



gain some hands-on experience as anthropologists in the "Discovery Place." Here, the children helped put together a mock version of the bones of a mastodon.

After a lunch near the museum's carousel, the group went on a tour of the State Capitol, where they walked up the "Million Dollar Staircase" (photo below) and admired the ornate details of the stairs, which took 14 years to construct. The children also had the opportunity to sit in the Assembly and Senate Chambers and learned how many of the nation's most important leaders once served as leaders of New York. All *EWYC* youth had a great time exploring and learning about local and state history.



Hiking at Sam's Point

The *EWYC*'s fourth trip of the summer combined education and outdoor physical activity. On July 29th, nearly 15 youths between the ages of 7 and 15 received a hands-on learning experience about our region while hiking through **Sam's Point**.

As the kids hiked along several of the trails that **Sam's Point** offers to our community, they learned about the ecology of the **Shawangunk Mountains** and the history of the Ellenville area. The group then cooled off by taking a two-mile hike through **Ice Caves Mountain** and marveled at the year-round ice that exists in the cave, despite the record temperatures that we have felt throughout the summer. During this portion of the hike, the kids were particularly excited to learn about the history of migrant huckleberry and blueberry pickers.

After a picnic lunch, participants hiked to **Sam's Point** itself and enjoyed the astoundingly beautiful views that the preserve offers of the region. Throughout the hike, the group also learned about the Dwarf Pitch Pine Barren native to the hiking trails, which is both rare and endangered.

The youths came away from the hike with not only a renewed appreciation for the beauty of our area, but also with a great sense of accomplishment for having hiked more than three miles in one day.

The Ulster County Fair

Participants of the *Ellenville-Wawarsing Youth Commission* again braved the outdoors on August 3rd, but in a slightly different setting than at **Sam's Point**: this time, the kids traveled to the Ulster County Fair in New Paltz (photo below).

Thirty-five kids faced the sweltering heat, but they were rewarded with unlimited rides on all of the fair's attractions; they were also able to see many of the fair's exhibitions, including those by local and state police and local 4-H groups. Some kids faced their fear of heights by going on gravity-defying rides such as "The Zipper" or "The Condor," while others chose to stay closer to the ground on the bumper cars or the fun house. Overall, the trip provided a safe and fun recreational activity to all that participated.

Mansion Tours: Vanderbilt Mansion and FDR Presidential Library & Museum

The *EWYC* followed up the pure fun of the Ulster County Fair trip with a more relaxing and educational glimpse into the history of our region; on August 12th, almost 15 kids experienced the splendor of two of the area's most beautiful and historically-significant homes, both located along the Hudson River.

The kids began learning about two of the nation's most well-known families by receiving a guided tour of the 54-room Vanderbilt Mansion. The group was amazed to learn that the Vanderbilt family essentially employed the entire town of Hyde Park; more, the kids especially delighted in learning that Mrs. Vanderbilt used to give a toy to each child in Hyde Park at Christmastime – she even gave a child a piano at the child's request. The children then followed this tour by taking a leisurely walk through the majestic gardens on the estate grounds.

After a picnic lunch on the Vanderbilt grounds, the group headed to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library & Museum. Here, the children visited the Presidential Library and learned about FDR's upbringing, his longtime battle with polio and its after-effects, and his journey to the presidency; they also learned about Eleanor Roosevelt's life, along with the Roosevelts' impact on the Depression and World War II-era America.

Once the group learned about FDR as a national figure, they were in turn able to see a more personal side to one of our nation's greatest leaders by touring Springwood, the home that FDR was born in and lived in

