

Warren County Hall of Fame to honor local residents on Oct. 20

Warren Reporter By Warren Reporter

on October 06, 2012 at 4:28 PM, updated October 06, 2012 at 4:29 PM



Pictured (from left) is the Warren County Hall of Fame Class of 2012. This year's inductees include Gloria Decker, Richard Cotton, Bruce Schott, Mattar Mattar and Ann Reeves. Not pictured is Charles Morrison who is receiving the honor posthumously.

Two women with very distinctively different backgrounds will have something very much in common on Saturday, Oct. 20, when they are inducted into the Warren County Hall of Fame.

Gloria Decker, whose service record to the County of Warren, her hometown of Phillipsburg, and to the State of New Jersey, is arguably among the most extensive of any woman in the state and Ann Reeves of Belvidere, whose folk art has made her an icon in the art world here and abroad, are among six individuals to join the ranks this year.

In addition to Decker and Reeves, real estate visionary Richard Cotton, restaurateur Mattar Mattar, former banker Bruce Schott and Hackettstown football coach Charles "Chot" Morrison (posthumously) will be honored for their contributions to the greater Warren County community at the Hall of Fame Recognition Dinner at Hawk Pointe Golf Club.

Additionally, special recognition awards will be given to Donaldson Farms and the family of George Akehurst (who started the Stone Soup Symphony – he passed away a few years ago). Craig Neier, a long-time supporter of the college in myriad ways, will receive the prestigious President's Merit Award.

Decker and Reeves will join Dr. Barbara- Jayne Lewthwaite, president of Centenary College, as the only women inducted into the Warren County Hall of Fame.

Reeves, who lived for many years in Hackettstown, is an artist whose works are seen throughout Warren County – and beyond, from Germany to cruise ships traversing the world. Her unique folk art style is easily identifiable and features many "local scenes" such as street scenes of Hackettstown and the Warren County Farmers Fair. Her works have been seen in major art galleries and she has earned a number of awards for her art. She was commissioned by the Atlantic City Convention Center Authority to paint the city of Atlantic City.

'Art just comes naturally to me,' said Reeves, who notes that she has never had a formal art education. "My

art education was going to the Hackettstown Public Library and studying art books. Everything I learned I taught myself.”

Reeves’ love for small towns helped make her the go-to artist for paintings of downtowns and the like. Decker has been a longtime leader in Warren County as Phillipsburg Mayor, Rotary Club member, business owner, Board of Elections Commissioner, Director NJ Real Estate Commissioner, volunteering with a number of organizations and business groups. She was also the first woman to lead the N.J. State Lottery Commission and has served on a host of county volunteer posts.

“I just seemed to have gotten involved in things,” said Decker. “I just had a knack for listening to people and helping them. I never planned on any of this. It just happened.”

In addition to her exploits here, she was instrumental in starting the lottery in Washington, D.C. and in showing her ability to take on new projects, she and her daughter are currently writing a cook book together with recipes from family and friends.

The Hall of Fame Recognition Dinner will be held at Hawk Pointe Golf Club in Washington Township. The event is open to the public. The gala dinner will celebrate the newest class of inductees and all the finalists. The Hall of Fame itself is set up at Warren County Community College, where the public is invited to see it. For tickets to the recognition dinner and other information, call 908-835-2334 or email

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