD Marching Band on Memorial Day and will be part of the marching band at Temple.

Our Shade Tree and Board of Health Secretary Lee Campbell's daughter **ShaeLee Campbell** will be a proud graduate of Cresskill High School this month. She plans to study for her real estate license over the summer and attend Bergen Community College in the fall.

Kieran Talty, Police Captain Brian Talty's son, will be graduating from NVOT this year and plans to attend Ramapo College in the fall. Captain Talty and mom Kristin are very proud of Kieran.

Hannah Cohen, who is working as an intern at Borough Hall this month and who played Taps at our Memorial Day ceremony, is graduating from NVD and will attend Lafayette College in the fall.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KATHERINE, MARCEL, ALEX, SHAELEE, KIERAN, AND HANNAH. YOU SHOULD ALL BE VERY PROUD OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS; I KNOW YOUR PARENTS ARE EXTRAORDINARILY PROUD OF YOU!

TASOC Summer Offerings

Enroll now at **The Art School at Old Church** for **Summer Session (June 15 -July 25)** and **Blast of Art! Summer Camp (Aug 4-8 & Aug 11-15)**. Explore a wide range of classes and workshops for children, teens, and adults at tasoc.org. Register online, in person, or by phone: **(201) 767-7160**.

The Demarest Library

Please **join yoga therapeutics teacher, Lorig Hamparian**, for a cooling summer yoga flow on Thursday, **June 5 from 6 - 7 pm**, helping you to find balance and peace within your body, mind, and heart during the hot days of summer. The practice will include postures, breathing, and meditative relaxation. All levels welcome as adaptations will be made. Please bring a mat or a large towel to lie down on. The class will meet at the Demarest Gazebo, unless in the case of inclement weather or extreme heat. Register [here!](#)

Come join us on Wednesday, **June 4 from 4:30 - 5:00 pm** for our fan favorite **Children's Read to a Dog Program!** Community Volunteer Ms. Jody will bring one of two therapy dogs for children to practice reading to in a safe setting. **Register for the 4:40 time slot [here](#) and the 4:50 timeslot [here!](#)**

Come play chess with players of all levels at our **Kid's Chess Club on Saturday, June 7 from 10:00 - 11:30 am**. This event will take place at the library in the children's area. As always, children ages eight and under must be accompanied by an adult at all times, and children cannot visit the library alone until the age of eleven. Registration is not required, but space and chess boards are limited. Your child may have to wait for a turn to play, but we encourage them to learn from observing games.

Finally, **GO KNICKS!** We need that comeback magic!!

Have good weekend,

Mayor Brian K. Bernstein

Mayor's Memorial Day Speech 2025

Dear friends, neighbors, honored guests, officials and beloved veterans, welcome.

Today's parade and this Memorial Day service, are intended to remind us of the greatest of sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform. Today, we honor the memory of our American heroes who lost their lives in service to our nation.

We live in a nation that values freedom and liberty. And, we enjoy that freedom because of the courage and sacrifice of our men and women in the armed forces. You have all heard the expression, "Freedom is not free," well that's a fact; it requires continuous effort, sacrifice and vigilance. This means it's not something that can be passively enjoyed; it demands proactive action and commitment. It requires selfless service and sacrifice, putting country before self. And, too often, the defense of freedom comes at an extreme expense, the loss of life, as exemplified by our military personnel and others who gave their lives for our country and freedom. This year, we mark the 80th Anniversary of the end of World War II.

Today, we did not have a Grand Marshal to lead the parade. Instead, the three passenger seats of the lead car, were intentionally left empty to honor the memories of three men with strong ties to Demarest who died in Europe while serving our country during WWII.

Walter G. Kellmann lived on Stelfox Street back in 1941 when he entered the service at just 21 years old. According to our research, Mr. Kellmann held the rank of Private First Class, US

Army and he served to protect freedom and liberty, not just for America, but for people around the globe. During his service for our Country, Mr. Kellmann experienced a critical situation outside of the battlefield that led to his death. We honor the memory of Walter G. Kellmann for his service and for his ultimate sacrifice.

Nicholas G. Muller also hailed from Demarest and was lost at sea, with his last known location in the English Channel. He was declared dead on June 9, 1944 in Normandy only three days after the D-Day invasion began. This timeline suggests that Mr. Muller was a part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy, the largest amphibious invasion in history, involving more than 156,000 troops, that marked the beginning of the end of the war and the liberation of Western Europe. Mr. Muller held the rank of Technical Sergeant, US Army and he is memorialized at Tablets of the Missing at Normandy American Cemetery, Colleville-sur-Mer, France. We honor the memory of Nicholas G. Muller for his courageous service and ultimate sacrifice.

Charles J. Merritts, Private First Class, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, was killed in action (KIA) at Ardennes during the Battle of the Bulge on January 9, 1945. KIA refers to the death of a military person at the hands of the enemy or hostile forces during combat or battle. We honor the memory of Charles J. Merritts for his courageous service and ultimate sacrifice. Charles' nephew Gerry and Gerry's wife Jenny live in Demarest and we honor them as a Demarest Gold Star Family.

WE CAN NEVER REPAY THE DEBT OWED OR EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO WALTER, NICHOLAS and CHARLES AND THE APPROXIMATELY 407,000 SERVICE MEMBERS THAT DIED WITH THEM DURING WORLD WAR II AND TO ALL OF THE OTHER BRAVE SOULS WHO DIED AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN DIFFERENT WARS, CONFLICTS AND HOSTILITIES. MAY THEIR SOULS REST IN PEACE FOR ALL ETERNITY!

Later today, at 3:00 PM, there will be a National Moment of silence to remember and honor those who have died in service to the United States. But, I know that at 3 PM this afternoon, many of us are likely to be busy at events, barbecues, the swim club, with family or simply distracted with life. So, please stand, if you are able, remove your hats and join me for a minute of silence to honor our fallen heroes. Thank you.

While Memorial Day commemorates all those who have died in service to the nation, I think it appropriate to acknowledge and thank our living veterans for their service, sacrifice and commitment. We will forever owe you a debt of gratitude that can never be fully repaid. We are lucky to have many veterans living in Demarest. We have reached out to the community to identify all of you. Please join me in thanking our veterans for their service. On November 10th, at our 7:30 Mayor & Council Meeting, we will be honoring our Veterans.

As Mayor of Demarest, I am proud to be part of a community that honors its veterans, our Country's military personnel and pays special tribute to honor the men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

I have distributed to the Council members and veterans red poppy pins to wear to honor the fallen heroes and support the living who have worn our nation's uniform.

The red poppy, central to the wartime poem "In Flanders Fields," written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, while serving in WWI, speaks to the duty of the living to carry on the fight, to remember and to honor the sacrifice of those who gave their lives. The Poem evokes powerful imagery of poppies growing among the war dead.

I would like to thank our Borough Administrator, Deputy Clerk, and Borough staff, the Demarest Council, Jason and the DPW crew, our Demarest Police Department, our Fire Department, our Volunteer Ambulance Corp., the Garden Club, the Band from NVD, our marchers, volunteers and to all of you who have joined us today.

Thank you all for participating in today's Memorial Day Parade and service.

on what is going on around town, please help with that goal by forwarding this email to your friends so they can visit demarestnj.gov and sign up for my weekly emails! The link can be found about halfway down the homepage.

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