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## TROOP 19 SOARS: NEW EAGLE SCOUTS TAKE FLIGHT

Scouts BSA Troop 19, St. Rose of Lima Short Hills

With the pews of St. Rose of Lima Church filled with family, friends, civic leaders, and fellow Scouts, Scouts BSA Troop 19, chartered at St Rose of Lima Church, proudly held its fifth Eagle Scout Court of Honor, celebrating the remarkable achievements of four outstanding young women: Giselle Bonardi, Ava Legasto, Annette Johnson, and Nidhi Pusapati.

Star Scouts Sahasra Chalasani and Elena Katz opened the ceremony as Masters of Ceremony. Following a dignified procession and color guard presentation, attendees joined in the Pledge of Allegiance and stood for a moving rendition of the National Anthem performed by Liza Johnson, sister of honoree Annette Johnson. Deacon David Hughes of St. Rose delivered the invocation, offering heartfelt blessings and reflections on service, growth, and leadership.

Troop 19's Senior Patrol Leader Genevieve Brazell welcomed the audience and acknowledged the troop's exceptional progress, including 46 rank advancements and 22 merit badges earned since October 2024. She highlighted how far the program has come and the example set by the four new Eagle Scouts.

This year's Eagle Scout class represents the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th young women from Troop 19 to earn Scouting's highest rank since the troop's inaugural class of female Eagle Scouts in 2021, which is a powerful testament to the momentum and legacy the troop continues to build.

In front of a proud audience, each Eagle Scout was honored in a formal pinning ceremony with her parents:

- Giselle Bonardi, a freshman at Friends Select School in Philadelphia and a member of the Army Ants patrol, revitalized the East Orange Public Library garden, transforming it into a vibrant community space. Her project included installing bird boxes, repairing planters, planting vegetables, and leading environmental education sessions for local youth. A dedicated leader, Giselle has



(above) Troop 19 Scoutmaster James McKenna (center), poses with his latest class of Eagle Scouts, Giselle Bonardi, Ava Legasto, Nidhi Pusapati, and Annette Johnson (left to right)

Photos by Erica Moffitt, Naki Studios

served as Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Troop Guide, and Historian, and is a member of the Order of the Arrow.

- Ava Legasto, a founding member of Troop 19 and Millburn High School sophomore, led a global outreach effort benefiting Friends of Female Footballers, collecting over 600 pieces of soccer gear and raising more than \$1,700 through a juggling fundraiser. Her work helped equip young female athletes in underserved communities worldwide. Ava is a top-performing high school soccer player with a deep love for the impact of the sport—especially the confidence it instills in young women. She plays on both her club team and Millburn High School's varsity squad. In addition to her athletic achievements, she has held several leadership roles in the troop including Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Den Chief, Quartermaster, Troop Guide, and currently serves as an Instructor.
- Annette Johnson, a certified EMT and high-adventure trekker, taught first aid to children aged 7–11 through her Eagle project. Her project was inspired by a personal medical incident she experienced as a child, which motivated her to ensure other children are better prepared to respond in emergencies. Annette has served as Quartermaster and

(Continued on page 15)

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Do you have a community service that you need help publicizing? Did you or someone you know accomplish something amazing? We are interested in hearing about your latest achievement (honor, award, etc.), send us your news! Email: [editor@rennamedia.com](mailto:editor@rennamedia.com)

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MHS LIMELIGHT PLAYERS PERFORM OUR TOWN

This fall, the MHS Limelight players are thrilled to be performing a classic of American theater: Thornton Wilder’s Our Town. The play chronicles the lives of the inhabitants of Grover’s Corner and encourages audience members to appreciate the “biggest smallest” moments in life. Due to HS auditorium renovations, we are grateful to be performing at Millburn Middle School. Show dates are November 21st and 22nd at 7:30pm and November 23rd at 2:00pm. General admission tickets are now on sale at [mhsnj.booktix.com](http://mhsnj.booktix.com).

Millburn High School  
Limelight Players

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by Thornton Wilder

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## NOVEMBER LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Register at [millburnlibrary.org/events](http://millburnlibrary.org/events).

For virtual programs, registrants  
will receive a Zoom link.

### ADULTS PROGRAMS

#### Move Your Body! Exercise Class

Friday, November 7, 10:30-11:15am

Auditorium. Join us for Zumba with Millburn's own Holla Studio! All ages and abilities are welcome. Register to attend.

#### Holiday Book Preview

Monday, November 10, 7-8pm, Room B

Our Librarians will give you the inside scoop on their top picks for adult fiction, non-fiction, and children's titles. Register to attend.

#### Holiday Card Design: Canva Tutorial (Virtual)

Tuesday, November 11, 7-8pm, Virtual

Learn to design your holiday card with Canva. Discover a collection of free design templates and images. Registration required.

#### Creative Aging: Essential Oils

Tuesday, Nov 18, 10:30am-12pm, Room B

Learn to make your own unique perfume blend using essential oils. Creative Aging programs are designed to stimulate creativity and community in people ages 50 and up.

### FAMILIES PROGRAMS

#### Sleepytime Tales

Thursday, November 6, 7-7:30pm

Children's Room, Ages up to 8. Families are welcome to join us for an evening storytime. Feel free to wear pajamas and bring a stuffy!

Register to attend.

#### Learn About the Lenape

Friday, November 21, 4-4:45pm

Gallery, Ages 5-12. Reeves-Reed Arboretum joins us for stories and activities focused on the first people to live in New Jersey, the Lenape.

Register to attend.

### TEENS & TWEENS PROGRAMS

#### What Colleges Want (Hybrid)

Monday, November 10, 4-5pm

Williamsburg Room/Zoom. An info-packed session about what colleges are looking for.

Register to attend.

#### Period Party!

Friday, November 14, 4-5pm

Auditorium. A menstruation celebration. Teens and Tweens: learn about periods, make fun crafts and leave with a period "go bag." Geared towards ages 9-18. All genders are welcome.

Register to attend.

#### Pride+ Hangout

Tuesday, November 18, 3:30-4:30pm

Room B. ALL ARE WELCOME to celebrate Transgender Awareness Week with Janis and JP Pedoto of Pride+ Family Connections NJ. Enjoy a casual hangout with food and activities.

### RESOURCE OF THE MONTH:

#### Ancestry

Interested in finding your ancestors and building your family tree? Ancestry has millions of documents and images to discover, from immigration and military records, to birth, death and marriage certificates.

## ENROLLING IN MEDICARE AND UPDATING YOUR PLAN

By George Sosa, President, The Sosa Insurance Group

Turning 65 marks eligibility for Medicare, a federal health insurance program designed for seniors and certain individuals with disabilities. While the system can be complex, resources are available to help beneficiaries navigate enrollment, updates, and plan changes to ensure their coverage continues to meet their needs.

Original Medicare consists of Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (medical insurance). Part A covers hospital stays, skilled nursing facilities, home health, and hospice care. Part B focuses on outpatient care, doctor visits, preventive screenings, and therapies. While comprehensive, Original Medicare leaves gaps in coverage, which can be supplemented through Medigap policies. These help with deductibles, co-pays, and sometimes foreign travel coverage, offering flexibility and predictability.

Medicare Advantage (Part C), offered by private insurers, combines Parts A and B and often includes additional benefits like vision, dental, hearing, fitness programs, and lower premiums. These plans have out-of-pocket maximums, but often require use of in-network providers.

Prescription drug coverage (Part D) is also offered through private plans. Each plan has a formulary outlining covered medications, cost-sharing structures, and potential coverage gaps, though assistance programs like "Extra Help" exist for those with limited income. New Jersey also provides state assistance through PAAD and Senior Gold to help seniors manage prescription

drug costs.

For higher-income beneficiaries, Medicare applies IRMAA (Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount), which adds extra costs to Part B and D premiums based on IRS tax information.

Enrollment timing is crucial. While some may delay enrollment due to employer coverage, late enrollment penalties apply if coverage lapses without creditable insurance.

Every year, Medicare beneficiaries have an opportunity to review and adjust their coverage. The Annual Enrollment Period (October 15 – December 7) allows switching between Original Medicare and Advantage plans, adding or changing drug plans, or returning to Original Medicare. Any changes take effect January 1. Additionally, the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment (January 1 – March 31) allows those in Advantage plans to switch or return to Original Medicare.

When evaluating options, beneficiaries should consider cost, provider networks, additional benefits, drug coverage, and changes in their health or medications.

Understanding Medicare is the first step to making the best decisions for your health and budget. If you'd like help comparing plans or reviewing your coverage for 2026, The Sosa Insurance Group is here to guide you every step of the way. Contact us at 973-902-5445 to schedule a one-on-one review about your Medicare choices.

## Medicare can be complicated. We Make it simple.

### Annual Enrollment Period ends December 7th!

The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is the time when Medicare beneficiaries can choose to re-evaluate their health care coverage. Getting Medicare or changing Medicare plans is a major milestone.

We specialize in Medicare Supplement, also known as Medigap, Medicare Advantage, Medicare and Medicaid and Stand-Alone Part D Prescription. We provide prospective clients with phone, virtual and face-to-face appointments to assist in navigating all your Medicare options:

- Change from one Medicare Advantage Plan to another Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Change from a Medicare Advantage Plan to Original Medicare.
- Change from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Enroll in a Prescription Drug Plan or change your Prescription Drug Plan.
- If you're new to Medicare, you might have a different election period; reach out to us to review your options.

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The Sosa Insurance group is dedicated to assisting Medicare beneficiaries throughout their Medicare journey.

If you, parents or a loved one is new to Medicare, considering a change or just simply want to review their plan options, please call 973-902-5445 to speak with one of our expert agents. You can also reach us by email at [info@thesosainsurancegroup.com](mailto:info@thesosainsurancegroup.com) to request a quote. Consultations are free of charge.

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# ONE TOWN, ONE HEART – AED AWARENESS SAVES LIVES

Emilie C. Whitley – EMT, Millburn Short Hills Volunteer First Aid Squad

We’ve all heard of them, may know what the letters stand for, and may even know someone whose life was saved by one. But do we know where they are in town?

An AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) analyzes a person’s heart rhythm and, if necessary, delivers an electrical shock to restore a normal heartbeat. Before the 1960s, cardiac arrest was almost always fatal. Now, with good CPR and early defibrillation, patients can survive with little or no neurological damage.

AEDs are designed for bystanders to use - they’re simple, with voice prompts and clear diagrams so anyone can operate one confidently. An AED is the third vital link in the “Chain of Survival”:

- 1) Call 911
- 2) Begin high-quality CPR
- 3) Apply the AED for rapid defibrillation

That third step is the most critical and works best within the first two minutes of cardiac arrest. Quoting Squad President H. Steven Roth, “Knowing where your nearest AED is could make the difference, as every minute of delay in defibrillation reduces chances of survival.”

Look for the AED symbol – a heart with a lightning bolt. Try spotting them, they’re wall-mounted in many public spaces, including: Township Offices, Police and Fire Departments; Paper Mill Playhouse – front of house; ShopRite – near the cashier section; Millburn Public Library; Gero Park: Field A dugout (seasonal), Par 3 Golf Course (April–November), Municipal

Pool (Memorial Day–Labor Day), inside Gero Community Center; Taylor Park: tennis courts (seasonal), inside Bauer Community Center; Train Stations: Millburn and Short Hills; Department of Public Works

Churches and temples are also well equipped, and Millburn public schools have multiple AEDs on-site and on athletic fields. The Short Hills Mall has several as well; in an emergency, call 911 first, then mall security at (973) 376-1320 to

dispatch a trained officer.

Many residents have already taken the CPR–AED course offered by the Millburn-Short Hills Volunteer First Aid Squad (MSHVVAS). Knowing where AEDs are located can save precious seconds when they matter most. New Jersey’s Good Samaritan law protects anyone who helps in good faith, so don’t hesitate to act.

Every minute counts: survival drops up to 10% for each minute defibrillation is delayed. Early defibrillation within five minutes is a community goal we can all help achieve. Know where your nearest AED is - it could save a life.

We’re fortunate to live in a community that cares. Register for a CPR class at [mshvfas.org](http://mshvfas.org), upcoming sessions are on November 9 and December 7.

Do it for them. Do it for our town. Do it for yourself.





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Saturday, November 15 at 6pm

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The Sieminski Theater is a 501c3 performing arts non-profit.

For more information or tickets, visit  
SieminskiTheater.org  
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Saturday November 15th at 6:00pm Join us for this fun-filled evening and fundraising event for the Sieminski Theater! Just in time for the holiday Hallmark movie season, and who doesn't love those cheesy Hallmark holiday movies! "My Unauthorized Hallmark Movie Musical"!

The evening will start with a cocktail reception in the lobby with Hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Then move into the theater for this delightful, lighthearted musical production. Afterwards, enjoy a dessert bar and champagne and an opportunity to meet the star of the show. There will be raffles, drawings and more surprises. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go to future programming at the Sieminski Theater. An event not to be missed and will help keep the Arts alive at the Sieminski Theater!!

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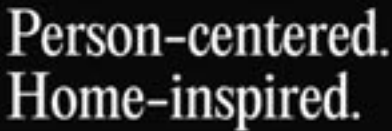
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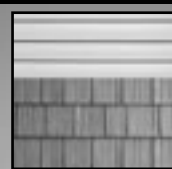
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# BREAKFAST WITH SANTA AT TWIN MAPLES

The entire family is invited to one of the areas loveliest historic homes, Twin Maples in Summit, on Saturday or Sunday, December 6 and 7 to join Santa for food and fun. The weekend event is hosted by the Fortnightly Club of Summit to benefit historic preservation. Festivities begin at 9:15 a.m. each day with a delicious Holiday ‘Breakfast with Santa’ served in the beautifully decorated ballroom with catering by ‘What a Dish.’ For those who can’t

make it for breakfast, ‘Brunch with Santa’ will be served each day at 11:15 a.m. All seatings include a children’s buffet, adult served meal, photos with Santa, live music and more. This year’s beautiful holiday décor features a ‘Nutcracker’ theme, so don’t be surprised to see Clara, the Sugar Plum Fairies and some really naughty mice. Tickets to Santa at Twin Maples can be purchased at <https://www.fortnightlyclub.org> or through Eventbrite. Seating is limited. Pricing for Breakfast with Santa is \$45 for adults and \$20 for children under 12. Please bring booster seats for children. Highchairs are not available.

The weekend event benefits the preservation of Twin Maples, 214 Springfield Avenue, Summit, a property on the New Jersey and National Historic Registers. The house was designed and built by New York architect Alfred F. Norris in the Colonial Revival style in 1908 and resembles the White House. The Fortnightly Club purchased the property in 1949. Today, Twin Maples serves as a clubhouse and hosts many community events and fundraisers. The Fortnightly Club of Summit, a non-profit organization founded in 1893, offers women camaraderie and a full calendar of interesting events and volunteer opportunities. The Club supports the preservation of Twin Maples, education, the arts and humanitarian efforts. For over thirty-years the Club has awarded annual scholarships to deserving young, local women. Fortnightly Club’s 104 members are from Summit and many neighboring towns. To join or for more information, visit the Club’s website at [www.fortnightlyclub.org](http://www.fortnightlyclub.org).



(above) Santa visits with children at Twin Maples beside the Club’s Annual Mitten Tree

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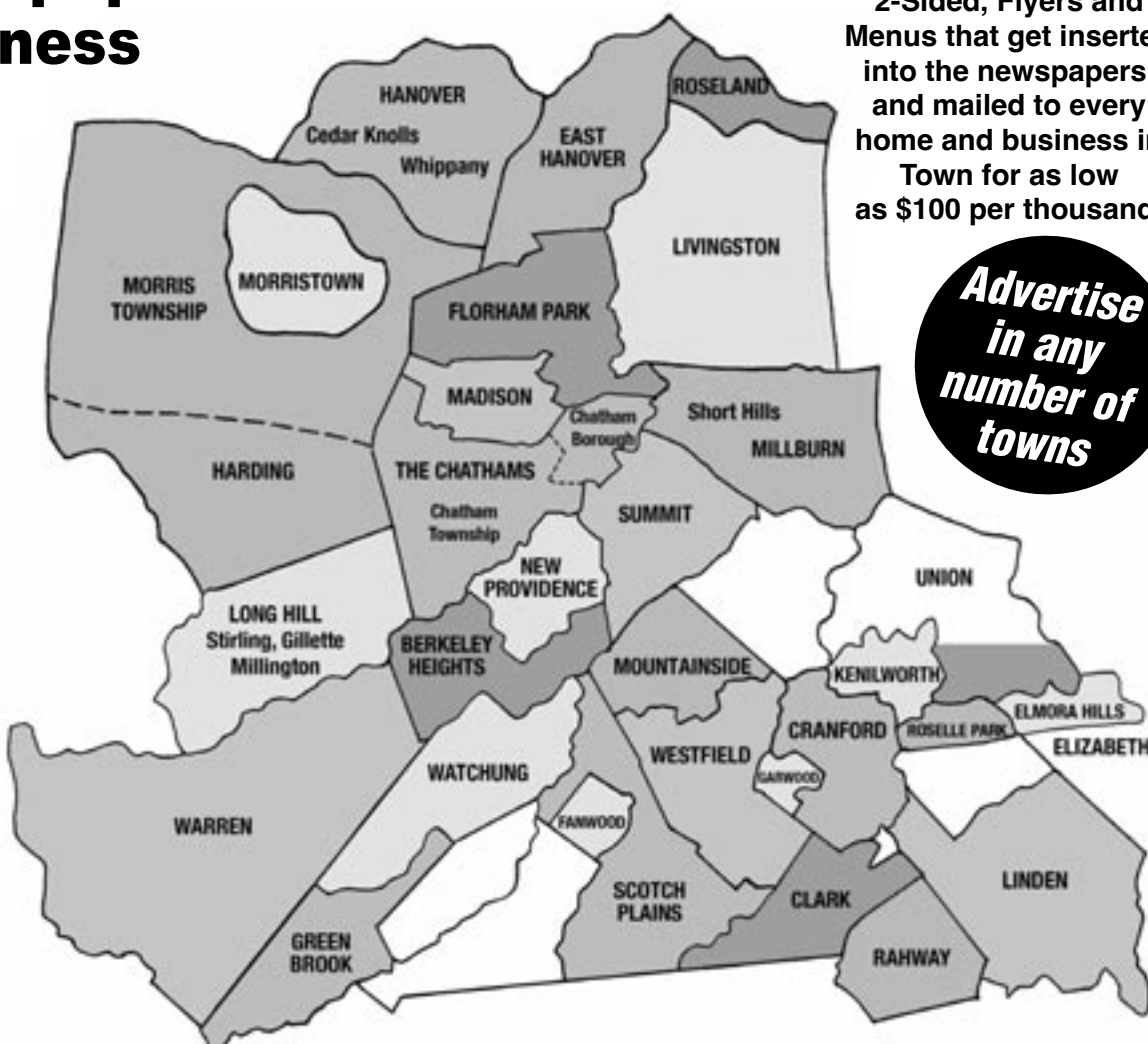
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## TROOP 19 SOARS: NEW EAGLE SCOUTS TAKE FLIGHT (Continued from page 1)

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, completed NYLT, and led a Philmont crew on a challenging backcountry trek.

- Nidhi Pusapati, a sophomore with a love for science and reading at Livingston High School, built a Little Free Library for an underserved elementary school and conducted engaging science classes for young students. Her project provided equitable access to books and sparked curiosity about STEM topics. Through this initiative, she empowered over 300 children by combining education and inspiration, leaving a lasting impact on both literacy and scientific learning in the community.

Throughout the evening, civic and veteran leaders offered their praise and support. New York State Senator Jeremy Cooney, Ava's uncle, delivered heartfelt remarks honoring the Scouts' achievements. Millburn Mayor Annette Romano and Deputy Mayor Michael Cohen extended congratulations on behalf of the township. Lieutenant Commander William Rapp of the Military Order of the World Wars presented commendations for service and leadership, while Jamie Serruto, Adjutant of the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 140 and an Eagle Scout of Troop 17, presented awards on behalf of the American Legion, continuing the long-standing partnership between St. Rose Scouts and local veterans' organizations.

As the newly pinned Eagle Scouts received their Eagle Scout neckerchiefs, they were joined onstage by Eagle Scouts from Troop 19's growing alumni network. Katie Cannon, Maanya Jha, and Natalie Daniewski, all Eagle alums now in college, returned to deliver the Eagle Scout Charge. Their presence was moving reminder of

the enduring impact of the rank and the responsibilities it carries.

Following the charge, Scoutmaster Jim McKenna led the Eagle Scouts in reciting the Eagle Scout Oath, culminating in a powerful declaration: "By the authority vested in me by the National Court of Honor of the Scouts BSA, it is my privilege and pleasure to pronounce you Eagle Scouts."

As a new tradition and special moment, Scoutmaster McKenna invited Katie Cannon, recipient of the first Troop 19 Scout Spirit Award, to join him in presenting the second Scout Spirit Award to Eagle Scout Kelsey Quane. The award honors an Eagle Scout who continues to serve visibly and actively as a Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, demonstrating exceptional commitment to mentoring and troop development.

The evening concluded with the Scoutmaster's Minute, in which Mr. McKenna reflected on the strength, resilience, and inspiration of the young women of Troop 19. He offered special recognition to the troop's adult leaders for their unwavering service: "The commitment of these adult leaders to delivering a safe and quality program to the over 60 female Scouts of Troop 19 is nothing short of remarkable," said McKenna. "Just six years ago, the idea of standing in front of a troop of over sixty young women earning ranks, merit badges, and Eagle Scout honors would have felt impossible. But thanks to their dedication, it's not only possible, it's thriving!" He then proceeded to recognize Jennifer Bhatena, Victoria Brazell, Daniel Cannon, Jordan Katz, Frank Reda, and Sandra Winkler for their Scouting service milestones and continued support of Scouting's mission.



(above) Troop 19 poses with their new Eagle Scouts during at the conclusion of their celebratory Eagle Scout Court of Honor.

Each of the four new Eagle Scouts, Giselle, Ava, Annette, and Nidhi, then gave their own reflections, expressing gratitude to their families, fellow Scouts, and leaders who guided them along the path to Eagle and shared memorable stories from their journey.

With the induction of Giselle, Ava, Annette, and Nidhi into the proud ranks of Eagle Scouts, Troop 19 not only celebrated achievement, but reaffirmed its place as a trailblazer in building leadership, character, and service in young women across northern New Jersey and beyond.



(above) The Troop 19 Scout Spirit Award, was presented to Eagle Scout Kelsey Quane by Scoutmaster James McKenna and Troop 19 alum, Eagle Scout Katie Cannon



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