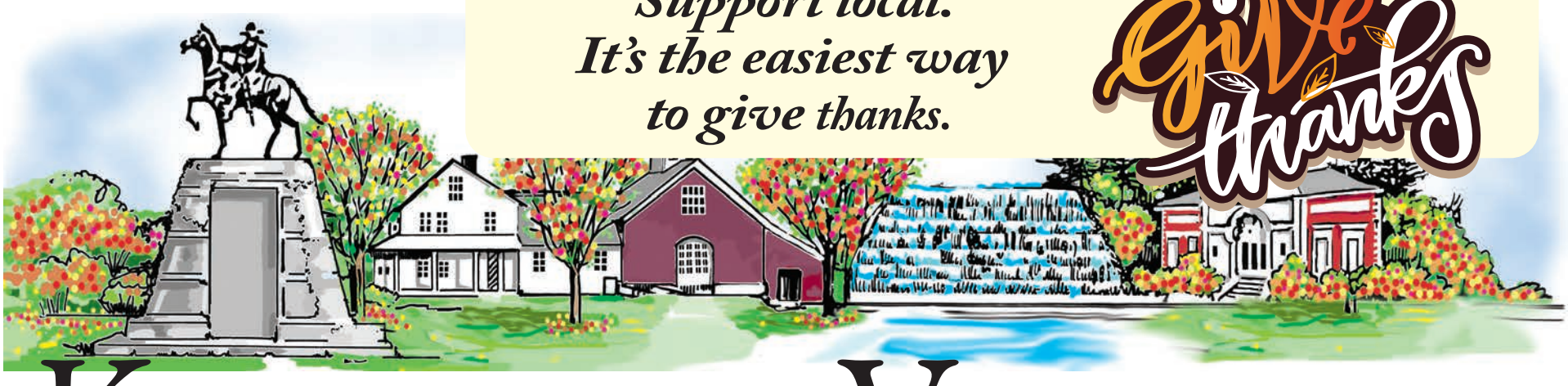
Support local.
It's the easiest way
to give thanks.

give thanks



KILLINGLY VILLAGER

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Friday, November 21, 2025

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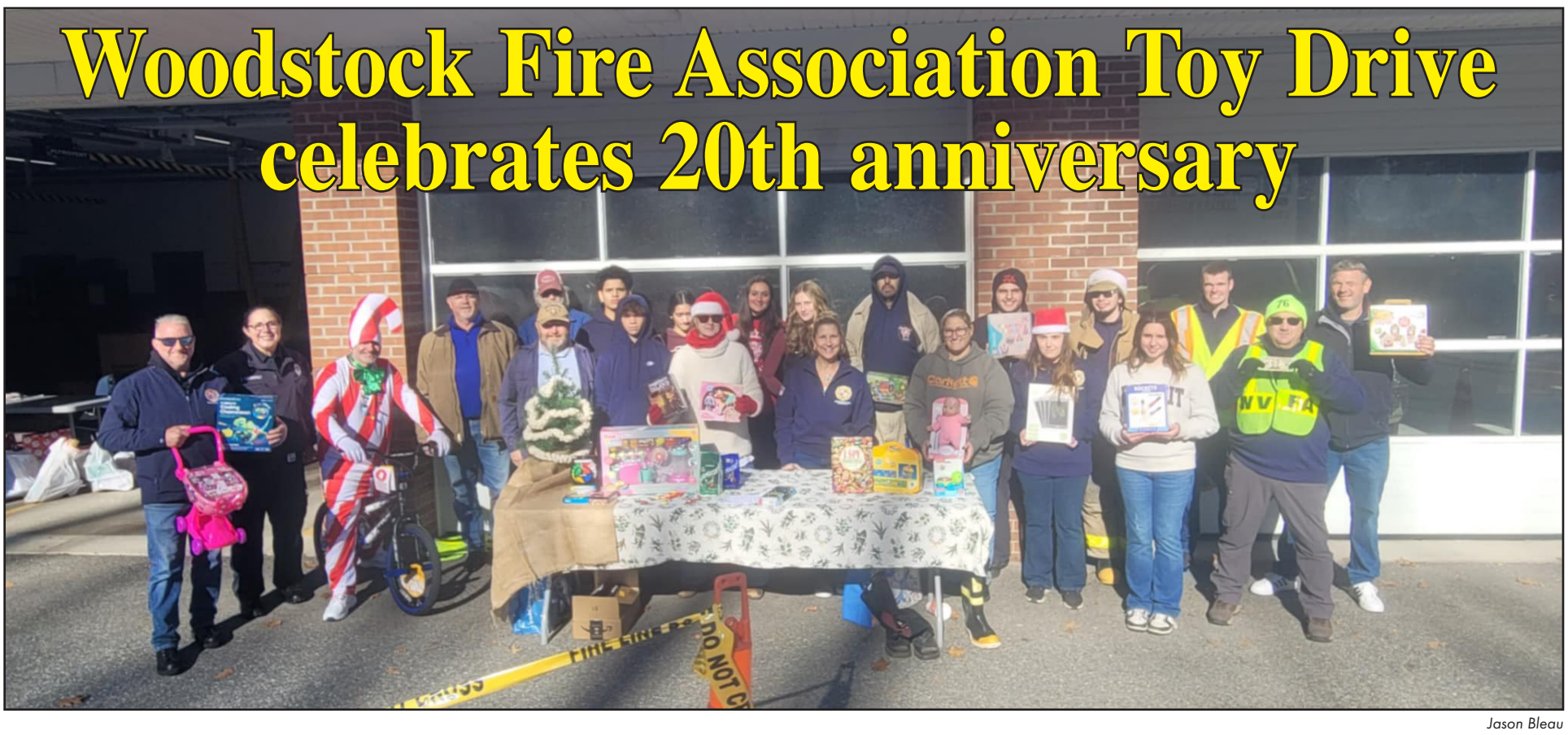
Woodstock Fire Association Toy Drive celebrates 20th anniversary



Jason Bleau

Volunteers pose for a photo during the Woodstock Volunteer Fire Department's 20th annual toy drive.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

WOODSTOCK — The Woodstock Volunteer Fire Association Station 76 celebrated a milestone for possibly its biggest annual events as a holiday tradition returned to kick off the season of giving.

Every November, the association hosts a toy drive helping support local organizations to give families a magical holiday. In 2025, that collection hit a major milestone celebrating 20 years of giving back to Quiet Corner communities.

The drive originated in 2006 inspired by a member of Station 76 who themselves benefited from the generosity of the Southbridge Fire Department in Massachusetts as a child. That experience and the longing to ensure no child goes without a gift at Christmas inspired Woodstock to create their own version of a toy drive eventually incorporating other fire departments including Bungay Fire Station, Muddy Brook, and Community Fire Station of Thompson as well as several different local school groups. Over 20 years, the toy drive has collected around $143,000 and more than 48,000 toys to benefit local kids and families with 2020 being the most successful year on record to date.

Iris Arsenault, a Station 76 member and EMT who has been a part of the toy drive from the very beginning, reminisced on two decades of growth and success.

"It's amazing from the first year that we were here to today. When it started, everyone brought their children and taught them the gift of giving to the less fortunate and those families keep coming back year after year," said Arsenault. "The generosity of the donations, no matter how big or small, is nice. It's great to see the faces come back year after year. It's a good feeling for all and it gets us all together to give back to the community in a way that's not an emergency situation."

Russ Downer, President of the Woodstock Volunteer Fire Association Station 76, added that the toy drive is a staple of every member's

Turn To **TOY DRIVE** *page* **A11**

Lawrence resigns from Killingly Board of Ed

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — The Killingly Board of Education will be one member short for the time following the resignation of Republican Laura Lawrence.

Lawrence, who was elected in 2023, announced her resignation effective Nov. 13, citing family and career commitments as the reasons behind her departure. She called her time with the board a "valuable experience" and wished well to the remaining members but left a powerful message about avoiding party politics to do what's best for the students in the Killingly Public Schools.

In a letter made public by the Killingly Republican Town Committee, Lawrence explained she feels she has struggled to make a difference as a member of the board due to what she believes were inconsistencies in communication between all members. In a social media post prior to the 2025 municipal election, Lawrence expressed concerns about politics taking priority over the students in Killingly, which was also at the core of her farewell letter.

"I encourage you to keep politics out of the work of the Board of Education and ensure that all members are equally included in discussions and decisions," Lawrence wrote, addressing the remaining members of the Board of Education. "There is much important work ahead for our public schools, and real progress can only happen when every board member has a voice."

Lawrence capped off her letter stating, "the children are watching."

Lawrence's comments about party politics on the Board of Education bring to mind controversies that predate her time on the board. When Republicans took a majority in 2019, their campaign was almost completely driven

Turn To **LAWRENCE** *page* **A11**

Aspinock Historical Society, Putnam Recreation announce 2025 Putnam History Maker Awards

PUTNAM — The Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam, in partnership with the Putnam Recreation Department, is proud to announce the recipients of the Annual Putnam History Maker Awards. This prestigious award honors individuals who have made, or are still making, an honorable and positive, direct or indirect, major impact on the area through their works, deeds, and service, whether done in Putnam and/or globally with ties to the town

This year's distinguished honorees are Fabiola Cutler and Leo C. Tetreault.

The awards ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 11 at the Putnam Elks Lodge.

Event Details
- What: Annual Putnam History Maker Awards
- When: Thursday, Dec. 11
  - 5 p.m.: Social Hour
  - 6 p.m.: Awards Ceremony
- Where: Putnam Elks Lodge
- Music: Provided by the talented Linda Colangelo

Honoring Our History Makers

The Putnam History Maker Award recognizes contributions from any resident or non-resident of Putnam, living or deceased, whose impact is felt locally or globally, in the spotlight or quietly behind the scenes.

Fabiola Cutler and Leo C. Tetreault have been selected for their outstanding commitment and significant contributions that embody the spirit of this award. Their dedication has left a lasting, positive mark on our community.

"The History Maker Award is our way of celebrating the people who have shaped Putnam into the wonderful place it is today," said a representative from the Aspinock Historical Society. "We are thrilled to honor Fab Cutler and Leo Tetreault, two individuals whose commitment to service truly exemplifies what it means to be a History Maker."

The public is invited to attend the free event to celebrate the achievements of these two exceptional individuals. Please reserve your spot by contacting Marcy at 860-963-6800, ext. 141. The Aspinock Historical Society is dedicated to the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the history of the town of Putnam.

Ellis Con celebrates 35-year milestone

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — The H. H. Ellis Technical High School hosted the 35th edition of what has become a certified tradition celebrating the uniting elements of gaming in all its forms.

Ellis Con, the only gaming convention in the region, has been going strong for decades, even generations at this point, serving as a space for gamers of all kinds to come together and enjoy their favorite pastimes whether in the form of board games, role playing games, card games, video games or anything in between. The event has become a successful fundraiser to support Ellis Tech's Simulation Club.

Jason Bleau

Gamers of all kinds turned out for the 35th annual Ellis Con, many taking part in role playing and board games in the school's cafeteria.

The 35th year of Ellis Con went off like any other, with countless fans of all different genres of gaming visiting the school for a day-long convention networking with like-minded individuals who embrace the same hobbies or exploring new games they may not have tried before. David Carter, an educator at Ellis Tech and a longtime organizer of Ellis Con who supervises the school's Simulation Club, said the event is a place for anyone and everyone to enjoy a day of good company escaping reality in whatever games they choose.

"We provide space for people to come together and

Turn To **ELLIS CON** *page* **A6**

Holiday makes for early deadlines

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the submission deadline for any press releases or letters to the Editor intended for publication that week will be moved up one business day, to Friday, Nov. 21 at 4 p.m. Submissions can be e-mailed to Editor Brendan Berube at brendan@villagernewspapers.com. Our staff would like to wish readers a safe and very happy Thanksgiving.

Pourings & Passages hits 10-year mark

DANIELSON — On Nov. 20, 2015, a new venture opened its doors on the second floor of 183 Main St. in Danielson.

Filling multiple rooms with gently used books, CDs, jewelry, jig saw puzzles and other items, all donated, the all volunteer crew began what was to become 10 years of sorting, pricing, shelving, dusting, greeting patrons, ringing up sales and bagging merchandise, with all profits going directly to St. James School.

After five years on the second floor, this unique business crossed over the railroad tracks to commence life in its present location, on ground level, at 103 Main St. in Danielson.

One can only wonder how many words have been formed by the innumerable vowels and consonants any given author has chosen to unite in order to express thoughts that grace the pages of the untold number of books that have passed from hand to hand at this local used book store. All donated.

If footprints were visible, how many would one see from the very smallest, that of the toddler leading his parent through the entrance, up the ramp, through various rooms til he lets go of the hand and runs into the children's room to enjoy the books, toys and stuffed animals. All donated.

How many footprints of all ages and sizes, firm or steadied by a walking aid, have passed from room to room, stopping to study books or other items of interest. Unknown.

How many old friends have reconnected by chance, because their paths just happened to cross in a store that has become a staple in the lives of many patrons over the last ten years? Unknown.

How much has been donated to St. James School as Pourings & Passages celebrates its 10th anniversary? This question has an answer. Jim Weigel, the retired school librarian who turned a dream into this reality, estimates the school has received more than $300,000.

Pourings & Passages Used Bookstore: where everything is donated, all workers are volunteers and all profits go directly to St. James School. Located at 103 Main St. in Danielson; open Wednesday – Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and can be reached at 860-774-1712.

Saint Nicholas Fair

Location: Christ Church

527 Pomfret Street • Pomfret, CT

Christchurchpomfret.org • 860.315.7780

Saturday, Dec. 6th, 10am - 1pm

(Snow Date: December 13)

Holiday gifts, yummy treats & more!

Online Auction Nov. 22 - Dec. 3

new.biddingowl.com/ChristChurchPomfret

NEW! Thank You Basket Raffle

Drawing on 12/6 @ 1PM
Each $5 donation = 15 tickets. Use this QR code to donate.

Benefits Local Outreach

Quiet Corner poets release anthology to raise funds for Pomfret Library

DANIELSON — An anthology of poems whose profits will be donated to the Pomfret Library will be launched on Dec. 8 at 6:30 p.m. at The Vanilla Bean Café. This event is free and open the public, and books will be sold for $15 each. The book contains poems written by Quiet Corner Poets, a group of writers who wrote and shared their poems together from 2019 through 2025. Titled "Shared Journeys," the book contains the work of 14 area poets on topics including relationships, politics, parenthood and nature.

Founded by Christine Kalafus, the group met at the Old Town Hall, Pomfret Public Library and now meets at Christ Church Library. Poems contained in the anthology include work by Mary Archambault, Sarah Blanchard, M. Constantine Cole, Diane Cooney, Karen Durlach, Mary Ellen Ellsworth, Carol Graham, Donna O'Scolaigh Lange, Mother Lightning, Philippa Paquette, Sarah St. George, Maria Sangiolo, Karen Warinsky, and Nancy Weiss.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR NOVEMBER 21–28

When nights grow long and days turn cold,
The Quiet Corner's warm and bold.
So mark the dates and bring a friend—
Here's what's happening, end to end.

Friday, Nov. 21
Putnam Library Tales at Ten
At 10 a.m. the stories flow,
At Putnam Library—come say hello.
A morning of books for little ones' cheer,
A gentle start as winter draws near.

Killingly's Holiday Craft Night
At 6 p.m., Westfield Church will host
Crafters of all stripes—bring glue, bring toast.
No fee to join, materials supplied;
Sign up online with festive pride.
www.westfieldchurchkillingly.com

Saturday, Nov. 22
Woodstock Farmers' Market Indoors
From 9 to noon at Town Hall's space,
Winter veggies, breads, and lace.
Vendors local, friendly, bright—
A cozy market through frost and light.

Brooklyn Historical Society Open House
From noon to three, at the old Academy's hall,
Browse exhibits big and small.
Step through Brooklyn's yesteryears,
Learn the tales your town holds dear.

Sunday, Nov. 23
Pomfret's Wolf Den Nature Walk
Meet at 1 p.m. at Mashamoquet State Park,
Rangers lead the way through woods growing dark.
A family walk, one mile or two—
Bring warm layers and good boots too.

Eastford's Community Potluck
At 5 p.m. the tables fill
Inside Town Office Hall on Snow Road Hill.
Bring a dish or simply show—
Neighbors gather as breezes blow.

Monday, Nov. 24
Thompson Zoning Board Meeting
At 7 p.m. in the Town Hall room,
Civic matters shake off gloom.
Zoning plans and projects start—
A meeting for the civically smart.

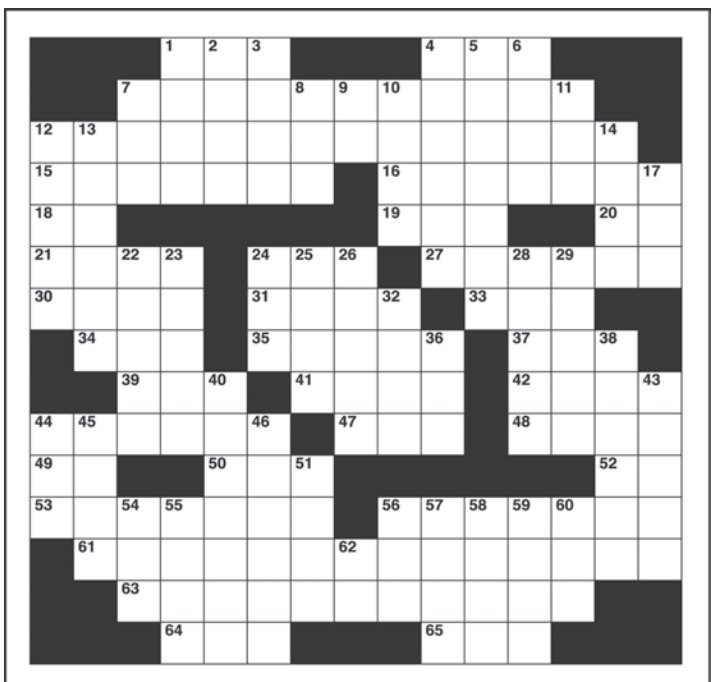
Tuesday, Nov. 25
Putnam Rotary's Community Meal
From 4:30 to 6 at the Congregational Church,
Dinner for all—no need to search.
Volunteers greet with warmth and grace,
A welcoming table for every face.

Wednesday, Nov. 26
Woodstock Senior Center Bingo
At 1 p.m. the numbers ring,
Cards spread wide—what luck they bring.
Snacks included, spirits light,
A pre-holiday game in bright daylight.

Thursday, Nov. 27 – Thanksgiving Day
Turkey Trot in Killingly
At 8 a.m., racers gather near Davis Park,
Jogging through leaves crisp and stark.
5K route, family-friendly pace—
A holiday start in Killingly's embrace.

Friday, Nov. 28
Putnam's Candlelight Shopping Stroll
From 5 to 8 on Main Street's run,
Shops stay open, lights are spun.
Musicians play while snowflakes land—
A gentle start to the season planned.

And that's the week from our towns so dear,
Where neighbors gather this time of year.
Savor the moments, small and sweet—
The Quiet Corner can't be beat.



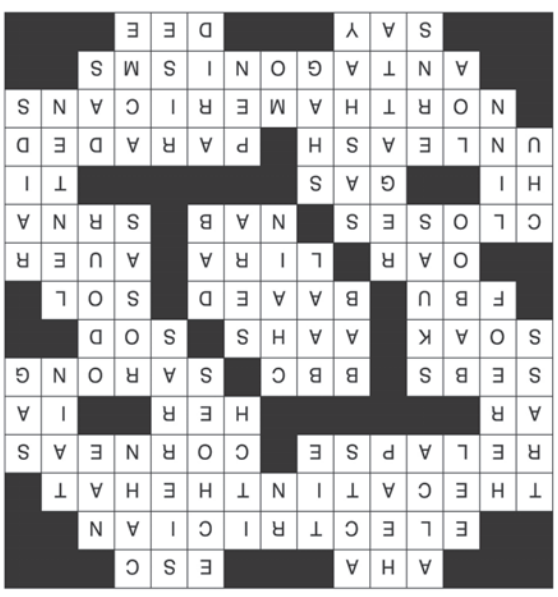
CLUES ACROSS

1. Expression of surprise
4. Keyboard key
7. One who works on lights
12. Notable children's story
15. Fall back into a bad pattern
16. Eye parts
18. Atomic #18
19. Of she
20. Farm state
21. One point south of southeast
24. British media entity
27. Asian garment
30. Drench
31. Expressions of pleasure
33. Turf
34. UK trade union (abbr.)
35. Bleated
37. Fifth note of a major scale
39. Paddle
41. Monetary unit of Italy
42. American classical pianist
44. Shuts down for the day
47. Seize
48. Soluble ribonucleic acid
49. Greeting
50. Some cars still need it
52. Atomic #22
53. Let go
56. Marched in public
61. U.S. residents, Mexicans and Canadians
63. Hostilities
64. Speak aloud
65. River in NE Scotland

CLUES DOWN

1. Razorbill genus
2. Longtime Baltimore tight end
3. Performs on stage
4. Supports a sentiment
5. Rugged mountain ranges
6. Broadway songwriter Sammy
7. Snakelike fish
8. Men's fashion accessory
9. Hospital worker
10. Something to scratch
11. No (Scottish)
12. Volcanic ash
13. Of this
14. American jazz drummer Watts
17. Drop down
22. English dialect
23. Predatory seabirds
24. Imams' deputies
25. Fertility god
26. Fence material
28. Parks and DeLauro are two
29. Distinctive smell (Brit.)
32. Protein-rich liquids
36. Touch lightly
38. Season for Catholics
40. Boat race
43. Police actions
44. Chinese river
45. Waterfall (Scottish)
46. Walk ostentatiously
51. Type of carpet
54. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
55. Sea eagles
56. An enclosure for confining livestock
57. Dry
58. An increase in price or value
59. The highest point of something
60. Government lawyers
62. Larry and Curly's pal

PUZZLE SOLUTION



VILLAGER ALMANAC

AT CT AUDUBON

Bird sightings at the Connecticut Audubon Society Center at Pomfret and Wyndham Land Trust properties for the week of Nov. 10: Barred Owl, Great horned Owl, Saw-whet Owl, Purple Finch, Brown Creeper, Pileated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Junco, Field Sparrow, Red-shouldered Hawk, Raven, Blue Jay, Robin, Hairy Woodpecker

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Tourtellotte announces honor roll

NORTH GROSVENORDALE — Tourtellotte Memorial High School has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

9th Grade

High Honors: Shyla Beckett, Payton Bolte, Arilynne-Brunnelle, Deegan Bryniarski, Hazel Clavette, Logan Delicata, Jeylia Denham, Emma Fournier, Rebeca Franco, Saylem Kratzer, Sophia Kus, Andrew Marquette, Danika Minarik, Gia Reynolds-Rankin, Shawn Sinni, Cameron Snow, Adylin Stewart, Levi Tucker, Jayden Watkins

Honors: Nana Baffour-Gyimah, Braeden Carlson, Christopher Herlihy, Sadie Houle, Alexis Light, John Lowe, Paris Lowe, Kellan Mrozinski, Bentley Plaza, Delvin Ruiz Aquino, Lilah Spearin

Recognition: Trent Gardner, Kaylee Reiner, Gianna Sheldon

10th Grade

High Honors: Laila Franco, Jeremi Helwig, Madison Marchitelli, Dominic Muscato, Madison Perry, Gabriella Santos

Honors: Timothy Beaudoin, Mallory Chubka, Travis Coomey, Bryant Fleming, Brookelynn Pearson, Ayden Perry, Bradley Pettis, Naisha Ruiz Aquino, Brody Vincent

Recognition: Adyson Boyden, Jaydin Sevigne

11th Grade

High Honors: Amelia Brousseau, Maddison Carlson, Nicko Casto, Estela Freitas, Thomas Kenadek, Calleigh Levesque, Billie Lewis, Mabel Perreault, Samantha Podgorni

Honors: Alexis Andrews, Dylan Axtell, Caue Sarto Barros, Gabriel Bourget, Jordan Burns-Studley, Ty Chausse, Nicholas Lavallee, Anthony Machado, Ella Martin, Keone Masterson, Tanisha Patel, Kaydyn Racca, Chyanne Rock

Recognition: Leah Belair, Kaleb Laporte, Jordyn Poplawski, Haley Russell, Matthew Rybacki

12th Grade

High Honors: Bailey Benton, Deanna Burress, Julia Lewis, Briana Martin, Ember Merrill, Nelia Reed, Laci Sinni, Gaige Smith, Ava Tucker, Kevin Vescera

Honors: Isabella Barrows, Anna Bell, Logan Boss, Dylan Bryniarski, Nicholas Cunningham-Ingram, Cristian DeJesus, Vivianna Hill, Cole Hopkins, Caitlyn L'Heureux, Alexis Phav, Nathan Richardson, Tyler Shead, Makenna Sheridan, Joshua Tackson, Jenna Valby

Recognition: Joseph Annese, Jadon Dakai, Alex Davis, Gia DiPasquale, Summer Dutram, Jordan Fitton, Aidan Ford, Sahara Moore, Amaya Munoz, Isabella Stewart, Fabiola Torres

Thompson Middle School announces honor roll

THOMPSON — Thompson Middle School has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

Grade 5

High Honors: Sonya Apley, Margaret Axtell, Ellouise Baldwin, Annabelle Chrzanowski, Macie Freeman, Reed Hoenig, Charlotte McGlynn, Maeve Murzycki, Brody Nichols, Delaney Pacheco, Nathan Rybacki, Lena Seney, Henry Tilton, Jude Travinski, Molley White, Brody Zabka

Honors: Apraku Adinkrah, Aiden Arnett, Rose Black, Bradley Bond, Aria Fairbanks, Noelina Frembpong, Carter Gravel, David Greene, Noah Norniak, Louise Kennedy, Aura Landry, Aubrey Maliff, Zachery Mayer, Keena Parent, Pranshu Patel, Jessa Perron, Colton Ross, Izabela Sarto Barros, Clayton Yong

Recognition: Lucy Kiley, Lillian Miller, Noah Staszek

Grade 6

High Honors: Maica Abrajano, Kyleigh Akana, June Bardellini, Callan Bolte, Quinn Cooney, Amelia Hendrickson, Lillian Kiley, Jeffrey Kuras, Emma Moriarty, Patrick Paquette, Sierra Vallee, Jessie Wuensch

Honors: Sophi Benoit, Isaiah Blaise, Lance Burden, Mason Caya, Olivia Desjarlais, Chloe Faucher, Brielynn Fijol, Paige Houle, Heaven Labonte, Isabella Leveille, Reis Mailloux, Elsah Monahan, Cain Peck, Trent Plaza, Jacob Racine, Brooke Renaud, Henry Rivers, Lillian Speroni, Ava Tremblay, Alanah Tsouridis

Recognition: Austin Auger, Psylah Bonefont, Avan Cady, Oliver Files, Ryler Hachey, Nathan Jacobson, Ethan Meyers, Bryce Proulx, Emmett Salvas, Jase Tsouridis

Grade 7

High Honors: Parker Beck, Kasandra Beckett, Joshua Boss, Emily Cabral, Hailey Caverly, John Clarke, Jezarya Denham, Ella DiCicco, Lucas Dodd, Joshua Freitas, Chloe Gillon, Jakub Krupa, Piper Kus, Mitchell Murzycki, Jaeda Rose, Grace Roy, Tanner Saad, Kinslie Stewart, Julianne Valby, Elizabeth Vescera, Lily Wolf, Bailey Yong

Honors: Ashel Aubin, Cole Benoit, Alyzah Brousseau, Derrick Caley, Kileigh Comptois, Jackson Costa, Salena Curry, Annabelle Estabrook, McKenzi Hamilton, Tripp Hoenig, Ezerik Johnson, Damyen Lowe, Logan McCarthy, Jasmine McCutcheon, Jordan McDonald, Jason Opuni-Mensah, Rosalea Rizzuti, Bryce Rock, Kaylee Valdes, Amber White

Recognition: Ethan Cayer, Phoenix Desaulnier, Bentley Fazzina-Tebo, Eva Lafontaine, Dylan Mrozinski, Jacob Poirier, Amelia Smith, Bailey Vose

Grade 8

High Honors: Kiley Audette, Lacey Barnett, Brooke Caya, Madyson Grazulis, Gracie Greene, Amelia Hachigian, Maya Khaomongkhoun, Jack Lyon, Lucey Miller, Colin Peckham, Allison Rivers

Honors: Stephen Andrews, April Boudreau, Gage Cady, Matthew Chrzanowski, Alexis Fiske, Aiden Girard, Jack Gustafson, Lily Kimball, Samiah Lafleche, Elizabeth Lemay, Laura Logsdon, Nathan Lyon, Liam Maliff, Ellyana Mayo, Owen McBrien, Jayden O'Connor, Alison Phav, Amelia Senkhamtar, Avery Szarkowicz, Summer Warburton, Logan Wedda

Recognition: Yvonne Clavette, Landon Horniak, Phoenix Khaomongkhoun, Simon Lepino, Ashley Martin, Rylee Parkin, Dante Warren

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Borough of Danielson

The **Borough of Danielson Fire Department** is seeking an experienced and community-focused **Volunteer Fire Chief** to lead our department!

The Chief serves as the senior officer responsible for all department operations, training, and administration, representing the Borough with professionalism and integrity. This appointed position offers a six-year term (renewable) and the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in the community.

Minimum Qualifications

- 10 years of firefighting experience (5 in leadership)
- Fire Officer I (II preferred) & Fire Service Instructor I
- EMT (preferred) or EMR, NIMS/ICS 100, 200, 700, 800
- HazMat Operations
- Valid CT license (Q or CDL B endorsements)
- Residency within 8 miles of the firehouse

Also required: Fire Officer II within one year, 30 hours of continuing education annually

If you're a strong leader with a passion for public safety, we invite you to apply!
Apply by January 1, 2026 Learn more at 👉 **www.boroughofdanielson.org**
Application, letter of interest, resume, and certifications can be submitted to **admin@boroughofdanielson.org**

Christ Church Pomfret invites youth community to participate in Christmas pageant

POMFRET — Christ Church Pomfret invites local youth to join its annual Christmas Pageant, scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 21, at 10 a.m., at the P.Y. & Kinmay Tang Performing Arts Center at Rectory School.

Rehearsals will take place from 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. on two Sundays (Dec. 7 and 14), followed by a mandatory final dress rehearsal on Saturday, Dec. 20.

Donna Bessette will direct this year's performance in collaboration with the church's Christian Formation Director, Madison Day. Bessette and Day will provide more details to parents and children about the production and assign roles. For more information or to register your child for participation, contact ccpomfretformation@gmail.com.

Traditionally, young children portray angels and shepherds, while elementary school students act as animals and Roman soldiers. Speaking roles and solos are assigned to older children and teenagers. Teens are also encouraged to play chimes or serve as a narrator.

If you have any friends in the community who would like to take part in this tradition during the Christmas season, please invite them to join. All are welcome to share in telling this wonderful story.

Christ Church Pomfret, an Episcopal Church for northeast Connecticut, is a place where faith and real life intersect. From here, we are called to share God's love in the Church and in the world through generous hospitality, serving one another, community involvement, and providing a safe place to explore a relationship with God. Whether you are a Quiet Corner native or have recently moved here, a committed Christian or someone inquiring about the faith for the first time, we want you to feel at home. Please know that you are invited to participate in all aspects of our worship. We are so glad that you're here.

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Weather wear and tear on local infrastructure

Every season in northeastern Connecticut brings its own character, but the past few years have shown a clear pattern: heavier rains, muddier springs, hotter stretches in late summer, and abrupt cold snaps that test even the sturdiest back roads. While these shifts may not seem dramatic day to day, they add up, and the wear is showing across our towns.

Residents see it firsthand. A back road washed out after a sudden cloudburst. Culverts clogged by a storm that delivered two inches of rain in an hour. Frost heaves returning in places where they once appeared only occasionally. Town crews across the Quiet Corner are stretching budgets and staff hours to keep up.

None of this is the fault of any one department or decision. It is the cumulative effect of small towns managing roads, bridges, and drainage systems originally designed for gentler patterns. Rural infrastructure is durable, but it was built for another era. When weather grows more intense, costs grow with it.

That reality has practical implications. It means more routine maintenance, more short-term repairs, and more long-term planning. It means assessing culverts that were installed decades ago and updating stormwater systems that were never meant to handle the volume we see now. These are not glamorous projects, and they rarely garner much attention until a road closes or a shoulder collapses. Yet they influence daily life more than most issues that make the headlines.

The encouraging news is that many towns here have already begun shifting their approach. Some have updated capital plans to prioritize drainage improvements. Others have invested in better mapping of vulnerable areas or revisited long-outdated engineering assumptions. These are small steps, but they matter.

What comes next will require steady, realistic thinking. No community can rebuild every old culvert or resurface every road overnight. But we can acknowledge what residents already know: the weather is changing, and maintaining safe, passable roads requires planning for the conditions we have, not the ones we remember.

Small towns succeed when they adapt early rather than react late. The Quiet Corner has always been practical that way. As budget season approaches this winter, it is worth keeping in mind that the most important investments are sometimes the ones beneath our feet—quiet, unseen, and essential.

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

It's scientific to believe

To the Editor:

The birds

It's scientific to believe that a mother eagle is supernaturally programmed to make a nest, lay eggs in the nest, lay on the eggs for the right amount of time until the eggs hatch into baby eagles. The mother eagle feeds the baby eagles until they are grown and then she teaches them how to fly.

It's scientific to believe that the Baltimore oriole is supernaturally programmed to, with its bill, make one of the most complex nests with stitches, knots, and loops.

It's scientific to believe that the Arctic Tern is supernaturally programmed to, migrate from where it is born in Alaska, Canada, and other northern areas, to South America, South Africa, and the Antarctic every year, a round trip of approximately 22,000 miles!

It's scientific to believe that the golden plover is supernaturally programmed to fly from Canada to South America without stopping!

It's scientific to believe that the Emperor penguins are supernaturally programmed to breed in the cold and dark of the Antarctic winter. The male incubates the egg on his feet for 62 to 67 days, during which time he cannot feed or even move. He keeps the egg warm under a flap of skin below his belly. The female returns after the egg hatches.

(Readers Digest book of facts)

Our brain

It's scientific to believe that our brain is supernaturally programmed by the God who created all things. Our brain originates and contains all our thoughts, actions, memories, and dreams of a lifetime. Evidently, it is the home of our every emotion.

Our eyes

It's scientific to believe that our eyes are supernaturally programmed by God. Under the title, "Your Remarkable Eyes," Science Digest points out the following:

"It is unbelievable with what rapidity the eye works. It has been estimated that from the vast panorama presented by your eyes, each one can send a billion impulses per second to the brain and then your mind chooses significant details."

The eye's lens changes its curvature to focus on objects. The pupil is self-adjusting without any control by the individual. Eyelids open and close 30,000 times a day. They wipe the eye's window clean and leave a slight film of fresh salt water on the eyeball.

Our Earth

It's scientific to believe that the earth was supernaturally programmeed to be just the right size, approximately 8,000 miles in diameter. If the earth were smaller or larger we could not live on earth. If you added a thousand miles to its diameter, the weight of the air would double along with the amount of oxygen. This would cause the earth to be flooded.

The earth weighs 6,952,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons. If the earth didn't weigh as much as it does, it would have less gravity and thus have less air than is needed. The lighter gases would escape, leaving the heavier gases such as carbon dioxide. This would give us an atmosphere like the moon and we would cease to exist.

If the earth were as small as the moon, the power of gravity would be too weak to retain sufficient atmosphere for man's survival. If earth were as large as Jupiter, Satan, or Uranus, extreme gravitation would make human movement almost impossible…It didn't just happen that the sun is 93 million miles away from earth. If it were further away, we would freeze to death and if it were closer we would burn up. We get just enough light and heat. The sun evaporates the earth's waters so as to properly redistribute water all over the earth. Oceanographers tell us that if the oceans were deeper than they are it would cause too little carbon dioxide and oxygen for plant life to exist.

It is scientific to believe that everything that exists was supernaturally programmed by the God that created everything!

Pastor Phil Cannistraci, Sr.
East Putnam

The unsung heroes of Election Day

To the Editor:

Did you vote in the November municipal election? If the answer is yes, then you encountered poll workers in your local community upholding the democratic process and ensuring that every eligible voter had the opportunity to make their voice heard. I want to thank and acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the poll workers who make our elections run smoothly.

Until recently, I had not been involved in the prepping, setting up, and organizing it takes to run an election from start to finish. I did not grasp the amount of time, dedication, and commitment required from the volunteers in our community who step up to serve. Poll workers volunteer for fourteen days of early voting and then again on a very long election day. They arrive early, leave late, and some even take time off from their regular jobs to serve.

Their tasks are many. They set up equipment, check in voters, guide people through the process, and help keep everything moving. They may be called to do manual hand counts or recounts, which can take hours. After a long day, they stay to pack up equipment so it is ready for the next election. Their presence builds trust in the system and supports our democracy. They do all this for very little pay and even less recognition.

Poll workers are essential to our elections. The combined effort of these workers is significant and deserves our gratitude.

If you have ever thought about volunteering, I encourage you to do so. You will help make sure elections can happen in your community, and you will gain a deeper understanding of the process and a renewed respect for the people who make it work.

In Brooklyn, you can sign up to be a poll worker on the Town website by visiting the Registrar of Voters page. The Poll Worker Application is posted there.

To every election worker out there, especially in my town of Brooklyn, thank you for all that you do. You a very much appreciated.

Lisa Arends
Brooklyn

Actually, cartel countries are a Republican paradise

To the Editor:

Trump's not fooling me with his usual bluster about "narco-terrorists" and drug cartels. The ugly truth is that what he's making fun of is actually what a party of "limited government" wants.

Developing countries with cartel or warlord problems represent a "limited government" state where a weak central government struggles with powerful private interests. They are current day examples of what happens when "government gets out of the way."

We can talk about minarchism and government getting out of the way, but when does anyone ever talk about how the government gets out of the way? In the case of these countries, it gets out of the way because it can't do stuff. Technically these warlords and drug barons are enterprising private individuals with unfettered ownership of firearms. This should be right up the GOP's alley. Imagine that. The government doesn't bug you and you can do whatever you want for your business and own whatever guns you want.

Keep that in mind next time someone says liberals want to turn America into a third world country. There are plenty of third world countries where we know exactly what that looks like, and rule of law and government as the collective expression of the will of the voters isn't part of the equation.

Jay Gerhart
Putnam

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Thanksgiving gratitude

The young man taking orders at Five Guys, a fast food place that recently opened in Dayville, was polite and patient.

NANCY WEISS

It was the first time I had ordered anything from the establishment and I was asking questions, marveling at the price of one burger and coming off as the aging consumer I am. I asked him about himself, i.e. did he like working there and what was he learning, and his answers were heartfelt and interesting.

He made our exchange pleasant, and as I walked out the door with my bag of fries and a burger, I thought about another special quality of our area: people, including young people, who work at restaurants, shops, big box stores and countless other places open to the public are almost always engaged, well-trained, competent and seemingly happy with their jobs, co-workers and customers. One can read accounts of all the short-comings of people today, but at least in our area, it isn't the norm.

My husband claims that the only people who call him, "Hon," are at the coffee drive through places. He doesn't question their sincerity. He knows the folks at the super market do whatever is needed to help when he picks up the ingredients for the monthly community kitchen meal he makes with other members of our church. Perhaps it is the nature of small towns, but it is more than geography. People want to do a good job, do the right thing and respect themselves and others. The mean talk, the finger pointing, the conspiracy theories are certainly real, but not the norm, not here, and I suspect, not most other places either.

It is gratitude for the basic decency of people that resonates with me this Thanksgiving season.

Thanksgiving is also about food. Every year I share a poem that expresses gratitude for friends by giving thanks for them in terms of the vegetables they resemble. It is reprinted by the author's permission — Rev. Max Coots, Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton, N.Y.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us give thanks…

For generous friends…with hearts as big as hubbards

and smiles as bright as their blossoms;

For feisty friends as tart as apples;

For continuous friends, who like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding us we had them;

For crotchety friends, as sour as rhubarb and as indestructible;

For handsome friends, who are as gorgeous as eggplants and as elegant as a row of corn- and the others- as plain as potatoes, and so good for you.

For funny friends, who are as silly as brussel sprouts and as amusing as Jerusalem

artichokes, and serious friends as complex as cauliflowers and as intricate as onions;

For friends as unpretentious as cabbages, as subtle as summer squash, as persistent as parsley, as delightful as dill, as endless as zucchini, who -like parsnips-can be counted on to see you through the long winter;

For old friends, nodding like sunflowers in the evening-time, and young friends coming on as fast as radishes;

For loving friends, who wind around us like tendrils, and hold us despite our blights, wilts and witherings;

And finally for those friends now gone, like gardens past, that have been harvested- but who fed us in their times that we might have life thereafter;

For all these we give thanks.

I give thanks for the chance to share the thoughts that rattle through my busy brain, more like a tossed salad than a single vegetable, as I reach out to those of you kind enough to read my column over these many years.

The Corner of Kindness

Corner of Kindness

By CHIPPY

I have always thought that the Quiet Corner earns its name in more ways than one. It is quiet in the literal sense, of course—roads where you can still hear your own tires, evenings when the loudest sound is a porch screen door. But it is also quiet in another sense: people here seem to do their good deeds without announcing them. Kindness moves through these towns like a breeze through the trees. You feel it, even if you can't always see exactly where it came from.

Lately, I have been thinking about how rare it is, in our noisy world, to notice something gentle. It is easy to see the big moments, the grand gestures, the occasions people write about in scrapbooks or post online. But the quieter moments are the ones that stay with you. The neighbor who brings your garbage bins up the driveway on a rainy night. The person ahead of you at the market who glances back and lets you go first without making a production of it. These things are nearly invisible when they happen, yet unforgettable once remembered.

One morning not long ago, I watched someone straighten a crooked welcome mat outside a shop. No reason for it, no audience for it. They simply nudged it back into place because it looked like something that needed doing. It struck me because it reminded me of how many problems in life could be softened—if not solved—by small acts that take less time than complaining about them.

The Quiet Corner has a way of teaching that. People here seem to understand the value of going a little out of one's way. Maybe it's because so much of daily life still relies on familiar faces. When you know you're likely to see the same people again tomorrow, and the day after that, you become more aware of the trail you leave behind. A bit of patience at the post office. A friendly nod in the bank line. A moment of conversation in the pharmacy aisle. These gestures matter in places where neighbors are not theoretical.

There is also something heartening about how quickly people in this region notice when someone needs a hand. I've seen strangers steady a step for someone carrying too many bags, or offer a ride when a car won't start. Once, I watched a small procession of drivers stop when a lost dog trotted along the shoulder of a road—not because anyone planned to be a hero, but because nobody wanted the animal to meet a bad end. It reminded me that kindness is often practical, unromantic, and very much rooted in simple concern.

When I think back on the times someone has helped me unexpectedly, I am struck by how ordinary the helpers were. None delivered speeches. None seemed to think they were doing anything extraordinary. Yet their actions were the sort that lift the corners of a day and make it easier to proceed with a little more faith in people.

I sometimes wonder whether kindness grows better in places where life hasn't sped entirely out of reach. When you have a moment to breathe, you have a moment to notice. And when you notice, opportunities for decency reveal themselves like stepping-stones across a stream. You don't have to leap. You only have to take the next step.

That, I suppose, is what I appreciate most about life here. People don't seem to be trying to impress each other; they are simply trying to live well together. You see it in the way folks hold a door a beat longer than necessary, or how they let you take your time when you're not moving as fast as the world seems to expect. There's a gentleness to that, a recognition that everyone is carrying something unseen.

My grandmother used to say that kindness was like bread dough—you have to keep working it, or it turns stiff. I didn't understand that as a child, but I do now. You practice kindness not because the world asks you to, but because doing so keeps your own heart flexible. And on the days when life feels heavy, someone else's kindness can make the difference between discouragement and determination.

So this week, if you find an opportunity to brighten someone's day, take it. Straighten the welcome mat. Let someone go ahead of you. Offer the better seat. Say something gentle at the exact moment someone needs to hear it. These little acts don't change the whole world, but they do change the corners of it.

And in the Quiet Corner, that might be enough.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We are approaching a watershed moment

To the Editor:

The American legislative process has some rather bizarre components. One is the ability to shut down its own multi-trillion-dollar governmental process over what should be the simple and routine passage of appropriation measures. What we have just experienced for 43 days is unique to our system. Nowhere else in the world does this happen. And as we have seen, it causes widespread suffering of its constituents.

Things were not always like this. Up until 1980, many federal agencies continued to operate in some form during shutdowns, believing that Congress did not intend agencies to close while waiting for the enactment of annual appropriation acts. At that point, the DOJ issued an opinion that a total shutdown was the only legal recourse. To begin with, shutdowns were mere hours to days with minimal repercussions. Then in 1995, a Republican Congress led by Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich produced two back-to-back ones, lasting six and then 21 days. President Clinton prevailed and Gingrich's political career was permanently dented. The Republicans again, in 2013, spearheaded a 16-day government closure under the direction of John Boehner in an attempt to derail the Affordable Care Act. Once again, the President, Obama, prevailed and the Republicans drew the ire of the American public. Next it was the Democrat's turn, led by Senator Chuck Shumer and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi in January 2019. This closure was over the cost of the border wall and lasted 35 days.

It was the Democratic party once again who organized the longest shut down in history, 43 days, over their opposition to the Big Beautiful Bill's cancellation over tax credits for those receiving health insurance through the ACA. This finally ended after Republicans agreed to once again bring the issue to a vote.

This is no way to run a government. While standing up for the rights of Americans to avoid health insecurity, they caused millions to lose food assistance, federal employees to miss paychecks, and a chaos in air travel. All told, the economy took an estimated $11 billion hit. And should the Republicans again vote down the ACA, this could all happen again come January.

In addition. the routine vote to raise the national debt and avoiding an economic collapse brought on by a default on its debt still looms as a future scenario.

In the case of the most recent shutdown, as laudable as the Democratic party's intent was, the means did not justify the end. One way or the other, needy Americans suffer. The time for negotiation is prior to the budget being passed. And in a system where the majority rules, more voters cast their ballot for a President and his party who feel that supporting the rich is more important than maintaining safety nets for millions of Americans who live paycheck to paycheck. If the ACA tax breaks are not extended, tens of millions of people will no longer be able to afford healthcare. This, in turn, will lead to overrun emergency rooms as sicker people cause long lines. More hospitals that are already reeling from Medicaid cuts may have to shutter their doors. The economy will take a hit as the number of sick days rises. Medical bankruptcies will soar. People will suffer.

At the same time, the President has designated billions of dollars to fund ICE, in order to "protect" American citizens from violent "animals." Apparently, these dangerous criminals are to be found in factories, farms, Home Depots, churches, and schools. They were seemingly also out at family Halloween parades. Trump feels that armed masked men, who point guns at taxpayers, shoot pepper spray at children, and lob teargas into peaceful crowds makes the country safer.

Closing the government down is not how our government was meant to work. Reaching consensus should not be conducted under duress. We have a process through which Washington policy is shaped. It's called elections. If the majority of the American people value programs that favor the rich, the white, the Christian faith (but not Christian values) and the cis xy chromosome, so be it. That is how the system works, like it or not. If, however, one believes in an equal playing field for all regardless of color, sex, or religion, that healthcare, food and housing security is a right, and that immigrants, be them documented or undocumented, strengthen the country, then November 2026 will be a watershed moment in the nation's history.

Lee Wesler
Woodstock

Quiet Corner Al-Anon group meets Wednesdays

WOODSTOCK — An open Al-Anon meeting meets at the East Woodstock Congregational Church every Wednesday from 7:30-8:30 p.m.

The Quiet Corner Al-Anon Family Group is open to anyone affected by alcoholism, family or friend. Any enquiries can be directed to 860-634-3271.

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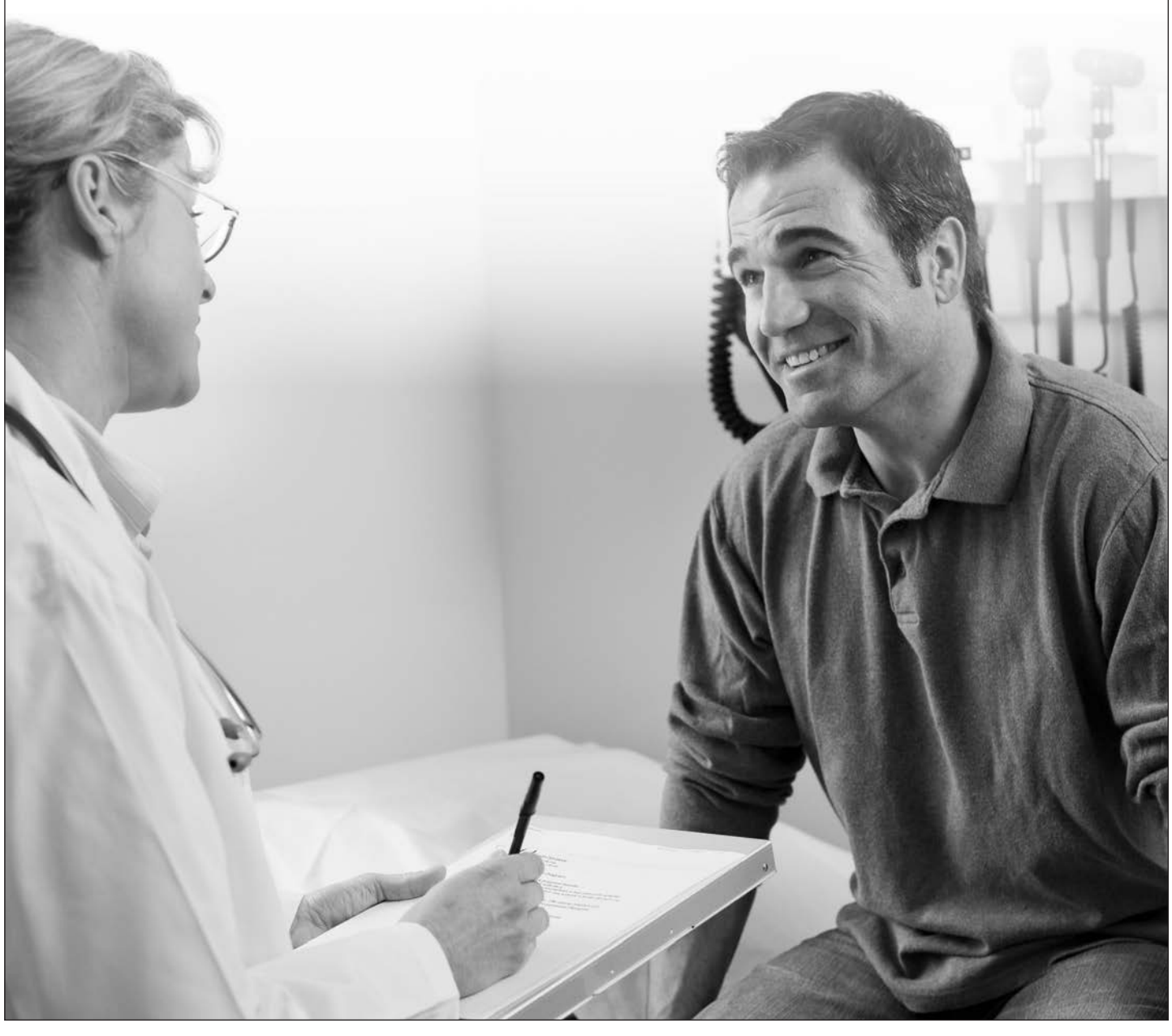

Veterans honored across Westview facilities

DAYVILLE — The facilities of Westview Health Care Center, Country Living at Westview Commons, and Westview Child Care Center united in heartfelt gratitude to honor America's veterans. Veterans Day across the Westview campus celebrated not only the traditions of the holiday, but the veterans who reside there, those receiving care, staff and families with military ties, and the many proud service members within the broader community.

Between Westview Health Care Center and Westview Commons, 37 veterans were recognized in ceremonies joined by family members, friends, and visiting service members. Westview's appreciation extended across the nation and throughout the local community—embracing every veteran whose sacrifice strengthens the shared American story.

Each Westview facility marked the day with its own meaningful elements under a common banner of respect. Westview Health Care Center and Country Living at Westview Commons both opened their Veterans Day Programs with the proud presence of American Legion Leo J. L'Homme/William F. Burdick Post 21, whose Color Guard presented the state and national flags before audiences rose in unison for the National Anthem, a reflective invocation, and the Pledge of Allegiance. At Westview Commons, resident Pamela Rosenlund offered a moving reading of Ann Landers' "Who Is a Vet?" to deepen the moment's solemnity.

Before patriotic flags were distributed to the honored veterans, both venues welcomed distinguished guest speakers. Ronald P. Coderre, U.S. Air Force Veteran, addressed the audience at Westview Health Care Center, while Frederick Ruhlemann, U.S. Navy Veteran and President of the Danielson Veterans Coffee House, spoke at Westview Commons. Each speaker—accompanied by a member of Post 21 and a facility staff member—personally greeted every veteran present. This gesture was marked by a handshake, an American flag, and clear-eyed acknowledgment. The somber yet sweet bugle tones of "Taps" followed, offering quiet pause before Post 21 retired the colors.

The ceremonies were arranged by Westview's Therapeutic Recreation Department and Westview Commons' Activities Coordinators, whose detailed planning shaped the respectful atmosphere. Across the street, students at Westview Child Care Center added their own heartfelt tribute by creating handmade greeting cards to have delivered to veterans at Westview Health Care Center.

After the principal honors led by Post 21's Color Guard, both facilities presented moving musical tributes set in the key of life and liberty. Westview Health Care Center welcomed Linda Colangelo, whose patriotic repertoire filled the room with warmth and reverence. Ms. Colangelo—an expressive vocalist with a strong stripe of American pride—also read "Who Is a Vet?" and performed the National Anthem to open the program.

At Westview Commons, residents enjoyed a stirring performance by Sgt. Daniel M. Clark, "The Singing Trooper." A U.S. Marine Corps veteran and retired Massachusetts State Trooper, Clark has appeared at more than 2,500 military and civic events. His program—featuring service anthems, "God Bless America," "Amazing Grace," and other patriotic selections—brought his trademark blend of vocal command, heartfelt sincerity, and enduring respect for fellow veterans.

Westview remains steadfast in its year-round dedication to honoring veterans through programs, remembrances, and community partnerships. The Westview family offers sincere thanks to all who contributed to these ceremonies—and extends profound gratitude to every veteran across the Union whose courage and service continue to safeguard the nation we proudly call home.

Westview Health Care Center is a 103-bed inpatient skilled nursing facility, which includes a distinct and self-contained 28-bed sub-acute short term rehabilitation unit and outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapies including: Sports Medicine, Adolescent/Pediatric, Adult, and Aquatic Outpatient Centers, all dedicated to providing outstanding quality health care services. The Dayville facility is consistently ranked among the top nursing facilities in the nation, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as well as U.S. News and World Report, consecutively for the past 17 years. Westview Health Care Center has now grown to share its campus with Country Living at Westview Commons and Westview Child Care Center.

Day Kimball Health names Joanne Sward September Employee of the Month

Courtesy

Joanne Sward, precertification specialist, has been named Employee of the Month for September 2025.

PUTNAM — Day Kimball Health (DKH) has named Joanne Sward, precertification specialist for the hematology-oncology department, as its employee of the month for September 2025.

Sward joined DKH in 2020, bringing years of experience and a deep commitment to supporting patients undergoing cancer treatment. In her role, she helps ensure patients receive timely and affordable care by managing pre-certifications for chemotherapy, diagnostic imaging, and oral medications. She also provides cost estimates, assists patients and staff in understanding insurance policies, and supports charge entry when needed. Her attention to detail and compassion help ease patients' burdens during some of life's most difficult challenges.

"Joanne's work exemplifies our mission of providing compassionate, patient-centered care," said Kyle Kramer, CEO of Day Kimball Health. "Her dedication, professionalism, and quiet leadership have a lasting impact on both our patients and her colleagues. We are proud to honor her with this well-deserved recognition."

Sward said her favorite part of the job is knowing she's helping patients focus on treatment rather than financial stress. "I am so honored to have my hard work and dedication to DKH's Hem-Onc patients recognized," she shared. "The pre-cert position with Hem-Onc is largely a behind-the-scenes role, but carries potentially major financial impacts for both the hospital and patients. It also plays a critical role in ensuring patients can begin treatment as quickly as possible."

A lifelong resident of the Northeast Corner, Sward now resides in East Putnam with her husband of 36 years, two golden retrievers, and two tuxedo cats. She holds a bachelor's degree in music from the University of Connecticut. Outside of work, she enjoys volunteering with a local animal shelter, reading, collecting books, cross-stitching, and spending time with her family.

About Day Kimball Health

Day Kimball Health is a nonprofit community healthcare system composed of Day Kimball Hospital, Day Kimball Medical Group, Day Kimball Healthcare at Home, and healthcare centers in Danielson, Dayville, Plainfield, and Putnam. Its service area includes Northeast Connecticut as well as nearby Massachusetts and Rhode Island communities. Day Kimball Health's comprehensive network employs more than 1,000 staff including nearly 300 associated, highly skilled physicians, surgeons, and specialists. Its Web site is daykimball.org.

ELLIS

continued from page A1

game. As you walk around and see some of the awesome games we have, you couldn't set these up in your house conveniently. Your dining room table would be covered, or you'd need to set it up in the garage. We provide a space to gather, be around like-minded people, and do that gaming," said Carter.

Founded by former Ellis Tech educator John Haskell, who still leads games at the convention to this day, Ellis Con had humble beginnings themed around war games. When Carter took over the event, it was agreed the event would expand to include a wider variety of games bringing in fanbases from across the medium for a day of comradery and fun.

Carter noted how over the years the convention has become an annual stop for many, and with 35 years of history Ellis Con is starting to see a whole new generation of fans keeping that tradition alive.

"There are people I know here just because of gaming, so it's pretty cool. Many of us only see each other once a year, but we can talk to each other like we just saw each other last week or we can talk about some of the new games we've been playing," said Carter

As for the future, Carter said Ellis Con will always be evolving. He considers it a "live" convention with new layouts and vendors incorporated each year. Since its beginnings, the convention has added so many new games and areas of focus, and with the medium of gaming only becoming even more popular in all its forms, there's no telling what Ellis Con might include over its next 35 years.

John Hascal, a former Ellis Tech educator and one of the founders of Ellis Con, still participates in the event to this day. In year 35, he helped guide players in B-17 Queen of the Skies, a modified version of a now retired war game.

Local martial artists travel to World Games

OSLO, Norway — Every two years, the World Martial Arts Games Committee holds the World Games, where martial artists of all styles compete against hundreds of competitors for world champion titles. 4th Dan Master Audrey Hussey, and 3rd Dan Mr. Nick Walters, from Brooklyn, traveled to Oslo, Norway this past week and participated, along with 250 other martial artists from the United States. New England sent a team of 25 athletes.

Some of the events were point fighting, full contact fighting, team fighting, traditional and creative forms and weapons, grappling, self defense, creative, wood, and concrete breaking. Over 500 martial artists from 7 countries completed.

The United Stated team dominated the Games, taking home 225 gold, 198 silver, and 130 bronze medals.

Master Hussey competed in traditional Korean forms, taking the gold medal, and point fighting, winning silver. Mr. Walters competed in point fighting, traditional Korean forms, and creative weapons.

Master Hussey is the owner and Chief Instructor at Village Martial Arts, in Chepachet, Rhode Island. Mr. Walters is an Instructor at the school, and is a junior at Rhode Island College, where he runs a martial arts club for students.

www.VillagerNewspapers.com

Killingly wins state best 22nd straight game

WATERFORD — In a rematch of last season's Class SS' State Semi-final game, Killingly High School (9-0) beat Waterford (5-4) on Friday night, piling up 545 yards in total offense in a 63–28 road victory.

Hayden Allard led the Trailblazers with a four-touchdown performance, rushing for 209 yards on 23 carries. Teammate Joseph Mackie added three touchdowns of his own while racking up 160 yards on just 10 carries,

Quarterback Quinn Sumner was efficient through the air, completing 5 of 6 passes for 152 yards, including a 35-yard touchdown strike to Hunter Allard. Payton Wallace had 2 catches for 83 yards.

Joseph Gould, Kaiden Guertin, and Callan Senecal each finished with five tackles, with Senecal adding two tackles for a loss. Aiden Lamotte added an interception for the Trailblazers. Cooper Logee finished a perfect 9-9 on extra points.

The Trailblazers will return to action at home Thanksgiving morning against Woodstock Academy at Morgan field, this will be the last matchup on Thanksgiving between the two schools. Kickoff is at 10 a.m.

The Week in Sports at Woodstock Academy

Girls Volleyball

Class L state tournament
Semifinal
(1)East Lyme 3
(5) Woodstock Academy 0

The Centaurs have been skilled at getting to the Class L final four, they have been successful in doing that for three of the last four seasons, but making that next step to the state championship match has proven difficult.

The Centaurs ran into East Lyme for a fourth time this season and the result was the same as in the first three meetings, a shutout win for the Vikings (23-1).

East Lyme moves on to meet seventh-seeded Bristol Central, a 3-0 winner over Guilford, in the state title match.

Isabella Diep was the key for the Vikings.

The setter not only had 29 assists but also had 27 service points including eight straight to start the first set, won by the Vikings 25-12, and 13 straight to start the third set which East Lyme took 25-16.

Woodstock Academy, which finished the season 18-9, did put a scare into the Vikings as it took the lead late in the second set but lost a heartbreaker, 25-22.

Kaylee Bundy had nine kills, eight service points and five kills for the Centaurs who also got eight digs and seven kills from Kennedy McCooey and 18 assists from Lily Morgis.

Football

Woodstock Academy 35
Montville 19

The Centaurs have relied on the passing game all season but on Friday, the run game stepped up.

Junior running back Cooper Harris scored on runs of 1, 3 and 2 yards for the Centaurs and Elijah Laprade added a pair of scores on a 65-yard punt return and a 40-yard pass reception to account for the Woodstock Academy (3-6) scoring.

Laprade. Griffen Bloom and Aidan Soukaloun added interceptions on the defensive side for the Centaurs as they upended the Wolves (2-7).

Prep Soccer

Woodstock Academy Prep 2
5
St. Thomas More 1

The Centaurs Prep 2 soccer team has captured the Global Education Sports Partners League regular season title for the first three years.

But the tournament title has been another story.

The Centaurs (13-3) finally captured their first league tournament title with the win over the Chancellors at the Bentley Athletic Complex.

Mack Gallagher, , Mark Maruyama and Victor Schougaard all had a goal and an assist in the win.

Yuki Kato and Haesung Kim also scored for the Centaurs in the win.

Caio Bueno scored the only goal for St. Thomas More.

Day Kimball Centreville Bank Golf Classic raises more than $125,000

Courtesy

From left: Kyle Kramer, chief executive officer, Day Kimball Health; James Zahansky, senior partner and chief strategist, WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, and member of the Day Kimball Health Board of Directors; Hal Horvat, president, chief executive officer, and chairman of the board, Centreville Bank; and Merton Gollaher, partner, Garfunkel Wild. The photo was taken at Connecticut National Golf Club in Putnam, Conn., on Friday, Sept. 12, during Day Kimball Health's 41st Annual Centreville Bank Golf Classic.

PUTNAM — The 41st Annual Day Kimball Hospital (DKH) Centreville Bank Golf Classic, held at the Connecticut National Golf Club on Friday, Sept. 12 raised more than $125,000 with more than 265 participants and volunteers in attendance. Net proceeds benefit DKH's efforts in enhancing critical patient care initiatives with a focus on diagnostic imaging services.

More than 130 local and regional businesses and organizations, as well as individual community members and families, participated in sponsoring the event to support expanding access to healthcare in Northeast Connecticut. This is the ninth consecutive year that Centreville Bank has partnered with DKH as the title sponsor, contributing $25,000 toward Day Kimball Hospital initiatives over this calendar year.

Other major sponsors for the event included Gold Sponsors Ensemble Health Partners, Garfunkel Wild, P.C., and WIN Waste Innovations; and Silver Sponsors America's First Network Credit Union Northeastern CT Healthcare Division, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., bankHometown, Colonial Health & Rehab Center of Plainfield, LLC, Downes Construction Co., LLC, Linemaster Switch Corp., Northeast Emergency Medicine Specialists, Pinnacle Healthcare Consulting, Putnam Plastics Corporation, and Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors.

"Centreville Bank is proud to stand alongside Day Kimball Hospital in support of their mission to expand and improve access to healthcare in our region," said Hal Horvat, President, CEO, and Chairman of the Board of Centreville Bank. "This tournament is about more than just golf -- it's about community, compassion, and commitment to ensuring that individuals and families in Northeast Connecticut receive the high-quality care they deserve."

"We're grateful for our continued partnership with Centreville Bank and for the incredible support from our community," said Kyle Kramer, DKH president and CEO. "The success of this event reflects what can be achieved when local organizations and individuals come together to strengthen access to quality care in Northeast Connecticut."

Tournament highlights included hole-in-one contests, a mid-day presentation and salute by the American Legion L'Homme Burdick Post 21 Danielson Color Guard escorted by the Manchester Pipe Band, and a special performance of the National Anthem by Guada Mary Benoit of Norwich, Connecticut.

"Once again, the level of support that we received from our DKH family of community members, organizations, and business partners was overwhelming," said Kristen Willis, director of development, Day Kimball Health. "The results of this year's tournament were humbling to say the least, not only in terms of dollars raised in support of our patients, but in the level of participation, enthusiasm, and excitement that were felt throughout the day. It is a true testament to how much our community values Day Kimball and is willing to invest in its future."

From its modest beginnings 41 years ago at Harrisville Golf Course sponsored by Steve Bousquet and Jumbo Appliances, to today's field of more than 60 foursomes at CT National and in partnership with Centreville Bank, the golf tournament has raised more than $2,694,000. These funds have been instrumental in ensuring access to high-quality medical care in Northeast Connecticut.

For more information about the Day Kimball Hospital Centreville Bank Golf Classic, visit daykimball.org/golfclassic or call the Day Kimball Healthcare Foundation Office at (860) 928-7141.

2025 DKH Centreville Bank Golf Classic Results:

1st Place (53) – Roger Noll, Sean Vigue, Scott Vose, Pat Kozelka

2nd Place (54) – Brendan Meehan, Jared Meehan, Mike Meehan, Nick Kobel

3rd Place (57) – Kyle Hicks, Geoff Yeagley, CJ Hurd, Jeff Masse

Closest to Pin #4 – Nick Kobel, 9'8"

Closest to Pin #9 – Evan Parsons, 6.5"

Closest to Pin #11 – Donald St. Onge, 5'11"

Closest to Pin #15 – Larry Darling, 4'6"

About Day Kimball Health

Day Kimball Health is a nonprofit community healthcare system composed of Day Kimball Hospital, Day Kimball Medical Group, Day Kimball Healthcare at Home, and healthcare centers in Danielson, Dayville, Plainfield, and Putnam. Its service area includes Northeast Connecticut as well as nearby Massachusetts and Rhode Island communities. Day Kimball Healthcare's comprehensive network employs more than 1,000 staff including nearly 300 associated, highly skilled physicians, surgeons and specialists. Its Web site is www.daykimball.org.

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Beyond "Giving Tuesday": Charitable giving strategies for maximum impact and tax benefits

FINANCIAL FOCUS

HOLLY C. WANEGAR INVESTMENT ADVISER

While Giving Tuesday serves as a wonderful reminder to support meaningful causes, strategic charitable giving shouldn't be limited to one day, or even one season. Of course, need is present all year long. And with significant tax law changes taking effect in 2026 and evolving opportunities for tax-efficient philanthropy, now is the perfect time to develop a comprehensive charitable giving strategy that maximizes both your impact and your tax benefits.

The changing landscape of charitable giving and why 2025 is critical

Recent tax legislation, including the "One Big Beautiful Bill" Act (OBBBA), introduces important changes that will reshape charitable giving starting in 2026. The most significant changes include a new 0.5 percent adjusted gross income (AGI) floor for itemized charitable deductions and a universal charitable deduction for non-itemizers of up to $1,000 for individuals and $2,000 for joint filers.

What this means for you:

If your AGI is $100,000, you'll need to donate more than $500 before any charitable contributions become deductible starting in 2026

Over 90 percent of taxpayers who don't itemize will gain new tax incentives for charitable giving beginning in 2026

A new 35 percent cap on itemized deductions may affect high-income donors

Given these upcoming changes, 2025 presents a unique opportunity for high earners to accelerate charitable giving before tighter itemized deduction caps begin in 2026. This makes current planning especially valuable for maximizing your philanthropic impact.

Top charitable giving strategies for maximum impact

1. Bunching contributions: Rather than making consistent annual donations, consider "bunching" multiple years' worth of charitable contributions into a single tax year to exceed the standard deduction threshold. For 2025, the standard deduction is $15,000 for single filers and $30,000 for married couples filing jointly. For example, instead of donating $10,000 annually, contribute $30,000 every three years. This allows you to itemize in high-giving years while taking the standard deduction in others.

2. Donate appreciated assets, not cash: Donating appreciated stocks, real estate, or other assets held for more than one year offers two significant tax benefits: you eliminate capital gains taxes that would be owed if you sold the assets, and you can claim a charitable deduction for the full fair market value. This strategy can increase the amount available for charity by up to 20% compared to selling the asset and donating the proceeds.

3. Leverage Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs): Donor-advised funds offer immediate tax deductions when you contribute, while allowing you to recommend grants to charities over time. You can contribute cash, stocks, real estate, and other assets, which have the potential to grow tax-free until distributed. DAFs are particularly powerful for bunching strategies, as they allow you to claim the deduction immediately while maintaining flexibility in your giving timeline.

4. Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs): If you're 70 and a half or older, you can make qualified charitable distributions of up to $108,000 directly from your traditional IRA to qualified charities. This counts toward your required minimum distribution without generating taxable income.

5. Tax-loss harvesting with charitable giving: For securities that have declined below their cost basis, you can sell at a loss and donate the cash proceeds. Use the loss to offset capital gains and up to $3,000 of ordinary income, while still claiming a charitable deduction.

Advanced strategies for high-net-worth donors

Charitable Remainder Trusts (CRTs): CRTs provide you with an income stream during your lifetime while supporting charity upon your death. You receive an immediate tax deduction and can make additional contributions over time.

Charitable Lead Trusts (CLTs): These trusts provide income to charity for a specified period, with remaining assets eventually passing to your beneficiaries—often with reduced gift or estate tax implications.

Year-end planning considerations

As we approach year-end, consider these immediate actions: review your giving capacity against the upcoming 0.5 percent AGI floor; accelerate planned giving to maximize 2025 tax benefits; harvest tax losses to offset gains from appreciated asset donations; and coordinate with retirement planning if you're eligible for QCDs.

Tax law changes create new complexities that require careful planning. At WHZ, our experienced financial planners can work with you to ensure your charitable giving strategy aligns with your broader financial goals.

But of course, effective charitable giving isn't just about tax benefits—it's about creating lasting impact for the causes you care about while optimizing your financial strategy. The key is planning ahead and understanding how different approaches can work together to maximize both your philanthropic goals and tax advantages.

While tax benefits may motivate your giving strategy, donors are ultimately inspired by results, relationships, and purpose. By implementing these strategies thoughtfully, you can ensure your charitable dollars work harder for the causes that matter most to you.

Ready to develop a charitable giving strategy that maximizes both impact and tax benefits? Contact us for a complimentary consultation at whzwealth.com or call (860) 928-2341. Let's create a plan that provides "Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life."

Authored by Holly C. Wanegar, CFP®, Vice President at WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. This article is for informational purposes only and should not be considered personalized tax or legal advice. Consult with qualified professionals regarding your specific situation.

Generally, a donor-advised fund is a separately identified fund or account that is maintained and operated by a section 501(c)(3) organization, which is called a sponsoring organization. Each account is composed of contributions made by individual donors. Once the donor makes the contribution, the organization has legal control over it; however, the donor, or donor's representative, retains advisory privileges with respect to the distribution of funds and the investment assets in the account. Donors take a tax deduction for all contributions at the time they are made, even though the

Turn To FINANCIAL page A9

The history behind your Thanksgiving dinner

KILLINGLY AT 300

MARGARET WEAVER

Note: The Killingly Historical Center will be closed Wednesday, November 26th, the day before Thanksgiving. IT WILL BE OPEN SATURDAY, NOV. 29 FROM 10 A.M.-4 P.M., AS USUAL. Bring your out-of-town relatives to visit the museum or research.

Thanksgiving pies for sale! Do you miss the scrumptious flavor of a homemade pie on Thanksgiving? Killingly Grange #112, 801 Hartford Turnpike, Dayville, is taking orders for Apple and Pumpkin pies at $16 per pie. Last day to order is Saturday, Nov. 22. Pick-up on Wednesday, Nov. 26. To reserve a pie call or text Terry at (860)-884-1813, or visit them at www.facebook.com/KillinglyGrange/

Help Celebrate CT 250 with Putnam's VFW. Roast beef dinner with potatoes and beans, Saturday, Nov. 22, 5-7 p.m. Eat in or take out. $20 per person. Providence St. Dancing from 7-11 p.m. with live rock band Jailbreak. For tickets or more information call Jim at 860-753-0953.

The Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar is open by appointment. For additional information, please call (860)207-6044 and leave a message.

Join the Putnam Public Library to view completely different clips of the film "The American Revolution" by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David Schmidt on Saturday, November 29, 12:30-1:45 p.m. Putnam Municipal Complex 200 School Street.

Friends of Assisi Thanksgiving Food Collection: Saturday, Nov. 22, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. & Sunday, Nov. 23, noon to 3 p.m. at 77 Water St. (Home of Friends of Assisi), Monday, Nov. 24, 3-6 p.m. at St. James gym. Wish list: Apples, broth, gravy, box potatoes, canned yams, rolls, squash, carrots, sweet potatoes, pickles, olives, monetary donations and grocery store card. Thank you so much for your caring and generosity.

Holiday Music Sing-Along with Harmonie Road: Wednesday, Dec. 10, 6-7 p.m. Putnam Public Library. Join Kevin and Gary St. Jean for an evening of holiday music. Song lyrics will be provided. All are welcome.

It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is nearly here. I'm sure those of you who will be cooking a hearty meal are already purchasing some of the many ingredients you need for this once-a-year feast. I'm sure you've heard about the history of the holiday since you were children. But what do you know about the history of some of the special foods? I'm sure most of you will have cranberries in one form or another, and I've written about locals harvesting them in Killlingly and Woodstock. What do you know about canned cranberry sauce? AI had this to say: "The modern, canned version was developed in 1912 by Marcus Urann, who later co-founded Ocean Spray. His canned sauce was sold nationally starting in 1941, and Ocean Spray's marketing helped cement its place on holiday tables. The first documented recipe for cranberry sauce appeared in Amelia Simmons's 1796 cookbook, 'American Cookery.' It called for stewing the cranberries with sugar and served them with turkey". Native Americans introduced the early settlers to this tart fruit. "In 1606, the Mi'kmaq people introduced the French settlers in Port-Royal, Nova Scotia, to cranberries. They would have been sweetened with maple sugar and served at the settlers first Thanksgiving in North America that year. The settlers described eating what they called 'small red apples' in letters sent back to France. Port-Royal reports contained menus describing cranberries. They are still called pommes de prés, or 'meadow apples', today in Acadia." (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cranberry_sauce). Notice that predates the arrival of the Pilgrims and refers to an earlier Thanksgiving. In regards to 1621, Wikipedia continues, "According to a 'Thanksgiving Primer' published by the Plimoth Plantation, cranberries may have been used in the stuffing recipes, but it is unlikely they would have been made into a sauce because sugar was very scarce." "

I thought I would check "The Diaries of Dr. Hill 1851-1896," edited by Marcella Houle Pasay, to see if he had any special mentions of Thanksgiving 150 years ago in 1875. Apparently, the holiday didn't warrant a Diary entry. November entries indicated that he was among the men of the town getting a new building ready on the Killingly Town Farm. The Killingly Town Farm at that time included land that is now Owen Bell Park and where the Killingly Highway garage is located. A notation for Saturday, Nov. 20, 1875 reads, "Sold old house at town farm $70 and $83 with two lots at $100 each to S.L. Sayles." (p.117). S. L. Sayles was Dayville millowner Sabin L. Sayles. Monday, December 5 entry added more, "West Killingly (Danielson) twice to get furniture for town farm in evening with Esquire B. Miller and E. R. Burlingame. Got lamps from Jacobs. Got home late." There was more on the Town Farm on Wednesday, December 8. "Was at town farm today and helped move paupers to the new house just completed." On Christmas, members of the community remembered those at the Town Farm, "At town farm with Selectmen. People from West Killingly brought presents for paupers."

"Presents for Paupers." We, too, are called to think of those who need a little help in our communities at this time of the years. Friends of Assisi and Daily Bread are collecting food for Thanksgiving. St. James Knights of Columbus is collecting coats as part of a wider distribution; Killingly Parks and Recreation is collecting new toys, coats, hats, gloves, and pajamas. If you are able, take the time to help with one or more collections. All donations will be greatly appreciated. I'm sure other towns are also collecting so be generous and donate in your community.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, November 2025. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main Street Danielson Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety

Healing tears

BEYOND THE PEWS

BY BISHOP JOHN W. HANSON ACTS II MINISTRIES

I have discovered that God heals people's hearts through processes. Psalm 41:3 says, "The Lord nurses them when they are sick and restores them to health." That process can include pain, disappointment, weariness and doubt. Many times, it is the process that strengthens one's faith, because it stretches their faith.

Rev. Raymond Woodward did YouTube presentation in which he shared some this about tears:

Only humans cry. Crying establishes bonds between parents and their children. Tears also express our helplessness, so that others know we are in need. And tears are also evidence of human empathy.

He shared that the human eye produces three types of tears

basal tears – lubricate and protect our eyes

reflex tears – to protect our eyes in an emergencies

emotional tears – in response to our emotional state. These tears are thicker and more laden with chemicals designed to help us deal with our emotions.

But the most interesting information he shared comes from research done by Maurice Mikkers who studied tears under a microscope. He discovered that no two people's tears are alike. He has also discovered that each kind of tear has a different landscape to it. For example, a tear of sorrow looks different than tear of fear. (for more information visit: Imaginariumoftears.com)

The conclusion he drew from his research was that God designed us to cry and that He intended the crying to be a part of the healing process. In other words, crying can have a healing effect.

I personally do not cry often. Maybe I should learn how to process my feeling more – I don't know. But I do know that the times in my life when I have cried have been significant and transformative. The most memorable is when I was eleven years old. I had been praying for three years to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I had tried everything... singing, lifting hands, saying Jesus over and over again, but I was at an impasse.

Then one night, as I went to the altar, I suddenly had a surge of emotion. From down deep inside me I felt a longing to be close to God. I began to cry and reach out to God, instead of focusing on speaking in tongues. When I finally opened up emotionally, God filled me with the Holy Spirit and I spoke in a language I had not learned. God was waiting for me to love him with my mind, might and heart. I don't know what kind tears you would call them, but I know they indicated that something amazing was happening deep inside of me.

If you have ever been, or are currently in, a valley of mourning or sorrow, don't despair. It might be the beginning of a good think in your life. Life brings tears to believers and non-believers alike. But God ministers to those who express their emotions to Him. In fact, if our times of worship and prayer are unemotional, something is probably wrong.

Psalm 34:17-18 says, "The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed." Maybe this would be a good time to let God use tears to bring healing to our lives.

Bishop John W. Hanson oversees Acts II Ministries in Thompson. For more resources or sermon videos please visit www.ActsII.org.

‘Tis the season for collecting

Antiques, Collectibles & Estates

Wayne Tuiskula

The holiday season is fast approaching, which means people are preparing to decorate. Sometimes decorations are handed down through generations. People might also reminisce about the holidays of their youth or appreciate the craftsmanship of holiday decorations made during Victorian times, leading them to seek out vintage pieces.

I’ll start with a look back at a holiday that has already passed. Many people have fond memories of dressing in costumes and trick-or-treating when they were younger. Some collectors like the nostalgia and history of Halloween. Others like the scary element, including images of jack-o-lanterns, witches, ghosts, and skeletons. Whatever the reason, Halloween is one of the most popular holidays for collectors.

Halloween collectibles can go for anywhere from a dollar to tens of thousands of dollars. Vintage postcards are among the most inexpensive collectibles and you may find some for a dollar or less. Of course, an advanced collector may pay much more. A rare postcard signed by the artist had all the things that collectors are looking for with a witch, broom, and cauldron, mice, snake, black cat, bats, and a full moon. It sold for $2,600 in 2022. Other items that Halloween collectors look for include figurative pieces, candy containers, vintage masks, costumes, and metal noisemakers. Older decorations made from papier mache, cardboard and crepe paper, metal, porcelain, and ceramics are all popular with collectors. Rare and unique items can even lead to bidding wars. A cast iron doorstop depicting a girl in costume holding a jack-o-lantern was said to be one of four known to exist. It sold for over $34,000 in 2016.

Moving ahead on the calendar, Abraham Lincoln’s October 3, 1863, proclamation declared the last Thursday of November to be a day of national Thanksgiving. In 1941, Franklin Delano Roosevelt made the fourth Thursday of November a federal holiday. Despite its history, Thanksgiving collectibles aren’t as popular as those of other holidays. However, a turn of the century skittles game with cast iron wheels in the shape of a Thanksgiving turkey sold for over $2,600 in 2013.

Christmas collectibles are so popular that there is a collectors group called “the Golden Glow of Christmas past.” Like Halloween, there are a wide variety of Christmas collectibles. Some items on the Golden Glow of Christmas Past website include “antique glass and spun cotton ornaments, Belsnickle figures, and vintage lights like bubble lights and blow molds.” Vintage and antique Christmas figures and aluminum trees with color wheels are also sought after. We’ve sold ornaments that have brought strong prices. Sixteen clip-on birds that went on a Christmas tree brought $480, nine glass Santa and elf ornaments sold for over $500, and 12 other figural ornaments went for over $600 in one of our auctions last year. Of course, older and rarer pieces can bring some huge prices. A German made nodding Father Christmas store display from the turn of the century reached $28,000 at an auction house in 2017. That definitely brought both the buyer and seller some Christmas cheer.

Our single-collector Civil War auction will be taking place later this month. Following that, we’ll have a major auction with fine jewelry, sterling silver, art, and other antiques and collectibles. 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).

Create your own winter containers

Garden Moments

Melinda Myers

Add a bit of seasonal beauty to your front steps, window boxes, and other outdoor spaces with winter containers. Fill them with greenery, berries, cones, baubles and more. You’ll find many of these items in your own backyard and more at your favorite garden retailer.

Collect a few evergreen stems, interesting seedheads and pods, colorful stems, and fruit and berry covered branches from your landscape. Plants you enjoy in the winter garden are good candidates to include.

Many native plants make excellent additions to winter containers. Include berry-laden stems of plants like winterberry, dried flowers of smooth hydrangea, colorful stems of red twig dogwood, branches of paper bark birches and fruit from native crabapples, hawthorns and roses.

Collect a few evergreen cones and harvest some stems topped with seedheads and pods from gardens and native plantings. Add some airy texture and motion to your winter containers with native and ornamental grasses. Leave them in their natural state or add some paint and glitter for a bit of bling.

Do not include invasive plants like phragmites, teasel and oriental bittersweet. These will drop seeds in your landscape and soon become a problem in your gardens and surrounding natural spaces.

Convert one or two of your summer or fall containers into a winter display or start with an empty planter. Make sure the container you select can tolerate winter weather. Concrete, iron, metal, wood and fiberglass containers are best suited for year-round use. Even plastic pots will last for a few years when left outside and kept safe from damage by snow shovels and snow blowers.

Make sure the pot has drainage holes to prevent waterlogged soil and water from overflowing the pot. Fill the container, up to an inch below the rim, with a well-drained potting mix, sand or topsoil. The soil helps hold the greenery, twigs and other materials in place and adds weight to keep the pot upright throughout the winter. Add a rock to the bottom of lightweight containers to prevent them from blowing over in the wind.

Use a mix of evergreens to provide a variety of textures, various shades of green and a backdrop for the items. Pine, spruce, arborvitae, boxwood and junipers may be growing in your landscape and most of these are available at garden centers. Spruce tips make it easy to create vertical accents in your containers. Select fresh greenery with pliable branches and firmly attached needles. Secure the stems by placing them at least four inches into the soil.

Melinda Myers

Winter containers filled with greenery, colorful stems, cones, berries and more can brighten the landscape all winter long.

Next, add the other materials you purchased or collected from your landscape. Create vertical interest with colorful and fruit-laden stems and branches. Tuck in seedheads, pods, cones and colorful branches for added interest throughout the arrangement. Depending on your style, add artificial materials such as ribbon and outdoor ornaments. It’s your opportunity to be creative.

Water thoroughly to remove air pockets and lock your ingredients in place. Keep the soil moist until the potting mix freezes to extend the beauty of your winter arrangement. If possible, set your planter in a sheltered location out of drying winter winds and sunlight to keep it looking good even longer.

Once your container is complete, it’s time to relax and enjoy your favorite winter activities and celebrations.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the Midwest Gardener’s Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses “How to Grow Anything” streaming courses and the nationally syndicated Melinda’s Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

FINANCIAL

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money may not be dispersed to a charity until much later.

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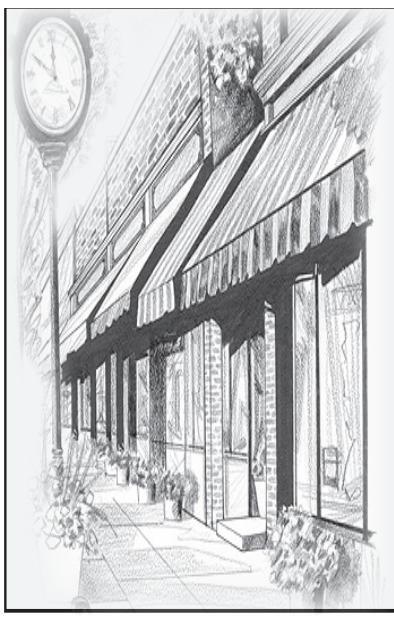

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Your help is needed to honor our veterans!

WILLIMANTIC — The Eastern CT Veterans Center and the Windham Region Chamber of Commerce Foundation have been the hosts for the Wreaths Across America program at the New Willimantic Cemetery for the past decade and are once again planning the ceremony for Saturday, Dec. 13 at noon.

The deadline to sponsor a wreath that will be placed on a Veteran's grave is Dec. 1. More than 250 additional wreaths are needed for the New Willimantic Cemetery and we are asking the public to please be generous and help us to be able to place one on every grave. The cost per wreath is $17. You can go online and order a wreath at www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/ct0090 or you can send/drop off a check or cash. Checks should be made out to the Eastern CT Veterans Community Center and mailed to 1010 Main St., Willimantic, CT 06226 or dropped off at 47 Crescent St. on any Tuesday or Wednesday before Dec. 1.

This program is dear to our hearts. Our veterans should not be forgotten. They need to be remembered and honored. So many of them no longer have families that can tend to their graves, or their family no longer lives locally. The Eastern CT Veterans Community Center has made a pledge and promise that we will never forget. We place flags on every grave for Memorial Day and Veterans Day. The wreath laying is the ultimate in remembrance. Please help us fulfill this promise… to give back to those who gave their everything to defend our country, our liberty and our families.

Please consider joining us on Dec. 13 at noon, rain, snow or shine, for the ceremony. For more information email info@WindhamChamber.com or call/text 860-423-6389.

Local student provides peer mentoring at Emmanuel School of Nursing

BOSTON, Mass. — Kayla Morrison, of Putnam is helping fellow students succeed as a peer mentor at the Emmanuel College School of Nursing.

As a peer mentor, Morrison provides support and guidance for at least one first- or second-year student. Participants also receive support from the faculty peer-mentoring team.

Offered through the School of Nursing Club, the program matched more than 60 mentors with fellow students this fall.

Evidence shows that peer mentoring helps reduce challenges such as isolation, loneliness, and stress among first- and second-year college students.

Peer mentoring is one of many ways the Emmanuel School of Nursing helps students build the knowledge and skills to think critically, communicate effectively, and provide patient-centered care.

With more than 80 majors and areas of study, Emmanuel College combines outstanding classroom instruction and real-world experience to prepare students for lives of professional achievement, lifelong learning, and purpose. Voted the #1 college location in America in 2025 by Niche.com, Emmanuel offers ready access to world class medical, cultural, and business organizations, all with a tight-knit 17-acre campus and 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Learn more at Emmanuel.edu.

New Al-Anon meeting in Pomfret

POMFRET — The recently formed Together We Can Do It Al-Anon Family Group is meeting at Christ Church in Pomfret (Route 169) on Tuesdays at noon. This is an open meeting, meaning not only family and friends of people suffering from the effects of addiction are welcome, but also professionals who may have clients they would like to recommend attend the meetings.

Al-Anon is a worldwide program for people just like you, who are worried about someone with a drinking problem. This Pomfret group will also welcome folks concerned about someone suffering from drug addiction.

Utilizing the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, the group will discuss the Steps, Concepts, and Traditions as well as offer support for your specific situation. No advice is given; understanding and support in a confidential setting are the largest benefits of membership in the group.

For more information about Al-Anon, visit www.al-anon.org. For information about the meeting in Pomfret, call 203-561-7954.

Paws Cat Shelter to hold cat food drive

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter is holding a holiday cat food drive on Friday, Nov. 28 from 7 to 11 a.m. at the WINY radio station in Putnam. Donations of dry and canned cat food are needed to help their community pet food bank. Monetary donations and gift cards are always welcome and greatly appreciated.

Food donations may also be dropped off at Petco in Dayville, Quinebaug Valley Veterinary Hospital in Danielson, Agway in Plainfield, Joseph Jewelers in Putnam and Danielson Surplus. Food, gift cards and cash donations can be dropped off at Paws Cat Shelter at 74 School St. in Putnam on Wednesdays 4-5:30 p.m. or Saturdays noon to 3 p.m.

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

Small Business "Caturday" at Paws Cat Shelter

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter will be open on Nov. 29 from noon until 3 p.m. at 74 School St., Putnam, for Small Business "Caturday." T-shirts, sweatshirts, assorted crafts and Paws items PLUS cats to visit. Pet food and monetary donations are greatly appreciated.

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

Paws Cat Shelter hosting Holiday Bazaar

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter is hosting a Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 6 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Putnam High School cafeteria, 152 Woodstock Ave., in Putnam. More than 25 vendors with crafts, gifts, raffle baskets, baked goods and more.

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

Northeastern CT Knights of Columbus, Danielson Elks to hold Free 'Coats for Kids' program in Plainfield

PLAINFIELD — Bring your child to get a free, new, warm winter coat on Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, Nov. 28, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., at St. John's Church, 15 Railroad Ave., off Route 12 in Plainfield.

The area's Knights of Columbus and Danielson Elks Lodge 1706 will be giving away new winter coats in various colors for boys and girls, in toddler's, children's and teen sizes. They will also have free, used winter coats in good condition available for men and women. The program is free and open to anyone in need, with no obligation. For information, please call (860) 928-5873 (do not text).

Congregational Church of Eastford offers divorce support group

EASTFORD — The Congregational Church of Eastford is offering a 13-week support group for people undergoing separation or divorce. The sessions will begin Sunday, Dec. 14, running 13 consecutive Sundays from 5:30-7 p.m. All sessions will be held at the church offce, 4 County Rd., Eastford.

Some of the topics covered during this helpful course include acknowledging deep hurt, dealing with children and co-parenting issues, financial and legal issues, forgiveness and much more. For questions, please reach out to the facilitator at: cceastford@gmail.com. It is requested that you register at: cceastford.org/divorcecare/.

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brendan@villagernewspapers.com

OBITUARIES

Florence A. Dupre
1928 - 2025

Putnam – Florence A. (Caron) Dupre, 97, of Church St., died Friday morning, November 14, 2025, at Matulaitis Nursing Home. She was the beloved wife of the late Arthur G. Dupre, Sr. Born in Putnam, she was the daughter of the late Herve and Eva (Bousquet) Caron.

Mrs. Dupre was a homemaker.

She enjoyed golfing, knitting, crocheting, reading, and making puzzles.

Until recently she enjoyed her yearly winter trips to Florida to meet with nieces Cheryl and Donna.

Mrs. Dupre was a member of the league of Catholic Women, Daughters of Issabella, and was a Eucharistic Minister at St. Mary Church of the Visitation in Putnam.

Florence is survived by her son, Arthur "Gerry" Dupre and his wife Sandra of Putnam; her two grandchildren, Scott and Jennifer Dupre, her four great grandchildren, Tahjma and Aydan Singleton and Jake and Sarah Dupre, and her two nieces, Cheryl Mastronianni and Donna Frederick.

She was predeceased by her two sons, Alan Dupre and Jon Dupre, and her sister, Lucille Frederick.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Florence's family from 9:30AM to 11:00AM on Friday, November 21, 2025, in the Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT 06260, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:30AM. in St. Mary Church of the Visitation, 218 Providence St., Putnam, CT. Burial will follow in St. Mary Cemetery. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Linda A. Para
1948 – 2025

Quinebaug – Linda A. Para (76) passed away peacefully at her home on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, after a long illness. She is survived by her devoted husband of 52 years, Gregory Para.

Linda leaves behind three sons: Christopher M. Para of Quinebaug; Randy N. Para and his life partner Jennifer Teixeira of Palmer; and Brian M. Para and his life partner Agnes Ucher of Woodstock. She is also survived by her brother, Francis Bourget and his wife Leta, her sister, Joann Blain and her husband Ronald, and her brother-in-law, Fred Para and his wife Joyce, along with several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her parents, Arthur and Emelda Bourget, and her brother, Arthur Bourget Jr.

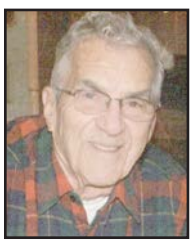
Born in Fitchburg, Linda was raised in Webster, MA. She attended Bartlett High School and Dudley Hall Secretarial School. Linda worked for MAPFRE Insurance for 25 years and was a former member of Saint Anthony's Church in Dudley, MA.

Linda adored her family, cherished her friends, and had a deep love for animals.

Relatives and friends were invited to visit with Linda's family on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at the Valade Funeral Home and Crematory, 23 Main Street, North Grosvenordale, from 10:00 to 11:00 am. A service followed at 11:00 am in the funeral home. A reception for Linda will be held following the service at Point Breeze Restaurant in Webster. A memorial guestbook is available at www.gilmanandvalade.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Linda's memory may be made to the Community Cat Collection, 289 Thompson Road, Webster, MA 01570.

William "Grumpy" Meagher, 93



William "Grumpy" Meagher, 93, of Dayville, passed away peacefully on Monday, October 6, 2025, at Matulaitis Nursing Home in Putnam. Bill was born in Norwich on December 25, 1931, son of the late James Leonard Meagher and Grace Milicent Hutchins Meagher. He was the beloved husband of Aurore Hubert Meagher. They were married for 71 years, 60 of them were in the house he designed and built in Dayville. Bill proudly served in the U.S. Navy from 1951-1955. He worked as a mechanical engineer for 39 years at Pervel Industries in Plainfield until their closing. Later he did consultation work for several area companies. He was active in the experimental aircraft association. Bill traveled extensively in his motor home throughout the United States with his wife by his side. They also enjoyed spending time at Alexander's Lake.

Besides his wife, he is survived by three children, Keith Meagher and wife Lori of Dayville, Lynn Ravenelle and husband Greg of Pomfret and Todd Meagher of Manchester. He leaves behind his grandchildren, Matthew Ravenelle and wife Jessica, Marc Ravenelle, Patrick Meagher and wife Roselyn, Meghan Ravenelle, Caitlyn Meagher and Kyle Meagher. He also leaves behind one great grandchild Parker Coyle, in addition to many nieces and nephews. He also will be missed by his beloved grandpup Millie. He was predeceased by his brothers, James, Thomas and John Meagher.

A calling hour was held on Saturday November 1, 2025, from 10:00-11:00 A.M. followed by a memorial service at 11:00 A.M. in Tillinghast Funeral Home, 433 Main Street, Danielson. Burial will be at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association at donorservices.alz.org. Bill's family would like to extend a sincere thank you to the staff at Matulaitis Nursing Home for their caring of Bill. tillinghastfh.com

Gerard (Gerry) R. Chartier
1936 - 2025

Dayville - Sergeant Gerard R. Chartier (Gerry), 89, passed peacefully at home with his family on November 5, 2025.

Gerry was born to Dr. Gerard M. Chartier and Rubia L. Chartier. The oldest of twelve siblings, Gerry grew up in Danielson CT, speaking French before he spoke English. He attended Catholic school as an elementary student, later graduated from Assumption Preparatory School, and studied at Central Connecticut State College. A rambunctious child, he was dis-invited by his piano teacher to continue lessons (much to his relief) but was a talented athlete and sportsman. He loved hockey and auto racing and excelled at football.

When Gerry turned 18, he visited a military recruiting office intending to join the Marine Corps to fulfill his mandatory military obligation but was drawn instead to the Coast Guard (USCG). Upon enlistment, he embarked on a grand 4-year adventure. From the home port of Boston, he served aboard the station-keeping vessel Castle Rock and the icebreaker Eastwind. With the USCG, he saw much of the world: the Arctic Circle, Greenland, New Zealand, Australia, eastern and western Africa, and Antarctica. He traveled the Panama Canal, Suez Canal, and across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

After concluding his military service, Gerry followed his life-long passion and embarked on a 30-year career with the Connecticut State Police where he served with distinction. He became a stalwart protector of the people of Eastern CT, maturing from a high-spirited rookie to a seasoned sergeant. He received commendations for bravery and was involved in many high-profile investigations with the Eastern CT Major Crime Unit. His most renowned case was the investigation and apprehension of CT's last serial killer. He also had a special disaffinity for motorcycles with loud after-market exhaust pipes.

Gerry married Marie Coutu of Putnam. The couple lived in Sterling CT and later built a home in Dayville. They had three children, Elizabeth, Sarah, and Gerard P. Tragically, Sarah was lost to childhood leukemia. Gerry and Marie divorced after 25 years of marriage.

Gerry and his second wife, Dawn Marquette, settled in Woodstock CT. They enjoyed traveling across the U.S. in their RV, rescued many dogs and cats, and were active members of the community until Dawn's passing in 2018.

Gerry did the NYT crossword puzzle in ink and loved playing cribbage. He was a loyal brother and friend, a great cook, a ferocious competitor, a terrible singer, a relentless acquirer of gadgets, a talented woodworker, and a big softy with kids and animals. He was predeceased by his daughter Sarah Elaine, his first wife, Marie C. Chartier; his second wife, Dawn M. Chartier; his siblings David, Pierre, Ann-Marie, and Joseph.

He is survived by his daughter, Elizabeth; son, Gerard P.; stepson, Andrew Marquette, his wife, Pamela, step-grandchildren, Madison, Nathan, and Andrew; and siblings, Robert, Marc, Normand, Michele, Celeste, Louis, A. Nicolas; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, grand-nieces, and grand-nephews. Gerry had just begun his 90th trip around the sun. He will be deeply missed by those who loved him.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Gerry's family from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm on Tuesday, November 25 at the Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory, 104 Church Street, Putnam, CT 06260. A service will take place in the funeral home at 1:30 pm. In lieu of flowers, please donate to Friends of Assisi Food Pantry in Danielson, CT or the Northeast Animal Shelter in Salem, MA. https://www.mspca.org/adoption-centers/northeast-animal-shelter/.

Robert E. Gaudet, 84

Robert E. Gaudet, 84, of Putnam, passed away peacefully at home with his family by his side on Friday, November 14, 2025. He was born on September 16, 1941 in Hartford, CT, the son of late Edmond and Naomi (Laroche) Gaudet.

After graduating high school, Bob attended the University of Hartford, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering in 1963. He went on to pursue his entire 34-year career at Connecticut Light and Power Company. In addition, Bob served his country in the Army Reserves for 24 years, retiring as a Major in Army Intelligence.

A loving husband of 61 years to Doris (Betty) Gaudet, together they raised three boys: Steven, Thomas and Christopher. He was a devoted father who taught the value of hard work and perseverance by example. Bob's outdoor hobbies were hunting, boating, fishing and clamming, all he was passionate about. Over the course of one year, Bob used his carpentry skills over countless weekends to complete his beach house in Charlestown, RI. Starting in the summer of 1979, he would vacation with his family for almost 35 years in Charlestown, providing decades of fun and memories, while visiting his parents who lived nearby.

He is survived by his loving wife, Doris and his sons Thomas and his wife Lisa and Christopher and his wife Lori. He has six amazing grandchildren, Steve "JR", Madeline, Grady, Samuel, Lillian and Ian. Bob is also survived by his sisters Dianne Prosser and Lois Fleury, and his son Steven's companion Lisa Bowen and many nieces, nephews and friends who will miss him dearly. He was predeceased by his beloved son Steven and his sister Marie Gosselin.

A Memorial Mass of Christian Burial to celebrate Bob's life will be held at 11:00AM on Saturday, November 22, 2025, at St. James Church, Danielson, CT. Burial with full military honors will be scheduled at a later date at the Connecticut Veterans Cemetery in Middletown. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, donations in Bob's memory may be made to Hartford Healthcare Hospice, 34 Ledgebrook Drive, Mansfield CT 06250. tillinghastfh.com

LEGALS

Town of Woodstock IWWA

On November 3, 2025, the Town of Woodstock Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency made the following decisions:

- Approved permit #10-25-04 - 45 Center Cemetery Road (MBL 5130/25/01)- Kristen Kaiser - Timber Harvest
- Approved permit #10-25-06 - 1041 Rt 169 (MBL#5130-29-43D-12)- Anne Ambert - NSFH in Upland Review Area
- Approved, permit #10-25-03 - 55 Crooked Trail (MBL 5787/34/111W)- Peter Flaherty - Reconstruction of Retaining Wall
- Approved, permit #10-25-05 - 306 Green Road (MBL 5703/04/16A)- Donna Lamey - 2 Lot Subdivision
- Approved, permit #10-25-08 - 294 Route 198 (MBL 5789/29/13 & 14)- Noreen Stehlik - Timber Harvest

Details of these approvals may be obtained by contacting the Woodstock Land Use Department at landuse@woodstockct.gov

November 21, 2025

TOY DRIVE
continued from page A1

calendar. It has become one of the most important days for everyone because of the impact it has on families.

"It's the spirit of Christmas. It's about giving back. We're trying to make somebody's day on Christmas morning. We've had members and community members who have had tough times, and they know what it's like to have that little extra something on Christmas morning," said Downer. "This is a great day for everybody."

The toys and money collected will be distributed to families in Eastford, Pomfret, Putnam, Thompson, and Woodstock over the next month with the help of the Eastford Public Schools, TEEG, and the Putnam Family Resource Center, all longtime partners of the toy drive.

LAWRENCE
continued from page A1

by public outcries against the Democrats for changing the school's mascot. The Republicans in turn lost control of the board a few years later in part due to their own controversy over rejecting mental health services. Both issues were considered by many to be heavily influenced by party interests. It's important to note that these issues were not part of Lawrence's farewell letter nor has she cited these matters on social media, but they do show a trend of what many may interpret as party-driven issues that have dominated the Board of Education's meetings for over half a decade.

Recently, Democrats increased their majority on the Board of Education with a successful campaign in the Nov. 4 election. Lawrence's seat was not up for reelection. Her departure means an interim member will be assigned to serve the remainder of her term. Interim members are traditionally selected from recommendations brought forth by the party of the departing member.

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

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