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## PROJECT GRADUATION 2024 WRAP UP

Governor Livingston High School's 2024 Project Graduation was a huge success!

Over 200 seniors enjoyed a fun-filled night at the Branchburg Sports Complex.

The event ran from 9:30 p.m. – 2 a.m.

There were a variety of activities available to the students including Gaga, Laser Tag, an arcade, basketball, volleyball, dodgeball, pickleball, soccer, an inflatable obstacle course, a casino (with Amazon gift card prizes), BINGO (with varied gift card prizes), caricaturists, airbrush tattoos, tarot card readers and so much more!

Mountainside EMTs Domenico Deluca and Brianna Boxwell were on hand for the entire evening as were police officers from each town, Detective LT Shaun Bendik from Mountainside and Cpl. Don Maxwell from Berkeley Heights. A huge shout out to the EMTs and Police Officers!

Eleven event volunteers traveled by bus to and from the event; without them this event wouldn't

be possible. Those amazing volunteers were: Jeanie Ruban, Dana Liloia, Lisa Fabio, John & Wendy Caccamo, Helena & Henrique Sousa, James Butler, Anne Woodard, Janet Graham, Allison Adornato, and Chrissy Kiesewetter. On-site coordinators were Catia Salerno and Jovan Siconolfi.

A team of 18 additional volunteers, led by Annie Basile, helped with registration and bag check in at GL before the 6 busloads of seniors departed.

A huge thank you to the Berkeley Heights Board of Education, Mr. Nixon, Mrs. Bartlett and the GL administrators, local businesses for their generous donations (including 24 dozen donuts donated from the Berkeley Heights Dunkin Donuts located on Springfield Avenue), as well as First Group and their phenomenal team of busses and drivers.

## PLANNING FOR 2025

Freshmen, Sophomore and Junior parents, please consider getting involved with Project Graduation in the future. Project Graduation includes many activities throughout the year including a Senior Breakfast in the fall, Prom Fashion Show in February, a Senior Picnic on the day of the prom and finally the Project Graduation event. The Project Graduation committee is also responsible for sale of the graduation lawn signs as well as the sale of the Highlander Way pavers and seat and parking spot raffles for Graduation.

Courtesy photos

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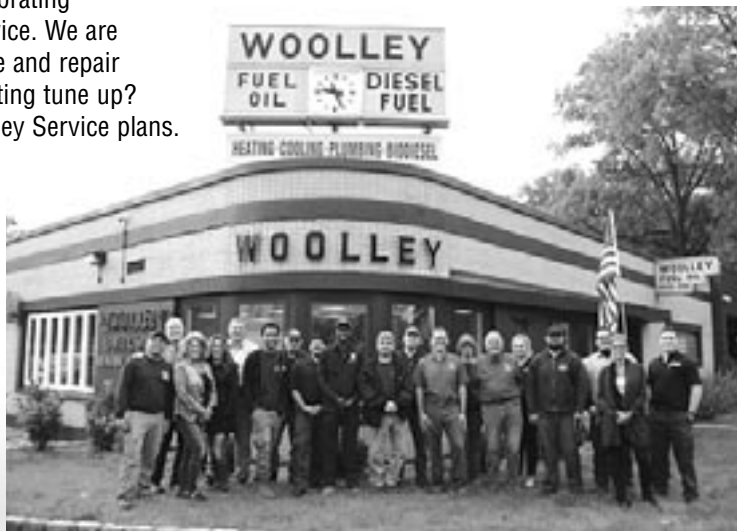
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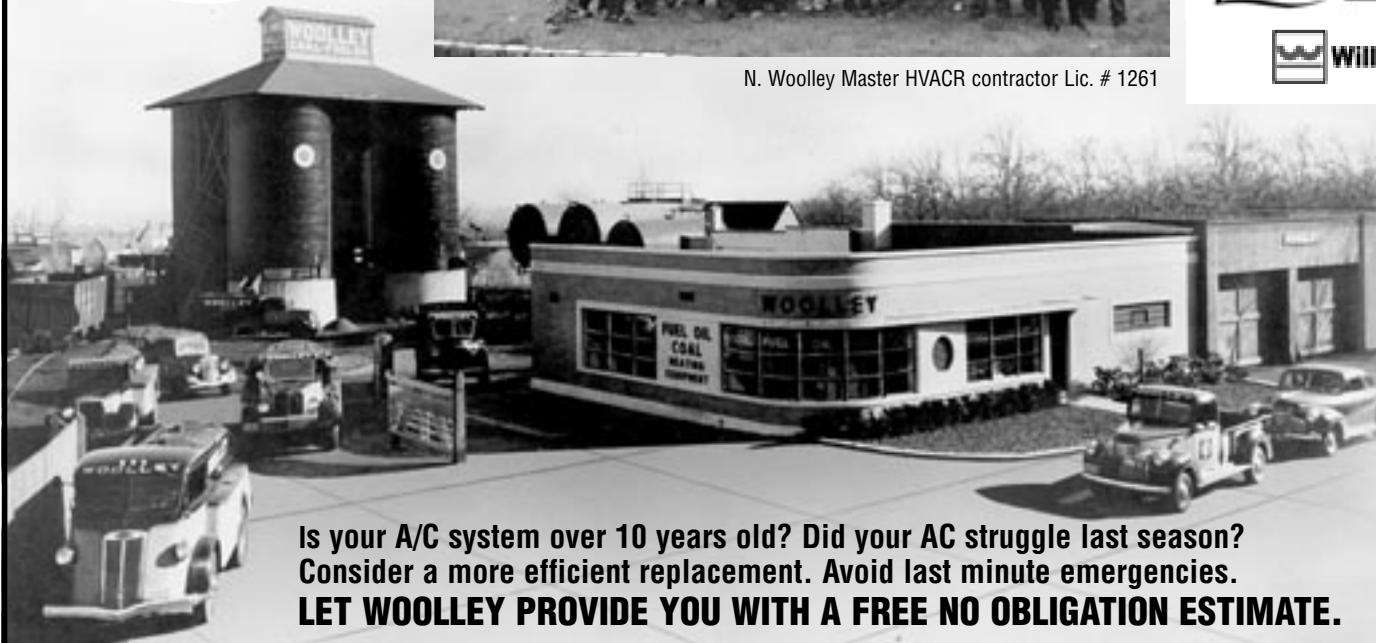
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# AUGUST PROGRAMS AT MOUNTAINSIDE LIBRARY

1 Constitution Plaza, Mountainside, NJ • 908-233-0115 • [www.mountainsidelibrary.org](http://www.mountainsidelibrary.org)  
 Monday, Thursday: 9:30am - 8:00pm; Tuesday, Wednesday: 9:30am - 6:00pm  
 Saturday: 9:30am-5:00pm (closed in July and August) • Sunday: closed

### Monday Night Book Club

August 4: 6:30pm.

The book this month is 1984 by George Orwell.

### Award winning documentary:

#### March of the Penguins

August 5th (12-1:25pm)

#### Space Station Virtual Tour

August 7: 2pm.

A behind-the-scenes guide to space exploration with the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum curator Dr. Jennifer Levasseur. To register go to [libraryc.org/mountainside](http://libraryc.org/mountainside)

### Blue Jersey Band Concert:

#### "Django, Jazz and Bluegrazz"

August 8: 6pm.

Enjoy a free concert- listen to tunes from the American Songbook, Standards. Something for all ages. With interesting stories and liner notes. No registration required.

### Cliff's Cooking Prep: Pots and Pans

August 15: (6-7pm)

Learn about general use and maintenance of pots and pans with a long-term, self-taught home cook. Registration required. Email [spicaro@mountainsidelibrary.org](mailto:spicaro@mountainsidelibrary.org) or call the library. Free to attend. Participants are asked to wear closed shoes and avoid flowing clothing that can catch on objects.

### Board Game Night

August 22, at 5:30pm.

Bring a card game or a board game to play, or enjoy one of the games provided.

No registration needed.

### August Story Time

Tuesdays, Aug 6, 13, 20 & 27 (3-3:30pm)

Special longer tales for good listeners.

No registration required.

### August Family Story Time

Wednesdays, Aug 7, 14, 21 & 28 (10-10:45am)

Stories, songs, rhymes and a craft for all ages. No registration required.

### August Babies In Arms

Wednesdays, Aug 7, 14, 21 & 28 (11:15am)

A lap-sit with simple stories, songs, rhymes and time to visit with others. This is a good way to meet other families and get to know your library. No registration needed.


### August Rotating Clubs

Thursdays, Aug 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29 (2-4pm)

Something new each week for families to do together. Examples: Legos, art, puzzles, games and more.

### August Friday Afternoon Movies

Fridays, Aug 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 (1pm).



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*Michael D Boll, NJVN President*

For the last few years, the New Jersey Veterans Network (NJVN) has been helping veterans with resources and assistance with their mental health conditions. Over time we came to realize that the veteran's family was being affected by their struggles as well. Our team had to learn how to include their family members in our outreach efforts. We lose 22 veterans each day to suicide, and they leave behind grieving families. Recently, we decided to make sure all veteran family members can use the same resources that our team has available for veterans. Sometimes we forget about the sacrifices our veteran families have to make and this country should appreciate them for this.

One thing our team decided to do was to have Gold Star families meet disabled veterans at our events, so they can work together and form a bond. This effort was extremely affective and immediately brought joy to both the Gold Star families and to the disabled veterans. By adding veteran family members to the team, it allows us to work together on our peer support and recreational therapy programs. We are honored to have veteran family members to work alongside us and know they are just as committed with helping our veterans live a better way of life.

If you need assistance, or would like to join the team as a volunteer, please send us your name, email, and phone number to [NJVN1775@gmail.com](mailto:NJVN1775@gmail.com).

## ABOUT NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK

We are a group of veterans and volunteers dedicated to helping our veterans and their families live better lives. Our mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs. Help us save Vets! We are always looking for volunteers, with various skills, to join the team. If you are a veteran or family member that is in need of assistance; or are interested in volunteering, would like us to speak at your event, or contribute to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email [NJVN1775@gmail.com](mailto:NJVN1775@gmail.com). To learn more visit [njvn.org](http://njvn.org).

Courtesy photos

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(above) Michael D Boll, NJVN President, with Dina and Tom Duffy who lost their son Tom Duffy, a Marine Corporal and Afghanistan War veteran.

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## NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AUGUST 6TH

The Borough of Mountainside will host its National Night Out on August 6th from 6 – 9 p.m. in the Borough Hall parking lot (1385 Route 22). Mountainside thanks its generous sponsors that helped make this year's event better than ever!

The community will enjoy free hot dogs, hamburgers, water, ice cream, bounce house, dunk tank and a DJ. Stop by to enjoy the fun and

get to know your neighbors and first responders.

National Night Out culminates annually on the first Tuesday in August. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances. For more information visit [natw.org](http://natw.org).

## 23RD ANNUAL DRIVE FOR AUTISM GOLF EVENT

The Drive for Autism Foundation is pleased to announce that its annual golf event, Drive for Autism XXIII will be held at Royce Brook Golf Club in Hillsborough, NJ on Monday September 16, 2024.

The Drive for Autism Golf Outing, which has been held since 2002 has raised and distributed over \$855,000 to local school programs. Previous beneficiaries of grants were Morris Union Jointure Commission (New Providence, NJ), Salt Brook School (New Providence, NJ), AW Roberts School (New Providence, NJ), Union County Educational Services Foundation/Crossroads School (Westfield, NJ), Educational Partnership for Instructing Children (Paramus, NJ), Young Life (greater Summit area), Eden II/Genesis Programs (Staten Island, NY), Spectrum360 - formally The Children's Institute (Verona, NJ), and Seton Foundation/Mother Francheska Elementary School (Staten Island, NY).

Grant recipients use money to fund Health and Fitness Programs, Social Skills Programs,

educational curriculum and teacher training, a van for community trips and transportation to job training centers, laptop computers, computer touch screens, iPads, video projectors and educational toys and games

The golf event is the main fundraising function for the foundation. Single golfers and foursomes are welcome as well as, product donations and corporate sponsorships. To register online please go to: [birdease.com/DriveforAutismXXIII](http://birdease.com/DriveforAutismXXIII)

### DRIVE FOR AUTISM GOLF OUTING 2024

The Drive for Autism XXIII is scheduled for Monday Sept 16, 2024, at Royce Brook Golf Club in Hillsborough, NJ. The event consists of a morning round of golf followed by a barbeque. Special events include golf contests, raffles and a silent auction of sports memorabilia, game tickets and golf trips. To register or

for additional information please visit  
[birdease.com/DriveForAutismXXIII](http://birdease.com/DriveForAutismXXIII),  
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# SCOUT TROOP 177 SUMMER ADVENTURES

Submitted by Sheila Sidhu

Embarking on a 60-mile trek at Philmont Scout Ranch was a monumental adventure for Mountainside Scout Troop 177. The journey through Philmont challenged us physically and mentally every step of the way. Each day, we hiked for hours, carrying everything we needed on our backs, from tents to food supplies.

One of the most exhilarating moments was when we decided to summit Mount Baldy. As we ascended the steep trails, the air grew thinner, but the anticipation and excitement kept us going. Reaching the summit at 12,441 feet felt like a triumph. The views from the top were breathtaking. The vast expanse of wilderness stretching out below us was a reminder of the beauty of nature.

But the most important part of our journey in Philmont wasn't just in conquering mountains; it was the bonds formed with our crew mates. We relied on each other every day, whether it was singing on the trail, setting up camp, or cooking meals together. Sharing these responsibilities brought us closer, teaching us teamwork and cooperation in ways we couldn't have learned

elsewhere.

Evenings around the campfire were filled with laughter, stories, and reflections on our day's adventures. These moments allowed us to connect on a deeper level, sharing our aspirations, fears, and triumphs. Through challenges like thunderstorms or steep climbs, we grew not just as individuals but as a tightly knit team, supporting each other through every obstacle.

By the end of our trek, standing together at basecamp, we knew we had experienced something extraordinary. The memories of our 63-mile journey, summiting Baldy, and bonding with my crew will forever be etched in my heart as a testament to the strength of friendship and the spirit of adventure that Philmont Scout Ranch embodies.

We will have many more troop activities planned for the summer of 2024, including one week of Boy Scout camp in the Poconos of Pennsylvania.

If you have an interest in Scouting, please get in touch with Jeff Healy at [jeffhealy8@gmail.com](mailto:jeffhealy8@gmail.com).



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