KILLINGLY VILLAGER

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Friday, October 30, 2026

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Thompson residents launch new program honoring local veterans

THOMPSON — A group of patriotic citizens, in partnership with the Thompson Recreation Department, the Quinebaug VFW Post 10088, and their Auxiliary and the Thompson Veterans Office, are exploring and rolling out a new initiative to honor living military veterans.

A new "Banner Program" is currently in the planning stages to erect banners of Veterans similar to other area Communities in Putnam, Dudley and other surrounding Towns.

Our vision is to initially erect 25 banners of living veterans, both around the Thompson Hill Common and along Riverside Drive (Route 12), from Grosvenordale to North Grosvenordale (approximately the old Belding Mill site to the intersection of Riverside Drive and Main Street) at the Veterans monument near the Library Community Center.

The initial cost for the permanent brackets will be funded from the balance of the Thompson 250th anniversary Celebration Account which was totally funded by private donations. It is expected that the cost of the colored banners will be approximately $150.00 and will be funded by the Veteran or the Veterans Family. The Veteran or the Veterans Family will need to also provide the committee with the Military photo of their choosing.

It is our expectation that the first 25 banners will be in place during the Spring in time for the 2027 Memorial Day Parade on Monday May 31 of next year.

We are still finalizing final details for the selection process, designing an application, and the process for submission of a Veterans name and information to place on a banner. The committee has also been actively working on the placement and design of those banners. We encourage any ideas that the community may have in regard to this new initiative to contact our committee at HeroBanner@thompsonct.org

We look forward to rolling out another new way to continue to honor our Hometown Heroes in Thompson who gave so much for our Freedom.

Committee Members: Brian Lievense, Recreation Director, Erica Groh, VFW Auxiliary, Ken Beausoleil, former Selectman, Nick Donohue, First Selectman and Rene J. Morin, Veterans Officer.

Killingly provides updates on bridge projects

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — Killingly currently has two bridges under consideration for redesigning and rebuilding efforts under the State Department of Transportation (DOT). Both Wright Road Bridge and Peep Toad Road Bridge are being examined as future projects. However, while one is going smoothly, the other has hit a proverbial roadblock.

Town Manager Brian Palaia provided an update on both bridges to the Town Council on Oct. 13. He explained that both bridges are part of a larger effort to update structures of concern in the town.

The first bridge he discussed was Wright Road Bridge, which is in the middle of its design and public outreach phase and is the closest to a final solution.

"We got a design and build grant through DOT to replace four bridges in town," Palaia explained. "(Wright Road Bridge) is leading the pack in terms of the progress on a solution."

The DOT put forth a proposal to the public during a public informational meeting on Oct. 15. Records from this meeting were unavailable for this story. However, the meeting is a required part of the design phase to allow the project to proceed closer to its full rebuild.

However, most of the discussion was focused on the second bridge: the Peep Toad Road Bridge. This structure is much farther from a final solution. Palaia explained that the aging bridge, which holds historic significance for its hand-constructed nature, is stuck in limbo as designers grapple with whether to rebuild it or eliminate the structure entirely.

"We saw the preliminary recommendation from the DOT's designer a couple weeks ago which is to not

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Killingly PTO seeks return

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — Dr. Paul Haughey has wasted no time jumping into his role as the new Superintendent of Killingly Schools.

In his first two months on the job, Haughey has focused on visiting classrooms, meeting with stakeholders, and corresponding with students to get an idea of how to move the district forward. Through those meetings a revelation has come about: the reformation of a Killingly Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

The district has had a PTO in the past. In 2025, it was announced that the separate PTOs joined to form the unified Killingly KCS, KMS, KIS PTO, however that same year the group confirmed they were initiating an investigation into improper use of funds by a former officer. Soon after, the group announced it was revising its bylaws, but in October of 2025, they posted that the K-8 PTO was "unable to operate" and have not provided any updates sense.

According to Haughley, that's about to change. Part of his first few months with the district has involved a meeting with PTO representatives to initiate new bylaws and bring the PTO back to a fully functioning partner of the district.

"I wholeheartedly support the recreation and reconstitution of the PTO in partnership with our district and its work," the Superintendent told the Board of Education during an Oct 14 meeting. "I want to be extremely clear and say this publicly now. In no way have I ever, nor will I ever, engage in outreach with the PTO or an organization like a 501C3 or the like asking for donations. Those opportunities of a Parent Teacher Organization traditionally

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Town of Putnam celebrates ribbon cutting for new EMS facility

PUTNAM — Town officials, emergency medical personnel, and community members gathered on Saturday, Oct. 24, to celebrate the official ribbon cutting of Putnam's new Emergency Medical Services (EMS) facility at 191 Church St.

The completion of the approximately 1,200-square-foot facility marks a significant investment in public safety and in the professionals who provide emergency medical care to Putnam and the surrounding region.

Designed to better support around-the-clock operations, the new facility includes sleeping quarters, bathrooms, showers, kitchen facilities, office space, and improved accommodations for EMS personnel. The project addresses longstanding limitations of the previous facility while maintaining the organization's centrally located response headquarters.

Courtesy

Left to right: Tammy Szpyrka EMS Chief, Deputy Mayor Scott Pempek, Town administrator Elaine Sistare, and Selectman Mike Bogdanski.

"For the men and women who answer emergency

Turn To **EMS** *page* **A9**

Courtesy

Centreville Bank staff and community leaders celebrate the grand reopening of the newly renovated Putnam branch.

Centreville Bank celebrates reopening of renovated Putnam branch

PUTNAM — Centreville Bank celebrated the grand reopening of its newly renovated Putnam branch on Thursday, Oct. 22, marking the completion of a significant renovation project designed to modernize the banking experience, improve accessibility, enhance security and support the needs of customers and employees for years to come.

The project began in spring 2026 and was completed while maintaining uninterrupted service through a temporary on-site Bank-in-a-Box facility.

The extensive renovation transformed both the interior and exterior of the branch, incorporating updated technology, a redesigned customer experience, improved accessibility features, enhanced security measures and modernized workspaces for employees.

New features include Interactive Teller Machines (ITMs) with drive-up and walk-up access, providing customers with expanded access to live banking services and extended service hours. Customers can speak directly with a Centreville Bank representative through the ITM network, often connecting with a member of the Putnam team.

"This renovation represents our ongoing commitment to Northeast Connecticut and the customers, businesses and communities we have proudly served for generations," said Hal Horvat, President, CEO and Chairman of the Board, Centreville Bank. "While this project modernizes the branch with new technology, enhanced accessibility, and improved customer amenities, it is ultimately about investing in relationships. Putnam has long been an important part of our story, and this investment ensures we can continue delivering exceptional service and personalized banking experiences for decades to come."

The grand reopening brought together customers, employees, community leaders and local officials, including Deputy Mayor Scott Pempek, Connecticut State Senator Mae Flexer, Sylvie Hanshaw of the Putnam Business Association and Kelly Bellavance, Executive Director of the Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce. Senator Flexer also presented a state proclamation recognizing the milestone.

"Our customers have been incredibly supportive throughout this renovation," said Brandy Hapgood, Branch Manager. "From the day we moved into the Bank-in-a-Box to the day we welcomed customers back into the renovated branch, our community continued to place its trust in us. We are excited to provide a more modern, accessible, and convenient banking experience while continuing to deliver the personal service that our customers have come to expect from our team."

The celebration also highlighted Centreville Bank's commitment to investing beyond the walls of its branches. Paola Fonseca-Fernandez, SVP, Community Development, presented two community impact grants during the event, including support for the Hale YMCA and Putnam Elementary School. The $4500.00 grant for Putnam Elementary School will help fund the addition of several weatherproof picnic tables for the school playground, providing new outdoor spaces for students as the PTO continues its broader playground improvement efforts.

"We are incredibly grateful to Centreville Bank for their investment in our students' outdoor spaces," said Emilia Reynolds, Putnam Elementary School PTO Treasurer. "Their generous support of three new picnic tables crosses a huge item off our wish list and brings us another step closer to making these much-needed playground improvements a reality."

The branch renovation reflects Centreville Bank's continued investment in Connecticut and its commitment to creating spaces that support customers, employees and communities while preserving the relationship-based approach that defines community banking.

About Centreville Bank

Founded in 1828 and headquartered in West Warwick, Rhode Island, Centreville Bank is a full-service mutual bank with over $3 billion in assets and 26 locations throughout Rhode Island and eastern Connecticut. Centreville understands the unique financial needs of individuals, families and businesses and offers a wide range of personal banking and commercial banking products and services including checking accounts, savings accounts, CDs, money market accounts, mortgages, business loans and more. Centreville is committed to its employees and the communities it serves, always striving to help people make progress and achieve their financial goals. That is progress on purpose. Visitcentrevillebank.com, follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, or come into a branch or office to learn more.

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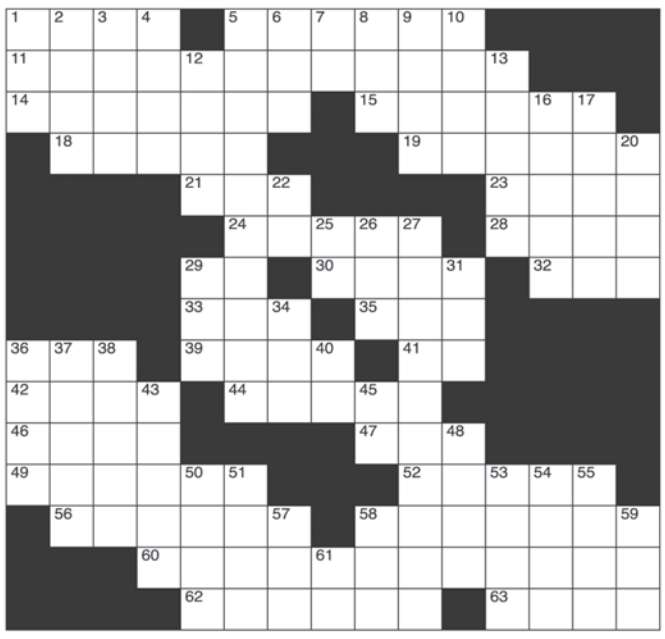


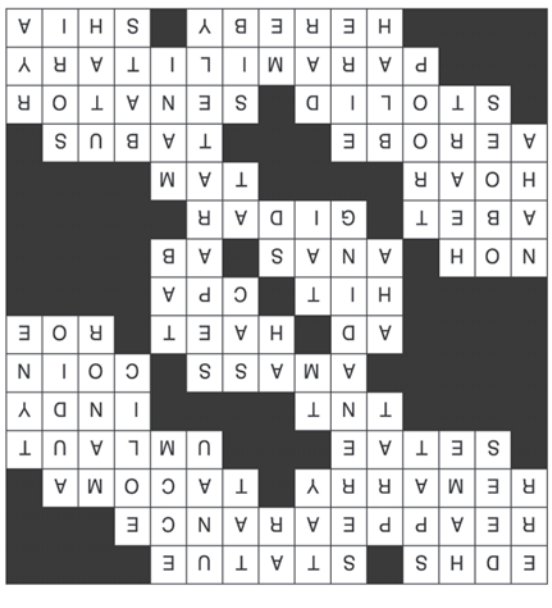
CLUES ACROSS

1. El Dorado High School
5. A sculpture representing a human or animal
11. A type of return
14. Tie the knot again
15. Washington city
18. Hairlike structures
19. Mark used over a vowel
21. Explosive
23. Popular 500 car race
24. Pile up
28. Currency
29. Commercial
30. A minute amount (Scottish)
32. Mass of fish eggs
33. Baseball stat
35. Licensed accountant
36. Japanese classical theater
39. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
41. Blood group
42. Assist in wrongdoing
44. Language of Cameroon
46. Grayish-white
47. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
49. Microorganism
52. Strong social customs
56. Calm and dependable
58. Congressman
60. Force
62. As a result of this document
63. A main branch of Islam

CLUES DOWN

1. Make a mistake
2. American DJ Rick
3. Fictional Asimov planet
4. Coughed out
5. Singing to one's lover
6. Scotland's longest river
7. One of the six noble gases
8. Body art
9. Two-toed sloth
10. Electronic counter-countermeasures
12. A foolish person
13. Of the wind
16. Mansion
17. Sound
20. English river
22. Business symbol
25. Exclamation of surprise
26. Pouch
27. Individually
29. Satisfaction
31. The bill in a restaurant
34. Japanese delicacy
36. Port in southern Japan
37. Double-reed instruments
38. Center
40. "The Mount Rushmore State"
43. Soldier
45. Indicates position
48. Beauty treatment: __-pedi
50. Nonsense (slang)
51. Republic of Ireland
53. Ballplayers' tools
54. American state
55. Clusters of a fern frond
57. Patriotic women's group
58. A person's brother or sister
59. Breed of sheep
61. Of I

PUZZLE SOLUTION



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I'll be out in a minute

THIS CORNER OF CONNECTICUT

By CARL

I like going places. It's getting ready to go places that seems to be giving me trouble.

An invitation sounds perfectly agreeable when it arrives a week ahead of time. Supper, a gathering, a little something on a Saturday evening. Of course we'll come. It'll be good to get out. Then Saturday arrives, and around late afternoon I begin wondering whether anyone would notice if we sent our regards.

Nothing has happened. I'm feeling fine. I still like the people involved. But I have been home long enough to become established. My shoes are off. There is something on tv that I wouldn't have chosen but am now apparently committed to watching. I've started thinking about supper in terms of what can be heated without transferring it to another dish. Leaving would require reversing several decisions.

My wife usually recognizes this stage before I do. She starts getting ready while I conduct a quiet review of whether the event really begins at the time printed on the invitation. Perhaps that's when they open the doors. Perhaps people aren't expected immediately. Perhaps I should get my shoes.

There was a time when an evening out required very little persuasion. Somebody suggested something, and off we went. Now I want to know about parking, seating and whether we'll be getting home before I've lost interest in being awake. I don't remember applying for these standards. They developed on their own.

Around northeastern Connecticut, an evening out can also involve a stretch of dark road, a little weather and the discovery that the jacket you brought is the wrong jacket. By October, I can use any of these facts to support staying home. I am especially persuasive when talking to myself.

The adult kids have their own arrangements. Apparently, a person can now answer an invitation by saying they might stop by, then provide updates as the evening develops. I find this aggravating, although I have occasionally stood in my own kitchen hoping for a minor plumbing problem that would excuse us. Nothing serious. A slow faucet would do. The irritating part is that once I get there, I nearly always enjoy myself.

Somebody asks how things are going, and we get past the automatic answer. Someone else mentions a problem I thought belonged exclusively to our household. Before long, we're discussing the difficulty of getting anyone to return a phone call, and I feel among friends.

There is usually something to laugh about. Often, it's something that wasn't funny when it happened, which seems to be how a fair amount of useful humor is produced.

I remember that I like hearing real live people tell a story in person. You get the pauses, the expression and the spouse across the table quietly correcting the mileage. You can't improve on that with a message on your phone.

On the way home, I'll generally say I'm glad we went. My wife receives this announcement with the restraint of someone who could say quite a bit more. I appreciate her discretion.

I'm trying to remember that feeling earlier in the evening, while I'm still bargaining with my shoes. Staying home is pleasant, and some nights it's exactly what I need. But I can get a little too comfortable letting one quiet evening become another.

So if we've said we're coming, expect us. I may complain while finding my jacket. I may have a few observations about the parking. Once I'm through the door, though, put on the coffee. There's a reasonable chance you'll have trouble getting rid of me.

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.

Got Space? we do.
Contact Mikaela Today,
860-928-1818

Brian Fitts named Thompson's Veteran of the Month

THOMPSON — United States Marine Corps Vietnam Era War Veteran Brian A. Fitts of Paul Avenue in the Quinebaug Village of Thompson has been selected by the nominating committee to be recognized and honored as the November 2026 Veteran of the Month for the Town of Thompson. Sergeant Fitts served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1973 to 1979, and is a 100 percent Disabled Vietnam Era War Veteran.

Brian was born on Jan. 17, 1953, to parents Homer and Marion Fitts in Worcester, Mass. and lived his early years in Oxford, Mass. until his family purchased their home in Quinebaug when Brian was three years old. He still lives in that same home 70 years later. In spite of Brian's physical disabilities, he continues to maintain that picture-perfect corner house lot and garden like manicured property with pride and care for he and the neighborhood to enjoy. Brian attended grades 1 to 3 in the old three-room Schoolhouse in Quinebaug that is now the Veterans of Foreign Wars building. He later attended the Thompson Elementary School from grades 4 through his freshman year at Tourtellotte High School before transferring to the Ellis Technical School in Danielson as a student in the Electrical Shop where he graduated in the Class of 1971.

Brian's dad was a six-year World War 11 Veteran as a Medic and a "tough guy" who witnessed first-hand unspeakable tragedy. He advised his Son to join an "Elite Force" when considering joining the Military. Brian, being a tough guy as well, followed his dad's advice and joined the Marine Corps. He reported to Paris Island, South Carolina for a rigorous 16-week basic training duty. Brian reports that there were 50 recruits in his platoon when he began his training at Paris Island. Only 32 Marines finished and graduated. Sixteen members of his initial platoon did not finish their basic training and two died, one from suicide and one was shot by guards. That is what Brian's dad inferred when stating that his son Brian was a "tough guy." After basic training graduation, Brain was sent to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina for his advanced training. He spent his first two weeks of AIT in an advanced infantry training session, and subsequent four months of schooling hands working with auto and heavy equipment diesel machinery.

It was there, at Camp Lejeune, that Brian and countless more innocent infantrymen were subjected to toxic well water contamination that was 3000 times above the legal drinking and bathing minimum requirements. Little did they realize then, they would become part of a major class action lawsuit and legal battle decades later from consumption of that contaminated and toxic water. Chest pains, headaches, narrowing of the veins and aneurysms of the aorta were a direct result of this toxic water. They were told not to complain about the drinking water, because It was just not what they were used to back home, but it was safe to drink. Those results are just now recently being discovered as major factors for all of those Marines illness and disabilities that have haunted them and followed them throughout their post service years. Finally, decades later, the government is recognizing this as service related disabilities, thousands of deaths and life changing debilitative lives later.

At the conclusion of Brian's advanced infantry training, he was deployed to the 7th Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, California to wait for his orders to be sent over to Vietnam. 10 days before his unit was going to be shipped to Vietnam, they were informed that the United Stated Government was going to be starting a new program to transition Vietnam refugees into American Society. Their unit had been chosen to begin this process because of their knowledge of motor transport. The 2nd Marine Battalion from Camp Lejeune was ordered to Vietnam in their place and Brian's unit was spared from deploying to Vietnam.

Sergeant Fitts was assigned as the shop chief of a platoon of about 1,000 Marines to transport Vietnam refugees from their drop off point at the San Diego Naval Shipyard and transport them to Camp Pendleton. Sgt. Fitts estimates that during the ensuing 28 months, he and his fellow battalion mates transported in excess of 10,000 South Vietnam refugees to a newly constructed Village on the Marine Corps Base at Camp Pendleton, California where the refugees were transitioned into a new life, learning the American Language, and how to care for themselves. They remained at this village for a six- to 12-month period until it was determined that they could be integrated safely and independent into our American society. Most of these refugees were well to do refugees with money and gold who were encouraged to come to America and begin a new life here. It was part of a government deal that was made between the two governments with benefits for both the United States and South Vietnam. Brian informs me that one of the families that transitioned through Camp Pendleton and came to the East coast to begin a new life is part of the family that currently owns and operates the Vietnamese restaurant/pool hall "Bravo" in Putnam.

Sgt. Fitts is a Certified Marine Corps Sniper and a Certified Marine Corps Paratrooper. In this role, Sergeant Fitts was often assigned to protect President Richard Nixon at the Camp Pendleton Golf Course. Whenever the President was at his San Clemente home, Sergeant Fitts was assigned to protective duty at the Camp Pendleton golf course because of his expert sniper and paratrooper skills. On numerous occasions, Sergeant Fitts had the opportunity and good fortune to be in President Nixon's Company. Sergeant Fitts would often ride in a golf cart following the President around the course as part of his secret service security force. They would often speak about golf, as both Sergeant Fitts and the President were avid golfers with relatively low handicaps. Sergeant Fitts was a member of the Marine Corps Golf Team. He would travel with the team to play golf matches against other Service teams (Army, Navy, Air Force and other branches"). Among Sergeant Fitts Marine Corps highlights, one afternoon the President extended an offer to Brian to play 18 holes with him. Of course, Brian accepted. To this very day, Brian can boast that he not only played golf with the President of the United States, but shot and 84 while the President shot an 89. Raise your hand if you can tell a true story about playing golf with a sitting United States President and having a better golf score. Quite an accomplishment and an honor for a young Marine from Thompson, (Quinebaug) Ct.

On Dec. 3, 1976, Sgt. Fitts was discharged from his active duty at Camp Pendleton California. Wanting to continue to serve his Country, Sergeant Fitts transferred to the Marine Corps Reserve in Hartford, Ct. and in Worcester, Mass. He remained in the Reserve for 3 years. With his background in Heavy Equipment and Motor Transport Duty, he was assigned to be a Tow Truck Operator and a Mechanic for the Marine Reserve Corps. He remained there until his final discharge on Nov. 22, 1979. For his exemplary Service Sergeant Fitts was awarded The Good Conduct Medal, The National Defense Service Medal, The Rifle Marksman Badge, The Certified Marine Corps Sniper Award, The Certified Marine Corps Paratrooper Award, the State of Connecticut Vietnam Award, along with numerous other Citations and Ribbons.

After Brian's discharge from the Military, he worked for the United States Postal Service for 31 years. He held numerous positions during that time including being a postal carrier in Westboro, Mass., a mail handler, and a supervisor. He mostly enjoyed his time as a postal carrier because of his love of the outdoors. Due to worsening medical conditions from to his exposure to the Camp Lajeune toxic drinking water in his service years, Brian had to take an early retirement form the postal system to remain homebound.

After his retirement from the Post Office in 2008, Brian moved back home to care for his elderly mom. His mom was a professional quilter and seamstress. She was wheelchair bound and Brian was able to care for her needs for 10 years until she passed in 2018 at 97 years of age. Brian took an interest in quilting as he watched his mom over those many years. She taught Brian her trade, and Brian quickly learned how to make beautiful quilts. His specialty was painstakingly making hand woven "Quilts of Valor" for Veterans of the Armed Services. These are professional quality Quilts, made by hand, each taking in excess of 400 hours to make. Brian estimates that he has quilted in excess of 100 quilts in his sewing room at his home. Brain donated to the Town of Thompson the stunning 12 by 12 American Eagle Quilt of Valor which hangs in the Town Hall first floor hallway in honor of America's 250th Celebration. He has also donated three additional smaller quilts of honor that will be presented to three Town of Thompson military families as part of our annual Veterans Day Ceremony to be held on Wednesday, Nov. 11 at the Oscar Swanson Memorial Park at 11 a.m.

Brian is a certified 50 caliber machine gun expert marksman. From 500 yards away, he could consistently and completely destroy the enemy or target of choice. Brian has received numerous awards for his expert and precise shooting skills and ability. He still has a passion for golf and played on the Thompson Lions Club League for a number of years. He was an athlete, and ran track for his Tourtellotte Memorial High School Track Team. He was also a long-time member of the Westboro and Webster American Legion Post.

United States Marine Corps Veteran Brian Fitts will be honored and presented with a commemorative plaque by the Board of Selectmen and the Veterans Officer at the next Board of Selectman meeting.

Paws Cat Shelter hosting can and bottle drive

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter is holding a Can and Bottle Drive on Saturday, Nov. 7 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the shelter located at 74 School St. in Putnam. Please separate two-liter bottles. Pet food and donations are always welcome and greatly appreciated.

Paws is a non-profit, all volunteer organization caring for the cats of our communities. For more info or to make a monetary donation, contact Paws at 860-315-1228.

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PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

Honoring service while our veterans are here to see it

There is something particularly meaningful about recognizing someone's contributions while they are still here to appreciate the gesture. Too often, communities wait until a person has passed away before finding a way to publicly acknowledge a lifetime of service and sacrifice. By then, the opportunity to offer that person a heartfelt thank-you has been lost.

That is what makes a new initiative taking shape in Thompson especially worthwhile.

A committee of local residents and officials, working in partnership with the Thompson Recreation Department, Quinebaug VFW Post 10088 and its Auxiliary, and the Thompson Veterans Office, is developing a program to display banners honoring living military veterans throughout the community.

The initial plan calls for 25 banners displayed around Thompson Hill Common and along Riverside Drive, stretching between Grosvenordale and North Grosvenordale. Organizers hope to have the first banners installed in time for the Memorial Day parade on May 31, 2027. It is a relatively simple idea, but one with considerable meaning.

Military service is an important part of the history of Northeast Connecticut. Generations of residents have answered the call to serve, sometimes leaving behind young families, established careers and familiar surroundings to fulfill responsibilities that demanded far more than an ordinary day's work.

Some served during wartime. Others served during periods of relative peace. Their experiences varied, as did the sacrifices they and their families made. Yet each made a commitment that deserves recognition.

And while Memorial Day appropriately honors those who died in military service, and Veterans Day recognizes all who have served, there is something valuable about creating a visible reminder of that service throughout the year.

Imagine a veteran driving through town and seeing a photograph from his or her military years displayed along a familiar street. Imagine grandchildren discovering a younger version of a grandparent in uniform, perhaps prompting questions about experiences that have seldom been discussed around the dinner table. Those conversations may be among the most important benefits of this project.

Veterans are not simply names on monuments or photographs in old albums. They are neighbors, parents, grandparents, coworkers and familiar faces at local businesses and community gatherings. Their military experiences are part of their personal histories, but also part of the history of the towns they call home. A banner program offers an opportunity to connect those histories with the community's everyday life.

The organizers have also developed a funding approach intended to make use of existing resources. Permanent brackets are expected to be paid for through the remaining balance of Thompson's privately funded 250th anniversary celebration account. Individual banners, estimated to cost approximately $150, would be funded by veterans or their families.

As the committee finalizes its plans, accessibility deserves consideration. Not every veteran or family will have $150 available for a banner, and financial circumstances should not determine whose service receives public recognition. Community sponsorships or voluntary donations could provide a way to include veterans who might otherwise be unable to participate.

The selection process should also be clear, fair and transparent, particularly if interest exceeds the first 25 available spaces. With thoughtful planning, the program can grow into a lasting tradition rather than a one-time display.

Credit is due to the committee members who have begun the work of bringing this

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A response to Mr. DeLuca

To the Editor:

Once again, a letter to the Editor in the Oct. 16 edition of the Villager raised many questions and caused me to do some research. In this case, the letter was from Ed DeLuca.

I was at first puzzled by his opening paragraph, where he began two sentences with "It's been reported . . ." without stating where it has been reported. That always makes me raise an eyebrow of suspicion, because more often than not it means hearsay.

But ignoring that point, I'm curious why Mr. DeLuca was so concerned about taxes in California. Does he own property there? And even if he does, why are California's taxes of any concern to anyone else here in the quiet corner of Connecticut?

Mr. DeLuca claims that in California, the top 1 percent (he doesn't state 1 percent of what) pays nearly half the state's income taxes. Well, as much as I dislike using AI, I asked the question and found that the top 1 percent of wage earners in California pay approximately 39 percent of all income taxes. The top 1 percent has a tax rate of 26.95 percent, followed by the top 5 percent (which includes the top 1 percent) of 24.45 percent, and average income tax for the state is 15.81 percent.

One could certainly argue that the top 1 percent is paying more than their share. That is, if you happen to be among the Republicans that feel sorry for the poor billionaires. But I asked AI how much wealth does the top 5 percent control, and the answer was that the top 5 percent controls approximately 60 percent of the state's wealth. So if they are only paying 39 percent of the taxes, they are not paying their fair share.

I then asked how much wealth the bottom 50 percent controls, and it is only nine tenths of a percent. But what does the wealthy 1 percent get for their money? Access that the bottom 50 percent doesn't get.

Any of the California billionaires can call the White House and Trump will personally take the call. Recently, there was a photo-op in the Oval Office with a dozen or more AI billionaires watching Trump sign an order allowing those foxes to guard their own hen houses without government interference. When's the last time you saw a photo of anyone that wasn't a billionaire in the White House? Trump openly sells access to him for $1 million and up. In the same paragraph, he states that "It's been said," another phrase that raises my hackles, "that the Democrats have more billionaire donors that Republicans do." AI begs to differ. In the current election cycle the total contributions from billionaires to Republicans amount to $1.54 billion, while Democrats have received only $590 million. For clarification, a billion has 3 more zeros than a million.

$154,000,000 for Republicans, $590,000,000 for Democrats.

Mr. DeLuca then goes on about people complaining about Elon Musk's wealth but not George Soros. It's not complaining about their wealth, it's what they are doing with their wealth. Most of what is attributed to Mr. Soros is hearsay talking points for which no one has offered proof, but we all watched as Elon Musk directly paid voters for their votes. I've heard how all the No King's marchers are being paid by Mr. Soros. I've been to six such marches and no one has ever paid me a penny, not even covering my travel expenses. There were no busloads of protesters showing up, no massed produced signs. Mr. Soros sure is a stingy contributor. But I asked AI how much he donated to political campaigns this year and got "George Soros and his son Alex have donated more than $1 million to the Democratic National Committee during the 2022 midterm election cycle, but they have yet to contribute any money to the DNC in the current year." Ask the same question about Elon Musk and I got "Elon Musk has contributed approximately $366 million in the 2026 U.S. midterm election cycle, with $276 million of that amount donated since July." I'm pretty sure Elon Musk has his own key to the White House.

Mr. DeLuca then goes on to talk about how we just adapt when prices go up. Heating oil is at the highest it's ever been in history, but Mr. Deluca can afford to have propane splits installed in his home. He adapted, because he has wealth. Many people will adapt by having frozen pipes.

Mr. DeLuca and Marie Antoinette seem to have a lot in common. They both wear blinders.

There is not enough space to counter the rest of his arguments about Connecticut. Maybe someone else will cover that, or maybe I'll address it in the future. Though I do agree that we are highly taxed, Connecticut ranks second in the nation in public education, third in healthcare, and third in public safety. It's not like we aren't getting anything for our money.

DAVE CLARK
THOMPSON

Vote for Lena Wagner

To the Editor:

I'm supporting Lena Wagner for State Representative for the 51st District.

I first met Lena Wagner last October, when a group of concerned citizens came together to fight to restore Old Killingly Pond State Park to its original pristine levels. Lena didn't just show up once and wish us well and show up months later to have her picture taken. She showed up to work, and she was there for the duration and is still working, offering her expertise with consistent outreach to bring accurate information to the community at large.

Lena shows up for critical town meetings and has been impressively informed on the issues. Lena is for sensible economic growth that aligns with the values of our community. She's joined the opposition to massive warehouses and data centers. She studies and listens to the experts on the impacts these monstrosities will have on our aquifer, threatening our clean water, the air we breathe, and the dangers created by adding tractor trailer traffic to our already congested roadways near our public schools and senior housing. She is a champion for our bustling Main Street which will be negatively impacted by all of these issues.

Lena will continue to be an advocate for frontline workers, fighting for good jobs that pay a living wage and benefits, not for giant warehouses run by robots. She will fight to bring our tax dollars back home to fund our school budgets knowing that public education is the best investment in the future. I'm sure that Lena Wagner will work with her constituents and her fellow representatives to address the needs of District 51.

Yes, you should vote for Lena Wagner. She will be a great advocate for the wellbeing and flourishing of the 51st District.

P.S.: Don't just bet on a trifecta. Vote for a trifecta. Support Lena Wagner, Sam Derenthal, and our proven leader, Sen. Mae Flexer!

Ida Berris
Killingly

No debate? No vote. Period.

To the Editor:

Are we seriously still propping up candidates around here who blow off debates with their opponents?

If you're representing me in Putnam or in Hartford, my expectation is that you will stand up for your convictions, a.k.a. be able to debate. That is what we're paying you for.

Blowing off debates during a campaign is a rather clear message to me that you're not interested in doing your job. If you won't do your job, then I'll return the favor by not voting for you.

Voters - fire any would-be politician who thinks they're entitled to a free job and paycheck without having to show they actually have the drive and desire to do it.

Jay Gerhart
Putnam

Derenthal will work together to benefit all

To the Editor:

Sam Derenthal has my vote for 44th State District Representative. Unlike some politicians, who refuse to collaborate, Sam knows how to work with people of all parties, all ages, all backgrounds. That's because Sam understands that everyone has something to contribute, and by working together we can make life better for everyone in Killingly, Plainfield, and Sterling. Sam also understands our challenges and is a quick study. As new issues arise, Sam digs in with gusto, always working to understand why things aren't better for our communities and how she can help.

For example, Sam will work with representatives from other rural areas of Connecticut to reduce the burden of sky-high property taxes, by pressuring Hartford to pick up their fair share of special education and other school funding. Sam, like her opponent, is against distribution mega-centers and trash plants. But she understands that these projects impact more than one town and threaten all of us. Sam has a plan to partner with her colleagues throughout the Quiet Corner so that the entire area grows in ways that preserve the beauty, safety and pristine nature of our Last Green Valley.

Most important, Sam Derenthal shares my most crucial values. Sam is honest, industrious and unselfish. She believes that everyone deserves respect and should be treated with dignity. She listens to people, even if she disagrees. She believes that government can and should make our lives fairer and more affordable. She is curious and smart, and a practical and creative problem-solver. (And it doesn't hurt that Sam has a great sense of humor.)

Early voting is now available, with evening and weekend hours. Go on in and vote for Samantha Derenthal!

ROBIN LOFQUIST
DANIELSON

Bicycles

KILLINGLY AT 300

MARGARET WEAVER

Walktober, sponsored by the Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor is underway. There are events and walks for people of all ages and physical ability. Calendars of events (258 this year) are available at local town halls and libraries. The brochure encourages use of the calendar "in conjunction with our website, TheLastGreenValley.org. to ensure you have the most up to date information. You'll find additional Walktober experiences, weather updates and more on the website." For additional information call 860-774-3300.

Order your Thanksgiving Pies. Killingly Grange #112 is again selling apple and pumpkin pies for Thanksgiving. $16 per pie. To reserve a pie call Terry at 860-884-1813 or Penny at 860-230-7367. Last day to order Saturday, Nov. 21 at 5 p.m. Pick-up Wednesday, Nov. 25.

Killingly Historical Society Fall Meeting. Saturday, Nov. 14 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. The Dirty Blue Shirts will present a program on Federal fashions (the Dolley Madison era). You will be able to see and feel clothing of the New Republic, the ways in which we stayed on top of European styles, and the ways in which we made our own sartorial marks on the international scene. You may remember the wonderful program they presented last year on women's fashions of the Revolutionary era. All are welcome. Refreshments will be served. A short business meeting will take place at 1 p.m. prior to the program.

Killingly Grange #112 Craft Fair: 801 Hartford Turnpike, Dayville. Display and market your crafts to the public. Saturday, Nov. 14 and Sunday, Nov. 15, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. each day. Rain or shine. Rent space inside or outside for $20. Tables available for $5. Contact Terry Barton to reserve a space/table at tmbartonkillinglygrange@gmail.com or text 860-884-1813 or for additional information. You do not have to be a member of the Grange to participate.

I often get ideas for my columns from the everyday events that have happened around me. This week's is no exception. I'll write about the history of bicycles. Unfortunately, the event leading to the topic was nearly tragic. My adult son Michael was the man on the bicycle who was hit by a car at the intersection of Hurry Hill Road and Route 12 in Putnam on Oct. 19. He then was taken by helicopter to RI Hospital. By the Grace of God, he is alive and very mobile. He has many bruises, staples (instead of stitches), and four broken fingers on his non-dominant hand. He was told his helmet saved him. (If you are a biker, wear yours!) He is now home, is still able to draw and use his computer, and is up and about. Thank you to everyone who helped him that day and who is helping now. Bless you!

Now back to bicycles. Wikipedia had quite a lot so I shall have to condense, "The 'dandy horse,' also called Draisienne or Laufmaschine ('running machine'), was the first human means of transport to use only two wheels in tandem and was invented by the German Baron Karl von Drais. It is regarded as the first bicycle and von Drais is seen as the 'father of the bicycle, but it did not have pedals. Von Drais introduced it to the public in Mannheim in 1817

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mae Flexer has built a stellar record of delivering for her constituents

To the Editor:

While it can often be difficult for busy people to know exactly what our representatives are up to, what I have seen from Senator Mae Flexer over the years has shown me she deeply cares about her district and the core concerns of her constituents. Perhaps more to the point, she has proven herself to be very adept at translating these concerns into meaningful outcomes for the people of Northeast Connecticut. And, while I'm sure if I were sitting where she is there might be an issue or two which I may approach slightly differently, I can't turn my nose up at Senator Flexer's undeniable record.

Just from my perch here in Killingly, we have seen her be the driving force in protecting local taxpayers by securing State funds when we had an unexpected shortfall during the recent renovations at Killingly Memorial school. She also helped secure significant funding for Owen Bell Park, one of Killingly's major recreation hubs. Mae has been working hard behind the scenes for many months to ensure Old Killingly Pond's waters are restored and this beautiful State park remains the treasure it has been for future generations (In fact she was also a staunch advocate back in 2014 when we faced a similar threat to permanently drain the pond). She led the creation of the debt free community college program which has prevented folks in Killingly and the region who attend Quinebaug Valley Community College (and similar schools) from getting priced out of higher education. When many concerned residents expressed deep reservations about building a second large power plant in town—Killingly already having one of the biggest in the state—she was a powerful advocate alongside them. More generally, while still working to support local businesses, she has been very attuned to residents' concerns about prioritizing the profits of large developers over the needs and desires of the community (I would note she was also named a 2026 legislative champion by the League of Conservation Voters). Last but not least, while across the country rural hospitals have either closed or been bought up by private equity firms with more interest in extracting wealth than serving the community, Senator Flexer has worked tirelessly both publicly and in private, to secure both ongoing funding and now a steady partner for Day Kimball Hospital in UConn Health (importantly with backing from the State of Connecticut).

While there is much more I could expand on here, as could those from other towns in her district, I have to recognize that her accomplishments are largely a result of both her work ethic and the relationships she has built at the State House. Impressively, she has built these relationships while being steadfast about not being compromised by big money donors. And now, as she has become a member of leadership in her party, she is even more well positioned to advocate for the quiet corner.

This work for her district would be impressive enough if that were the extent of what she had done in office but this says nothing of all the other important work she has done in addressing issues affecting all residents of Connecticut as chair of the Government Administration and Elections Committee; Vice Chair of the Judiciary Committee; and member of the Appropriations, Education, Higher Education, and Veterans Affairs committee (the latter being a special passion for her as the daughter of a Vietnam Veteran).

Though we might not always be aware of the work that goes into it, Sen. Flexer's results in delivering for her district are indisputable at this point. And while I don't relish jumping into the political fray, I write here because I absolutely believe Mae Flexer's record and experience deserve our support on election day.

Ian McDonald
Killingly

Pat Boyd has my vote

To the Editor:

Pat Boyd has done a credible job for us for ten years. His opponent, Mr. Emilio, did not even intend to run until the Republican leadership figured out that their endorsed candidate was a virulent [anti-LGBTQ bigot] who seems to support murdering those unlike himself. Probably, they should have vetted the kid a bit better, but nonetheless they had to coax Mr. Emilio into representing them.

Parties aside, do you want someone with 10 years' experience representing the QC in Hartford and who actually wants the job, or someone who had to be talked into it?

Pat's got my vote, and I hope he has yours, too.

Natalie Langlois
Woodstock

Change needs to start in the voting booth

To the Editor:

Donnie Dingbat may not be on the ballot, but the midterms are nonetheless a clear plebiscite against him. If we can roll out an overwhelming vote and gain control of both Houses of Congress, we will take away his ability to promote his criminal and immoral agenda. Take away his supporting toadies and you take away the adulation which supports his craven and psychopathic mental state.

His waving to the "cheers" from an empty field is a clear indictment of his dementia. It will take a decade to rectify the damage Donnie Dork has done to the Republic and every American. We need to start now to make the changes. Even if you are a life-long Republican, you cannot ignore the peril your party has allowed to come about. Your vote is secret. You can vote against Donnie Destroyer without jeopardizing your standing in the party.

Stephen Etzel
Putnam

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.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!

brendan@villagernewspapers.com

Thompson's tax burden kicks seniors when they're already down

To the Editor:

The little post card Thompson taxpayers received was a lie.

There was no $550,000 reduction in the Education budget. That was a lie.

There was no $265,000 reduction in the General budget. That was a lie.

Thompson voters, did you really believe this?

The real numbers with no smoke or mirrors:

	Education		General Town
2027	$23,382,673	2027	$8,219,712
2026	$21,778,936	2026	$7,682,795
	---		---
Up	$1,603,737	Up	$ 536,917

In just five years, Thompson's budget has increased $5,807,156. Congratulations. Yes, voters, our seniors and people on fixed incomes will be paying for the most expensive heating oil/insurance /groceries/auto/electric/medical ever. And of course, town taxes. Everyone needs to vote.

Nice job, Town Hall Kick them while they're down.

When taxes are raised, just a few people in the Town Hall benefit. When taxes are lowered, everyone in town benefits.

Help our seniors.

Lee Landry
Thompson

Earth — The big rip-off! (Part 2)

To the Editor:

The oil and gas industry is one of the most heavily subsidized industries in American history. Have you ever wondered why? Exactly why do we continue to subsidize a fully mature industry swimming in cash? It makes no sense. Other industries are expected to learn to stand on their own--do or die, right? Sometimes they might get limited government support in their infancy. But once grown, of course, they pay their fair share of taxes and charge accordingly for their products, to make needed profit and reinvestment. But the oil industry, now 167 years old, is an exception to this rule. Our government still treats them like little babies, and props them up with massive subsidies. Why? Why after all that time haven't they learned how to stand on their own?

As nuts as this is, it recently got even worse. Unbelievably, Trump increased federal subsidies to the oil industry to record levels via his Big Beautiful Bill. It's no surprise 2026 will set new profit records for the industry. At the same time, Trump canceled the comparatively small and short-term subsidies Biden had granted the nascent green energy industry, which offered consumers more choice and savings.

In 1985, Carl Sagan, testifying before Congress, suggested that fewer subsidies would drive more efficient use of fossil fuels. What he meant was that subsidies give the appearance that gas is cheap by hiding its true cost. And, of course, if something is cheap, you use a lot and waste a lot of it because, well, it's cheap! In reality, though, oil is not cheap.

To see the true price of oil, you must uncover all the subsidies it gets from the federal government (from us taxpayers), which are hidden from view. These come in the form of federal tax breaks, guaranteed purchase agreements, international trade negotiations, free access to federal lands, and even the cost of environmental oversight and response to pollution events. To get a more accurate picture of the true cost of oil, we must add together the many different forms of subsidies with the price at the pump.

There is actually another gigantic freebee the oil industry gets and it's even bigger then the handouts we call subsidies. By far, the largest cost driver of oil (and all fossil fuels) is entirely offloaded onto the public as what economists and accountants like to call an "externality." That's a fancy way to say, "Let's just dump this cost onto the public and walk away scot-free." In this case, the externality is climate change, which is now inflicting unfathomable economic costs across the world.

In his 2024 book, "Slow Burn: The Hidden Costs of Climate Change," Dr. Jisung Park of the University of Pennsylvania writes that the global economy loses $7 trillion per year in costs inflicted by climate change. Another independent study set those costs at $6.5 trillion, confirming the validity of this massive number. The trajectory only gets worse with time. According to the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, by 2050, that number will skyrocket to $34 trillion! GDP is estimated to grow to $228 trillion by then, thus climate change will effectively be shaving 15 percent off global GDP. Think about that for minute! A significant percentage of this number also must also be added to the real price of fossil fuels.

Fossil fuel externalities are evident across the world in their negative impacts on health, education, worker productivity, crime, social behavior, and mortality. Here in the US, just one example is revealed in a 2025 study by Stanford University's Doerr School of Sustainability. The study concludes that 40,000 Americans per year now die from exposure to wildfire smoke, which, of course, has been greatly amplified by ever worsening climate change.

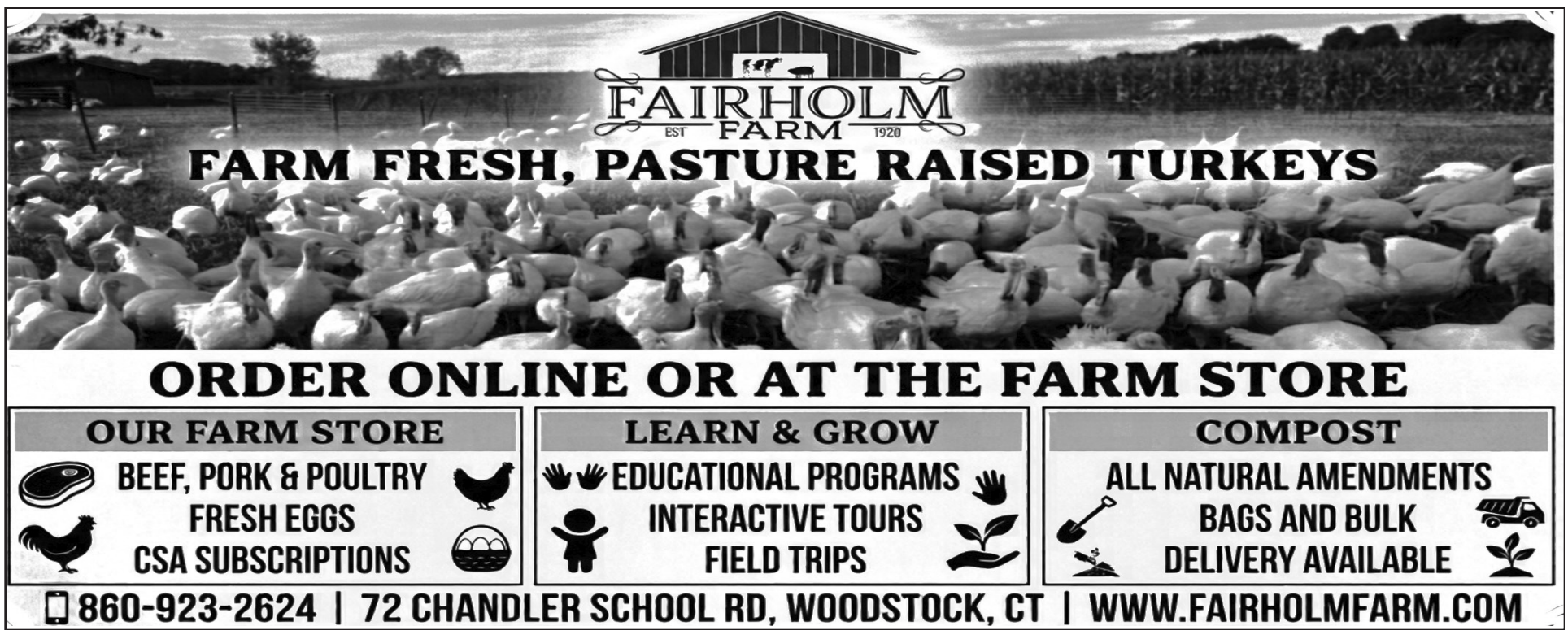
Many studies have added up the federally legislated subsidies and the 'externality' costs to calculate the true price of gas. Most estimates cluster in the $10-to-$15-per-gallon range. Let's split the difference and call it $12.50 per gallon. Today, however, we must also add an additional $1.50 to cover the recent increase in the price of gasoline brought on by Trump's war in Iran. This brings the real price we are paying for gas today to $14 per gallon. This is the true price, cleverly hidden from us all.

Knowing the true price might cause consumers to look at more efficient alternatives, like electric vehicles and solar, right? In 2012, President Obama tried to eliminate billions of dollars in federal subsidies to the oil industry, saying it was "outrageous" to take subsidies "when top oil companies were raking in tens of billions of dollars in record profits." His efforts were blocked by a collation of senators from oil-producing states, led by Republican, Paul Ryan.

The oil industry has been very crafty in hiding the true price of its product. By taking subsidies most of us know nothing about and offloading its externalities that are complex and hard to understand, we ordinary citizens get stuck with the bill without even knowing. Most of us assume capitalism in America means a fair competition in the marketplace of ideas, but this is not how it works with energy. The deck has been stacked against us by hiding the real price and killing off the competition (consumer choice).

Like Obama, Biden tried to help the consumer by imposing higher mileage standards on the auto industry—something they could easily achieve. But of course, that was overturned by Trump in 2025. Higher vehicle mileage would do two things the oil industry is terrified of: save you money and lessen demand. That had to be stopped, so oil could continue the big rip-off.

Ken Wolslegel
Woodstock



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Flexer has failed us

To the Editor:

What I think people need to know most about Mae Flexer is that she is seemingly paralyzed with fear and self-doubt. Those are strange characteristics to have in a representative. Flexer cannot be persuaded to answer her constituent mail or phone calls.

The state has been circling the drain economically ever since she was first elected. The tax-and-spend incumbent has no plan for bringing prosperity back.

Flexer's signature issue of being an "advocate" for female victims of violence is directly at odds with her other signature issue of "Second Chance Society." Flexer votes to release men from prison early who use women as punching bags. Maybe those wildly contradictory positions is the reason why she is afraid to debate her opponent, Chris Reddy?

Reddy is the polar opposite of Flexer. Reddy is emotionally stable, reasonable and accessible. As our new Senator Reddy is perfectly willing to listen to his would-be constituent concerns no matter what party they happen to belong to.

They say diapers and politicians should be changed often — and for the same reason. No where is that more true than in the 29th Senatorial District.

JOHN R. MCCOMMAS
WILLIMANTIC

Kate Cerrone combines a judge's mind with a servant's heart

To the Editor:

Choosing a judge of probate is one of the most deeply personal decisions a voter can make. Years ago, when I lost my parents, we spent lots of time trying to sort their estate through probate. It was a struggle not only emotionally, but the process was sometimes overwhelming. A probate court does not handle high-profile criminal trials; instead, it guides families through some of the most sensitive, emotionally challenging moments of their lives—from settling loved ones' estates to navigating guardianships and conservatorships.

Having known Kate for almost two decades, I can confidently attest to her exceptional character and skill. In a role where empathy is as critical as legal knowledge, Kate stands out as deeply compassionate. The probate court needs a leader who listens with an open heart and treats everyone who walks through the door with dignity. Over the 20 years I have watched her work and live in our community, Kate has consistently shown the legal skills and patience needed to guide families through grief and loss.

With a distinguished 25-year career as a local attorney based right here in Putnam, she has a significant understanding of the law and our region's needs. This judicial experience means she already knows how to run a courtroom fairly, weigh evidence impartially, and apply the law accurately. She has a sharp, analytical mind and the skills to ensure our Probate Court operates as efficiently as possible. She understands the value of transparency, fiscal responsibility, and modernizing court operations so that the system remains accessible and user-friendly for us everyday citizens. Her leadership is not loud or self-serving; it is grounded and reliable, and her vision is to keep the probate court compassionate and accessible. Her deep roots in the community, including her work on the board of education, her volunteer work with the YMCA, and her role as president of the Putnam Business Association, show that her commitment to public service comes from the heart.

When you vote, you can choose the future caretaker of our community's legal and personal well-being. We need a judge who combines a brilliant legal mind with a servant's heart. Vote for Kate Cerrone for Northeast Probate Court Judge—a phenomenal attorney, an exceptional business leader, and a truly good person who will protect and serve our families.

(P.S.: Vote Sam Derenthal into office, too.)

MIKE BOGDANSKI
PUTNAM

Gordon's campaigning has employed some poetic license

To the Editor:

In a well-written, cogent, but blinkered letter to the Villager last week about state Sen. Jeffrey Gordon, now running for re-election, reader Dave Lusignan makes a valid point: being in the minority in the State House limits one's ability to get things done.

I don't think anyone disputes that.

What was not addressed in his letter, and is really the point, is the chasm between what Gordon says he has done — in his daily rhetoric, in his campaign mailers, and especially during his debate on WINY last month with challenger Ethan Werstler – and what he has actually accomplished.

Gordon says he is "reining in drug prices," but the only thing the legislation he sponsored (HB 7192) did was require pharmacy benefit managers to offer a "pass-through" option to insurers, with no "spread pricing," or profit on each drug. But "spread pricing" was not actually banned, as Mr. Lusignan claims, and there are so many other ways pharmacy benefit managers can make money (administrative fees, etc.) that it's hard to have any confidence that this bill will "rein in drug prices" — or have even the slightest effect.

Gordon touts his efforts to lower energy bills, with a focus on lowering the public benefit charge, which has been used to assist people who are having trouble paying for electricity, as well as an incentive to use renewable sources of energy. Left unsaid, and hugely relevant, is that the public benefit charge is a small fraction of the overall bill, and Gordon, as opposed to Werstler, has made no suggestions, nor has he presented any ideas about how to rein in Eversource, responsible for the lion's share of the bill. Eversource is a virtual monopoly which earned $811.7 million in 2024, $1.66 billion in 2025, and yet has the gall to apply for a $451 million revenue increase this year.

Perusal of Gordon's social media postings and campaign mailings reveals many colorful poster-like graphics, such as one which appeared on his social media feed several days ago. It features a large colorful picture of the candidate adjacent to large font proclaiming "$50,000," and above it, in white print, also in a large font, "Stafford Public Schools!" In a much smaller print, we learn that this is a "high-dosage tutoring grant from the Connecticut State Department of Education for the 2026-2027 school year." At the top of the posting, in a medium-sized font with white lettering, backed by a faint gold background, it says, "Congratulations." At the bottom, in large blue letters over a white background, it shouts, "Jeff Gordon." You would be forgiven if you looked at it and concluded, at least subliminally, that Jeff Gordon played a significant role here, not just that he's offering his "congratulations." In fact, Jeff Gordon, as best I can ascertain, had nothing to do with Stafford getting the grant.

In his latest mailer, in font, layout, and colors that look exactly like the National Enquirer, Gordon claims that Werstler "supports higher taxes," whereas he, Jeff Gordon, "says NO to higher taxes." (I suppose, since state budgets have cut taxes these last few years, and Gordon voted for those budgets, that counts as saying NO to higher taxes.) This is highly misleading. In fact, what Werstler is proposing is an additional tax bracket — a 1 percent tax on every dollar made over $1 million. (Maybe we have a lot of people making over $1 million/year in the 35th, but I doubt it.) If this happens, the state would be better able to fund education, lessening the burden on towns and ultimately lowering property taxes.

A certain amount of "poetic license" is to be expected in political campaigns, but the nature of it, and the extent, often gives a meaningful window into the character of the person running. That may well be the case here.

JOHN A. DAY, JR.
WOODSTOCK VALLEY

Support Jeff Gordon

To the Editor:

Jeff Gordon deserves our continued support. Jeff has been on the forefront of fighting to lower our electric bills. He opposed several new taxes from being added to our current taxes on energy bills. He has worked to get some of the old taxes removed, and lowering energy costs has been a priority of his. He is our voice in Hartford and has earned our support. Please vote for Jeff Gordon to continue his work on our behalf.

BRENDA SHEAD
WOODSTOCK

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!

brendan@
villagernewspapers.com

Investing in the future of the Quiet Corner

To the Editor:

As someone who has spent much of my life in northeastern Connecticut, both as a resident and a business owner, I understand how important it is to have people in Hartford who recognize the unique needs of our region. The Quiet Corner has its own character, challenges and priorities, and our communities benefit when those needs are understood and represented at the state level.

Decisions made in Hartford affect us all, regardless of which legislative district we call home. State Representative Pat Boyd and State Senator Mae Flexer both play important roles in ensuring northeastern Connecticut's needs and priorities are represented at the state level. Our small businesses, family farms, schools, community institutions, and healthcare providers all contribute to the quality of life that makes northeastern Connecticut such a special place. Their continued success depends, in part, on having state leaders that understand that our needs differ from other parts of the state.

Rep. Boyd's career has been rooted in service to our region as a first responder, educator, and school administrator. These experiences give him insight into the people and institutions that help our communities thrive. Sen. Flexer has also dedicated herself to representing northeastern Connecticut, bringing the region's interests and the concerns of its residents to the forefront of state-level discussions. Her continued service reflects the importance of having a voice for our communities in Hartford and ensuring the needs of the Quiet Corner remain part of the conversation.

Supporting our region means recognizing the important role local businesses play in creating jobs and sustaining our economy. It means understanding the challenges facing family farms and agriculture, investing in public education, and ensuring our first responders have the resources to keep our communities safe. It means supporting our veterans, and protecting access to quality healthcare close to home. These priorities are interconnected, and the decisions made today will help shape the future of our region for generations to come.

Strong communities don't happen by accident. They require attention, investment, and a commitment to the people who call this region home. Ensuring that northeastern Connecticut continues to thrive means having leaders in Hartford who recognize its value, understand its needs and remain committed to the people and institutions that make our communities strong.

PETER DEARY
DAYVILLE

My vote is for democracy

To the Editor:

Have you voted yet?

I've never regretted voting early, but I have regretted waiting in a long line holding a cold coffee.

If you haven't voted, there's still time, and you can beat the Election Day crowds. Early Voting continues through the weekend, with the last day on Sunday, November 1. Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 3.

Not registered? You can still register and vote on the same day. Same Day Registration is available at your town's Early Voting polling location during Early Voting and at your town's designated Same Day Registration polling site on Election Day.

Every vote matters. Elections in our towns, in our state, and across the country have been decided by those who vote. Whether the people making decisions about our schools, our health care, our rights, and our local economy reflect our values is up to those of us who show up and vote. Staying home let's someone else's voice be heard.

Before heading out:

Check your voter registration online.

Confirm your polling place. Your Early Voting location may differ from your Election Day polling place.

Preview your town's ballot. A sample ballot for every town is available through the Secretary of the State's office at portal.ct.gov.

You'll find many talented, dedicated Democratic candidates on the ballot this year. They're running to protect our freedoms, strengthen our communities, and put people before politics.

My vote is for democracy, that's why I'm voting Row A on my town's ballot.

Together, we can make a difference. Let's make our voices heard.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

Moral outrage

To the Editor:

My Dearest Neighbors in the Quiet Corner ...

Help me understand your love for the beloved pets in your lives. I consider your intense affection to be an extension of your empathetic attachment to a creature that provides unconditional love for you!

As an Army brat, it was too complicated in my family, so we kept those relationships at a distance. But for the love of God, doesn't it make your blood boil when you are reminded by a TV ad that your $19 a month will keep an abused and hungry animal fed, and how you can't stand by and allow that to go on for another day, but yet turn away from a hungry child? We can actually look away from a sick or homeless human being, neglected, or rejected, in our own towns and cities across this country, and find room in our hearts and pockets to "save" a dog from starvation. How did we get here? Where an animal's comfort is more worthy of our conscience, than a human being? How do we turn our backs on our brothers and sisters? How did we become more guarded against our own kind, to the point that we feel more empathy for an animal? Is contributing to the food pantry enough? How much will it take to make us feel better? A monthly contribution to Mrrcy Ships?

Let's kick it up a notch on the humanity scale... Do we really want to invite more "legal" executions in our prisons? Do we search for more ways that can go wrong? How about promoting more public firing squads or shooting innocent people on the street, with brown skin or cámaras, or masks? How many children can we squeeze into a cage to make some people feel less afraid? Where is our morality compass headed?

Are we comfortable with selling our semi-democratic representative form of government to the highest bidder? Are you passively watching a multi-billionaire actively purchasing a congressional seat for $200-$300-$400 million, through the advertisement of lies or half truths to facilitate the acquisition of power? Does it make your stomach growl, to know that medicine, food, and shelter are being denied to millions around the world and in our own back yards, for the price of an election in one state? How much of our American identity needs to be sold at yard sale prices, for haters to feel good about "winning"? And... what have you won?

How much better will a pet's life be in a warm and clean shelter, after you pass, with your hefty donation? Keep a dozen pets happy! Would a monthly donation towards the efforts in Ukraine strike a cord in your heart? How about a monthly contribution to the efforts of the World Kitchen in Gaza? Where's your moral compass these days? Maybe we can show the billionaires our souls are not for sale! Think about it while you Vote... where do you want your Compass to point to?

LYDIA RIVERA-ABRAMS
DAYVILLE

The founding fathers would be heartbroken

To the Editor:

In 2016, the RNC held their noses and chose Donald Trump as the Republican presidential candidate. A big political gamble in a desperate attempt to regain the Whitehouse. The gamble paid off short term, but it created a Frankenstein monster that they soon lost control of. In spite of dire warnings from fellow Republicans, the same reckless decision was repeated in 2024. The American people continue to pay a high price (in every possible way) for those short-sighted mistakes. The Republican Party may finally see it blow up in their faces also.

Our government is infected with politicians who put their lust for power and job security above the interests of the American people. Both parties have members that are guilty of that, but Trump and his "MAGA Mafia" have taken corruption and self interest to new historic levels. Our founding fathers would be disgusted and heartbroken.

TODD PATRIE
POMFRET CENTER

Please vote

To the Editor:

Be a part of the change for Connecticut!

It is your right and privilege to reject decades of leadership which has our beautiful state of Connecticut ranked #46th in our country for affordability.

Make the change…vote!

TAMI WYKES
BROOKLYN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Draw your own conclusions

To the Editor:

As the final days and hours tick down to the election, most voters have made up their minds by now as to which candidates they will be checking off. So rather than repeat prior arguments, this writer will simply list recent headlines with minimal commentary and allow readers to draw their own conclusions.

Trump has continued a policy that both marginalizes and antagonizes America's historic allies. "Trump threatens that US 'could leave' Europe over violent protest, says 'we got Greenland' "(PBS news hour). "Pentagon excludes key allies from NATO meeting" (Politico) "Trump threatens to stop trading with EU over 'laughable' membership offer to Canada (The Guardian) US pressures Europe to release diesel reserves as Trump threatens export ban (BBC) Trump Threatens to abandon Europe over migration polices, NATO rift (TVC News) "Trump, I know Europe better than the people who are running it" (FOX News)

At the same time, the President has applauded our historic (who also remain) adversaries. "Trump's open alliance with Putin betrays the US and helps Russians kill Ukrainians" (Philadelphia Inquirer) Trump administration "clearly on the side of the Kremlin," says ex-US army Europe chief (TVP World).

Witkoff to Putin "You are a humanitarian...I salute that" (Politico) "Trump calls Kim Jong Un a friend and plays down N Korea's nuclear arsenal (Al Jazeera) Trump says 'friend' Kim Jong Un sets North Korea apart from Iran on Nuskes (Newsweek) "Not long ago Trump accused Chinese of election meddling. Today 'Great Friendship ' "(New York Times) "Iran says its ties with Russia are stronger than ever after a visit by Putin's top envoy, challenging Trump's assertion that Moscow isn't helping Iran in the war." (CBS News) China's secret Iran support caused massive US base damage Iranian expert reveal details" (Oneindia News)

Trump has called tariffs a boon for the economy and blames the current economic woes on the Biden administration while asserting the economy is soaring. "Trump promised $2 gas and cheaper groceries" (NBC News) "President Trump claims, "We don't have inflation, and tariffs don't cause inflation," but a new report strongly disagrees" (Yahoo Finance) "Post haste: Trump's tariffs can inflict far worse damage on the economy than just a recession, warns economist (Financial Post) "US trade balance sinks deeper into the red as imports hit record high despite tariffs" (Reuters)"American made goods also got more expensive under Trump tariffs, new research finds" (Fox News) "US budget deficit swells to almost $2 trillion for fiscal 2026, up 12 percent in a single year" (CNBC) US national debt surpasses $40T as federal spending hits $7.5 trillion in fiscal 2026 (Fox News) "US pending home sales tumble to a record low in September" (Reuters) "Delinquent auto loans are rising and the industry could come crashing down, Report" (Car Buzz) "Trump says he doesn't 'give a damn' about gas prices as US making 'fortune' " (Newsweek)

The Iran (not a war) war drags into its 8th month with no foreseeable end in sight. "US and Israel are planning for a possible post-midterms attack on Iran" (NPR) "Iran says won't allow US warships to get close as Trump ponders new attacks" (Al Jazeera) "Iran says 7 oil tankers attacked in the strait of Hormuz as fears grow of a return to war (AP News) "Donald Trump says 'We Won' Iran War" (Newsweek) "'We won,' 'Winding down.' 'Close to over.' Six months of Trump on the Iran war" (LA Times) "32 times Trump suggested the war in Iran was almost over" (NBC News)

Donald Trump's ego, and his craving for validation, have created an anathema in the White House that represents the direct antithesis of the executive role conceived by President Washington. "Trump ranks himself the greatest US president ever. Historians beg to differ" (The Guardian) "Trump puts himself as greatest President ever" (Newsweek) "Trump says Google's CEO rejected his plan to change the Atlantic's name to the 'Trump Ocean' " (Business insider) "Trump says Kennedy center will stay closed without renovation unless his name is added back" ((CNBC) "Trump plans to fast-track arch despite legal challenge" (Politico) Trump $1 coin makes him first living president on US currency in a century" (BBC) "New limited edition passport features Trumps's image..." (Fox News) "Trump to Ballroom Architect: 'I am the code'" (Mother Jones) "Bungled Trump reflecting Pool way worse than reported" (Art Forum) "Trump acknowledges 'some contractor error' on reflecting pool and repeats vandalism claims" (NBC4 Washington)

Just like his first term, Mr. Trump has had a hard time keeping high level staff. Among those fired or forced to resign are Kristi Noem, Gail Slater, Pam Pondi, Lori Chavez-DeRemer, Tulsi Gabbard, Katherine Scarlett, David Warrington, Karoline Leavitt, James Braid, Kimberly Guilfoyvle, Katie Zacharia,

Trump's "A team turnover is 56 percent. The Cabinet turnover is 20 percent" (Brookings) "Top MAHA adviser Calley Means resigns from White House days ahead of midterms" (STAT).

The President blames Ukraine for Russia's ongoing takeover of a valuable sovereign ally. "Trump administration holds up Patriot missiles for Ukraine" (Washington Post) "Trump says Ukraine should get a new president as he blames Zelenskyy for US diesel prices" (AP news) "Trump signs order exempting Russia from sanctions law (New York Times) "Global diesel prices seen staying high despite Trump's deal with Russia" (Reuters) "The Kremlin relishes in the US Russia diesel deal and Trump's criticism of Zelenskyy" (AP News) "Trump's diesel deal with Russia equals less than two weeks of US demand (CNBC)

Trump and his family have profited greatly from his presidency. "Trump, crypto firm sued for profiting from foreign government" (Bloomberg) "Trump's $2 billion financial payout sparks corruption debate ahead of midterm elections" (Fox news) " 'Directly profiting' off policies: Trump sons linked to 10 defense companies receiving government funds" (MS Now) "Kushner fund backed by Mideast saw assets jump to $6.2 billion" (Bloomberg)

There of course is more. Trump's attack on America's elite educational institutions, his disdain of the free press, his abandoning government investments in science, and ICE's terrorization of immigrants and US citizens alike are but a few. And if one favors this then vote your conscious to continue the status quo.

This has not been an attack on all Republicans and there remains many outstanding candidates who will be harmed by Trump's unpopular actions. Remember, we have a two-party system for a reason. No single platform nor single individual can do what's best for the nation. This is America's historical collaboration that has in recent years fallen off the tracks. Correcting our current morass will take individuals willing to make sacrifices and to work through differences and come up with ideas that help the most and harm the least. Difficult but certainly not impossible. But to succeed it will take competent Democrats as well as Republicans. Most importantly it takes an informed electorate who makes decisions based on factual assessments and not social network rhetoric.

Lee Wesler
Woodstock

Campaign season rhetoric needs fact-checking

To the Editor:

Remember when Americans were promised lower gas prices, cheaper groceries, peace abroad, and an America First economy by Republicans now in power in Washington? How are those promises working out?

Oil prices have reached their highest closing level since April. Gasoline prices increased 9.1 percent in September alone, and overall consumer prices are up 3.7 percent over the past year. Families continue to struggle with the cost of everyday necessities.

And what about the promise to keep America out of foreign wars? Instead, we face continuing conflict with Iran, uncertainty in the Middle East, and rising energy costs. The consequences of decisions in Washington reach far beyond Washington.

Here in Connecticut, people are understandably frustrated with rising property taxes, municipal budgets, and the cost of living. It is interesting how quickly some candidates in the upcoming election blame our incumbent state legislators for everything that costs more.

Is everything Hartford's fault? They unrealistically claim they can fix high taxes, stop unfunded mandates, and reduce the cost of living.

Our state representatives and senators don't control international oil prices, federal trade policy, foreign wars, or decisions made in the White House. Yet those decisions have very real consequences for Connecticut taxpayers.

Consider the cost of operating a small town. Fuel for school buses, fire trucks, and public works equipment. Heating schools and municipal buildings. Road maintenance, infrastructure construction, materials, equipment, and employee health insurance. When costs increase, municipal budgets and household finances feel the pressure, and ultimately so do property taxpayers.

Connecticut legislators have their own responsibilities, including education funding, and municipal aid. They should absolutely be held accountable for their decisions. In fact, the incumbent legislature approved additional municipal and education funding this year, with bipartisan support, to help communities manage rising costs and ease pressure on local taxpayers.

Shouldn't we understand where the problems originate before assigning blame? Only then can we begin to address them. Republicans have long campaigned on fiscal responsibility, lower prices, a strong economy, and putting American workers first. Those promises deserve to be measured against actual results, just as the promises of Democrats should be.

For families struggling to pay their bills, political slogans don't fill the gas tank or put groceries on the table.

Before blaming Connecticut legislators or local officials for every financial frustration, perhaps we should take a closer look at the decisions being made by the party in power in Washington, how those decisions affect our communities, and what can realistically be done to address the resulting pressures.

Accountability and responsibility don't stop at the Connecticut state line.

Sincerely,

Maureen Nicholson
Pomfret

Why I am a Democrat

To the Editor:

Winston Churchill famously observed that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others. His point was simple enough. Human beings are often confused, shortsighted, and wrong when they think they're right. The bottom line is that giving the people political power is a risky business. But history shows us that placing that power in the hands of an authoritarian dictator is far more dangerous.

Democracy is messy precisely because it acknowledges our imperfections and presses on anyway. Nobody possesses the whole truth but we must vote and decide our children's future. Democracy's greatest weakness is also its greatest strength.

Today, we face an extraordinary moment Germans in the 1930s once faced: through democratic elections, we are deciding whether we wish to remain a democracy at all. Wealthy interests wield enormous political influence, authoritarian fascism is increasingly celebrated, and the current administration treats constitutional restraints as obstacles to its thirst for power.

Do we want a government that relies on intimidation, fear, and the threat of violence to enforce its demands? Or do we continue with an imperfect democracy that requires compromise and runs the risk of overturning itself nearly every Election Day?

Party politics make our divisions seem impossibly wide. Big Money makes matters worse. Media purveys propaganda as often as it does information. The endless struggle for political advantage can leave us wondering what we should believe, whom we should trust, and what principles are worth defending.

For me, the way forward begins with the conviction that every human being possesses an inherent dignity that no government, political party, or powerful individual has the right to take away.

That's why I'm a Democrat. Not because Democrats are always right, or because the party has somehow escaped the corruption and hypocrisy that infect political life. I'm a Democrat because, at this moment in American history, the Democratic Party represents the most significant organized resistance to authoritarianism, fascism, and oppression that threatens to unleash institutionalized cruelty as the norm.

History teaches us that authoritarian movements depend upon dividing people into "us" and "them." The cruelty and sadism of the current administration follows this familiar pattern. Once a group is declared less than fully human, denying "them" the protections of the law becomes a twisted form of patriotism. History tells us where that road leads.

Democracy demands something more difficult. It asks us to recognize the humanity of people we dislike, defend the rights of people with whom we disagree, and accept that no political victory is permanent. It asks us to resist those who would turn their political power into a license to persecute others.

I don't believe the Democratic Party is perfect, but it stands for something greater than itself, and it stands against fascism and its cruelties

I'm a Democrat because I believe human dignity comes before political power. And when those in power abandon our highest principles, resistance becomes more than a political choice. It becomes a moral obligation. The answer isn't party loyalty. It's a moral commitment that makes resistance necessary.

Joseph Zornado
Danielson

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Senexet Grange preparing for Winter Boot Drive

WOODSTOCK — As the leaves begin to change and colder weather approaches, the Senexet Grange #40 is once again preparing to help ensure that members of our community have warm, dry feet this winter.

Located in Woodstock and serving the broader Quiet Corner community, the Grange is proud to announce its Third Annual Winter Boot Drive and is asking our neighbors for their support.

The Winter Boot Drive began under the leadership of the Woodstock Democratic Party. In 2024, they asked Senexet Grange to take over the event so that it could become a non-partisan effort focused on helping local families. During its first year under the Grange's leadership, the drive focused primarily on Woodstock. Thanks to the tremendous support from the community, we expanded our efforts in 2025 to include surrounding towns.

Last year, we moved the collection site to the Putnam Town Hall parking lot and reached out to local schools and community organizations to help spread the word. The response was remarkable. With the generosity of our neighbors, we collected 67 pairs of winter boots, one pair of gloves, 39 packs containing 142 pairs of socks, and $307.42 in monetary donations. Every donation was given to TEEG, which distributed these items and funds to individuals and families in our area who needed them most.

This year, we hope to build on that success.

The Third Annual Winter Boot Drive will take place Saturday, Nov. 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the parking lot of Putnam Town Hall. We invite community members to donate gently used winter boots or consider purchasing new winter boots or socks to donate. Donations of all sizes are welcome, including men's, women's, and children's sizes.

Every pair of boots and socks can make a difference to someone facing the challenges of a Connecticut winter. Whether you donate a pair of boots, a package of socks, or make a monetary contribution, your generosity will directly benefit members of our local community through TEEG.

Our goal this year is simple: to collect more than we did last year and help even more of our neighbors stay warm this winter. We hope the Quiet Corner community will once again come together to make this year's drive our most successful yet.

Please mark your calendar for Nov. 7 and join us at Putnam Town Hall. Together, we can make a difference—one pair of warm boots at a time.

CT State to hold open house event

DANIELSON — Connecticut State Community College (CT State) will hold Fall 2026 Open House events at 12 locations throughout Connecticut in November for those interested in learning about becoming a CT State student.

An open house will be held at the Quinebaug Valley campus in Danielson on Nov. 19 from 5-7 p.m.

Prospective students and their families are welcome to tour CT State campuses and learn about degree and certificate programs, financial aid, the free tuition program and admissions. Open houses are listed by town below. For more details, including open house hours, parking, and event updates, visit ctstate.edu/openhouse. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required.

Many CT State degree options offer seamless transfer to the four Connecticut state universities and Charter Oak State College, making it the most affordable path to attain a bachelor's degree in Connecticut. These credits can also be transferred to other public and private colleges in Connecticut and throughout the United States.

Registration opens Oct. 26 for winter session and spring 2027 credit semester. Accelerated, seven-week fall semester classes begin Oct. 22. Short-term workforce career programs are also available on a rolling basis.

About CT State

Following the merger of the 12 Connecticut community colleges in 2023, CT State Community College is the largest community college in the Northeast and fourth largest open admission public two-year college in the country, serving close to 60,000 students annually. CT State offers accessible, high-quality education across its locations in Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, Danielson, Enfield, Farmington, Hartford, Manchester, Meriden, Middletown, New Haven, North Haven, Norwalk, Norwich, Waterbury, Willimantic, and Winsted. The college office is located in New Britain. Visit ctstate.edu for more information.

Killingly history comes to life at Town Hall

KILLINGLY — As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society is taking the opportunity to look closer to home. History is not only found in textbooks or famous landmarks—it is also found in the people, places, documents, and everyday objects that tell the story of our own community.

The Society has recently refreshed the display cases in the lobby of Killingly Town Hall with an America 250 exhibit featuring "Tidbits About Killingly." The two displays offer visitors a glimpse into both Killingly's connection to the American Revolution and the everyday lives of generations who came before us.

One display case honors the men from Killingly who answered the Lexington Alarm in April 1775, joining the response to the opening events of the American Revolution. Their names are listed along with short biographies of several participants, photographs of the men, and photographs of their homes and gravestones. These were Killingly residents whose lives became part of a much larger chapter in American history.

The second case takes a different look at the past, featuring everyday objects from various eras. Among the items are a tabletop butter churn, a plug-in portable vacuum, a percolator, and a metal lunch box. Each item includes information about when it was used and how it worked, offering a reminder of how much daily life has changed.

The Society has been creating displays at Town Hall for a number of years. Past exhibits have featured Boy Scouts, schools, fire departments, promotional items from local businesses, and the history of the Town of Killingly itself. One exhibit included old dog license fees, assessments, tax bills, and changes in local street names—including Potter Street, once known as Fitch Street, and Broad Street, once called Summer Street.

These exhibits demonstrate that history can be found everywhere—even in objects sitting on a shelf or in an old street name we pass every day.

The next time you visit Killingly Town Hall, take a moment to stop and explore the America 250 displays. They offer a small but meaningful look at how the history of Killingly connects to the larger story of America.

The Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society invites residents to discover, share, and help preserve the history of our community.

Day Kimball launches Project ASSERT to expand substance use support services in Emergency department

PUTNAM — Day Kimball Hospital has launched Project ASSERT, a new emergency department program that connects patients experiencing substance use concerns with education, treatment options, recovery resources and community-based support services beginning the moment they seek emergency care.

Funded through the Connecticut Opioid Settlement Fund, and administered by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), the program is designed to reach patients affected by opioid use disorders during a critical window when they may be most open to seeking help.

In its first five weeks, the program completed 43 consults with 38 patients, resulting in three inpatient treatment placements, six outpatient treatment placements, four detox placements and two medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) interventions.

The initial results demonstrate both the need for these services in the community and the value of meeting patients where they are. Every connection represents an opportunity to help someone take the next step toward recovery and improved health.

"Project ASSERT allows us to meet patients where they are, at a moment when they may be most open to considering treatment," said Kyle Kramer, DKH CEO. "These early numbers tell us there is a real need in our community, and they tell us this approach works. Every one of these connections is a chance to change someone's path, and that's exactly the kind of care we want to provide. Our goal is to reduce the barriers, provide education, and help patients take the next step toward recovery and improved health."

How it works

Health promotion advocates (HPAs) work alongside emergency department staff to screen patients for substance misuse and connect them with resources tailored to their needs, including:

Treatment programs

Access to primary care, counseling and community-based recovery support

MOUD, including FDA-approved medications such as Suboxone, buprenorphine and methadone

Education on safer choices, overdose prevention and harm reduction

"Substance use disorders are treatable medical conditions, and recovery looks different for every person," said Steven Wexler, MD, FAAEM, DKH HPA Site Champion and medical director of the Day Kimball Hospital Emergency Department. "By connecting patients with resources during an emergency department visit, we can help bridge the gap between immediate care and long-term recovery."

The team

In addition to Dr. Wexler, the DKH Project ASSERT team includes:

Vanessa Brown, MD, JD, FACEP, FAAEM, Chief Medical Officer and Vice President, Medical Affairs and Quality

Christine Collins, LPC, ED Grant Supervisor

Crystal Lanning, MSOL, RN, HPA Supervisor

Emily Laprade, Health Promotion Advocate

Courtney Peltier, Health Promotion Advocate

Getting help

Patients can speak with a member of the DKH Project ASSERT team during an emergency department visit to learn more about treatment options and recovery resources.

Anyone who uses drugs alone and is seeking immediate overdose prevention support can call SafeSpot's free, confidential, 24/7 Overdose Spotting Hotline at 1-800-972-0590.

About Day Kimball Health

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

Kimberly Crocker Davis featured at Putnam gallery

PUTNAM — An art exhibit featuring the works of local artist Kimberly Crocker Davis is currently on display at The Corridor Gallery at the Putnam Municipal Complex, 200 School St., until Dec. 30. The show, entitled "Casual Artistry by Kim," features

original paintings that blend dreamy surrealism with everyday symbolism, creating soulful pieces that invite viewers into gentle, storyrich moments.

Kimberley is a retired professional cake decorator who spent many years mastering color, detail, and the art of turning imagination into something tangible. After retiring, she shifted that creative discipline into painting, developing a style rooted in warmth, whimsy, and quiet emotional resonance. Her work has earned recognition at local town events and fairs, where several of her pieces have won awards for creativity and craftsmanship.

An Artist's Reception will be held in the Gallery on Thursday, Nov. 5 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. The reception is free and open to the public. The show is sponsored by the Putnam Arts Council.

For hours and more information, please visit PutnamCtArtsCouncil.com.

Courtesy

Last week, the Killingly Robotics teams competed at Capitol Region Education Council High School in Enfield. Three great teams represented! A NaCl+ and Battery represented by Jasper Gilbert, Layla Raymond, Dakota St. Jean, Odin Spjut, Alexander Saunders, Xavier Mongeau, Dakota Lavoie and Tim Carlson qualified for the round of 32! The Nitro team represented by Maddux Duquette, Tyler Kincaid, Roman Walsh and Davin Shaw took W's through the round of 32 and the round of 16! And team Extraction represented by Max Richardson, Graham Milot, Glen Leveille and Chase St. Jean battled their way to the Finals! They also finished 2nd in the Skills competition! With their 2nd place finish, they have qualified for the 2027 CREATE U.S. Open! All Killingly teams were complimented multiple times by judges about their great character and the way everyone presented themselves and absolutely represented themselves on and off of the competition arena! All coaches and teachers could not be prouder! You have worked really hard this year and it certainly showed!

Killingly High School Weekly Sports Wrap-Up

Field Hockey

Killingly battled NFA in a hard-fought 2-0 loss on Oct. 22. Jaynie Macquarrie stood strong in goal, turning away nine shots to keep Killingly in the game. Maddie Plumadore sparked the offense with strong runs upfield, helping push the attack forward. Killingly kept the pressure on and competed hard through the final whistle.

Girls Soccer

Killingly Girls Soccer traveled to Woodstock on Thursday afternoon, Oct. 22 for a hard-fought matchup. The game remained scoreless at half-time as both teams battled through a defensive first half. Woodstock was able to find the back of the net twice in the second half to take a 2-0 lead. The Trailblazers continued to fight until the final whistle, and with just five minutes remaining, Olivia Cabral scored to cut the deficit to one. Despite the late push, Killingly fell by a final score of 2-1. McKenna Mulvey had an outstanding performance in goal, recording 8 saves and keeping the team within striking distance throughout the match. With the result, the Killingly Girls Soccer team moved to 10-3-1 on the season.

On Saturday morning, the 24th, the Killingly Girls Soccer team hosted Stonington and came up short in a 4-0 loss. The Trailblazers battled throughout the match but were unable to find the back of the net. With the loss, Killingly's season record now stands at 10-4-1.

Boys Soccer

Killingly boys soccer earned a 7-1 victory over a hard-fighting Putnam team on Oct. 20. The Trailblazers showed great teamwork and ball possession throughout the game, creating scoring opportunities and finishing with five different goal scorers. Zachary Lackner and Christian Tremblay each scored twice, while Keegan Shippee, Kaiden Cayer, and Ed Purcell added goals of their own. Lackner, Tremblay, Cayer, Zachary Blanchard, and Chris Caron recorded assists. Great team effort by the Trailblazers!

The boys earned a 5-0 victory over Tourtellotte on Oct. 22, coming out strong in the second half to put the game away. Liam Sierakowski led the way with a hat trick, while Christian Tremblay and Ed Purcell added goals. Kaiden Cayer, Sierakowski, Adam Lovendale, Glen Leveille, and Bryce Lemovitz recorded assists. The Trailblazers turned in a great defensive and goalkeeping performance to secure the shutout.

Would you invite 65 teenagers to spend the weekend at your house?

POMFRET CENTER — Heather Logee, Youth Program Director at the Windham-Tolland 4-H camp, does exactly that three times a year! She welcomed them to camp, along with eight other staff members on Friday, Oct. 16 at 5 p.m., and they left Sunday morning at 9 a.m.

Every Teen week-end has a service piece to it. For the past few years, the teens involved in the October weekend have hosted a Fall Extravaganza program. It's an early family friendly trick or treat event on campgrounds. Teens decorate the cabins in the boys area and don costumes to pass out treats to children ages two and up who walk the trick or treat trail. The $5 admission fee goes into our health center renovation fund. There are free s'mores and hot chocolate by the fire at the lake, a popular donut eating contest and games. This year there were two bouncy houses that added to the fun thanks to the generosity of Sky's the Limit Inflatables. Check them out on Facebook.

Most teen camp participants have been campers for many years, many participate in out Teen Leader training program, others started as six year old clover campers and now are on administrative staff. Leadership and team building skills are part of the camp leadership training experience and we have sent dozens of participants on to careers in teaching or counseling. The teen leader program is open to 15 – 17 year olds who are interested in a fun summer learning and community service experience. If you are a teen who will be 18 or older and a high school graduate, you might be interested in a camp counselor position. Check out our Web site, www.4hcampct.org, and look for further information under the employment tab to apply for these opportunities.

bankHometown to host three free shred days

REGION — bankHometown invites customers and members of the community to three free Shred Days. The second will be held on Saturday, Oct. 10, from 9 to 11 a.m. at the bank's 9 Sack Blvd. location in Leominster.

The third event will be on Saturday, Nov. 7, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the bank's 148 Route 171 location in Woodstock, Conn.

Local residents can reduce their risk of identity theft by bringing old mail, receipts, statements or bills, cancelled checks, pay stubs, medical records, or any other unwanted paper documents containing personal or confidential information and shredding them safely and securely for free. Bay State Shredding, a professional document destruction company, will be on site in the bank's parking lot and can accept up to two boxes of documents per car. No appointment is necessary.

About bankHometown

Headquartered in Easthampton, Massachusetts, TruNorth Bank and its bankHometown and TruNorth Mortgage divisions have more than $6.9 billion in assets and offer consumer and business banking in 54 locations throughout Massachusetts, northeastern Connecticut, and southern New Hampshire. We're proud to fulfill our community banking mission—providing individualized financial support, a suite of comprehensive products and services, and banking tools and technology—all to ensure our customers can unlock their potential and build a successful future.

Through our sponsorship and charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, TruNorth Bank supports non-profit organizations and causes throughout the communities we serve. In 2025 alone, we donated more than $2.2 million and over the last decade, more than $13 million. We were named a Corporate Citizenship Award winner by Boston Business Journal, reaffirming our status as one of Massachusetts' most charitable companies.

As an employer of choice, we've been recognized nationally as a four-time USA TODAY Top Workplaces award winner, an America's Best-in-State Bank by Forbes, and a top place to work by The Boston Globe. For more information, visit TruNorthBank.com.

Woodstock Women's Golf League celebrates 33 years with second annual tournament

WOODSTOCK — For 33 years, the Tuesday morning Woodstock Women's Golf League has brought women together for golf, friendship, and a little friendly competition. Now, the League is building on that tradition by giving back to the course it calls home.

Originally scheduled for Sept. 27, the League's Second Annual Golf Tournament was postponed to its rain date of Oct. 4 due to strong winds and severe weather. Fortunately, the extra week's wait brought golfers together at Woodstock Golf Course at Roseland Park for a day of great golf, plenty of laughs, and a few memorable shots along the way.

Played in a scramble format, the tournament celebrated not only golf, but also the friendships and community spirit that have kept the League going strong for 33 years. The competition was close! Taking First Place with a score of 28 were Brian Lynch, Shirley Mancini, Ann Rathbone, and Bill Rathbone. Finishing just as strong, the Second Place team of Drew Aitken, John Aitken, Connor Liebscher, and Clara Siegmund, also posted a 28, while Third Place went to Brian Bardier, Richard Beaudry, Marc Cotnoir, and John Rhea, who finished with a score of 31.

There was more than team competition to keep golfers on their toes. Special contests added to the fun, including:

Closest to the Pin — Ravine, Hole #7: Mora Cristy

Longest Drive — Long Tom, Hole #8: Women's — Molly Thienel; Men's — Drew Aitken; Senior Men's — Mitchell Eaffy.

Of course, the day was about more than scorecards and bragging rights. The tournament is part of the League's effort to make a lasting difference at Woodstock Golf Course. Thanks to the generosity of golfers and donors, the 2025 inaugural tournament funded the purchase of two benches at the course. Proceeds from this year's event will help fund additional benches and other course improvements, while supporting the League's goal of encouraging families to enjoy golf together.

After the final putts dropped, participants gathered to share a meal, swap stories, and celebrate a successful day on the course. The event was another step toward making the golf course an even more welcoming place for golfers and families.

The Woodstock Women's Golf League looks forward to continuing its tradition of friendship, fun, and community support, both on and off the fairways.

For more information about the Woodstock Women's Golf League, please contact Margaret Young at youngmargaret421@gmail.com.

Thompson Public Library announces Seventh Annual Textile Artists' Community Show

THOMPSON — The Seventh Annual Thompson Textile Artists' Community Show will be on view at the Thompson Public Library from Dec. 3 - 30. The show will feature textile pieces of various media made by community members who live or work in Thompson.

A reception will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 8 from 6 - 7:30 p.m. at the Thompson Public Library. The reception is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be provided thanks to the Friends of the Thompson Public Library. The library is currently accepting submissions to the show until Saturday, November 14th. To submit a piece, visit thompsonpubliclibrary.org or visit the library for a submission form.

Courtesy

The Putnam Rotary Club's Interact Club was at Putnam's Great Pumpkin Festival Oct. 17. Members were collecting for a project called The African Library Project. The program collects books and keeps libraries sustainable in sub-Saharan Africa. From left: Alyssa Daniels, Mabel Perreault and Calleigh Levesque.

Hellstar OTE opens season with dominant 120–70 win

WOODSTOCK — Hellstar OTE opened its season in impressive fashion, rolling to a 120–70 victory over Bright School on opening night at Woodstock Academy's Alumni Fieldhouse.

In front of a huge, energetic crowd, the Alumni Fieldhouse was rocking from the opening tip as Hellstar OTE delivered an explosive performance to start the season 1–0.

Anthony Pannell led the way with a dominant all-around performance, recording 18 points, 11 rebounds and six blocks. Antoine Caughman Jr. added 22 points, six assists and four steals to fuel the victory.

Jalen Taggart provided a major spark from beyond the arc, knocking down four of seven three-point attempts on his way to 13 points while adding two steals.

Hellstar OTE also received balanced contributions throughout the lineup. Zack Dawson (six assists, four rebounds and three steals), Isaac Olaniba (six rebounds and two blocks), Kyle Delves (five rebounds and six assists) and Jason Nistrio (three rebounds) all chipped in 10 points apiece in the win.

Despite the lopsided final score, head coach Thomas Espinosa knows there is still work to do as the team prepares for its next challenge.

"It wasn't pretty, but we got the win. We did what we had to do," Espinosa said. "First games, you make mistakes. The goal is for the second game to make fewer mistakes. We will continue to work these next two days to be ready to go Friday."

Espinosa also expressed his appreciation for the large turnout, highlighting the excitement surrounding the program at Woodstock Academy.

"I was really happy to see the big crowd tonight. This is really exciting times here at Woodstock Academy with Hellstar OTE," he said.

Hellstar OTE will look to build on its season-opening success when it returns home this Friday to face Broome Street Academy of New York. Tipoff is scheduled for 6 p.m. at the Alumni Fieldhouse.

EMS

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calls at all hours of the day and night, this facility represents more than just a building," said First Selectman Barney Seney. "It is an investment in the people who dedicate themselves to serving our residents when they need help most."

Putnam EMS traces its roots to 1954 and has operated from the Church Street location for more than two decades. As emergency medical services evolved into a 24-hour operation, the need for a facility better suited to modern EMS demands became increasingly apparent.

After evaluating several alternatives, town officials ultimately pursued a practical and cost-effective solution that allowed EMS operations to remain at their established location while providing greatly improved working conditions. The project was completed using a combination of municipal funding resources, including Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) funds and federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for related improvements.

The facility stands as the result of collaboration among the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Town Administration, Putnam EMS leadership, members of the EMS Facilities Committee, and numerous local partners who contributed to the project's success.

"The completion of this facility reflects the Town's commitment to ensuring our emergency responders have the resources they need to continue providing exceptional care," Seney said. "We are proud to recognize the dedication and professionalism of Putnam EMS and grateful for the service they provide to our community every day."

The Town of Putnam extends its sincere appreciation to the members of Putnam EMS, past and present town officials, project partners, and residents whose support helped make the project possible.

OBITUARIES

Joyce Barber Greenman, 91

Joyce Barber (Devolve) Greenman, 91, of Danielson passed away peacefully at home on October 8, 2026. She was the loving wife of the late Irving Greenman, Sr. Joyce was born in Oneco, CT on July 18, 1935, and was the daughter of the late Alfred and Viola (Cole) Devolve. Joyce's world revolved around her family. She loved her children equally and was so proud of them. She had so much love to give and everyone called her "Mom" including friends and neighbors and family. Joyce loved to read and work in her puzzle books. Joyce was an avid gardener and could grow anything. She grew the most beautiful flowers, plants and shrubs. She had huge gardens and enjoyed sharing her bounty with her family, neighbors and friends. Joyce loved to sew and made her children clothing. The house was full of curtains, bedding, Halloween costumes and quilts that she sewed with love. Joyce started working at a young age on local farms picking vegetables. She worked for many years in Danielson and then Plainfield at the chicken plants. Later she worked at Tivan Linen. She finished her working years at Idle Wild Farms in Pomfret, CT. She always reminisced about her dog Spot that she spent so much of her younger years with. She had many loving and faithful dogs over the years. Texas was her protector these past few years and they shared so much love. Joyce is survived by five children. Irving, Jr. (Laurie), Arnold (Corinne), Sally (Bryon), Nancy (Mike), Lewis (June). Joyce was able to spend her last years in her home thanks to her loving grandson Bryon, who devoted his life to caring for her. Joyce was predeceased by her daughters Gloria and Doreen. Also her siblings Andrew Devolve, Sr., Lillian Salois, Spencer Devolve, Marion Tracy, and Emma Hewitt. Joyce loved family and leaves a very large legacy. She had her seven children, fourteen grandchildren, numerous great grandchildren and several great great grandchildren. She will be deeply missed by all. Calling hours were held in Tillinghast Funeral Home 433 Main St. Danielson, CT on Monday October 12, 2026 from 5-7 PM. A Funeral Service took place at Packerville Baptist Church 228 Packerville Road Plainfield, CT on Tuesday October 13, 2026 at 11 AM. Burial followed in the Packerville Cemetery. tillinghastfh.com

Mary Ellen Blake

Mary Ellen Blake of Woodstock, Connecticut, passed away peacefully at home on October 23, 2026, surrounded by the family she loved dearly. She was born on September 21, 1942, in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Mary Ellen grew up in the Village of West Thompson, Connecticut, before her family relocated to Putnam following the Flood of 1955. Later, she made her home in Woodstock, where she began raising her own family and built a lifetime of cherished memories.

Family was at the heart of Mary Ellen's life. She treasured weekend visits, holiday gatherings, and annual family vacations, finding joy in time spent together and in the traditions that brought everyone close. Her love and devotion to her family created a lasting legacy that will continue through the generations.

She leaves behind her four children, Roberta (Matt), Michael, Steven (Clare), and Catherine; seven grandchildren, Kristin, Timothy, Samuel, Sara, Susan, Benjamin, and James; and three great-grandchildren, Lucas, Callum, and Ruby. She is also survived by her brother, Donald P. St. Marie (Linda) of Amesbury, Massachusetts, along with many beloved nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her parents, George W. St. Marie and Mary Lucy (Dartt) St. Marie.

Mary Ellen had a wide range of interests and talents that reflected her creativity, curiosity, and appreciation for the past. She enjoyed genealogy, attending auctions, baking, sewing, quilting, crocheting, knitting, and rug making. She had a special fondness for all things raspberry and pansies. An enthusiastic bird lover, she also found pleasure in observing and appreciating the natural world around her.

Her dedication to her community was evident through her active involvement in numerous organizations, many of which held special meaning to her. She was a member of and held positions within the Sarah Williams Danielson Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) in Brooklyn, Connecticut; Jasmine Chapter #58, Order of the Eastern Star; Betty Putnam Chapter #106, Order of the Eastern Star; Grand Chapter OES of Connecticut (Snowflake Family); Rainbow Assembly #26; Woodstock Historical Society; the Central Cemetery Association; Senexet Grange #40; East Woodstock Congregational Church; Woodstock Theft Detecting Society; and the L'Après Midi Club. Through these organizations, she generously shared her time, talents, and commitment to the community she called home.

Mary Ellen will be remembered for her deep love of family, her many creative pursuits, her dedication to preserving history and tradition, and the countless memories she created with those around her. Though her presence will be deeply missed, the love she gave, the traditions she cherished, and the memories she leaves behind will live on in the hearts of her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and extended family for generations to come.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Mary Ellen's memory to the Sarah Williams Danielson Chapter, NSDAR, in Brooklyn, Connecticut, or to East Woodstock Congregational Church.

Calling hours will be Friday, October 30, 2026 from 10:30 a.m. to noon, followed by a service at noon at the East Woodstock Congregational Church, 220 Woodstock Road, East Woodstock, CT 06244. A private cemetery service will be held. Services have been entrusted to Smith and Walker Funeral Home, Putnam, CT, share a memory at Smithandwalkerfh.coM

Susan "Susie" Larkin-Bessette, 58

Susan "Susie" Larkin-Bessette, 58 of Dayville, CT passed away October 16, 2026 at UMass Memorial Hospital in Worcester, MA. She was born February 17, 1968 in Norwich, Connecticut, daughter of the late James "Whit" Larkin Sr. and Ethel "Dolly" (Thurlow) Larkin.

Susan graduated from Killingly High School in 1986. She then went to Central Connecticut State University and later graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University with her Bachelors in Education.

In 2000 Susan became the beloved wife of George "Butch" Bessette and loving stepmother of Holly (Bessette) Baker.

Susan was a Catholic School Teacher and taught at St. Mary School in Putnam, CT and at St. Mary - St. Joseph School in Windham until it closed. After the school closed she would continue to tutor children in her home. In her spare time Sue was the secretary for the Attawaugan Fire Department and taught CCD at St. James Church.

The most important things to Sue were her family and her faith. She enjoyed traveling with her husband, game nights with family and watching the Red Sox. She loved the holidays spent with family, reading and sunflowers.

She leaves behind her mother Dolly Larkin of Dayville; brother James Larkin Jr. and his wife AnneMarie of Pomfret Center; sisters Sally Larkin of Putnam and Tammy Dexter and her husband James of Sterling; nephews, nieces, grandchildren and great nephews/nieces.

She was predeceased by her husband "Butch"; father "Whit"; nephews Connor Larkin and Chace Wood, also her Godson.

Calling hours will be Wednesday, October 21, 2026 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the Gagnon and Costello Funeral Home, 33 Reynolds Street, Danielson, CT. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Thursday, October 22, 2026 at 11:00 AM at St. James Church, 12 Franklin Street, Danielson, CT. There will be a burial immediately following the ceremony at Holy Cross Cemetery, Danielson, CT.

Donations may be made in Susan's memory to the Cancer organization of your choice.

Share a memory at Gagnonandcostellofh.com

www.VillagerNewspapers.com

Loving Memory of Darrell James McClellan

Darrell James McClellan, 48, was born on October 14, 1978, and passed away unexpectedly on October 20, 2026, leaving behind a lifetime of love, laughter, and cherished memories.

Darrell had a heart as big as his personality and a beautiful way of making everyone feel loved, valued, and accepted. His love for others knew no boundaries, and he never hesitated to extend kindness, compassion, or a helping hand. Family was always at the center of his world, and his love for them was immeasurable.

He had a deep passion for music, a contagious laugh, and a joyful spirit that could brighten even the darkest days. He believed in enjoying life, sharing laughter, and showing love freely. His presence was a gift to everyone fortunate enough to know him.

He leaves behind his cherished and loving wife, Jaimie; his five precious children, Avianne, Joey (Angelica), Jordan, Jayden, and Jessiah; and his eagerly awaited grandson, Rafael, who will carry forward his grandfather's love and legacy. He also leaves behind his beloved mother, Tina Champlin; his father, Darrell McClellan; his cherished uncle, James Startz, whose love, guidance, and fatherly presence helped shape his life; his dear sisters, Tonesha and Tiarra; his beloved niece, Jaida; his nephew, Jeremie Jr.; and his four cherished nephews, Isaiah, Antonio, Colt, and Tanner.

While his passing leaves an immeasurable void, there is comfort in knowing he is reunited in eternal peace with his beloved brother and best friend, Jeremie Sr., whose bond with Darrell was truly special.

Darrell also leaves behind a large and loving extended family, a community that loved and adored him, and countless friends whose lives he touched. Many affectionately called him "Uncle," a reflection of how he made others feel like family, regardless of blood.

His presence will be deeply missed, for there was truly no one quite like Darrell. The love he gave, the laughter he shared, and the memories he created will forever live on in the hearts of everyone whose life he touched.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."-Matthew 5:8

Luba M. Bugbee
December 31, 1950 - October 20, 2026

Luba M. Bugbee of East Killingly died at her home on Tuesday, October 20, 2026. She was born on December 31, 1950, in Putnam, daughter of the late Peter A. and Katherine (Korecki) Malt. A Connecticut State Scholar, she graduated from the University of Connecticut in 1972, with a B.A. in Liberal Arts, concentrating in research biology with a specialty in entomology. In 1975, she earned an associate degree in business administration from Quinebaug Valley Community College.

Luba and her husband, Russell Lee Bugbee, first met as children at Orthodox Church picnics at Pulaski's Pond in North Windham. Their paths would cross again in 1970 at the UConn dairy barns, where Russell worked as a dairy herdsman and Luba's genetics coursework made her a frequent visitor. They married on November 4, 1972. After four years studying entomology, she considered it only fitting to marry "a kindred heart named Bugbee," as she once wrote. Together, they began married life on the 15 acres of her family's land where she'd grown up in East Killingly. Here, they raised their only son, Greg, and lived as an extended family with Luba's mother and father on their farm.

Luba began her career in 1973 at National Patent Medical, later American White Cross, Inc., in Dayville. Over 22 years, she advanced from quality assurance inspector to Director of Customer Service and Market Development Manager. She subsequently coordinated the One Stop Job Center and School-to-Career program for Workforce One, worked in sales for several companies, and served as a substitute teacher and special education instructional assistant at H.H. Ellis Technical High School. In 2009, she joined the University of Connecticut Graduate School, helping ensure students met all requirements for their graduate degrees. In 2017, she retired from the same university where she had earned her own degree in 1972.

Above all, Luba was a loving wife, devoted mother, and, more recently, proud grandmother to Alek. She was a steady, trusted presence in her family's life and always a calming force. She had a sense for the unspoken and often knew what people were thinking without them saying a word. She could be counted on for sage advice that was often simple: do the right thing, be good to yourself and others, and everything will work out. She was generous with her time and encouragement, once writing, "Happiness is my success and lots of love." An accomplished artist, she drew intricate pen-and-ink designs and enjoyed all kinds of music and performing arts. Luba loved creating in the kitchen, experimenting with spices to invent new treats and baking cookies by the thousands each Christmas. She cherished her family and its traditions. She loved hosting and socializing, and because she could talk with anyone, she formed genuine connections with the people she met. Her home was always full of life with a constant stream of friends and family stopping by.

Her commitment to community began in her teens, when she served as Worthy Advisor of Brooklyn Assembly #40 Rainbow for Girls. Like her mother, she was a Past Worthy Matron of Danielson Chapter #77 Order of Eastern Star and a member of Harmony Court #12 Order of Amaranth. She also served as president of the Quinebaug Valley Community College Alumni Association and was a member of the Danielson Lions Club. As she once wrote of herself, she was "a multitude in one not one in a multitude."

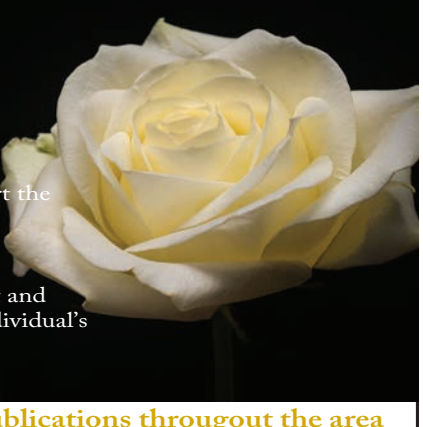
Luba is survived by her husband of nearly 54 years, Russell Lee Bugbee; her son, Gregory Lee Bugbee, and his wife, Rebecca, of Windham; her grandson, Alek; her sisters-in-law, Beverly K. Malt of Ellington, Karen B. Totolis of Bradenton, Florida, and Loretta Bugbee of Eliot, Maine; her nephews, Robert Peter Malt and his wife, Barbara, of Ellington, and Theodore Douglas Malt and his wife, Angela, of Ludington, Michigan, and their families; many other nieces and nephews; and many dear friends who were like family to her. She was predeceased by her brother, Anthony Theodore Malt.

Services will be private, with no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, donations in Luba's memory may be made to the Amaranth Diabetes Foundation at donors.diabetes.org/page/Amaranth or by mail to the American Diabetes Association, P.O. Box 7023, Merrifield, VA 22116-7023. Donations may also be made to K-B Ambulance Corps, Inc., P.O. Box 209, Danielson, CT 06239.

Gilman & Valade Funeral Homes, 104 Church Street, Putnam, is in charge of arrangements.

How to Submit an Obituary

Guidance in Your Time of Need.



Posting an obituary is a meaningful way to honor the life of someone who has passed, share the loss with the community, and support the grieving process. It celebrates their life, family, memories, and accomplishments while bringing people together in remembrance. An obituary also helps loved ones find comfort and closure during a difficult time preserves the individual's story as an important part of the family's history and legacy.

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For obituaries over 400 words, the charge is $ 250 for each additional 400 words or less.
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PTO

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provide the enriching opportunities to schools for things like field trips, playground enhancements and enrichment and those extra little things that make a school district special."

There has been no official announcement of social media concerning the reformation of the PTO or what its structure might look like. However, Haughley confirmed that the PTO presented new bylaws and that the parents are "extremely excited" to reengage with the community.

He feels the group will be an important part of the strategic work ahead, but he also wants to approach the process with patience preferring to "go slow to go fast" in bringing it back to working order.

EDITORIAL

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idea forward. Their willingness to invite community suggestions is another encouraging sign. A program intended to honor Thompson residents should reflect the thoughts and experiences of those residents.

There is no shortage of monuments reminding future generations of the sacrifices made by those who came before them. Those memorials remain essential. But there is also room for recognition that reaches people during their lifetimes.

The greatest value of Thompson's proposed banner program may not be found in the banners themselves. It may be found in the moments they create: a veteran feeling appreciated, a family taking pride in a loved one's service, or a young person discovering that someone they have known for years has an extraordinary story to tell.

A community should never have to wait until someone is gone to say thank you. Thompson has an opportunity to make those words visible, personal and lasting.

UPDATES

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have a bridge anymore and essentially build two cul-de-sacs at the end of either side of the road. I don't think anybody really likes that solution," Palaia said. "I think the most significant driver behind that recommendation is the historical nature and character of the bridge. It's essentially man-made and built out of stone by hand and it would be really difficult to replace that within their program budget."

Palaia made it clear the town does not support removing the bridge but acknowledged that it is an aging structure that will eventually need work or it will be closed. With that in mind, Palaia indicated that a rebuild effort may not be the best course of action, and the bridge might be removed from the program to assess a new avenue forward.

For now, the town will await alternative options from the State DOT before making any final decisions on the bridge.

KILLINGLY

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and in Paris in 1818. The rider sat astride a wooden frame supported by two in-line wheels and pushed the vehicle along with their feet while steering the front wheel. (Like a kiddie car). The first mechanically propelled, two-wheeled vehicle may have been built by Kirkpatrick MacMillan, a Scottish blacksmith, in 1839, although this claim is often disputed. He is also associated with the first recorded instance of a cycling traffic offense, when a Glasgow newspaper in 1842 reported an accident in which an anonymous' gentleman from Dumfries-shire... bestride a velocipede... of ingenious design' knocked over a little girl in Glasgow and was fined five shillings (equivalent to £24 in 2025). In the early 1860s, the Frenchmen Pierre Michaux and Pierre Lallement took bicycle design in a new direction by adding a mechanical crank drive with pedals on an enlarged front wheel (the velocipede). This was the first in mass production… These bicycles were difficult to mount, dismount and brake due to their high seat over the large front wheel." Numerous other improvements were made and the 1890's became known as The Golden Age of Bicycles. Women, can you imagine trying to ride a bicycle in a long skirt? How dangerous that must have been! If you've found this interesting go to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_bicycle for a number of photos showing the evolution of the bicycle.

I never thought about bicycles being used during World War II, but they improved the efficiency of numerous soldiers. Wikipedia continued, "Bicycles were used by paratroopers during the war to help them with transportation, creating the term bomber bikes' to refer to US planes dropping bikes for troops to use. The German Volksgrenadier units each had a battalion of bicycle infantry attached. The Invasion of Poland saw many bicycle-riding scouts in use, with each bicycle company using 196 bicycles and 1 motorcycle. By September 1939, there were 41 bicycle companies mobilized. During the Second Sino-Japanese War, Japan used around 50,000 bicycle troops. The Malayan Campaign saw many bicycles used. The Japanese confiscated bicycles from civilians due to the abundance of bicycles among the civilian population. Japanese bicycle troops were efficient in both speed and carrying capacity, as they could carry 36 kilograms (79 lb) of equipment compared to a normal British soldier, who could carry 18 kilograms (40 lb).'' I'm sure many of you recall that Orville and Wilbur Wright had built bicycles prior to their invention of their first airplane. "The brothers gained the mechanical skills essential to their success by working for years in their Dayton, Ohio-based shop with printing presses, bicycles, motors, and other machinery. Their work with bicycles, in particular, influenced their belief that an unstable vehicle such as a flying machine could be controlled and balanced with practice." (Wikipedia).

Since this is still Family History Month, I'll add a few more free genealogical sites that Killingly Historical Center researcher Sue Gosselin has used. 1. CT online marriage locator link: https://data.ct.gov/History/Connecticut-Vital-Records-Index-of-Marriages-1897-/fy7b-hj53/data_preview . This link will help in locating marriages in CT from 1897 - 2001. Using the Search box on the right, fill in the name of the bride/groom, press Enter. Names of brides/grooms, marriage date and place will appear.

2. Family Search familysearch.org In addition to using the Search button dropdown menu and clicking Records (at the top of the page), you may also search using the Images button from this same dropdown menu. The Images button contains the current unindexed resources available. Starting your search with a place, type in Killingly and choose accordingly. The next page provides all the options for Killingly, from the group you chose. In the filter section on the right, for Date, type in the year you are searching and choose a Life Event, click Update. You may now search with this group of images for the record you need.

3. Find A Grave https://www.findagrave.com/ Reminder: Memorial information is volunteer submitted, it may not be verified. Always find proof.

4. Library of Congress Chronicling America: https://www.loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/ . Below the title: Collection Chronicling America Historic American Newspapers there are three blue choices, click: Digital Collections. The Advanced Search screen will appear and allow you to search. 5. National Archives: https://www.archives.gov/research This site provides information and many resources for your research including genealogy articles, census records, immigration and naturalization, maps, passenger lists and much more.

Do you have memories of the Hurricane of 1938? Please email me and share. Next week I'll include a few more.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, October 2026. Thanks to Sue Gosselin for the information on free genealogy sites . 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. For Putnam Patriots and Windham County Observers visit the home page of the Putnam Public Library and look on the right hand column for links. If you are out of this area, check to see what papers your public library has available. For Online Land Records go to Search IQS.

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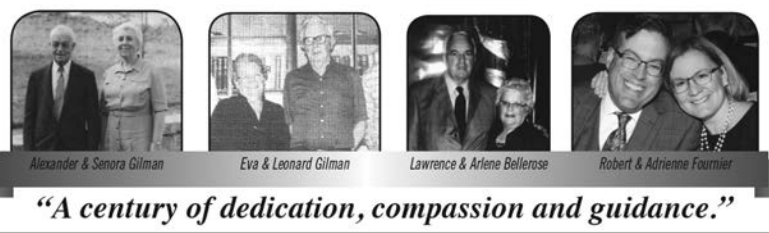

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LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Walter N. Talaga (26-00411)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate,District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated October 20, 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.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
James N. Talaga
c/o STEPHEN T KULIG, BRIGHAM & KULIG, 69 BROAD STREET,
DANIELSON, CT 06239
October 30, 2026

Town of Putnam
Planning & Zoning Commission
Legal Notice

The Town of Putnam Planning & Zoning Commission held a Hybrid Meeting on October 21, 2026, at 7:00 P. M. in Room 201 at the Putnam Municipal Complex, located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. The following action was taken:

Docket # 2026-12 Strategic Commercial Realty. Inc. request for a Special Permit modification for the excavation and removal of approximately 1.9 million cubic yards of rock to prepare three lots in the Quinebaug Regional Technology Park for future development by creating flat pad suitable for construction of buildings, parking, and related facilities. Town of Putnam Zoning Regulations Section 607. Property is located at 28, 44 & 48 Technology Park Drive. Town Assessors Map 037, Lots 87,94 and 95 , Zoned TP Overlay. **APPROVED**

Docket # 2026-13 285 River Road LLC & River Road LLC request for a Special Permit for the renewal of the previously approved permit # 2023-06 to remove 363,000 cubic yards of earth material. As of July 31, 2026, approximately 118,660 cubic yards have been removed from the properties. Property is located at 285 & 357 River Road, Town Assessors Map 43, Lots 5 and 10, Zoned AG-2. **APPROVED**

Docket # 2026-14 Robert Darigan request for a 2-lot subdivision consisting of 4.82 acres for property located at 508 Pomfret Street, Town Assessors Map 18, Lot 21, Zoned M/OD. **PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED TO NOVEMBER 18, 2026 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Docket # 2026-15 John Gee request for a Special Permit for the temporary use of his property to store material from the Route 44 retaining wall project to expedite repair and rehabilitation of the retaining wall. He would segregate and recycle stone and gravel using a medium sized impact crusher and if necessary, a screener. The use will be temporary and solely intended to complete the work as quickly as possible in conjunction with the reopening of Route 44. Property located at 124 Pomfret Street, Town Assessors Map 15, Lot 158, Zoned Industrial. **PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED TO NOVEMBER 18, 2026 AT 7:00 P.M.**
October 30, 2026

Town of Putnam
Inland Wetland Commission
Legal Notice

The Town of Putnam Inland Wetland Commission held a hybrid meeting on October 14, 2026, in Room 201 of the Municipal Complex located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. The following action was taken:
Robert Darigan – 508 Pomfret Street - 2 lot subdivision APPROVED
Adam Paquin, Chairman.
October 30, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Donald Bray (26-00350)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate,District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated October 6, 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:
Jillian Lawrence,
503 4th Street West,
Whitefish, MT 59937
Roberta Enhus,
70 Temple Street,
West Boylston, MA 01583
October 30, 2026

NOTICE OF UNCLAIMED GOODS Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 50-2Notice is hereby given that the following non-perishable goods have been left at [full address of the barn or location, including town and Connecticut county], and the owner is unknown or has neglected to take them away for more than six months: Various tools, parts, engines, pieces of motorcycles, parts vehicles (ford) and other miscellaneous itemsThese goods will be held one month from the publication (30) @ 134 South Street, Brooklyn, Connecticut 06234. If the owner does not claim them 30 days after the date of the first publication all items with be removed disposed of. Any person claiming ownership should contact William Wolak 860-377-1430 or bill.wolak@att.net and be prepared to show ownership pay unpaid storage fees and other related expenses 10/9/2026
October 16, 2026
October 23, 2026
October 30, 2026
November 6, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Kathryn C Parker (26-00421)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate,District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated October 20, 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.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Nadine P Landau
c/o EDWIN C HIGGINS, EDWIN C. HIGGINS III, 168 MAIN STREET,
P.O. BOX 528, PUTNAM, CT 06260
October 30, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Edgar Hayn (23-00407)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate,District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated October 20, 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.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Sarah M Hayn
c/o STEPHEN FRANCIS SUTTON, KAHAN, KERENSKY & CAPOSSELA, LLP,
45 HARTFORD TURNPIKE,
PO BOX 3811,
VERNON, CT 06066
October 30, 2026

The Sandwich Generation's guide to long-term care planning: Protecting your parents' care and your own financial future

Financial Focus

HOLLY C. WANEGAR
INVESTMENT ADVISER

If you're reading this, there's a good chance you already know the feeling. A parent's health shifts, and suddenly you're managing appointments and insurance calls on top of a job, a mortgage, and kids who still need you. Pew Research Center found that about 23% of U.S. adults are in this position, and among people in their 40s it's 54%.

Here's the good news: this is a planning problem, not a crisis, as long as you start before it becomes one. Action really is the best remedy to anxiety.

First, what Medicare actually covers

This is the single most common misunderstanding I encounter, so let's clear it up right away. Medicare covers up to 100 days of skilled nursing care following a qualifying hospital stay. It does not cover custodial care, which is help with bathing, dressing, eating, and moving around. Custodial care is exactly what most families end up needing, and it is exactly what Medicare will not pay for.

That leaves three funding sources: your parents' own assets, a long-term care insurance policy if they have one, or Medicaid once assets are nearly exhausted. Think of Medicaid as the floor rather than the plan. It catches people, but only after almost everything else is gone.

The price tag is what makes this urgent. The CareScout Cost of Care Survey puts the national median for nursing home care well above $100,000 a year, with assisted living in the neighborhood of $6,000 a month and in-home care around $35 an hour. Connecticut consistently runs above national medians. A few hours of help a day sounds manageable until you multiply it out.

What changed under the new law

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act restructured Medicaid in ways that matter specifically for families in your situation. If we think about three changes:

First, and most important, retroactive coverage is shrinking. Medicaid has historically covered care costs incurred up to three months before an application was filed. Beginning Jan. 1, 2027, that window narrows to two months for aged and disabled enrollees, which is how most nursing home residents qualify, and one month for expansion adults. If your parent enters a facility and the paperwork takes time, your family absorbs more of the gap. At current rates that gap is measured in five figures.

Second, eligibility redeterminations move from annual to every six months for adult enrollees starting at the end of 2026. More frequent paperwork means more opportunities for a renewal to be missed, and a missed renewal means a coverage lapse at the worst possible moment. Someone in your family needs to own that calendar.

Third, the home equity limit for long-term care eligibility is being capped at $1 million effective January 1, 2028, with no inflation indexing and no state discretion to disregard amounts above it. For most families this is not the binding constraint, but if your parents own a highly appreciated home, it's worth a conversation with an elder law attorney now rather than later.

One more thing to consider: the law also paused federal nursing home staffing requirements and tightened state financing rules. Neither affects your parents' eligibility directly, but both add pressure to care availability and quality, which makes choosing well and choosing early more valuable.

How to have the conversation

Most people dread this one, so keep the goal modest. You are not trying to solve anything in the first conversation. You are trying to find out what exists.

Three questions get you most of the way. Do you have long-term care insurance, and if so, where is the policy? Who has your power of attorney and healthcare proxy, and where are those documents? And if you needed help at home tomorrow, what would you want that to look like?

Notice that none of those questions is "how much money do you have." Leading with the balance sheet almost always shuts the conversation down. Leading with preferences opens it, and the numbers tend to follow naturally once your parents feel like you're helping them get what they want rather than auditing them.

If it helps, blame the paperwork. Saying "my advisor asked whether I know where your documents are" is an easier opening than "we need to talk about your money."

Protecting your own plan

This is the part that gets skipped, and it's the part I care most about. Here is what I'd encourage you to put in place.

Decide in advance what you can contribute, in dollars, and treat it as a budget line rather than an open tab. Vague generosity has a way of becoming an unlimited commitment. Protect your retirement contributions specifically. Your children can borrow for college and you can adjust their expectations, but nobody lends for retirement, and the years you skip are the ones that were doing the most compounding.

Get the documents done on both generations while everyone is healthy. Durable power of attorney, healthcare proxy, and HIPAA authorization. Without them you may not be able to so much as speak to your parent's insurer during an emergency.

And if you're in your late 40s or 50s, look at your own long-term care coverage while you're still insurable. Premiums rise sharply with age and health underwriting gets harder. The trade-off to consider is real: traditional policies can raise premiums, and hybrid life or annuity policies with care riders cost more up front. Neither is automatically right, which is exactly why it deserves an actual analysis rather than a default.

A bonus tip to leave you with: put a shared folder somewhere both generations can reach it, with policies, documents, account contacts, and physician information in one place. It costs an afternoon and it is the single most useful thing you can hand a family member in a crisis.

At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, we help families model both sides of this at once, so that supporting your parents doesn't quietly derail your own goals. Our Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™ process is built to hold multiple generations in the same picture, delivering on our promise of Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.

If you're ready to build a plan that accounts for both, schedule a complimentary discovery session at whzwealth.com or call (860) 928-2341.

Authored by WHZ Vice President, Associate Financial Advisor Holly C. Wanegar, CFP®. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. Medicaid and Medicare rules referenced here are current as of the date of publication, vary by state, and are subject to change. WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice, and nothing in the accompanying pages should be construed as specific tax or legal advice. Please consult a qualified elder law attorney regarding Medicaid eligibility planning. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret St., Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Rd., Tolland, CT 06084, 860-928-2341. http://www.whzwealth.com.

KHS Music Department to present Nov. 5 concert

KILLINGLY — The Killingly High School Music Department will showcase the talents of its student musicians during a concert scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 5, at 6:30 p.m. in the Killingly High School auditorium.

The evening will feature performances by four of the school's musical ensembles: the Symphonic Band, Chamber Choir, Concert Choir and Percussion Ensemble.

The concert will bring together instrumental and vocal musicians for an evening highlighting the variety of musical opportunities available to students at Killingly High School.

The Symphonic Band will represent the school's instrumental music program, while the Chamber Choir and Concert Choir will showcase students' vocal abilities. The Percussion Ensemble will add another dimension to the evening's performances, emphasizing rhythm and percussion instrumentation.

With four distinct ensembles participating, the concert will offer an opportunity for families, friends and community members to experience the work of Killingly High School's student musicians.

The performance is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5, in the Killingly High School auditorium.

Additional information about admission and the evening's musical selections was not included in the announcement.

Woodstock Commission on Aging launches Senior Resource Guide

WOODSTOCK — The Woodstock Commission on Aging has officially launched the

new Woodstock Senior Resource Guide, a comprehensive tool designed to help older adults and their families easily navigate local care, programs, and support services.

The guide brings together key local resources on aging in place, healthcare options,

financial and legal planning, food assistance, transportation, and social or recreational opportunities.

How to Access the Guide:

Online: Download the document directly via the Town of Woodstock Web site.

Mobile Access: Scan the printed QR code using a smartphone camera to view the guide instantly on mobile devices.

Physical copies: View a print copy at Woodstock Town Hall, local libraries, fire stations, or community worship centers.

About the Woodstock Commission on Aging

The Woodstock Commission on Aging works to evaluate, develop, and support services

and initiatives that enhance the quality of life for senior residents in Woodstock. For

inquiries, feedback, or to suggest resources for future guide updates, please contact

860-928-6595 or email AgeFriendlyWoodstock@gmail.com.

bankHometown to host three free shred days

REGION — bankHometown invites customers and members of the community to three free Shred Days. The second will be held on Saturday, Oct. 10, from 9 to 11 a.m. at the bank's 9 Sack Blvd. location in Leominster.

The third event will be on Saturday, Nov. 7, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the bank's 148 Route 171 location in Woodstock, Conn.

Local residents can reduce their risk of identity theft by bringing old mail, receipts, statements or bills, cancelled checks, pay stubs, medical records, or any other unwanted paper documents containing personal or confidential information and shredding them safely and securely for free. Bay State Shredding, a professional document destruction company, will be on site in the bank's parking lot and can accept up to two boxes of documents per car. No appointment is necessary.

About bankHometown

Headquartered in Easthampton, Massachusetts, TruNorth Bank and its bankHometown and TruNorth Mortgage divisions have more than $6.9 billion in assets and offer consumer and business banking in 54 locations throughout Massachusetts, northeastern Connecticut, and southern New Hampshire. We're proud to fulfill our community banking mission—providing individualized financial support, a suite of comprehensive products and services, and banking tools and technology—all to ensure our customers can unlock their potential and build a successful future.

Through our sponsorship and charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, TruNorth Bank supports non-profit organizations and causes throughout the communities we serve. In 2025 alone, we donated more than $2.2 million and over the last decade, more than $13 million. We were named a Corporate Citizenship Award winner by Boston Business Journal, reaffirming our status as one of Massachusetts' most charitable companies.

As an employer of choice, we've been recognized nationally as a four-time USA TODAY Top Workplaces award winner, an America's Best-in-State Bank by Forbes, and a top place to work by The Boston Globe. For more information, visit TruNorthBank.com.

Friends of Assisi Food Pantry announces Thanksgiving basket registration for Killingly, Brooklyn residents

KILLINGLY — The Friends of Assisi Food Pantry will hold registration for its annual Thanksgiving food basket program Friday, Nov. 6, offering assistance to residents of Killingly and Brooklyn as the holiday season approaches.

Registration will take place from 9 to 11:30 a.m. in the Community Room at the Killingly Public Library. Residents seeking Thanksgiving assistance are encouraged to attend during their designated registration period, which has been organized alphabetically by last name to help streamline the process.

Residents whose last names begin with the letters A through L are asked to register between 9 and 10:15 a.m. Those whose last names begin with L through Z should attend between 10:15 and 11:30 a.m.

All applicants must bring identification and proof of address for every member of their household.

Residents who are unable to attend the registration session in person may designate someone else to register on their behalf. The representative must bring the required identification and household information.

The food pantry is also asking families to register with only one assistance agency for Thanksgiving baskets, helping ensure that available resources can reach as many households as possible.

The Thanksgiving basket program is intended to help local families prepare for the holiday while easing some of the financial pressures associated with providing a holiday meal.

Residents with questions about registration, documentation requirements or the Thanksgiving basket program may contact the Friends of Assisi Food Pantry at 860-774-2310 or by email at director-foodpantry@gmail.com.

Registration is open to residents of Killingly and Brooklyn only.

University of Connecticut announces summer graduates

STORRS — The following area residents at the University of Connecticut completed requirements for degrees during the summer 2026 term.

Danielson
Ethan Miller

Pomfret
James Phongsa

Storrs
Huynh Minh Chau Dang, Jared Lawrence, Chungah Lee, Ran Liu, Mehmet Ozcakar, Keerthi Uppalapati, Natalie Vázquez Rivera, Yaning Xing.

The following individuals earned undergraduate degrees:

Thompson
Anthony Vajcovec

Tolland
Zachary Evensen, Xavier Febles, Cal Soucy

Woodstock
Nicholas Caggiano

The following individuals earned graduate degrees:

Danielson
Alexis Bates

Dayville
Sarah Halley

Storrs
Qiaoling Fan, Olin Green, Makayla Leroux, Angelo Patrizi, Santhipriya Voggu