

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."
- Mark Twain

WOODSTOCK VILLAGER

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Friday, May 1, 2026

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Courtney touts commitment to veterans during Westview Commons visit



Vietnam Veteran Paul Dillon and Congressman Joe Courtney standing before the "Wall of Honor" at Country Living at Westview Commons.

Courtesy

DAYVILLE — United States Congressman Joe Courtney recently visited Country Living at Westview Commons—connecting with residents and affirming his pledge to persist on behalf of veterans across Connecticut's 2nd District. The gathering at the Dayville independent and assisted living facility heralded a visit from a federal representative inasmuch as a continuation of long-standing relationships anchored in advocacy, communication, and mutual respect. This particular occasion formed through the efforts of Westview Commons resident Paul Dillon, who has remained in contact with Congressman Courtney through many years and important matters.

A Vietnam veteran and retired U.S. Navy Master Chief, Paul Dillon lived in Gales Ferry and worked at Millstone Nuclear Power Plant before moving to Westview Commons' Dayville campus earlier this year. While Dillon is long

detached from direct duty aboard a destroyer, he has perpetually pursued ways to continue his service to country. He accepted a position on Congressman Joe Courtney's Veteran's Advisory Committee after functioning in the same position for the previous Congressional Office; signaling colorblind patriotism through steadfast alliance. Across 20 years of sustained dialogue, a trusted bond formed between Congressman Joe Courtney and Paul Dillon—one that has contributed to meaningful legislative outcomes and lasting personal connections.

Residents and staff gathered in the facility's Great Room where Westview Commons' Dietary team served a welcoming spread. Courtney spoke warmly of the Westview community and its role in the region. He noted the facility's impact as a provider of care—but also as a patron of the local workforce and a resource for families throughout the

Quiet Corner. His remarks reflected a clear familiarity with the organization and a genuine appreciation for the people who shape it.

A central focus of the discussion was advocacy work on behalf of Veterans. Congressman Courtney recounted Dillon's efforts supporting service members—particularly his role advancing equity for Vietnam Veterans impacted by Agent Orange exposure. Dillon brought crucial attention to disparities in benefit eligibility between those who served directly on land and those stationed just offshore. The shared persistence of Congressman Joe Courtney and Paul Dillon expanded recognition, legislative policy, and support for affected Veterans.

Dillon offered his grateful perspective commenting, "Congressman Joe Courtney made sure that neglected Veterans received the benefits they

Turn To COURTNEY page A10

Colleagues mourn passing of Killingly Councilor John Labelle

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — The Town of Killingly is mourning the passing of Town Councilor John Labelle, whose death was confirmed by both the town's Democratic and Republican Town Committees.

Each respective committee posted tributes to Labelle on social media on April 24 complimenting his character and his commitment to the town. Labelle, who was elected chair of the Democratic Town Committee in 2024, was part of a slate of democrats that reclaimed a majority on the Council in 2025, earning his first term on the Council. Beyond the election, Labelle was active in Killingly for decades as both a professional and a volunteer on several boards and commissions.

A lifelong resident of Dayville, a village in Killingly, Labelle served 30 years with various boards and commissions, including stints on the Killingly Charter Commission, Permanent Building Commission, and worked closely with the Water Pollution Control Authority including most recent-

Turn To LABELLE page A10

The Wall That Heals coming to Putnam this fall

PUTNAM — The Wall That Heals, a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial along with a mobile Education Center, is coming to Putnam at Murphy Park, and will be open 24 hours a day and free to the public.

The Wall That Heals honors the more than three million Americans who served in the U.S. Armed Forces in the Vietnam War, and it bears the names of the 58,281 men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam.

"As your Mayor, it is my privilege to welcome The Wall That Heals to Putnam. As a Vietnam veteran, it is my honor. This exhibit belongs in communities like ours — small towns with big hearts that sent their sons and daughters to serve

and never stopped waiting for them to come home," said Mayor of Putnam Barney Seney.

"The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is pleased to bring The Wall That Heals mobile exhibit to Putnam, Connecticut, to allow local veterans and their family members a chance to experience The Wall," said Jim Knotts, president and CEO of VVMF. "Hosting The Wall That Heals provides an opportunity to honor and remember all those who served and sacrificed in the Vietnam War and educate visitors on the continuing impact of the Vietnam War on America."

The Wall That Heals is transported from community to community in a 53-foot trailer. When parked, the trailer opens to

reveal exhibits built into its sides, allowing it to serve as a mobile Education Center that tells the story of the Vietnam War, the establishment of The Wall, and how the Memorial and Vietnam transformed the way our nation treats its veterans and service members.

The three-quarter-scale Wall replica is 375 feet long, and stands seven and a half feet high at its tallest point. Visitors will experience The Wall rising above them as they walk towards the apex, a key feature of The Wall's design in D.C. Visitors can do name rubbings of individual service members' names on The Wall.

The mobile Education Center exhibit includes two digital photo displays. The Hometown

Heroes display highlights service members whose names are on The Wall, and who list their home of record within the area of a visit. The In Memory display highlights Vietnam veterans from the local area honored through VVMF's In Memory program, which honors veterans who returned home from Vietnam and later died. Additional displays include videos that teach about the history and impact of The Wall; educational exhibits told through items representative of those left at The Wall in D.C.; a replica of the In Memory plaque; a map of Vietnam and a timeline of the Vietnam War. The exhibits tell the story of the Vietnam War, The Wall and the era surrounding the

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Carvalho and Guedes sign letters of commitment

PUTNAM — Maria Giulia Carvalho and Maria Eduarda Guedes sat front and center on stage in the auditorium at Putnam Science Academy. In front of teammates, coaches and administrative staff they solidified their commitment to continue playing soccer at the collegiate level.

Giulia Carvalho will continue her academic and athletic career at Fitchburg State University. The Falcons compete in the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Division III level. It was the strong sense of community and the overall environment that made Carvalho feel at home.

"That made them more outstanding than the others. I'm very happy to go there and enjoy the next four years there," Carvalho said.

Numerous colleges went through her mind during the recruiting process. Long days of looking for the right fit both academically and athletically was no easy task. But when Carvalho came across the Falcons of Fitchburg State, she knew she made the "right decision."

When it was all said and done, a wave of relief engulfed Carvalho, who said, "Thank you, God! Of course this took time. I was pushing through Jeb every day. Asking him, texting him. We have a good contact now. It was great."



Eduarda Guedes will travel to the Midwest to compete at Illinois Central College. ICC competes in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics at the Division I level. The navigation of the recruiting

process was alleviated by the guidance of her future Head Coach Javier Valle.

"Coach Javier was very kind and helpful during the recruiting process. I'm looking forward to changing my soccer level and academic

level," Guedes said.

Her family and current Head Coach Matt Johnson also made the process a little less nerve-wracking. To be among the few high school athletes to continue their careers in college, this moment of commitment for Guedes is "very important in my life because now I am playing at the next level," she said. "It's very different from my country here...I'm very excited."

In attendance was their Head Coach Matt Johnson, standing beside the stage, soaking in this truly special moment.

"This was truly a special and inspirational moment both personally and professionally. Knowing that both individuals came here to

Putnam Science seeking an opportunity and dream to play soccer at the next level and attend college in the U.S. I'm extremely excited for their next chapter and honored to have been a small part of their journey," he said.

Carvalho's commitment to her team at Putnam Science has made an impact on Coach Johnson, who said, "She is the most committed players to both herself and the team, consistently concerned about her teammates, their well being and ensuring that everyone put forth the effort and dedication necessary."

As for Guedes, it is her "sense of pride being on

Turn To COMMITMENT page A10

Quiet Corner Garden Club planting trees to celebrate America's 250th

REGION — The Quiet Corner Garden Club has started its program to plant white oak trees in celebration of America 250 in the 14 towns in northeast Connecticut and two in Massachusetts in which Club

members reside. A \$2,000 grant from National Garden Club's Plant America program and funds raised from the Club's Annual Plant Sale were used to purchase the trees.

The first oak was planted in Hyde Park, Stafford on April 18 by the Stafford Garden Club. With assistance from Putnam Boy Scout Troops 25 and 66, led by Corina Torrey and Missy Ericson, a tree was planted in Putnam's Municipal Park on April 25. The Ashford Garden Club also planted an oak behind the old Warrenville Post Office that day.

Oaks were planted in Woodstock, Pomfret, and Killingly on April 27. Girl Scout Troop 60581, led by Kayla Noren, planted a tree on the Woodstock Common and one at Pomfret Recreational Park. Boy Scout Troop 43, led by Amy Ferland, planted a tree at Phaiiah's Dog Park in Danielson.

On April 28, the Club with the help of Boy Scout Troop 92, planted trees at the General Lyon Homestead in Natchaug Forest, Eastford and at the Chaplin firehouse in Chaplin.

On Saturday,

May 16 at 10 a.m., Boy Scout Troop 273 will assist planting a red maple at the Dudley Grange, in Dudley, Mass. At 3 p.m. that day, Girl Scout Troop 63002 will plant an oak at Heritage Way Park, North Grosvenordale (Thompson).

The Brooklyn Elementary School will be the location for Boy Scout Troop 44 to plant an oak on Friday, May 22 at 2 p.m.

On Tuesday, May 26, Boy Scout Troop 93 will be busy planting a tree in Hampton at 6 p.m., followed by a tree planting in Scotland at 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 30 at 9 a.m. will find Cub Scout Troop 11 and Boy Scout Troop 54 planting an oak in Plainfield at the municipal park by Town Hall.

An oak tree will also be planted in Canterbury and in Webster, Mass. on dates to be determined.

The white oak was selected in part because of its long-lived nature, which symbolizes the continuing strength, endurance, resilience, and continuing growth of the United States as it celebrates 250 years as a nation and looks forward to the next 250 years.

This project also has ecological and historical signifi-



Courtesy

Clockwise from top left: Will Chartier, Julius Lang, and Will Bates of Putnam.

cance to this area. The white oak is Connecticut's state tree, honoring the Charter Oak, a majestic white oak that grew in the state capital of Hartford and in which American colonists hid Connecticut's Royal Charter in 1687, to prevent its confiscation by British authorities. A violent storm felled

the Charter Oak in 1856, when it was an estimated 500-600 years old.

The public is welcome to join the fun at any or all of these plantings.

The Cheshire Nursery, in Cheshire, Connecticut assisted the Club by supplying the white oak saplings at a reduced price.

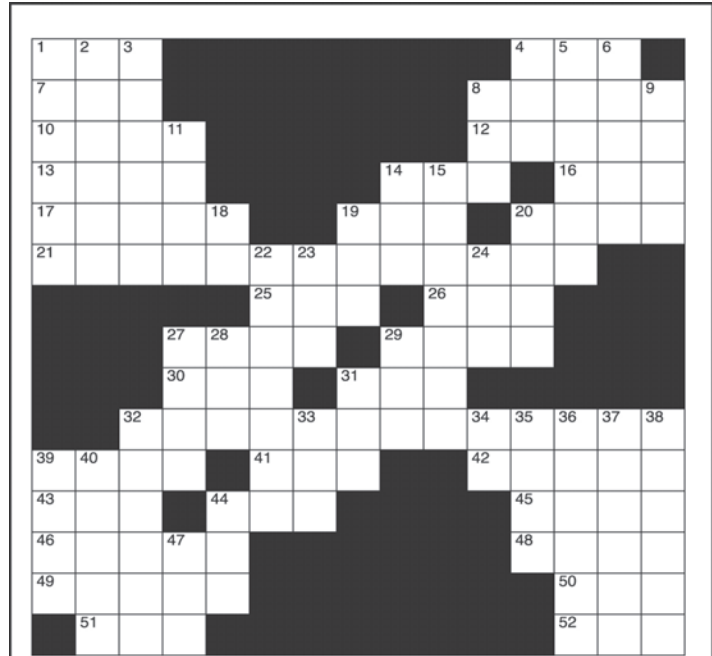
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CLUES ACROSS

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|--|--|
| <p>1. Purchase
4. British news organization
7. Midway between northeast and east
8. Language specialist group
10. Fancy automobile
12. Small loop or series of loops
13. Exploiter
14. Don't know when yet
16. Group of languages
17. One who's finished
19. After B
20. Angled
21. A place to adopt pets
25. Swiss river
26. Young boy
27. Unexciting</p> | <p>29. American comedian Vidale
30. Peyton's little brother
31. Corporate higher-up
32. "All in the Family" star
39. Strike something forcefully
41. Up in the air (abbr.)
42. Clay earth pigments
43. Means to record brain activity
44. Small constellation
45. Embraces
46. Brief description
48. Exclude
49. White (French)
50. Insect
51. A major division of geological time
52. Soviet Socialist Republic</p> |
|--|--|

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Type of whale
2. In tune
3. A citizen of Yemen
4. Actress Ling
5. One who supports
6. Circus performer
8. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
9. Quantitative fact
11. Utah city
14. Where a golfer begins
15. Attendant
18. The ancient Egyptian sun god
19. Book of Chronicles (abbr.)
20. Benedictine monk
22. Not turbulent
23. Car mechanics group</p> | <p>24. Buffer used in chemistry
27. Fall heavily
28. Pie ___ mode
29. The Brits love it
31. Children's TV channel (abbr.)
32. Jacksonville footballer
33. Helps little firms
34. ___ and behold
35. A way to resemble
36. Fingers
37. Excessive indulgences
38. You might be an "empty" one
39. "How the West Was Won" writer
40. European river
44. They begin the alphabet
47. The body's messenger</p> |
|--|---|

Putnam soldier killed in Philippines one of "Hometown Heroes" honored in new book series



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

PUTNAM — Summer in the Philippines is very tropical — hot, humid, and wet, especially on the Island of Luzon. It was on a day such as this — July 3, 1900 — when a detachment of 20 men from Company H, Third

US Volunteer Infantry Regiment, under the command of Sergeant Alfred W. Merriam, was scouting the country in the vicinity of Hagonoy, Bulacan Province, Luzon, PI, in search of the robbers of the steamer "Filipino," when they were ambushed one and a half miles from the coastal fishing village of Tibaguin by insurgents. Reinforcements under Second Lieutenant J. H. Page, 3rd US Infantry, arrived later, and the insurgents were defeated with a loss of 12 killed. Six rifles were captured and 6 more destroyed. Three US soldiers were killed, and 2 men were wounded. Sadly, Sergeant Merriam was one of those soldiers killed during the engagement. He was shot through the neck and died instantly.

Alfred Wilder Merriam was born March 30, 1875 in Putnam, the son of Alfred Merriam (1821-1891) and Ada (Lawrence) Merriam (18XX - 1894). At the age of 21, he was enlisted in the US Army on March 30th 1895 at Fort Trumbull, New London, by Lt. Reed. At that time, he listed his occupation as "brakeman". His physical attributes were listed as follows: eyes, blue; hair, light brown; complexion, fair; height, five feet, nine and a half inches; He enlisted as a Private in the 2nd Artillery Regiment, Battery K. He was discharged as a Sergeant at the expiration of his term March 29, 1898 at Fort Schuyler, N.Y. He left with an "excellent" rating.

On April 9, 1898, he was re-enlisted at Fort Schuyler, N.Y. by Lt Krayenbuhl. He enlisted into the 3rd US Infantry Regiment, Company H. At that time the unit had just completed a deployment to Cuba and had returned to their garrison at Fort Snelling Minnesota. On 5 October 1898, a force of about 80 men—including soldiers of the 3rd Infantry, US Marshals and Indian Police—fought in the Battle of Sugar Point against 17 members of the local Pillager Band of Chippewa Indians near the Leech Lake Reservation. The US forces lost six soldiers and one Indian Police officer killed and another 14 wounded. There were no casualties among the Chippewa. The Battle of Sugar Point was the last battle fought between the US Army and Native Americans.

The 3rd Infantry was then redeployed to the Philippines, and sailed from New York on 3 February 1899 aboard the US Army transport Ship USS Sherman. It reached Manila, the Philippines on 22 March 1899 via the Suez Canal.

After Sgt. Merriam was killed-in-action, his body was sent back home to his family in Putnam, and he was buried at the Grove Street Cemetery, Putnam. The local post of the Spanish War veterans was named in his honor — the Alfred Wilder Merriam Camp #16, United Spanish War Veterans.

Unfortunately, we don't have any pictures of Sgt. Merriam, but we included a picture of an iconic Spanish-American War statue, called "the Hiker." There are more than 50 of these bronze statues throughout the US. They were made in Providence, R.I., and there is one in that city, and there is one in Meriden.

During the period of 1898 through 1902, there were approximately 186 men from the local area who served on land and at sea during the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and the Boxer Rebellion in China. Their stories will soon be published in the "Hometown Heroes of the Quiet Corner" book series, 2026 Volume 6, the Spanish-American War Edition, published by the Mayotte-Viens Post #13, American Legion, Putnam. The Hometown Heroes book series is available for purchase on-line at <https://hometown-heroes-of-the-quiet-corner.myshopify.com/>.

All proceeds from the book sales benefit the local community.

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Putnam woman's poem selected as winner of National Baseball Poetry Contest

PUTNAM — Jessica Andersen's poem "Mickey 7" was one of this year's winning poems in the National Baseball Poetry Contest.

Twenty poems in the adult category are selected each year, and this year, there were 315 submissions from 42 states and 12 countries. Andersen and three other winning poets from previous years will read their poems at the NBP Festival's opening ceremony which will be held at 4 p.m. on May 8th at Polar Park in Worcester, MA.,

followed by a WooSox game. This is the fourth year of this festival which encourages youth in grades four to 12 and adults ages 18 and up to write a baseball poem, and connect with the art form in a fun and personal way. Youth submissions also reached close to 300 this year and winners are being notified. All winning adult poems will be posted soon on the National Baseball Poetry Festival website (<https://baseballpoetryfest.org>).

Andersen, who works as a preschool paraprofessional at Putnam Elementary School,

said her poem is about the relationship "with myself, my father, and baseball" and was inspired by the memory of her dad's reaction when Mickey Mantle died. Andersen had submitted the poem last year but it didn't win.

She said, "... a letter from the contest gave me encouragement to try again."

The public is welcome to attend five free events included in this year's festival: two writing workshops on the morning of May 8th at the JMAC Pop Up, 20 Franklin St.

(9:30 a.m. led by Tommy Twilite and 10:45 a.m. led by Karen Warinsky); a musical feature with Dr. Charles Steinberg (WooSox president) from 1-3 p.m. at the DCU Lounge at Polar Park followed by the 4 p.m. opening ceremony; a Poet's and Publisher's panel discussion on May 9th (9:30-11 a.m.); a Poet to Poet reading the afternoon of the 9th from 12:30 -2:30 p.m.; and an open mic from 7-11:30 p.m., all at The White Room, 138 Green St., in Worcester. Go to the National Baseball Poetry Festival Web site for details.

Connecticut homecare agency wins double accolades at annual Healthcare Warrior Awards



Courtesy

Two senior homecare professionals employed by Assisted Living Home Care Services were honored at the prestigious Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce's 6th Annual Healthcare Warrior Awards ceremony on April 9, 2026, at the Vue Banquet Hall in Hamden CT. From left: Healthcare Warrior winner Shannon Prentiss of Dayville, Melissa Lapointe, Scheduling Manager at Assisted Living Home Care Services, Terri Ducharme, Director of the Assisted Living Home Care Services' Woodstock branch, Julie Cruz, Director of Adult Family Living Program at Assisted Living Home Care Services, Healthcare Warrior winner Susan Bone of Dayville, Amy Cormier, Human Resources Director at Assisted Living Home Care Services, Lynne Talbot, Director of Community Outreach at Assisted Living Home Care Services and Kim Vertrees, Community Outreach Marketing Manager at Assisted Living Home Care Services.

WOODSTOCK — Two female senior caregivers employed at Assisted Living Home Care Services in Cheshire, Westport and Woodstock recently earned the prestigious Healthcare Warrior Award presented by the Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Shannon Prentiss and Susan Bone, both of Dayville, were among twelve honorees from the healthcare and homecare fields, that included doctors, nurses, homecare assistants, educators and support staff from various area health agencies, non-medical homecare agencies, as well as fire and police departments. The Sixth Annual Awards ceremony was held on April 9 at the Vue Banquet Hall in Hamden with host Kathryn Hauser of WTNH-NewsChannel, 8 and more than 100 attendees.

"We are thrilled that these two exceptional caregivers who service many of our senior clients were recognized for their compassionate commitment to their careers," said Mario D'Aquila, MBA, Chief Operating Officer at Assisted Living Home Care Services. "Shannon and Susan's unwavering dedication to the eldercare industry have not only elevated them to star status within our company, but the larger Connecticut community as well."

The Hamden mayor and fire and police chiefs were among the more than 100 people who attended the breakfast. The honorees were nominated by their peers, and their stories were read to the audience. Each Healthcare Warrior received a framed certificate and heart shaped award.

D'Aquila shares a summary of Shannon Prentiss' nomination, noting, "Shannon joined Assisted Living Home Care Services in May 2025 and was shortly

after recognized with a Platinum Caregiver Award for the extraordinary care she was providing. She works with an elderly woman who was initially resistant to services but due to Shannon's kind demeanor and professionalism, the client has not only accepted the help she needs but looks forward to Shannon's visits. The client's family has recognized how their loved one's quality of life has improved dramatically since starting services."

D'Aquila notes that Susan Bone was also publicly recognized by the company within one month of employment for going above and beyond the call of duty when caring for her senior clients. Bone's dedicated actions have included: searching for and finding a much-needed footstool on Facebook Marketplace for a client with severely swollen feet, locating two new kitten companions when an elderly client's original cats died, taking a client's dog into her own home when he was admitted to the hospital, and sourcing and purchasing a golf cart battery for a client who enjoys getting around on his own.

The Hamden Chamber of Commerce created the Healthcare Warrior award in 2020

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.

during the pandemic to "celebrate and shine a light on our local healthcare and essential workers in our community."

"We are beaming with both pride and gratitude that our two valued employees were officially recognized with this high-profile award," adds D'Aquila. "Every day, homecare professionals- both on the front line and behind the scenes - make the decision to show up and care for seniors who often don't have anyone else and dramatically improve their quality of life as a result."

About Assisted Living Home Care Services

Since 1996, a ward-winning Assisted Living Home Care Services in Cheshire, Westport and Woodstock has provided quality, solely non-medical homecare to residents across Connecticut.

Its unique CarePlus program blends personal care by over 700 employees and caregivers with technological safety and monitoring devices from sister company Assisted Living Technologies, Inc. The family-owned company was ranked on the 2020 Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing companies and recognized by Home Care Pulse® as a "Best of Home Care Leader In Excellence", a designation given to the best home care providers in the nation. Learn more by visiting www.assistedlivingct.com or calling 203-634-8668.

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The Chief serves as the senior officer responsible for all department operations, training, and administration, representing the Borough with professionalism and integrity. This appointed position offers a six-year term, (with option to renew for an additional 2 years at the Council's discretion) and the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in the community. Annual stipend for this position is \$15,000.00.

Minimum Qualifications

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- HazMat Operations
- Valid CT license (Q or CDL B endorsements)
- Residency within 8 miles of the firehouse

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

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INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED

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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
PRESIDENT/PUBLISHERBRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

When The Wall comes to Putnam, memory comes with it

Later this year, Murphy Park in Putnam will become a place of quiet reflection as The Wall That Heals arrives in Northeastern Connecticut. For many residents, the visit will feel personal in a way few national memorials ever can. This traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial carries with it not only history, but unfinished conversations, family memories, and a long-awaited opportunity for recognition.

The Vietnam War shaped a generation that still lives throughout Northeast Connecticut. Many local families sent sons into service. Some returned changed. Some never returned at all. Others came home to communities that did not always understand what they had experienced. The passage of time has softened many things, but it has not erased the need to remember.

That is why the arrival of The Wall That Heals matters.

Unlike the permanent memorial in Washington, D.C., this exhibit comes directly into communities like Putnam. It allows neighbors to walk alongside the names. It gives veterans a chance to stand quietly with one another. It gives younger generations a chance to understand that the war was not something distant or abstract. It happened to people who once lived down familiar streets, attended local schools, and sat at local kitchen tables.

Mayor Barney Seney spoke plainly when he said the exhibit belongs in towns like this one. Small towns carried a heavy share of the burden during Vietnam. The losses were felt across entire communities, not only within individual families. In places such as Putnam, Thompson, Woodstock, Killingly, Pomfret, and Brooklyn, service has always been part of civic life. So has remembrance.

The educational component of the exhibit adds another layer of importance. The mobile center explains not only the war itself but how the country's treatment of veterans changed afterward. That story still matters today. It reminds visitors how public understanding evolved and how respect for service members became more visible in later generations.

For younger residents who know Vietnam mostly through textbooks, this visit offers something different. Seeing the names arranged in quiet order creates an experience that reading alone cannot provide. Walking the length of the Wall makes history tangible.

For older residents, especially veterans and their families, the experience may carry deeper meaning. Name rubbings, photographs, and the simple act of standing near the memorial often become moments of recognition that were missing decades ago. In many cases, they also become moments of healing.

Events like this do not happen often. Hosting The Wall That Heals reflects the kind of effort that local organizations, volunteers, sponsors, and civic leaders quietly bring together behind the scenes. Their work ensures that remembrance remains part of community life rather than something observed only on distant holidays.

Murphy Park will soon become more than a gathering place. It will become a temporary bridge between generations. It will invite reflection without speeches and gratitude without ceremony.

Some visitors will arrive knowing exactly which name they came to find. Others will come simply to walk and learn. Both reasons are enough.

In communities across the Quiet Corner, memory has always traveled through families, through veterans' organizations, and through traditions that continue year after year. When The Wall That Heals arrives in Putnam, it will become part of that tradition as well, even if only for a few days.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Embrace the warehouses

To the Editor:

It appears that the town of Killingly is freaking out and going full Chicken Little about warehouses wanting to set up shop in this area. As always, someone has to be the voice of reason, and I actually believe in letting area businesses offer decent jobs to people who actually want to do some good old-fashioned work instead of roaring for the heavy hand of big government to run job creators out of town.

Our area is warehouse central because it's a straight shot up the highways to Boston, Worcester, and New York City. The I-84 corridor closer to Hartford has some of this as well, but we have a straight shot to I-95 and the Mass Pike thanks to 395. Large businesses create more stable jobs than small businesses do, a fact that gets lost in the shuffle because small businesses create more jobs overall. A good rule of thumb is that small businesses create jobs but large businesses create careers.

Transportation and warehousing are one of the few industries consistently creating jobs these days as well. The work's not glamorous, but people want their stuff, and as I've seen since graduating from college with a Computer Information Systems degree only to be one of many, many Millennials who were rug-pulled by our degrees being for a world that no longer exists, spatial location is part of how jobs don't end up outsourced. If a job needs to be done in a specific place, you can't send it to India, as opposed to a lot of tech stuff I've seen go all over the place

when someone doesn't have to physically be where the systems are.

Nowadays, the white collar jobs us folks with degrees went to school for are being further eroded by AI. People act like it's this terrible thing that came out of nowhere, but I see it as a mere continuation of what we saw with the various outsourcing waves for jobs that didn't need to be done by a specific person in a specific place.

Retail has been retrenching as people buy more things on the internet and America backs away from having the highest square footage of retail space per capita worldwide. Manufacturing is subject to the whims of the industry and government, and we never seem to be able to figure out which jobs to keep in America or send overseas. Restaurants and hospitality are heavily dependent on disposable income and crater during recessions. Health care is enjoying a bubble that will burst due to retiring baby boomers. Other service jobs have similar problems. People, however, remain hopelessly hooked on anything that resembles Amazon Prime.

Between all this, plus the outsourcing and AI disruptions to job opportunities, working in a warehouse seems to be more of a sure thing these days than most of what's out there. Kneejerk trying to ban distribution and fulfillment centers these days is like holding a big sign that says, "We hate jobs!"

JAY GERHART
PUTNAM

What really matters...community & connections

To the Editor:

April is Grange Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the important role that local Granges continue to play in strengthening our communities. Here in Woodstock, the Senexet Grange #40 stands as a vibrant example of how tradition, service, and fellowship bring people of all ages and backgrounds together.

One of the most remarkable aspects of our membership is its diversity in age and experience. Our youngest member is just 17 years old, while two of our cherished members are 92 years young. The average age of our members is 60, reflecting a healthy blend of youth, working adults, and retirees. Currently, our Grange includes students pursuing higher education, active members of the workforce, and many retirees who continue to contribute their time and wisdom.

Our membership also tells a story of deep roots and lasting commitment. We have families spanning three generations within the Grange, and members who joined as teenagers and have remained involved for decades. One member, Minola Terwilleger, exemplified this lifelong dedication—joining at age 14 and remaining active for over 85 years, until her passing just after her 103rd birthday. Stories like hers are not uncommon in the Grange. We have sisters who followed their parents into membership and have each been part of the organization for over 70 years, as well as couples who met through Grange events, built their lives together, and continue to serve alongside children and grandchildren.

Geographically, our members come not only from Woodstock but from neighboring towns

such as Pomfret, Thompson, Eastford, Brooklyn, Putnam, and even as far as Vermont. While many are not farmers, we are proud to include several agricultural members, staying true to the Grange's historic roots while embracing a broader community mission.

The Senexet Grange is also defined by service. Our members volunteer in local elections, serve on town boards, participate in civic organizations, and support community initiatives. We are especially proud of the leadership and dedication shown by individuals who work tirelessly to keep our Grange active and relevant, as well as those who have contributed lasting legacies—such as scholarship funds that continue to support local students.

With 52 members—19 men and 33 women—we are a community organization that values inclusion, connection, and shared purpose. All members are also part of the Connecticut State Grange and the National Grange, linking our small-town efforts to a larger network committed to community betterment.

As we celebrate Grange Month, we invite our neighbors to learn more about what we do, who we are, and how the Grange continues to evolve while honoring its traditions. Whether through fellowship, service, or simply sharing a slice of homemade pie, the Senexet Grange remains a welcoming place for all.

Sincerely,

DANIELLE DUQUETTE
VICE PRESIDENT
SENEXET GRANGE #40
WOODSTOCK

Have a say in how your tax dollars are being spent

To the Editor:

I have deep appreciation and thanks to the generations of people who have volunteered to serve our town. My roots run deep, as my grandfather was the elected tax collector, my great grandfather the First Selectman and State Rep. People love this town and serve because they hear the calling in their soul. I too have heard the call to serve, and was elected in November 2025. Thank you to the voters of Brooklyn.

Now, with six months under my belt on the Board of Selectmen, I would like to encourage all of you to attend the three town events in May that help us get to a well-informed budget.

Town meetings: May 4, May 18, and Town forum: May 28 all at 7 p.m. in the Brooklyn Middle School auditorium. There is also a zoom or call-in option to attend remotely- see website for the link.

We are all feeling the economic impact of

Brilliant strategists or bumbling fools?

To the Editor:

Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth — brilliant military strategists or clueless bumbling idiots? The answer is obvious, as the disastrous (and needless) war with Iran drags on. Our troops have suffered losses and injuries (with more likely), the global economy is in a tailspin, and we're less safe than we were before Trump set out on his big adventure.

policy outside of Connecticut, with gas and food prices, rent or mortgages, and the needs of your family. Finding a way to pay for what we need as a small community, identify our priorities, and make a long-term plan is required. There is much to be done.

I encourage you to come hear how our tax dollars are being spent. Come see where your money is going. We want to hear from you; we need your participation.

Current issues: Day Street, fire service, schools, streets/intersections, Christmas lights, leaky roofs, and a library are all things we need to lean into and be part of the conversation. I hope you can join us in person or on zoom. There is also a "call in" feature for a phone to connect with the meeting.

Sincerely yours,

SHERRI VOGT
BROOKLYN

Only a few Republicans in Congress are showing the courage to speak out against Trump's madness. The rest will have their cowardice come back to bite them in the voting booth.

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The Quiet Corner in May 1956



KILLINGLY

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Mark your calendars: Celebrate America 250 / Killingly. Mohegan educator and storyteller, Madeleine Hutchins, will present a program and video "Up and Down the River" on

the history of the Mohegan tribe for The Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society at the Killingly Public Library at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, May 2. The Society's annual meeting will be held at 1 p.m., prior to the program. All are welcome. Refreshments will be served. The Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society will be closed that day, Saturday, May 2.

Celebrate America 250/ Brooklyn-Saturday, May 2, Unitarian Meetinghouse (7 Hartford Road-Route 6, across from the Brooklyn Town Hall), 2 p.m. Dennis C. Landis, historian of the Unitarian Society, will tell the story of Rev. Samuel J. May, who served as minister for the Society from 1822-1836 and put his values into practice as several nearby sites in Brooklyn were stops on the Underground Railroad trek towards Canada. All are welcome.

The Gertrude Chandler Wamer Boxcar Museum will open for the season the first weekend of May, May 2 & 3, and will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Volunteers are wanted. Could you donate two and a half hours a month? Training supplied. For additional information, please call (860) 207-6044 and leave a message. It is also open by appointment. For additional information, please call (860) 207-6044 and leave a message.

Celebrate America 250 Saturday May 2 from 1-2:30 p.m. at Putnam Public Library with Garden Researcher and Historian Christie Higginbottom from Old Sturbridge Village on "Kitchen Gardens in Early America." Co-sponsored by the Quiet Corner Garden Club.

Celebrate America 250/ Putnam. Putnam Public Library, Saturday, May 16 at 1 p.m. "A Visit with Major General Israel Putnam." Costumed Portrayal by Prof. Kenneth Kroll. Kroll will share stories about Putnam's life as a farmer, tavern keeper and war hero. Sponsored by the Putnam Public Library and the Aspinock Historical Society.

Since some of you were alive in the 1950's, I thought I'd look at what was happening in the area in May 1956. Page 1 of the May 3 issue of the Windham County Transcript had a number of items to reminisce about. Much progress was being made on the construction of Route 6. "Work on the improvement of U.S. 6 in the Danielson area is continuing as scheduled. Already constructed is that section of U.S. 6 from South Killingly to the Rhode Island state line. Last year saw the completion of the contract for the construction of the bridge over Conn. 12, the bridge over the railroad tracks and about a quarter of a mile of grading and drainage. On April 18 of this year the highway department advertised for the construction of the next section. This will begin at Allen Hill Road in Brooklyn and will include the construction of the bridge over the Quinebaug River between Brooklyn and Killingly. Bids will be opened on May 7." (p.1). I would love to hear from those of you who are old enough to remember the old bridge to Brooklyn. I'm curious about the traffic flow.

Do you remember Ruth Fiske? "Miss Ruth A. Fiske was the recipient of the 1956 Religious Achievement Award of the Danielson Council of Churches, at presentation cer-

Turn To KILLINGLY page A4

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Our troops deserve better than this war

To the Editor:

The U.S. and Israel launched a war against Iran on Feb. 28. As we approach 60 days, the conflict has led to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, increased naval strain, and severe disruptions to global supply chains.

Iranian retaliation caused far more damage to U.S. regional bases than initially disclosed, with repair costs reportedly reaching into the billions. NBC reporting, summarized by secondary sources, says the damage included hangars, runways, radar systems, communications equipment, and aircraft. According to The New York Times, the strikes have forced American servicemembers to work remotely from hotels and temporary office spaces. The full extent of the damage has not been made public. Reports also state that 13 American service members were killed and nearly 400 others were wounded.

The displacement of thousands of troops raises serious questions about what preparation, if any, the United States made for a predictable Iranian response. By Donald Trump's own admission, he "was caught completely by surprise" when Iran struck Gulf countries and blockaded the Strait, even though military assessments for decades warned that Iran would likely move to close the waterway in the event of war.

More than 50,000 American service members are currently stationed in the Middle East, including thousands of Marines and sailors aboard warships patrolling the Strait of Hormuz. Several vessels have not made port since the war began in late February. Reports indicate some U.S. troops are now facing food shortages and rationing meals.

According to USA Today, a Navy sailor aboard the USS Tripoli texted his mother last month, "[Supplies] are going to get really low." "Morale is going to be at an all-time low."

Family members have tried to send care packages to deployed troops, yet none of those shipments have been delivered, according to USA Today. Mail service to military ZIP codes across the region has been suspended indefinitely due to "airspace closures and other logistical impacts from the ongoing conflict," an Army spokesperson said. "Resumption of mail service is contingent upon the reopening of airspace by civil authorities, and the area commander's evaluation of regional transportation and distribution stability."

According to the Center on Conscience and War and the GI Rights Hotline, hundreds of service members have called their hotlines. Many have requested support to conscientiously object to the war on Iran, citing the deadly Minab school bombing, the "Armageddon" rhetoric used by commanders and concerns about incompetent leadership.

Our servicemembers deserve better than this. They need our support.

Call your representatives and demand they assert their constitutional authority, end this unjustified war, and bring our troops home.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

No president has been more dedicated to dismantling out government than Trump

To the Editor:

Acknowledging that other presidents of both parties have been corrupt in ways similar to what Donnie-Destructo is doing now, none have been so dedicated and thorough in dismantling the structure of the government and the economy. Donnie's Corruption — yes, with a capital C — is astoundingly out of control and obviously criminal. There is no attempt on the part of Donnie-Destructo, his sycophant Cabinet, his cringing Congress and Supreme Court, or his ignorant cabal of MAGA followers to follow the limitations of law and decency.

We elect a president to run the Executive Branch and to obey the Constitution under oath. Even the most politically naïve must understand that Donnie-Despot just sees the Presidency as a wonderful opportunity to make money regardless of legality. He and his family has increased their wealth by \$4 billion in just 16 months being in office. I'm not making this up.

He is tearing down the protective gates of law, decency and reason to pillage and plunder not just our precious democracy but the stability of the entire planet. Every decision and Executive Order is structured to gain power and weaken the fabric of America so a few can gobble up money that sloshing around without Congressional controls. Donnie Despot must be removed by impeachment or the 25th Amendment now.

On a positive note, for several months now, a dozen or so of us have been demonstrating from 4 to 5 p.m. at the intersection of Providence Avenue and School Street at the Putnam Town Hall. It has been encouraging to hear the many honking horns, waving hands and those giving a thumbs up. In opposition, we have a few pickup trucks puking black smoke, rude gestures and profane yells. Definitely not taking the high road. Come and join us exercising our rights.

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.

Happy May Day



TIPS FOR SUCCESS
MIKE BOGDANSKI

May Day has several meanings.

May Day, celebrated on May 1, is a traditional spring festival that marks the return of summer (thankfully) and has roots in ancient Roman and Celtic festivals. Some common traditions include dancing around a maypole, crowning a May Queen, and leaving flower baskets for neighbors, all of which symbolize fertility, new life, the blooming of spring, and the relief of the sun finally breaking through a long, cold winter. It is a festival of "making it" to the other side. But there is another Mayday, one that doesn't smell like spring.

But there is another Mayday — one that matters as much. "Mayday," which is the international voice distress signal used by pilots, mariners, and emergency responders to signify a life-threatening emergency, is typically repeated three times ("Mayday, mayday, mayday") for clarity. Invented in 1923 by Frederick Stanley Mockford at an airport, it derives from the French m'aider (help me). The term was adopted in 1927, replacing SOS to overcome radio static and language barriers.

Significance of the term "Mayday."

1. Immediate Action: It alerts you to an immediate, life-threatening danger, such as engine or structural failure or a fire, requiring immediate rescue.

2. Clarity: Unlike "help," "mayday" was specifically chosen as a short, unambiguous term that cuts through radio static, crucial in emergency voice communications.

3. Distress vs. Urgency: "Mayday" indicates an imminent threat, while "Pan-Pan" (I have never heard this one) is used for urgent but not immediately life-threatening situations.

"Mayday" is used when in distress — a clear, urgent, unapologetic signal that says I need help now. It carries no shame. No pilot hesitates to use it when lives are at stake. The same urgency can apply to our own mental and emotional well-being. When childhood experiences teach us that asking for help leads only to rejection or disappointment, finding the courage to ask again can feel nearly impossible. It's not a flaw; you may have learned that acting alone is best for survival. Independence seems like the best defense, but it's not.

My key points

1. We were never meant to fly solo. Pilots don't navigate emergencies alone, and humans aren't wired for isolation. Asking for help is biology, not weakness. Our Navy SEALs are elite, brave warriors, and they "always" have a swim buddy.

2. Mayday is a clear signal, not a

complaint. There's a difference between venting and genuinely calling for help. It's okay to ask for help — simply saying "I need support right now" is a powerful act.

3. The cost of silent distress. What happens when pilots ignore warning signs? Crashes. Explore what emotional "crashes" look like when we suppress the Mayday call for too long.

4. Who's in your control tower? Identify your support network — trusted friends, family, and teachers, doctors, and crisis lines. You need to know who to call before your emergency happens.

5. Shame is the static on the line. The stigma around mental health muffles the signal. Many people are embarrassed by having mental health challenges, but they are as real as having a cold or the flu.

6. Having a Mayday moment is not permanent — sending a distress signal doesn't define you. It's a temporary call for help, not an identity. Sending a Mayday doesn't mean you are a "broken person." It means you are in a broken moment.

7. You don't need to be in crisis to call. Mayday occurrences exist on a spectrum — early calls are easier to answer than late ones.

My closing thought

Asking for help is an act of courage and self-awareness, not a sign of defeat. The bravest thing you can do is transmit clearly: I need help. I'm here. Find me, help me.

Famous psychologist Abraham Maslow spoke about the need for a sense of belonging. The third level in his hierarchy represents the fundamental human desire for interpersonal connection, friendship, trust, and acceptance. Positioned after physiological and safety needs, this need drives people to seek connection through family, friends, work groups, and communities to avoid loneliness and depression.

Every pilot who has ever called Mayday did so because they believed the journey was still worth completing. So should you. Whatever turbulence you are facing — the anxiety that won't quiet, the grief that won't lift, the weight you have carried in silence for far too long — you are allowed to call for help. You are allowed to say I am here, I am struggling, and I need some help. The moment you send that signal, you are no longer alone in the cockpit. And that changes everything. Sometimes life is too heavy to carry on your own.

A great local leader I know (Joe C!) loves this quote and uses it often — "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

Over the decades, I have visited

KILLINGLY

continued from page A1

emonies held during the annual banquet and meeting of the council, Tuesday evening in the Baptist church... the committee had unanimously voted the award to Miss Fiske, because of the work done by Miss Fiske in her own church, in the work of the council and in the community... The Rev. Harold Kier, secretary of the Connecticut Council of Churches, was the guest speaker of the evening, and brought a stirring message on "Togetherness". Preceding the business meeting a ham supper was served by the ladies of the Baptist Church." (The Danielson Council of Churches has evolved into a more ecumenical group and is now the Killingly-Brooklyn Interfaith Council).

In 1956, there seemed to be a number of organizations which are no longer active (or are just not in the news). "The Danielson W.C.T.U. will meet with Mrs. Anna Lippens at her apartment in the Gables, Thursday afternoon, May 10 at 2:30 o'clock." "Cooties Install Officers Tonight. "Ross Hutchins of Franklin Street will be installed as Seam Squirrel of Lost Bugs Tent No. 19, Military Order of Cooties at ceremonies conducted tonight at the Merrill C. Smith Post No. 2800 V.F.W. "(p.1). For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Gables, it is the unique Tudor-revival mill housing in the vicinity of Morin Avenue, Danielson.

The Greek Orthodox Church was looking forward to celebrating Easter on May 6, "in contrast to the other Christian

denominations, which solemnized the holy day on the first of April. The difference in time is in accordance with Greek Orthodox canon law, which states that Easter is to be the Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox and always after the Hebrew Passover..." (p.1)

There were a number of different sports being covered in the 1956 Transcript including some we don't hear much about today. "Dr. Hervey Lupien defeated Lembit Kuusk 3 to 2 to take the fourth annual table tennis tournament at the town hall, Last Wednesday. In the tournament, which is sponsored by the Killingly recreation department, Kuusk, last year's champion, was the runner-up with Foxy Martin (I think it should say Fortin. See next sentence.) finishing third. Fortin lost only to Dr. Lupin and Kuusk. The tournament is conducted for men and boys over 16 with no maximum age limit and the recreation director, Rene Frechette, stated that this year's entry list was one of the best yet..." (p.9).

Bowling was very popular at that time. "Social league bowlers held their annual banquet Thursday evening, featuring a steak supper. Among the invited guests were Adriaan Herklots, Adelard Provost, Omer Madon, and John Deltac. During the evening the league secretary, Nabby Bessette, presented trophies to the following: Class A high average, Nabby Bessette, with 118.24; high three, Gerald Bessette, 412; high single, Chet Kuszai; Blass B high average, George LaBelle, 105.26; high three, Joe Brennan, 367; high single, Pete Perry, 154. George Sarault accepted a trophy

for the Rogers team single of 590. Championship awards went to the American Legion team composed of Leo Beauvais, Bob Warren, Hollis Hooper, Sr., Al and Dick Caron, Jim Shikrallah, Norman LaRochelle." (The order of these names was slightly off in the article so hopefully I did not miss anyone.) (p.9). Several photos of the bowlers also appeared on the same page if you are looking for old photos of relatives.

Do you remember the Old Stone Mill at the southern end of Main Street in Danielson? "Custom Made Curtains-Draperies at low factory prices. Exact sizes for Your windows. Quality Fabrics and Workmanship. ..Curtain Manufacturers Here for Over Twenty Years..." (p.9)

Do you remember when Felix Dudek had a T.V. and appliance store in Attawaugan? He was advertising an "All New Crosley Electric Range...No more cooking guesswork with Crosley. Dial any temperature you want from 'Simmer to Fry-Fast'. "Complete Line of Crosley and Bendix Home Appliances." (p.9). Killingly Historical Society president, Bernie Mitchell, who lives in Attawaugan, remembers his parents buying several television sets from Felix. Dudek would even tune them up. After Felix got into the real estate business, he gave up the appliance store (conversation April 25 & 26).

Spring was definitely in the air and all sorts of lawn care items were being advertised. I think some of the brands which are mentioned are probably no longer in existence. Andrew E. Meech Hardware (103 Main Street Danielson) was

many schools and dealt with many at-risk kids. I always recommended that they ask a trusted adult to help, from the teacher to a cafeteria worker to the bus driver. And I always, always told them, if no one else is listening, call me. I will be your friend.

Mike Bogdanski is a martial arts Grandmaster and anti-bully advocate.

Woodstock Building Associates recognized among industry's top customer service leaders

WOODSTOCK — Woodstock Building Associates, LLC (WBA), received a 2026 Guildmaster Award from GuildQuality for demonstrating exceptional customer service within the residential construction industry.

Since 2005, GuildQuality, an Atlanta-based third-party customer satisfaction surveying company, has powered the Guildmaster Award to recognize and celebrate home building, remodeling, and contracting professionals demonstrating the highest level of customer service within the U.S. and Canada.

Out of nearly 2,000 eligible applicants, WBA is one of more than 400 businesses within the residential construction industry recognized by GuildQuality for consistently delivering superior customer care.

In determining which businesses received the 2026 Guildmaster Award, GuildQuality reviewed thousands of survey responses submitted by customers of Guildmaster candidates and considered two primary metrics for each candidate: the percentage of customers stating they would recommend the business to a friend and the percentage of customers who responded.

WBA achieved a recommendation rate of 90 percent or above from their customers surveyed by GuildQuality.

"This award belongs to the entire WBA community. It's the result of a tireless commitment from our team and subcontractors to put our clients at the center of everything we do. We are incredibly grateful for the strong partnerships we've built with our vendors and the lasting trust our clients place in us—they are the true inspiration behind our best work," said Steven Keene, Principal of Woodstock Building Associates.

For more on the 2026 Guildmaster Award and qualifications, visit www.guildquality.com/guildmaster/.

advertising Eclipse Lawn Mowers in all sizes, "Hand, rotary and reel types." Fertilizers and lawn seed were also in stock (p. 5). D. Blumenthal Hardware and Farming Supplies (across from the Killingly Town Hall) ...was also advertising lawn care items—seed and fertilizers, hoses, wheelbarrows and mowers by Toro, Reo and Lawnboy. (p. 9). Duffy's, the Locksmith, on 9 Academy Street, was offering lawnmower service and sales—Briggs & Stratton mowers, blade sharpening, engine repairs, overhauling.

Mother's Day was not far away so there were ads in this Transcript for presents for your mother. Ladies still wore hats. Do you recall the House of Hats and Fur, 85 Main Street, Alice Laroux proprietor? "Make it a special hat for Mom" (p.11). Please feel free to share your memories about any of the above businesses from the 1950's. That's what makes our history so much more interesting.

If you would like a different present for your mother this year, consider a gift certificate to the Killingly Historical Center for research or stop in and see the assortment of books that are now available.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, April 2026. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main St., Danielson, Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety.

Killingly High School Weekly Sports Wrap-Up



Track & Field

At Wheeler

The Killingly Boys Track & Field team battled at home in a Divisional matchup against Wheeler on April 23! So many personal records were made on a cold day at Morgan Field, Killingly took the win 81-61! Season Record (2-1). Shout out to coaches and athletes on Wheeler; very fun meet, and everyone couldn't have been nicer and encouraging!

In the 100m, Kaiden Cayer blazed to finish tops amongst Killingly athletes finishing 3rd closely followed by Braydee Testa and Cooper Logee.

In the 200m, Braydee and Kaiden were not done flying and finished 2nd and 3rd respectively with Brandon Harrison Jr. finishing close behind!

In the 400m, Isaiah Benoit was flying to finish 2nd, sooo close behind him scoring points and taking 3rd was Jon Palmer while Williams Polanco, Costandinos Yonclas and Nathan Comtois.

In the 800m, Williams continues to represent as our long-distance specialist scoring points for Killingly finishing 3rd, he continued his long-distance dominance in the 3200, finishing 2nd!

Calvin Vandale did what Calvin Vandale does all seasons in track, his Senior Year he continues throwing some Long Distance in and flew in the 1600m finishing 2nd!

In the 100m and 300m hurdles, Jeremiah Smith continues to do what Jeremiah Smith has done since his Freshman year, finish 1st!

In the 4x 100, Braydee to Coop to Preston Suprenant to Kaiden for the WIN!

In the 4x 400, Preston to Brandon to Cameron Deschamps to Rylan Roethel for the WIN!

Down on the throwing fields, In Shot Put, Ezekiel Benoit chucked his Shot for 1st, followed by Larry Cote who threw for a PR for 3rd, followed by Cal and Jackson Olson!

At the Discuss, Zeke took 1st again with Breydan Pearson taking 3rd with a PR and Nathan Franklin close behind with a PR, Zach Ferland also threw for a great PR!

In the Javelin, Zeke swept the field in all throwing events finishing 1st with a PR, followed by Breydan and Larry for another PR!

In High Jump, Killingly took top 3 with Jeremiah finishing 1st, Coop finishing 2nd, and Braydee finishing 3rd!

In Pole Vault, Gabe Covington got a PR by over

1 foot clearing 8 feet finishing 1st with Isaih finishing 2nd!

In the Long Jump, we had people soaring through the air! Jermiah finished 1st, Coop finished 3rd and Jon Palmer, Brantley Smith, Cyncere Perry all finished with a PR!

Annd in the Triple Jump, Monty Niyomkham continues to improve his skills and finished with 1st and a PR, closely behind was Isaiah, Cyncere, Brantley and Zeke, ALL with PRs!

Absolutely great job yesterday by all! Everyone represented Killingly and themselves proudly on and off of the track. Many compliments were given to the team and could not be prouder as coaches!

Tetlow (Ledyard) Relays

On April 25, the Killingly gentlemen travelled to Ledyard to battle in the 44th annual Tetlow Relays! This has been a yearly tradition that showcases Relay teams and Field events. This had some great competition as Killingly was battling 13 other teams from all over the State which meant competition was never lacking! We also want to give a special shout out to all the parents and friends that showed up for the meet. The team appreciates you and we see and hear you!

In the 4x 100 Varsity, Aveion Janton- Adams to Braydee Testa to Preston Suprenant to Kaiden Cayer for 8th with a Personal Record! In the 4x 100 Junior Varsity, Cameron Deschamps to Ossie Lugo to Brandon Harrison Jr to Liam LaMotte for 9th out of 24 and a Person Record!

In the SMR, which consists of 200m, 200m, 400m, 800m, ABSOLUTE RESPECT to Brandon and Liam for stepping up to put together this team! Cam to Ossie to Brandon to Liam for a Season Record at the event! GREAT JOB! At the High Jump, Cooper Logee and Braydee Testa were putting on a great show!

Braydee fought hard to finish 7th and Coop finished 4th for a medal! At the Long Jumping pits, Aveion, Coop and Brantley Smith competed as a team to see how far they could soar! Coop was the top finisher finishing 10th! In the Triple Jump, Aveion, Brantley and Monty Niyomkham have been practicing hard and flew, Aveion was the top finisher finishing 6th for a medal!

At Pole Vault, Isaiah Benoit has now gotten back-to-back-to-back Personal Bests at Pole Vault soaring for 9 feet finishing 12th! Annd in the throwing Pits, at Shot Put, 3 great



showers teamed up to see how well they could do as a team, Ezekiel Benoit, Jackson Olson and Breydan Pearson. Zeke hurled his Shot for the top placement in the team for 23rd and a Season Best! Jackson also absolutely hoisted his Shot for a Personal Record! In Discuss, 3 great gentlemen teamed up to see how far they could throw! Zeke, Breydan and Isaiah teamed up to hurl their Discs! Zeke launched his Disc for 17th while Isaiah also got a Personal Record! Annd at Javelin, Zeke, Breydan and Jackson teamed up to see who with the flick of a wrist could sling their Javs the furthest! Zeke finished 17th while Breydan got another Personal Record! Awesome job to all the throwing teams!

Absolutely great job yesterday by all! Everyone represented Killingly and themselves proudly on and off of the track. Many compliments were given to so many of you and the entire team and could not be prouder as coaches!



Baseball Killingly Baseball (4-6) took the win over Wheeler (5-4), on Killingly Little League Day at Owen Bell Park, in walk off fashion!

Jake Beaudreault led the offense going 3 for 3 with a double and a home run, scoring the game winning run in the 8th on a Brady Girardin walk off single!

Killingly took a 1-0 lead in the 2nd inning on a blast by Jake Beaudreault into the woods in right field, and was followed up with a triple by Gaighe DeBella (2 hits). However, DeBella was left stranded and unable to score.

Michael Fabiano, Jr. (6.1 innings, 1 ER and 11 K's) cruised into the 5th inning unscathed before Wheeler cashed in on a pinch hit 2 run single to take the lead after an error and a walk. Wheeler extended their lead to 3-1 with another with another RBI single in the 5th inning.

In the bottom of the 6th,

Fabiano Jr. laced a base hit to left field before Jake Beaudreault drove him in with a backside RBI double to the wall in left. Beaudreault came around to score to tie it on a ground ball by Gaighe DeBella that was booted by Wheeler. DeBella came around to score on an RBI ground out by Matt Poirier giving Killingly a 4-3 lead.

Wheeler tied the game at 4 in the 7th on a throwing error with 2 outs to send the game to extra innings. Jake Beaudreault (1.2 innings, 0 hits, 5 K's) struck out 5 Wheeler batters in relief of Fabiano Jr to extend the game into the 8th.

Beaudreault led off the 8th with a base hit, before stealing 2nd base. DeBella's base hit to left field moved him to third, and then he advanced on defensive indifference gave Killingly 2nd and 3rd with 0 outs. Joey Gould was intentionally walked, before Girardin's chopper over the pitchers head got through to score Beaudreault and give Killingly the walk off win!

Final Score: Killingly 5 - Wheeler 4 (8 inn)

Girls Golf

On Wednesday, April 22, the Killingly High School Girl's Golf team opened the 2026 golf season by hosting Coventry & Bacon Academy in a tri-match. Coventry came out on top with a score of 207, followed by Killingly at 214 and Bacon Academy at 245. Killingly was led by co-captain Mackenzie Pothier who shot 49 and Gracie West with a 51.

On Thursday, April 23, the girls traveled to East Lyme and earned their second victory of the season. Killingly posted a score of 209 with East Lyme posting a score of 227. Killingly was led by co-captain Mackenzie Pothier who shot 49 and Gracie West with a 50. Kate Crowley also contributed to the victory with a score of 53.

Boys Tennis

Vs. Fitch Killingly 1, Fitch 6 Will Clayton lost to Charlie Gemp 4-6 1-6

Evan Kozey lost to Larry Balsley 5-7 2-6

Jackson Santese lost to Michael Petropoulos 2-6 2-6

Brady Brezniak lost to Luc Nickerson 3-6 1-6

Max Richardson & Brady Jonasch defeated Jason Greene & Jeffrey Hipsley 4-6 7-5 10-5

Ed Purcell & Glenn Leveille lost to Mason McAllister & Max Romilly 6-3 3-6 2-10

Riley Nolin & Naitik

Pandya Lost to Milo Chiapperini & David Pan 2-6 2-6

Vs. St. Bernard Killingly 5 St. Bernard 2 Will Clayton defeated Alex Chen 6-3 6-2

Evan Kozey defeated Jackson Leitkowski 6-3 6-3

Jackson Santese defeated Reuban Allen 6-2 6-3

Waiting Pandya lost to Joseph Poeschl 3-6 3-6

Max Richardson & Brady Jonasch defeated Liam Moriarty & Mitchell Graul 6-4 7-6 6-2

Glenn Leveille & Riley Nolin defeated George Kowalyshyn & Oliver Dumas 6-1 6-3

Jasper Gilbert & Garrett Walter's lost to Sean Silvia & Stanley Dimon 0-6 3-6

Vs. Ledyard Killingly 5 Ledyard 2 Will Clayton defeated Ethan Tagart 6-0 6-0

Evan Kozey defeated Alex Olczak 6-2 6-2

Jackson Santese defeated Tyler Salver 6-2 3-6 6-2

Brady Brezniak lost to Zane Hill 4-6 6-7 (4-7)

Max Richardson & Brady Jonasch defeated Aiden Williams & Wesley Mortelle 6-4 6-4

Ed Purcell & Tomas Gutierrez lost to Brody Bickett & Mason Knafels 2-6 5-7

Riley Nolin & Glenn Leveille defeated Brandon Haug & Logan Hadn't 6-4 6-2

Girls Tennis

Vs. NLHS

April 22, 2026 match K-Traiblazers verse NLHS KHS girls tennis defeated NLHS 7-0

Singles:

1 S: Talia Santese (K) defeated Mackenzie Frazier (NL) 6-0, 6-0

2 S: Nina Purcell (K) defeated Ja'leahya Dockery (NL) 6-0, 6-0

3 S: Abbey Danielson (K) defeated Daniella Ramirez 6-0, 6-0

4 S: Mariette Vien (K) win by forfeit 6-0, 6-0

Doubles:

#1 Doub: Samantha Smith & Corinne Daniels (K) defeated Michchaela Skyers & Winiber Grullon (NL) 6-0, 6-0

#2 Doubles McKenna Mulvey & Allegra Turbayevskiv (K) defeated Yvonnah Aubourg & Gabriella Alston (NL) 6-0, 6-1

3 Doub: Lillian Beach & Ri'nyiah Couillard win by forfeit 6-0, 6-0

Vs. St. Bernard/Wheeler April 24, 2026 match K-Traiblazers verse ST Bernard/wheeler HS

KHS girls tennis defeated St Bernard/Wheeler 4-3

Singles:

1 S: Talia Santese (K) defeated Paige Daley (STB) 6-1, 6-0

2 S: Abbey Danielson (K) defeated Natalie Pelletier (STB) 6-3, 6-0

3 S: Mariette Vien (K) defeated Catherine Perez (STB) 6-0, 6-0

4 S: Corinne Daniels (K) defeated Emma Haslip (STB) 6-0, 6-0

Doubles:

#1 Doub: Kayce Edwards & McKenna Mulvey (K) lost vs Rebecca Bartnik & Isabella Brassaw (STB) 5-7, 4-6

#2 Doub: Ri'nyiah Couillard & Lillian Beach lost vs Yohee Chen & Zujelly Colon (STB) 6-4, 4-6, 3-10

3 Doub: Lucy Gavis & Joselinne Sanchez lost vs Abigael Dumas & Elisabeth Hammond (STB) 6-4, 3-6, 9-11

Vs. LHS

April 27, 2026 match K-Traiblazers verse Ledyard

KHS girls' tennis lost 3-4 vs Ledyard

1 S: Talia Santese (K) defeated Rachel Kulterman (LHS) 6-2, 6-2

2 S: Nina Purcell (K) lost vs Teresa Eberly (LHS) 4-6, 3-6

3 S: Abbey Danielson (K) lost vs Callie Rice (LHS) 6-4, 1-6, 2-6

4 S: Mariette Vien (K) lost vs Jayla Sebastian (LHS) 3-6, 4-6

#1 Doub: Kayce Edwards & McKenna Mulvey (K) defeated Skylar Botts & Addison Lacosse (LHS) 1-6, 7-6 (TB) 7-5

#2 Doub: Samantha Smith and Corinne Daniels (K) defeated Emma Dean & Dana Vera Cox (LHS) 6-2, 6-3

3 Doub: Allegra Turbayevskiv & Lillian Beach (K) lost vs Jayce Lin & Caitrin Cassidy (LHS) 2-6, 0-6

Girls Lacrosse

Killingly girls lacrosse lost to bacon academy on April 23, 15-5. Morgan Deojay, Tilly Jarvis, Mabel Peterson with 1 goal and Riley Ritchotte adding 2 goals to the board for Killingly. We will be looking to make a comeback against Rockville on Saturday.

The girls faced off against Rockville on April 25. Riley Ritchotte dominated the draw circle winning 6 draws. Ella Dunn scored her first 2 goals of the season. Lylah Connetti added a goal for Killingly. Alexa Gregoire had 8 saves in net. The final score was 7-3 Rockville.

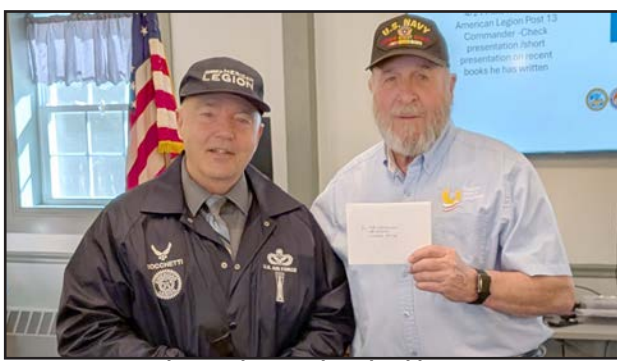
On April 27, the team faced off against EO Smith this afternoon. While the final score of 7-4 was not in our favor, our defense had a strong game. Our draw unit was locked in winning 10 of 15 draws. Riley Ritchotte with 7 herself, Lylah Connetti picking up 2 and Lianna Hutchinson adding another. Riley Ritchotte put up a hat trick and Lylah Connetti tallied one for Killingly. Ella Dunn had two assists and Tilly Jarvis had one. We will be back at home on Wednesday against Fitch.

Danielson Veterans Coffee House receives donation from American Legion

PUTNAM — The Mayotte-Viens Post #13 of the American Legion recently made a \$3,000 donation to the Danielson Veterans Coffee House at one of their regular breakfast gatherings, on Tuesday morning, April 21, at the Putnam Lodge of Elks.

The donation will help pay for the meals that are served every Tuesday morning to more than 100 attendees.

The DVCH provides a comfortable location for all veterans, both men and women of any age, to meet, have breakfast, socialize and connect with one another while providing and discussing information regarding veterans' benefits and services through federal and state agencies and programs.



Mike Rocchetti and Fred Ruhlemann

According to their President, Fred Ruhlemann, a US Navy Vietnam Era veteran, "We are in our 12th year of operation, and going strong."

The DVCH also does monthly food distributions to needy recipients at the Farmers Market Pavilion. In Putnam.

According to Post #13 Commander Michael Rocchetti, a USAF Iraq War veteran, "We are fortunate to have this organization in Putnam. The breakfast meals that the DVCH provide to the veterans are a special treat, especially for those on fixed-incomes, that can't afford to eat at restaurants."

"We greatly appreciate the generous donation made by Post 13. It will really help us feed the local veterans," added Ruhlemann.

The Mayotte-Viens Post 13 American Legion was chartered in Putnam CT in 1919, shortly after the end of World War I. The American Legion is the nation's largest veteran's organization, and it stands on four pillars: national security, veteran's affairs and rehabilitation, children & youth, and Americanism. All veterans are encouraged to join, and can apply on-line at: <https://www.legion.org>.



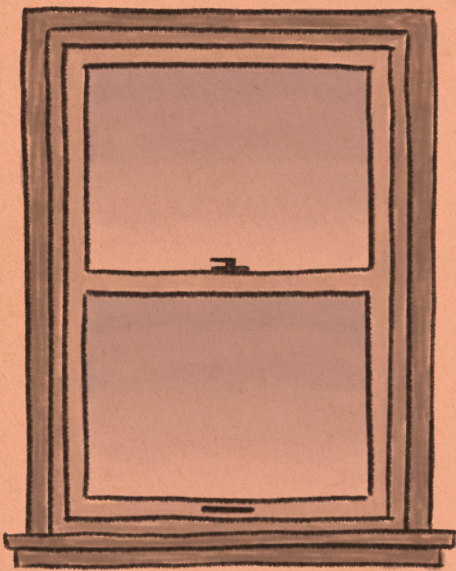
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The Week in Sports at Woodstock Academy

Boys Volleyball

Woodstock Academy 3
Aerospace Academy 0
It wasn't as easy as it may sound for the undefeated Centaurs (10-0 overall, 5-0 Connecticut Volleyball League).

Woodstock Academy won the first set 25-19 and had to hold off their hosts, 25-21, in the next two sets for the win.

Christian Hart had 13 points and four aces and added 15 digs defensively.

Brayden Bottone led the offense with 16 kills for the Centaurs.

Woodstock Academy 3
Norwich Tech 0

The Centaurs were more than proficient from behind the service line as Evan Chernik had 20 service points including six aces and Owen Budd equaled those six aces and delivered 13 service points for the Centaurs (11-0, 5-0 Eastern Connecticut Conference).

Brayden Bottone led the offense with 16 kills while Chernik contributed seven and both received help from setter Jake Henderson who had 22 assists.

Woodstock Academy 3
Capital Prep 0

Senior Gavin Hecker made the most of his first game of eligibility as a Centaur.

The transfer from

Norwich Free Academy had six kills, 14 assists, and 15 service points as Woodstock Academy (12-0, 7-0 Connecticut Volleyball League) blanked Capital Prep 25-4, 25-6, 25-19.

Evan Chernik had 18 service points, half of them were aces while Brayden Bottone led the team with eight kills.

Boys Golf

Waterford 5 ½

Woodstock Academy 1 ½
Aidan O'Connor paced the Centaurs (0-2) with a 43 while both Max Kopp and Brady Hebert finished with a 44.

Lucas Vincenti led the Lancers (4-1) with a 3-over par 38 and Wyatt Haynes was just a stroke back of his teammate.

Woodstock Academy 5
Stonington 2

THOMPSON – Senior Aidan O'Connor won his match and was the medalist with a 1-over par 37 to lead the Centaurs (1-2) to their first win of the season.

Alec Nunes and Blake Hudock also won their matches.

Cohan Hinchey led the Bears (3-4) with a 39 at the Quinnettis Country Club.

Girls Golf

Woodstock 212
Suffield 234

Reagan Scheck finished as the medalist in the match for the Centaurs (2-0) in the non-league match at the Crestview Country Club.

Woodstock Academy 188
Stonington 226

Reagan Scheck carded a 41, Lilian Moran added a 43 and Colbie O'Connor added a 48 to lead the Centaurs (3-0, 2-0 Eastern Connecticut Conference) to the victory at the Quinnettis Country Club.

Finn O'Keefe led the Bears (3-1, 3-1) with a 52.

Boys Tennis

Waterford 6

Woodstock Academy 1
Rodrigo Diez battled hard for the Centaurs to get the only win for the team on the road.

Diez upended Christos Matsas 6-1, 7-6 (7-5) in first singles for Woodstock Academy (3-2).

Colton Murch, Justin Wang and Ethan Wang won the other singles matches for the Lancers (4-1) who also swept the doubles.

Woodstock Academy 4
NFA 3

Rodrigo Diez, Ryan Chabot, Dan Jameson and Heath White all posted victories in singles for the Centaurs (4-2, 3-0 Eastern Connecticut Conference Division II) and it's a good thing they did.

The Wildcats (2-4,

1-2) Ty Maurice and Ben Burchman took the first doubles match and NFA also won the next two to make it close at the end.

Girls Tennis

Woodstock Academy 4
Waterford 3

The Centaurs had their first match in two weeks and certainly didn't exhibit any rust as they improved to 4-0 with the close victory at Pomfret School.

Mariia Oliinyk and Emma Mairson guaranteed Woodstock Academy the win with a 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 win at third doubles.

Wynter Worth and Kerrigan Reynolds also picked up wins in singles and the duo of Jayda Ngibuini and Andrea De Cos Ortiz had a second doubles win.

Woodstock Academy 7
NFA 0

The Centaurs continued their winning ways as they won their fifth straight match to start the season.

Gianna Musumeci, Wynter Worth, Kerrigan Reynolds and Catherine Trudeau guaranteed the Woodstock Academy (5-0, 2-0 ECC Division II) victory as they swept the four singles matches against the Wildcats (1-4, 0-3).

Baseball

NFA 10

Woodstock Academy 9
The Centaurs put together

a wicked top of seventh comeback attempt that fell one-run shy.

Woodstock Academy (3-5) trailed by seven going into the seventh but Will Ellsworth hit a three-run homer, Colin Ericson had a two-run double and Logan Coutu drew a bases-loaded walk before the Wildcats (7-2) recorded the third out.

Jacob Holmberg had two hits and two RBIs for NFA which won its fifth straight game.

Fitch 3

Woodstock Academy 0
Nick Logan and Mark McBride drove in all the runs the Falcons (4-7) would need as Fitch pitching held the Centaurs to one hit.

Rhys Asikainen had the only hit for Woodstock Academy (4-6).

Softball

East Lyme 15

Woodstock Academy 2 (5)

Senior Ellary Sampson hit her fourth homer of the season, a two-run shot in the first inning to briefly pull the Centaurs (1-7) within a run.

The Vikings (5-3), who scored three first inning runs to begin the contest, followed with four runs in the second inning and six in the third to help force the early ending.

Natalie Knowlton had a triple and a homer and drove in five runs for East Lyme.

Ledyard 6

Woodstock Academy 0
Alexia Lemmon allowed only three hits and struck out 13 in the pitching circle to lead the Colonels (4-2, 3-0 ECC Division II) past the Centaurs.

Ellary Sampson had two of the three hits for Woodstock Academy (1-8, 0-3).

Bacon Academy 7
Woodstock Academy 0

It was another three-hit day for the Centaurs as the Bobcats Riley Stolzman held the Woodstock Academy bats at bay and struck out 14.

Stolzman also delivered three hits, including a double, and drove in two runs for Bacon Academy (8-1).

Campbell Favreau had two of three singles for the Centaurs (1-9).

Boys Lacrosse

Stonington 10

Woodstock Academy 4
Patrick Griswold and Jackson Aleman each scored a pair of goals for Woodstock Academy (2-4) and Cam Marshall had a pair of assists in the loss.

Girls Lacrosse

Stonington 15

Woodstock Academy 5
Vivian Bibeau and Clara Dowdle each had two goals and Kaylee Saucier added the other for the Centaurs (0-3-1, 0-2 ECC Division II).



Courtesy

Left to right: Adrian Joyner (Assistant Coach), Jim Crabtree (Head Coach), Quin Crowley, Patrick Crowley (Assistant Coach). Not pictured: Ben Desaulnier (Assistant Coach).

Quin Crowley makes CHSCA All-State team

SOUTHINGTON — On April 21 at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington, Killingly Junior Guard Quin Crowley was honored for making the CHSCA Division III All State Basketball team! He was named one of the top 12 players in Division III, and 62 players total for the entire state of Connecticut!

Crowley, also a two-time All-Eastern Connecticut Conference All Star, had a historic season this past year. He became the second boys basketball player in school history to surpass the 1,000 points in a career mark in only their junior season, while helping Killingly to a 14-6 regular season record, with a 16-8 record overall, including advancing in the CIAC DIII tournament with a victory over Branford HS! Crowley averaged 23 points/game and 5 rebounds/game, while shooting 47 percent from the field, 40 percent from three, and 84 percent from the free throw line. He scored over 20 points in a game 17 different times, and over 30 points in two other games. He finished the season scoring at least 20 points in each of Killingly's last 14 games.

Crowley is the 4th All State player for Killingly under Coach Jim Crabtree since 2020, following Shayne Bigelow, Yianni Baribeau, and Johnny Kazantzis.

Crowley will return to Killingly High School for his senior season next year and is sure to be one of the top players in Eastern Connecticut next season. He will look to leave a lasting mark on his Killingly Basketball legacy.

Coach Jim Crabtree said, "The coaching staff is incredibly proud of Quin for his commitment and dedication to our program and his team. He is a true testament of hard work paying off, and he has earned every honor he has received. Quin has proven on the court to be one of the best basketball players in Connecticut, and is fully deserving of this prestigious honor. Quin shoots the basketball at an elite level, but has added much more to his game over the course of the last year and can score consistently at the rim and in the mid range. He sets the tone in practice each time he takes the floor, and his teammates respond to his workman like attitude that he brings every day. Quin has taken every challenge head on this season and been a great leader for our team. I am excited to coach him one more time next season and can't wait to see where he can lead us during his senior year!"

Putnam Science's Vrcan signs with CCSU



Valentina Vrcan

PUTNAM — One of the most moving aspects of sports is that it can make dreams a reality. Valentina Vrcan forever dreamed of playing Division I basketball. After committing to Central Connecticut State University, that dream is no longer a just dream.

According to Vrcan, the dream required patience.

"They kept coming to my games, they kept talking to me and showing interest, but they never offered," she said.

The school told her that if a scholarship spot opened up, they would send an offer her way.

"I was always thinking if that will happen, after them coming to five or six games. They finally offered," she said.

Central Connecticut State was Vrcan's first Division I offer, and she wasted no time in letting the school know her decision. The school competing at the Division I level was a major factor in Vrcan's commitment.

"I've always dreamed

about playing Division I. I think I'm a Division I player. I think I can compete with their competition," Vrcan said.

The academics of the school impressed Vrcan as well, following meetings with the faculty of the business and finance staff.

"They told me I could do a 5th year Master's degree," she said. "It's a big school with about 10,000 people." The Blue Devils are getting a player that has matured and shown growth in the game of basketball.

"They are getting somebody who can lead the team. Somebody who will show up when it matters. Somebody who can drive, shoot and talk to the team when they are in their heads because I've been through

it and know how it feels. Having somebody like that be by our side is a plus," Vrcan said.

She plans to major in business and finance at Central Connecticut State University.

Vrcan has played for the PSA Lady Mustangs for two seasons. Last year was up and down, she had to battle for minutes. This past season was much different, she was the starting point guard who led the Lady Mustangs to an outstanding season and a run to the National Final Four.

The Putnam Science Academy family is very happy to keep Vrcan in the state of Connecticut for a few more years!

Pomfret Historical Society to host program on Black and Native American soldiers in the Revolutionary War

POMFRET — On Saturday, May 2 at 3 p.m. at the Old Town House, 11 Town House Dr., Pomfret Center, join Genealogist and author, Vicki Welch and discover the life stories of three soldiers of color who fought for our freedom and theirs. The program, "Hidden Patriots: Captive Heroes," tells the little-known saga of the soldiers who were captured and imprisoned by the British on the notorious HMS Jersey. The history of Connecticut's Black and Brown soldiers is complex and long ignored by historians, but recent research shows the exemplary bravery of those who fought for freedom and independence on multiple levels.

Enslaved Africans, Free Blacks, and Native Americans were not segregated on British Prison Ships. Instead, they suffered starvation, disease, and freezing temperatures alongside the thousands of Patriots imprisoned on the Jersey in Wallabout Bay, N.Y. Although British officers tried to woo prisoners of color with food and freedom from slavery, few took the bait. Some persevered the horrific conditions while others joined the more than 11,000 to 11,500 people who died on the prison ships, including the Jersey. Many of their remains were buried in shallow graves in Brooklyn.

Vicki Welch is a professional genealogist specializing in People of Color and Native New England.

She holds a BA in Anthropology and Psychology from the University of Connecticut. Vicki has published numerous articles and spoken at conferences on the national and international level. She has worked for several tribes seeking federal recognition and is a member and recognized elder in local tribal culture. She was also hostess of a local powwow for 23 years.

Vicki's book *And They Were Related Too: A Study of Eleven Generations of One American Family* is a standard resource for those of African and Native American descent seeking their roots in eastern Connecticut. Her latest book, *And So They Fight* dives into the stories of Connecticut's enslaved Africans, Blacks and Native Americans who fought in every war since the Revolution.

The program on May 2 at The Old Town House in Pomfret is a collaboration between Pomfret Historical Society and the Pomfret 250 Commission and was generously funded by an America 250 Grant from The Last Gren Valley. The program is free of charge. Refreshments will be served, and donations for the Old Town House resurrection are always welcome. For more information contact Donna Dufresne, windsong@snet.net or 860-465-7228.

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FINANCIAL FOCUS
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When people talk about generational wealth, the conversation usually centers on how to build it – growing assets, investing wisely, and transferring wealth efficiently. But there’s another side of that conversation that matters just as much, and it’s often overlooked: preparing the next generation to manage it.

Without that preparation, even well-structured wealth plans can break down over time. Research continues to show that a large percentage of family wealth is lost within a generation or two—not because of poor market performance, but because heirs were not fully prepared to manage the responsibility.

That’s why financial literacy for heirs isn’t just helpful, it’s essential to preserving generational wealth. At WHZ we proactively assist our clients to help the next generation gain the knowledge they need to make the most of the family wealth that’s passed down to them. Everyone, regardless of the size of their estate, should do the same.

Are your heirs ready to manage the money they’re due to inherit?

We are currently in the middle of one of the largest wealth transfers in history, with trillions of dollars expected to pass from Baby

Boomers to younger generations over the coming decades. That scale raises an important question: are the next generations ready to receive and manage that wealth? In many cases, the answer is not yet.

Heirs often lack experience in managing significant assets, understanding tax implications, or making long-term financial decisions. Many also feel uncomfortable discussing money, which creates a disconnect between wealth transfer and wealth stewardship.

One of the biggest risks to generational wealth isn’t market volatility—it’s silence.

In many families, financial conversations are avoided. Parents may hesitate to discuss money to maintain privacy or avoid conflict, but the unintended consequence is a lack of clarity. Heirs may not understand the size or structure of an inheritance, the purpose behind it, or the responsibilities that come with it. When those conversations are delayed, decisions are often made under pressure rather than with intention.

How to instill financial literacy in your children and heirs

Financial literacy is not a one-time lesson. It’s a long-term process that develops over time. The goal isn’t to turn heirs into financial experts overnight; it’s to build confidence, understanding, and sound decision-making.

That process often starts early. In childhood and teenage years, simple concepts like saving, spending, and delayed gratification lay the groundwork for future habits. If you have children or grandchildren in this age group, I’d encourage you to take advantage of the Kids’ Financial Literacy Quiz available on our website at whzwealth.com/resources – it’s a great way to start up the conversation. (WHZ Managing Partner, Advisory Leisl Langevin actually created this quiz for the kids in her own family. She gives a new one to the each holiday season and sweetens the deal with a little cash for each question they get correct.)

As individuals move into young adulthood, the focus can expand to budgeting, managing credit, and understanding basic investing principles. As their knowledge progresses further, involvement becomes more important. Including heirs in family financial

discussions, investment conversations, and planning decisions helps bridge the gap between theory and real-world application. Over time, that participation evolves into stewardship—where individuals are prepared to understand estate structures, navigate tax considerations, and make long-term strategic decisions.

The key to building financial literacy is consistency

Financial education works best when it’s ongoing, practical, and connected to real decisions. Starting conversations early helps normalize money discussions and reduce discomfort over time. Using real-life examples—why certain investments are made or how tradeoffs are evaluated—makes the learning process more relevant. Gradually involving heirs in planning conversations builds familiarity and confidence without overwhelming them.

It’s also important to focus on principles rather than just tactics. Markets will change, but core concepts like diversification, discipline, and long-term thinking remain constant. When those principles are understood, decision-making becomes more grounded and less reactive.

Another critical compo-

nent is connecting money to purpose. Wealth is more likely to be preserved when it’s tied to meaningful outcomes, whether that’s financial security, flexibility, opportunity, or impact.

Why working with a financial advisor can help build financial literacy

Financial literacy doesn’t need to be developed in isolation. A coordinated advisory team can help facilitate family conversations, simplify complex strategies, and create opportunities for the next generation to engage in the planning process. At WHZ, this often means helping families move from abstract concepts to practical understanding—so that knowledge is transferred alongside assets, not after the fact.

Ultimately, the biggest threat to generational wealth isn’t economic conditions or tax changes. It’s a lack of preparation. The families who successfully preserve wealth across generations are not just those who pass down assets—they are the ones who pass down knowledge, perspective, and responsibility.

If you’re thinking about how to prepare the next generation—not just financially, but practically—the right approach can make all the difference. At WHZ, we help families build

strategies that align wealth with long-term purpose, so future generations are equipped with both the resources and the understanding to manage them.

Schedule a discovery session at whzwealth.com or call us at (860) 928-2341 to start the conversation and see how we work to provide you and your family with Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.

Authored by WHZ Wealth Advisor Logan Lum. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. These materials are general in nature and do not address your specific situation. For your specific investment needs, please discuss your individual circumstances with your financial advisor. 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. 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>.

Woodstock Building Associates recognized among industry’s top customer service leaders

WOODSTOCK — Woodstock Building Associates, LLC (WBA), received a 2026 Guildmaster Award from GuildQuality for demonstrating exceptional customer service within the residential construction industry.

Since 2005, GuildQuality, an Atlanta-based third-party customer satisfaction surveying company, has powered the Guildmaster Award to recognize and celebrate home building, remodeling, and contracting professionals demonstrating the highest level of customer service within the U.S. and Canada.

Out of nearly 2,000 eligible applicants, WBA is one of more than 400 businesses within the residential construction industry recognized by GuildQuality for consistently delivering superior customer care.

In determining which businesses received the 2026 Guildmaster Award, GuildQuality reviewed thousands of survey responses submitted by customers of Guildmaster candidates and considered two primary metrics for each candidate: the percentage of customers stating they would recommend the business to a friend and the percentage of customers who responded.

WBA achieved a recommendation rate of 90 percent or above from their customers surveyed by GuildQuality.

“This award belongs to the entire WBA community. It’s the result of a tireless commitment from our team and subcontractors to put our clients at the center of everything we do. We are incredibly grateful for the strong partnerships we’ve built with our vendors and the lasting trust our clients place in us—they are the true inspiration behind our best work,” said Steven Keene, Principal of Woodstock Building Associates.

For more on the 2026 Guildmaster Award and qualifications, visit www.guildquality.com/guildmaster/.

Cunniff, of Woodstock, presents research findings during third annual Social Justice Research Symposium

WESTON, Mass. — Shannon Cunniff, of Woodstock, presented their research “The Special Education Teacher Shortage in Rural Massachusetts Communities” during Regis College’s third annual Social Justice Research Symposium on April 16. Cunniff is a Education & Interdisciplinary Studies — Humanities major.

Cosponsored by the Writing Program and the Center for Student Engagement, the symposium features student research panels, poster presentations, art/music displays and performances, and thesis slams from students across the university’s undergraduate and graduate programs.

More than 200 students participated in the event, highlighting Regis’ mission to cultivate students as change agents in their communities, and to encourage them to serve and lead as advocates for a more just and compassionate global society.

“This is the third annual symposium bringing together the research and voices of students, faculty, and staff at Regis to explore unsolved issues in our local and larger communities,” said Associate Professor of the Writing Program and Symposium Coordinator Jennifer Krusinger, PhD. “At a time when AI plays an ever-more dynamic and unpredictable role in many of the professions and our society, this event underscores the power of our mission at Regis and our unique emphasis on the human role in identifying a need, taking responsibility, and developing solutions in a socially just way.”

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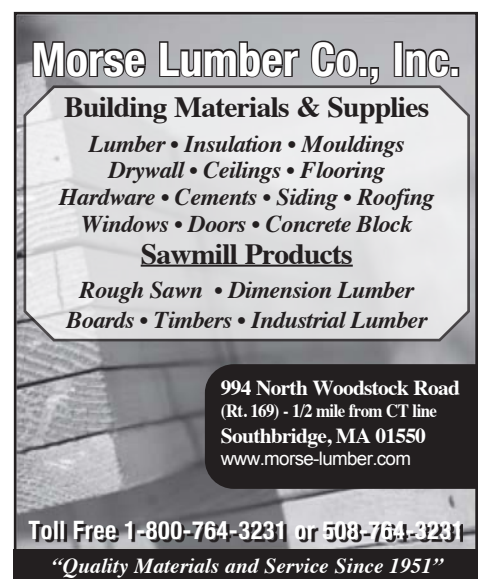
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OBITUARIES

Henry A. Belanger, 90



Henry A. Belanger, 90, of Maple Courts in Danielson, CT passed away peacefully with his family by his side on Thursday April 23, 2026. He was born in Waterville, ME on September 3, 1935, son of the late Mathias and Marie Ann (Jacques) Belanger. Henry worked his entire professional career as an operating engineer, operating heavy machinery on numerous work sites with precision and care. Henry was a longtime communicant of St. James Church in Danielson, CT.

As an avid outdoorsman, in his free time, Henry could be found fishing, hunting and traveling. He was fascinated by old cars and enjoyed driving and attending car shows. He was a UConn Women's Basketball season ticket holder for many years and appreciated all of the success the team achieved

over the years. Above all, he was a devoted family man who adored his children and grandchildren.

Henry is survived by his son Eric Belanger and wife Charleen of Danielson and his daughter Kara Langevin and husband Matthew of Webster, MA. He also will be greatly missed by his grandchildren Kyle Langevin, Bradley Belanger and Kayla Belanger. Henry also leaves behind several nieces and nephews. Besides his parents, he was predeceased by all seven of his siblings.

Visitation will be held in Tillinghast Funeral Home 433 Main St. Danielson, CT 06239 on Saturday May 2, 2026, from 10-11 AM with a Funeral Service beginning at 11. Burial will be private and at the convenience of Henry's family. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital stjude.org/donate.tillinghastfh.com

Deborah "Debbie" Busha



Deborah "Debbie" (Fearing) Busha passed away peacefully on Friday, April 17, surrounded by her loving family. She was known to many simply as Debbie, a woman whose infectious laugh, carefree spirit, and genuine kindness left a lasting impression on everyone she met. Debbie had a way of bringing joy to any room, often saying something a little outrageous and then laughing it off in a way that made everyone around her smile. She truly loved life and always saw the best in others.

Born in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, Debbie spent the first half of her life there before settling in Killingly, Connecticut, where she lived for more than 40 years and built a life centered on family, friendship, and community.

Many knew Debbie from her years working as a waitress at Ma's Frosty, where her warm personality and easy conversation made customers feel like family. It was also there that she met the love of her life, her husband, Ernie Busha. Debbie and Ernie shared 36 years together, filled with laughter, adventures, and time spent with friends and loved ones. They enjoyed life side by side and created many cherished memories along the way.

Debbie was a devoted mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. She is survived by her daughter, Tanya Rioux; her sons, Steven Rioux and his wife, Susan, Dan Busha and his wife, Michele, and Matt Busha. She was a proud and loving grandmother to Nathan, Kyle, Jonathan, Jaily, Kelsey, Joshua, Jackson, and Camden, each of whom brought her great joy.

She is also survived by her siblings, Anne Bressan, Linda Snoek, Brian Fearing, Keith Fearing, Bob Vadeboncoeur, and Susan Gaboriault, as well as many nieces, nephews, and extended family members who loved her dearly.

She was predeceased by her mother, Dolores Fearing, and siblings, Ronnie Fearing, Richard Fearing, and Michael Fearing, who will welcome her with open arms.

Debbie will be remembered for her constant smile, her generous heart, and her ability to make others feel comfortable and cared for. She had a rare gift for connecting with people and leaving them better than she found them. Her kindness, humor, and loving spirit will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

Her family finds comfort knowing that her laughter and love will live on in the many memories she created with those fortunate enough to know her.

Rest in peace, Debbie. You will be missed by many and remembered always.

Steven W. Eddy

May 4, 1949 to December 22, 2025



Long time Woodstock resident Steve Eddy passed away after a sudden illness. Steve was the son of Thurston and Evelyn Eddy and grew up in East Woodstock. He was a 1967 graduate of Woodstock Academy and went on to receive a bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut.

Steve worked as a freelance carpenter. One of his hobbies was wood working. He built many fine pieces of furniture over the years.

Another passion of Steve's was music. He played guitar and several other instruments. He crafted many

guitars and other stringed instruments using fine types of woods.

Steve also enjoyed the outdoors. He liked golfing, hiking, canoeing and kayaking, camping, and gardening.

Steve is survived by his partner Patricia Pelloth of Woodstock, a sister, Kathy Roth of Sedona, Arizona, a brother, Ralph Eddy of Avon, Connecticut, nieces and nephews, cousins and friends.

A celebration of life will be held for Steve at the East Woodstock Congregational Church on May 16 at 11:00.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Woodstock Middle School Music Program, ATT: Business Dept., 147 A Rt 169, Woodstock, CT 06281.

First Congregational Church of Pomfret to host "Our God Is Awesome" weekend of fellowship and renewal

POMFRET — The First Congregational Church of Pomfret invites the community to a special weekend event titled "Our God Is Awesome" scheduled for May 15 and May 16. This weekend event will be a time for fellowship and renewal.

You are invited to come and worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! Each of the 5 sessions will be led by an area pastor or church leader, starting on Friday evening and continuing throughout the day on Saturday.

The schedule includes:

- Friday, May 15 at 7 p.m. Our God is WISE
- Saturday, May 16 at 9 a.m. Our God is HOLY
- Saturday, May 16 at 10:30 a.m. Our God is FAITHFUL
- Saturday, May 16 at 1 p.m. Our God is LOVING
- Saturday, May 16 at 2:30 p.m. Our God is SOVEREIGN

In addition to the sessions, the church will provide hospitality to all who attend; coffee and desserts will be served during the Friday evening session, and a lunch will be on Saturday.

Registration is required to attend this event, so the church can ensure there is enough seating and food. Interested individuals are encouraged to sign up by calling the church office at (860) 928-7381 or by emailing fccp@fccpomfret.org.

About First Congregational Church of Pomfret

The First Congregational Church of Pomfret exists to help people to know Christ and make Him known. We are a dedicated and caring community of believers in Jesus Christ who seek to share His salvation message with others. We are family friendly and desire to share God's love with people of all ages.

COURTNEY

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deserved. He made sure that legislation passed through—with unwavering resolve—and I thank him for that."

Courtney acknowledged the significance of their collective work; noting that Veterans' policy efforts often require sustained advocacy and collective resolve.

"We make progress with Veterans matters, but we can never stop being vigilant in protecting those hard-won gains," Courtney remarked.

He recalled publicly recognizing Dillon's vocal advocacy on the House floor during Congressional proceedings broadcast on C-SPAN.

Additional insights were provided by Karen Weseliza, a 2nd District Office Associate representing Courtney's region-wide constituent responsibilities and Manuel F. Meneses, a Veterans Service Representative based in Courtney's Norwich office—and also a retired U.S. Navy Master Chief. The Congressman's collective offered further knowledge and direct assistance in navigating federal systems for Veterans' benefits, Medicare, Social Security, and related case-work. Courtney addressed broader regional developments, including workforce expansion efforts at Electric Boat in Groton. He further noted the important role that Connecticut's techni-

cal schools play in preparing the next generation of skilled workers, calling this period one of significant opportunity for the region.

Westview Commons' Activities Director, Louise Taylor, reflected upon the discussion by highlighting the unique needs of aging veterans within care communities. Emphasizing how support must include and extend beyond recognition of service, Taylor spoke to building connections among those who share similar experiences.

"Creating opportunities for Veterans to engage with one another is an essential component of emotional well-being and long-term healing," she stated.

Courtney's accessibility remained evident throughout the visit. Following the formal discussion, residents and staff engaged in one-on-one conversations with the congressman and his team. The gathering concluded with a shared meal prepared by the Westview Commons Dietary team, and served to reinforce the facility's sense of community.

Westview Commons' Executive Vice President, David T. Panteleakos, expressed appreciation for Congressman Courtney's continued presence and engagement, adding, "Congressman Courtney has joined us at Westview facilities many times across many, many years, and he is truly a friend to our community here."

Panteleakos added,

deeply about his town and its people," read the post. "His contributions were not always loud or visible, but they were real and enduring, rooted in a long commitment to the place he never left. His passing marks the loss of someone who believed in local service and who gave, in his own way, to the shared life of the community."

Killingly Republican Town Committee Chair Michelle Murphy also posted a tribute on the committee's social media pages acknowledging that while Labelle might have been an opponent at the ballot box, he was a good person to all. "We didn't always agree

"What impresses me most about Congressman Courtney is the fact that he covers such a large district and he is always in the field meeting his constituents. I am truly grateful for his enduring commitment to all the people we serve in Northeast Connecticut."

In both message and manner, the visit reflected a consistent theme. Meaningful progress—whether in policy, care, or community—begins with connection, and is sustained through continued presence and shared purpose.

Country Living at Westview Commons is part of the Westview family of services, alongside Westview Health Care Center and Westview Child Care Center. Westview Health Care Center is a 103-bed skilled nursing facility, featuring a distinct 28-bed sub-acute short-term rehabilitation unit and specialized outpatient treatment centers. The Dayville campus features the Westview Sports Medicine Gym, Westview Outpatient & Aquatic Center, and dedicated adolescent/pediatric, and adult therapy environments. Westview outpatient services strive to deliver exceptional quality health care through physical, occupational, and speech therapy. Westview Health Care Center is ranked among the top nursing facilities in the nation by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and U.S. News & World Report consecutively through the last 17 years.

LABELLE

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ly as the Town Council's liaison for the WPCA.

Professionally, Labelle also spent 30 years in the construction industry utilizing his knowledge and experience to help his local community in its own endeavors.

The Killingly Democratic Town Committee offered its condolences to Labelle's family in a tribute on social media calling him an "outstanding citizen" and "friend to all in Killingly."

"Those who worked alongside John knew him as a colleague who cared

on everything, but he was always a decent man, a man devoted to his community, and a kind friend to myself and many others," said Murphy.

Funeral or service details, a cause of death and an exact date of Labelle's passing were not available for this story as an official obituary had yet to be published.

With Labelle's passing, this marks the second instance this year where the Town Council will be forced to select a new member to fill out an unexpired term. The Council recently filled a vacancy left by the resignation of Democrat Jim Rivers.

WALL

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conflict. They are designed to put American experiences in Vietnam in a historical and cultural context.

USAA has returned as a presenting sponsor for the 12th year. Over the past decade, they have traveled to more than 300 communities with VVMF. Wipfli is returning as a sponsor for the second year. Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wipfli is an advisory and accounting firm with more than 3,300 associates who deliver digital, people, strategy, risk, financial, and outsourcing solutions to nearly 56,000 clients.

Through partnerships with the Truckload Carriers Association (TCA), the trucking industry, and Blue Beacon, the exhibit can travel across the country.

Local Medal of Honor sponsors already include Bank Hometown and the Putnam area foundation.

To learn more about how to get involved with The Wall That Heals in Putnam, follow us

at thewallthathealsputnam2026.org.

Since its debut in 1996, the exhibit has been on display in more than 800 U.S. communities, including an April 1999 tour of the Four Provinces of Ireland and a visit to Canada in 2005. The Wall That Heals is a program of VVMF, the nonprofit organization that built the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. in 1982. The Wall That Heals is the only traveling exhibit affiliated with The Wall in Washington, D.C., and features the largest Wall replica to travel the country.

Two VVMF staff members lead volunteers on site,

educate visitors and students, and ensure the reflective atmosphere of The Wall. More information can be found at www.thewall-thatheals.org.

About VVMF

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is the nonprofit organization that built the

Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall) in Washington, D.C. in 1982. VVMF continues to lead the way in paying tribute to our nation's Vietnam veterans and their families. VVMF's mission is to honor and preserve the legacy of service in America and educate all generations about the impact of the Vietnam War and era through programs, ceremonies, and education materials. To learn more about VVMF, visit www.vvmf.org or call 202-393-0090.

COMMITMENT

continued from page A1

the team combined with her dedication to her teammates and helping her co-captains helped create a strong foundation for success." To make this even more special both players were accepted into their first choice of schools. Coach Johnson acknowledged how hard of a journey this was for both players. From researching schools, the meetings with various coaches and then the exhausting effort of comparing the offers given. It was all worth it for him. "Watching them sign their commitment letters brought me a sense of joy, happiness

and pride," he said.

As Carvalho and Guedes' soccer careers wind down, they will forever leave a mark with Coach Johnson. Carvalho determination, strength and courage to realize her dream, combined with her compassion and love for her teammates. Guedes' hard work, ambition to improve and commitment to her teammates, combined with her infectious smile and unforgettable laugh," he said. As both players embark on their new journeys, their respective schools are gaining two incredible athletes, as well as people.

"As players, they will be instrumental to their new teammates because of

their level of commitment and dedication to playing the game and always working to improve themselves and those around them. As individuals, the schools will be gaining two incredible human beings that bring a sense of pride, compassion and respect for themselves and all around them. I will truly miss each one of these young ladies, and be forever grateful for the impact they had on me personally," said Johnson.

Maria Giulia Carvalho and Maria Eduarda Guedes are ready and excited to bring their Brazilian flair to Fitchburg State and Illinois Central College.

OBITUARIES

Donna Lee Normandin



Donna Lee (Terwilliger) Normandin departed this life on April 20, 2026, at Day Kimball Hospital in Putnam with family alongside her. Donna was born on March 16, 1948, in Putnam to Elizabeth (Slater) and Wesley Terwilliger, the second of their eight children: Claudia Allen (Roman Jamieson), Ann Gaudette (Roger), Carol Erskine, Linda Orkney (Roy), Wendy Cochrane, David Terwilliger (Tammy) and Paul Terwilliger (Aimee). Her Aunt Bobbi Ritchie was a loving and formative presence in Donna's growing-up years. Donna married Viet Nam Veteran, Frederick Severe Barcomb, Jr. and had two beloved children: Kimberly Ann (Barcomb) (Marshall) Mauger of West Chester, Pennsylvania and Randy Paul Barcomb of Cartersville, Georgia. Donna later married Charles N. Normandin, Jr. and they celebrated 37 years of marriage living in Danielson together before his passing in 2020. Donna leaves four precious granddaughters: Hope Elizabeth Marshall, Eden Lee Mauger, Jordan Lee Barcomb, and Anastasia Mae Barcomb, whom she adored and treasured. Donna was a highly skilled and precise clerical worker, beginning her work at Sears Roebuck & Co. catalog order service, and was subsequently employed at the 11th Circuit Court and Doring Labels; all in

Danielson. She ended her work career with over 20 years in the Finance Department of Linemaster Switch in Woodstock. Anyone who called and encountered the recorded answer message would have the pleasure of hearing Donna's voice in the greeting. Donna, a long-time member of the South Killingly Congregational Church; sang like an angel, and as a student represented Killingly High School at both All-Connecticut and All-Eastern concerts. She also was a singer from her pre-teen years with the church choir. Donna performed in many South Killingly Hoopla programs; performed with her sisters as "The Star Lites" twice on the W-BZ Boston, MA Community Auditions TV show, and later at wedding ceremonies and local church benefits as "Harmony". Donna's interests included genealogy and family history. She wrote creative and entertaining stories and poetry for the enjoyment of family and friends. Donna Lee Normandin (DLN), is the author and illustrator of "Amethyst Tales", a book series she hoped would be published one day.

Visitation will be held on Monday, May 4, 2026 from 10-11am with a service beginning at 11am at Tillinghast Funeral Home, 433 Main Street Danielson, followed by burial at South Killingly Cemetery. Donations may be made to K-B Ambulance Corps, Meals on Wheels or Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Connecticut. tillinghastfh.com

Jean G. Auger 1940 – 2026



Thompson – Jean G. Auger, 85, of Main St., formerly of Thompson Rd., died Thursday, February 26, 2026, at home surrounded by her loving children. She was the loving wife of the late Albert R. Auger.

Born in Putnam, she was the daughter of the late Walter and Rita (Michon) Szpyrka.

Mrs. Auger worked as a receptionist and office manager for Putnam Medical Associates and Thompson Medical, prior to that she worked for Bates Shoe. She enjoyed playing bingo, sewing, attending the Thompson senior luncheons, reading, and volunteering at the Thursday night St. Joseph Church BINGO and the St. Joseph thrift store. She was a member of the VFW Women's Auxiliary Post #10088 and The Thompson Senior Citizens. In 2017 Jean was named the Sweetheart of the Year by the Thompson Lions Club.

Jean is survived by her sons, Mark Auger and his partner Nancy Leo of Spencer, MA, and Kevin Auger and his partner Tammy Shaver of Edgewater, FL; her daughters, Debra Barbour of Thompson, and Kelley

Genest and her husband Lenny of Putnam; brothers, Bruce Szpyrka of Palm Bay, FL and Cyril Szpyrka of Thompson, 9 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren. She was predeceased by her brothers, the late Ernest, Dennis, Carl, and Keith Szpyrka.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Jean's family from 9:00AM to 11:00AM on Saturday, May 9, 2026, in the Valade Funeral Home and Crematory, 23 Main St., N. Grosvenordale, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:30AM in St. Joseph Church, 18 Main St., N. Grosvenordale, CT. Burial will follow in St. Joseph Cemetery.

Jean's family wishes to extend their heartfelt thanks to the Day Kimball Hospice for their compassionate and professional care and support as well as all of Jean's friends that visited her in her final days.

Memorial donations in Jean's memory may be made to St. Joseph's Food Pantry c/o St. Therese Parish, P.O. Box 665, Putnam, CT 06260 or Day Kimball Homemakers and Hospice, P.O. Box 632, Putnam, CT 06260. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Stanley J. Lesniewski

April 20, 1945 – April 19, 2026



It is with a heavy heart that we notify you of Stan Lesniewski's passing to his eternal rest on April 19, 2026.

Stanley John Lesniewski was born on April 20, 1945, in Derby, Connecticut to

Amelia and John Lesniewski. Stan dearly loved his aunts, uncles, and cousins in Seymour, Old Forge, Scranton, PA., and today throughout the great U.S.A. Growing up he was close to his dad and the memories they shared fishing at the local waterways together stuck with him forever. His interest in sports grew growing up and he became a standout in baseball and football. Stan graduated from Seymour High School in June 1963.

On July 3, 1963, Stan entered the U.S. Navy and later became stationed in Yokosuka, Japan at the U.S. Navy Hospital as a hospital corpsman for two years. His next stop came in 1966; Chu-Lai, South Vietnam, with the 1st Marine Air Wing Mag36 Helicopters where he recovered and aided wounded soldiers. Stan was a proud veteran, even with his scars, nightmares and cardiac issues that came home with him. The medals and pins remain in his seabag "unpacked" to this day.

Upon returning home from Vietnam, Stan continued his education and became certified in wastewater treatment and abatement. Later he focused his education on industrial and chemical waste. He retired from Schott Fiber Optics in 2011.

He leaves many great friends, professionally and socially. If you are among the great memories and experiences throughout Stan's life, you shall never be forgotten, quite likely a few memories should never be retold!!

Stan was always very interested in volunteering and serving his community. While in Seymour he was a volunteer fireman. Upon moving to Thompson, he was a member on the Recreation Committee, the Little League Board as an umpire, coach and life-long member, and the Inland and Wetlands Commission. He rarely missed a selectman's, finance, budget, or school meeting if it involved the welfare of children or the good of the community. Stan was on the Connecticut Eastern Board of Umpires for many years, including a term as President. He had a passion for umpiring high school, legion, and college baseball. Golf was always a favorite sport for Stan, along with racing through the halls of Westview! He was a legend on the WINY talk show and the old Saturday Morning Sports Talk.

He was a member of many professional groups, along with the American Legion Baseball, American Legion Post, Putnam

Knights of Columbus, and the Danielson Veteran's Coffee House.

We would like to thank the many caring people that entered Stan's life over the last 12 years, especially this last year. You are all amazing and we would place all of you on a pedestal if we could; we know it wasn't always easy! Far too many places and people to name, we will always remember YOU!

Stan is survived by his wife Barabra (Nurse Ratchet) of 57 years; his children, John, Jay and Fenna, Jeffrey and Jessica; along with the one person who entered his life and soul, whom without her knowing, by her mere presence through all of these tough years had given him the love, strength and will to live and fight for his health – his adoring granddaughter Jainna.

He is also survived by his sister Jean and brother-in-law Russell Mitchell; sister-in-law Roberta Garland; step-brothers Skip and Mickey Krajza; nieces and nephews Michelle Dilisio, Robert – Roberta, Nathan Mitchell and Lauren and Christian Lyman, James – Nanada, Bryson and Breanna Mitchell – Paul Bruzenak – Krisitie, Patrick, Avery and Brooklyn Fortuna – Mark, Sandy, Brittany and Joseph Garland – Tammy Scarfe – Stacy, Stephanie and Frank Dean, Nicole (Ben) Betts, and Todd Vincent Myrick. Stan is also survived by many endearing cousins through the U.S.A.

Stan was predeceased by his mother Amelia (Amy); father John Lesniewski; stepfather Walter Krajza; mother and father-in-law, Bertha and Bill Lane; sister and brother-in-law, Geri and Rocky Dilisio; his courageous and beloved niece, Sharon Dilisio Bruzenak; brother-in-law Arnold Garland; along with two unforgettable men whom he loved and immensely influenced his life, Charlie Tarby and U.S. Navy HM1 Tom Parker.

Stan, may you be in peace. "May you be in Heaven, a full half hour before the Devil knew you were there."


In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation in Stan's honor to Tri-Town American Legion Baseball, P.O. Box 262, North Grosvenordale, CT 06255, the Danielson Veteran's Coffee House, P.O. Box 3, Danielson, CT 06239, or a charity of your choice.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Stan's family on Sunday, May 3, from 3pm to 6pm at Valade Funeral Home, 23 Main Street, North Grosvenordale, CT 06255. A Funeral Mass of Christian Burial will take place the following day, Monday, May 4, 1pm at St. Joseph Church, 18 Main Street, North Grosvenordale, CT 06255.


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

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LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF

Charles T Skowron (26-00106)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated April 3, 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:
Maria E Skowron,
75 Berry Corner Road,
Charlton, MA 01507
May 1, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF

Hans H Otto (26-00130)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated April 17, 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:
Richard H Otto
c/o EDWIN C HIGGINS, EDWIN C.
HIGGINS III, 168 MAIN STREET, P.O.
BOX 528, PUTNAM, CT 06260
May 1, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF

Eugenie F Doyle (26-00120)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated March 31, 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:
Christopher J Doyle
c/o GAIL JESSEL ROOKE-NORMAN,
ROOKENORMAN & ASSOC, 31
ACADEMY STREET, PO BOX 347,
DANIELSON, CT 06239
Stephen P Doyle
c/o GAIL JESSEL ROOKE-NORMAN,
ROOKENORMAN & ASSOC, 31
ACADEMY STREET, PO BOX 347,

DANIELSON, CT 06239 May 1, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF

Olga R Otto (26-00131)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated April 17, 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:
Richard H Otto
c/o EDWIN C HIGGINS, EDWIN C.
HIGGINS III, 168 MAIN STREET, P.O.
BOX 528, PUTNAM, CT 06260
May 1, 2026

Killingly Town Manager provides update on moratorium

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — Killingly officials provided the first major update on the year concerning the ongoing moratorium on sewer connections during a meeting in April signaling the potential loosening of the restrictions, but a long road ahead to find a final solution.

Killingly Town Manager Brian Palaia told the Town Council on April 15 that conversations with neighboring Brooklyn regarding their continued interconnection agreement would commence within the week. He also notably revealed that the town is looking at “relaxing” the moratorium, which has prevented new connections to the system since 2024.

Killingly imposed the moratorium after it was determined that their treatment plant had reached capacity. The move came nearly two years after Brooklyn had signed an agreement to connect into the system. The limitations have effectively stalled economic growth in both communities, and Killingly has been working towards a permanent solution to increase the plant’s capacity.

As those resolutions are being worked out, Killingly is now entering new negotiations to continue its partnership with Brooklyn, which expires at the end of the year. Palaia said they’re looking into more precise projections for flow to build into their calculations when looking at expanding the plant and have even reached out to Pomfret to gauge that

town’s interest in continuing a dormant connection to Killingly’s system.

Palaia implied part of the negotiations will involve the impact Brooklyn’s projected flow will have on Killingly. Last year reports indicated that Brooklyn exceeded its agreed upon 0.36-million-gallon limit, which became a talking point in both towns.

“There’s some issues we’ve had with their flow. We’d like to address how that gets counted so we cannot have them be over and not have that negatively impact our operation going forward,” said Palaia.

The bigger picture however also involves the moratorium itself and when the town may consider easing those limits to allow continued hookups. Palaia explained

the Water Pollution Control Authority is working on specifics but made sure to stress that the moratorium is not ending anytime soon but may be loosened if they feel the system can accept certain hookups.

“We’re still only going to have a certain allocation that’s being given up temporarily to work with, and

we have to make that allocation last as long as we can until we expand the plant,” said Palaia. “Currently, the Town Engineer is designated as the person to decide whether somebody can connect. We’re having discussions internally and with the WPCA about how they would like to break up that allocation, how they’d like

to decide who can and can’t tie in.”

Part of that process could involve creating categories for different types of uses, possibly giving preference to people with small accessory dwellings. Palaia said the whole process includes a “degree of complexity” to deciding how things would work.

Danielson Martial Arts Academy students shine at Federation Challenge Tournament



DANIELSON

— On April 19, members of the Danielson Martial Arts Academy attended The Federation Challenge Tournament hosted by The Cheezic Tang Soo Do Federation.

DMAA took home numerous medals in each division, including:

7-8 Year Olds:
Girls:
Mackenzie Gagner
4th Forms
Avery Dietlin
3rd Forms
3rd Weapons

9-10 Year Olds:
Boys:
Dexter Gagner:
4th Breaking
2nd Sparring

11-12 Year Olds:
Boys:
Ziggy Fugazzi:
1st Breaking
1st Forms
1st Sparring
2nd Weapons
Jeff Fugazzi:
2nd Breaking
2nd Forms
2nd Sparring
1st Weapons

13-17 Year Olds:
Girls:
Ava Moyer
3rd Forms
2nd Sparring

Junior Blackbelt 9-10 Year Olds:
Girls:
Autumn St. Jean
2nd Breaking
2nd Forms
2nd Weapons

Junior Blackbelt 13-17 Year Olds:
Girls:
Kyra Dionne
4th Forms
2nd Sparring
Boys:
Hunter St. Jean:
1st Breaking
2nd Forms
1st Sparring
Eli Petrarca
1st Forms
1st Weapons

Blackbelt 18-29 Year Olds:
Women:
Caryssa Adams:
2nd Forms

Blackbelt 40-49 Women:
Dawn Dionne:
1st Forms
2nd Sparring
Cathleen Anderson
2nd Breaking
2nd Forms

For more information regarding classes at Danielson Martial Arts, please call 860-779-0699 or visit their Website at danielsonmartialarts.com.

bankHometown welcomes Rodriguez as Assistant Branch Manager



Amber Rodriguez

KILLINGLY — bankHometown is pleased to announce the appointment of Amber Rodriguez as assistant branch manager of its 3 Central St., Killingly office.

In her new role, Rodriguez will support the daily operations of the branch, assist in leading customer services initiatives, and help drive team performance to ensure a positive and efficient experience for customers. She will work closely with branch leadership to strengthen customer relationships and support the bank’s growth within the community.

Rodriguez brings two

years of banking experience to the role. She most recently served as a personal banking representative at Beacon Bank, where she assisted customers with a wide range of financial needs and built strong client relationships through personalized service. Before that, she worked as a universal banker at Bally’s Lincoln Casino, gaining experience in both transactional banking and customer support.

About bankHometown
Founded in 1889, bankHometown is headquartered in Oxford, Massachusetts. We have \$1.6 billion in assets and offer a complete line of consumer and business deposit and lending products and services through 15 locations throughout Central Massachusetts and northeast Connecticut. We’re proud to fulfill our community banking mission—providing individualized financial support, comprehensive products and services, and

banking tools—to ensure our customers can unlock their potential and build a successful future.

Through our charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, we support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Worcester and Windham Counties. In 2025 alone, The Giving Tree donated more than \$550,000 and over the last decade donated more than \$3.3 million. bankHometown was named a Corporate Citizenship Award winner by Boston Business Journal for the past six years, reaffirming our status as one of Massachusetts’ most charitable companies. Additionally, we were named a 2025 Top Place to Work award winner by The Boston Globe, and both bankHometown and our parent company, Hometown Financial Group, were recognized as four-time USA Today Top Workplaces award recipients. For more information, visit bankHometown.com.

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