



We all started out as a precious newborn. Even him. Even her. Yep.

PUTNAM VILLAGER

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Friday, September 13, 2024

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Savor the Flavor adds honey twist to local dishes

Thompson to hold final 65 Main workshop

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT



Jason Bleau

The Courthouse Bar and Grill's Savor the Flavor special was a hot honey pulled pork with apple slaw of a bao bun. The dish earned the restaurant the People's Choice Award for Best Main Dish.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

PUTNAM — The town of Putnam welcomed back its annual Savor the Flavor event for the ninth year challenging local eateries to create unique dishes and drinks based off the day's special ingredient theme: honey. The popular self-guided tour of Putnam's restaurants and beverage businesses was once again a sell out with all 250 wristbands purchased for the day-long event. Seventeen restaurants participated in Savor the Flavor 2024 which event co-chair and owner of the Courthouse Bar and Grill Sheila Frost said has become a mod-

ern tradition in Putnam since its early days as a chili cook off. "It allows the restaurants to get a little bit out of their comfort zone or feature something they already have, but it is a chance for them to put a twist on things," said Frost. "We're pretty pleased every year with how much the public embraces this event." Each year Savor the Flavor features a different main ingredient with 2024's challenge being honey. Businesses were tasked with incorporating the sweet substance into drinks, desserts, or main dishes which were judged by celebrity judges and the public

for awards at the end of the day. Event Co-Chair Jennifer Brytowski, owner of Jennerate, who also works with Chase Graphics in Putnam, said the event not only serves as a chance to draw attention to local eateries, but also benefits Daily Bread, a Putnam-based food pantry. "Every year, we try to give back and work with Daily Bread. They benefit, the community benefits, the restaurants benefit from the exposure. It's very sweet and nice for everyone to come together and work on an event that brings so much to our community," said Brytowski. The winners of the 2024

Savor the Flavor are as follows: The Judge's Choice for Main Dish went to The Broken Crust with Brick Wall Eatery and Bear Hands Brewing in second place. The Judge's Choice Dessert was Main Street Gelato with Bill's Bread and Breakfast as runner-up. Finally, the Judge's Choice Beverage was Bear Hands Brewing with The Crossing Restaurant and Brew Pub in second place. For People's Choice, the Main Dish winner was The Courthouse Bar and Grill, the Dessert winner was Main Street Gelato and Bear Hands Brewing won in the Beverage category.



The Crossing Restaurant and Brew Pub served up a hot honey peach margarita for their entry into Savor the Flavor. The drink earned the eatery second place in the Judge's Choice Beverage category.

THOMPSON — The 65 Main project in Thompson is approaching its final workshop meeting later this month which will adjourn to the next phase of the initiative: finalizing a master plan to implement all the elements discussed over the last year. The town has held monthly workshops dating back to October of 2023 as part of a 12-part series exploring the community, educational, structural, and design elements of the project. The workshops have provided critical public feedback required through the USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (UAIP) grant program through which Thompson procured funding to develop a Small Business Support Center. The project seeks to reuse 65 Main St., a town owned building that formerly housed the Tourtellotte Memorial High School Superintendent and TEEG, as its centerpiece to include business support programming, a permaculture food forest, educational and recreational facilities and more. September will be the final meeting in the Turn To **WORKSHOP**, page **A11**

Thompson Public Schools debut new track

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

THOMPSON — The Thompson Public Schools

finally have a new track after a years-long effort to replace the aged facility which had been relegated on only public use for

around two decades.

The track had been the subject of replacement talks for several years in the 2020s, and in January of 2023, a referendum confirmed the public's support for investing in its replacement. The town received a Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant totaling \$500,000 to offset a third of the \$1.5 million price tag. Construction on the new acrylic six-lane track began in May and completed prior to the school year. The surface now matches the bright red that serves as the primary color of the district and its Tigers sports teams. Thompson students and athletes are to begin utilizing the facility as early as this month.

Superintendent Melinda Smith credited town officials like First Selectman Amy St. Onge and Director of Planning and Development Tyra Penn-Gesek for helping spearhead the project on the town side and said the entire district is excited to finally hold events on the track for the first time in around three decades.

"Our students had nowhere to practice, and the track was actually dangerous because of the divots that were in the track surface, so it was unusable. The district hasn't been able to hold a track meet in 30 years so being able to hold some of those events is going to revitalize the community overall. We're really

looking forward to being able to host events like that and get that going," said Smith.

The track replacement cost just under \$1.5 million and was managed by Mountain View Landscape LLC of Cromwell who were revealed as the only bidders in January. The project completely removed the older track, releveling the base ground layer and placing a brand new track on top. While the previous track was closed to the public during school hours, Smith revealed that the public's support of the project inspired officials to make the facility a truly public track for all to enjoy.

"We made a decision

when we went for the referendum and when we were working with First Selectman St. Onge that we wanted the track to be accessible to the public during the school day. Obviously, the priority will be if there are school teams out there practicing or playing, but we don't want to close it down during the school day. We want it to be accessible to walk or run. There are going to be guidelines, rules, and regulations around using the track like no spiked shoes, no roller blading or skateboards, no strollers or pets so that we can maintain the integrity of the track. As far as the community itself, we wanted it open to the

community whenever they want to use it and if the community is supporting the installation of the track, they should have access to it," said Smith.

The town and school are still working on purchasing equipment for the track which was set to the subject of a Board of Selectmen meeting this month. A ribbon cutting will be held during Thompson's community Day celebration on Oct. 5 with a special ceremonial first mile run to include commemorative medals, the same awards given out during the final track meet on the former surface with special engraving for the occasion.

Sonny Hamel named Thompson's Veteran of the Month

THOMPSON — Leonard (Sonny) Hamel of Red Bridge Road in North Grosvenordale has been chosen as the Town of Thompson's second recipient of the newly formed Veteran of the Month Program.

Hamel, as he is most affectionately known, is the September 2024 awardee. He served in the United States Army from 1966 to 1968, and proudly served his Country in the Vietnam War. Sonny was a combat engineer working in the front trenches of the War. He witnessed first-hand the ugly side of the Vietnam War. Sonny's dedication to his Country is still evident today, as he marches every year as a member of the firing squad in the annual Thompson Memorial Day Parade. An interesting tidbit is that Sonny still marches in the same uniform that he wore 56 years ago. It still fits him perfectly. Sonny is married to wife Paulette and together they have two adult daughters Jessica and Kerry.

Thank you, Sonny, for your service from a very grateful community.

Each month an advisory Committee of the Veterans Affairs Office will choose a deserving Veteran who has served honorably in our Armed Forces. The honoree will be presented with a commemorative plaque at a Board of Selectmen meeting by the Board of Selectmen and the Thompson Veterans Officer, along with other public recognition. Please send in your nomination to the Thompson Veterans Affairs Office by downloading an application form from our Web site, www.thompsonct.org. You May also pick one up at the Veterans Office in the Town Hall.

Please stop by to say hello at our Thompson Veterans Tent that will be part of the 2024 Thompson Community Day extravaganza on Saturday, Oct. 5. The event will be held again this year at the Lions Riverside Park in North Grosvenordale from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. We hope to see many Veterans and their Family participate. Give away's for the kiddo's, Veteran information and application forms for the Veteran of the Month program will be available.



Geoff Bolte — Courtesy

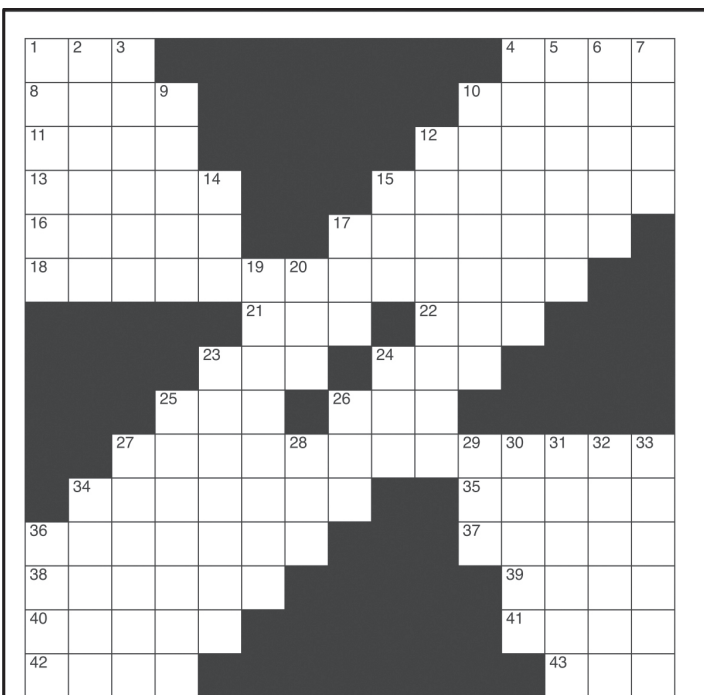
The Thompson Public School District's new track is completed and ready for student and public use.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Engine additive
- 4. A type of test
- 8. Curtail
- 10. Irish surname
- 11. The opposite of good
- 12. Got rid of
- 13. Central parts of a church building
- 15. Stylistically
- 16. Intestinal
- 17. Negative potential outcomes
- 18. Lived up to a standard
- 21. Snag
- 22. Time units (abbr.)
- 23. Ad __
- 24. "Partridge" actress Susan
- 25. For each
- 26. __ Paulo, city
- 27. League titles
- 34. More intensely black
- 35. Slang for lovely
- 36. Petrarch is known for them
- 37. Old Eurasian wheat
- 38. Body part
- 39. Swedish rock group
- 40. They're worth avoiding
- 41. Rising and falling of the voice
- 42. Wings
- 43. Enzyme import for respiration

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Idyllic
- 2. South Pacific island nations
- 3. Shrub of the olive family
- 4. Boundaries
- 5. Encircle
- 6. Weights
- 7. Samberg is one
- 9. Sheep sound
- 10. European country
- 12. Respected group of people
- 14. Trigraph
- 15. Prosecutors
- 17. Assign a nickname
- 19. Huge size
- 20. Partner to cheese
- 23. Fastballs
- 24. Principle underlying the universe
- 25. Distinct units of sound
- 26. Title of respect
- 27. Against
- 28. Foot (Latin)
- 29. One point east of due south
- 30. Concerning the blood
- 31. Type of pentameter
- 32. North American peoples
- 33. Layers of rock
- 34. Georges __, French philosopher
- 36. Lengthy tale

PUZZLE SOLUTION

Eastern's top faculty award goes to Yaw Nsiah, nursing program founder

WILLIMANTIC — Yaw Nsiah of Lebanon, chair of the Department of Health Sciences and Nursing, won Eastern's 2024 Award for Exemplary Service, the top faculty award of the academic year. Nsiah was awarded for his vital role in launching the university's nursing program last year.

The award goes to a faculty member who demonstrates "academic excellence in teaching, devotion to scholarship and service to the university." He received the award at the conclusion of the spring 2024 semester.

Nsiah spearheaded the development of the health sciences program in 2017, which was expanded to include nursing in 2023.

"We started with a certificate program in public health and then a minor in public health, then a certificate in allied health," said Nsiah. "Eventually, we put everything together to form the department."

Nsiah's use of the word "we" is intentional. "I don't like to use 'I' because I have worked with an extremely competent, supportive group of faculty and staff who (agreed) that we needed a health sciences and nursing department," he said.

"It has been a group effort to

put this program together," he said. "You can call me a lead, but I'm simply trying to gather a group of people to do something good for the institution."

Connecticut is facing a nursing shortage, which Eastern aims to alleviate with its partnership with Hartford Healthcare. The Department of Health Sciences and Nursing has more than 400 students enrolled this semester. This semester's first-time enrollment includes 92 students in the health sciences major and 66 in nursing — the maximum cohort size for the program.

"We have a program that is very attractive to students because of the career opportunities," said Nsiah, adding that the current nursing workforce is aging, presenting opportunities for the next generation of nurses. "The nursing profession currently is top heavy."

Speaking to the challenges of developing a nursing program, he said, "Nursing programs are capital intensive; they require a lot of money and require a lot of resources. Therefore, not every school is able to train more nurses."

Eastern was able to launch its nursing program with the help of a \$1.2 million grant from the Connecticut Health Horizons program. The program will also

benefit from a soon-to-be-built simulation lab at Windham Hospital.

Additionally, Nsiah encourages students to study abroad to enrich their nursing and health sciences education. As such, he sponsors a related global field course in Ghana. "Now that we have the nursing program, the students will get to actually practice their profession when they go on this global field internship," he said.

"It's not just Willimantic or Connecticut... There are a whole bunch of other people out there who have a different perspective on life. But at the end, you see that they are not that different. They feel the same things you feel and they are all humans."

Nsiah is proud to have won the Exemplary Service to Eastern Award, but he takes little credit for it himself. "I just do my job; there's nothing personal about it," he said. "I just want to be an effective member of the community here."

For Nsiah, the Eastern community includes many team members who have helped him achieve his dream of developing the Department of Health Sciences and Nursing. "I've worked with some great people," he said. "I couldn't do this without all those folks."

Logee's rare plant sale to benefit Access

DANIELSON — Join us for Logee's Rare Plant Day on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 141 North St. in Danielson. Whether it rains or shines, admission is free! Explore a stunning variety of rare and unusual plants on display and for sale, including many one-of-a-kind specimens.

In addition to the plant sale, enjoy outdoor booths featuring local artisan vendors, live musical entertainment, and delicious food and beverages. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Access, supporting families and individuals in need.

Take advantage of this unique opportunity to explore Logee's six tropical greenhouses, which will be open for tours. Outdoor plant sale tents will offer discounted prices, and the Rare Plant Room will showcase a diverse selection of plants for purchase, including Aroids, Byron's exclusive Begonia

hybrids, Cacti & Succulents, Ferns, Fruiting Plants, Gesneriads, Hoyas, Orchids, and more! Some large, mature specimens will be available, so don't forget to bring a truck! With many one-of-a-kind plants, arriving early ensures the best selection. Last year, Logee's raised \$1,000 for Access, directly benefiting those in Windham and Tolland counties.

For your convenience, free parking will be available next door to Logee's in the Carelot DayCare parking lot and a block away at 187 North St. Handicap parking will also be available in the Carelot Day Care parking lot. Please be aware that there is no parking directly across the street from Logee's, as that lot is privately owned, and parking along North Street is not permitted during the event. A complimentary shuttle bus service will be provided from 8 a.m.

to 5:30 p.m., circulating every 15-20 minutes between two nearby parking lots:

- Ellis Technical High School - 613 Upper Maple St., Danielson
- Killingly School District Central Office - 79 Westfield Ave., Danielson

We look forward to seeing you at this exciting event!

Logee's is a mail-order horticultural company growing, fruiting, rare and tropical plants since 1892. For more information visit <https://www.logees.com/rare-plant-day>.

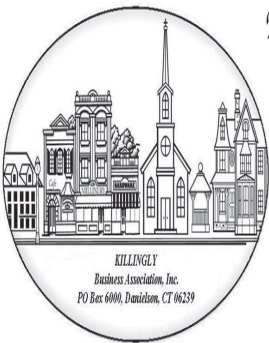
Access Community Action Agency is designated by the federal and state government as the anti-poverty agency in northeast Connecticut. Access provides food, affordable housing, job readiness services, and other pathways to economic self-reliance for vulnerable limited-income families and individuals throughout the region.

"Growing Together" at First Congregational Church of Pomfret

POMFRET — First Congregational Church of Pomfret invites you to take part in a day full of interactive, inter-generational fun and learning from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 21 on the church grounds. "Growing Together" is the theme for this event, which will be led by Brian Barclay, a locally based retreat leader, facilitator of adventure learning experiences and spiritual director.

Barclay, who has more than 30 years of diverse experience, enjoys helping people grow spiritually and relationally through designing creative programs. The many "hands-on" activities Brian has planned for this event will engage those who attend through both group and team activities designed to help participants grow in faith, grow together, and grow in understanding of how vitally important people at every stage of development are when it comes to accomplishing group goals and working together as a team.

Both lunch and a cookout supper will be provided at no cost to those who attend. This event has been designed with children, young people, single people, married people, and Sr. adults in mind. No one is too young and no one is too old to take part! In the event of rain, activities will be conducted inside the church building. Please call 860-928-7381 or email info@fccpomfret.org if you would like additional information about participating in this fun time of learning and growing.



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A flood of memories

KILLINGLY CHRONICLES SEPT. 16 – SEPT. 21

TOWN HALL MEETINGS (agendas and minutes at www.killingly.org)
 Monday the 16th
 Planning & Zoning Workshop (Town Meeting Room – Town Hall) 6 p.m.
 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting (Town Meeting Room – Town Hall) 7 p.m.
 Tuesday the 17th
 Housing Authority Meeting (Maple Courts II) 7 p.m.
 Wednesday the 18th
 Water Pollution Control Authority Meeting (WPCF) 5 p.m.
 Conservation Commission Meeting (Room 102 – Town Hall) 7 p.m.
 Thursday the 19th
 Fiscal Subcommittee Meeting (Town Meeting Room – Town Hall) 6 p.m.
 Historic District Commission Meeting (Room 102 – Town Hall) 7 p.m.

COMMUNITY EVENTS
 Monday the 16th
 KPL Lit Talks (Library) All Day
 Create Our Bookmark (Library) All Day
 An Epic Book Quest (Ages 13-18) (Library) All Day
 Homeschool Club (All Ages) (Library) 10:30 a.m. to noon
 Monday Mystery Matinee (Ages 18+) (Library) 1 to 3 p.m.

Tuesday the 17th
 Teen Program Totes (Ages 13-18) (Library) All Day
 Moving & Grooving (Ages 1-5) (Library) 9:30 to 10 a.m.
 Chubby Chats (Ages 18+) (Chubby Dog Coffee and Gaming Bar) 10 to 11 a.m.
 Wednesday the 18th
 Little Listeners (Ages 2-5) (Library) 11 to 11:45 a.m.
 Virtual Story Time (Ages three and older) (Library) 10 a.m.
 Adult Coloring & Greeting Cards (Ages 18+) (Library) 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
 Dr. Nate Klemp: Virtual Author Talk (Library) 2 p.m.
 Let's Get Crafting (Ages 13-17) (Library) 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

KILLINGLY PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMS/EVENTS COMING UP...
 Beginner Rhythm Ballroom Dancing – Nov. 18 through Dec. 2 (Mondays) (Killingly Community Center)
 Pre-Season Basketball Skills Clinic – Nov. 4 through Nov. 7 (Monday, Wednesday and Thursday) (Killingly Community Center)
 Tuesday Art Club Classes with Tunk City – Sept. 10 through Dec. 17 (Tuesdays) (Killingly Community Center)
 Virtual High Five 2024 (Killingly Community Center) (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday)
 River Trail Wake-Up Workout with CV/Fitness – Sept. 9 through Oct. 14 (Mondays)
 Thursday Yoga with Mary (Session 1) – Sept. 12 through Oct. 3 (Killingly Community Center)
 Senior Yoga September – Sept. 6 through Sept. 27 (Fridays at 9 and 10:30 a.m.) (Killingly Community Center)
 Yoga for every "body" (Session 1) – Sept. 11 through Oct. 2 (Killingly Community Center) (Wednesdays)
 Zumba with Movement Magic – Sept. 16 through Sept. 30 (Killingly Community Center) (Mondays)
 Getting in Line – Beginner Line Dancing with Mary – Sept. 11 through Oct. 2 (Killingly Community Center) (Wednesdays)
 Relaxation and Guided Meditation – Sept. 24 through Oct. 29 (Killingly Community Center) (Tuesdays)
 Senior Picnic – Sept. 16 (Killingly Community Center)
 The Big E – Sept. 24
 Stew and Story – Oct. 17 (Killingly Community Center)
 Spooktacular Parade – Oct. 26 (Davis Park and Main Street)
 Check out the Killingly Parks and Recreation website for more daily class schedules, camps, trips and events!
 For updates and changes, please visit the calendar on the Town of Killingly Web site at www.killingly.org.

NEW BOOK FOR SALE: The Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society now has "Ghosts of King Philip's War" by Thomas D'Agostino and Arlene Nicholson for sale for \$20. Please add \$5 if you wish to have a copy mailed. The books are available at the Killingly Historical Center during regular Wednesday or Saturday hours (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) or may be purchased by mail. Please send a check to P.O. Box 265 Danielson, CT 06239.

In the past week, I've gotten some nice feedback about memories from the Flood of 1955. Ed Gaffney, who reads the column from Michigan, shared the following: "I remember it well. I was 11 years old, going into the 6th grade at Goodyear School in Rogers. We lived in Rogers on State Ave. which is in the 'Heights'. The village of Rogers was down the hill where the Rogers Corporation is located. The river was usually about 30 feet wide. When I went to look at the flood, from near the Rogers water tower, the entire Village of Rogers was overcome with a roaring river about a half-mile wide. It was extremely frightening. Entire homes were floating down the river. Several of my classmates lost their homes. Those who did not lose their homes, had a huge clean up job to do. Credit the people of Rogers for surviving this horrible force of nature. We had to boil any water we were going to drink for about two weeks. A National Guard helicopter landed on the grounds of Goodyear School. That was a big deal, making a real loud noise." (email, Sept. 4).

Killingly Historical Society president Bernie Mitchell lives in Attawaugan by the Five Mile River, and lived there with his grandparents and parents at the time of the 1955 Flood. He said that the evening of the flood the Fire Department came to the house and told them to grab their personal belongings that they might need and move out. There was a concern that the mill dam in Ballouville would let go (The one on the Five Mile River in Attawaugan had in the 1936 flood. They were able to stay with family in the Attawaugan Village, which is higher. Bernie remembered how crowded the little mill house was with seven adults and five children, some of them sleeping on the floor. Luckily, they only had to stay one night. Fortunately the Ballouville Dam held. In fact it is still standing although it is slightly breached. Route 12 and the Attawaugan bridge near Bernie's were fine. The old ones had been washed out during the 1936 flood, and the new replacements were higher. (conversation, Sept. 4).

Lynn LaBerge said that her father worked for Danielson Oil and he and the men from T. H. Ray were kept busy going a very long way around to Day Kimball Hospital with oil for the generators. (Remember that the bridges in Putnam were out). (conversation, Sept. 4).

Friends who lived in the outlying areas of Northeastern Connecticut also were getting a glimpse of the action. Barbara, a Historical Center

volunteer, lived on a hill in Moosup and said that they could see the explosions in Putnam. Barbara Schreier lived in Woodstock at the time and said that they would see the sky light up from the explosions. (Sept. 4). Linden Whipple, who lived on Putnam Heights on the corner of Hurry Hill Road and Route 21 (Liberty Highway) said that they could hear the barrels of magnesium exploding. His mother's brother lived on Livery Street in Putnam, and his family had no idea if they were alive since the phones were out. Linden said that he was frightened when his father went to Putnam to check. Blacksmith Mr. LaCroix lived opposite Linden's family on Putnam Heights but his shop was right in the flood zone in Manhasset Village. After the flood he built a cinderblock blacksmith shop on Putnam Heights and used a few wooden pieces salvaged from the flood ruins. (conversation, Sept. 6).

A few comments on the magnesium. Linden commented that only a few people knew that it was there since it had been a military secret during the War. Bernie Mitchell remembered that the late Ted Sabourin told us that the State Police had had men act as sharpshooters to shoot the magnesium barrels and keep them away from bridge abutments. Ted was one.

Al Borders stopped at the Killingly Historical Center to add his memories. His family was living in Foster at the time but came to Danielson. They went across the bridge (the old iron one) to Brooklyn when a large truck was also using it. The bridge was very shaky. The Quinebaug River had undercut river bank where the Del Chevrolet car dealership was and about 20 cars were in the water. They have a photo of his uncle on one of the cars. (conversation, Sept. 4).

If you have memories to share from the Flood of 1955, please feel free to email me. I'd love to have a few from people who lived in downtown Putnam.

I recently received a phone call from Fab Cutler, long-time archivist for the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam asking if the Killingly Historical Society had a photo of the Tucker District Schoolhouse.



KILLINGLY
AT
300
MARGARET
WEAVER

Apparently at least one Cutler attended that school. It was not unusual for children near the border, to attend school in an adjacent town. A search of the school photos at the Killingly Historical Center unfortunately revealed no picture of that school. If you have one, please consider bringing it to the Center so we can scan it for our collection. If you're technically savvy, you can even take a picture and send it with your phone to director@killinglyhistorical.org.

The files did reveal some interesting tidbits about this and a few other rural Killingly schools, which you might not have known existed. The Tucker District School was a very small one located on the northwestern corner of the junction of Roth Road and Tucker District Road (not far from North Road). A typed sheet, in the school file at the Center, with the notation related by Alice Caron in 1975 (but name of typist not given) noted that Miss Alma Keech was the teacher circa 1915 when Alice Caron did a short stint of substitute teaching for her. At that time there were about 10-12 students ranging from little ones to "grown" boys.

If you have memories of the small district schools, please share them by emailing me. I know Bernie Mitchell said that he attended the school in Attawaugan.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, September 2024. Special thanks to Ed Gaffney, Bernie Mitchell, Barbara, Barbara Schreier, Lynn LaBerge, Linden Whipple, and Al Borders for sharing memories of the flood. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Center Wed. or Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or www.killinglyhistorical.org, or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook at www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety. Mail for the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society, Inc. or the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Center should be sent to PO Box 265, Danielson, CT 06239.

VILLAGER ALMANAC

AT CT AUDUBON

Bird sightings at the Connecticut Audubon Society Center at Pomfret and Wyndham Land Trust properties for the week of Sept. 2: Common Yellowthroat, Cooper's Hawk, American Redstart, Red-eyed Vireo, White-eyed Vireo, Veery, Red-tailed Hawk, Hummingbird, Gray Catbird, Phoebe, Carolina Wren, House Wren, House Finch, Goldfinch, Song Sparrow. Visit ctaudubon.org/pomfret-home.

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EDITOR

Raising the bar for decency and leadership

There was a time when being American meant standing for something bigger than ourselves—when looking out for one another, showing respect, and upholding certain standards was simply the way things were. But somewhere along the way, we've lost our way a bit. The tone of our politics has shifted from a place of professionalism and decorum to something more like a never-ending reality show.

The truth is, politics was never meant to be a joke. It's about the serious business of leading a country—of shaping policies that affect all of us, from the farmers in the heartland to the teachers in our towns. Yet lately, it feels like decency and respect have taken a backseat to personal attacks, name-calling, and divisiveness. It's not just embarrassing—it's harmful. We deserve better, and it's time we demand better.

As Americans, we need to band together and make kindness a priority once again. Not just in our daily lives, but in the way we engage with politics. Our leaders should be held to higher standards. They should represent us with dignity and professionalism, not petty squabbles and cheap shots. Politics should be about problem-solving, not point-scoring.

Imagine what we could accomplish if we focused on bringing people together instead of tearing each other down. Kindness doesn't mean we all have to agree on everything, but it does mean treating each other with respect—even when we disagree. The strength of America has always been in our diversity of thought and background. But diversity only works when there's a foundation of decency and empathy.

We have to stop lowering the bar and start raising our expectations. Our political leaders should exemplify the best of us—people who are informed, compassionate, and ready to fight for what's right, without losing their humanity in the process. Let's return to a time when class, integrity, and decorum mattered in public life. When we disagreed with one another civilly, knowing that, at the end of the day, we're all on the same team.

America is at its best when we care about our neighbors, when we stand up for those who can't, and when we hold our leaders accountable to a higher standard. Together, we can make America kind again. Not just in the way we treat one another, but in how we demand professionalism, decency, and class from our leaders.

The future of this country depends on all of us—not just the people we elect, but the expectations we set. Let's set them high.

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Earth — our energy future is here!

To the Editor:

Energy. Man has been trying to capture and channel it since the beginning. For most of our energy history, man relied on carbon fuel sources like firewood and then briefly whale oil. The discovery of oil (petroleum) in Pennsylvania in the mid 1800's, provided man a transformational energy source. Then, midway through the 20th century we harnessed a new form of energy - big energy that came from splitting the atom.

Once again, humanity is making a new energy shift and this one will power us deep into the future. Like nuclear, solar energy originates with the atom. Fusion reactions on the sun release enormous amounts of shortwave radiation and the amount that reaches the Earth every day dwarfs all other energy sources. A 2011 article from MIT News, reported that "173,000 terawatts (trillions of watts) of solar energy strike the Earth continuously. That's more than 10,000 times the world's total energy use." But at the time that article was written in 2011, this energy was still expensive to capture.

"The cheapest source of energy today comes from simply pointing a plate of glass at the sun!" That's how author Bill McKibben describes solar power today. Many people don't realize that a kilowatt of energy is generated via solar cheaper than any other means, including nuclear, oil and coal. And, solar gets cheaper every year. The current payoff period for solar is in the range of seven years and once the hardware is paid off, it generates electricity at no cost.

Aside from being the cheapest form of energy, there are other huge factors that tell us solar's time has truly arrived. A second factor is that solar panels turn our rooftops into our own personal power plants, thus decentralizing power generation and profit. That's why Putin's Russia and U.S. oil companies have a long history of fighting the shift to green energy - to keep hold of their power over us.

The third great reason to go solar is that it generates energy without generating conventional pollutants or carbon dioxide. Thus, solar is a vital part of reducing global warming. The lack of winter ice, new invasive tick species, and the 15 inches of rain that fell on Aug. 14 in central Connecticut are all evidence of climate change happening locally, and it will only get worse. In Bill Bryson's "A Short History Of Nearly Everything," he writes, "A little change in the Earth's dynamics can have repercussions beyond our imagining." No need for imagination, just pick up

To the Editor:

At long last, it took four years for the truth to come out of his mouth for all to hear. Trump has publicly admitted what normal people have always known. That the "Big Lie" was just that, a lie, no election fraud whatsoever.

Was Trump purging his conscience? (he has none). Was he baring his soul? (he has none).

In this podcast interview with a Lex Fridman (aired Sept. 3), Trump acknowledged he lost the Presidential election "by a whisker." You should know that Trump's whisker was seven million popular and 74 electoral votes, asinine that he is.

This surprise remark came on the heels of a similar comment by Trump at a recent "Moms for Liberty" conference, again saying "Biden beat us by a whisker." Imbecile. Trump can put a stain on anything, even moms.

Is Trump embracing reality? (He has none).

The old Trump quickly re-appeared, saying "the fraud was on the other side" (?). That's more like it. Trumpers will be quick to say he misspoke.

Poor Trump must have been getting concerned his lapdog public was finally starting to realize this continued election denialism is getting somewhat unpopular. They have been swallowing his bottomless lies for so long they won't know what to think, he is so disorienting.

It doesn't stop here though. In another interview bonanza for Special Prosecutor Jack Smith (with right-wing commentator Mark Levin), Trump states, "I had every right to interfere with the election." Out of the mouths of fools comes Trump's stream of unconsciousness- a prosecutor's dream, a defense attorney's nightmare.

a newspaper and you'll see that we're subjected to more intense fires, floods and storms.

The fourth great reason to get that plate of glass is that the source that powers it - the sun - is eternal. Astronomers say it won't fade out for another five billion years, but the supply of fossil fuels on the other hand, is a shrinking pool, and its days are numbered. Yet, more people populate the planet each day, increasing our energy needs.

The largest ever climate poll, conducted earlier this year by the UN Development Programme found that 72 percent of people worldwide want to see a "quick transition" to sources of green energy. This transition is closer than you think. The cover story of the June 22 issue of the Economist, titled "The Dawn Of The Solar Age" predicts the majority of the world's electricity generation will come from solar by the mid 2030s, and solar will be the dominant source of not just electricity, but all energy by the 2040s.

Even China is making big strides in solar. Online news site Electrek reported in July that China has reached its clean energy target six years ahead of schedule, installing 75 gigawatts of solar capacity in the first half of 2024. That compares to the 12 gigawatts installed here in the U.S. for the same timeframe. But as reported in Wired on August 27, for the first half of 2024 (in the U.S.) "wind, solar, and batteries were each installed at a pace that dwarfs new natural gas generators. And the gap is expected to get dramatically larger before the year is over."

Power and energy are not quite the same thing. By making our own energy from the sun, we take power away from Russia and the Saudis and put it back into the hands of "We The People." Furthermore, neither OPEC nor Exxon can rig the price of the sun which has powered life on Earth since the beginning. Our sun is here for us to power our world today, if we only we would take it. What other business model can compete with this? 1) it's cheaper; 2) we become less dependent; 3) it's non-polluting and combats climate change, and, 4) it's eternal. Wouldn't it be nice if we could cross one big need (energy) off the list - for eternity and save our planet (and money) at the same time?

If you're concerned about the health of our planet's natural systems and what that means for humanity's future, please take a look at my Web site at: earth21stcentury.com and join me for a presentation of Earth2024.

KEN WOLSLEGEL
WOODSTOCK

The damage was done

To the Editor:

Just imagine all of his Jan. 6 friends now sitting in jail hearing about this honesty from Saint Donald. The banging of heads against the bars would sound like church bells on Easter Morning to all of us who love our democracy. The traitors deserve every lump.

I know you Trumpers are certainly disappointed with this admission. Your twice impeached, guilty sexual predator; 34 count convicted felon, facing more state and federal charges is now a reformed liar (somewhat). You now have one less quality to admire in Trump. What on earth will you do when Kamala Harris, someone who cares about America and not just herself, is elected President? What will you do?

Look at what this one person has put our country through with that lie and remember that it did not have to be so.

When Trump is onstage spewing his garbage, what he is really telling his audience is this: He wants to end the global economic system that has made our country prosperous; He wants to end the Western Alliance that has kept us safe; He wants to end our democracy that has kept us free.

Republican Adam Kinzinger, speaking at the Democratic National Convention, said of Trump "He is a weak man pretending to be strong, a small man pretending to be big, a faithless man pretending to be righteous, a perpetrator who cannot stop playing the victim."

If Judge Juan Merchand in New York adheres to the creed that all are equal under the law, for his lawful conviction and mockery of all 10 contempt of court charges, let's hope Trump spends the night of Nov. 28 where he belongs: curled up in his cell bunk sucking his thumb, your small, weak, faithless tin pot dictator of yours.

RICK ROCHELEAU
DANIELSON

Additional Letters to the Editor, See Page A-9

Gambling memorabilia



Gambling has a long history. Tiles from 2,300 BC were found in China and are believed to have been used in a game of chance, according to gambling.net. Slips like current day Keno tickets from 200 BC were found and may have been used to fund government projects. Dice were discovered in an Egyptian tomb in 3,000 BC and the Greek poet Sophocles mentions them in his writings from around 500 BC. Gambling was banned in Ancient Rome and penalties were imposed on those caught participating. The citizens began using chips so authorities wouldn't see that they were playing for money. Playing cards were invented by the Chinese in 800 AD.

Gambling has of course developed and progressed since. An early version of Baccarat migrated from Italy to France in the 1400s. In 1601, Miguel de Cervantes (the author of Don Quixote) wrote about a Spanish game called veintiuna that was like blackjack, according to gambling.net. A gambling house (an early form of casino) opened in Italy in 1638. Roulette was invented in France in 1796. Poker may have developed over time, but one of the first times a recognizable form of the game was played occurred in New Orleans in 1829. Slot machines started being used in New York in 1891. The Golden Gate Casino, the first casino in Las Vegas, opened in 1906. In 1910, U.S. gambling laws halted gambling until the Great Depression of the 1930s, when it became legal again.

There are many reasons that people collect gambling memorabilia. They may like the history and focus on an era like Victorian gambling memorabilia. Casinos were also extravagant social spaces with "debonair personalities, luxury, and high-society figures," according to the "Island Echo" of the United Kingdom's Isle of Wight. Many collectors are attracted to that lifestyle.

Some recent auction results attest to the desirability of gambling memorabilia. A 1930s wood gambling carnival wheel sold for \$500 last month. A rare early 1900s bicycle competition mechanical parlor gambling machine sold for \$2,500 in June. We sold a vintage Mills Novelty quarter slot machine for \$500 in our June auction.

A colorful painted saloon wheel described as being circa 1900 "from an Indian Territory in Oklahoma" brought \$10,000 in 2016. A Desert Inn \$25 casino chip sold for \$25,000 in 2013. A 1936 Evans Roll-ette machine described as "one of the rarest and most sought-after 20th century casino machines" went for \$28,000 in 2016. A Charles Fey slot machine, considered to be the first 3-reel gambling machine, hit the jackpot, selling for \$145,000 in 2017.

We'll have a collection of gambling memorabilia from a local estate in our major auction starting this month. That auction will also feature a wide variety of other items including gold jewelry, sterling silver, art, coins, and historical items. We are always accepting quality consignments of all kinds for future auctions. I'll be appraising items for the public at the

Turn To **ANTIQUES** page **A5**

Talk to your kids about bullies



LESSONS
FOR LIFE
MIKE BOGDANSKI

Talking to your child about school bullies is an essential conversation as the new school year begins. For elementary and middle school-aged children, navigating social interactions can be challenging, and understanding how to handle bullying is crucial for their emotional well-being. Here's how you can approach this sensitive topic.

1. Create a safe space for conversation

Start by establishing a safe and open environment where your child feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings. During a quiet moment, such as after dinner, when your child is more likely to open up. Begin the conversation by asking general questions about their day at school, such as who they spent time with or what they enjoyed. A good way to start is by asking what was great today and then moving into what was bad today. Gradually steer the conversation toward friendships and peer interactions, making it clear that they can talk to you about anything, including uncomfortable situations. It might be good to share a personal story from your youth.

2. Define bullying clearly
It's important to ensure your child understands what bullying is. Explain that bullying can take many forms—physical, verbal, or social—and can occur in person or online. Give age-appropriate examples, such as name-calling, spreading rumors, exclusion from groups, or physical aggression.

Emphasize that bullying is repeated behavior intended to hurt someone, which is never the victim's fault. Sometimes it's not easy to see the bullying going on.

3. Point out real-life examples

To help your child recognize bullying, point out situations you might witness daily. Whether it's something you see while walking down the street, in a store, or even on television, use these moments as teaching opportunities. For example, if you see children being unkind to each other at a park, gently discuss what you observed with your child and ask how they think the victim might feel. These real-life examples make the concept of bullying more real and help your child to better understand and see similar situations they might encounter at school.

4. Encourage empathy and kindness
Teach your child the importance

of empathy by encouraging them to think about how others might feel. Discuss the value of being kind and standing up for peers who bullies may target. Role-playing scenarios can be a helpful way to practice responses to bullying, whether your child witnesses it or experienc-

es it themselves. Reinforce the idea that everyone deserves to feel safe and respected at school.

5. Empower them with strategies

Equip your child with strategies to deal with bullies. Encourage them to stay calm, assertively tell the bully to stop, and walk away if possible. One of the best skills you can practice is teaching your child to stand assertively, hands open, make good eye contact, and if feeling physically threatened, strongly repeat "Back away"! This skill can be practiced daily almost like a game until it is embedded in your child.

Emphasize the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult, such as a teacher, school counselor, or trusted adult, if they feel threatened or uncomfortable. Let them know that reporting bullying is not tattling; it's the responsible way to protect themselves and others. If they don't help stop bullies, the terror tactics will just continue.

6. Stay involved and follow up
Maintain an ongoing conversation

about your child's experiences at school. Regularly check in to see how they are doing and if they have encountered any bullying. To personalize an experience, share your bullying memories and how you dealt with it.

Stay in touch with teachers and school staff to monitor any problem situation and ensure that your child feels supported. Your involvement can make a significant difference in helping your child navigate bullying effectively.

By keeping communication open, educating your child about bullying, and equipping them with the tools to handle difficult situations, you can help them feel more confident and secure as they navigate the school's social landscape.

These tips will help by addressing bullying before it happens.

Mike Bogdanski is a martial arts Grandmaster and anti-bullying activist.

Paws Cat Shelter hosting chicken BBQ fundraiser

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter is hosting its 9th Annual Chicken BBQ fundraiser on Sunday, Sept. 29 from 5-6:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 64 Providence St. in Putnam.

Meal includes half chicken, baked potato, salad and roll. Eat in or take out. Tickets are \$15 each and can be purchased at Paws Cat Shelter, 74 School St., Putnam, Joseph Jewelers, 153 School St., Putnam, and at Knights of Columbus.

Paws is a non-profit, all volunteer organization caring for the cats of our communities. For more info or how you can donate, contact Paws at 860-315-1228.

American Legion hosting all you can eat breakfast

NORTH GROSVENORDALE — On Sept. 29, there will be an all you can eat breakfast at the American Legion Family Post 67, Route 200, North Grosvenordale. Tickets \$15 for adults and \$10 for children.

Tickets will be sold at the door.

ANTIQUES

continued from page A6

Scandinavian Culture Center in Newton from 1 to 3 p.m. on Sept. 21. Please visit our Web site, <https://centralmassauctions.com>, for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-6111).

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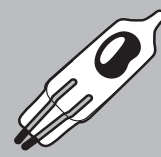
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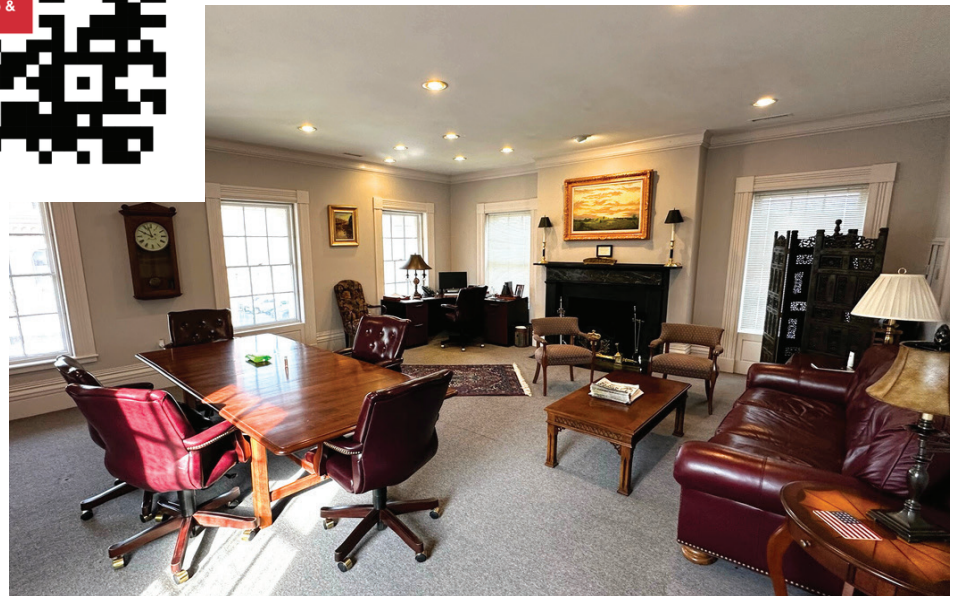


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EASTCONN celebrates National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week with inspiring events

REGION — EASTCONN is proud to announce its participation in National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week, which takes place from Sept. 16-20. This week-long observance highlights the critical role that adult education and family literacy programs play in empowering individuals, strengthening communities, and enhancing the nation's workforce.

EASTCONN has sent Honorary Proclamations to district leaders across the region, urging them to support this important cause. The towns of Griswold, Bozrah, Chaplin, Woodstock, Union, and Voluntown have already adopted the proclamation, demonstrating their commitment to addressing the needs of adult learners in Connecticut.

To mark the week, EASTCONN invites the public to join us on Wednesday, Sept. 18 at the Connecticut State Capitol, North Lobby, starting at 10 a.m. The event will honor several outstanding adult learners and recognize longtime adult education advocate David Downes. We are especially proud that EASTCONN graduate Krislia Grisman will be speaking at the event.

Krislia Grisman is originally from Venezuela and holds a degree in digital marketing and graphic design. Due to her husband's visa status, she was unable to work in the U.S. and is currently a stay-at-home mom. Determined to improve her English skills, Krislia enrolled in several EASTCONN programs, including Family Literacy, after seeing signs for EASTCONN services in her community.

"EASTCONN programs have helped me improve my English and gain confidence," Grisman said. "I'm grateful for the support and the opportunity to learn and grow."

Adult education programs in Connecticut are more important than ever. With more than 322,000 adults lacking a high school credential and more than 120,000 struggling with English proficiency, the need for accessible, high-quality adult education has never been greater. Connecticut's adult education programs served nearly 30,000 learners this past year, helping them to acquire the skills they need to succeed in post-secondary education, the workforce, and beyond.

Last year, 218 adult residents of northeastern Connecticut sought to improve their basic skills and/or earn their high school diploma through one of EASTCONN's three high school credentialing options,



Courtesy

Krislia Grisman at EASTCONN Adult & Community Programs graduation in 2023.

while 212 adult students enrolled in our English Language Learning (ELL) programs. In addition, 163 adults participated in EASTCONN's Adult Workplace Education certificate classes and work-site education and training programs.

"Adult education is a lifeline for so many in our communities," said Kristin Hempel, EASTCONN's Director of Adult & Community Programs. "It opens doors to new possibilities, whether that's earning a high school diploma, learning English, or gaining job skills. EASTCONN is committed to helping our adult learners achieve their goals and improve their lives."

EASTCONN encourages everyone to recognize the importance of adult education and family lit-

eracy during this special week and to support the continued efforts to educate and elevate our communities. We also invite you to share your own stories at the Capitol of how these programs have made a difference in your community.

For more information about National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week and EASTCONN's involvement, please visit the Connecticut Association for Adult & Continuing Education (CAACE) Web site at caace.org or contact Kristin Hempel at khempel@eastconn.org.



Courtesy

OUTDOOR MEETING IN 'NAMESAKE' PARK

The Putnam Rotary Club recently held its meeting in Putnam's Rotary Park. After lunch on the Bandstand Rotarian Karen Osbrey gave a presentation on the history of the park. After the Flood of 1955, Rotary clubs from around the world sent funds for the creation of the park. It really is an international park.

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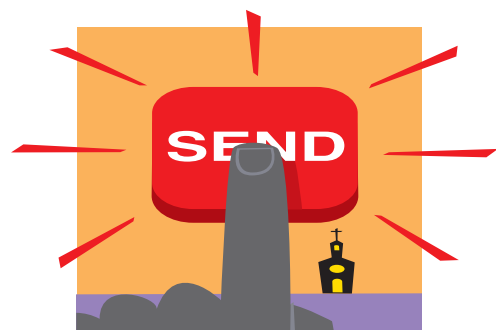


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Tips for preventing vole damage in your landscape

Matted down, grassy trails in the lawn and missing bark on trees and shrubs in late winter and early spring might be when you first become aware of voles in your landscape. Fall is an important time to protect plants from damage.



GARDEN MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA MYERS

der of hardware cloth. Sink the wire several inches into the ground to keep the voles out.

Keep the grass surrounding flower beds mowed to reduce the risk of voles moving into the garden. Cut tall grasses shorter in the fall so they do not fall over and create homes for these pests.

The same is true for branches lying on the ground. Trimming these off the soil surface also helps eliminate vole habitats.

Boost your success by including Plantskydd (plantskydd.com) in your efforts to prevent vole damage. This organic odor-based repellent is snow and rain-resistant. Apply a liberal amount of the granular Plantskydd over the soil surface around your plantings. Apply it in the fall to protect your plants over winter and early in the growing season to protect new plantings. As always, read and follow label directions for the greatest success.

Some gardeners choose to use a snap trap to manage these rodents. When populations are high there can be hundreds of them, limiting the success of this option. If you opt to use a rat trap baited with peanut butter and oats and placed on one of their trails, set it inside a pipe. The pipe or a similar cover prevents birds from feeding on the oats and being killed by the trap.

A variety of animals including hawks, owls, and foxes feast on voles, helping to manage their populations. Avoid using



Melinda Myers

Damage to a lawn caused by voles.

rodent poison that puts them as well as cats and dogs at risk when feeding on a poisoned vole.

Working with nature and adapting your landscape management strategies can help you reduce vole damage while growing a beautiful landscape.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and

Small Space Gardening. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series* and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Peace Pilgrim

POSITIVELY SPEAKING
TOBY MOORE

It's easy to feel like everything is falling apart these days. The economy is uncertain, with prices climbing and jobs becoming more unsta-

ble. We hear endless news about war and global unrest, and as elections approach, the sense of instability only grows. Many of us lie awake at night, wondering how we'll make it through these difficult times.

Wouldn't it be nice to let go and trust that everything will be OK?

That's precisely how Peace Pilgrim lived her life. In 1953, she set out on a mysterious journey that would last nearly 30 years, walking over 25,000 miles zig zagging across the United States.

She gave up her name, her possessions, and her home, choosing to live with nothing but the clothes on her back, a comb, a pen, and a few small pieces of paper. She had no money, no food, and no specific destination, yet she walked without fear, relying on the kindness of others for food and shelter.

Her mission was to spread a

message of peace, and through her unwavering faith, she trusted that everything she needed would be provided.

Peace Pilgrim lived in simplicity.

"Unnecessary possessions are unnecessary burdens. If you have them, you have to take care of them!" she would often say.

Her life was proof that there is great freedom in simplicity.

She believed that "those who have enough but not too much are the happiest." With nothing but her faith and her message, she showed that peace and contentment come from within, not from material things.

Throughout her journey, she encountered challenges that would have caused most people to lose hope, but her trust never wavered. She believed that "a pilgrim is a wanderer with a purpose." Her purpose was to spread peace, and she trusted that life would support her in that mission. And time after time, the help she needed arrived—often in mysterious ways.

Once, while walking through the Rocky Mountains, she was

caught in a fierce snowstorm with no shelter in sight. It seemed impossible that she could make it through the night. But instead of panicking, she kept walking, trusting that something would come. Sure enough, just as the storm became unbearable, a stranger appeared, offering her a warm coat and a place to stay. The stranger had no reason to be there but had felt an inexplicable urge to drive down that road.

Another time, while walking through the Mojave Desert, she went days without food. Hunger gnawed at her, but she remained calm. She knew that help would arrive when she needed it. And sure enough, a man driving down that empty road stopped to offer her food and water. He had felt a nudge to take a detour, not knowing why, but was surprised to find her there.

She once said, "for light, I go directly to the Source of light, not to any of the reflections." She trusted not in the material world but in a deeper, spiritual source. She showed that peace comes from within, which can produce a knowing that everything will be taken care of.

The true mystery of

Peace Pilgrim wasn't just how she survived physically, but how she radiated such calm and positivity in every situation.

"When you find peace within yourself, you become the kind of person who can live at peace with others," she said.

And indeed, wherever she went, people felt drawn to her message of peace. Her calm, centered presence inspired thousands of people.

Though her identity remained unknown for many years, it wasn't until after her death in 1981 that people learned she had been born Mildred Lisette Norman. She had lived a normal life before experiencing a spiritual awakening that led her to dedicate her life to peace.

Despite her hardships, she always remained positive, saying, "Keep your feet on the ground and your thoughts at lofty heights."

The secret may be found in trusting the journey and believing in the goodness of others and the world. By following the example of Peace Pilgrim, we can learn to embrace uncertainty, knowing that even in the most trying times, life provides exactly what we need.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wake up call!

To the Editor:

Holy Macarena!

Stepped away from the Chalupa for a Week, and I can hardly recognize the place! Everybody's smiling ... and it seems that most folks have a spring in their step! The Windy City must be affecting our weather! Gotta confess... feelin' groovy! I can tell the feeling is mutual, compadre! But there are a few clouds in the forecast, and we can't afford to get giddy.

While away, I realized the threat of staying in our comfort zone. Of staying among those who think and talk like we do. Of behaving exactly like those whom we criticize. People who live afraid of listening to any media other than Fox news... of not allowing different thoughts or ideas into our minds and conversations. It's so sad to be limited to shallow conversation about the weather by people who say they want no arguments or conflict about political comments. It feels like we have straightjackets on! I find it sad that we're drawn into a model where we're treated like Kindergarteners because we behave like them when this topic comes up! We immediately fall into the trap of trying to convince the other person, or insult their intelligence, instead of asking the why of their belief.

I can't begin to describe the despair I felt while being out of the country and realizing that no one in my surroundings spoke of our election cycle or was even interested in the drama! There is no participation in presidential elections in Puerto Rico for American citizens who are residents or born on the island. Alarming enough, they find no political connection to the outcome! The percentage of voters is very high, boosted by the fact that election day is a holiday. The political topic of the day on the Island is the Statehood referendum, and much like here...everyone is discouraged to discuss it, in an effort to avoid conflict. In my opinion, supporting it is as ridiculous as eliminating the Department of Education in Project 2025! How does one define second class citizenship? There are millions of US citizens who live in any one of the 50 states who would define their status in this country as second class. A great number of folks are convinced that a Referendum will automatically be reciprocated with welcoming arms. There is no realization that Congress has the final word, and that there will surely be a revolution if DC isn't declared a State first!!! Talk about taxation without representation! But I digress... as if my plane hasn't landed!

Yet... isn't that the MAGA state of mind? Their mental trip hasn't landed on firm ground yet! They're on board a Trump plane, built by Boeing in the '50s, and they can't seem to pull the oxygen masks down to breathe!

Then an Ahhh moment... The one that Tip O'Neil referred to about All Politics being Local...in Puerto Rico, Arizona, Georgia, or Montana. Voters feel disconnected from Federal, state, or local outcomes unless they are touched by the policies directly. The interesting detail, is that even then...they don't feel their vote counts! Why else would roughly 200 people show up to vote on the town's budget that affects 17,000 residents of Killingly! I still don't get it! Over 60 percent active voting presence on an island that plays no role in our presidential election, while a lack of interest in our own direct involvement! What are we missing here?

A second Ahhh? How can we ring an alarm that sounds different about this election. What makes this storm different from another "Storm of the Century?" How can we claim that Democracy is in danger, when Civics is no longer a subject in our schools and students or their parents have no clue how government works or what democracy actually is? Electoral College? Oh, please! No wonder it's easy to sell the lie about stolen elections!

So...now that we don't have time to explain it all...

while trying to elect a new President and determine a constructive path...

How can we provide her with the opportunity she needs to be effective at enacting the legislation she hopes to put in place?

She must have the majority in the House and the Senate to do it.

In an answer to the neighbors who ask why some agenda promises were not accomplished by a "D" administration in the White House, it can't be done without a majority of votes in the House and the Senate! Congress is real! We do have a checks and balances system, not a dictatorship. The directive becomes perfectly clear!

Vote in favor of the entire "D" candidate ballot sheet you see in front of you... Unless you know of someone who's a convicted felon on that list!

Hopefully, they've all introduced themselves to you or through a surrogate. If not, google their names or ask someone you trust. It's the only way we can avoid the Obama straight-jacket, when the opposite party controlled the Senate, kept him from moving ahead with his agenda, and stopped him from appointing a Supreme Court Justice! Remember?

Let's get our ducks in a row neighbors. Understand that we can't endure a three, four-, or five-alarm fire in our Executive Branch of government, by allowing a mentally ill individual anywhere near that Resolute Desk! Get the ball rolling with phone calls, texts, emails, and Facebook postings to out of state family and friends! Organize bridge or Scrabble games at the Church basement! Tell me when and where, and I'll show up! As Coach Tim says...We can sleep when we're dead! We've got to get this right!

LYDIA RIVERA-ABRAMS
DAYVILLE

Flexer has a record of standing up for us

To the Editor:

I am writing in support of the re-election of State Sen. Mae Flexer to continue to serve us in Brooklyn, Canterbury, Killingly, Mansfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Thompson and Windham. Sen. Flexer has represented us well since she first won this office in 2015. While there has been disparagement of "career" elected officials from her opponent, Sen. Flexer has indeed served us faithfully in her time in office.

Some of the recent benefits to our towns that have come to us due to Sen. Flexer's hard work, attention to detail, commitment to our most vulnerable citizens, prioritizing of workers, education and health-care include the following:

*\$210,000 in improvements to Owen Bell Park in Killingly

*\$250,000 for reconstruction of Church Street in Brooklyn

*\$780,000 for three Thompson Schools projects: school track & athletic field re-building, Alliance District funding, and construction of an ADA-compliant elementary school playground.

While taxpayers often complain of state tax burdening, Sen. Flexer has made it her business to be sure that her district receives the benefit of those taxes, which we have already paid. This is no small accomplishment for Windham County, which is the poorest county in our state.

In addition, Sen. Flexer has fought to keep Day Kimball Hospital, our area's largest employer, in operation during their financial struggles—most recently to the tune of \$10 million in state support. This is OUR tax money coming back to our towns when we need it.

Finally, no one has a

stronger record of standing against domestic violence by writing and supporting bills to expand GPS monitoring of domestic violence offenders and securing \$14.6 million to fund organizations that provide essential services for victims and their families. She has also won continued additional funding for support of children who have experienced domestic violence.

To hear Sen. Flexer's opponent accuse her of responsibility for the tragic death in Willimantic of visiting nurse Joyce Grayson in October, 2023, is not only smearingly inaccurate, but also paints Sen. Flexer as an uncaring politician who carelessly allows the release of dangerous criminals. I have known Mae Flexer for over ten years now, and am frankly disgusted to hear this accusation that is the exact opposite of the kind of person she is: one who

will always stand for law and order and against mistreatment of women, children, veterans, elderly, and consumers. She works to protect those who need it the most.

Rather than a newcomer who has strong opinions, good intentions, but will need to learn on the job, our Quiet Corner needs Sen. Flexer's years of experience and record of success in bringing her constituents the representation, tax funding, and state-level leadership that help improve our lives. She has my support, and I urge readers to overlook campaign rhetoric and instead look at Sen. Flexer's record of standing up for us.

Respectfully,

CLAUDIA ALLEN
THOMPSON

The Democrats have their own "Project 2025"

To the Editor:

The Biden/Harris administration and the Democrats have accomplished phase one of their "Project 2020." And though they were clever enough not to put it in a 900 page document, they've flooded the country with countless millions of future Democrat voters, and have basically turned the USA into the land of the freebie at the taxpayers' expense. The goal of phase two - their Project 2025 - is to give them all amnesty and make them voters to ensure future democratic rule. Remember President Biden saying they had a "Plan?" (And didn't a writer here express a concern about a future one-party government, but maybe it's okay if it's only the party they support?) No doubt a small portion of these migrants have become contributors, but if you add those who haven't, or probably never will, to the growing number of welfare deadbeats, it will result in more and future people relying on government handouts, but isn't controlling the masses by making them dependent on the government part of the preachings of

Karl Marx?

It was said that immigration has cost the state of Massachusetts \$1.5 billion, and in New York it's like \$6 billion, and who knows what it's costing the other sanctuary states, like Connecticut? Have you ever heard the saying: "If you're better off now than you were four years ago, then you must be an illegal alien?" I'll bet those affected by the high cost of living and those struggling to make ends meet have. But pay no attention to any of that because the new leader has a plan (yawn), and though it's in a different package, she expects you to continue drinking the same Kool-Aid, and that has the ship-jumping, never-Trumpers "feelin' groovy." (Gulp it down, and Jim Jones couldn't have pulled it off any better!) Besides the DNC being nothing more than a bunch of "hooray for our side" Trump-bashing, their brain-washed ilk left there with only the message of "joy." It's sad that this pair was the best the democrats could come up with, and as Chris Plante has said: "They're not liberals, they're the left." But why don't you minions just

say it like it really is - that you'll vote for "anybody but Trump?" And did you know that the Democrats' version of "MAGA" is now called ka"MALA," which in Spanish means "bad?"

It was asked "why should we vote for Donald Trump?" (That answer was in Larry Consiglio, Jr.'s last letter.) So now tell me why should we vote for pro-criminals like the bailer and the burner? If Harris is such a "country loving woman," then why has Donald Trump earned the unanimous endorsement of the largest police union in the world, the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP)? Why should we vote for Harris when not one thing she's ever accomplished as our VP has ever been mentioned here? And speaking of Walz, even his own brother said he shouldn't be in a position of power, and I'll bet the store owners and the people affected during those riots feel the same way. Additionally, a photo of eight of his own family members wearing "Walz's for Trump" T-shirts has surfaced.

Ian Sams, another mouthpiece puppet for the Harris campaign,

appeared on CNN and made excuses for why they are not talking about Harris's record. He said: "We don't have time to think about why certain things happened over the last few years." Nice diversion you pencil-necked geek moron, and it's obvious that they want the voters to forget the fact that she's been part of the Biden administration and is directly responsible for what has transpired over the last three and a half years. (And by the way, this wind up toy was dragged out of mothballs after being a spokesman for both Fauci and Hunter Biden, so we have to believe him, right?) While speaking from an event in Russia, Putin said that he is now supporting Harris, and he jokingly referred to her "infectious" laugh. He also mentioned that he previously supported Biden, and argued that Harris could lift sanctions Biden placed on Russia. So who's your puppet now, Vlad?

ED DELUCA
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A criminal many times over

To the Editor:

Trump just can't help himself. He breaks the law because he has no respect for it. Now he apparently broke the Logan Act which says a private citizen cannot engage in diplomatic conversations or negotiations with foreign governments. He is accused of having a phone call on Aug. 14 with Israel's Netanyahu about the war in Gaza urging him to reject discussions to find a peace deal. Why? Because a peace deal would presumably help Harris.

This is a felony, just another one to be heaped on his mountain of crimes, punishable by fines and up to three years in prison. OK, this hasn't been proven in a court of law but must be put under intense and immediate investigation.

And let's not forget the abomination at the Arlington Cemetery. He knowingly broke the law by having a political rally in a restricted area. And

his associate committed assault against a cemetery worker. Anyone else would have been arrested on the spot. But no - not here because of the "political ramifications." We have the proof because we saw it. He's broken the law - period. It just another example of his complete disdain for morality, honor and patriotism.

With Trump breaking the law almost every week, it is an abomination that he hasn't been charged with very many of them. Facetiously, I think the reason is that we might be running out of AG's and DA's enough to prosecute them all. Trump has made a lifetime of overloading the legal system to avoid convictions.

In an Ohio rally in March, Trump said that if he doesn't get elected, "there will be a bloodbath." This is inciting to riot just like he did with the Jan. 6 insurrection. Trump is threatening persecution, violence and revenge on

his enemies and election officials if he wins. He is again calling for his political opponents to be jailed and a return to "public military tribunals." Like most tyrannies, it doesn't take much to be accused of being a political opponent. Read your history of '30s Germany.

And this is certainly not the face of a true Christian. And I quote Leviticus 19:18 - "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself." Trump has no concept of what this is saying. How much more evidence do you GOP'ers need to be afraid of living under a dictator?

In stark contrast, Vice President Harris has said, "Violence is never acceptable. We will always speak out against violence, hate crimes and discrimination, where ever and whenever it occurs. It has no place in our democracy." Their opposing views on governing, humanity and

compassion could not be any more obvious.

Chuckles the clown, Bozo the clown, Clarabel the clown, Donnie the clown. See a connection here? They are all jokes. But most clowns make things up to make you laugh. Donnie the clown makes up things to make you fearful, to make you hate, to make you wallow in lies, to make you reject reality, science and medicine, to make you cling to fantasies and to make you support things that will do you grievous harm. We can bring Donnie the clown down just by laughing at him and voting Blue.

I see a glimmer of hope in that hell has not frozen over but has definitely cooled down. Dick Cheney has come out supporting Harris. OMG. And Alan Lichtman, who predicted the outcome of nine of the last 10 Presidential elections, has predicted a Harris victory. Hoorah.

STEPHEN ETZEL
PUTNAM

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OBITUARIES

James G.A. McCall, 89



James G.A. McCall, 89, of Dayville, CT passed away peacefully on Sunday, August 18, 2024 at the HopeHealth Hultar Hospice Center in Providence. He was born in Providence May 4, 1935, son of the late Donald T. and Asenath Ashley McCall. James was a long time resident of North Scituate, RI and in his later years, resided in Dayville, CT. He served in the US Army and worked for many years as a screw machine operator in the manufacturing industry. He was a volunteer fireman for the North Scituate and Danielson Fire Departments. He served on the Killingly/Brooklyn Ambulance board of directors from 1996 to 2014 and chairman of the board from 1997 to 2009. He was a lifetime member of the American Legion Post 21 in Moosup, CT. James

was married to his wife of 31 years, Dorothy McCall. He is survived by his children Marianne Healy, Brenda E. Castellona, and Robert H. McCall. He also had two step children Brian Brewer and Bruce Brewer(deceased). He also left behind five grandchildren Frank E. Castellona, Tyler J. McCall, Jordan T. McCall, Hannah C. Brewer, and Noah D. Brewer, as well as numerous nieces and nephews. There will be a graveside memorial service with full military honors at Westfield Cemetery in Danielson, CT on Thursday September 26, 2024 at 11am followed by fellowship and refreshments at the Danielson Church of the Nazarene for family and friends.



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Lauren Elizabeth Alexander, 56



Lauren Elizabeth Alexander, 56, of Danielson, CT passed away peacefully at Hartford Hospital on August 28, 2024. She was born in San Jose, California on October 7, 1967 daughter of Carol Alexander and the late Louis H. Alexander. Besides her mother, she is survived by her brother Louis G. Alexander and his wife Kathleen Alexander of Fairfield, CT. She also leaves behind her nephew Michael Alexander, aunt June Fitzgerald and cousins Susan Fitzgerald and Christine Price all of Staten Island, NY.

Lauren will always be remembered for her bright, infectious smile, and her enthusiastic singing of the songs she loved from The Wizard of Oz and

Annie. Lauren loved playing dress-up. She spent many Halloweens dressed as Dorothy carrying Toto down the yellow brick road, and could often be found wearing her Annie wig and quoting Dr. Suess.

Lauren was a resident at Putnam and Ravenlawn Group Homes. The family wishes to thank all her caregivers who loved and supported her every single day.

Lauren has found peace over the rainbow, in the arms of her dad, and we take solace in knowing "Those we love, never truly leave us".

A Memorial Mass of Christian Burial will be held at St. James Catholic Church, 12 Franklin St. Danielson, CT on Monday September 16, 2024, at 11 AM. Burial will take place at Lawncroft Cemetery, Fairfield, CT at a later date.

Michael A. Wysgoll 1954 - 2024



Putnam – Michael A. Wysgoll, 70, of Cady Rd., Formerly of Washington, died Thursday morning, August 29, 2024, at Day Kimball Hospital. He was the loving husband of Udomrat (Buncharoen) Wysgoll. Born in Germany, he was the son of the late Anton and Margarethe Marie Wysgoll.

At the age of one he moved with his family from Germany to Washington state. In 2017, he and his wife moved to Putnam so they could be closer to their daughter.

He was a High School Graduate of Carroll High School, received his

Bachelor of Arts Degree from Gonzaga University, and his master's degree from Johns Hopkins University.

Mr. Wysgoll worked for many years as a software engineer for Lockheed Martin.

Michael is survived by his wife, Udomrat Wysgoll; his daughter Rachanee Wysgoll and her husband Carl Savoie; and his brother, Ulrich Wysgoll.

Funeral services are private and have been entrusted to the Gilman Funeral Home & Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT 06260. For memorial guest-book visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Maggie Wilson, 81



Newton- Maggie Wilson, 81, formerly of Westview Commons in Killingly and Lebanon Hill Housing, Southbridge, passed away at Saint Elizabeth Medical Center, Boston, MA.

Maggie leaves her two sons, David K. Ayau and his wife Skiyea L. Ayau, Joel T. Ayau and his wife Cheng-Yin Lin, and her five grandchildren Kahluel K. Ayau, Kalai K. Ayau, Makani K. Ayau, Keoni K. Ayau, and Ian L. Ayau, as well as her former husband Thomas L.C. Ayau, Jr. She was predeceased by her husband of 9 years, Theodore M. Harakaly Sr.

Maggie was born and raised in Southbridge, MA. She graduated from Mary E. Wells in 1960, and completed degrees at Clark University and Chaminade University. Maggie was a

profoundly sympathetic and compassionate woman who found her calling late in life as a social worker, assisting the elderly through Tri-Valley Elderly Services. She came to sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization which became central to her social life and network of caring for many other women. Maggie had a life full of zest, and was known for her quirky sense of humor and love for her children and grandchildren.

Calling hours for Maggie will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 4th, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, followed by a Funeral Service in the funeral home at 7:00pm. Burial in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Southbridge, will be held at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Salvation Army, 640 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 or online at <http://salvationarmyma.org/Worcester>

Send all obituary notices to Villager Newspapers, PO Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550, or by e-mail to obits@stonebridgepress.news

WORKSHOP

continued from page A1

series bringing together all the different elements that have been discussed at length over the past year.

Thompson Director of Planning and Development Tyra Penn-Gesek explained that the most recent workshop in August helped set the stage for the final meeting which will serve as a culmination of all the public discussions to date.

"We had a really productive meeting (in August). Among our discussion topics was a lengthy brainstorm to create the project's mission statement, as suggested at the meeting. Jocelyn Leahy, Executive Director of CT Resource Conservation, tinkered around with an AI bot to draft six samples," said Penn-Gesek.

The proposed mission statement reads "Our mission is to support and accelerate the growth of local entrepreneurship through tailored resources,

expert guidance and strategic partnerships. We embrace a sustainable and regenerative agricultural, business and human ecology."

Penn-Gesek said participants can expect the final workshop to provide a big picture of how the project will look from every facet once it is finally completed.

"We are going to do a big wrap-up presentation at the Thompson Public Library, highlighting our key accomplishments throughout the planning process, before the grant partners and I take six more months to write the final master plan. As always, we will be both in-person and on Zoom, but I highly encourage those who have been along for the ride for the last year to attend in person, and also to bring any friends or family who may be interested in learning more about this innovative local initiative," said Penn-Gesek in an email to project stakeholders and supporters.

The meeting will also finalize the mission statement and potentially agree on a name for the new facility.

The final public workshop will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 25 from 6 until 8 p.m. Participants can RSVP with Penn-Gesek's office by emailing planner@thompsonct.org or calling 860-923-9475. Videos of past 65 Main workshops have been posted on the Town of Thompson CT YouTube Channel.

LEGALS

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
ESTATE OF Edward Windecker, Sr.
(24-00341)**

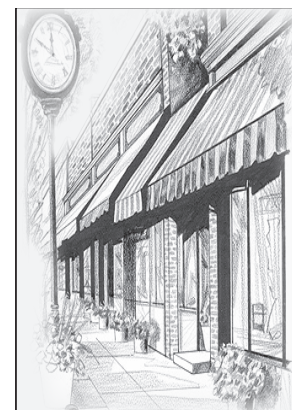
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated August 30, 2024, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
John K. Windecker, 276 Cooper Road, Chepachet, RI 02814
September 13, 2024

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