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## BSA Troop 177

BSA Troop 177 is proud to announce that George Newcome has earned his Eagle rank after completing 32 merit badges, camping for 53 nights, hiking over 50 miles, and devoting 100 hours to community service. He served as Den Chief, Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader and Junior Assistant Scoutmaster. He was on Troop 177's Adirondack canoe trek in 2022. George is BSA Troop 177's 34th Eagle Scout.

For his Eagle project, George supervised a crew of scouts and adults improving the front of the library. He installed new plantings, and a bench area perfect for reading under the trees. Please join us in congratulating George on his achievement and thanking his family for all their support!



(above) George Newcome, from Cub Scout to Eagle Scout.

## Submitted by Lillian Chu Zawislak

Mountainside Cub Scouts Pack 177 held their annual food drive in November. This year, the Cub Scouts collaborated with BSA Troop 177 and the Mountainside Girl Scouts troops to collect around town. After picking up the contributions from Mountainside residents, the scouts helped

sort the food items into bins for easier transport to Hands of Hope Food Pantry in Edison. This year, 113 bins were filled, beating last year's record of 102 bins. Thank you to Mountainside for your continued generosity and care for other families in need.

Courtesy Photo



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## FIRE DEPARTMENT 2026 OFFICERS

During the Mountainside Borough Hall Reorganization Meeting held on January 6, 2026, the Mountainside Fire Department 2026 Officers were sworn in. The ceremony formally recognized the department's leadership team.

Edward Kweselait was sworn in as Chief, with

Matthew Watson taking the role of Assistant Chief. Deputy Chief positions were filled by Matthew Pristasch and Pete Esemplaire.

The officer lineup also includes Captains Ian Kaluzny and Antonio Famiglietti, along with Lieutenants TJ McGowan and Rocco Menoni.



Photo by Borough of Mountainside

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Vice President: Jamie Pereira  
Treasurer: Sonali Shah  
Secretary: Kevin Pereira  
Delegates: Norma Huber  
& Steve Susman  
Chaplain: Marty Roden  
Chief: Eric D. Pastore  
Deputy Chief: Chris Sileo  
1st Lieutenant: Domenico Deluca  
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## RESCUE SQUAD 2026 OFFICERS SWORN IN

Mountainside Rescue Squad's 2026 officers were officially sworn in at the Borough's Reorganization Meeting. The Mayor thanked our

members for their continued dedication, and we are grateful for the ongoing support of the Mayor and Town Council as we begin a new year.



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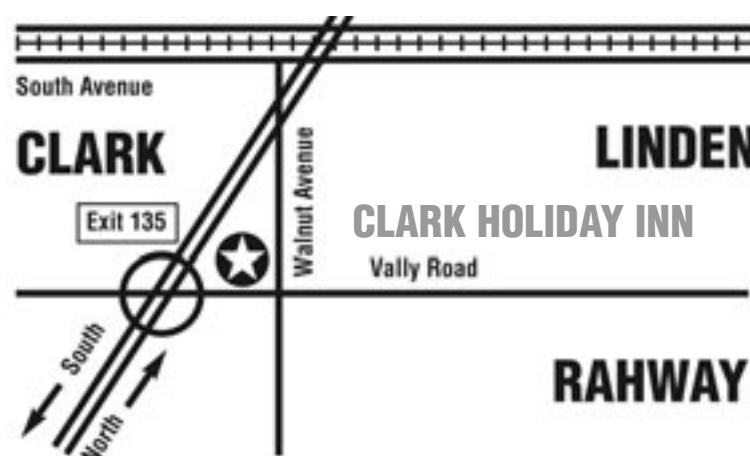


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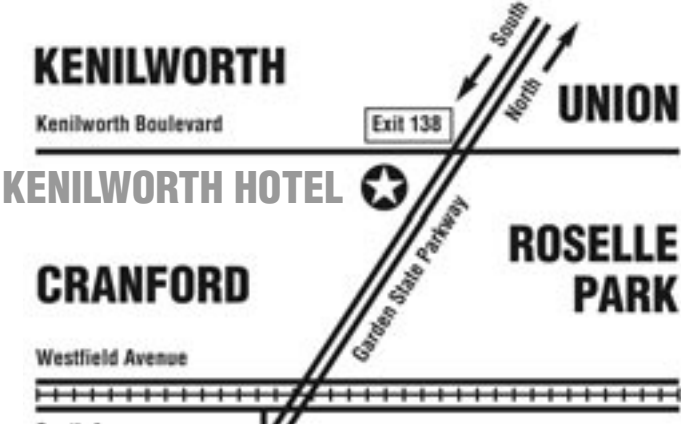


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## UPDATE ON BOROUGH BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS

The Borough of Mountainside, in partnership with volunteer beautification group Beautiful Mountainside, completed phase two of Mountainside Common, located at the corner of Mountain Avenue and New Providence Road. The construction of a 26-foot wide, three-foot high curved brick 'welcome wall' was completed, and electricity connections were finalized so that the wall is lit at night - a lovely welcome and hello to passersby. The Beautiful Mountainside group also installed small bushes lining the front of the wall and decorated them for the holidays, along with the additional evergreen tree in the space.

The town has plans to repair/replace the sidewalks and update the streetlights surrounding the space, while the Beautiful Mountainside group will continue to work with the town to further excavate and landscape the area around

the sign, providing a beautiful green and open space in the downtown area.

Beautiful Mountainside Vice President Alice Cowell reflected on the work to date, saying "The wall is a real statement and our group is so proud to be able to work so closely with the Borough on this project. Through our fundraising efforts and grant applications, no costs have been passed along to residents, which is great! The Common is a terrific addition to our town, and we can't wait to see it come to life."

In addition to partnering on the wall construction and additional Mountainside Common enhancements, the Beautiful Mountainside group has been busy throughout the year on various projects, including:

- Planting bright yellow daffodils along key thoroughfares to surprise and delight

residents. The group has planted more than 5,000 daffodil bulbs over the past two years.

- Ongoing clean up and refreshing of planting areas near Borough Hall and throughout the town.
- Town litter clean ups, as well as spring and summer clean ups along Route 22.
- Refreshing the planter boxes in front of local businesses on Mountain Avenue with seasonal plantings and decor.
- Sponsoring a holiday home exterior decorating contest.
- Sponsoring the annual Christmas tree lighting (tree located along Route 22, near Borough Hall).

If you'd like to volunteer your time and join Beautiful Mountainside, please email: beautifulmountainside07092@gmail.com.

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# GLHS HEART OF THE HIGHLANDER FALL AWARD RECIPIENTS

*Berkeley Heights Public Schools*

The Governor Livingston High School Athletic Department is excited to recognize the next class of Heart of a Highlander award recipients for the 2025 Fall sports season. This group is an exceptional collective of student athletes that represent GLHS in the highest

regard. This award was created to recognize a Governor Livingston High School student-athlete from each sports team (each season) who exemplifies great character, leadership, sportsmanship, inclusion, and community service. **THE STUDENTS RECOGNIZED ARE:**

- Noah Abdalla - Boys Cross Country
- Rylee Conover - Girls Cross Country
- Abby Kim - Girls Volleyball
- Pippa Raaijmakers - Girls Tennis
- Sienna Duff - Cheerleading
- Collin Cisco - Football
- Corinne Morrison - Field Hockey
- Nole Campbell - Boys Soccer



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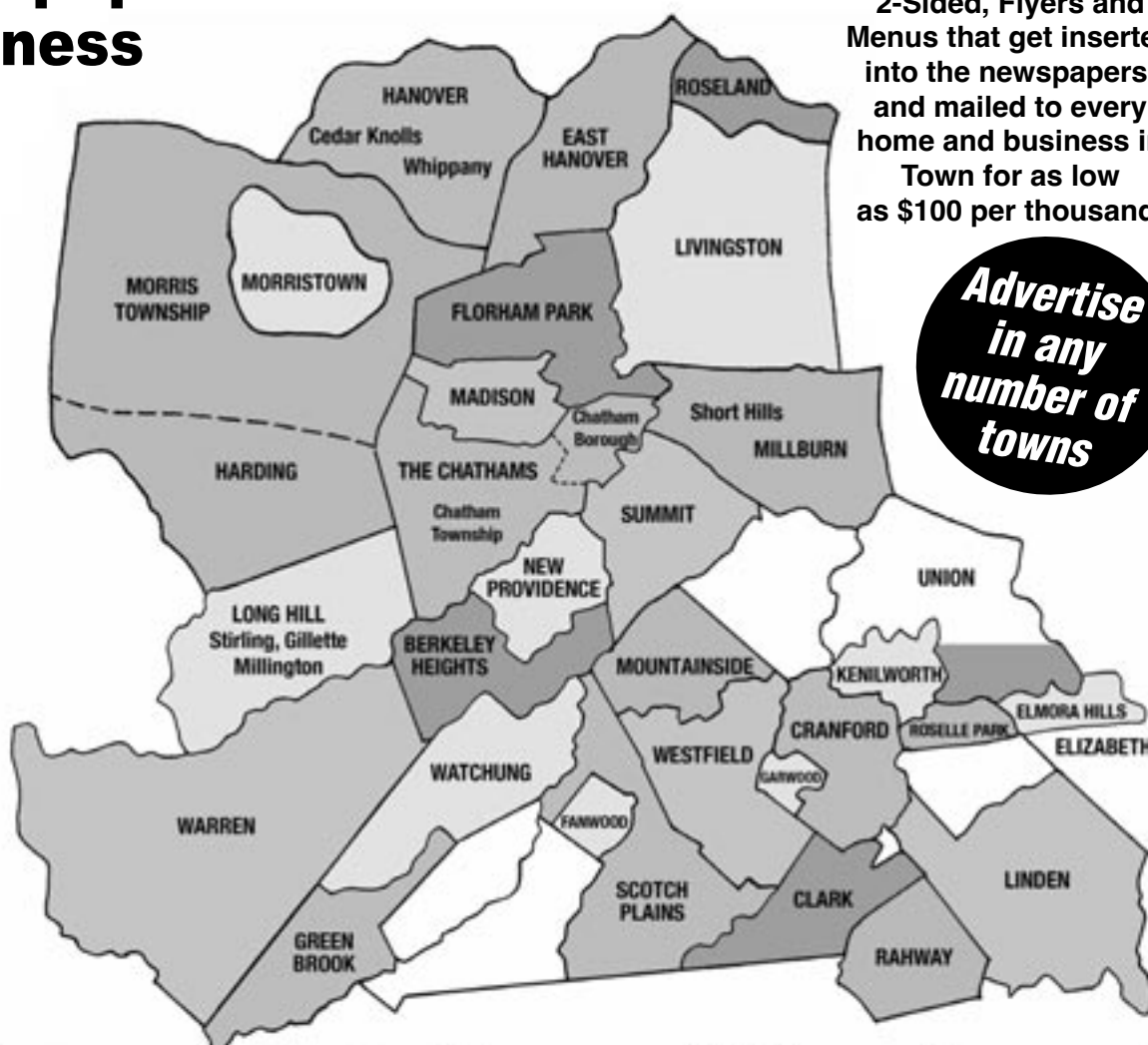
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"Sharpie" as we call them, made great progress and was moved to an outside flight cage on 12/28/25. After proving strong, steady flight and good awareness, the hawk was successfully released back to the wild on 1/2/2026.

Sharp-shinned Hawks are incredibly fast and agile forest hunters, built to weave through dense trees while chasing small birds. That same speed and focus, however, can make them especially vulnerable to window strikes when reflective glass looks like open sky or habitat.

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Diane Kontra is extremely knowledgeable, professional and very dedicated. She walked me through each process of selling my home. She staged our house beautifully. I didn't have to worry about a thing as she just led me in each step. She helped us in so many ways beyond my imagination. I was so overwhelmed with all of it and Diane just had a way to make me feel that it would all work out and be ok. The thought of packing up my home of 20 years was enough to send me in a whirlwind not to mention the stress of selling. But Diane, never crumbled, she took it all with a grain of salt and just calmly offered her help and there she was packing up my house with me. This woman works so hard and deserves a great deal of recognition. I don't know what I would have done without her, Thank you Diane Kontra!



*Please call me to discuss your unique market strategy.*

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