KILLINGLY VILLAGER

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Friday, August 28, 2026

Complimentary to homes by request

Community rallies behind Congregational Church of Putnam after ceiling collapse

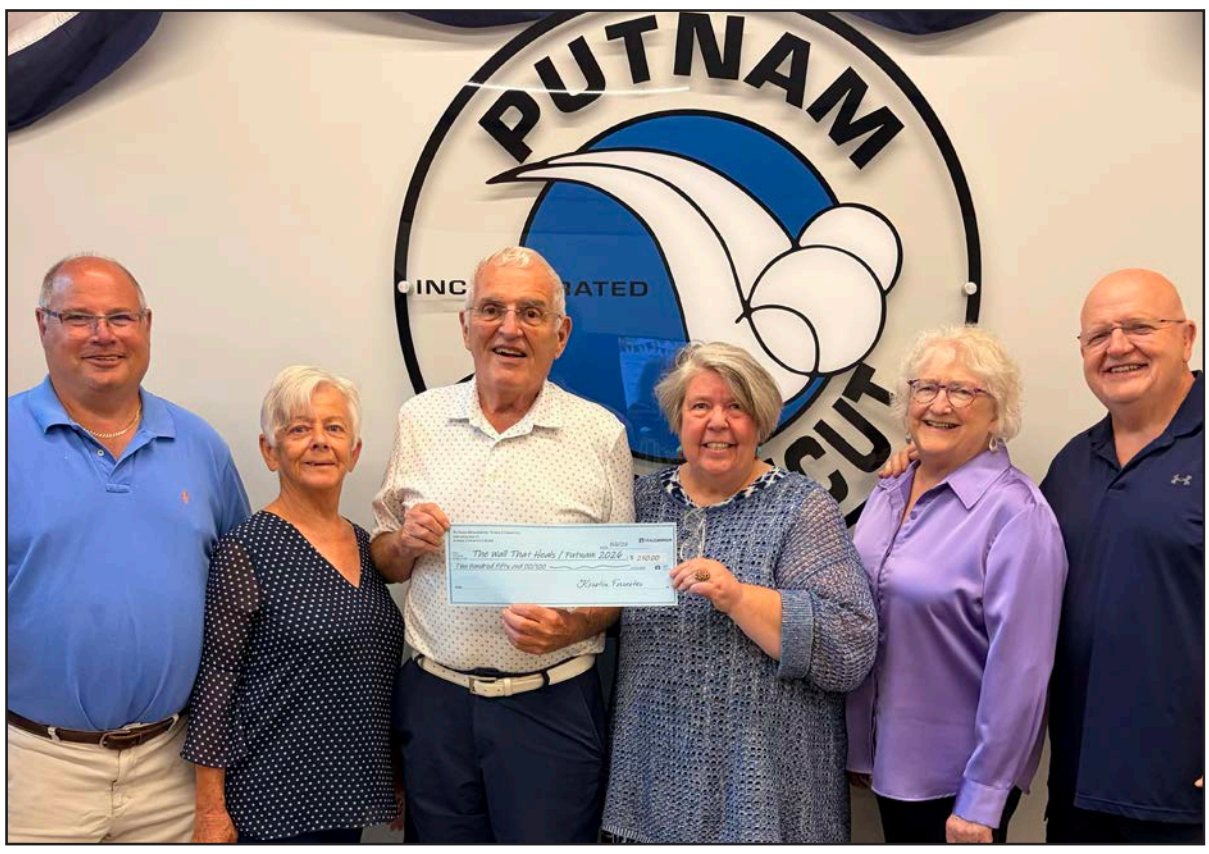
BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

PUTNAM — "The building is not the church" has become a defining phrase of resilience for a local congregation after their church's ceiling fell in, damaging one of Putnam's most iconic downtown landmarks.

On the outside, the Congregational Church of Putnam looks normal as ever - a shining beacon of hope and strength where many have come and gone to embrace their faith, and many more have visited to enjoy meals, fundraisers, and craft fairs in downtown Putnam.

Inside, however, are the remains of an unfortunate

Turn To COLLAPSE *page* A11



Courtesy

The Putnam Democratic Town Committee recently presented a $250 check to help fund 'The Wall That Heals' visit to Putnam. The Wall That Heals, a three-quarter scale mobile replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and mobile Education Center, will visit Murphy Park (15 Keech St, Putnam) from September 10 to September 13, 2026. The event is free and open to the public 24 hours a day. Organizers need 200 to 300 volunteers to ensure the memorial is guarded and staffed around the clock. We especially need late-night and early-morning volunteers. If you are able to help, please sign up through The Wall That Heals at thewallthathealsputnam2026.org. From left to right: Deputy Mayor Scott Pempek, Selectwoman Gloria Marion, Mayor Seney, DTC Chairperson Mary Oliver, DTC treasurer Kerstin Forrester, Selectman Mike Bogdanski.

Northeastern Connecticut Chamber announces Kelly Bellavance as new Executive Director

REGION — The Northeastern CT Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that Kelly Bellavance has been selected as the organization's next Executive Director. Bellavance brings more than 20 years of experience in higher education, leadership, relationship building, small business ownership, and community involvement to the role.

Bellavance was selected following a comprehensive search and interview process led by the Chamber's hiring committee and Board of Directors. A Brooklyn resident, local small business owner, and active member of the region's business community, Bellavance brings both an impressive professional background and a strong connection to Northeastern Connecticut. Her experience in leadership, relationship building, event management, and community engagement will help guide the Chamber as it continues its work supporting businesses across the 23 towns it serves.

Bellavance spent more than two decades working in college admissions, including nearly 16 years as Associate Director of Admission at Boston College. Throughout her career, she led recruitment initiatives, managed teams, built relationships with schools and community partners, and coordinated large scale events and programs with thousands of attendees.

Bellavance is also no stranger to organizational leadership. She served as President of the New England Association for College Admission

Turn To BELLAVANCE *page* A11

Local schools receive first wave of High-Quality Special Ed Incentive grant funding

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

REGION — Three local school districts have been named as recipients of funding through the first round of the High-Quality Special Education Incentive Grant Program.

Brooklyn, Putnam, and Thompson will each receive money to help support their special education programs through the competitive grant. Brooklyn will receive $146,159, while Putnam and Thompson will receive $315,000 and $156,422, respectively.

The High-Quality Special Education Incentive Grant Program, administered by the Connecticut State Department of Education, was created through an act of the Connecticut General Assembly to help local and regional education boards build in-district and regional special education services according to a release from Gov. Ned Lamont's office.

In the press release announcing the recipients, Lamont focused on the value and importance of investing in these programs to help districts accommodate all students regardless of their specific educational needs.

"It is important that school districts have the resources to support special education programming that allows more students to learn alongside their peers in their own communities," Lamont said.

"Over the last several years, special education services have been one of the largest cost drivers for school districts due to the increase in the number of students eligible for special education services and the rapid increase in the cost of those services, particularly for students outplaced in approved special education programs," he continued. "This increased investment supports our municipalities and our students with special needs."

The first round of the new grant committed $10.6

Turn To FUNDING *page* A11

Bysiewicz visits Westview Child Care Center

DAYVILLE — The students and staff of Westview Child Care Center recently hosted an illustrative campus tour for Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Office of Early Childhood Commissioner Elena Trueworthy, and members of the Connecticut OEC leadership team. The presentation highlighted the facilities, fun, and friendships to be found at the Dayville destination.

Katy Holzer, Director of Westview Child Care Center, led the distinguished guests to explore individual classrooms, visit the large indoor Gross Motor space, and sing along with a Prekindergarten class. The visit concluded outside under brilliant sunshine. Guests were happy to close their time learning the nuances of brightly-colored bubbles, cheering for determined riders along the tricycle path, and encouraging playful creativity on the stage set before the base of "Imagination Castle." The young students approached the moment with joyful innocence—they were purely delighted to encounter new friends, exhibit playground features, and share a few extra smiles on a sunny afternoon.

Westview Executive Vice President David T. Panteleakos appreciated this recent visit by Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz as a mark of continued connection spanning many years and successes, and valued the opportunity to talk with the Office of early Childhood leadership about present and prospective goals.

"We are delighted to share this moment with Lt. Gov. Bysiewicz, Commissioner Trueworthy, and all our guests on the Westview campus. We are happy to celebrate the growth of the Westview organization as well as all of the achievements here in Northeastern Connecticut!" Panteleakos said.

Operating proudly as an employer-based child care center, Westview Child Care Center is capable of care provisions for children as young as 6 months old, preschool education for each stage before Kindergarten, and after-school care for students up to 15 years old. The Dayville child care facility offers services prominently—but not exclusively—to all staff members of Westview Health Care Center and Country Living at Westview Commons. The Westview family of facilities felt honored to showcase the impact that high-quality early childhood education has on children, families, and the workforce.

Westview Child Care Center Director Katy Holzer expressed gratitude for this opportunity to further inform the discussions that Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz holds on important early childhood matters.

"Recognition like this means the world to our team and reaffirms our commitment to providing exceptional care every day," Director Holzer remarked. "Thank you to Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz, Commissioner Trueworthy, and the OEC leadership team for spending the morning with us. To all of our incredible early educators, families, and children—thank you for making Westview a place we're so proud to share with our state leaders!"

Westview Child Care Center is part of the Westview family of services, alongside Westview Health Care Center and Country Living at Westview Commons.

Back-to-school spending: Does consumer sentiment make the grade?

FINANCIAL FOCUS

JIM ZAHANSKY
INVESTMENT ADVISER

Back-to-school shopping lists are more than a seasonal ritual; they're also a real-time read on how households are weighing two competing forces this year: the squeeze of inflation and the lift of a strong market.

While estimates for back-to-school shopping are wide-ranging, at WHZ we're optimistic that spending will increase again this year. Most consumers are employed, and stocks have been in a bull market for almost four years. School goods aren't immune from inflation, which will make this year's purchases more expensive, but sales should attract buyers. Judged by Amazon's Prime Day, consumers are ready to spend, especially when there's a bargain to be had. Prime Day sales, which ran from June 23 to June 26, rose 9.3 percent, according to data from Adobe.

A National Retail Federation (NRF) survey found that consumers plan to spend a record $43.3 billion on back-to-school goods for those in grade school, a 9.9 percent increase from last year and surpassing the prior high of $41.5 billion in 2023. Spending is expected to increase on shoes, school supplies, and electronics. Spending on college students is expected to be even stronger, rising 16.6 percent to a record $103.5 billion, with strong spending on electronics, dorm décor, and clothing.

The new twist in back-to-school shopping this year: artificial intelligence. We'll be watching to see how this new tech tool helps parents track down all the items on their kids' wish lists.

Back to school means shopping

Now that the dog days of summer are in the rearview mirror and kids are returning to school, it's time to go shopping for sneakers that fit and crayons that are sharpened. In recent years, back-to-school shopping has been spread over more weeks as families take advantage of sales.

Early birds tap into Amazon's Prime Day shopping specials in June, and procrastinators race to the stores in late August or early September. Estimates for back-to-school shopping run the gamut—from down 17 percent to up 10 percent. We're optimistic that spending will be relatively strong because unemployment is low and Amazon's Prime Day sales were strong in June.

Let's take a look at what may influence this year's back-to-school shopping season.

Survey says: More spending this year

A National Retail Federation (NRF) survey found that consumers plan to spend a record $43.3 billion on back-to-school goods for those in grade school, a 9.9 percent increase from last year and surpassing the prior high of $41.5 billion in 2023. Spending is expected to increase on shoes, school supplies, and electronics. Spending on college students is expected to be even stronger, rising 16.6 percent to a record $103.5 billion, with strong spending on electronics, dorm décor, and clothing.

Not everyone is optimistic. A NerdWallet back-to-school survey found that shoppers plan to spend 17.5 percent less this year vs last year. A quarter of respondents said they plan to pull back because higher costs of living have squeezed budgets, and 62 percent plan to seek out sales, up from 52 percent last year. A Deloitte survey found consumers plan to spend the same amount this year as they did in 2025.

The divergent results may be due to the survey respondents' income levels. JLL's survey found that back-to-school budgets rose by an average of 11.7 percent this year, but those earning less than $50,000 plan to increase spending by only 3.8 percent, while those earning between $50,000 and $150,000 plan to boost spending by 20.7 percent, and those with even higher incomes expect to spend 14.4 percent more this year.

Reason to stay optimistic

We expect back-to-school spending to be robust because sales rose 9.3 percent during Amazon Prime Day, which ran from June 23 to June 26, according to data from Adobe. Amazon has successfully turned its annual sale into a major event, with $26.4 billion spent over the four days. That rivals the $32.5 billion spent from Black Friday through Cyber Monday last year. Amazon's impressive Prime Day results are even more impressive now that Walmart and Target have launched their own competing sales events.

We're hopeful consumers will continue shopping because the job market remains healthy. With the July unemployment rate at only 4.1 percent, the vast majority of consumers are pulling in a paycheck. Meanwhile, consumers who invested in the stock market are sitting on multiple years of strong gains.

We're certainly mindful of the impact of inflation, which continues to run north of 3 percent. With prices rising broadly, it's tough for some families to stretch their incomes. Looking for sales will no doubt be part of the back-to-school shopping equation.

This year artificial intelligence (AI) may play a role in helping families stay within their budgets. Seventy-three percent of parents surveyed by PwC said they plan to use AI to help research, compare, budget, or find deals. We'll be watching to see how this new tech tool helps parents track down all the items on their kids' wish lists.

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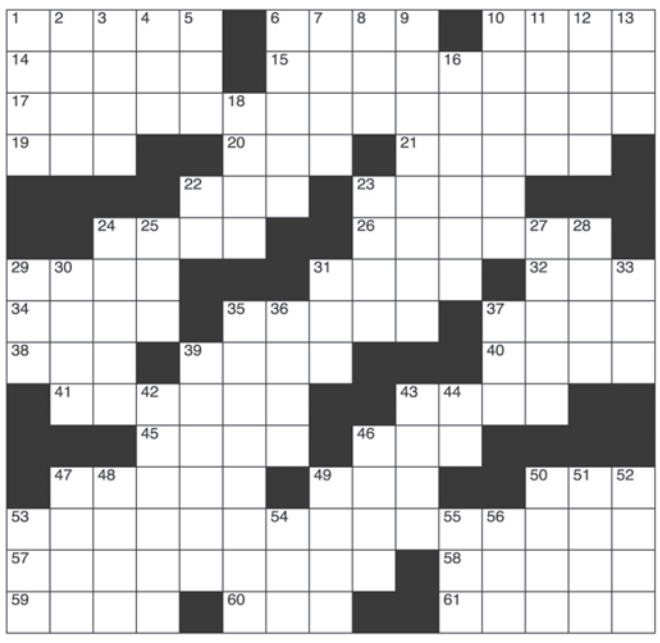


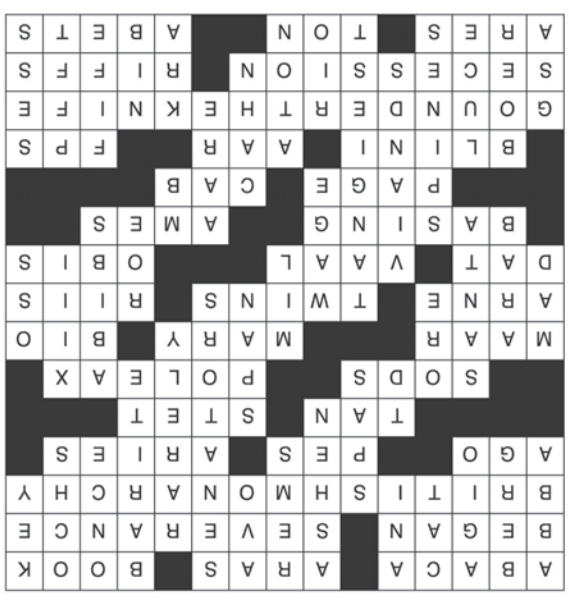
CLUES ACROSS

1. Manila hemp plant
6. Turkish river
10. Something to read
14. In a way, initiated
15. Popular Apple TV series
17. King Charles is part of it
19. Earlier
20. Foot (Latin)
21. Zodiac sign
22. A browning of the skin
23. Remain as is
24. Turfs
26. It's used to slaughter animals
29. Volcanic crater
31. The mother of Jesus
32. One's life story
34. One-time Liverpool coach Slot
35. Counterparts
37. Jacob __, American journalist
38. Digital audiotape
39. River in South Africa
40. Kimono sashes
41. Rooting somewhere
43. American spy Aldrich
45. A way to call for
46. Taxi
47. Pancakes made of buckwheat flour
49. Swiss river
50. Popular type of video game (abbr.)
53. Have surgery
57. Formal withdrawal from a union
58. Performs spoken improv
59. Greek war god
60. 2,000 lbs.
61. Helps to evade capture

CLUES DOWN

1. Swedish rock group
2. "Friday Night Lights" director Peter
3. Currency exchange fee
4. Feline
5. Folk singer DiFranco
6. Ghastly pale from distress
7. Rapid eye movements
8. Monetary unit of Macao
9. Lawmakers
10. Colorless mineral
11. At some prior time
12. American protest singer
13. Opener
16. Seldom
18. Relaxing places
22. Touchdown
23. From end to end
24. Kids love him
25. Metal-bearing solid
27. Skin care product manufacturer
28. Thirteen
29. Angry
30. Member of a Semitic people
31. One-thousandth of an inch
33. Former CIA
35. Most lemony
36. Engage in
37. Mass of fish eggs
39. Food supplies
42. Backbones
43. American real estate investment firm
44. Megabyte
46. "Three Coins in the Fountain" songwriter
47. Dutch colonist
48. Full-grown pike fish
49. Emergency prep expert Edwards
50. Flute
51. Dismissive sound
52. Slang term for marijuana
53. Young women's association
54. Cosmopolitan city
55. Narrow isthmus in Thailand
56. Pointed end of a pen

PUZZLE SOLUTION



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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
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BUSINESS MANAGER
RYAN CORNEAU
860-928-1818 EXT. 102
ryan@salmonpress.news

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
JIM DINICOLA
508-764-6102
jdinicola@stonebridgepress.com

EDITOR
BRENDAN BERUBE
860-928-1818 x 323
brendan@villagernewspapers.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
JULIE CLARKE
860-928-1818, EXT. 305
julie@villagernewspapers.com

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We'd Love To Hear From You!

Chelsea Groton Foundation awards grant to Ragged Hill Woods program

POMFRET CENTER — As our summer camp program ends at the Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp, we move on to concentrating on our Ragged Hill Woods Environmental Education Programs We are excited to acknowledge receipt of a $5,000 grant from the Chelsea Groton Foundation to support our Ragged Hill Woods program.

The Foundation's mission is to support their ongoing commitment in partnership to the long term growth in the local community. We are very grateful for this award which will allow us to keep tuition costs as low as possible to allow access to more participants. This is the second year that we have received support from this Foundation and as you can see, it made a lot of campers smile.

Our fall homeschool days for children in second through fifth grades will run from 12:30 – 3:30 p.m. on Mondays as follows: Sept. 14 – Nature Detective Training, September 21 – Mapmakers and Trailblazers, Sept. 28 – Tree Time Travelers, October 5 – Forest Feasts: Seeds, Nuts, and Survival, Oct. 19 – Forest Floor Recycling Crew and Oct. 26 – Rocks, Roots and Hidden Trails. Cost is $45 per child per class or $250 for all six weeks. Topics are being selected for our six week Wednesday afternoon programs from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. for children from Kindergarten to grade 6 from Sept. 9 to Oct. 21. All programs are held rain or shine. You can email raggedhillwoods@gmail.com to inquire about topics and specific dates for this series.

Livestrong's 343-mile First Responder Ride for Resilience to pass through area

THOMPSON — Ahead of the 25th anniversary of Sept. 11, Livestrong, a nonprofit

dedicated to improving the daily lives of cancer survivors, is hosting a landmark First Responder Ride for Resilience, a five-day, 343-mile cycling journey from Boston to the 9/11 Memorial in New York City honoring the 343 firefighters lost on September 11, 2001. Riders will move through northeastern Connecticut on Monday, Sept. 7. Local residents are invited to cheer on riders, volunteer at a water stop, or donate to show their support.

According to research from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, firefighters are nine percent more likely to be diagnosed with cancer and 14 percent more likely to die from it than the general public. The ride brings together first responders, cancer survivors, and community members to raise funds benefiting Friends of Firefighters, the Boston Fire Cancer Foundation, and Livestrong, expanding access to cancer survivorship and mental health programs for first responders and their families.

"This ride wouldn't be possible without the communities that welcome it along the way," said Suzanne Stone, President and CEO of Livestrong. "Every stop gives people an opportunity to honor the firefighters and first responders affected by September 11 while supporting organizations that continue to serve them. We hope people will see this as a chance to come together around something that matters: honoring the heroes we lost,

and standing with those still fighting today."

"Friends of Firefighters was born out of 9/11 with the promise that firefighters would never have to face the weight of the job alone," said Nancy Carbone, Executive Director of Friends of Firefighters. "In the last 25 years, we have lost nearly 800 members of the FDNY to September 11th and 9/11 cancer, and job-related cancer remains one of the greatest risks our firefighters face every single day. Whether you ride, volunteer, or donate, you're providing hands-on support for the physical and mental toll cancer takes on our first responders."

To register, volunteer, donate or view the local route through northeastern Connecticut, visit 911ride.org.

About Livestrong

Founded in 1997, Livestrong has supported more than 10 million people living with, through, and beyond cancer, providing the trusted information, programs, and community that help survivors navigate every stage of the journey. Livestrong helped establish survivorship as a formal field of study in cancer care and continues to

expand access to the practical and emotional support that cancer survivors and their families deserve. Because surviving is just the beginning. To learn more or to donate, visit Livestrong.org.

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The Woodstock Historical Society
This month's installation of
Crazy for Quilts is the latest in our series of small spotlight exhibitions of quilts by local quilters
Also on view is our major exhibition
Woodstock Through the Camera's Eye in Post-Civil War America
Will are open on Sundays from 10 am. to 1 pm.
The Center for Woodstock History
Palmer Memorial Hall, 523 Route 169
Research appointments and scheduling visits at other times may be made at our web site
www. centerforwoodstockhistory.com

Quiet Corner Al-Anon group meets Wednesdays

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

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

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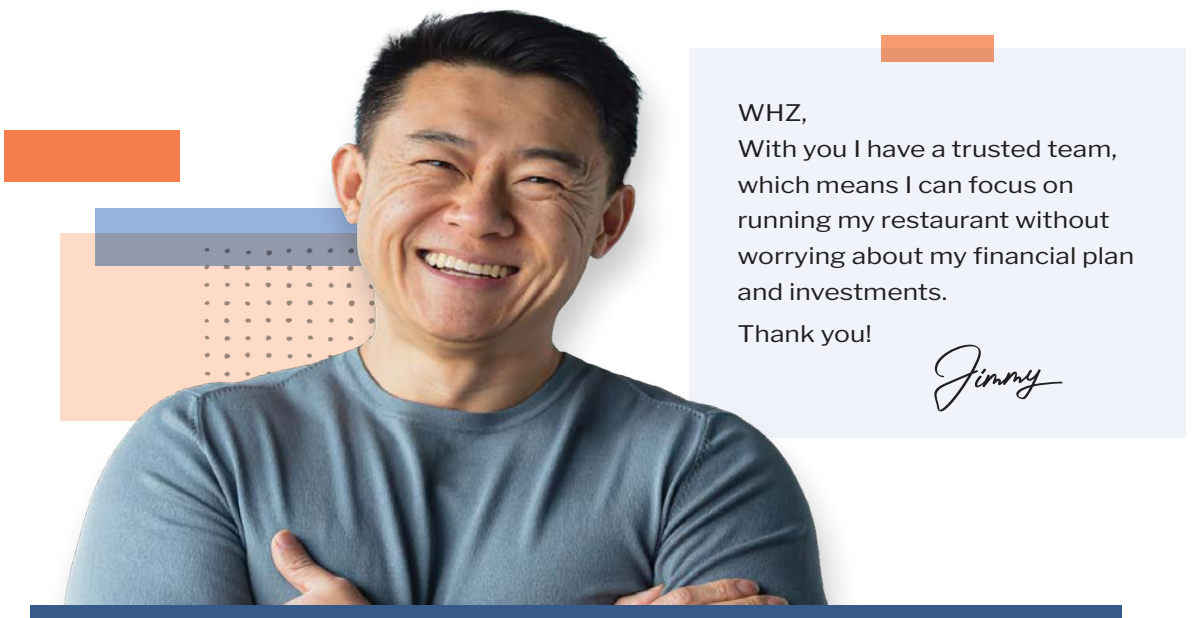

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P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550

Telephone: (860) 928-1818
Fax: (860) 928-5946
www.villagernewspapers.com

Frank G. Chilinski
President/Publisher

Brendan Berube
Editor

A church is more than its walls

There are certain buildings that become inseparable from the identity of a community.

The Congregational Church of Putnam is one of them. Its familiar presence downtown represents generations of worship, weddings, funerals, community meals, craft fairs, fundraisers and gatherings. Even those who have never attended a Sunday service likely recognize the church and understand that it occupies an important place in Putnam.

That is why the Aug. 7 collapse of the ceiling into the sanctuary was more than a maintenance problem. The photographs of wood, dust and debris scattered across a room normally associated with worship and celebration were difficult to see.

Fortunately, nobody was injured. Buildings can eventually be repaired. That fact alone is something worth remembering as the congregation confronts what could be a lengthy and complicated recovery.

Yet perhaps the most important lesson to emerge from the collapse was expressed by the Rev. Pamela Briddle herself: "The building is not the church. We are."

Those words could apply to many of the institutions that hold small communities together.

Buildings matter. They give organizations a home and communities landmarks around which memories accumulate. A church sanctuary where generations have celebrated Christmas, mourned loved ones and watched children grow up cannot simply be replaced by another room with four walls and a roof.

But an institution ultimately survives because of its people. That became evident remarkably quickly following the collapse. Only days later, members of the Putnam congregation gathered at Fort Hill Farms with the Thompson Congregational Church. The joint service had been planned before the Aug. 7 incident, but circumstances gave it considerably greater meaning.

Members of the Thompson church understand something about suddenly losing access to a cherished spiritual home. Their own congregation endured a devastating fire in 2016. There was something fitting about these two congregations worshipping together as Putnam began facing its own period of uncertainty.

There was also a broader lesson in the response. When something goes wrong in a small community, people frequently discover connections they did not realize existed until they need them. Offers of assistance arrive. Organizations share space. Neighbors ask what they can do. People who might ordinarily encounter one another only in passing suddenly find themselves working toward the same goal.

Putnam Town Hall and Community Center has now become part of that response, with the congregation announcing plans to hold services in its large meeting room for at least four weeks beginning Aug. 23.

It will not look like the sanctuary. It does not have to. What matters during these next several weeks and months is that the congregation continues gathering while those responsible for the building determine what must be done to make it safe again.

There are still significant questions ahead. There is no announced timeline for reopening. Repairs to a historic and prominent building can be complicated, and the extent of the work required will determine what comes next.

There is little value in pretending that those challenges will be easy. There is considerable value, however, in recognizing what has already survived.

The congregation remains together. Its neighbors have responded. Another church has stood beside it. The town has provided a temporary place to gather. Most importantly, no lives were lost when the ceiling came down.

Briddle told her congregation that the future does not have to be figured out all at once. That is sensible advice far beyond the walls of a church.

Large problems are rarely solved in a single moment. Communities address them one inspection, one decision, one contribution and one act of generosity at a time.

Someday, the hope is that people will again walk through the doors of the Congregational Church of Putnam and gather beneath a restored and safe ceiling. When that day comes, the building will undoubtedly mean even more to those who return.

Until then, the congregation has already demonstrated something important.

A ceiling can fall. A sanctuary can close. The church can carry on.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Human dignity in a time of tyranny

To the Editor:

Any political system that treats human beings as expendable must be rejected, and instead, we must rededicate ourselves to a society that protects human well-being and human dignity everywhere. No political leader should be permitted to reduce others to a lesser status in which they are deemed unworthy of food, water, safety, or kindness.

Our survival depends upon empathy and compassion because these qualities are the foundation of civilization itself. It is no coincidence that allies of the current administration disparage empathy and call it a "weakness." By discrediting empathy, those in power hope to prepare people to accept the gross mistreatment and even annihilation of those deemed troublesome or expendable.

We have seen this process before, and we appear to be seeing it again. Today, however, the consequences extend beyond a country, continent, or community. Tyranny renders human lives expendable even as it assumes no responsibility for future generations or the environment upon which all life depends. Our escalating global climate crisis is the ultimate test of our current political values, and we are failing that test badly.

George Orwell understood the political machinery of power. In "1984," he writes that those in power seek only one thing: more power. They surveil and control the population, corrupt language, dominate the media, and compel people to deny the evidence before their eyes. Deprivation, humiliation, and disinformation make people fearful and angry. Into this mix, tyranny presents itself as a solution in the name of order and safety.

Today, those in power commit crimes against vulnerable people, especially children, that are almost impossible to imagine except for the pictures, eyewitnesses, and other records that make these crimes undeniable. Such crimes are the ultimate expression of heartless power over others.

What can be done? The possibilities are complex, but the problem is simple. Some people may prefer authoritarian certainty, political, religious, or both, to the difficult work of responsible democracy. But if we still hope to form a more perfect union, we can rededicate ourselves to a few basic ideas.

First, we must improve our critical-thinking skills so that we can recognize manipulation rather than repeat it. Second, we must confront the local expressions of global crisis by protecting our water, air, land, and other resources. Third, we must defend human dignity and reject every effort to dehumanize others. If it can happen to them, it can happen to you. At the heart of this is compassion, empathy, and the Golden Rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Joseph Zornado, PhD
Danielson

$40 trillion

To the Editor:

$40 trillion: that is the amount this week that the USA has passed in debt/deficit spending. Yes. This is true. You may want to read this a few times and let it sink in. We are spending $1 trillion every five months. Since the cult leader was reelected in 2024, the debt has risen $3.6 trillion; his first term, he let the debt run up some $7.8 trillion. That makes over $11 trillion in less than six years.

Using math, that means 30 percent of the debt is attached to the Cult Leader. Remember when the GOP used to care about this issue. At this pace he will add over $5 trillion to the debt before the 2028 election. Ouch. How great was DOGE now in retrospect? With all the money given and spent by the Dept. of Defense, we do not have enough weapons to fight a stupid, not necessary and poorly thought out and planned war in Iran. Have you heard this before we will grow our way out of the debt and good things will trickle down to the everyday American. More simple 3rd grade math the bigger the deficit grows the more money it will take, at these interest rates, the bigger it will get. It is unsustainable.

The effects of this problem are higher interest rates for borrowing on housing, cars etc. The price of gas has and will rise going forward and the price of oil heat is already approaching $5 a gallon. Hope for a warm winter. Costs go up but paychecks will not rise to match. This will impact seniors and retired people on fixed income, not allow some who want to retire will have to make changes. Parents with children will need good luck and those in their 20's and early 30's will face big struggles. We are living on a very slippery slope that could impact all of us very adversely.

One other thing, while the Cult Leader wants to cut out mail-in voting for any Americans, he just voted by mail this week. Double standard. More concerned with his vanity projects than most Americans daily living. He just keeps on grifting.

This one's for the No Bubbles Club at the Y.

David Cassettari
East Killingly

Application for Plainfield trash plant must be opposed

To the Editor:

We strongly oppose the proposed solid waste recycling facility ("trash plant") that Smart Technology Systems, LLC is seeking to develop on land between Norwich Road and Black Hill Road in Plainfield, CT. As lifelong residents of this community, we want to make everyone aware of the application that Smart Technologies has submitted to the CT Siting Council asking for a declaratory ruling. This declaratory ruling means Smart Technologies wants to bypass the full application/certification and public process, including an in person public hearing in Plainfield.

We urge everyone to oppose this application, and to oppose the declaratory ruling.

We also ask all state senators and representatives to support a change to state law so the Siting Council cannot put these projects in residential areas, and certainly not more than one per town! Plainfield already has the wood burning plant on Route 12. We believe it is unfair to the people of Plainfield to be forced to have another burn plant in our town.

The town of Plainfield did hold a vote on if the townspeople wanted the trash plant or not, and the results were an overwhelming 1,148 to 125 against the trash plant. Although this was a non-binding vote, the townspeople have definitely spoken!

This land is currently zoned residential for important reasons that should be respected and preserved. The proposed trash plant could have severe negative impacts on our community. Some of our concerns are below.

Health and environmental concerns:

Waste processing facilities are known to release particulate matter and potentially toxic chemicals that can harm respiratory health.

The proximity to residential areas puts families and the aquifer at direct risk of exposure to these pollutants

The proposed site is very close to Sugar Brook State Forest, threatening this protected natural area

Property value impacts:

Similar facilities have been documented to decrease surrounding property values for residents

Many residents, we included, have invested their life savings in their homes with the understanding that this area would remain residential

This financial harm would be imposed on homeowners who chose this location specifically for its residential character

Quality of life degradation:

The facility would introduce constant industrial noise and odor to our peaceful neighborhood

Increased truck traffic would create safety hazards, especially for children and the elderly

Light pollution would disrupt the natural day/night cycles for both residents and wildlife

The possibility of mice and rat infestations is high around huge amounts of trash

Experimental technology concerns:

This facility would be the first of its kind in the United States, making our community unwilling test subjects

Without established operational history in our country, there is no reliable data on the long-term health and environmental impacts

Residents should not bear the burden of being the "guinea pigs" for an unproven waste processing technology

Environmental justice:

The land serves as a natural buffer between existing residential homes

Industrial development would permanently destroy this environmental asset

The zoning laws were established precisely to prevent these kinds of incompatible land uses from harming established residential communities. The current zoning designation as residential should be maintained to protect the character of our neighborhood, our property values, our health, and our environment.

We strongly urge everyone who is concerned about this project to contact your State Representatives and give them your feedback. Also, please contact the Siting Council by Sept. 6 at siting.council@ct.gov or 860-827-2935 to inform them of your opposition to Smart Technologies application and request for a declaratory ruling.

Hopefully we can collectively ensure this land in Plainfield remains zoned residential, protecting it from this industrial development. Please stand with us and the many residents of Plainfield who chose to live here because of its residential character and natural beauty.

Please visit plainfieldtrashplant.org for more information.

Sincerely,

Marie and Dennis Hoffman
Plainfield

Remembering the Quiet Corner's role in the Revolution

Killingly at 300

Margaret Weaver

Tuesday, Sept. 1. 2 p.m. Killingly Public Library Virtual Author Discussion. David O. Stewart. "The Democracy We Must Keep; Why the Ideas that Built America Still Matter." Register at killinglypl.org under Virtual Author Talks to receive the link.

America 250. Saturday, Sept. 19. 12:30-1:30 p.m. PowerPoint presentation on Revolutionary Families of Northeastern Connecticut by Killingly Municipal Historian Margaret M. Weaver. Sponsored by the Putnam Public Library & the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam. Margaret will talk about how the Revolution was affecting families here in the Quiet Corner. Have you heard about the House the Women Built? All are welcome.

Although I am busy researching my own Revolutionary program, I've been trying to attend many of the ones that are being presented here in Northeastern Connecticut in conjunction with America's 250th anniversary. On Aug. 21, I had the pleasure of seeing a Revolutionary presentation by Danbury storyteller Mike Allen, former host of the podcast Amazing Tales About History. Given for LiR-QV, Mike spoke about significant Connecticut figures and Connecticut Battle Sites during the Revolution. Of course, he included Pomfret's and Brooklyn's own Israel Putnam. I loved the slide of Putnam riding his horse down steps in Danbury during the British attack on that community. Did you know that Putnam Memorial State Park in Redding, where Putnam had a winter encampment similar to Valley Forge in the winter of 1778-9, was the first such Connecticut park? The more venturesome among you might want to do a daytrip to the western part of the state to visit it.

Other significant Connecticut individuals whom Allen highlighted were Roger Sherman, who signed four Revolutionary era documents: the Continental Association of 1774, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U. S. Constitution. Eastern Connecticut's Samuel Huntington was born in what is now the town of Scotland. He lived in Norwich, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, served as the first president of the United States under the Articles of Confederation, and later became the State's governor. Noah Webster, considered the Father of American Scholarship and Education, published a simple textbook called the Blue-Backed Speller in 1783. "Originally titled 'A Grammatical Institute of the English Language,' this simple textbook sold tens of millions of copies and replaced British books in early American classrooms. He changed British spellings to simpler American forms, altering words like centre to center and colour to color." (Noah Webster House). Jonathan Trumbull, of Lebanon, Connecticut, was the governor of Connecticut during the Revolution. Important meetings with Washington, Rochambeau, and other officers took place at his War Office which is now a museum. Nathan Hale of Coventry, Benedict Arnold of Norwich and New Haven, Major General David Wooster,

Turn To KILLINGLY page A4

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Don't be a bystander

To the Editor:

It's been a while since I've written, mostly because I'm remembering the words of American author Ambrose Bierce: "Speak when you are angry, and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret." What to do with anger and frustration with some of my fellow citizens? So here is an effort to communicate something useful to someone who may read this letter.

How important is it to vote? Let's remember that earlier in our history–and who knows, maybe in future elections–our own people were beaten and sometimes killed for attempting to register to vote. If you did not hear of those historically documented tragedies in history or civics classes, you can still look it up now.

One of the most famous of these patriots was Georgia Congressman John Lewis, born into a family of impoverished sharecroppers. Sharecroppers farmed land owned by others and paid rent with a portion of the crops grown and harvested by their own labor, and could keep a small amount of the money when those crops were sold. The landowner took most of the proceeds, making it very difficult for sharecropping families to save enough to buy their own land or to afford food and basic supplies for themselves. So they borrowed from those landowners and often remained in debt.

John Lewis, inspired by the words and actions of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., managed to be educated and to graduate from the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, paying for his education by working campus jobs in exchange for tuition, room and board. His first job there was in the cafeteria cleaning large industrial-size cooking pots, later mopping and waxing administration building floors. This man knew how to work! By 1967, Mr. Lewis had completed his bachelor's degree in religion and philosophy from Fisk University. Is there a more "American" story we can imagine?

Mr. Lewis used his abilities to organize and to connect with people to be a key part of the 1963 poor peoples' March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, with over 250,000 in attendance and ending with Dr. King's most famous "I Have a Dream" speech. This momentum, and the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (a year after I graduated from Killingly High School) offered hope for Black citizens to become part of the voting process, and therefore have real input on legislation and maybe even run for office. Can readers imagine being born here with many of your previous generations enslaved, but still risking violence and institutional obstruction of your constitutional right to vote? Or even to register to vote?

That was the world in John Lewis' South in 1965 when he was part of a 54-mile peaceful march to the Edmund Pettus Bridge on the way to the state capitol in Montgomery, Ala. These peaceful marchers were met with state troopers, and sheriff's posse members who used whips, tear gas and clubs to injure more than 50 of the marchers. John Lewis' skull was fractured. Federal troops, weeks later, gave protection as the marchers led by Dr. King completed the full march for Black voting rights, which was the law of our land.

Prior to this quietly courageous, although bloody, success, in June of 1964 (about the time that I graduated from Killingly High School), the Freedom Summer Voter Registration Campaign brought about 1,000 mostly white students from northern states to Mississippi. Of their own free will and out of their patriotic sense of right and wrong, these white students and activists worked alongside Black activists to help Black residents register to vote.

They were met with violent opposition by those whose job was to enforce laws. Instead, churches were burned, Black residents were denied voter registration, the KKK terrorized the Black population, and among the tragedies of that summer were the brutal killings of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner. James was a Black activist from Meridian, Mississippi; Andrew and Michael were white volunteers from New York City. They were murdered by "law enforcement" and buried underneath a dam. On the 41st anniversary of these murders the final participant, Klansman Edgar Ray Killen, was convicted (of manslaughter) and sentenced to prison–in 2005.

Other white people whose names are undoubtedly not noted in our history classes gave their lives during the 1964-65 voting rights campaigns in the South. I want to recognize them here also: William Moore, former Marine from Binghampton, N.Y.; Rev. Bruce Klunder from Cleveland, Ohio; Rev. James Reeb from Washington, D.C.; Viola Gregg Luzzo, housewife and mother of five children from Detroit, MI; and seminary student Jonathan Daniels from Keene, NH. All were brutally murdered during this effort.

This could be an even longer accounting of many others who gave their time, their hearts, and sometimes their lives to bring about voting justice for our most vulnerable citizens. (No, I will not address here the accusations of non-citizens in our state cheating and figuring out how to vote illegally. Maybe another time.) Further, a strong case can be made that our WWII veterans fought and died for us to keep the right to vote instead of blindly acquiescing to the lies and demands of dictators like Hitler and Hirohito. We do not have a democratic republic if any U.S. citizens are wrongly denied the right to register and vote. My dad, a Navy veteran, fought in the Pacific theater to keep my right to vote, and I will always remember that–every time I vote. There is still plenty of time to register to vote in the upcoming November election. There is plenty of time to find out who is running, what their stated priorities are, and to question them about how they expect to accomplish those priorities.

Don't be a bystander in these crucial times for our country. People died so that you can vote. Please honor their sacrifice and do your part to keep power with the people–with us.

Respectfully,

Claudia Terwilliger Allen Thompson

Earth — Still recognizable, but different

To the Editor:

Ten thousand years ago, as the Stone Age was coming to an end and the traces of modern civilization were just beginning to form. the entire planet held only four million people, slightly larger than the population of Connecticut. The mass of humanity equaled less than one percent of the total mass of all vertebrate animals on the planet. We were significant, but still a small sliver of Earth's biodiversity.

Today, we add four million of us humans and an additional 1.5 million head of livestock to the planet every three weeks. Man and our domesticated animals now equal 96 percent of vertebrate animal mass on Earth—nearly the whole pie. In the competition Charles Darwin described as "the survival of the fittest," man is the ultimate victor. Gone are our closest competitors: Cro-Magnon man and Neanderthals, as well as countless other species. By the end of the 19th century, the great American buffalo herds that once numbered 50 million strong had been reduced to a few dozen. What remains today is a mere fraction of a fraction of what used to be.

The Earth has never seen as many humans as we have now. Once, after giving my multimedia presentation called Earth2026, someone in the audience correctly pointed out that the Earth's carrying capacity is actually greater than today's eight billion humans. Scientists generally believe the Earth can accommodate up to ten billion of us. We'll reach that mark in only 24 years, so we'll soon find out if their calculus was good.

I don't know if the calculus reflects humanity's ever-expanding ecological footprint, but I do know that things have changed dramatically since my parents were kids. Just one indication of that can be seen in our homes, which have doubled in size since the 1950s, when there were only 2.5 billion of us sharing the planet.

The explosion of consumerism in my own lifetime is equally astounding. With our relentless appetites for more, we continue to trade our planet's living environment for data centers, Amazon warehouses, and those ubiquitous self-storage facilities that 40% of Americans now rent to store the abundance of stuff that won't fit into their ever-larger homes. No doubt, we have more and bigger—of everything! But how much of nature can we afford to keep trading for it? And have these trades actually made us any happier?

I recently read that half of the Earth's trees and an even larger percentage of green space (wetlands, savanna, grassy plains) have been removed from the Earth by man. In his remarkable film "A Life on Our Planet," Sir David Attenborough, now 100 years old, states: "Only 35 percent of Earth's wilderness remains." He ought to know. He's been documenting Earth's natural places for 75 years.

Recently, Elon Musk announced his plans for SpaceX and Tesla to collectively build the largest building on Earth, near Houston, Texas. The microchip factory, called Terafab, will have a footprint of nearly four square miles. Musk bragged (as billionaires like to do) that Terafab will be more impressive than Apple's headquarters and also worth a lot more. Terafab's microchips are to be used in Tesla's Optimus robots and self-driving cybercabs, as well as SpaceX's planned data centers. Doesn't that just make you feel even happier?

The Earth has been changed so dramatically by human activity that we may have to rethink our assumptions about its carrying capacity. In his remarkable book, titled "Eaarth" (an intentional misspelling of "Earth"), Bill McKibben writes that, due to human activity, "Earth has changed in profound ways, ways that have already taken us out of the sweet spot where humans so long thrived." He goes on: "The world hasn't ended, but the world as we know it has—even if we don't quite know it yet." Yes, our planet is still recognizable, but fundamentally different.

If we're not in the sweet spot anymore, where are we? According to Dr. Mathis Wackernagel, President of the Global Footprint Network, "rates of resource harvesting and waste generation deplete nature faster than it can regenerate." This means we are in a state of "ecological overshoot," and we don't know how long we can remain there before something really bad happens.

More people today are beginning to think about their own ecological footprint and how to make it smaller to help preserve our world. But few believe this shift is happening fast enough. I worry about what will remain of the Earth when my kids are grown and want a family of their own. Will Eaarth be able to support 10 billion of us living like we do today? Overwhelming evidence suggests it won't—unless we profoundly change the way humans live, and fast!

Please do your kids a favor and watch David Attenborough's "A Life on Our Planet." It may be the most important thing you ever do for them.

Ken Wolslegel
Woodstock

Additional Letters to the Editor, See page A-6

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.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Grateful for the views of Villager contributors

To the Editor:

I am grateful to writers Arends, Cotnoir, Day, Shay, Silvestri, Sweetnam and Wesler for their intelligent, thoughtful, insightful letters to the Editor published in the Killingly Villager.

Thank you!

JUDY DOYLE
KILLINGLY

"Election integrity" — really?

To the Editor:

Donald Trump, in a fever to prevent a Democratic rout of Congress in the upcoming mid-term elections, is proposing that Federal troops, i.e., National Guard, I.C.E., Army, etc., as well as state and local police and possibly other para-military "Law Enforcement" personnel "monitor" polling places to prevent "irregularities" during the ballot casting and counting process.

The true purpose of the proposed attendance by various military and law enforcement personnel is voter intimidation, pure and simple. He is also proposing the seizure of voting machines in districts where the vote does not go his way. Further, he is suggesting that he will declare a national emergency that would enable him to completely shut down the elections. Do not be deceived, Mr. Trump is running scared at this point and knows that his days are numbered. He will try anything to avoid impeachment and imprisonment. What he seems to not understand is that this sort of military presence is specifically forbidden by the US Criminal Code, to wit:

18 U.S. Code § 592 - Troops at polls "Whoever, being an officer of the Army or Navy, or other person in the civil, military, or naval service of the United States, orders, brings, keeps, or has under his authority or control any troops or armed men at any place where a general or special election is held, unless such force be necessary to repel armed enemies of the United States, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both; and be disqualified from holding any office of honor, profit, or trust under the United States. This section shall not prevent any officer or member of the armed forces of the United States from exercising the right of suffrage in any election district to which he may belong, if otherwise qualified according to the laws of the State in which he offers to vote."

Mr. Trump will stop at nothing. What he wants to do is firmly establish his dictatorship over our country, primarily for the financial benefit of him and his family and cronies. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated. Lock your arms together with your friends and family and go vote.

BRUCE P. SHAY
POMFRET CENTER

"Trump Derangement Syndrome" describes his supporters, not the opposition

To the Editor:

The nonsense just keeps on coming. Now there's talk of naming a new aircraft carrier after Trump instead of the WWII war hero originally chosen. Really? A draft-dodging, veteran-insulting egomaniac? Maybe name it the USS Bonespurs!

"Trump Derangement Syndrome" is a favorite term he and his groupies use for people who speak out against him. Actually, I think it more accurately describes the mindset of Trump's supporters who turn a "blind eye" to his psychotic behavior, and make excuses for his disastrous policies and endless corruption. Time to wake up, people — you're bowing down to a narcissistic lunatic wearing a MAGA hat who's destroying our great nation piece by piece.

TODD PATRIE
POMFRET CENTER

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!

brendan@
villagernewspapers.com

How the dismantling of America's food safety agencies is making us sick

To the Editor:

"Eating food in the United States is like playing Russian Roulette!" Cyclospora. Salmonella. E. coli. Listeria. These food born illnesses are more prevalent than ever under the current administration. Many factors impact food safety like supply chains, mega farms, and mass reductions in force at agencies responsible for food safety. Unfortunately, The Trump Administration has affected all three. It has been reported that the Trump administration has significantly undermined food safety with the mass reduction in force of most agencies meant to identify and reduce food related health issues before the food reaches our plates and stomachs.

Data from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management shows a complete picture of staff losses at federal agencies responsible for food safety and public health. (Food Safety)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture lost 19,984 staff in 2025 and another 2,269 so far in 2026. The Food Safety and Inspection Service was reduced by 874 and 39 personnel in 2025 and 2026, respectively; the Agricultural Research Service by 1,932 and 73, respectively; and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service by 2,017 and 15, respectively. The USDA's workforce has decreased in size more than any other federal agency since 2015, with net losses of more than 17,400 staff (the vast majority of these losses occurring in 2025–2026).

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration was reduced by 3,859 and 473 in 2025 and 2026, respectively.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was reduced by 2,499 and 390 in 2025 and 2026, respectively.

Many staff losses were DOGE-driven reductions in force of the people who actually do the work of reviewing, inspecting and testing our food. The FDA suspended testing for the Food Emergency Response Network, a system of roughly 170 laboratories that test food for pathogens. (Forbes)

Critics say political loyalists prioritized over scientists and expertise are running agencies responsible for our food. Food-safety experts warn it will take years to restore the lost capacity as a result of decades of experience and knowledge cut from the food safety and public health agencies.

In 2022, the FDA finalized the Food Traceability Rule, a regulation designed to do exactly what didn't happen fast enough this summer: shrink outbreak investigations from an average of about 35 days to five or six days, get contaminated product off shelves faster, and make recalls precise. It was supposed to take effect in January 2026. Instead, the Trump FDA proposed and finalized a 30-month delay, pushing the compliance deadline to July 20, 2028. Americans will have to wait at least two more summers for the rule to take effect to protect our food. Congress restricted the FDA from using appropriated funds to enforce the rule before that date.

This year's recall may read like your grocery list:

Lettuce has been tied to Cyclospora outbreak. 10,930 illnesses across 17 states, 454 hospitalizations and two deaths.

Blueberries linked to E. coli outbreak.

Eggs linked to Salmonella outbreak.

Soft cheese tied to Listeria outbreak.

Jalapenos recalled over Salmonella and triggered secondary recalls of meat & poultry products containing peppers.

Deli meat recalled over Listeria contamination.

Seeds for sprouting recalled due to Shiga toxin-producing E. coli (STEC).

Prepared/frozen foods (spinach, precooked pasta, baked goods & pancake mixes) recalled for Listeria, Salmonella or undeclared allergens.

The FDA's outbreak-investigation tracker shows 21 active investigations in 2026, about 40 percent above the 2022-2025 average.

As if a gutted inspection system and delayed traceability rule aren't enough, Trump announced on Aug. 21 he is allowing 300,000 tons of ground beef to be imported into the U.S. with no requirement to tell us where it came from in an attempt to win the mid-term elections with three months of lower priced beef. As one South Dakota farm advocate put it, "without Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling, we do not even know where the beef is imported from." "Here we are in the middle of a public health crisis over imported lettuce and now the President is OK importing beef in abundance." (National Agricultural Law Center)

Fewer inspectors, fewer lab scientists, a revolving door of political leadership at agencies meant to be insulated from politics and the delayed traceability rule, have made it hard to ignore the impacts on our food. Americans are getting sick. We are less equipped under this Administration than ever before to catch the next outbreak before it reaches our plates.

Contact your senators and representatives in Congress and tell them to fund and enforce the FDA's Food Traceability Rule and support small farms and businesses. Remember when you vote, who is looking out for you and your family's health and food safety.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

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THOMPSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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860-923-9581

Thompson Public School Public Media Release for Connecticut School Nutrition Programs

The Thompson Public Schools announced today its policy for determining eligibility of children who may receive free or reduced-price meals served under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), or free milk served under the Special Milk Program (SMP).

Local school officials have adopted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) for family size and income criteria for determining eligibility. The following income guidelines will be used in Connecticut from **July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027,** for determining participant's eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals and free milk in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP).

Income Guidelines for Child Nutrition Programs: July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027

Free Meals

Household Size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income
1	20,748	1,729	865	798	399
2	28,132	2,345	1,173	1,082	541
3	35,516	2,960	1,480	1,366	683
4	42,900	3,575	1,788	1,650	825
5	50,284	4,191	2,096	1,934	967
6	57,668	4,806	2,403	2,218	1,109
7	65,052	5,421	2,711	2,502	1,251
8	72,436	6,037	3,019	2,786	1,393
Each additional family member	7,384	616	308	284	142

Reduced-price Meals

Household Size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income
1	29,526	2,461	1,231	1,136	568
2	40,034	3,337	1,669	1,540	770
3	50,542	4,212	2,106	1,944	972
4	61,050	5,088	2,544	2,349	1,175
5	71,558	5,964	2,982	2,753	1,377
6	82,066	6,839	3,420	3,157	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	3,858	3,561	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	4,296	3,965	1,983
Each additional family member	10,508	876	438	405	203

The income calculations above are based on the following formulas:

- monthly income is calculated by dividing the annual income by 12;
- twice monthly income is computed by dividing annual income by 24;
- income received every two weeks is calculated by dividing annual income by 26; and
- weekly income is computed by dividing annual income by 52.

All numbers are rounded upward to the next whole dollar.

Students residing in households with income at or below the levels shown in the chart above are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals or free milk through the SMP. Applications are being sent home to all families with the Welcome back Newsletter from the superintendent. Additional copies are available on our school website or can be obtained by the school secretaries. To apply for free or reduced-price school meals or free milk through the SMP, households should fill out the application and return it to the school. Only one application is required per household and an application for free or reduced-price school meals cannot be approved unless it contains complete eligibility information as indicated on the application and instructions.

The information provided on the application is confidential and will be used only for the purposes of determining eligibility and for administration and enforcement of the lunch, breakfast, and milk programs through the SMP. Additionally, all school-aged students in income-eligible households can receive school meal benefits regardless of a student's immigration status and the district/school does not release information for immigration-related purposes in the usual course of operating the CNPs. Note that the district *may* share your eligibility information with education, health, social service, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules. This information may also be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program officials. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year.

No application is required if the district directly certifies a student based on a household member receiving assistance from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) program. All students in these households are eligible for free school meals or free milk through the SMP. The school district will notify households receiving assistance under the SNAP/TFA programs of their eligibility and all enrolled students residing in the household will be offered free school meals or free milk through the SMP unless the household notifies the determining official that it chooses to decline benefits. If any students were not listed on the eligibility notice, the household should contact the district or school to have free meal or milk benefits extended to those students. Households receiving SNAP or TFA benefits for their children should only submit an application if they are **not** notified of their eligibility by September 11, 2026.

Some students *may* be directly certified for free or reduced-price meals or milk through the SMP based on HUSKY A (Medicaid). No application is required if the district directly certifies a student based on participation in HUSKY A (Medicaid). Students in these households are likely eligible for free or reduced-priced meal or milk benefits and will be notified of their eligibility and their children will be offered free or reduced-price school meals or milk through the SMP, unless the household notifies the determining official that it chooses to decline benefits. If any students were not listed on the eligibility notice, the household should contact the district or school to have free or reduced-price school meals or milk benefits extended to those students.

Additionally, some students may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals or free milk through the SMP if the students were determined to be eligible for Summer Electronic Benefits (S-EBT). No application is required if the district determines that a student is eligible for free or reduced-price meals or free milk due to participation in S-EBT. Students in these households are likely eligible for free or reduced-priced meal benefits and will be notified of their eligibility and their children will be offered free or reduced-price school meals or free milk accordingly, unless the household notifies the determining official that it chooses to decline benefits. If any students were not listed on the eligibility notice, the household should contact the district or school to have free or reduced-price school meals or milk benefits extended to those students.

If a student is not directly certified, the household should complete and submit a free and reduced-price meal application form. The application for households receiving SNAP or TFA benefits require the SNAP or TFA client ID number and the households may be asked to provide proof of the SNAP or TFA client ID number. The signature of an adult household member is also required.

Students in households participating in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) may be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Please complete and submit a free and reduced-price meal application or contact the determining official for more information. For a tutorial on how to complete the application, visit *How to fill out the Application for Free and Reduced-price Meals or Free Milk and Summer EBT.*

When known to the district/school, households will be notified of any student's eligibility for free school meals if the individual student is "Other Source Categorically Eligible" because the student is categorized as either: homeless; runaway as defined by law and determined by the district's or school's homeless liaison; or enrolled in an eligible Head Start or pre-kindergarten class as defined by law. Households with students who are categorically eligible under Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs should complete and submit a free and reduced-price meal application and check off the relevant box. Questions should be directed to the determining official. For any student not listed on the eligibility notice, the households should contact the school or determining official about any student also eligible under one of these programs or should submit an income application for the other students.

Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the determining official or school if it chooses to decline the free school meal benefits. If households/students are **not** notified by the district/school of their free meal benefits and they receive benefits under qualifying public assistance programs or under Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs, the parent/guardian should contact the determining official for their school.

Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are categorically eligible for free school meals. A foster parent does not have to complete a free/reduced-price school meal application if they can submit a copy of the legal document or legal court order showing that the student is a foster child. Additionally, a foster child may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits. If the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced-price school meal benefits, it does not prevent a foster child from receiving free school meals. A foster child's eligibility for free school meals does not automatically extend to all students in the household. Free and reduced-price school meals application forms for all other households require a statement of total household income, household size, and names of all household members. The last four digits of the social security number of an adult household member must be included or a statement that the household member does not have one. The adult household member must also sign the application certifying that the information provided is correct.

Under the provisions of the policy for determining eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals, the Director of Food Services, Debra Mita, dmita@thompsonpublicschools.org. will review applications and determine students' eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals. If a parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the ruling of the determining official, they may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. If they wish to make a formal appeal, a request either orally or in writing, may be made to Melinda Smith, Superintendent, 785 Riverside Drive, North Grosvenordale, CT 06255, 860-923-9581 ext:12013 for a hearing to appeal the decision.

The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedure. Each school and the central office of the school district has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by an interested party.

If a household member becomes unemployed or if household size changes at any time, the household should contact the school to file a new free and reduced-price school meals application. Such changes may make the students of the household eligible for reduced-price school meals, free school meals, or free milk, if the household income falls at or below the levels shown in the Income Eligibility Guidelines.

Questions regarding the free and reduced-price school meals application process may be directed to the determining official at 860-923-9581 Ext: 41192. A video tutorial on how to complete a free and reduced-price school meals application can be viewed at *How to fill out the Application for Free and Reduced-price Meals or Free Milk and Summer EBT.*

This is the Public Release we will send on 8/19/26 to the following news media outlets, the local unemployment office, major employers contemplating layoffs, etc.

1. Local Unemployment Office
2. http://district.thompsonk12.org
3. School E-Mail Notification System
4. Local News Station (WINY RADIO)

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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"Claws & Applause" launches call for performers and sponsors

PUTNAM — The stage is set, the music is ready and now Claws & Applause: A Lip Sync Battle for Paws is officially calling on local performers, business and community members to join the show!

Taking place Friday, Aug. 28 at Montana Nights Axe Throwing in Putnam, this fundraising event will bring the community together for an unforgettable night of over-the-top lip sync performances, outrageous costumes, audience voting and friendly competition.

And right now, organizers are looking for performers and sponsors ready to step into the spotlight!

Individuals, groups, businesses, organizations and friends are invited to form a team, choose a song and put together a show-stopping lip sync performance. Whether performers go for hilarious, dramatic, glamorous or completely over-the-top, no actual singing talent is required, just creativity, enthusiasm and willingness to have fun for a great cause! No professional experience necessary. If you can commit to the bit, work a crowd and have fun, there is a place for you on the Claws & Applause stage!

"We want people to come ready to laugh, cheer, compete and have an incredible night of fun, as we look to raise money to help shift our focus form constant crisis management to prevention and long-term care for the cats in and beyond our shelter" says event organizer Jennifer Lowell. With more than 400 cats currently in care, including those placed in foster homes, Paws Cat Shelter continues to face tremendous demand for rescue, rehabilitation and rehoming services. The event aims to raise critical funding for a spay and neuter initiative to help address the cycle that contributes to overcrowded shelters in the first place.

Local businesses and community partners are also invited to become part of the event through a variety of sponsorship opportunities. Sponsorships range from $100 – $2,000 and offer opportunities for recognition through event signage, promotional materials, VIP experiences, stage recognition and more. Sponsors can make a meaningful community impact while helping Paws Cat Shelter work toward a long-term solution.

One Night. One Stage. All for the cats! Get involved today by forming a team, becoming a sponsor, purchasing tickets, voting for your favorite performers or making a donation.

Paws Cat Shelter is dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming cats in need while promoting compassionate animal welfare throughout the community. Through the support of volunteers, donors and local advocates, the organization continues to provide life-saving care and adoption opportunities for homeless cats.

Monaco Modifieds join Sunoco World Series to headline Saturday Showcase Oct. 10

Tom Morris — Courtesy

The Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series returns to Thompson Speedway for an unprecedented third visit in 2026 to headline the Saturday portion of the 64th Sunoco World Series of Speedway Racing on Oct. 10.

THOMPSON — In an exciting addition to the Thompson Speedway calendar, the Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series has been added to the 64th Sunoco World Series of Speedway Racing to headline the Saturday portion of the three-day extravaganza!

2026 will mark the first time in series history that the Monaco Modifieds have visited Thompson Speedway three times, this coming at a crucial point in the championship chase! While the championship will certainly be on the forefront of the drivers' minds, the addition completes three-straight days of Tour-type Modified Racing at the Sunoco World Series!

It all starts Friday, Oct. 9 with the Modified Racing Series headlining the opening night with a 50-lap finale to crown their 2026 champion. The Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series now headlines the Saturday, Oct. 10 showcase while the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour will crown their 2026 champion following the World Series 150 on Sunday, Oct. 11.

"We are glad we got to add the Monaco Modifieds to this year's Sunoco World Series," said American-Canadian Tour managing partner Cris Michaud. "They always put on a great show at Thompson and the fans are sure to get their Modified fix before the snow starts to fall!"

Thompson Speedway roars back to life on Wednesday, Sept. 16 for the Eden Raferty Attorneys Fall Showdown Late Model Special! The Late Models take center stage in their extra-distance showdown alongside the Thompson Sunoco Modifieds, SK Light Modifieds, Street Stocks and Crown Vics with a 6 p.m. Post Time.

The North East Short Track Network (NESTN) will stream Wednesday Night Racing at Thompson Speedway all season long, visit www.nestn.tv for more info including Pay-Per-View pricing and ways to subscribe!

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.proallstarsseries.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. To take advantage of marketing opportunities please call 207-577-1836 or inquire at OPSmarketing50@gmail.com.

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

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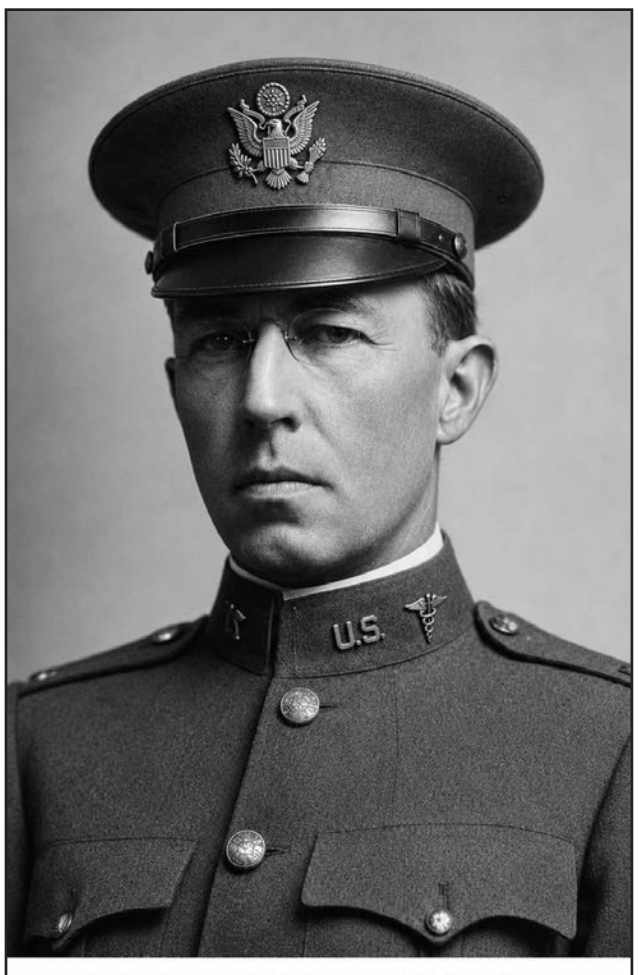
Dr. Edward F. Perry — Physician, World War I veteran, and first Commander of American Legion Post #13



Dr Edward F Perry (1871-1929)

BY MICHAEL ROCCHETTI
COMMANDER
MAYOTTE-VIENS AMERICAN LEGION POST #13
PUTNAM

For nearly a quarter century, Edward F. Perry was one of Putnam's best-known doctors, caring for families throughout the community and surrounding countryside. When his country entered World War 1, he temporarily exchanged his civilian clothes for an Army uniform and volunteered his medical skills for military service in France.

When he returned home, Perry became one of the local veterans who helped establish what would become the Mayotte-Viens Post #13 of the American Legion. He was a charter member and served as their first Commander.

Perhaps most remarkable is that Perry left behind an unusually candid account of his military experience. His Connecticut Military Service Record preserves not only the dates and places of his service, but also his personal thoughts about Army life. His answers reveal an intelligent, experienced and occasionally frustrated physician who desperately wanted to make a greater contribution to the war effort than the Army bureaucracy permitted him to make.

Edward Franklin Perry was born in Pomfret on Oct. 8, 1871, the son of Franklin White Perry and Cornelia Maria (Williams) Perry. His family moved to Putnam while Edward was young, and his father became a prominent local businessman and eventually served as mayor.

Perry attended Putnam's public schools before continuing his education at Norwich Military Academy in New Hampshire. He later entered Amherst College with the Class of 1896. Among his classmates was another young New Englander destined for prominence, future President Calvin Coolidge.

He later studied medicine at Long Island College Hospital in Brooklyn, receiving his medical degree in 1897. His postgraduate hospital experience included service at St. John's Hospital in Yonkers and Brooklyn Hospital.

Perry initially established a medical practice in Wellfleet, Mass., then in 1905, he returned to Putnam. He was associated with Day Kimball Hospital as a surgeon and served as a medical examiner for the US Public Health Service. He was also active in the American Medical Association, CT State Medical Society and Windham County Medical Society, eventually serving as president of the latter.

Perry had married Edith Lillian Smith of Washington, Connecticut, in New York City on Feb. 17, 1899. They eventually had four children: Edward Franklin Jr., Ruth Beeman, Alice Cornelia and Myron Albert Perry.

When the US entered WW1 in April 1917, Perry was already 45 years old and an established physician with a wife, children and a thriving medical practice. He nevertheless volunteered his professional services, and on Aug. 8, 1917, Perry received his commission as a First Lieutenant in the Medical Corps. After his initial training, he was sent to France in June of 1918.

He soon became frustrated: "I found my duties trivial, monotonous, and unprofitable. Having had many years' experience in hospital surgery, I asked for frontline work, and was assigned to a wood camp."

Perry served as a medical officer with 20th Engineers in the Landes region of southwestern France. This unit performed an essential but largely unsung mission – providing lumber. Timber was required for barracks, hospitals, railroads, bridges, docks, warehouses, trenches, roads and countless other military necessities. The 20th Engineers operated sawmills and logging camps in France to keep the enormous American war machine supplied. Perry's job was to keep those soldiers healthy. It was important work. It simply wasn't the work he wanted.

The war ended on Nov. 11, 1918, and on Jan. 5, 1919, after nearly seven months overseas, Lieutenant Edward F. Perry returned home and was discharged on Jan. 18, 1919.

Perry was an unusually candid veteran. The Connecticut Military Service questionnaire asked veterans to reflect upon how military service had changed them. Many surviving World War I questionnaires contain predictable expressions of patriotism and duty. Perry's answers were different. Asked why he had volunteered, he listed several motives: "Desire to be of service, for adventure, change, experience, and professional improvement and advancement." Perry did not pretend that a single lofty motivation had driven his decision. Patriotism and service were there, but so were curiosity, adventure and professional ambition.

Then came his final verdict: "When I have made up my financial losses incident to my service, and regained my lost practice, I shall be satisfied to remain a civilian for the rest of my life." Ironically, Perry's declaration that he intended to remain a civilian would not prove entirely permanent. He later served in the National Guard.

Perry returned home to a country transformed by the war. Returning veterans began organizing what would become one of the most influential organizations in American history—the American Legion. Putnam veterans soon organized their own post, and Dr. Edward F. Perry was a charter member and the first Commander of the Anselm Mayotte Post #13, American Legion. The post was named for a local serviceman who had lost his life during the war. It would later become the Mayotte-Viens Post #13.

Perry left a legacy that extended well beyond medicine. As its first Commander, he helped lay the foundation for generations of Putnam veterans who would follow him. More than a century later, Mayotte-Viens Post #13 remains part of Putnam's civic life.

Medicine and veterans affairs were only parts of Perry's interests. He was active in Putnam's Second Congregational Church and belonged to Quinebaug Lodge, A.F. & A.M., the Masonic Club and Israel Putnam Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. He had also been the first Commander of the George W. Child Camp of the Sons of Veterans.

Perry possessed a lifelong interest in books, history and literature. He enjoyed writing and even worked for a time as Putnam correspondent for the Worcester Evening Gazette and the Hartford Times.

His Final Illness: By 1929, Perry's health was failing. During the spring he was treated at the Naval Hospital in Newport, RI, he was also treated at Day Kimball Hospital. Later that year he entered medical care in Hartford. His condition progressively deteriorated.

Dr. Edward Franklin Perry died on Dec. 19, 1929, at the Hartford Retreat. He was 58 years old. The Windham County Observer reported the primary cause of his death as chronic myocarditis, with chronic hypertensive nephritis as a secondary cause. Putnam had lost one of its most prominent physicians. Its veterans had also lost one of their own. Dr Perry was buried with full military honors at the Grove Street Cemetery in Putnam.

Edward Franklin Perry's military career was not filled with battlefield heroics. He never claimed that it was. In fact, when Connecticut asked whether he had seen combat, Perry made certain that future generations would know the truth: "Saw none of it." That honesty is part of what makes his story worth remembering.

Wars are not fought only by the soldiers carrying rifles in the trenches. Behind them stand doctors, nurses, engineers, railroad troops, stevedores, mechanics, clerks, cooks, lumbermen and thousands of others whose work makes combat operations possible. Perry was one of them.

At 46 years old, with an established medical practice and four children at home, he left Putnam and crossed the Atlantic during wartime because he believed he could be useful. He treated American servicemen suffering from poison gas. He cared for soldiers working in the immense forestry operations of southwestern France. He served until the war was over and then returned home to rebuild the medical practice he had left behind.

And when Putnam's veterans needed an organization of their own, Dr. Edward F. Perry stepped forward again. He became a charter member and first Commander of American Legion Post #13.

Today, more than a century after Perry and his fellow World War I veterans organized the Post, his legacy remains woven into the history of the Mayotte-Viens Post #13 and the community it serves. Dr. Edward Franklin Perry was a physician, surgeon, soldier, veteran, writer, student of history and community leader. Above all, he was one of Putnam's Hometown Heroes.

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LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF PUTNAM

The following ORDINANCE was approved at the Town Meeting held on August 17, 2026, and shall become effective twenty-one (21) days after date of publication.

Dated at Putnam, Connecticut this 18th August 2026.

Christine M. Bright
Town Clerk

ORDINANCE
Veterans Determined Totally Disabled Based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU) Qualification

Pursuant to 12-81pp of the Connecticut General Statutes, a veteran determined to be totally disabled due to individual unemployability shall be eligible for the property tax exemption authorized under 12-81(83)(A) of the Connecticut General Statutes, including the exemptions and limitations as referenced in Chapters [285-5, 285-6 and 285-7] above. The provisions of this article shall become effective commencing with the October 1, 2026, Grand List.

August 28, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF PUTNAM

The following AMENDED ORDINANCE was approved at the Special Town Meeting held on AUGUST 17, 2026, and shall become effective twenty-one (21) days after date of publication. This amendment is to the Ordinance that was adopted June 5, 2023.

Dated at Putnam, Connecticut this 18th day of August 2026.

Christine M. Bright
Town Clerk

ORDINANCE

Article V **Exemption for Vehicles Owned by Persons with Disabilities**

§ 285-7 **Definitions.**

As used in this article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

DISABLED INDIVIDUAL

An individual who requires a specially equipped and/or modified motor vehicle as hereinafter defined as a result of the individual's medical incapacitation and/or disability.

SPECIALLY EQUIPPED AND/OR MODIFIED MOTOR VEHICLE

A vehicle which is modified, equipped and/or fitted with special equipment to accommodate a disabled individual who is incapable of operation of a motor vehicle on his or her own, to use or operate the same for transportation and/or to transport a disabled individual as hereinbefore defined. By way of example, special equipment shall be, but is not limited to, hand controls, lifts, ramps, special seating, braking or acceleration mechanisms for manual operation, physical alterations to accommodate medical equipment, i.e., oxygen tanks, mechanical respirators.

§ 285-8 **Eligibility.**

Any specially equipped and/or modified motor vehicle registered in the Town of Putnam owned by a disabled individual or owned by the parent or guardian of a disabled individual shall be exempt from property tax provided the application requirements set forth below are met.

§ 285-9 **Application; proof of disability; filing.**

A. The owner of a specially equipped and/or modified motor vehicle described herein may apply to the Assessor of the Town of Putnam on a form prepared by the Assessor to request a property tax exemption for such specially equipped and/or modified motor vehicle.

B. At the time the owner makes application to the Assessor, the owner must attest that the motor vehicle has been equipped or adapted for use by a disabled individual as hereinbefore defined and present the vehicle for physical inspection by the Assessor.

C. At the time that the owner makes application to the Assessor, the owner shall attest to the individual's need for a specially equipped and/or modified motor vehicle as here in before defined.

D. Applications for such exemptions shall be filed between October 1 up through and including December 31 following the assessment date with respect to which such exemption is claimed, commencing with the Grand List of October 1, 2023. Failure to file such application in such manner and form within the time limit prescribed shall constitute a waiver of the right to such exemption for the assessment year.

§ 285-10 **For-profit vehicles.**

The exemption shall not apply to equipped motor vehicles operated for profit.

§ 285-11 **Expiration.**

The exemption shall expire when the equipped motor vehicle ceases to be used by the disabled owner or parent or guardian of a person with disabilities. Also, the exemption shall expire when the vehicle is sold or transferred and not used for the use intended.

§ 285-12 **When effective.**

This article is to take effect 21 days after publication.

August 28, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF PUTNAM

The following ORDINANCE was approved at the Town Meeting held on August 17, 2026, and shall become effective twenty-one (21) days after date of publication.

Dated at Putnam, Connecticut this 18th August 2026.

Christine M. Bright
Town Clerk

ORDINANCE
EXEMPTION UP TO 2 ACRES OF PROPERTY

Pursuant to 12-81(83)(E) of the Connecticut General Statutes, a veteran qualifying for the exemption under provisions of 12-81(83)(A) shall also be entitled to an exemption from taxation of not more than two (2) acres of the lot upon which such dwelling sits. The provisions of this article shall become effective commencing with the October 1, 2026, Grand List.

August 28, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF PUTNAM

The following ORDINANCE was approved at the Town Meeting held on August 17, 2026, and shall become effective twenty-one (21) days after date of publication.

Dated at Putnam, Connecticut this 18th August 2026.

Christine M. Bright
Town Clerk

ORDINANCE
Zoning Citations

Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish penalties for violations of the Town's Zoning Regulations, establish procedures for issuance of citations to violators and for collections of fines and to have the Town's citation hearing procedure apply to citations hereunder issued.

Issuance of orders and citations.

The Town's Zoning Enforcement Officer or agent is authorized to issue cease-and-desist orders or other appropriate orders to a violator of the Town's Zoning Regulations or of any approval or permit issued by the Town Planning and Zoning Commission. If such violation has not been remedied either immediately or within 10 days of the date of issuance of the cease-and-desist order or other appropriate order, as provided in the order, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, or such other Town official or employee designated by the Mayor of Putnam to issue citations, unless such time has been extended for good cause by the Zoning Enforcement Officer, shall issue a citation to the violator which shall invoke the Town's citation hearing procedure set forth in § 172-6 of the Town Code. However, in the case where a violation is found by the Zoning Enforcement Officer or agent to be willful, penalties may be assessed from the date such violation has been committed.

Penalties for offenses; hearing.

The penalty for each violation of the zoning regulations or approvals or permits issued shall be $100 for each day that such violation continues beyond the compliance date in the cease-and-desist order. Notwithstanding the preceding, in instances of willful violations and instances where the violation is not corrected within such manner and time period stipulated in the order, fines may be assessed from the date such violation has been committed.

Procedure.

The procedure to be followed with respect to all citations issued under this chapter shall be the citation hearing procedure set forth in § 172-6 of the Town Code.

August 28, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF POMFRET
INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES COMMISSION

At the July 1, 2026, meeting of the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission, the following application(s) was acted upon:

a. 26-6W of Scott and Judi Bellefeuille, 70 Brayman Hollow Rd requesting permission to construct a house, driveway, and septic within the 150' upland review area. **APPROVED with conditions**

Town of Pomfret
Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission
Dated this 10th day of August 2026
Sarah Healey, Clerk
August 28, 2026

Notice of Meeting
Town of Putnam
Board of Assessment Appeals

All owners of motor vehicles registered in the Town of Putnam are hereby notified that the Board of Assessment Appeals of the Town of Putnam will meet on the 2nd floor of the Municipal Complex, Room 201, 200 School St., Putnam, Connecticut, on Thursday, September 17, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The sole purpose of the meeting will be for the hearing of appeals related to the assessment of motor vehicles. All persons claiming to be aggrieved by the doings of the Assessor of the Town of Putnam with regard to motor vehicle assessments on the Grand List of October 1, 2025, are hereby warned to make their appeal to the Board of Assessment Appeals at the above stated meeting place and time.

Board of Assessment Appeals
Lee Konicki, Chairman
Cindy Bissonnette
Lauren Heidelberger
August 28, 2026

TOWN OF POMFRET
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
LEGAL NOTICE
Town of Pomfret Planning & Zoning Commission

At the August 19, 2026, meeting of the Pomfret Planning & Zoning Commission, the following legal action(s) were taken:

a. 26-4SP, 144 Valentine Road Derik & Jennifer Kruger, requesting approval of a separate 3 car garage 24'x36'**APPROVED.**

b. 26-5SP 249 Peterson Rd, Rory Apperson requesting a Special Permit to construct an 864 square foot barn with a loft on property located at 249 Peterson Rd **APPROVED.**

Dated at Pomfret, Connecticut
Sarah Healey, Land Use Clerk
August 19, 2026
Planning & Zoning Commission
August 28, 2026

Town of Putnam
Planning & Zoning Commission
Legal Notice

The Town of Putnam Zoning Board of Appeals held a hybrid meeting on August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. in Room 201 on the second floor at the Putnam Municipal Complex, located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. The following action was taken:

Appeal # 2026-006 Joseph Scott & Chery L. Pempek request for a variance from the required 50' side yard setback down to 35' for the construction of a 24' X 30' 1.5 story garage. Property is located at 90 Five Mile River Road, Town Assessors Map 32, Lot 73, Zoned AG-2. Public hearing continued until September 15, 2026 at 7:00 P.M. at the Putnam Municipal Complex.

Scott Zadora, Chairman
August 28, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Leonard W. Gajewski (26-00280)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate,District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated August 11, 2026, 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:
Keith Gajewski
c/o WILLIAM J MONTY,
LAW OFFICE W MONTY,
930 ROUTE 169,, P.O. BOX 266,
WOODSTOCK, CT 06281
August 28, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Diane W Gajewski (26-00325)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate,District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated August 11, 2026, 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:
Keith Gajewski
c/o WILLIAM J MONTY,
LAW OFFICE W MONTY,
930 ROUTE 169,, P.O. BOX 266,
WOODSTOCK, CT 06281
August 28, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF KILLINGLY
BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

The Board of Assessment Appeals of the Town of Killingly will be in session at the Killingly Town Hall, Room 102, 172 Main St., Danielson, CT, on the following day:

Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 6:00 PM

For the purpose of hearing appeals for the October 1, 2025 motor vehicle assessments only.

Appeal forms are available in the Killingly Assessor's Office or at www.killinglyct.gov/assessor under Forms and Applications.

Dale Dauphinais
Kevin Gaudreau
Russell Lavigne
Board of Assessment Appeals
August 28, 2026

TOWN OF KILLINGLY
BOROUGH OF DANIELSON
SOUTH KILLINGLY FIRE DISTRICT
TAX NOTICE

The first quarter installment of real estate and personal property taxes for the Town of Killingly, the Borough of Danielson, and South Killingly Fire District listed on the October 1, 2025 Grand List are due August 1, 2026. Also motor vehicle taxes are due August 1, 2026. Taxes will become delinquent after September 1, 2026. All bills are subject to interest at the rate of 18% per annum, 1.5% per month or any fraction of a month, from the due date of August 1, 2026. A minimum of $2.00 interest will be charged for each delinquent bill and installment. FAILURE TO RECEIVE A BILL DOES NOT RELIEVE OR EXCUSE THE OBLIGATION OF TAX OR INTEREST DUE PER STATE STATUTE 12-130.

Payments will be received in the Revenue Office, 172 Main Street Killingly CT 06239, during the posted hours, by mail, online, or in our drop box.

Please visit our website for full details and online payments at www.killingly.org.

April Lamothe, CCMC
Revenue Collector
Town of Killingly

July 24, 2026
August 7, 2026
August 28, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF PUTNAM

The following ORDINANCE was approved at the Town Meeting held on August 17, 2026, and shall become effective twenty-one (21) days after date of publication.

Dated at Putnam, Connecticut this 18th August 2026.

Christine M. Bright
Town Clerk

ORDINANCE
SURVIVING SPOUSE QUALIFICATION

Pursuant to 12-81qq of the Connecticut General Statutes, the surviving spouse of any veteran qualifying for the exemption under provisions of 12-81(83)(A) who died prior to October 1, 2024, but after October 1, 2018, shall, while such spouse remains a widow or widower, be entitled to the exemption or exemptions under 12-81(83)(A) of the Connecticut General Statutes, including the exemptions and limitations as referenced in Chapters [285-5 and 285-6] above. The provisions of this article shall become effective commencing with the October 1, 2026, Grand List.

August 28, 2026

For Legal Advertising Information, Call 508-909-4127
email: legals@stonebridgepress.news

FUNDING

continued from page A1

million between 41 special education programs across the state, either for programmatic costs or capital improvements.

All three local schools are receiving programmatic funding which helps cover planning and start-up costs, staffing, assistive technology, instructional materials, professional development, and flexible learning models. The grant announcement did not detail specifically how these districts will utilize the money.

BELLAVANCE

continued from page A1

Counseling (NEACAC) and held numerous other leadership roles within the organization during her career in higher education.

Her experience also extends directly into Northeastern Connecticut's small business community. In 2022, Bellavance and her husband opened Stoneledge Inn in Brooklyn, transforming an 1870s farmhouse into a bed and breakfast that they owned and operated. She has served as Secretary of the Brooklyn Business Association since 2023, sits on the Board of Directors for the Brooklyn Cares Community Center, and has been involved with the Northeastern CT Chamber of Commerce since 2022.

"Kelly brings a wonderful combination of leadership experience, business knowledge, and genuine commitment to Northeastern Connecticut," said Amy Brunet, President of the Northeastern CT Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. "Throughout the interview process, it was clear that she understands the importance of relationships and community in the work of the Chamber. We are excited to welcome Kelly and confident she will continue building on the Chamber's momentum while bringing her own ideas and leadership to the organization."

The Northeastern CT Chamber of Commerce serves 23 towns across the region, connecting businesses, communities, and resources to support a strong and thriving Northeastern Connecticut economy. Through monthly networking events, educational programs, legislative and advocacy events, marketing opportunities, and community partnerships, the Chamber works to support, promote, and strengthen the businesses and nonprofit organizations that make up our region.

"I am so excited to welcome Kelly into this role," said Elle Sherman, outgoing Executive Director. "From the beginning of this process, Kelly's genuine commitment to our community really stood out. She understands small business because she has lived it, and she has spent her career building relationships, leading teams, and bringing people together. I am excited to work alongside her during this transition and know the Chamber will be in great hands as Kelly leads it into its next chapter."

"Northeastern Connecticut has truly become home for me and my family, which makes the opportunity to serve this community in a new way incredibly meaningful," said Kelly Bellavance. "I've experienced this region as a resident, a small business owner, and an active member of our local business community, and I've seen how much pride people have in this place. I'm excited to listen, learn, get to know our members across all 23 towns, and build on the great work already happening here. It feels a little bit like coming home to a role that brings together so many parts of my professional and personal experience."

Bellavance will train alongside Sherman throughout September, allowing for a month-long transition before Sherman's final day as Executive Director on Sept. 30.

To learn more about the Northeastern CT Chamber of Commerce, its mission, events, and members, visit nectchamber.com or follow the Chamber on Facebook and Instagram.

COLLAPSE

continued from page A1

incident that has paused public access to the church for the time being. In the late-night hours of Aug. 7, the church's ceiling came down, falling into the sanctuary, leaving the building unsafe for entry.

Images from inside the church, posted by local radio station WINY Radio and credited to Rev. Pamela Briddle, show wood, dust, and debris spread throughout the once shining room where many have prayed and worshipped. Even in the face of this setback, the church has persevered.

In the days and weeks following the incident, the church has found support throughout the community. On Aug. 16, a little over eight days after the collapse, the church reconvened at Fort Hill Farms joining in prayers with the Thompson Congregational Church, which had experienced its own setbacks due to a fire in 2016. While the joint service had been pre-planned before the roof collapse, it held an extra special meaning given the history of these two local institutions.

Briddle did not shy away from the situation in her address to the congregation on Aug. 16. She spoke of the challenges we all face in life and how these struggles do not create a definitive end. Her speech reminded the members of both churches that the building is nothing more than a sanctuary. It's the spirit they all share that keeps their faith alive.

"Buildings matter. Our church buildings have held generations of memories," Briddle said. "People have been baptized there, married there, mourned their loved ones there, celebrated Christmas there, shared meals and some hymns. People have prayed there and cried there and shared meals there, and it's sacred to us because of everything that has happened there. But here's the thing, the building is not the church. We are."

With that powerful statement, the reverend pointed out that the church is still here. The damage to their home has brought out the best in a community with many offering to help and provide resources and a whole other congregation praying with them in the aftermath.

"Some of the blessings we've received have come from unexpected places, and others have come from places we would never have seen coming," said Briddle. "And isn't that how God often works? We think we know what we're going to need and then God surprises us. We think we know what the answer is going to look like and then God sends something or someone we never expected. And that's why gratitude matters today."

There is no telling what the future holds. There is no current timeline to reopen the church. But that does not mean there won't be. That does not mean the congregation is gone. The people remain, their spirit remains, and their faith in a larger plan remains.

There is no easy fix. No Band-Aid that will cover the blemish. But Briddle sought to remind her congregation that they are still together. Nobody was hurt. The building itself still stands, albeit in a damaged state. An entire community is behind them hoping for the best and offering to be a part of the solution. No matter what lies ahead, Briddle reminded everyone they won't be alone.

"Thank you, God, that the future isn't ours to figure out all at once. We only need to take the next step. Thank you for reminding us that there are people who care," she concluded.

Information on the Congregational Church of Putnam's future services and recovery efforts are expected to be updated regularly on the Congregational Church of Putnam Facebook page and other social media resources.

As of this report, the Congregation posted that starting with its Aug. 23 service the church would worship in the large meeting room at the Putnam Town Hall and Community Center for at least four weeks.

KILLINGLY

continued from page A4

Lt. Governor Oliver Wolcott, and Oliver Ellsworth were others who contributed to Connecticut's efforts in the Revolution. If you are interested in any of them, copious amounts of information can be found online.

Allen also summarized the raids and battles which took place on Connecticut soil during the Revolution. Late April 1777 was a trying time for the western part of the state. During the Danbury Raid of April 25-28, the British attacked the supply depot and burned a number of houses in the city. By April 27, they had marched to Ridgefield and wreaked their destruction in that area. In July 1779 the communities along Long Island Sound were targeted---Fairfield, Norwalk, and New Haven. I'm guessing most of you who have read about the Revolution in Eastern Connecticut know about Benedict Arnold's treachery and the Battle of Groton (Fort Griswold) and New London and the burning of a number of homes in that city in September 1781.

Allen's presentation was packed with much more information than I can summarize. He told me that some of these topics were covered on podcasts which he did. See www.AmazingTalesCt.com. He can be reached at AmazingTalesCT@ gmail.com.

Two hundred fifty years ago, in August 1776, the Revolutionary conflict had switched from the siege of Boston to the New York City area. General Washington had placed Pomfret's General Israel Putnam in charge of Brooklyn Heights. The "American" troops had only 10,000 men compared to the British army of 20,000. Washington sent General John Sullivan to the south and Lord Stirling to the southwest. AI and the site Mountvernon.org provided a summary of the disastrous events: "August 22: British forces under General William Howe landed on Long Island at Gravesend Bay, mustering over 20,000 professional soldiers and Hessian mercenaries against General George Washington's Continental Army. August 27: The Battle of Long Island commenced. British troops outflanked the American positions through the unguarded Jamaica Pass, inflicting heavy casualties and forcing a chaotic American retreat. August 28–29: Trapped against the East River with the British closing in, Washington executed a brilliant, silent nighttime evacuation, ferrying his remaining troops safely across to Manhattan under the cover of fog." American casualties 300 were killed; 650 were wounded; 1,100 were captured. The British lost only 63 soldier and had 314 wounded. For additional information see mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/battle-of-long-island?

In volume two of her "History of Windham County, Connecticut," historian Ellen D. Larned reported "Windham County soldiers in the Connecticut Line suffered severely (during this battle). More than a hundred and fifty officers and privates were 'missing' from Huntington's regiment alone. Several men from Pomfret were killed; Surgeon David Holmes and others from Woodstock and adjoining towns were taken prisoners…With report of these events Windham County militia received immediate summons to the field. The militia including the Fifth, Eleventh (Col. William Danielson), Twelfth, and Twenty-first regiments, together with the regiment of horse, were ordered to march at once to New York. ..Already preparing to march for the defense of New London, these regiments were soon underway…The troops of horse under Major Ebenezer Backus speeded on and were soon reported at Westchester." (Swordsmith ed., p. 137-8).

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, August 2026. For additional information email me at 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. For Windham County Transcripts visit killingly.historyarchives.online courtesy of the Killingly Public Library.

Interact Club members busy helping

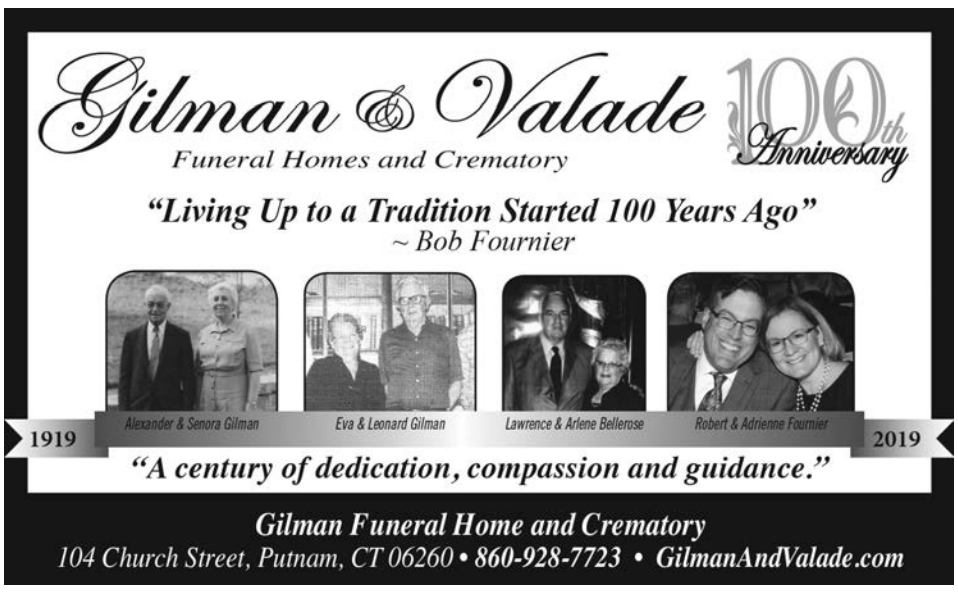
PUTNAM — The Putnam Rotary Club's Interact Club lent a helping hand at the Putnam Business Association's (PBA) Pluck-A-Duck fund-raiser's Kids Zone Aug. 9. Mabel Perreault and Matthew Rybacki gave out popcorn and Calleigh Levesque volunteered at the Make a Wish table. Denise Esslinger from the PBA thanked the Interact Club members for their help.

On Aug. 15, the Interact Club volunteered at the TEEG backpack and school supply distribution. Club members helped families with choosing all the supplies needed for the grade their child is attending.

Elizabeth Perry, TEEG coordinator, thanked the club members for collecting back packs and volunteering at the event, saying, "Thank you to Shyla and Sandi Beckett, Mabel Perreault, Matthew Rybacki, Alyssa Daniels and Sophie Godzike."

The Putnam Rotary Club's Interact Club is regional club that focuses on community service for ages 12-18. The club will meet at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 8 at the Putnam Public Library.

For more information contact Rotarian Roberta Rocchetti 860-933-8603 or robertarocchetti4@gmail.com.



LEGALS

PROPERTY AUCTION

The tax collector of the Town of Thompson has levied upon the following properties in Thompson and slated them for public auction to satisfy delinquent taxes and charges under C.G.S. § 12-157. Volume and page numbers refer to the Town's land records. Unless paid, these properties will be auctioned in "as is" condition at 10:00 a.m. on September 16, 2026 at the Thompson Town Hall at 815 Riverside Drive in North Grosvenordale.

±2.25 acres on West Thompson Road (Volume 321 Page 333) owned by the Estate of Wendell A. Dobson, owing $2,088.00. Daniel Dobson; Edward A. Dobson; William Dobson; Melissa Greenwood; the Connecticut Office of the Probate Court Administrator; the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services; the United States Internal Revenue Service; and the surviving spouse and heirs of Wendell A. Dobson may have interests which will be extinguished by the sale.

±0.51 acres on Riverside Drive (Volume 733 Page 88) owned by Dudley Sand & Gravel Corp., owing $5,682.82. Danielle Verdini and Dennis R. Blanchette may have interests which will be extinguished by the sale.

150-152 Church Street (Volume 464 Page 165) owned by Kenneth E. Gareau, owing $13,325.85. Henri Cloutier and Cecile E. Cloutier or her Estate may have interests which will be extinguished by the sale.

±24.67 acres and ±0.93 acres on Riverside Drive (Volume 142 Page 154 excluding any portions in Putnam CT) owned by Greatrex Corporation, owing $20,680.71.

±4.19 acres on Wakefield Pond Road (Volume 364 Page 47 excluding all portions in Burrillville, Rhode Island) owned by John B. Sharkey and Mary I. Sharkey, Trustees of the Sharkey Family Trust dated October 8, 1993, or their Estates or Successor Trustees, owing $3,174.77. The Connecticut Office of the Probate Court Administrator; the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services; the United States Internal Revenue Service; and the surviving spouses and heirs of John B. Sharkey and Mary I. Sharkey may have interests which will be extinguished by the sale.

±4.1 acres on Pompeo Road (Volume 70 Page 354) owned by Thomas F. Zabka or his Estate and Patricia A. Zabka or her Estate, owing $2,859.80. Scott Thomas Zabka; Amphone Zabka; the Connecticut Office of the Probate Court Administrator; the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services; the United States Internal Revenue Service; and the surviving spouses and heirs of Thomas F. Zabka and Patricia A. Zabka may have interests which will be extinguished by the sale.

The dollar amounts listed are through the end of last month. Additional taxes, interest, fees, and other charges authorized by law accruing after the last day of the month immediately preceding this notice are owed in addition to the amount indicated as due and owing in this notice.

Bidders must present $5,000 per property by certified check payable to "Pullman & Comley, Trustee" on the day of the sale, and the winning bidder must pay the balance of the sale price within 5 days or forfeit that deposit and the property. Unless redeemed, the purchaser will take title "free and clear" six months after the auction except for certain encumbrances. Details atwww.cttaxsales.com.
August 28, 2026

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Superior Products. Exceptional Service.®

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windows & doors

This is our **31-Day Sale**, and that means it won't last! Summer is almost over, making it the perfect time to update your windows and doors. **Take advantage of our special discounts & financing now!**

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Book yours before August 31!

Final week!

Sale ends August 31

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Interest is billed during promo period but will be waived if the amount financed is paid in full before 12-month promo period expires.

- Our windows are custom-built with our exclusive Fibrex® material and **available in 9 exterior colors, 6 interior colors or 3 stainable wood interior options.**
- **Our SmartSun™ glass is 70% more energy efficient** than ordinary dual-pane glass in the warmer months.[3]
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EXCLUSIVELY FROM RENEWAL by ANDERSEN

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[1]Subject to availability, on a total purchase of 6 or more. Buy 3 windows or doors and get the second 3 windows or doors, of equal or lesser value, 40% off – applied to lowest priced window and/or door products in purchase. $45 off each window or door discount valid during first appointment only. Cannot be combined with other offers. To qualify for discount offer, initial contact for an appointment must be made and documented on or before 8/31/26 with the purchase then occurring on or before 9/10/26. Products are marketed, sold and installed (but not manufactured) by Renewal by Andersen retailers, which are independently owned and operated under Southern New England Windows, LLC, d/b/a Renewal by Andersen of Southern New England. CT HIC.0634555. MA 173245. RI 36079. All residents of islands will be subject to an island surcharge. See complete information and entity identification at www.rbaguidelines.com. ©2026 Andersen Corporation. ©2026 Lead Surge LLC. All rights reserved.

[2]Plan 4521. Subject to credit approval. Rates range from 14.26% - 21.19% APR (interest rates range from 15.99% - 24.99%). Loan amount and rate will vary based on your income and creditworthiness. Monthly payments are not required during the Promo Period. Loans for the GreenSky® consumer loan program are provided by Synovus Bank, Member FDIC, NMLS #408043, without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or familial status. GreenSky Servicing, LLC services the loans on behalf of your lender, NMLS #1416362. www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org. GreenSky® is a registered trademark of GreenSky, LLC and is licensed to banks and other financial institutions for their use in connection with that consumer loan program. GreenSky Servicing, LLC is a financial technology company that manages the GreenSky® consumer loan program by providing origination and servicing support to banks and other financial institutions that make or hold program loans. GreenSky, LLC and GreenSky Servicing, LLC are not lenders. All credit decisions and loan terms are determined by program lenders.

[3]Values are based on comparison of Renewal by Andersen® double-hung window U-Factor to the U-Factor for clear dual pane glass non-metal frame default values from the 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018 International Energy Conservation Code "Glazed Fenestration" Default Tables. †It is the only warranty among top selling window companies that meets all of the following requirements: easy to understand terms, unrestricted transferability, installation coverage, labor coverage, geographically unrestricted, coverage for exterior color, insect screens and hardware, and no maintenance requirement. Visit renewalbyandersen.com/nationsbest for details.