

North Brunswick Historical Society
240th Anniversary Gala



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240th ANNIVERSARY GALA AND HONOREES ANNOUNCED

The Township of North Brunswick will celebrate its 240th Anniversary with a fourth **Community Gala** on **Friday, October 18, 2019** at the Heldrich Hotel in New Brunswick, sponsored by the North Brunswick Historical Society. This event will honor a group of longtime community volunteers for their distinguished service to our residents.

The Historical Society hosts an anniversary gala every five years, and is once again organizing a memorable evening that includes a cocktail reception with an open bar, an elaborate dinner, first-class entertainment, and an awards program.

This year's gala pays tribute to six community volunteers for their distinguished service to the community: Jocelyn Caffrey, Joseph "Pete" Clark, Thelma Comparato, James Grieco, Rev. Mark McGrath, and Evelyn Smirnow.

Jocelyn Caffrey is being honored in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the township Adult Drama Group, of which she has been a member for nearly 40 years. Mrs. Caffrey is also a longtime member of the Heritage Day Committee, a charter member of both the North Brunswick Humane Society and Care to Walk, and along with her husband, Raymund, long managed American Legion Post #459 and supported countless events and programs in support of veterans. She is a longtime volunteer at St. Peter's Medical Center.

Joseph "Pete" Clark's long history of public service goes well beyond his iconic career in education as a teacher, coach and principal of both the middle and high schools. Since his professional retirement, Clark has devoted even more time to a large collection of community service organizations including Buddy Ball Soccer and Basketball, the Heritage Day Committee, United Way of Central Jersey, North Brunswick Municipal Alliance, the Friends of the Library, the township Certified Emergency Response Team, and several veterans initiatives.

Thelma Comparato is the longest serving member of the North Brunswick Woman's Club, with 53 years of service. She was named to the club Honor Roll for her contributions to countless programs and activities, and was chosen "Woman of the Year" several times and presented with a wide assortment of recognition certificates and pins. For her work recruiting new members, Mrs. Comparato was honored by the NJ State Federation of Women's Clubs with their highest honor, the Order of the Lily. At their 2017 Installation Dinner, the club saluted her as "Woman of the Year" for her 50 years of service.

Jim Grieco is a 94-year resident of North Brunswick. Born and raised on a small farm in Adams Lane, he served with the U.S. Air Force overseas during World War II. He and his wife, Helen, established their own roots in North Brunswick and Jim quickly became part of the fabric of the early volunteer community as a founding member of the Adams Athletic Club where he still serves. Mr. Grieco was a member of the Pioneer Senior Citizens and served several terms as President. He was also a member and treasurer of Fire Company #3 for 10 years, and active member of the Knights of Columbus, and a longstanding Meals-on-Wheels volunteer.

Rev. Mark McGrath is part of the leadership team of Point Community Church in North Brunswick. He has been the chairman of the North Brunswick Housing Corporation for more than 30 years, leading the board that manages the Paul J. Maticera Senior Apartments. His long record of public service also includes more than 10 years as the chairman of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, a member of the 911 Memorial Committee, and many years of service here and abroad for Habitat for Humanity.

Evelyn Smirnow is the co-founder of Care to Walk, which for 20 years has raised more than \$200,000 for local cancer research, support and education. A nearly 40-year resident, she has been a school volunteer and class parent, a member of the Heritage Day Committee, and a member and President of the Independent Legions of Immigrant Philippine-Americans in the North Americas. The organization was formed to support charitable activities and financial literacy among indigent Filipinos in the Philippines.

“Celebrating our township history certainly includes honoring those citizens who have contributed to our sense of community,” said Historical Society President Michael Hritz. “Their significant and selfless years of volunteer service speak to the very foundation of citizenship in the Township of North Brunswick.” Hritz is the co-chair of the gala along with Rich Liguori, who serves as the group’s treasurer. The Board of Trustees host committee also includes Connie Adamo, Nansi Krauss, and Janice Larkin.

Proceeds will continue support the preservation and renovation of the Pulda Farmhouse and the launch of an effort to create and place historical markers at sites of notable interest throughout the township.

For more information or to be added to the invitation list, contact nbhistsoc1779@gmail.com.

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