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### **NEWLY RENOVATED CHILDREN'S ROOM OFFICIALLY OPENED**

Florham Park Public Library

On Monday, August 12, the Florham Park Public Library officially opened its newly renovated Children's Room to the public with a ribbon cutting ceremony. The renovation project includes new carpeting, new shelving and furniture, the incorporation of cozy reading nooks, and the addition of custom storage and play areas to the room. The project was completed with the Soyka Smith Design Studio.

The atmosphere was festive, with Library staff, Trustees, Borough of Florham Park employees, Friends of the Library, Library volunteers, and the Soyka Smith design team mingling with attendees of the morning's weekly storytime program.

The renovation project comes after nearly two years of planning that included community surveys and feedback and an extensive study of the collections and user behavior in the youth services area of the library. "Over and over again, we heard from community members that they wanted a space that is more interactive, playful, and comfortable for children and their families," said Library Director Nancy Shah of the project. The library has observed a surge in interest and usage

of the spaces, collections, and events aimed at young families with children in recent years, which is in line with a nation-wide trend in young people turning to public libraries for recreation and entertainment. "The last two years were our busiest years on record, and young people are driving that uptick in usage," remarked Shah. According to Shah, the Children's Room accounts for 20% of the Library's space, and the collections housed there account for 45% of overall circulation.

The renovated space will optimize the presentation of library materials and make it easier for users to find what they are looking for. The room will be organized so that the front of the space is oriented more toward infants, toddlers, and young children, while activities and collections intended for older children will be located farther back in the room. Throughout the space, a variety of seating options will cater equally to children and their caregivers to ensure people can comfortably enjoy the space and use it for extended periods of time. "People are looking for somewhere to go and hang out, and a public library is the ultimate stop because we have plenty to keep kids occupied and it's all free!" said Shah.

Courtesy photo

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(above, l-r) Kate Dinneny, Youth Services Librarian, Bridget Soyka Smith, AJ Herold, Councilman Josua Marchal, Joe Guerin Jr., President, Library Board of Trustees, Dr. Louis Gaydosh, Treasurer, Library Board of Trustees, Megan Mink, Library Board of Trustees, Stacy Saul, Secretary, Library Board of Trustees, Josue Lema, and Nancy Shah, Library

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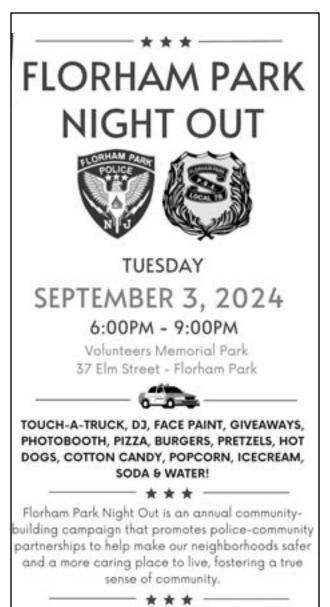
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### SEEKING HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS FOR THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

Halos for Angels Junior Board

Founded in 2023, the Halos for Angels Jr. Board consists of local high school students. They actively support the mission of Halos for Angels by contributing to the community through fundraising efforts.

Halos for Angels, Inc. (HFA) primarily aims to enhance the well-being of its community members. They offer temporary relief, comfort, and support to families facing sudden tragedies. HFA assists with daily responsibilities such as transportation, shopping, childcare, and meals, ensuring families receive the support they need until they regain stability. Emotional support and companionship are also provided by dedicated volunteers. and professionals collaboration with local families, organizations, and volunteers, HFA gives back by offering temporary services to help families move towards a stronger and stable environment once again.

If you or someone you know is in grades 9-12 and interested in making a difference in their community, gaining leadership experience, and having fun with other local teens, please email Steven at hfajuniorboard@halosforangels.org.



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### **ICE CREAM SOCIAL EVENT**

FLORHAM PARK SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB



The Florham Park Senior Citizens Club had a successful Ice Cream Social Event for our club members. The event was held at the Florham Park Senior Center on a hot July afternoon, which contributed to the well-attended event. The club provided a good variety of ice cream and toppings.

Our club members greatly appreciated an

afternoon socializing with friends and having fun enjoying ice cream creations.

Thank you to club volunteers that helped serve several varieties of ice cream. Also thank you to the Florham Park Girl Scouts, 8th grade, Cadette troop 97355 for providing the beautiful table decorations and assistance at the ice cream toppings table. Courtesy photos







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### THE SEPTEMBER SPEAKERS PROGRAM

### Summit Area Old Guard

The Summit Area Old Guard is a social, educational, and recreational organization that serves men of retirement age. We meet most Tuesdays at the New Providence Presbyterian Church located at 1307 Springfield Ave. Our dues are minimal, and members manage all aspects of the operation. Our motto is "Come for the Programs. Stay for the Friends." organization was founded in 1930.

In September, we will have four speakers:

On Tuesday, September 3rd, Summit Old Guard member, Larry Cunningham, will discuss some of the cultural differences that he observed between the U.S. and Russian personnel during the construction of the De-Kastri Crude Oil Export Terminal Project near Sakhalin Island, including standards of living, and differing approaches to project development between a capitalist-based society communist/socialist-based one. This project was completed in 2006 and is one of the largest oil terminals in the world.

On Tuesday, September 10th, our speaker will be Jack Willard, Sr. VP - Marketing & Sales at the Battleship New Jersey Museum & Memorial. The USS New Jersey is the most decorated battleship in U.S. Navy history. It earned distinction from 1938 until 1991 during World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and conflicts in the Middle East. It has steamed more miles, fought in more battles, and fired more shells in combat than any other battleship in history. We will learn more about the

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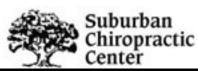
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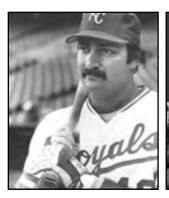
On September 17th, Steve Balboni will highlight the road taken to define his career in Major League Baseball, starting with his childhood in NH and his love of baseball from a very young age — the road from being a nineyear old not making the little league team — to being drafted by the NY Yankees. He will cover his experiences playing for the Yankees and the KC Royals, including some of the highlights of his career and some of the people who helped





him along the way. He will talk about the ups and downs of his career and how it eventually led him to coaching and then scouting.

Finally, on September 24th, we will learn about the turtles, frogs, and snakes found at the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Our speaker will be Randi Emmer, a member of the Friends of the Great Swamp. Randi will give us an account of the types of amphibians that reside in the Great Swamp, which also was the first national wildlife refuge in the United States.





(above, l-r) Larry Cunningham, Jack Willard, Steve Balboni, and Randi Emmer

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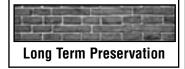
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### SECOND SUNDAY LINEUP SCHEDULE AT LIBRARY ANNOUNCED

The Florham Park Public Library is thrilled to announce its 2024-2025 Second Sunday schedule. These engaging events are free, open to all, and are designed to entertain and educate our community. Performances will be held each month, September through April, from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the Library's Akhoury Room. Registration for all events is through the library's website florhamparklib.org.

### "WHAT DO YOU SEEK?"

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Come to the 7-part Zoom series, "Beta: The Search," hosted by Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish of Scotch Plains, NJ.

This series is free to all. It runs 7 consecutive Wednesday evenings on Zoom, from Wednesday October 2, 2024, until November 13, 2024, beginning at 7:30 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. You will gather with other seekers, watch a 30-minute video on life's big questions, and then engage in small group discussion. This series is for all seekers; young, old, single, married, faithful, atheist, and agnostic.

There is no cost to participate but spots are limited so please register early. Just bring yourself and a desire for frank discussion, a willingness to participate and a commitment to attend. You will need a computer or smartphone capable of Zoom sessions. To register go onto IHMparish.net, scan the QR code or call Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish at 908-889-2100 with any questions you may have.

# Beta: The Search returns on Wednesday October 2, 2024. 7 Episode Series on Wednesday nights at 7:30 PM on ZOOM from October 2 until November 13. Please sign-up at www.ihmparish.net/beta or call the office if you need help 908-889-2100

### **Walter Choroszewski**

September 8, 2024

The season begins with renowned speaker Walter Choroszewski, who will present "Historic Northeast Hurricanes." This promises to be a captivating discussion, with a detailed exploration of the impact and legacy these powerful storms have had on the region.

### **Dr. Matthew Beland**

October 13, 2024

The Library welcomes Dr. Matthew Beland, an esteemed archivist from Drew University. Dr.

Beland will present "Ghosts at Drew University", a fascinating look into the eerie and mysterious lore that has become a part of the university's history. This lecture is perfect for getting into the Halloween spirit!

### Joan Schaible

November 10, 2024

As Veteran's Day approaches, please join Joan Schaible as she presents "Animals Go to War." This thought-provoking lecture will explore the significant roles animals have played, and continue to play, as they assist our brave troops during wartime.

### **John Kenrick**

December 8, 2024

Celebrate the holiday season with John Kenrick who will discuss the beloved classic film "It's a Wonderful Life". Gain new insights into this timeless movie and its enduring legacy.

### January 12, 2025

Prepare to be dazzled by a remarkable musical performance. Stay tuned for further details regarding this special event.

### John Cerilli

February 9, 2025

a docent from the Yogi Berra Museum, will delight baseball fans with "Brick City, Silk City, and Beyond - Baseball's Rich History in North Jersey". John's engaging presentation will highlight some of baseball's most iconic moments while delighting fans of

America's pastime.

### **Janet Mandel**

March 9, 2025

In celebration of Women's History Month, the Library will host Janet Mandel as she presents "Three Visionary Women/Three Great Art Museums." Janet's talk will explore the legacies of three remarkable women—Isabella Stewart Gardner, Helene Kröller-Müller, and Peggy Guggenheim—who each founded iconic

art museums.

### **Mallory Mortillaro**

April 13, 2025

Concluding the season, Mallory Mortillaro will delve into "The Lost Treasures of the Titanic." Discover the fascinating stories and mysteries surrounding the legendary shipwreck and its sunken treasures.

All Second Sunday programming is generously funded by the Friends of Florham Park Library.

For more information about the Florham Park Public Library's Second Sunday series and other library programs, please visit

florhamparklib.org

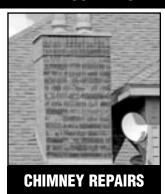
or contact Nancy Shah, Library Director at nancyashah@flo.mainlib.org.











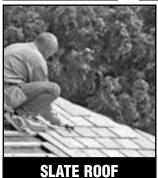


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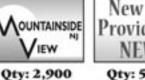
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### **ELKS FAMILY FUN DAY TO HELP HOMELESS VETS**

The NJ Elks East Central District is proud to announce the 2nd Annual Family Fun Day event on September 28, 2024 from noon to 6pm at the Stirling Elks Lodge at 1138 Valley Road in Stirling. This event aims to bring the community together for a day of food, fun, and entertainment for all ages to help support a crucial cause.

Included with entry, all attendees will enjoy a delicious pig roast, grilled burgers, hotdogs, pulled pork, sausage & peppers, sandwiches, sides, desserts, water, soda, beer, wine, sangria, and more. Kids' activities will include DJ Mr. Socks, contests, games, a bounce house, magic performances, a fire truck, and more. Adults and teens can participate in a professionally run cornhole tournament, a golf pitching contest, volleyball, and bocce ball. Additionally, the event will feature a special rendition of the National Anthem, a NJ State Police helicopter, World War II vehicles, bagpipers, a dunk tank, 50/50s, a Silent Auction, and a paratrooper parachuting the American Flag into the event.

Children under 12 are free.

There are thousands of homeless veterans in New Jersey which is a tragic reality that the NJ Elks are determined to change. Over the past five years, the New Jersey Elks have successfully helped to move over 2,400 homeless veterans into homes, providing them with a fresh start and

a sense of stability.

The Elks National Veterans Service Committee operates on a 100% volunteer basis, ensuring that all proceeds from this event will go directly towards improving the lives of our American heroes who have fallen on tough times. In addition, they are actively seeking sponsors and donors to support their efforts and their public relations committee will work hard to acknowledge them through several sponsorship packages.

Donations and advanced ticket purchases can be made at: http://donate.njelks-ecd.org or mailed to Elks ECD Veterans Committee, 87 Harrison Ave., Colonia, NJ 07067. Checks should be made payable to: ECD Veterans Committee, with 'homeless vets' in the memo. (If a 501(c)(3) receipt is needed, please make checks payable to: NJSEA, with 'homeless vets' in the memo).

For sponsorship interest or more information about this event, please contact Apollo Hrehorovich at funday@njelks-ecd.org, call or Admission is \$25 (donation) for adults. text 732-540-0062, or visit http://funday.njelksecd.org.

> Elks pledge "So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."

For more information about the Elks and how to join, please visit http://elks.org today.



### FLORHAM PARK MOTHER DAUGHTER TEAM PUBLISH A BOOK

Ridgedale Middle School 8th grade graduate, is the illustrator of a book created with her mother, Janice, about her grandfather's brain disease "It's OK, Grandpop". They are hoping it will help children and families in need of guidance and support.

The story is about how they learned to accept the struggles their grandfather experienced and how they were determined to find different ways to show their love. The book is available for purchase through Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

Kaitlyn Benacchio says "When my grandfather was diagnosed with a brain disease nine years ago, we noticed there weren't any books out there for children to use as a resource. We were looking for ways to help my brother and I make connections and know we were not alone in this battle. In turn, my mom and I created this book

Kaitlyn Benacchio, a recent Florham Park to help families in need of guidance and support that are going through similar situations".

> Janice Benacchio (mother) says "We hope to bring awareness to progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP) as well as offer young minds a means to learn about their loved one's afflictions."

> Dr. Steven Caponegro (Florham Park Superintendent of School) says "As a school district and having personally known Kaitlyn and her family for over 10 years, we are so proud of her for contributing to this worthwhile project. Spreading knowledge about a disease and providing resources to help family and friends who may be struggling to relate and to help them be more at peace is an incredibly noble act. I have already purchased a few copies for each of the schools so that current and future students can see the accomplishments and powerful message provided by Kaitlyn and her mother."



(above) Janice & Kaitlyn Benacchio.

Courtesy photos

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