



Once in a lifetime, someone special comes along and makes a significant difference in the world around them.

Honoring Emily Schacht: A Life of Devotion to Children and Community

Emily is more than a beloved figure at Waterford Country School—she is its heart, its history, and its enduring spirit. At 98 years of age, Emily continues to be a beacon of compassion, commitment, and care for children in need. Her lifelong contributions are deeply ingrained in the agency’s structure, reflecting generations of passionate and steadfast commitment.

As the matriarch of Waterford Country School, Emily has been a life-long champion of its mission. Her advocacy for at-risk children and youth has made a lasting impact, giving hundreds the confidence and support to live safe, healthy lives. Long before the school formally integrated Cornell’s “CARE-informed” approach, Emily instinctively prioritized the children’s best interests in everything she did. She understood their needs deeply and met them with boundless love and wisdom.



“ We all know of the importance of a strong legacy to provide the roots for an agency to grow strong and develop. Emily’s lifetime commitment helped provide those roots...”

~Bill Martin, Board Member & former Executive Director



Emily started her career of service early, joining the Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II. Working as a nurse at Waterford Country School, she met and married Herb, whose parents founded the school. Together, they grew into roles of leadership that spanned decades. For years, Emily has been a dedicated and proud Waterford, CT resident whose numerous contributions to the school and wider community deserve recognition. She serves on the boards of Waterford Country School (since 1975), the Regional Advisory Council for the Department of Children and Families, the Waterford Historical Society, and the Eastern Regional Mental Health Board as part of her community service.





Emily raised seven children of her own on the school's campus, but her family extended far beyond biology. Countless children at the school found a home in her care—kids who were treated as her own, folded into her bustling household with open arms. Cooking meals in quantity, managing the endless tasks of a full house, and still keeping up with the world around her—both locally and nationally—Emily showed what it meant to live a life of meaningful action.

She wasn't just part of the community—she *was* the community. Her gentle strength, immense empathy, and constant presence cultivated a supportive environment where children could grow, heal, and thrive.



Today, many of those she once cared for still consider her family. Her influence echoes in their lives and in the legacy of Waterford Country School. Emily's lasting influence on Waterford Country School, founded by her in-laws, is evident not just in the lives she touched, but in the strong roots she helped establish, allowing the school to thrive and fulfill its mission for thousands over 102 years.

Serving others has profoundly impacted Emily's life and is a testament to the power of altruism. Her story is one of fierce love, enduring strength, and unwavering hope. We are deeply grateful for her and the invaluable foundation she's given us, and we celebrate her.



"When I arrived at Waterford Country School in 1967, a "girl interrupted", Emily was raising her own children, was married to the Director, and serving as the school nurse. Even in her older years, she is still devoted to helping children achieve health and happiness with love and constancy. Countless children benefited from her intense dedication to their well-being, and many remain extended family. I am so fortunate to be one of them."

~ Kathy Jacques, WCS Board Member and Extended Family

"Emily - thank you for your many years of devotion to Waterford Country School as a founder, nurse, and board member. You have enriched and touched the lives of so many children and families. You have provided wisdom for board members that I will remember forever."

~ Ken Levy, WCS Board Member and Friend

"Emily - I have known you my entire adult life and have been proud to be able to call you my "Aunt". I was always in awe of you... We always love coming to your home for Holidays spent with the family; enjoying time together and eating such delicious food!!! Your telling me stories involving WCS... days past and present, are always informative and fun to listen to, and I look forward to hearing more of them.

~ Lorri Saunders, Founding Family member and WCS Board Member

"Emily is the champion of Waterford Country School. I have enjoyed her stories of the school along with her crystal clear memories and her knowledge of services to children. She has been a phenomenal advocate."

~Kim Caron, WCS Board Member

"Congratulations on a lifetime dedicated to educating countless of at-risk young children and youth to have the confidence to live healthy and safe lives."

~ Beth Camassar, WCS Board Member



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