



PUTNAM VILLAGER

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Guests to the Quiet Corner Community Baby Shower discuss services with representatives of the Nurturing Families Network.

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

PUTNAM — An old tradition has returned thanks to TEEG, which hosted a Quiet Corner Community Baby Shower at the Hale YMCA Youth and Family Center in Putnam on Oct. 25 giving expecting moms access to local resources to help them through their journey.

Erin Drake, Lead Early

Childhood Programs Coordinator with TEEG, said the program brings back a local tradition that predates 2020. It's the first time in Drake's nearly five years working for TEEG that the community has held such an event which serves as a kind of resource fair for mothers to be and those raising a child under six months. Drake said the day was an invitation to learn who is there for them

through the many challenges they may face when entering motherhood. "I think this gives them an opportunity to see how

many resources we really do have in this community," said Drake. "We have an amazing, supportive group of people that work in this

part of the state, so I think this gives them an opportunity to meet those people and learn more about what's available to them.

Sometimes you don't know what you need until you already need it, so this gives

Turn To SHOWER page A11

## Rectory School celebrates installation of Julie Anderson as sixth Head of School

POMFRET — The Rectory School community gathered in a joyful and historic ceremony to formally install Julie Anderson as the School's sixth Head of School and first female leader in its 105-year history. The event, held on campus and attended by trustees, faculty, staff, students, families, alumni, and community members, marked a milestone moment in Rectory's enduring story of leadership, learning, and belonging.

The ceremony opened with a prayer from the rector of Christ Church, Reverend Sandra Cosman, celebrating "a new chapter in the life of Rectory School" and calling for "wisdom, kindness, and courage" for Anderson as she steps

Turn To ANDERSON page A10

## RECTORY STUDENTS BECOME STEWARDS OF POMFRET'S HISTORY

POMFRET — Students in the Rectory School enrichment electives have been learning about Pomfret history through hands-on experiences and stewardship in one of Pomfret's America 250 initiatives. The electives enrich Rectory student schedules with twice-weekly hands-on learning opportunities. The goal of the America 250 program is to engage local schools in experiencing the American Revolution through a local lens.

The community service elective students have been cleaning the gravestones in the historic Pomfret Street (Grosvenor) Cemetery where Colonel Thomas Grosvenor is buried. Rectory students are familiar with Thomas Grosvenor because the administration building at Rectory School was once his

home. Grosvenor was featured in the John Trumbull painting titled "The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker Hill." He quickly rose through the ranks during the Revolutionary War and returned to Pomfret where he practiced law, became Probate Judge for Windham County, and served on the Governor's Council. Thomas Grosvenor died in Pomfret in 1825 after a lifetime of service and statesmanship.

The Pomfret Street Cemetery is nestled on the hillside on land which once belonged to Jonathan Hall behind Esteem Counseling Center on Putnam Road. The ancient cedar trees have taken a toll on some of the gravestones, toppling fragile slate and marble with their

Turn To AMERICA 250 page A11



Courtesy

Keegan day (kneeling) explains symbols in gravestone carving to Rectory students Will Santos, Cindy Liu, Mrs. Jamie Haines, Trevor Crawford (kneeling), Albert Li, Emmanuel Marks, Wren Gould, and Brandon Schultz.

## Putnam author brings local inspiration to new book

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

PUTNAM — A new book has recently hit store shelves that may seem awfully familiar for readers who embark on its mystery-laden adventure.

The novel "Grabtown" was release earlier this month, penned by Putnam-based author Sarah Blanchard, and takes heavy inspiration from the town in setting up its world which hosts a story crossing two timelines as a pair of sisters who seek out an evil within their small community after discovering a long-lost manuscript left behind by their mother.

What makes "Grabtown" unique is how much inspiration Blanchard brought to it from her real-life travels and experiences. Blanchard grew up in Stanford, attended UConn, and eventually lived 30 years in Pomfret before moving south and, eventually, returning to the Quiet Corner where she

currently lives in Putnam. A lifelong writer, she finally published her first novel in her 70s, with "Grabtown" as her second book. The novel draws heavily from Blanchard's love of the region, borrowing landmarks and elements from the area to create the small-town aesthetic that hosts its dark mystery while changing the names of the town and location so as not to cast a dark shadow over her real-world home.

Set in the fictional town of Winslow, Conn., "Grabtown's" Quiet Corner inspirations are apparent as readers will recognize landmarks like a radio station, a theater, and a waterway through the center of town reminiscent of iconic areas in Putnam. Other features like a large fairground and a state police barracks are also featured, borrowed from other communities surrounding Putnam. There are also elements of Blanchard's other past homes with the name

"Grabtown" specifically borrowed from her time living in North Carolina.

However, it's more than just the small town that gives this story an interesting real-world connection. The basic format of the story is also rooted in real life inspiration. While the mystery and dark elements are completely fictional, the book's use of a "crosscut" approach to storytelling, bringing together two stories from different times, was inspired by Blanchard's own discovery of an old manuscript that she incorporated into the book.

"The core of 'Grabtown' is a story within a story. It's a 1985 story set in contemporary times. A couple of sisters go home, clean out their mother's house after she has died, and they find an old manuscript. I actually wrote that manuscript in 1991 and 1992. I did the same thing. I found it in a box a little while ago and decided I needed to use



Jason Bleau

Local author Sarah Blanchard spoke about her new book, Grabtown, a Pourings and Passages in Killingly on Oct 25.

it, so I incorporated it into this story," said Blanchard. "The trick, of course, is integrating the two timelines without confusing the reader."

Early response to the novel has been impressive, with Blanchard revealing that many stores have sold out of their copies. She also met with local readers at Pourings and Passages in Killingly on Oct. 25, where she shared the creative pro-

cess behind the book.

While it took her until the later years of her life to finally be published, Blanchard said she is proud of her work and wants to encourage other writers, young or old, to embrace their love of writing regardless of whether they plan to write a full book.

"Just write, go ahead and write for yourself, for your friends, for your family. Just go ahead and do

it. There may be a larger audience for it. Dive in, but don't try to write everything by yourself though. Find a writers group or a workshop to be part of where you can get feedback and support," Blanchard said.

"Grabtown" is currently available through most book retailers including Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Copies are, of course, also available locally at Pourings & Passages.

# Andrew McKnight to perform at Vanilla Bean Café

POMFRET — Andrew McKnight, singer-songwriter, guitarist and “storytender,” will perform Saturday, Nov. 1, at 7 p.m. at the Vanilla Bean Cafe, center Pomfret

Powerful and entertaining one-man theatre, delivered

with warmth and down-home comfort. McKnight weaves his finely-crafted songs and nimble flatpicking together with humorous stories and poetic drama, while the musical soundscape traverses influences from Appalachia, spooky slide and jazzy blues, feisty

anthems, and rustic folk. For more, please visit <http://andrewmcknight.net>.

Since permanently leaving his corporate environmental engineering career in 1996, award-winning folk/Americana artist Andrew McKnight’s musical journey has traced nearly a million miles of blue highways, and earned him a wealth of critical acclaim and enthusiastic fans for his captivating performances and ten recordings.

McKnight’s solo performances are powerful and entertaining one-man theatre, delivered with warmth and down-home comfort. He weaves his finely-crafted songs and nimble flatpicking together with humorous stories and poetic drama,

while the musical soundscape traverses influences from Appalachia, spooky slide and jazzy blues, feisty anthems, and rustic folk. His shows are as likely to include humorous songs written with kindergartners as some of his powerful collaborations with combat veterans coping with PTSD.

His latest album and book “Treasures in My Chest” adds a dynamic new element to his show, introducing a cast of spellbinding songs and stories drawn from his own recent journeys into family history. Accompanied by three guitars, a dobro, and a Native American flute (some with their own remarkable stories), the stage comes alive with intimate detail and vibrant lyricism. From placing you in the footsteps of his doomed Civil War ancestor Aretas Culver, to finding sparks of hope in the long winter nights on the shores of mid-1800s County Down, his vision, voice and pen have created



©Pete Vidal

a mesmerizing sweet spot deeply familiar to anyone who’s wondered, “who am I and where did I come from?”

McKnight has performed at many prestigious venues like the Kennedy Center, the International Storytelling Center and the Atlanta Olympics, has been part of the Rocky

Mountain, South Florida, Boston and Delmarva Folk Festival lineups, and a guest on NPR’s “Art of the Song” and “River City Folk” shows. He is a gifted workshop leader, an engaging speaker, and a longtime endorsing artist for Fairbuilt Guitars.

## Pomfret America 250 Commission programs and initiatives off to a good start

BY DONNA DUFRESNE  
POMFRET AMERICA 250 COMMISSION

POMFRET — The Pomfret America 250 Commission has been meeting for several months to plan programs and initiatives for the America 250 Celebrations in 2025 and 2026. Several civic engagement and historical programs have already taken place in collaboration with Pomfret Historical Society (PHS).

In January, PHS received an America 250 grant from The Last Green Valley for The Long Road to Freedom And Justice for All Speaker Series 2025. The series was guided by the essential question: How did the Declaration of Independence inspire people of African and Native American descent to fight for freedom and equality? The series included a presentation by Dr. Jennifer Rycenga, author of the book *Schooling the Nation: The Success of the Canterbury School for Black Women*, which examined the legacy of Prudence Crandall’s Black students as life-long abolitionists and civil rights activists. In April, the series continued with a presentation at Pomfret’s Old Town House by genealogist Pauline Merrick who traced the ten Black Revolutionary Soldiers who were registered from

Pomfret. The finale of the series was a performance by State Library Archivist, Kevin Johnson, as Jordan Freeman, an enslaved servant of Colonel Ledyard of Old Lyme who was killed in the battle at Fort Griswold.

The collaboration with The Last Green Valley America 250 programming has continued with four Walktober events featuring topics of the War of Independence including the performance of Jordan Freeman; the tour of the ruins at the 1778 Higginbotham property which focused on the archaeological evidence of involvement in textiles and the non-importation movement; the walk to the grave of Stephen Averill who fought at Bunker Hill in 1775; and the Revolutionary Abington tour of the Abington Congregational Church with a presentation about the 11th Regiment and Revolutionary period followed by a walk on the Old King’s Highway.

Besides the collaborative programs with PHS, the commission has created a logo designed by Nora Robbins. The logo will be used on stationary, communications, advertising, and the newly developed website attached to the Pomfret Town Web site, <https://www.pomfretct.gov/america-250-celebration-committee>. The logo will also be used on merchandise such as T-shirts, hats, flags, and other items which will be sold

to help fund the many events and initiatives celebrating America 250 in 2026.

One of the America 250 goals is to engage our local schools, students, and faculty in learning about the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War through a local lens. Students from the Rectory School Community Service group have been helping to clean the gravestones at the Pomfret Street Cemetery where Col. Thomas Grosvenor is buried. Another group visited the South Cemetery and Old Abington Burial Ground to learn about the people buried there and some of the gravestone carvers. Laura Tedeschi is sharing her art based on colonial carvers and working with students to create their own versions of some of Pomfret’s famous gravestone art.

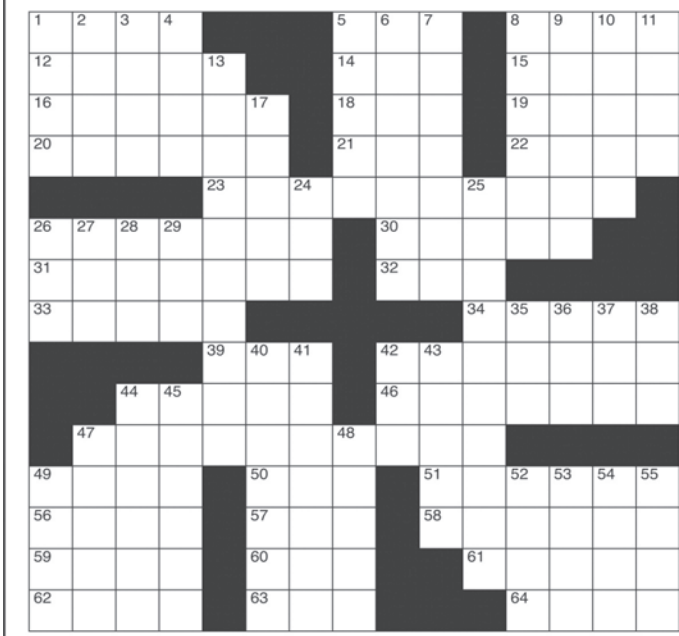
America 250 themed concerts, plays, exhibits at the Old Town House, and educational programs will culminate with a Revolutionary War Reenactment titled Revolutionary Abington which will take place at the town recreation fields in October 2026.

The Pomfret America 250 Commission is a non-partisan group and welcomes anyone interested in helping to facilitate events, programs, and initiatives that engender a sense of community and pride in Pomfret’s past. Stay tuned for an exciting year as we revisit Pomfret’s legacy in the fight for freedom and equality. Visit the Web site for meeting dates and events at <https://www.pomfretct.gov/america-250-celebration-committee>.

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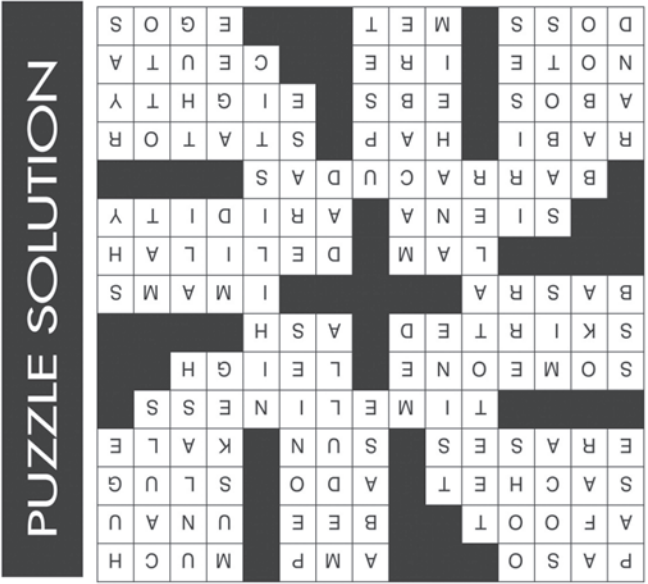


#### CLUES ACROSS

1. El \_\_, Texas town  
5. Rocker’s tool  
8. A lot  
12. Traveling by ground  
14. Spelling competition  
15. Two-toed sloth  
16. Small perfumed bag  
18. “Much \_\_ about nothing”  
19. Tough-skinned mollusk  
20. Removes from record  
21. It warms the planet  
22. Leafy green  
23. Quality of arriving favorably  
26. Living thing  
30. “Six of Crows” author Bardugo  
31. Got around a rule  
32. Resin from burned substance  
33. Iraq seaport  
34. Religious leaders
39. Fugitives are on it  
42. Samson’s influencer  
44. Italian city  
46. A quality of lacking interest  
47. Predatory tropical fishes  
49. Nobel physician Isodor  
50. Luck  
51. Stationary part of a motor or generator  
56. Orthopedic professional group (abbr.)  
57. One point south of due east  
58. It follows 79  
59. Paper currency  
60. Anger  
61. Spanish seaport  
62. Sleep in a rough place  
63. Famous museum  
64. Selfs

#### CLUES DOWN

1. Bullfighting maneuver  
2. From a distance  
3. Soul and calypso song  
4. Expressions of delight  
5. Lower in esteem  
6. Inner region of an organ  
7. Flowers  
8. A bog  
9. Remove a fastening  
10. Membranes  
11. Enormous  
13. One who abstains from drink  
17. Malayan wild ox  
24. Type of student  
25. Rejecting all moral principles  
26. Sino-Soviet block  
27. Egyptian unit of weight  
28. Wrong  
29. Make a mistake
35. Indicates location  
36. Boxing’s “GOAT”  
37. Where wrestlers compete  
38. Timid  
40. Disney town  
41. Suggesting the horror of death and decay  
42. Male parent  
43. Remove for good  
44. Simple shoes  
45. Flowers  
47. Hindi courtesy title for a man  
48. Not pleased  
49. “Atlas Shrugged” author  
52. CIA officer and writer  
53. Hoodlum  
54. \_\_ Von Bismarck, Iron Chancellor  
55. Woolen rugs



## VILLAGER ALMANAC

### At CT AUDUBON

Bird sightings at the Connecticut Audubon Society Center at Pomfret and Wyndham Land Trust properties for the week of Oct. 20: Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Robin, Mockingbird, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Blue-headed Vireo, Carolina Wren, Black-throated Green Warbler, Purple Finch, Junco, Eastern Towhee

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# Classical guitar concert to benefit Pomfret Historical Society

POMFRET — On Nov. 8 at 7 p.m., the Vanilla Bean Café will host a classical guitar concert with the international renowned guitar duo Mark & Beverly Davis of Hampton. The concert is sponsored by Pomfret Proprietors to help Pomfret Historical Society (PHS) raise money for renovations and repairs in their historic building, The Old Town House.

Mark and Beverly Davis have performed together as a duo since 2001 at many international festivals of mandolin and guitar including Eurofestival Zupfmusik (Germany), Mandolines de Lunel (France), Ciudad de Cristal (Spain), FAME (Australia) and the 46th Festival Internacional de Plectro La Rioja (Spain).

The Nov. 8 concert, Music from the Parlor, will feature chamber music for two classical guitars written and arranged for intimate settings, befitting the cozy listening room at the Vanilla Bean Café. The program will include some of J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations, the Suita Antigua by Guido Santorsola, a set of Greek Dances by James Lellaris, and some of the beautiful neo-British Isles folk-inspired pieces for two guitars from the Chords & Thyme collection by the late Ed Flower.

The historical society stewards the Old Town House, which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. The building was erected in 1841 for the purpose of town meetings and civic engagement. Closed since 2021 due to the Pandemic, the Old Town House was re-opened in April of 2025 to accommodate a rigorous schedule of historical presentations and performances for the PHS spring and fall season. When Pomfret Public Library needed a temporary home during the construction of their addition, PHS agreed to let the Library use the Old Town House. From April to November, library patrons have had a chance to visit and enjoy the grand Old Town House which features a vaulted ceiling and 15 large windows in the meeting room. Hundreds of visitors have attended PHS programs in building in 2025 featuring America 250 themes, including an educational exhibit about Pomfret During the Revolutionary War. Tickets are \$25 collected at the door. The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Rd., is known as a venue for singer songwriters, National performers, and local ensembles. A full dinner menu, beer, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages as well as desserts will be available during the concert. Guests are encouraged to reserve a table early for dinner. Concert begins at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Donna Dufresne windsong@snet.net or 860-465-7228.

## “The Flood of 1955” book signing scheduled

PUTNAM — John Miller, President of the Putnam Aspinock Historical Society, is pleased to announce a book signing and conversation of “The Flood of 1955” with the author, Putnam native Ronald P. Coderre. The event is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 6 at 10:30 a.m. at the Historical Society office located in the Municipal Complex at 200 School St. in Putnam.

“Our Historical Society is proud to host this book signing with Putnam native Ron Coderre. Ron penned the booklet of his personal memories and experiences of the flood, which occurred on Aug. 19, 1955 because he felt it was important to share in print. The booklet was professionally printed in Putnam at Chase Graphics. It is filled with photos and stories relating to that fateful day,” said Miller.

Coderre, a United States Air Force veteran and graduate of Assumption University in Worcester, Massachusetts, wrote the manuscript as a way of documenting the historic event for future generations.

“This year was the 70th anniversary of the event. I felt it was important to document my memories and experiences in writing and print to maintain a record beyond oral history, which often can be distorted or embellished as the information is passed on from generation to generation,” said Coderre.

He noted that all proceeds from the sale of the booklet will go to benefit the programs of the Putnam Aspinock Historical Society. He also stressed a strong belief in historical preservation of major events, especially on the local level.

The book signing is open to the public at no cost. To register, contact the Historical Society at 860-963-6800, ext. 301 or historicalsocietyaspinock@gmail.com. Refreshments will be provided.

## Interact Club combats food insecurity



Interact Club members recently set up a booth to raise awareness about food insecurity. From left: Paige Perry, Calleigh Levesque Alyssa Daniels and Rotaract President Matthew Gardiner in the back.

PUTNAM — This year, the Putnam Rotary Club's Interact is focusing on food insecurity so it was no surprise that Interact Club had a booth set up in Rotary Park recently.

The goal was to raise awareness and donations for Day Kimball Hospital Hematology Oncology Caitlyn's Cupboard. This is a food pantry serving financially insecure cancer patients. The club had brochures on hand explaining what Cailyn's Cupboard is and a food item wish list.

The Interact Club received \$66 in donations and boxes of food items from the Quinebaug Valley Regional Rotaract Club.

Rotarian Roberta Rocchetti, an Interact Club advisor, thanked Interact members Gabriell Cerasiello, Paige Perry, Jack Daley, Calleigh Levesque, Alyssa Daniels and Rotaract members Matthew Gardiner and Larda Yottivong for taking part.

For more information about DKH Caitlyn's Cupboard, contact csward@daykimball.org or call (860) 928-6451, ext. 2038.

## Warm feet are happy feet!

PUTNAM — As the holiday season approaches, many of us enjoy the act of giving to the many important causes- food drives, coat drives, toy drives, Salvation Army and valuable community collections. I ask that you consider a very important need that is not covered in the typical collections this year. Please find it in your heart to donate winter boots this season!

There will be a Winter Boot Drive on Saturday, Nov. 1 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Putnam Municipal Complex. This drive through event will accept new winter boots, gently used winter boots, new warm socks and monetary donations. All items will be given to TEEG to be distributed back to those who need help keeping feet warm this winter.

This will be the sixth year of the Boot Drive which was previously a Woodstock event. Over the years, thousands of dollars and hundreds of pairs of boots have been collected and distributed back into our community through TEEG. Because this is a very important need, the 2025 Boot Drive is expanded to the larger community.

Please consider purchasing a pair of boots and some socks when you are shopping this week...there is someone in our community who will appreciate that you did! If your kiddos have outgrown last year's boots, donate them! So often, kids boots get little to no use before being too small. Share this event with your friends, family and neighbors.

If you are unable to make the Boot Drive but want to contribute, please contact the Senexet Grange at grange40ct@gmail.com to make arrangements for collection. We hope to see you at the 2025 Community Boot Drive!

## Veteran Park ceremony, brick dedication Nov. 9

PUTNAM — On behalf of the Putnam Veterans Advisory Committee the Recreation Department announces this year's Veterans Day Ceremony and dedication of the new bricks installed this year will be held Sunday, Nov. 9, starting at 1 p.m.

Please share this information with all your family, friends, neighbors and colleagues to make it another memory-filled day in honor of our veterans – past and present.

Reflect on the improvements that have occurred in the park over the last few years, and on the incredible amount of service that is connected to our region. This is a true area-wide celebration.

Bricks representing more than 3,000 veterans are now in the park with orders being taken now with a Feb. 1, 2026 deadline to be installed sometime next year.

## Sobriety

POSITIVELY SPEAKING

**TOBY MOORE**

We all go through hard times. It begins quietly—a few rough days that turn into a few wrong turns. Then come the years of drifting, when comfort becomes craving and craving becomes chains. Maybe addiction shadowed those years, taking your peace, your people, your time—until you wondered if you'd ever climb out.

Whatever the case, you only have two options: Let the past define you, or let the past refine you.

The truth is, the hardest seasons often build the strongest souls — if we let them.

I was always a Robert Downey, Jr. fan, and not just because of his incredible talent as an actor, but because he's one of those people who chose to let his past refine him rather than define him.

He was one of Hollywood's brightest young stars—until years of chaos chipped away at his reputation, his finances, and his hope.

For a time, Downey's life read like a cautionary tale. In 1996, he was arrested for drug possession; he missed required court-ordered drug tests, his house in Malibu was lost, and his career stalled. Studios labeled him unreliable. For many years, he struggled to find meaningful

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Do you LIVE, WORK, PLAY OR OWN LAND IN Pomfret?

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Pomfret is seeking public input as part of the Plan of Conservation & Development Update

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Pomfret\\_POCD](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Pomfret_POCD)

Survey Deadline: November 20, 2025

\*Paper surveys available at town libraries, Town Hall & Seeley-Brown\*.

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Joe Bellavance - Sherri Vogt - Row A Team

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Joe Bellavance 1st Selectman

- Goal oriented, business and education leader
- Economic Development Commission Chairman
- Vice President, Brooklyn Business Association

Sherri Vogt 2nd Selectman

- Statewide Veteran's Health Liaison
- Former Congressional Constituent Aide
- Served on Brooklyn Agriculture Commission

Row A Team:

Melissa Perkins-Banas - Board of Education

Bob Smanik - Board of Finance

Richard Ives - Board of Finance

Susan Wasstrom - Board Assessment Appeals

Kate Bisson - Town Clerk

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EDITOR

# Halloween in the Quiet Corner — light, laughter, and a little local magic

Across Thompson, Putnam, Woodstock, Killingly, and every back road that winds between them, October brings out a side of New England that feels older than the map itself. Pumpkins perch on stone walls, porch lights glow like fireflies, and the scent of wood smoke mixes with the promise of mischief. Halloween in Northeast Connecticut isn't some over-commercialized city affair; it's a handmade holiday, stitched together from cider doughnuts, hayrides, and front-yard ghosts swaying on twine.

Our villages take the season seriously, but never solemnly. Kids parade down Main Streets in cardboard armor and witch hats, while parents trade cider and camera flashes at trunk-or-treats hosted by local churches and fire departments. Even the smallest towns, from Eastford to Quinebaug, find ways to turn community into celebration—costume contests at the library, pumpkin strolls behind town halls, ghost tours run by historical societies that seem half convinced their buildings are haunted.

Behind the fun lies something deeper: a reminder that community still matters. When volunteers decorate for the annual Spooky Walk, or when a neighbor helps a nervous first-time trick-or-treater cross a dark driveway, it's not just tradition—it's trust. It's proof that even in uncertain times, a little shared imagination can knit a town together tighter than any ordinance or budget.

This Halloween, the Quiet Corner shines brightest in the small moments: a porch light that stays on late, a bowl of candy left out for the kids, a police cruiser idling nearby to keep everyone safe. Those gestures—tiny, human, unheralded—are the kind of local magic no costume can match.

So as the jack-o'-lanterns grin along Route 169 and the wind rattles through the woods, let's give the holiday its due. Dress up, hand out candy, share a scare. But above all, celebrate the rarest thing of all these days—neighbors meeting each other face-to-face, even if they're both wearing masks.

## 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

### Re-elect Lenky to Thompson's Planning & Zoning Commission

To the Editor:

I know John Lenky. John is a friend of mine. He serves on Thompson's Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC). I know something about a PZC. I served 15 years as Chairman of Woodstock's PZC. John Lenky has my support and my endorsement for re-election to Thompson's Planning & Zoning Commission.

Now, more than ever, we need someone who understands the big picture and the fine details of land use. I speak from years of hands-on experience that managing municipal decisions about land use isn't easy. There are various competing interests, especially between community concerns and individual landowner rights. I deal with it on a state level as a State Senator who serves in a leadership role on the legislature's Planning & Development Committee.

You need someone who asks the important questions, whether big or small, and gets the needed answers. You need someone who knows how to put it all together to make the common-sense decisions for the Town of Thompson. You need someone who has a track record of doing these things. John Lenky has that experience during his 12 years serving you in Thompson.

Serving on a PZC requires listening to people, understanding various perspectives, looking at individual land use applications while being mindful of the bigger picture of the town and of

the future. It requires writing and changing zoning regulations that are fair to everyone, and that focus on the important municipal responsibilities of upholding public safety, public health, public welfare, economic development, individual rights, and environmental concern.

Serving on a PZC also requires administering zoning regulations in a consistent and fair manner when making land use decisions without bias, and when running meetings and public hearings in orderly and fair ways.

John has shown through his work track record that he gets all these things. John has also shown that he uses wisely his more than 50 years working on construction projects to guide Thompson having good zoning regulations and making good land use decision.

I ask that you support John Lenky's work and vote to re-elect him to Thompson's Planning & Zoning Commission.

Every election is important. Be informed about the candidates. I am fond of saying that it is not just what we do that matters, but also how we do it. It is about working for and working with people, getting things done, and continuing to move Thompson forward.

Vote for the Republican candidates on Row B.  
SEN. JEFF GORDON  
WOODSTOCK

### I look forward to continuing to serve Woodstock

To the Editor:

Hello my name is Chris Mayhew, and I am running for Selectman as a Republican in the beautiful town of Woodstock.

After being raised in the great town of Eastford and spending four years at Woodstock Academy, I headed off to Springfield College to obtain a degree in Physical Education. After achieving this accomplishment, as well as obtaining my Masters's degree, my teaching career began back in my hometown of Eastford. Following a short tenure, I was able to secure a position in the Woodstock Public school system, where I enjoyed the next 30-plus years teaching, coaching and working as the Athletic Director.

During this time, my wife Karen and I along with our three children settled down in what we consider our dream home right here in Woodstock. In my free time, I extended myself as a volunteer within the community. I was raised as a Freemason in our local Masonic Lodge in 2005 and climbed through the ranks to Worshipful Master twice in the last twenty years. Along my volunteer journey, I also became a member of the Crystal Pond Park Commission, Board of Directors for the Woodstock Fair and a proud member of Woodstock Volunteer Fire Association. The one regret I have is that I wish I would have joined a fire department at a much younger age. As you can see I live a busy life. A life that is filled with positive experiences and yes occasionally an obstacle along the way. With

the sad passing of Jay Swan, I was approached to fill the vacant Selectman seat here in town. With the advice from my dad, who is a former First Selectman, I accepted this position. I have been through one complete budget season and continue to be so impressed with the positive nature that town meetings and other local meetings present.

We have an enormous amount of volunteers in the town of Woodstock who dedicate many hours to make the town of Woodstock a great place to live. We also have openings on commissions, so if you are looking for something to do to benefit Woodstock, step up to the plate and become a volunteer. It is indeed a very rewarding experience. I have also taken on the responsibility of being a Shriner.

In closing, yes, I live a busy life; however, this would not be possible without the support of my wife and family. I enjoy riding around town and speaking to the "Locals" at various locations, whether it be the transfer station or the local orchard. I do find time to relax and spend time with the people I cherish the most. I look forward to continuing serving this community and working with Chan and Kate, and wish everyone the best of luck during this year's local election. Early voting has begun, with the final day of voting taking place on Nov. 4, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Woodstock Middle School.

CHRIS MAYHEW  
WOODSTOCK

### Barney Seney will keep Putnam moving forward

To the Editor:

I am supporting Barney Seney. Look how far Putnam has come in the last few elections. We have the new complex on School Street. We have all new sidewalks. When done, we will be going to Walmart. We have a beautiful veterans' memorial with personal bricks. Rotary Park has so many activities on weekends. Thanks to Barney and PBA, we have more parking. On Kennedy Drive area to light, problems are being taken care of. Our seniors have two buses to go on lunch trips at a reasonable price with Jimmy Callaghan with

Parks & Recreation. We have wonderful roads with Travis Sirrine. No potholes to put up with.

We see Barney at all our activities, meeting people and very friendly. Also, our Lighting Parade with Gary O. So many people attend.

We can still go further in our next election in November with Barney as Mayor. Barney has served for our country in foreign wars, and is a lifetime member of the VFW and the American Legion.

ANN M. RUSSO  
PUTNAM

### Trump has shown us his true colors

To the Editor:

Some of the younger generations have never experienced the political scene before the Trump influence. They have been led to believe that all politicians lie, and anyone in the federal world is corrupt. This is not true, and I, for one, am tired of hearing this lame excuse for the bad behavior of the current administration. Before his time, our democracy worked. It wasn't perfect and no one can say there was no corruption or animosity between parties, but the two-party system worked and the three-tiered governance kept things in balance as it was meant to do. Even though Republicans and Democrats had obvious differences, they generally showed respect for each other and managed to compromise on disagreements. Both sides of the political fence still honored the constitution and their oaths of office.

We're now in the grips of a regime that has respect for nothing. The wannabe dictator who has taken over this country doesn't know the difference between the truth and a lie and frankly, doesn't care. His penchant for revenge has no limits. Anyone who disagrees is a target. This behavior is not normal for a president or any other decent person. Unfortunately, his cabinet and the

republican law makers have followed his lead. At this point, they are so power hungry that they are willing to do anything including desecrating the constitution in order to stay in power and keep the American people under their thumb. In all of my seventy-plus years I have never seen such blatant lying and outright slander towards anyone Trump chooses to dislike. I have never seen our democracy so at risk by the very people who should be defending it. I am disheartened to see that there are still people in this country who think this is "normal" and that Trump is doing a good job. Even people in other countries are shaking their heads and wondering what the heck are those Americans thinking? And yet MAGA will stick with him while he systematically destroys this country, all the while calling liberals and Democrats "the enemies within!"

After the No Kings rallies last weekend, Trump showed his true colors once again. He posted a parody of himself [defecating] on the American people on his social media. This is basically what he thinks of all of us. Very presidential, Donald, but not surprising, given your lack of character.

JEAN McNALLY  
WOODSTOCK

## Memories and light



NANCY WEISS

Old friends came to visit last week to attend the service and reception to celebrate the lives of the late Murray and Carole Buttner. The Buttners were neighbors and friends of ours' for many years, who moved to live in Essex as they grew older. They were accomplished people in countless ways and their children and grandchildren must have been delighted by the outpouring of memories and affection expressed by those present. We reflected, yet again, with our friends that while change is the only constant, there is a deep longing in us to hold on to the memories of friendships, happy times and obligations that matter.

This is the perfect time to move toward some melancholy thoughts. Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, Nov. 2, and we move back to Standard Time, which makes sunrise and sunset each an hour earlier than it was the day before. Every year there are promises to stop changing the time, but nothing happens. We slip into early morning darkness extra eager for hot coffee and look for a cup of tea or a glass of wine when evening arrives far sooner than in summer.

For more than three decades, we lived on a hill in an antique farm that overlooked a working dairy farm in the fields below. In winter when I paced the floors with our fussy daughters when they were babies, I would look out the drafty windows at the lights in our neighbor's barn. In the morning darkness, the men would be milking the cows and tossing them feed. I could only imagine the steamy breath of the cows and the heavy step of the farmers bundled against the cold. It felt isolated and lonely but also as if two pin pricks of light, one from their farm and one from ours' held down the fabric of our mutual world.

Their farm is gone, replaced by the CT Audubon Center, where the reception was held for our friends. We moved a few miles away, but still have the grounding presence of two neighboring farms to measure the passage of the seasons that requires no human time.

Walking on the Air Line Trail another friend and I were caught beneath a loud and complicated display of black birds. They were migrating with as many complaints as a pair of toddlers in the backseat of a minivan. They know it is time to go, but they aren't leaving without comment. Our avian friends were not the pretty tree and barn swallows dancing above the CT. River this time of year, but the thump of their bodies as they landed in the trees and the whoosh of their wings in take-off made their sturdy existence tangible. What a gift it is to us, mere humans, to have so many area trails where we can stand beneath a canopy of wings.

My husband and I attended a celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of Temple Beth Israel in Danielson. The synagogue was built by Holocaust survivors who came to the area to farm, local Jewish families who welcomed them, and area residents who provided assistance and funds, including proceeds from the sale of their heifers. The Preservation Society, with a grant from the Daughters of the American Revolution, among others, has saved the building, which is open for holiday services and cultural events. I wonder if such a collaboration would happen today. I hope it would.

In the early darkness, it feels appropriate to retreat into memories but there is also time to celebrate the remarkable pleasure of life here, now.

# Woodstock officials working together on WES oil tank issue

To the Editor:

During a recent inspection by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), it was determined that the underground oil tank at Woodstock Elementary School has exceeded its expected 30-year lifespan. Following DEEP’s inspection, the tank was red-tagged, meaning that no new oil may be delivered to it.

Upon receiving notice, district and town representatives were required to participate in a DEEP adjudication hearing within 24 hours to determine the next step: either to appeal through an evidentiary hearing or to develop a Compliance Action Plan. Given the lack of existing historical records, the Compliance Action Plan was the only option. This plan required the immediate creation of a timeline for the removal and replacement of the oil tank, as well as the completion of pressure and tightness testing within 72 business hours of the hearing held on Wednesday, Oct. 15

Prior to testing, representatives from the Board of Education, the Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Finance, including First Selectman Chandler Paquette and Chairman Michael Dougherty, met to review the DEEP findings, outline next steps, and confirm procedural responsibilities. As the Town of Woodstock owns the school building, all costs associated with the removal and replacement of the tank will be a Town expenditure. The DEEP documentation also clarified that the existing oil could continue to be used until Nov. 19, pending the results of the required testing.

On Saturday, Oct. 18, the underground tank successfully passed all DEEP-required tightness and pressure tests. As a result, the existing oil may be safely used until Nov. 19. Should the district require use beyond that date, provided sufficient fuel remains in the tank, an additional round of pressure and tightness testing must be completed and reported to DEEP by Nov. 12. It is import-

ant to note that the existing tank cannot be refilled. Temporary above-ground tanks are readily available and can be installed on short notice, ensuring uninterrupted heating services during the transition.

Additional requirements within the DEEP Compliance Plan specify that evidence of a signed contract for the permanent closure of the current tank must be submitted by Jan. 12, 2026, and documentation confirming full closure and replacement must be provided by April 20, 2026.

Throughout this process, all three boards have worked collaboratively and professionally, maintaining open communication and a shared commitment to the safety, transparency, and the well-being of our community.

While we cannot retroactively access or recreate historical records that do not exist, we can, and will, ensure a more transparent and accountable future. Together, the boards are developing a shared compliance and tracking system to monitor all facility-related testing, maintenance, and regulatory requirements. This system will serve as a “checks and balances” tool to prevent lapses in oversight and ensure that Woodstock remains in full compliance moving forward.

With urgency, diligence, and a unified commitment to responsible governance, the three boards will continue to collaborate closely to meet all DEEP deadlines and make well-informed decisions that protect the interests of our students, staff, and community. We will continue to communicate updates and progress throughout this process.

Respectfully,

SONIA GREENE  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
CHANDLER PAQUETTE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MICHAEL DOUGHERTY  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
CHRISTOPHER ROCHE  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
WOODSTOCK

# There are just two contested races in Eastford – in support of Meghan Martinez

To the Editor:

With the exception of two races, Eastford voters already know which candidates will win the November election. One of these contested races is for the Eastford Public Library Board of Trustees. Meghan Martinez is an excellent candidate for this role. I am pleased to support Meghan, and I am confident she has the skills and dedication to be an effective Library Trustee. Meghan is a team player who will work alongside the other Trustees to sustain and build upon the quality services and programs offered by the Eastford Public Library.

I served as a Library Trustee in Eastford for 19 years, and I share Meghan’s love of books and appreciation of the role libraries play in promoting literacy and education. Meghan’s mother was a college librarian, and her grandmother was a teacher, so the importance of reading was instilled in her at an early age. I know that Meghan recognizes Eastford’s Library as the heart of our small community, a gathering place for

children and adults, a place where neighbors can meet and where ideas and knowledge can flourish.

Meghan’s background as a mental health clinician and current role as a cybersecurity professional give her a unique skill set to contribute to the Board of Trustees. Her focus on open communication and mutual respect will foster collaboration. Her managerial experience working with government officials and a variety of stakeholders will contribute to a positive working relationships within the Board, with staff, and with town officials.

I am honored to vote for Meghan Martinez for Library Trustee and I encourage my fellow citizens to vote for her as well.

Curious about the other contested race in Eastford? It’s for the First Selectman. And the obvious best choice for that role is incumbent First Selectwoman Deb Richards.

TERRY COTE  
EASTFORD

# Tammy Wakefield has my support

To the Editor:

I am a registered Democrat, and I am voting for Tammy Wakefield. I have served on the town council with Tammy, and she made her decisions not by party ideology, but what is best for the citizens of the Town of Killingly. She made the tough decision

to leave the Republican party and register as Unaffiliated. She is running as a write-in candidate.

On the ballot, go to 6 C and write Tammy Wakefield in the box below.

LYNN LABERGE  
KILLINGLY

# The perfect metaphor

To the Editor:

Well, Donnie Tyrant has finally done something perfectly. By demolishing the East Wing in just one week without authority or following the law, he has created the perfect metaphor for the destruction

he and his supporters are rapidly doing to the entire government and to all we were taught while growing up about honesty, duty and humanity.

STEPHEN ETZEL  
PUTNAM

# We withdraw our support for Kostaras

To the Editor:

The candidates and members of the Killingly Democratic Town Committee listed below have decided to withdraw their support of one of their candidates, Petros Kostaras. This decision follows the discovery of past statements attributed to this individual that do not align with the values, mission, or goals of the Killingly Democratic Town Committee.

We sincerely apologize for any offense these statements may have caused. While we fully support freedom of speech and respect every individual’s right to their opinions, we must also ensure that those associated with our committee and candidates reflect the principles of respect, inclusion, and integrity that our community deserves.

We remain committed to fostering a local government that upholds these values and works for the betterment of all Killingly residents. Thank you.

|                                                            |                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| ROBIN LOFQUIST<br>TREASURER, KDTC<br>CANDIDATE             | SUSAN LANNON<br>CHAIR, KILLINGLY BOARD OF EDUCATION             |
| MISTY MURDOCK<br>KILLINGLY BOARD OF EDUCATION<br>CANDIDATE | NELSON “BUZZ” KING<br>KILLINGLY BOARD OF EDUCATION<br>CANDIDATE |
| LORI ZORNADO<br>ACTING SECRETARY, KDTC                     | LACEY LUNEAU<br>MEMBER, KDTC                                    |
| HOWEEN FLEXER<br>DEPUTY CHAIR, KDTC                        | MIKE HEWKO<br>MEMBER, KDTC                                      |
| TONY GIAMBATTISTA<br>KILLINGLY TOWN COUNCIL                | MEREDITH GIAMBATTISTA<br>BOARD OF EDUCATION                     |
| LINDSEY DUQUETTE-BROWN<br>MEMBER, KDTC                     |                                                                 |

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Susan Lannon, the voice our children need

To the Editor:

As much as I would like to set the record straight on supposed “facts” presented in other letters to the Editor, there is no point. Many vote down a party line, or for who their friends tell them is the best. Some may even vote based on smear campaigns. I am asking everyone instead to vote for the person who visits the schools, talks to the children, talks to the parents, and cares about our community.

Sue is loved by many because she is inherently a good, caring person. Sue has always voted for what she feels is best

to help our children get the best possible education. There are certain BOE members who only vote with their party. Party doesn’t matter to Sue. She is an avid supporter of all things Killingly.

Even when odds were stacked against her, she fought for our children. That is always the kind of

person I want in my corner and on the BOE. So come election day, please vote Susan Lannon, I know I will.

HEIDI DRISCOLL  
DANIELSON

## Mayor Seney stands up and shows up for Putnam

To the Editor:

I am a longtime resident and supporter of Putnam, a place I care deeply about and am proud to call my hometown. I’ve been a proud citizen, community advocate, and unaffiliated voter my entire life, opting to choose the right people over party.

I have supported Barney Seney since his first run for Mayor, and he has proven time and time again that he has been the right choice. He stands up for what is right, stands by the many difficult decisions to be made as a town leader, and shows up for his constituents – whether it’s at his town hall office, at ribbon cuttings for new businesses, bulky waste days, snow days, early morning emergencies, and late-night meetings. You’ll also spot him in town parades, at ceremonies for veterans, Riverfires, concerts, children’s events, and on the dance floor at our senior dances.

Thanks to Barney and his hard-working team of candidates and community supporters, Putnam has a vibrant business community; a warm, welcoming atmosphere that has made it a premier destination for residents and tourists alike; and beautiful

accents and elements that show its support of public art, performance, and culture. We’re constantly improving roads, sidewalks, buildings, bridges, education, and infrastructure. We are inclusive, supporting all sectors of our population from children to seniors.

Putnam’s events and activities have put us on the map, making us a model of a thriving, progressive community. This progress doesn’t happen by accident. It takes proven leaders like Barney, who assemble teams of supporters who know how to get the work done and do it together. The Unity Slate is a team of Democrats, Unaffiliated, and former Republican candidates working together for a bright future. The slate includes Gloria Marion, Scott Pempek, Mike Bogdanski, and an entire ticket of candidates who are smart, rational, dedicated, hard-working public servants who love Putnam like I do.

My vote and your vote for Barney Seney and his team keep us on the path of progress and continued success for Putnam.

Sincerely,

LINDA COLANGELO  
PUTNAM

## Here are the facts, you decide...

To the Editor:

While our current Mayor has made positive contributions to Putnam, there are serious concerns about his leadership that deserve attention:

It’s not the Mayor’s town – it’s “our” town, the residents of Putnam.

You’re an elected official — voted for by the people to represent our town and its vision for the future. We hired you through our vote!

You have a support system of other elected officials called “your team.”

Team meaning “working together.” Not withholding vital information from them.

It is your job to go through “the chain of command” by being transparent.

Going Rogue to fulfill your own agenda is Never Acceptable nor is the manner in

which you have treated some of the other elected officials. They were voted in as you were. They didn’t sign up to be bullied because you don’t agree or like what you hear.

Last but, not least – it should be a given that when you hold the title of Mayor, that you would act professional. You are representing the people of Putnam.

I urge people to vote for David Coderre on Nov. 4 - A positive and professional change with a vision.

Respectfully Submitted,

DONNA M. CODERRE  
PUTNAM

## Killingly deserves honesty and transparency

To the Editor:

I felt compelled to respond to Misty Murdock’s recent hit piece in the Villager. In her article, she suggests that if we don’t elect her and her party, Killingly will fall into chaos. I find that statement ironic, considering her own track record.

Ms. Murdock failed to mention that when faced with a clear conflict of interest, she refused to recuse herself from a vote. Is that not chaos? She also neglected to share that her party made a motion to add an item to the agenda, and despite lacking the required two-thirds majority, the chair allowed it to pass anyway. Is that not chaos?

Furthermore, Ms. Murdock voted to fire the board’s attorney and replace them with another—at an additional \$100 per hour—

paid by taxpayers. Then she voted again to hire yet another attorney, this time at \$550 an hour, once more at the taxpayers’ expense. Is that not chaos?

And when parents, children, and staff voted democratically for a new mascot name, her party decided to disregard the winning choice and select the runner-up instead. Rules, policies, and procedures were broken.

Now, that sounds like real chaos.

Don’t be misled by Ms. Murdock’s rhetoric. Killingly deserves honesty, transparency, and leaders who respect the voice of the people — not those who rewrite the rules when it suits them.

NORM FERRON  
KILLINGLY

## Additional Letters To The Editor, see A8-9

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# The Week in Sports at Woodstock Academy

**Boys Soccer**

Fitch 3  
Woodstock Academy 1

The season came to a close for the Centaurs (3-9-4, 2-4-2 Eastern Connecticut Conference Division I) on the road.

The Falcons (7-5-4, 4-3-1) jumped out to the early lead with two goals in the first five minutes.

Woodstock Academy regained its composure but allowed a third goal with one minute to play in the first half.

The Centaurs did counter as Matt Johndrow scored

his team-best seventh goal of the season off an assist from Brayden De Oliveira with only three minutes gone in the second half.

**Girls Volleyball**

Eastern Connecticut Conference Tournament Quarterfinal

(3) Woodstock Academy 3

(6) Waterford 1

Kaylee Bundy had 22 kills to lead the Centaurs (14-10) into the Eastern Connecticut Conference tournament semifinals.

Lily Morgis had 34

assists and 10 digs for the Centaurs in the win over the Lancers (11-10) while Maggie Beams had 19 service points.

Woodstock Academy will play second-seeded Ledyard on Monday at 4:30 p.m. in a league semifinal at Fitch High School in Groton.

**Girls Soccer**

Eastern Connecticut Conference Tournament First round

(5) Woodstock Academy 1

(4) NFA 1

Woodstock Academy wins on PK's 2-1

Avery Danis and Harper Simoneau came through with a pair of penalty kicks to lead the Centaurs (5-9-3) past the Wildcats (5-10-1) and into the Eastern Connecticut Conference tournament semifinals on Saturday.

Danis put the Centaurs into the lead with a first half goal off an assist from Elise Coyle.

But host NFA came back to tie with 10 minutes, 22 seconds left in regulation and forced the overtime and, eventually, the pen-

alty kick session where Woodstock Academy keeper Ellary Sampson made saves on three of the five Wildcat attempts.

Woodstock Academy moves on to meet No. 1 Bacon Academy in a league semifinal match on Saturday at 11 a.m. in Colchester.

**Football**

Woodstock Academy 15  
Waterford 14

The Centaurs took over first place in Division II of the Eastern Connecticut Conference with the nail-

biter win over the Lancers.

Cooper Harris put Woodstock Academy (2-4, 2-0 ECC Division II) ahead to stay with a pick-6 with 8 minutes, 37 seconds left in the contest.

Caydem Herlihy had given the Centaurs the 8-7 halftime lead when he caught a touchdown pass from quarterback Elijah Poh.

But the Lancers (4-2, 1-1) went ahead, 14-8, when quarterback Lucas Racicot scored on a 4-yard run with 6:29 left in the third quarter.

## Killingly High school Sports Wrap-up

**Field Hockey**

The Killingly Field Hockey team played their final home game Tuesday, Oct. 21, ending in an intense 0-0 tie after a fierce battle that went into overtime.

The team showed incredible heart, with the defense standing strong all night to keep the scoreboard clean.

But the night was also about celebration! We took time to honor our ten seniors for their commitment and hard work throughout their time with the program. Thank you, Seniors!

The girls earned a hard fought 1-0 win Thursday night, Oct. 23 vs. Fitch High School. The lone goal came in the 4th quarter by Senior Joselinne Sanchez on a penalty corner assisted by Senior Ella Moyer.

Senior goalie Sage Cusson Malone made 5 saves in goal.

On Monday, Oct. 27 in Griswold, the Trailblazers took the field against Montville and came home with the ECC Division II title!

Kezlee Morrarty opened the scoring in the 16th minute, finishing a gorgeous through ball from Gracie Pekarovic-West. Killingly held the lead 1-0 at halftime, and with 16 minutes left in the match, Madison Perry doubled the score off a deflected shot from Adalyn Malarkey that ricocheted off the post!

Huge congratulations to Samantha Podgorni, named Player of the Tournament for her outstanding performance!

This team showed heart, hustle, and championship grit. We couldn't be proud-

er!

Season Record: 12-4-2

**Football**

Killingly (6-0, 3-0) defeated Fitch (3-3, 1-2) with a commanding 57-16 win on Thursday, Oct. 23, extending their state-best winning streak to 19 games.

**First Half Highlights**

- Hayden Allard opened the scoring on the second play from scrimmage with a 33-yard touchdown run (14 carries, 156 yards).
- Joe Mackie added a 17-yard touchdown run in the first quarter (6 carries, 84 yards, 2 TDs), though Killingly trailed 16-15 at that point.
- Mackie struck again with a 21-yard touchdown to open the second quarter.

- Ryan Webster blocked a Fitch punt and recovered it for a touchdown, giving Killingly a 28-16 lead at halftime.

**Second Half Surge**

Killingly shut out Fitch in the second half, scoring 29 unanswered points:

- Hayden Allard added a 4-yard touchdown run.
- Quinn Sumner threw two touchdown passes:
  - 20 yards to Callan Senecal
  - 24 yards to Hunter Allard
- Joseph Gould capped the scoring with a 6-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter.

**Defensive Standouts**

- Hunter Allard – 13 tackles
- Joe Mackie – 11 tackles
- Joseph Gould – 10 tackles
- Ryan Webster – 7 tack-

les

**Girls Soccer**

In a thrilling semifinal showdown Saturday, Oct. 25, the Trailblazers battled Wheeler to a 0-0 tie at halftime. Wheeler broke through with a stunning 40-yard free kick, taking a 1-0 lead with 30 minutes left in regulation. But Killingly wasn't done.

With 15 minutes remaining, Ashley Boudreau stepped up and buried a clutch penalty kick to even the score. The teams fought through two intense 10-minute overtime periods, still deadlocked.

The match came down to penalty kicks—Killingly prevailed 4-3, with Samantha Podgorni delivering 12 incredible saves on the day, including a key stop in the shootout.

The Trailblazers were scheduled to travel to

Griswold on Monday, Oct. 27 at 3:30 p.m. to face Montville in the ECC Division 2 Championship.

**Volleyball**

The Killingly Varsity volleyball team traveled to NFA last Thursday. The volleyball team lost to NFA 0 sets to 3, 16-25, 12-25, 18-25. Danielle Veillette had 10 digs; Kalynn Donbkowski had 6 assists; Kayla drinkwater had 4 digs; Hailee James had 4 assists; Kendall Rosen had 4 kills; Shyah Baker had 3 digs, 3 kills, 8 assisys; Loretta Lannon had 3 blocks, 3 kills; and Jayden Durand had 5 digs, 4 kills to lead Killingly.

The girls will next host a team to be determined in the CIAC tournament on Monday, Nov. 3, time to be determined.

## NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour comes home to Thompson for three events in 2026

THOMPSON — The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) announced Thursday afternoon the 2026 Whelen Modified Tour schedule ahead of the 2025 championship event at Martinsville Speedway in Virginia. Included in the 16-race schedule will be three events contested on the 0.625-mile Thompson Speedway here in Connecticut including the all-important finale in the heart of Modified country.

The roar and rumble of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour will open the 2026 season at the 52nd Icebreaker Weekend, headlining the Sunday, April 12 portion of the iconic start to New England's racing season. The NASCAR stars will return to the ever-popular midweek Thompson 150 on Wednesday, August 5 and finish out the season by crowning the 2026 NASCAR Whelen Modified Champion at the Sunoco World Series 150 on Sunday, Oct. 11.

“Both Tom (Mayberry) and I are glad to have the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour back at Thompson for three great shows in 2026,” said ACT managing partner Cris Michaud. “The NASCAR Modifieds put on some great racing for the fans and they are certainly some of the highlights of our 2026 plans for the Thompson oval, especially with the championship event back at the Sunoco World Series.”

As announced at the World Series, the Thompson Speedway oval will continue to operate under the American-Canadian Tour and Pro All Stars Series sanctioning bodies in 2026. The rest of the 2026 schedule continues to be in negotiation, expect a complete schedule of events for the Thompson Speedway oval to be released around Thanksgiving.

For more information about the American-Canadian Tour, contact the ACT offices at (802) 244-6963, media@acttour.com, or visit www.acttour.com. You can also get



updates on Facebook and Twitter at @ACTTour.

For technical information concerning all PASS divisions, and for media or marketing questions, please contact passracing@roadrunner.com or visit www.proallstarseries.com. Don't forget to “Like” the Pro All Stars Series on Facebook or follow on Twitter @PASSSLM14 to keep up with breaking news as it happens.

For general Thompson Speedway inquiries, call (860) 923-2280, email oval@thompsons Speedway.com, or visit www.thompsons Speedway.com. You can follow Thompson Speedway on Facebook and Instagram at @ThompsonSpeedway or on Twitter at @ThompsonSpdwy.



American Martial Arts Center recently had a Black belt grading. The candidate demonstrated a mastery of skill in forms (hyungs), self-defense and weapons. A special thank you to Grandmaster Needham for attending this event. Grandmaster Ken Saucier promoted the following student: Merideth Finegan to 1st Dan in Tang Soo Do.

left to right: Mr. Kevin Laber, Mrs. Donna Gilbert, Master Emily Feeney-McQuire, Master Brendan Boucher, Grandmaster Ken Saucier, Master Sarah Carlson, Mrs. Merideth Finegan, Master Paula Saucier, Grandmaster Harry Needham, Master Christopher Cavar, Master Joshua LaCourse, Master John Feeney.



Courtesy

American Martial Arts Center in Foster R.I. recently held a Master Blackbelt grading. Master belt level in Tang Soo Do is achieved at the 4th degree (dan) level. Candidates demonstrate a mastery of the skills in forms (hyungs), sparring, self-defense, weapons and board breaking. Grandmaster Ken Saucier promoted the following students: Sarah Carlson 4th Dan and Paula Saucier 8th Dan. A special thank you to Grandmaster Needham for attending this event. Left to right: Master Joshua La Course, Master Emily Feeney-McQuire, Master Brendan Boucher, Grandmaster Ken Saucier, Master Sarah Carlson, Master Paula Saucier, Grandmaster Harry Needham, Master Christopher Cavar, Master John Feeney.

# Navigating business succession in an uncertain economy

In today’s volatile economy, succession planning isn’t optional—it’s essential. Over two-thirds of small business owners plan to retire in the next two years (Teamshares, 2025), yet a third of all business owners say they have no plan or are unsure about their future (Gallup, 2025). With market swings and shifting policies, the smartest move is to start early and proceed with purpose.

At WHZ, we build succession into each client’s overall business and personal financial plan, and we coordinate with other professionals to help maximize enterprise value. One of our partners is Kevin Lewis, founding partner at Rocklobs Advisory, a business broker consultancy that guides clients through the business buying, succession planning, and selling process. Below are the key themes we emphasize with our business-owner clients.

### Why it matters now

Too few businesses have a documented, communicated plan, and a large percentage of companies listed for sale never find a buyer. That gap is both a risk and an opportunity. In late 2024 through mid-2025, leaders cited economic uncertainty as their top external concern (J.P. Morgan, 2025); a shift that’s reshaping exit strategies and timelines.

As Lewis notes, “The most successful exits begin planning years in advance—identify value drivers, address buyer concerns, and structure deals that protect returns and legacy.”

How uncertainty affects valuation

Valuation is the founda-

tion of any succession plan—and it’s being stress-tested by rate moves, supply chain ripples, and policy shifts. Many owners overestimate terminal value, assume straight-line growth, and expect premium multiples. Timing a sale can be as tricky as timing the market.

Financing has also tightened: lenders are demanding larger down payments, narrowing the buyer pool. Seller financing can bridge the gap, but it adds risk that must be priced and structured carefully. In uncertain times, however, buyer risk is often reduced by purchasing an existing proven business rather than starting a new one, which can work in sellers’ favor.

### What to prioritize

1) Operational excellence: Lean, well-documented operations make a company more resilient—and more attractive. Streamline processes and eliminate key-person dependencies. Standardize KPIs and close the loop on quality, delivery, and cash conversion.

“Grow profit, especially EBITDA [Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization]; that’s what buyers pay for,” says Lewis. “Chase investments that boost salability and durable advantages, not just top-line growth.”

2) Financial resilience: A strong balance sheet signals health and reduces execution risk for buyers while also improving financing options. Maintain healthy liquidity and disciplined working capital. Keep leverage in check versus industry norms.

“Size matters,” Lewis adds. “Reaching a scale that commands multiples above



FINANCIAL  
FOCUS  
JIM ZAHANSKY  
INVESTMENT  
ADVISER

two can materially improve outcomes, especially when buyers are selective.”

3) Diversified exit paths: Family succession is one path—not the only path. Consider: ESOPs to reward employees and create a market for shares

Management buyouts for continuity with leaders who know the business

Strategic buyers seeking synergies and growth platforms

Private equity for staged exits and professionalization

The best option depends on your objectives: liquidity, control, culture, legacy, and size of your business.

Building your buyer network early

One critical aspect often overlooked is developing a potential buyer list well before you’re ready to sell. The most successful business sale processes develop a large list of potential buyers and bring them into an active process. This proactive approach creates competition and maximizes value.

“There’s a huge benefit to developing relationships with potential buyers early,” Lewis emphasizes. “Network now—get a head start on it. Many potential outside buyers are younger business leaders looking for proven opportunities rather than starting from scratch.”

This generational shift means that building these relationships years in

advance can significantly enhance your exit options and final valuation.

Plan for policy and tax changes

With major provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act scheduled to sunset after 2025, tax strategy should be part of your timeline. Coordinate corporate structure, compensation, and personal wealth extraction (e.g., dividend vs. salary, earn-outs, installment sales, trusts, and gifting) so your exit plan and estate plan work together.

Lewis’s advice: “Apply real investment discipline. Ask: Does this initiative make my business more valuable and more attractive to a buyer—or just bigger?”

The value of the right advisors

Succession is multidisciplinary. You’ll likely need: a wealth advisor to integrate business exit with retirement, estate, and tax plans; an M&A advisor/valuation expert to position the company and negotiate terms; an attorney and CPA to structure deals, mitigate tax, and manage diligence; and banking and/or credit partners to secure capital and assess buyer financing. Regularly assess stakeholders—employees, customers, suppliers, lenders—to ensure incentives and relationships align with your exit goals.

Best practices for 2025 and beyond

Start early and formalize: Document your plan, owners’ objectives, and contingencies.

Scenario plan: Model different economic and market

conditions and define go/no-go triggers.

Enhance value: Focus on EBITDA quality, recurring revenue, customer diversification, IP/process defensibility, and a durable leadership bench.

Manage risk: Diversify both business lines and your personal net worth; reduce reliance on a single customer, supplier, or key employee.

Stay flexible on timing: Build options to accelerate or pause based on market signals, multiples, or personal milestones.

Uncertainty doesn’t argue against succession planning—it argues for a smarter, earlier, and more flexible plan. Owners who build sustainable value, keep multiple exit paths open, develop buyer relationships early, and assemble the right team are positioned to succeed in any market.

At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, our Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™ process helps business owners align growth, exit, and personal financial security. Contact us for a complimentary discovery session at whzwealth.com or (860) 928-2341 to see how we can help you to achieve “Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.”

Thinking of selling in the next three to five years? Connect with Kevin Lewis at Rocklobs Advisory at rocklobs.com or 617-899-0773 for knowledgeable guidance to maximize value, protect your legacy, and transition with confidence.

Authored by Senior

Managing Partner, Chief Strategist James Zahansky, AWMA® with commentary by Kevin T. Lewis of Rocklobs Advisory. Kevin Lewis and Commonwealth are engaged in a referral arrangement where Kevin Lewis refers potential clients to Commonwealth. Kevin Lewis receives a percentage of the commissions and fees, as applicable, received by Commonwealth resulting from these referrals. These payments create a financial incentive for Kevin Lewis to recommend Commonwealth over other firms where no compensation is received, resulting in material conflicts of interest. Kevin Lewis is not a client of Commonwealth. This referral may not be representative of the experience of others and is not a guarantee of future performance or success. To learn more about Commonwealth, search them wherever local business are reviewed. AI may have been utilized for research and initial drafting of this piece.

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# Interact Club boosts ‘Halloween spirit’



Courtesy

From left: Paige Perry, Gabriell Cerasiello, Billie Lewis, Calleigh Levesque, and Ava Tucker.

PUTNAM — Wet weather didn’t dampen the spirits of those who attended the TEEG fall festival Oct. 13. The Putnam Rotary Club’s Interact Club helped, as they do every year.

Elizabeth Perry, community program assistant/volunteer coordinator, said: “Even though it was a rainy cold day, we had nearly 40 families come and go. It

was a great turnout.”

The Interact Club thanked the Hale YMCA Youth and Family Center for its support as the club collected Halloween costumes. The costumes are donated to TEEG for its fall festival. The Interact volunteers assisted the children who attended with finding just the right costume.

Paige Perry, Interact

co-president, said, “There were a ton of kids, and it was fun helping them.”

Interact is a regional club for students ages 12 to 18. New members welcome. For more information contact robertarocchetti4@gmail.

The next Interact meeting is at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 28 at the Putnam Public Library.

# Thompson VFW hosting annual Harvest & Holly Festival Nov. 8

THOMPSON — Sponsored by VFW Auxiliary to Thompson Memorial Post 10088, the annual Harvest & Holly Festival is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 8 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., according to an announcement by Auxiliary President Linda Nizamoff and Festival Chairman, Anne Chrzanowski.

The Festival will feature our famous Mix ‘n Match Cookies and Bake Sale, Tea Cup Social, Crafts, Theme Baskets, Attic Treasures, Gift Card Tree and more. Again this year, please bring an unwrapped toy to be donated to Toys for Tots. Join us for a continental breakfast. Luncheon will feature Chili, kielbasa or hot dogs. It will be held at the VFW Post Home, 654 Quinebaug Rd., Quinebaug, and will benefit Veterans and Community Programs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GOP chaos in Pomfret

To the Editor:

Hey there! I wanted to share some thoughts on the recent changes in our local government. It seems like a few of the newly elected Pomfret Republican selectmen have decided to step down before their terms are up. Also, some of the recently elected Republicans have resigned from the Board of Education and the Board of Finance mid-term.

It's also worth mentioning that the RTC nominee for Planning & Zoning (who was previously recommended for the Board of Education!)-appointed by the Board of Selectmen-hasn't attended a single meeting in three years. And their nominee for the Conservation Commission—who's also the RTC Chair and was appointed by the BOS—has never shown up either.

Instead of addressing this record, the RTC candidates are making vague, unsubstantiated accusations to distract from it. They claim not to "know" this or that, but they haven't asked, haven't researched, and when facts are presented, they ignore them. This isn't oversight—it's willful ignorance used to mislead voters.

Candidates who operate this way won't represent Pomfret honestly, accurately, or responsibly. What you're seeing now is a preview of their idea of "good govern-

ment": shake, rattle, and roll—chaos over competence.

Pomfret is not a free-for-all. It's governed by state statutes, reinforced by checks and balances, and run by people who take transparency and accountability seriously. The Board of Selectmen maintains an open-door policy. All meetings are posted with agendas, all minutes are made public, and town meetings are legally noticed—in full compliance with state law and long-standing practice.

There are no back-room deals or hidden favors. What we have are residents who show up, do the work in public, follow the rules, and make decisions in the open because they serve the whole town—not a faction. Pomfret government functions because people serve, attend, listen, and finish what they start. If we want to keep good governance, we must elect people who actually do the work.

On Nov. 4, please vote for candidates who show up, stay engaged, and serve the town—not those who quit and then complain. Vote the Top Line "Row A" for the best future for Pomfret.

Sincerely,

CARL DUCHARME  
POMFRET

Putnam's leadership team has my support

To the Editor:

It is with great pleasure that I overwhelmingly cast my support for "Putnam's Team" of leadership. I would like to take a moment to speak about each candidate individually.

Scott Pempek is a former middle school student of mine, which means I have known him for a very long time. Scott's sole purpose for serving in government is his never-ending love for our community. Scott's mindset is on display on a day-to-day basis. Scott has been involved in numerous volunteer organizations, always with the citizens of Putnam at the forefront. Scott's character, integrity, and experience in town government, as well as business, make him an outstanding example of what a local political figure should be.

Gloria Marion is a former colleague of mine through the Putnam Public Schools. I worked alongside Gloria for many years and saw firsthand her tremendous interactions with young students as well as adults. Her ability to listen as well as lead has made her the outstanding leader for our team that she is. Gloria and her husband, Rene, with their close personal friends Jo-anne and Alan Joslin, led the Putnam Youth Basketball League for many years. Under the guidance of the then Recreation Director Willie Bousquet, Gloria and her team worked countless hours every weekend, providing a safe, friendly, growing experience for the student athletes of Putnam. Gloria also worked tirelessly for the Putnam High School Athletic

Alumni Association, again showing her ability to work with people as well as lead.

Mike Bogdanski has been a friend for close to 50 years. From early days at Midtown Fitness to his never-ending and tireless effort to make the D.A.R.E. program in the Putnam Middle School the envy of the State of Connecticut. Mike has the uncanny ability, like the aforementioned candidates, to be a strong leader, listening to input from young and old. Mike's character and desire to continue the work that Mayor Seney has done are unmatched. Always the first to volunteer for a cause, Mike will continue to move our great town forward.

Mayor Seney's record speaks for itself. In my opinion, the hardest-working small-town mayor in the state. If there is an event, Barney will be there. A true Mayor for the People, Barney loves being around all age groups, from youngsters to senior citizens. Our town is the talk of the state for its innovative approach to the Renaissance of a small, old New England town. All you need to do is look around, and you know as well as I do that, we are extremely fortunate to have had Barney leading the team for Putnam's future.

I thank you for your time, and strongly, without hesitation, urge you to vote on Nov. 4 for Scott, Gloria, Mike, and Barney, and allow them to lead Putnam, our great town, into the future.

DAVID VITALE  
PUTNAM

Our nation is headed for disaster

To the Editor:

Let's see how the "Make America Great Again" scam is working out. The government has been shut down for weeks, and our dysfunctional Congress does nothing but the usual finger pointing. Of course, they continue to get paid and enjoy all the benefits we provide them as thousands of taxpayers suffer. Instead of working on a solution, the con-artist in the White House is using the shutdown as an excuse for more political revenge.

Meanwhile, we have masked goon squads coast to coast rounding up anyone they choose who isn't white and speaking

English. The cost of living continues to skyrocket with no end in sight, but President Bone-Spurs is more focused on building a ballroom or wasting time on social media posting childish memes.

America has always been great, but our nation is becoming unrecognizable and headed for disaster. The demolition at "The Peoples House" is sadly symbolic of what Trump and his Cabinet of unqualified lackeys are doing to the greatest country in the world.

TODD PATRIE  
POMFRET CENTER

Political signs

To the Editor:

I always enjoy reading Nancy Weiss's column, as many of them bring back great memories. Her take on political signs was spot on, as were her comments about politics in general.

Back in the day, we used to hand paint the signs with crude stencils on 4X4 sheets of plywood on Saturday morning. We would put them up on Sunday in strategic locations. Candidates spent evenings and weekends going door to door to meet as many people as possible, asking and answering questions. Most of the time, there was a plan, a voters list, a street map, and a calendar to help determine where the candidate would campaign. It was best if the candidate had someone who lived in the neighborhood or on the street and knew most of the people to take them around. Always good to have a driver. Campaigns were fun. People were kind and interested. Republicans and Democrats raised funds with chicken barbecues, cocktail parties and other gatherings which often included family and friends.

Back to the signs; 4 X 4 hand painted plywood. Loaded into the back of a station wagon or truck, driven to special locations, some traditional and some new, but all in prime visible locations. They did not pop up like mushrooms after a light spring rain and steamy sunny day. Each location had its own unique problems. Soils too hard or

rocky, too soft, but all solvable with the right tools and ingenuity. These signs were colorful, creative, and sometimes had a message. Signs that come to mind are "Be Wise, Vote Weiss" for Nancy's husband, Jim Wiess who served, with distinction, two terms in the Connecticut House of Representatives. The other was mine, "Put Pete in the Seat," for my State Representative campaign in 1977. I am sure the young candidates will look back at the current pop-up signs 50 years from now and pine for those days as the signs then will probably be solar generated LED signs with the ability to change messages instantly or some type of holographic sign that can be placed electronically anywhere at any time.

Signs are still an important part of the campaign process. They tell you who is running and for what. Every position requires hours of committed time and dedication. Most of these positions are unpaid but still carry various levels of responsibility. So, if you know someone who is running for election, thank them for running. If you know someone who is serving in an elected or appointed position, thank them for their service. May the best candidates win in November.

Thank you, Nancy, for taking me down memory lane to a gentler, kinder time.

Sincerely,

PETER B. MANN  
POMFRET

This Halloween, Don't ghost the polls!

To the Editor:

Halloween and municipal elections have something in common. Both are opportunities for community engagement, neighbors connecting and people coming together.

This municipal election let's come together for Brooklyn. Early Voting ends Nov. 2, and Election Day is Nov. 4. This is when Brooklyn residents decide who they want shaping our town's future.

So, what could I say to inspire you to learn more about the Democratic candidates running for office? Or to convince you how much your vote matters? Maybe this: your vote is your voice and the power to shape what Brooklyn becomes next.

Join me in voting for candidates who are committed to making a real difference, leaders who will work with and for everyone, regardless of party.

For the top office in Brooklyn, those candidates are Joe Bellavance and Sherri Vogt. Together, Joe and Sherri are commit-

ted to:

- Working for our community, making Brooklyn stronger, more affordable, and ready for the future.
- Building on relationships, supporting local businesses, growing our tax base, keeping taxes stable, and protecting Brooklyn's character.
- Seeking state and federal grants to invest in our town. Honoring our heritage, enhancing and improving our community.
- Making sure residents are informed and heard because good decisions start with listening.

Better days are ahead but to make it happen we need to VOTE. Every election is decided by the people who show up. See you at the polls.

Learn more about all Democratic candidates at [brooklynctdems.com](http://brooklynctdems.com).

LISA ARENDS  
BROOKLYN

Pack 21 is thriving thanks to community's support

To the Editor:

Cub Scout Pack 21 just finished its Oct. 25 Spaghetti and Meatball Fundraising Dinner at the Albert J. Breault VFW Post 1523 on Providence Street in Putnam. To each and every one of you who came out to the Post on a Saturday night, ate with us, helped us and supported our children, we say thank you. We're so pleased to say that we sold over 300 meals and now we'll be able to run our Cub Scout program right through next spring. You are the reason for our success.

Also, we certainly want to thank Pack 21's chartered organization, the VFW Post and the Auxiliary, both for putting on the dinner for us on Saturday and for what they have done for us since we started four years ago. They have given us a place to meet, given us adult leadership for our kids,

supported our fundraising and they have been with us through it all. Without the VFW Post and their people's hard work, we would not exist. We are thriving because of them.

Please feel free to contact us if you want to know more about what we do. We do summer camp and all kinds of adventures and outdoor fun activities throughout the year. Cub Scout Pack 21 helps our young boys and girls in the Putnam area to develop character, citizenship and physical fitness. I'm available by voice only at: (860) 928-5873 and by email at [johnryan1776@hotmail.com](mailto:johnryan1776@hotmail.com).

Thanks once again,

JOHN RYAN  
CUB SCOUT PACK 21  
PUTNAM

Greetings, Pomfret neighbors!

To the Editor:

It's that important time of year again. Time to vote for folks who will have a direct impact on your everyday lives and your checkbooks. The people appearing on the ballot for the municipal election will have a direct say in your property tax bill, the quality of the education your kids are getting, and maintaining the environment, and good life to which you have become accustomed to in this wonderful Town of Pomfret.

If you take a moment to think about it, this town checks many of the "dream boxes" of most Americans. Safe streets, good schools, nice neighborhoods, close to shopping and good medical services, i.e., a place to retreat to after a long day at work and just breathe. One sees daily how attractive the town is by how quickly "for sale" signs turn to "pending" & "sold" as you drive through town.

Keeping those thoughts in mind, I ask you to take some time to vote for the Democratic team which has built this landscape with many years of quality leadership

and experience. Let's keep the success going!

I would also like to point you to another important item for your review and comment. The teachers' contract process for the Pomfret Community School staff has finished negotiations. The school budget is a significant cost to the town, and staff salaries are a big portion of that budget. In a few weeks, the contract will be available at the Town Hall for public review for 30 days. I strongly encourage you to take a look. It will be a significant number in preparation of the Education budget for the coming year, and you will be writing the check. Pomfret voters are always engaged and informed, and I believe it is not common knowledge the contract is there for your review.

Please come out and cast your votes for continued success with the Democratic team!

DEBI THOMPSON  
POMFRET

Eastford elections 2025

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the re-election of the current Eastford Board of Selectman, led by First Selectman Deborah Richards. Deb works tirelessly for the Town and is always looking out for the people of the town. It is a difficult and often thankless job. Paul Torcellini and Ashlyn Ellsworth completed the team that effectively runs the town.

ing and painting the Ivy Glenn Memorial—home to our town library, repairing items at the Town Office building and making numerous other improvements around town.

As a Republican, I will cast my vote for Deb Richards and Paul Torcellini on November 4. Deb is cross-endorsed by the Democrats—so Democrats—I encourage you to vote for Deb Richards and Ashlyn Ellsworth so we can keep the effective Board of Selectmen in place working hard for the betterment of our town. Their track records reflect transparency, fiscal responsibility, and a collaborative spirit that has fostered progress and unity throughout their terms of service.

JOANNE WARREN  
EASTFORD

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!



# Our families, children and veterans deserve better

To the Editor:

The federal government has stated that SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs) benefits will not be funded after Oct. 31. This means, practically speaking, that 22.3 million U.S. families will lose some or all of their food assistance. Food for people in the richest country in the history of the world will not be available to our most vulnerable people, including an estimated 237,000 Connecticut families. While most benefits are commonly around \$190 per month, the total is about \$75 million each month for Connecticut’s SNAP recipients.

And who are these federal SNAP recipients? According to the Connecticut Mirror Oct. 24 article that cited Urban Institute findings, they include 3.3 million families with children and 3.5 million working families, of which 1.7 million have a full-time, year-round worker. Of those who have seasonal work or who experience job loss, their SNAP applications are sporadic as they lose paychecks multiple times during a year. This brings total enrollment in our state to over 500,000 people annually.

Further, thousands of veterans in Connecticut are eligible for and receive SNAP benefits, with those over 60 or those with disabilities subject to special qualifying rules. I do not find those specific figures to cite, but northeast Connecticut has a substantial number of veterans who may stand to lose this food assistance.

According to Connecticut State Senate Appropriations Committee Co-Chair Cathy Osten, although Connecticut is a wealthy state, creating a new state network to distribute state-funded food assistance could take up to six months. Even then, such a network predictably would only cover a fraction of the need created by an indefinite stoppage of SNAP benefits. Most people, and especially children, need to eat every day.

One other program expected to be affected is Meals On Wheels, as demand will undoubtedly increase. Federal funding is a component of this service to elderly

shut-ins and disabled residents, and that loss will put a strain on available resources even though there are other funders.

These are our neighbors, some of whom we may not realize are dependent on SNAP to feed their families. It now needs to become our business to step up and fill this need, which we hope is a temporary one.

Now is the time to donate money, food and personal care items to our local food pantries and churches. Some of these food assistance centers are: TEEG, 15 Thatcher Rd., No. Grosvenordale, Tel. 860 923-3458; Access Agency, 231 Broad St., Danielson, Tel. 860 412-1600; Friends of Assisi Food Pantry, 77 Water St., Danielson, Tel. 860 774-2310; Community Kitchens of Northeast CT, 9 Spring St., Danielson, Tel. 860 779-2645, to name a few.

You may also wish to contact your nearby church or synagogue to inquire about donations for free meals they offer.

And veterans resources that can possibly provide help or direction include: Conn. State Dept.. of Veterans Affairs Info Line, Tel. 866 928-8387; Soldiers, Sailors & Marine Fund, 100 Broadway, Room 307, Norwich, Tel. 860 886-8557 or at 39 Woodland St., Room 006, Hartford, Tel. 860 246-0096; or Connecticut Foodshare Mobile Food Pantry, 2 Research Parkway, Wallingford, Tel. 203 469-5000.

Helping to feed our most vulnerable friends and neighbors seems to me the most important response to this unbelievable situation that has unfolded. Of course, there is a political component to what is happening to be addressed perhaps in another letter. For now, let’s hold hands, stick together and help each other through this pre-Thanksgiving nightmare.

To quote Hannah Arendt, “The death of human empathy is one of the earliest and most telling signs of a culture about to fall into barbarism.” Our families, children and veterans deserve much better than this.

Respectfully,  
CLAUDIA TERWILLIGER ALLEN  
THOMPSON

attention, but they do not solve problems or strengthen our town. Accountability, collaboration, facts, respect, and integrity are values that have guided Pomfret citizens and leaders of both parties for decades, yet they seem to be absent from this campaign. Pomfret succeeds when people work together with civility and focus.

Vote for candidates with a proven record of getting things done. Pomfret has achieved balanced budgets, strong schools, and a well-maintained infrastructure through steady, thoughtful work — good people of both parties serving the whole community. If you want Pomfret to remain the town we know and love, I hope you will consider voting for the top line, Row A, on Nov. 4. Together we can continue a tradition of good governance, cooperation, and results that benefit everyone.

Thank-you,  
BARBARA RILEY  
POMFRET

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## I care about makes Putnam and what makes it special

To the Editor:

I’m writing to you as a candidate for Putnam Selectman, and more importantly, as someone who truly cares about our town and the people who make it special.

I’ve been proud to call Putnam home for many years—as a resident, a small business owner, and a volunteer. Having seen our town’s remarkable growth and spirit firsthand, I will continue that progress while keeping Putnam an affordable and welcoming place for everyone.

Over the years, I’ve had the privilege of serving our community in different ways:

- Community and youth leadership: Through my martial arts school, I’ve worked with local children, teens, and adults for decades. Along the way, I’ve been honored to receive recognition from the State of Connecticut and the Northeast Connecticut Chamber of Commerce—but what matters most to me are the everyday moments of helping young people build confidence and character.
- Downtown & safety: As a former long-time downtown business owner, I’ve been proud to take part in Putnam’s revitalization. I also helped raise more than \$50,000 for DARE programs because I believe in keeping our kids safe and supported.

- Town planning & preservation: I currently serve on the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Inland Wetlands Commission, Economic Development and the Redevelopment Agency, and I’m involved with the Aspinock Historical Society and Putnam History Makers. These roles have deepened my appreciation for responsible growth and the importance of preserving our town’s history and environment.

I’ve attended many selectmen’s meetings over the years, and I’ve learned a lot about how our local government works and the challenges ahead. My goal is simple: to listen, to collaborate, and to make thoughtful decisions that serve everyone in our community. I will ensure Putnam’s direction is stable and secure for the future, guiding town growth in a thoughtful, sustainable way.

I’d be grateful for your support and your vote for Selectman. I also encourage you to join me in supporting Mayor Barney Seney and the entire Unity slate—a team committed to keeping Putnam moving forward, together.

With appreciation,  
MIKE BOGDANSKI  
PUTNAM

## Pomfret: good work, good people, good government

To the Editor:

I have lived in Pomfret for more than 35 years, and it has been one of the great honors of my life to serve this town in many roles — on the Recreation and Planning & Zoning Commissions, the Boards of Finance (as Chair) and Selectmen, and as your First Selectman — and to edit the Pomfret Times for 30 years. I love this community deeply, and have worked every day to help make Pomfret a better place to call home.

Pomfret is in excellent shape. Our finances are strong and carefully managed; our roads, buildings, and facilities are responsibly maintained; and our school continues to excel with outstanding test scores and a reputation for quality. Across Connecticut, Pomfret is recognized as a forward-thinking, innovative, and well-run town. That did not happen by chance. It is the result of committed employees who do the work every day, volunteers who give their time and talent freely, residents who stay engaged and informed, and state representatives who partner with us when we ask. Good outcomes come from good people working steadily, respectfully, and collaboratively.

We have led the way on important initiatives. Pomfret was among the first towns to move to appointed positions for Assessor, Tax Collector, Treasurer, and Town Clerk. We are one of only three towns in a grant-supported shared Town Administrator model — the first of its kind in the state — and other towns are now looking to replicate our success.

Through persistence and partnership, we have secured millions of dollars in grant funding to improve facilities and address aging infrastructure. Under my leadership we built a new Town Garage/Emergency Operations Center, a new salt shed, and a new Bulky Waste facility. We upgraded

the Community Center, expanded the Food Pantry, preserved open space, and launched the Library expansion. Our Pomfret-based Tri-Town 24/7 Ambulance is a model for regional cooperation and resident safety. We are partnering with Putnam to share costs on the Bulky Waste facility, keeping it free for Pomfret residents. And we invested our American Rescue Plan funds wisely in projects that improve our facilities and quality of life for all residents. None of this happened by accident — it came from cooperation, collaboration, and steady, respectful negotiation. Those are the values at stake in this election.

This election season has been the most divisive and misleading I have witnessed in all my years here, and it has been painful to watch. Personal attacks, disinformation, and falsehoods are not who we are as a town. They do not reflect the way Pomfret has ever gotten important work done. These are campaign tactics, not community values, and they diminish us. It is disheartening to see our reputation — built over decades of cooperation and good work — put at risk by reckless campaign rhetoric and inexperience. It will take work to repair that damage if we let it continue.

Pomfret has always been at its best when it is led by people who show up, do the work, respect one another, and put this town first. I ask for your support to continue that tradition of good government, led by good people, working for the good of our community. Please vote early, by absentee ballot, or in person on Nov. 4 at PCS. Vote Row A to keep Pomfret the town we know and love.

Thank you for your trust, your engagement, and your commitment to our town. Pomfret works best when we work together.  
MAUREEN NICHOLSON  
POMFRET

## Keep steady leadership and Killingly’s schools and ignore the noise

To the Editor:

If you’ve been hearing a lot of noise about some controversy with the Killingly Board of Education (BOE) in the past couple years, it is just that, noise.

One doesn’t need to agree with every decision by the Killingly BOE to recognize that the bi-partisan group of BOE members brought on in recent years, including chair Susan Lannon and Misty Murdock, have brought back a meaningful sense of stability to Killingly Schools. While there seems to have been a desperate and never-ending search to find a controversy to attach to this board, Susan Lannon, Misty Murdock and the others have worked earnestly to put the focus back where it belongs. Yes, others have made some positive decisions in the past and of which they can be rightfully proud (i.e. helping bring Dr. Nash’s thoughtful capable leadership to our schools).

That said, unlike in some previous years, and as someone with children in the district, under Lannon’s leadership I no longer feel I have to worry about the board’s priorities getting hijacked by the cable news culture war of the month. I also don’t feel like I need to worry about quality teachers fleeing the district, Killingly running afoul of the state BOE or getting what had seemed like all too frequent negative regional press (all of which likely depressed enrollment from sending towns along with revenue to our district). The quality of education, administration and staffing of our schools has been squarely centered. Susan Lannon, Misty Murdock, Meridith Giambattista, Kevin Marcoux (and previously the late great Danny Rovero) could be regularly seen at school events and have made a

genuine effort to intimately understand the many accomplishments and challenges our schools face. While the dedication to school quality as been a primary focus, as someone who follows the budget process closely, I think there has also been a real attempt in working with Dr. Nash to sharpen their pencils and put forward a school budget that is still relatively lean when compared with previous Killingly budgets or other town’s expenditures (though I certainly recognize that the inflationary environment over the last few years has made everyone understandably very sensitive to any and all spending). Susan Lannon, Misty Murdock and the new candidates for this year’s BOE, are open to hearing and understanding the concerns of residents and the town council regarding budgetary questions and hope to work together to find genuine opportunities for savings and revenue.

Speaking of this year’s new BOE candidates, Nelson “Buzz” King brings decades of impressive experience at all levels in Killingly and other local schools while Kyle Provencher offers both his business acumen to the budget process while still very much understanding of what children in the district (like his own) and teachers in the district (where his wife previously taught) might need to thrive. Block out the noise and put Killingly first by voting Vote Row A this election. Re-elect Susan Lannon and Misty Murdock and also give them some more help by voting for Nelson “Buzz” King and Kyle Provencher!

IAN McDONALD  
KILLINGLY

# This election is about leadership, not party labels

To the Editor:

I write as a resident of Killingly to express my full support for the current Democratic-endorsed slate of candidates for our Killingly Board of Education. In these times of heightened challenge in public education, our community needs thoughtful, inclusive, and future-focused leadership—and the Democratic candidates offer precisely that.

Over the past term, the board has faced significant issues—including student mental-health services, facility challenges, and ensuring every child receives a quality education regardless of background. In the last election, voters shifted the board’s majority to Democrats so that a new direction could be taken and there has been a significant improvement in the culture of the schools, as well as our reputation. That change was neither partisan theater nor ideological posturing—it was a statement by parents, educators, and citizens that our children’s education matters more than politics. We cannot go back.

I would like to address the slogan “People Over Party” that the Democratic Committee

has endorsed in recent elections. It means exactly that — our Board of Education should not be based in politics. It should consist of the most qualified individuals who will work together to do what is best for our children. Education should not be partisan. For this reason, candidates up for election that have been endorsed by the Killingly Democrats have come from all parties, including Independents and sometimes even Republicans. They are simply the individuals most qualified to continue the excellent progress that our current Board has made over the previous term.

This election is not simply about party labels—it is about whether our schools will have the leadership they deserve. I urge my fellow citizens of Killingly to vote for the Democratic-endorsed candidates for the Board of Education. Let’s continue to move Killingly forward and put our children first. Please cast your vote for Susan Lannon, Misty Murdock, Nelson “Buzz” King, and Kyle Provencher this November.  
LACEY LUNEAU  
KILLINGLY

ANDERSON  
continued from page A1

into her leadership role. “May laughter fill these halls, may learning flourish, and may every child here be known and lifted up,” the blessing concluded.

A legacy of leadership and a vision for the future

Nathan Follansbee, a Rectory trustee and member of the Head of School Search Committee, shared reflections on Anderson’s selection from a national pool of candidates: “Julie emerged as a clear and compelling choice—an accomplished educator known for her warmth, wisdom, and integrity. Her experience, her intellect, and her joy will carry Rectory forward while preserving the school’s most cherished traditions.”

Follansbee outlined Anderson’s impressive background, including more than two decades of leadership at Cheshire Academy, where she served as department chair, head of middle school, academic dean, and ultimately Head of School. Anderson holds degrees from Wesleyan University and Southern Connecticut State University, and also serves as a trustee for the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools, where she contributes her insight and experience to advance excellence and collaboration among peer institutions statewide.

Board Chair Kevin Lewis led the official installation, charging Anderson to “lead Rectory School according to its mission and values—Responsibility, Respect, Honesty, and Compassion.” Presenting the ceremonial medallion, Lewis added, “Together we will build on Rectory’s foundation as we form its future.”

A message of gratitude and shared purpose

In her installation address, Anderson expressed deep gratitude and a clear vision for the community’s shared future: “It feels both unusual and profoundly moving to be the one at the center of attention,” she said. “But an installation isn’t really about one person—it’s about celebrating a shared journey, our collective work, our hopes for the future, and the community that we will continue to shape together.”

Anderson spoke with heartfelt appreciation for the trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, families, and espe-

cially students who define Rectory’s spirit: “Our students are the heartbeat of Rectory School. They remind us that learning and joy go hand in hand. When faculty and staff feel seen, valued, and supported, their light shines even brighter—guiding and inspiring our students every single day.”

She also reaffirmed her commitment to fostering belonging and purpose: “At Rectory, the spirit of belonging has always guided our community. We are building a school where every person is seen, known, and appreciated for who they are—and where diversity of culture, language, and perspective is a strength to embrace.”

A community of many voices

The ceremony included remarks from students across grade levels, offering words of advice and warmth to their new Head of School.

“Always stay positive and enjoy every moment here,” one ninth grader shared, while elementary students collectively reminded Anderson of their affirmation, ‘You are smart. You are kind. And you can do hard things!’

Longtime colleague and mentor Laura Longacre offered a touching tribute, describing Anderson as “a master teacher first and foremost” and comparing her leadership to a “magic cookie bar”—a blend of distinct, essential layers that together create something truly special.

“Julie’s leadership will continue to create magic here,” Long said. “She will lead with compassion and grace, honoring Rectory’s history while nurturing its next chapter.”

Carrying the torch forward

Anderson closed her address with optimism and humility: “The stories we tell share one powerful truth—that when we care for one another, we can create something extraordinary. I am truly honored to serve as your Head of School, and I’m excited for the stories we will continue to write together—filled with laughter, purpose, and endless possibility.”

As the community joined together to sing the Rectory School Song, the installation concluded not just as a ceremony, but as a renewal of purpose—a celebration of leadership rooted in service, heart, and hope for the future.

Mark Your Calendars: Saturday, Nov. 1 at 1:30 p.m., the Killingly Historical Society will present “The Web They Wove: Women and their Wardrobes during New England’s Revolution” by Dirty Blue Shirts. There will be a short business meeting at 1:00 p.m. All are welcome. 196 Main St., Danielson, CT 06239.

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 reserves a pie call or text Terry at (860)-884-1813, or visit them at [www.facebook.com/KillinglyGrange/](http://www.facebook.com/KillinglyGrange/).

Korean Lotus Lantern. Putnam Library will sponsor a Korean Lotus Lantern workshop on Saturday, Nov. 8 from 1-2:15 p.m. Two women in traditional dress will speak of the Korean culture and lead the workshop. Space is limited. Registration is required. Call Putnam Public Library at 860-963-6826 to reserve your spot.

Happy Halloween, everyone! I’m not expecting any trick-or-treaters on my rural road so have great fun watching all the children when they come past the Killingly Historical Center for Trick or Treat on Main Street in Danielson. I thought I’d start this column’s research by seeing what mention was made of Halloween in the old Windham County Transcripts on the Killingly Public Library Web site. The Wednesday, Nov. 4, 1885 issue had a small tidbit, “A Halloween party, given by members of the class of ’86. was held at Miss Florence Blackmar’s home on Friday evening. A very enjoyable time is reported.” Several of the guests were named in Personals: Miss Elsie M. Hopkins of Wheaton Seminary, Norton and Miss Grace Spalding of Providence. (both articles p. 2).

A Thursday, Nov.

# Happy Halloween!



KILLINGLY  
AT 300  
• • • • •  
MARGARET  
WEAVER

Halloween and its formerly attendant ceremonies long antedated Christianity. The two chief characteristics of ancient Halloween were the lighting of bonfires and the belief that of all nights in the year this is the one during which ghosts and witches are most likely to wander abroad. About the first of November the Druids held their autumn festival and lighted fires in honor of the Sun-god in thanksgiving for the harvest. The Druids also believed that on the evening of this festival Saman, lord of death, called together the wicked souls that within the past twelve months had been condemned to inhabit the bodies of animals. On the Druid ceremonies were grafted some of the characteristics of the Roman festival in honor of Pomona held about the first of November, in which nuts and apples, as representing the winter store of fruits, played an important part.” (p. 3).

By 1953, the area churches were holding Halloween parties for the children. The Thursday, Oct. 29, 1953 Transcript listed several such parties. “St. Albans. Friday, 3 p.m. Halloween party at the parish house for children of the nursery and kindergarten.” Westfield Church Youth Fellowship would have a Halloween party at 7 p.m. that same evening. The Junior party would be Saturday from 5 to 7 p.m. The Methodist Church would have a party Friday, Oct. 31 at 7 p.m. for the primary and junior children of the church school in the vestry. (p. 4).

In that same issue Olliver’s Music was advertising “Your Favorite Records” of 1953. How many do you remember? Vays Con Dios by Les Paul and Mary Ford; You, You, You by the Ames Brothers; Ebb Tide by Frank Chacksfield; No Other Love by Perry Como; I See the Moon by the Mariners...” (p.4).

Late October 1959 saw quite a few Halloween dances for the adults of the area. Saturday, Oct. 31, there was to be a dance from 8-11:30 p.m. at the St. James gym. The same evening the Elks held their annual Ladies Night. “Costumes

for the event (according to chairman Robert Craig) (not mandatory) but it is hoped that most attending members will wear them, as prizes will be awarded for the most outstanding. Wally’s Harmonizers will be on hand to furnish dancing music from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. and a supper snack bar will be served at 11. A featured added attraction of the evening will be an apple dunking contest at ten p.m.” (p.14). “Commander Leo Beauvais has announced that the annual Halloween dance of the Leo J. L’Homme post No. 21 American Legion will be held on Saturday, October 31 at the Post home on Furnace Street. ...Dancing from 9 p.m. to 12:45 a.m. to the music of Frank Cariage and his orchestra. All persons attending are urged to wear costumes in order that they may compete for prizes.” “100 Attend VFW Halloween Dance at Post Quarters.” It was held the previous Saturday with awards being given for costumes. “Mr. and Mrs. Frank Deary of North Main Street dressed as a Spanish couple and Mr. and Mrs. Ross Hutchins dressed in hobo costumes.” The little community of Rogers not only had a party, it had a parade. “A Halloween party will be held at the Rogers recreation hall on Saturday, October 31. The parade will start at 7 p.m. sharp from the school yard and end at the recreation club. There will be judging of costumes with prizes awarded...Following this, refreshments will be served. Dancing will follow for the children from the 5th grade up, also for the adults until 11:30 p.m.” (Windham County Transcript, October 29, 1959, all p. 4). Goodness! That’s a lot of dancing in one little town for one night! I’m sure a lot of fun was had by all.

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

## Pomfret Lions hosting 19th annual raffle Nov. 22

POMFRET — The Pomfret Lions Club invites community members to attend the 19th Annual Cow Chip Raffle on Saturday, Nov. 22 at the Pomfret School Dining Hall.

The event will feature an evening of fine food, entertainment and will culminate with the announcement of the \$10,000 Grand Prize winner.

Tickets cost \$120 each, must be purchased in advance and are limited in number.

Tickets can be purchased by calling 860-428-4364, and asking for Peter Lusa.

6:30 p.m. – Doors open for the event.

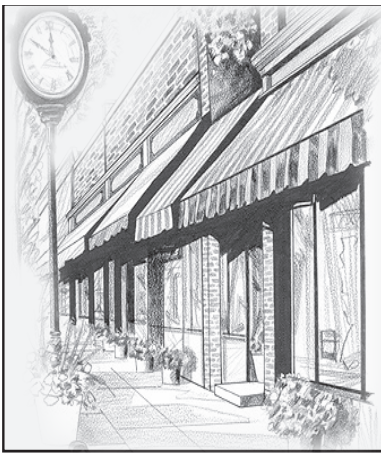
Each ticket entitles you and a guest to attend the event, enjoy a lovely dinner and have a chance at winning one of fourteen prizes. You do not need to be present to win.

Prizes range from the Grand Prize of \$10,000 to \$120.

Chances of winning per ticket are one in 320.

All profits from this event will go to local charitable groups and traditional humanitarian Lions charitable causes.

This is a great opportunity to enjoy a dinner for two, support charitable activities (TEEG, Pomfret/Eastford Little League, Hole in the Wall Camp, etc.) and have a chance to win a cash prize.



# Community Connection

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OBITUARIES

Clifford Raymond LaRose



Clifford Raymond LaRose, a cherished father, grandfather, partner, and friend, passed away on October 11, 2025, at his home in Danielson, CT. Born on December 11, 1945, in Norwich, CT, Cliff was the youngest son of Mary and Conrad LaRose. He was preceded in death by his mother and father, as well as his brother, Bobby LaRose, and his daughter, MaryAnn. Cliff's legacy is carried on by his loving family. He is survived by his daughter, Constance Doucette, her husband Darrin, and their children, Shawna and Max. He also leaves behind his devoted daughter, Vanessa Gebo, her husband Dan Jr., and their children, Peter and Katelyn (Geoff Southwell). His son, Raymond LaRose, along with his wife Cathyann and their children Aaron and Benjamin, will forever keep his memory close. He is survived by his sister, Pat Rosier. Cliff will forever be held and missed by his loving and committed partner of more than 20 years, Gail Desorda Waitkus, who was by his side, caring for him on every level. The bonds he created extended beyond blood, as his employees Mark Tyler and Troy Harvey were family to him. His life was further enriched by many other relatives,

friends, and customers, each one touched by his loyalty and generosity. Cliff served his country in the Navy, including overseas during the Vietnam War. He would eventually become a successful local business owner, operating Cliff's Plumbing and Heating in Killingly for 40 years, from 1984 until 2024, known for his hard work, commitment to service, and willingness to help anybody out at any hour-- if you visited his house, you knew that attention to yours came even before his own. Cliff enjoyed traveling in his RV, taking care of his little Pomeranians, and fighting the good fight to never throw anything away. He made friends everywhere he went, with his unpretentious character, infectious smile, and genuine care for others. Cliff didn't want a fuss, but we will honor and celebrate his remarkable life on December 7, 2025, from 2:00-5:00 PM at the Putnam Elks Club. Family, friends, and all who knew him are invited to gather, share stories, and remember him. If you aren't able to join us, take a friend out for a meal. It is what Cliff would do. Cliff was not a man who ever rested long. May he now rest, and rest in peace.



Marlene G. (Hunter) Hansen, 89



Marlene G. (Hunter) Hansen, 89, of Brooklyn, CT, passed away peacefully on Sunday, October 5, 2025, at Westview Healthcare Center, Dayville, CT. Marlene was born in Killingly on February 11, 1936, daughter of the late George Stevens, Sr and Gwendolyn (Conrad) Stevens. She was a chicken farmer for many years and was very involved with Mortlake Fire Dept and Brooklyn Fairgrounds. She was predeceased by her loving soulmate Robert Hunter in 2020,

her daughter Arlene Fredette, sister Joyce Davidson. She leaves a brother George Stevens III, a sister Beverly Fedorowicz, her grandson, Andrew Fredette and his wife Rachel of Thompson, CT and several nieces and nephews. A very heartfelt thank you to the entire staff of Westview Healthcare Center for the wonderful care she received there. A tremendous amount of gratitude to Dr. Joseph Botta and Kerri Sauer, APRN for the exceptional care they provided to her. There was a graveside service on Tuesday October 28, 2025 at 10AM in South Cemetery in Brooklyn with a celebration of life this coming spring. [tillinghastfh.com](mailto:tillinghastfh.com)

Pasquale "Pat" Integlia, 84



Pasquale "Pat" Integlia, 84, of Danielson passed away peacefully on Monday October 13, 2025, with his family by his side. Pat was born in North Providence, RI on September 16, 1941, the son of the late Pasquale and Mildred (Holden) Integlia. He was the beloved husband of Linda M. (Titchen) Integlia. Pat worked at International Paper in Putnam for 42 years until his retirement. He was a communicant of St. James Church in Danielson. Pat was an avid sports fan and enjoyed watching the Boston Red Sox and UConn Women's Basketball games. He also loved to travel with his family. Besides his wife he is survived by his children, Wendy (Peter) Baker of Brooklyn, Judy (Dale) Scully of Hampton, Steven

Integlia of Sterling, and Angela Brodeur of CA. Five grandchildren, Ashley Dumas, Mathieu Baker, Sonja Challinor, Steven Integlia, Jr. and Justin Veal. He is also survived by eleven great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. Pat was predeceased by his sister MayAnn Soler and brother Tony Francisco. Calling hours will be held on Sunday October 19, 2025, from 4-7PM in Tillinghast Funeral Home 433 Main Street Danielson. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Monday October 20, 2025, at 10:00AM at St. James Church, Danielson. Burial followed at Holy Cross Cemetery. In lieu of Flowers donations in Pat's memory may be made to Glioblastoma GBM Foundation 6350 Lake Oconee Parkway Suite 110-117 Greensboro, GA 30642 or Matulaitis Nursing Home 10 Thurber Road Putnam, CT 06260. [tillinghastfh.com](mailto:tillinghastfh.com)

Send all obituary notices to Villager Newspapers, PO Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550, or by e-mail to [obits@stone-bridgepress.news](mailto:obits@stone-bridgepress.news)

BABY SHOWER

continued from page A1

them a chance while they're still pregnant to connect with those resources." The event featured representatives of Day Kimball Hospital, Interfaith Human Services of Putnam, the Killingly and Putnam Family Resource Centers, Babywearing Connecticut, Community Health Center, Inc., The Northeast Early Childhood Council, The Nurturing Families Network, EastConn, Head Start, Connecticut WIC, TEEG, and more all providing information on their services and how they can assist mothers in their journey. Drake called the event a great example of the community coming together to support one another. "With this event, my goal was to give them that feeling of a village, that they're not alone. There are plenty of people to offer them support in whatever makes sense," said Drake. Expectant mothers or those in need of services are encouraged to contact TEEG where they can learn more information about the resources available to them throughout the Quiet Corner.



Expectant parents talk with a representative of the Putnam Family Resource Center.

AMERICA 250

continued from page A1

hefty root system. The shade from the overgrown evergreens has brewed a petri dish for algae and lichen which have enshrouded the symbolic carvings and epitaphs. Still, many of the colonial gravestones remain intact and can be easily cleaned, revealing the forgotten stories of the past. During one of the recent cleaning expeditions a group of students discovered a very long epitaph on Frances Harriett Eldridge's headstone. The eulogy sang her praises as one who lived a ministerial life caring for others even though she'd been lame since childhood. Harriett, whom I later learned was called "Aunt Fanny" by the Grosvenor/Eldridge family, was born in 1830 to Hannah Grosvenor, daughter of Col. Thomas Grosvenor, and Edward Eldridge Esquire. The Celtic Cross on her grave-stone indicates that she was

a member of the Episcopal Church. The carved text on the stone gives us clues about Harriett's character, but we don't know how she became lame or why she never married. Digging a little further into land and probate records I discovered that Harriett was intelligent and capable. When her mother, Hannah Grosvenor Eldridge died in 1865, Harriett was the administrix for her estate. Hannah bequeathed the Thomas Grosvenor farm to her three daughters, Frances Harriett Eldridge, Constance Eldridge, and Helen Eldridge Goodhue. It appears that Harriett and Constance, the unmarried sisters may have divided the property to build their own homes, while Helen, who was married, kept the main house. It's surprising how much information about a person's life can be gleaned from the data recorded on a grave-stone. This is one of the many reasons why stewardship of our early burial grounds is so important. In just a few ses-

sions of cleaning and removing lichen from the Pomfret Street gravestones, the Rectory Community Service students were able to reveal information and stories long forgotten. Besides data points and textual clues, the artwork in the carvings on the finial (top of the gravestone) tell their own stories about the social and religious history of the time-period. For example, we know by the Ornate Cross on Harriett's gravestone that she was Episcopalian. Earlier carvings from Puritan New England are riddled with symbology from the winged angel heads moving into the 19th century willows and urns. Students in the Rectory History Detective enrichment group are learning about the gravestone carvers and their symbolism from local expert, Keegan Day. They toured the South Cemetery with Keegan Day and Donna Dufresne, where they were introduced to some of the gravestone carvings and learned about

some of the Pomfret's first citizens buried there. Later in October the group will be visiting the Old Abington Burial Ground where sixty Revolutionary soldiers are interred. The students will be collaborating with local artist, Laura Tedeschi, whose paintings are inspired by New England gravestone carvings. She will share some of the symbolism and how the carvings inspired her modern renditions of this regional craft. The students will then create their own artwork inspired by the carvings and the stories about Pomfret's Colonial and Revolutionary Past. The Pomfret America 250 Commission is willing to work with students and faculty from local schools to explore the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution through a local lens. For more information about field trips, essay and poster contests, and other curricular opportunities, contact Donna Dufresne [windsong@snet.net](mailto:windsong@snet.net).

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LEGALS

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
**ESTATE OF**  
**Jerome Michael Zolobkowski**  
**(25-00380)**  
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated October 10, 2025, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.  
Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk  
The fiduciary is:  
Jami Ashley  
& Benjamin David Crowley  
c/o KATHERINE C GARVEY,  
GARVEY LAW LLC,  
1312 MEMORIAL A VENUE,  
WEST SPRINGFIELD, MA 01098  
October 31, 2025

Town of Woodstock Planning & Zoning Commission  
On October 16, 2025, the Town of Woodstock Planning & Zoning Commission made the following decision:  
• **Denied without prejudice.** Application #666-07-25 – Text Amendment concerning "Managed Residential Communities." Applicant: Kenneth Pelc/KM Villa State, LLC. Details of this decision may be obtained by contacting the Woodstock Land Use Department at [landuse@woodstockct.gov](mailto:landuse@woodstockct.gov) October 31, 2025  
**LEGAL NOTICE**  
**WOODSTOCK PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
The Woodstock PZC will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, November 6,

2025 at 7:45 p.m. at Woodstock Town Hall, 415 Route 169, Woodstock, for the following:  
1. Application #668-09-25, Activity on a Scenic Road, 259 Quarry Road (MBL #6389/70/23). Applicant: Kings Highway Farm, LLC/Brian Sheldon.  
The public may speak and submit written communications until the close of the public hearing. Details of the application are available from the Town Planner, [landuse@woodstockct.gov](mailto:landuse@woodstockct.gov) or available in the Land Use Office.  
David Morse  
Chairman  
October 24, 2025  
October 31, 2025

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
**ESTATE OF**  
**Paul E Goulette, Sr. (25-00377)**  
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated October 22, 2025, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.  
Brenda Duquette, Chief Clerk  
The fiduciary is:  
Joseph Marcel Goulette  
c/o FRANK GERARD HERZOG,  
BORNER SMITH ALEMAN  
HERZOG & CERRONE,LLC, 155  
PROVIDENCE STREET, PO BOX  
166, PUTNAM, CT 06260  
October 31, 2025

# Should you sell or auction gold or silver?



At the time of writing today’s column, silver is selling for over \$50 an ounce, while gold has sailed past the \$4,000 per ounce mark. You’ve probably seen television and newspaper ads telling you to trade your gold for cash. You may be asking yourself if you are better off selling your gold so it can be scrapped or if you should consign it with an auction house. The answer is: it depends.

If you have broken gold bracelets or damaged sterling silver serving pieces, it may be fine to sell them to a dealer who will scrap them. Whether you sell or auction the damaged and broken pieces, you will receive less than the scrap value. Pieces may need to be melted, and the buyer needs to make a profit. Some choose to auction broken pieces as well.

There are many silver pieces that should not be scrapped. Having a com-



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES  
**WAYNE TUISKULA**

plete set of sterling silver flatware or hollowware serving pieces will appeal to collectors or buyers who plan to use them, and these sets should be sold at auction. Some sterling items are considered pieces of art and could command a premium. Georg Jensen, Tiffany, and patterns by famous makers like Gorham and Towle typically sell well above scrap prices. Antique pieces of sterling and coin silver by well-known silversmiths can also bring high prices. Coin silver is 90% silver (the same percentage as a U.S. silver coin) while sterling is 92.5% silver.

Many of the reasons silver should head to auction also apply to gold. Tiffany & Co., Harry Winston, Cartier, and Van Cleef & Arpels are some of the makers that command a premium. Scrap dealers may not factor in the value

of gemstones when buying jewelry. The gemstones and design of a piece can greatly increase its value. Gold comes in different purities with 10 karat being 42 percent pure, 14 karat 58.5 percent, and 18 karat being 75 percent pure. The purity will of course impact the value. Auctioning your gold will ensure it reaches a wide audience. Instead of selling to one person, people from across the country or even across the world can compete to buy your items. Another plus is that the process is transparent. You can see exactly what your piece

es sold for and won’t be left wondering whether or not you were paid a fair amount for your valuables.

U.S. coins cannot legally be scrapped and melted. Some gold and silver coins may be worth just their value for the precious metals. Dimes, quarters, half dollars, and dollar coins from 1964 are made with 90 percent silver. However, there are many factors that can make a coin more valuable. The condition, the date, the mintmark (the letter that indicates the city where it was made), and different variations can turn

a \$10 coin into a \$1,000 coin. I’d recommend having your coins checked before you accept their gold or silver value.

Knowing when to sell gold and silver can be a difficult decision, especially with fluctuations in value. Given the current prices, many people are finding there’s a silver lining when they go for the gold and auction their pieces.

We are always accepting gold and silver for our auctions. Our single-collector Civil War memorabilia auction will be online next month. We are still accept-

ing consignments of paintings, statues, vintage comic books, baseball cards, and other valuable antiques and collectibles. Please visit our website <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](mailto:info@centralmassauctions.com) or 508-612-6111.

## Fight the winter blues with double amaryllis

P A d d unique flare to this winter’s indoor garden and décor with double amaryllis. The several layers of colorful petals are sure to make a statement wherever they are displayed.



GARDEN MOMENTS  
.....  
**MELINDA MYERS**

white petals are covered with coral pink stripes. If you like the traditional red amaryllis, you will enjoy the giant red flowers of Double King. Each bulb produces three stems with four or more blooms that open at different times to extend your enjoyment.

The candy cane striped narrow petals of Double Doublet are sure to catch your attention. Each flower is a bit different, adding to its uniqueness. Watch as the three stems grow, producing as many as a dozen flowers from each bulb.

Enjoy weeks of artistic blooms when you grow Double Aphrodite amaryllis. The ruffled white petals have a narrow red edge and lime green center. The fine red brushstrokes that extend from the petal tips add to this amaryllis’s charm.

Plant your amaryllis bulbs in a quality potting mix with the top half above the soil surface. Grow a single bulb in a pot that is seven to eight inches deep and five to six inches across with drainage holes. Or group several bulbs together in a larger container. Water the potting mix thoroughly and



Courtesy — Longfield-Gardens.com

The artistic blooms of Double Aphrodite amaryllis have ruffled white petals with a narrow red edge and lime green center.

place the container in a cool sunny location. Continue to water thoroughly but only often enough to keep the soil barely moist.

Add a bit of elegance and ease of care by going soil-less. Place several inches of pebbles in the bottom of a glass vase or watertight container. Cover the pebbles with water. Set the bulb on top of the pebbles, adding more stones around the bulb to hold it in place. Leave the top one third of the bulb exposed. Add water as needed to maintain the water level just below the bulb.

Now relax and wait a month or more for your amaryllis bulb to wake up and start growing. Water more often once sprouts appear. Enjoy the transformation as the bulb turns into a flowering plant over the next few weeks.

Growing amaryllis indoors will keep you gardening all year long, providing mood-boosting benefits and stress relief. Plus, the colorful blossoms are sure to brighten your winter days.

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” instant video series* and the nationally syndicated *Melinda’s Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by Longfield Gardens for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).

### POSITIVELY

continued from page A3

work, his public image tarnished, his potential derailed. Years of drift: opportunities lost, trust broken, momentum vanished. Friends, fans, and insiders began to write him off. Those years defined him—for a while, at least. He was behind, and it showed.

Maybe you see some of yourself in that spiral — the regret, the exhaustion, the wondering if you’ll ever get another shot.

In an interview with Oprah Winfrey, he said, “It’s hard to get out of the barrel, it’s slippery around the edges, and people like to see you fall back in.”

Behind the headlines was a man fighting himself—haunted by his addictions, uncertain if he’d ever climb back.

Something inside of him must have shifted. Downey embraced treatment and sobriety. He began returning to the industry with more minor roles, rebuilding trust. Soon, he became the face of the Marvel Studios universe as Tony Stark in Iron Man, launching a blockbuster run.

After a few years of focused effort, he effectively erased the drag of the previous decade. He locked into a mission: sobriety, discipline, and proving his value. From near-ruin to “one of the most bankable stars in the world,” he flipped the narrative.

In a New York Times article titled “The Fall and Rise of Robert Downey, Jr.,” he admitted, “I understand reversal of fortune; that usually comes from my own hand.”

The years of chaos didn’t vanish—they taught him—but the next few years of focus reset his life. He quieted the chaos. He said no to what destroyed him and yes to what healed him—recovery, the twelve steps, yoga, meditation, and a renewed sense of purpose.

He aligned with a new vision, determined to shift his trajectory—with a laser focus. By 2008, his new career arc was in place. The decade of hurt became the foundation for his resurgence. The past refined him—not defined him.

Now, what about you? Maybe you’re looking at a past decade of “if onlys,” of being stuck, of things going sideways, and you’re ready to say: not anymore.

Eliminate distractions—screens that snatch your attention, gossip that drains your energy, addictions that drain your soul, doubts that whisper “you can’t.”

It’s time to focus. It’s time to concentrate. The hole may be deep, carved by doubt or addiction, but you can still climb out. The light isn’t gone—it’s waiting for you to remember it’s there.

It’s faint at first—but it burns brighter each time you take a step upward.

You don’t need to be perfect. You need to be present. You need to refocus. Focus is a superpower—and it doesn’t cost money or status. It just asks for attention.

Your past? As hard as it is to believe, it doesn’t get to decide your tomorrow.

Just a couple of years of concentrated, consistent action can rewrite your next chapter. And when you decide to live like that, you begin to become unstoppable.

Focus, determination, and sobriety cut through confusion, clear your vision, and remind you who you really are.

## Thompson hosts Spooktacular Community Event

THOMPSON — The Parking Lot of Mary R. Fisher Elementary School was a busy place on Oct. 23 as all kinds of ghosts, ghouls, goblins, costumed heroes and more enjoyed the Spooktacular event featuring a line of Trunk-Or-Treat displays. Serving as a precursor to Halloween, the event helped bring local businesses and organizations together as kids and families gathered some of their first treats of the season and had the chance to show off their costumes a week early.



Thompson Recreation put together a bright and fun display complete with many Halloween staples and colors.



Thompson Little League’s display included a dancing witch and a peaking black cat.



EEG staff brought along a Stitch car themed after the namesake character of “Lilo & Stitch.”