FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONTCLAIR, N.J. - September 29, 2026

Deck the Halls: A Tradition of Community Connection

Join us for Deck the Halls, The Montclair Foundation's annual holiday fundraiser and a beloved tradition that brings our community together in celebration of the season.

This year, we are proud to honor **Betty Jagoda Murphy** and **Human Needs Food Pantry**, recognizing their extraordinary commitment to our community.

Betty Jagoda Murphy has been a dedicated and active supporter of nonprofit and community organizations for decades. Her extensive service has included leadership and volunteer roles with The Montclair Foundation/Van Vleck House & Gardens, Programs for Parents, the Jewish Women's Foundation of New Jersey, Dress for Success, the Montclair Art Museum, the Montclair Garden Club, Bnai Keshet, Shine Global and numerous other organizations. Betty currently serves on The Montclair Foundation's Board of Trustees and serves on the Grants Committee and Management Committees. She has also chaired and run the wildly successful Deck the Halls Holiday Boutique for the last six years.

Her contributions to the community have been widely recognized. Betty was named the North Essex Chamber of Commerce's Community Leader of the Year and NJ Women Business Owners' Businesswoman of the Year and received the Working Woman's Entrepreneurial Excellence Award. In 2022, she was honored by the Montclair Art Museum at its Art in Bloom Luncheon.

Betty is also deeply committed to preserving her family's musical and cultural legacy. For more than 30 years, she performed alongside her sister, brother, and mother, internationally acclaimed Sephardic musician Flory Jagoda, sharing the Ladino music and traditions of Sephardic Jews. Today, Betty continues her mother's legacy through performances and conversations about Sephardic culture and traditions.

Human Needs Food Pantry has been a vital resource for our community since 1982, providing food, clothing and other essential services to individuals and families in need throughout Montclair, Essex County and beyond.

At the heart of its work is ensuring that neighbors facing food insecurity have access to nutritious food with dignity. Clients receive fresh produce, meat and pantry staples, along with personal-care items, while volunteers deliver groceries to those who are homebound. Through its "Upstairs" program, the Pantry also provides free clothing, shoes, linens, kitchenware and other household necessities.

For more than four decades, Human Needs Food Pantry has responded to the changing needs of our neighbors with compassion, dignity and practical support. The Montclair Foundation is proud to honor this extraordinary organization and its longstanding commitment to caring for our community.

Deck the Halls will be held on November 21 from 6:30pm-10pm at the Montclair Art Museum at 3 South Mountain Avenue, Montclair, NJ 07042. Tickets to the celebration and tribute ads in the printed program can be purchased on our website Montclairfoundation.org or at **https://givebutter.com/c/deck-the-halls**

Proceeds from Deck the Halls support The Montclair Foundation's work to care for Van Vleck House & Gardens, provide educational and cultural programs, and invest in local nonprofits that make our community stronger.

About The Montclair Foundation/Van Vleck House & Gardens

The Montclair Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching the greater Montclair community through philanthropy, cultural programming, historic preservation, education, and public engagement. For more than 47 years, we have invested in organizations, programs, and initiatives that enhance the quality of life for those who live, work, and visit Montclair and its surrounding communities. Through grantmaking, community partnerships, and charitable giving, we support efforts that strengthen our community and create lasting impact. As the steward of Van Vleck House & Gardens since 1993, we are committed to preserving one of Montclair's most treasured historic and horticultural landmarks while providing meaningful opportunities for learning, inspiration, arts and cultural experiences, and community connection. We also serve as a vehicle for individuals and families who wish to make a lasting investment in the community's future through charitable contributions, endowed funds, and legacy gifts. Together with our donors, partners, volunteers, and supporters, we are helping to ensure that Montclair continues to thrive for generations to come.
www.montclairfoundation.org

Media Contact

Eileen Lundberg, Director of Community Engagement
The Montclair Foundation/Van Vleck House & Gardens
eileen@montclairfoundation.org