



HOLIDAYS IN FULL SWING AT THE CLUB!

On Tuesday, November 26, the spirit of gratitude and togetherness filled the air at our annual Thanksgiving Dinner. With 350 guests in attendance, the evening was a heartwarming celebration of community, generosity, and connection.

The event was open to all and completely free of charge, underscoring our commitment to bringing people together and ensuring everyone has a place to feel welcome during the holiday season. Guests enjoyed a delicious meal and shared moments of joy and reflection, reminding us all of the many blessings we have to be thankful for.

We are deeply grateful to Seawanhaka Yacht Club for their generous turkey donation and to the incredible volunteers and staff who made this event a success. From the donors who prepared the turkeys in the kitchen to the servers who delivered each plate with a smile, and everyone who gave their time and energy, this dinner was a heartfelt celebration of community spirit.

As the holidays continue, we look forward to creating even more special memories together at the Club. Stay tuned for more events to come—because the season of giving is just getting started!





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BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**

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CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE AT THE LEADERS' CIRCLE RECEPTION

On Wednesday, November 13, 2024, Grenville Baker Boys & Girls Club proudly welcomed the return of our highly anticipated Leaders' Circle Reception, marking the first time in years this special event has been held. The evening brought together a vibrant community of supporters, celebrating the individuals and organizations whose generosity and volunteerism breathe life into our mission every day.

Honoring Our Hall of Fame Inductees

A highlight of the evening was the induction of Stephen Ely and Brian & Lisbeth Finnerty into our prestigious Hall of Fame. Their long-standing commitment and unwavering dedication to the Club have not only shaped us but also paved the way for a bright future.

Recognizing Exceptional Volunteerism

This year's MacDonald Family Volunteer Award was presented to Kids in Nature, founded by Hon. Dave Gugerty, Dan Kriesberg, and Paul Mager. Their outstanding contribution introduced a new environmental program, inspiring youth to connect with and care for the world around them.

Celebrating Service and Dedication

Inaugurated this year, the William "Bill" Hinckley Award honored Shirley Durkin-Freni for her remarkable 17 years of service as the Club's dedicated Human Resources Specialist. As she embarks on a well-deserved retirement, we extend our deepest gratitude and best wishes to Shirley.

The evening was further enriched by the incredible restaurants whose delicious contributions made the event unforgettable. We encourage everyone to support these generous establishments by making a reservation, placing a takeout order, or planning your next event with them. A full list of participating restaurants can be found [here](#).

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to this unforgettable evening. Your support empowers us to continue shaping brighter futures for the youth in our community. Together, we make a lasting impact!





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Participating Restaurants*

Barney's Restaurant 516-671-6300	Loafers Bakery 516-759-9464
Basil Leaf Café 516-676-6252	Meritage Wine Bar 516-801-0055
The Brass Rail 516-723-9103	Oak and Vine 515-200-9520
Buckram Stables 516-671-3080	Oyster Bay Brewery 516-802-5546
Coach Meeting House 516-588-9288	Schultz's Restaurant 516-588-6240
Hidden Harbor Restaurant and Bar 516-226-1448	St. Rocco's Bakery 516-427-5333
Jeanine's American Café 516-200-9603	The Marker 516-629-6686
La Bussola Restaurant 516-671-2100	The Onion Tree 516-916-5353
La Ginestra Restaurant 516-674-2244	Walls Wharf 516-628-9696
Landing Bakery 516-676-9299	Village Beverage 516-802-0053





WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

In November, our team had the honor of traveling to Pittsburgh, the beloved hometown of Mister Rogers, for the annual Northeast Leadership Conference. Melissa Rhodes, Executive Director, Stephanie Urio, Director of Programs & Professional Development, Maria Arana, Director of K-5 Programs, and Giancarlo Servedio, Director of Tween Programs, seized the opportunity to learn, collaborate, and grow together.

and Southeast regions creates pride and excitement for what's to come.

From the warm welcome reception at PNC Park to thought-provoking sessions designed to help us think bigger, be bolder, and work better on behalf of the kids we serve, every moment was brimming with inspiration. These gatherings not only recharge our passion but also highlight the incredible force of our collective work across the Movement.

A highlight of the trip for Melissa was an intimate dinner with Jim Clark, our national CEO, and eight fellow regional CEOs. This candid discussion was a chance to align on our shared vision and delve into how we can collectively elevate our work.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the conference was introducing new staff members to this experience. It's a powerful way to showcase the impact we have when we unite as a Movement. Seeing our team engage, learn, and connect with peers from across the Northeast

Another standout moment was celebrating the achievements of the Women Working Our Way group. This remarkable initiative fosters mentorship and fellowship among female leaders, empowering women to make a meaningful impact within our Movement.

As always, the staff left the conference feeling both inspired and wired! The insights and ideas shared will undoubtedly shape the goals we set and the actions we take to advance our Mission. Together, we'll continue to make a lasting difference in the lives of the kids and families we serve.

ASSOCIATION OF FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONALS NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY

Executive Director, Melissa Rhodes and the Development Department had the pleasure of attending the AFP NY, Long Island Chapter's National Philanthropy Day 2024 on Friday! This inspiring event brought together leaders in philanthropy and nonprofit organizations from across Long Island to celebrate the power of giving and collaboration.

celebrating those who make a difference in our community. Thank you to the AFP Long Island Chapter for hosting such a powerful program for fundraisers, by fundraisers.

A highlight of the morning: Taking a picture with Tommy DiMisa! Tommy's energy and dedication to amplifying the voices of nonprofits are unmatched, and it was an honor to connect with him during such a meaningful event.

Together, we continue to strengthen our mission and create lasting change. Here's to celebrating philanthropy every day!

From insightful discussions to impactful networking, it was a morning filled with learning, connection, and





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Our Fall Gymnastics Program was a HUGE success! Club members had an amazing time learning new skills, building confidence, and having fun. From handstands

GYMNASTICS



to cartwheels, their energy and enthusiasm were incredible! We can't wait to do it all again for our Spring Gymnastics Program

TORCH CLUB HOSTS SUCCESSFUL VETERANS DAY PROJECT

The Torch Club members hit the ground running after their recent elections, diving into their first project with enthusiasm and purpose. For Veterans Day they showed their support for veterans by brainstorming ways to make an impact. After researching various organizations, they chose the Wounded Warrior Project as the focus of their efforts.

To raise funds, the Club hosted a Pasta Night, rallying their community to support the cause. Their hard work paid off, and they proudly raised \$500 to donate to the organization. Determined to make the donation personal, they invited a representative from the Wounded Warrior Project to visit the Club.

John Fernandez, an Iraq War veteran who lost both his legs in combat, was the guest speaker for the event. His inspiring story of resilience and overcoming obstacles resonated deeply with the audience. He connected with

the group through relatable anecdotes and took time to answer questions, leaving a lasting impression on everyone in attendance.

The Torch Club also saw the event as an opportunity to inspire the next generation of members. They invited 5th-grade students to join the presentation, hoping to spark their interest in the Club for the upcoming year. Erick, the newly elected Torch Club president, reflected on the experience, saying, *"I thought this was a really good story for all of us to hear."*

This successful initiative highlights the Torch Club's commitment to leadership, community service, and creating meaningful connections.





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Education Comes First, a vital program dedicated to fostering academic growth, is transforming the lives of young learners by instilling confidence in math and reading. With a focus on building strong educational foundations, the initiative is helping children develop the skills they need to succeed academically and beyond.

Through dedicated support and innovative teaching methods, Education Comes First is empowering young minds to achieve milestones in their learning journeys.



EDUCATION COMES FIRST

Each new skill mastered represents a step closer to a brighter future, equipping participants with the tools to become tomorrow's leaders.

Parents, educators, and community leaders are celebrating the program's success, emphasizing the role it plays in shaping the next generation. By prioritizing education and building confidence, Education Comes First is not just helping children excel in school—it's laying the groundwork for a lifetime of achievement.

2024 STEM CONVENING

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America is committed to empowering young people with innovative and high-quality STEM experiences, and Grenville Baker Boys & Girls Club is proud to be part of this mission! This year, Michelle Gallucci, Senior Director of Youth Programs and Julie Magliano, Youth Development Coordinator joined the 2024 STEM Convening, an exciting event bringing together 45 local Club trainers to enhance their skills and share best practices for delivering impactful STEM programs to youth.

The Convening was packed with active learning opportunities and inspiring moments. One highlight was a special trip to Disney's The Lion King: The Musical, where we participated in a STEM Career Talk Back, showcasing the fascinating intersection of arts and science.

We also left energized by Boys & Girls Clubs of America's updated DIY STEM curriculum, designed to make STEM learning more accessible and engaging for young minds.

