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Friday, December 1, 2023

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Handcuff Hunger food drive helps feed families for Thanksgiving



Jason Bleau

Trooper Shawn Tucker of the Connecticut State Police and a young volunteer were stationed outside of Putnam Stop & Shop during Handcuff Hunger 2023.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

REGION — The Handcuff Hunger Food Drive has long been a staple of the Thanksgiving season in Northeastern Connecticut and that tradition continued with another successful year on Nov. 18 and 19 as offi-

cers form the Connecticut State Police and Putnam Police stationed themselves at different stores collecting food for various local food pantries.

Police were posted at local Price Choppers, Stop & Shops, Big Ys and a Better Value as far south as Canterbury and Plainfield and as far north

as Putnam collecting food throughout both days to benefit organizations like TEEG, Daily Bread, Friends of Assisi and more mere days before these organizations were slated to perform their annual food distributions for the holidays. Thanksgiving week is often the business time for these agencies



Representatives and volunteers for the Putnam Police Department pose for a photo with food items outside of Putnam Price Chopper during the 2023 Handcuff Hunger Food Drive.

who depend heavily on donated funds and goods to serve hundreds of families throughout the quiet corner.

For the Connecticut State Police, Handcuff Hunger is an opportunity to meet and connect with the public while serving as the connecting point

between donors and valuable local food resources. State Police Trooper Shawn Tucker, who helped coordinate the 2023 Handcuff Hunger effort, said they are always proud to see the generosity that defines the sense of community embraced by the Quiet Corner.

“The biggest part is the community showing up every year. It’s actually amazing that every single time we do this, people are very generous. People will come out of the stores with a cart full of turkeys or \$100 worth of groceries.”

Turn To **FOOD DRIVE** page **A15**

Killingly mill fire puts grant funding in limbo



Courtesy

A fire tears through the Ballouville Mill in Killingly on the morning of Nov. 16.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — The Ballouville Mill in Killingly has been leveled by a massive fire putting the future of the site in question according to Town Manager Mary Calorio.

The mill, located at 244 Ballouville Rd. in

Killingly, caught fire overnight between Nov. 15 and 16 with fire departments first reporting to the site at 1 a.m. to find the structure fully involved. The response was a day-long effort by multiple area departments to control the blaze. In an interview, Calorio revealed that the mill’s ceiling and at least one floor had already collapsed by the time fire-

fighters had arrived. She credited first responders for their effective attack that saved neighboring homes and kept the fire under control.

“Our fire departments did an amazing job. This was all of the Killingly Fire Departments and many area fire departments that came in for

Turn To **FIRE** page **A14**

Killingly prepares to wrap up revaluation

KILLINGLY — The Town of Killingly is wrapping up the revaluation for the 2023 Grand List.

Assessment notices are scheduled to be mailed Dec. 1. Property owners will have the opportunity to conduct an informal hearing with Tyler Technologies to review their new assessments. All hearings will

be held by telephone. Supporting documentation can be emailed to Tyler Technologies: KillinglyReval@outlook.com.

Hearings will begin Dec. 11, and the deadline to schedule a hearing is Dec. 29. Property owners will need their assessment notice with Unique ID to make an appointment. After the informal

hearing process is complete, property owners still retain the right to appeal to the Killingly Board of Assessment Appeals. Appeal forms will be available in the Assessor’s Office and on our webpage no later than Jan. 31, 2024, and must be filed in the office no later than Feb. 20, 2024.

Dueling Pianos raises more than \$22,000 to benefit Day Kimball Healthcare At Home



Courtesy

Staff from the DKH at Home Services team, and Kristen Willis, director of development, DKH pose with Savage Pianos at Day Kimball Health’s Dueling Pianos Event held Nov. 11 at The Raceway Golf Club and Restaurant in Thompson.

PUTNAM — Day Kimball Health’s (DKH’s) Dueling Pianos event raised more than \$22,000 to benefit DKH at Home’s in-home care programs which include HomeMakers, HomeCare, and Hospice & Palliative Care. The event was held Saturday, Nov. 11 at The Raceway Golf Club and Restaurant in Thompson.

DKH welcomed back Savage Pianos, a high-en-

ergy rock & roll dueling piano show, whose talented musicians are recognized as headline entertainers around the world. The group’s enthusiasm was infectious, and no song was out of question as they performed everything from Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believing” to The Weather Girls’ “It’s Raining Men” and more. Two hundred-forty guests attended the sold out event and made song

requests throughout the night raising a total of \$1,100 in tips.

“We are overwhelmed by the generosity and support from our community that was present at this year’s event,” said Renee Smith, vice president, Post Acute Services, Day Kimball Healthcare. “The funds raised directly benefit our patients and their families by

Turn To **PIANOS** page **A14**

Holiday season brings early deadlines

The holiday season is upon us, bringing with it an accelerated press schedule for your local weekly newspaper.

The deadline for next week’s edition (out Dec. 8), Monday afternoon at 4 p.m., will mark the conclusion of business as usual for the remainder of the year.

The submission deadline for any press releases and letters to the Editor intended for publication in the Dec. 15 edition of the Villager will be Wednesday, Dec. 6 at 4 p.m.

For the following week (Dec. 22), the submission deadline will be Wednesday, Dec. 13 at 4 p.m.

For publication on Dec. 29, submissions must be received no later than 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 19.

The deadline for our first edition of 2024, Jan. 5, will be Friday, Dec. 22 at 4 p.m.

As always, submissions can be e-mailed to Editor Brendan Berube at news@stonebridgepress.news.

The staff of the Villager thanks our readers for their cooperation with our accelerated schedule, and wishes one and all a safe and happy holiday season.

Stop & Shop Floral Bouquet Program to benefit Access Food Pantries this month

PUTNAM — Fight hunger with a simple purchase of a floral bouquet! Access Community Action Agency has been selected by local Stop & Shop store leadership as the benefiting hunger organization in the Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program for the month of December at the

Stop and Shop location in Putnam! The Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program, which launched in February 2021, is an easy way for shoppers to give back as part of the regular shopping routine. Every \$10.99 Bloomin' 4 Good

Bouquet with the red circle sticker sold supports a hunger organi-

zation local to the Stop & Shop in which it was purchased.

According to Feeding America, every \$1 donation to a local hunger organization can provide 10 or more meals to someone in need. As part of this ongoing program, every month at every Stop & Shop location a different local hunger organization is selected to benefit from the sale of the Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet. Access was selected as the December beneficiary by local store leadership at the Stop & Shop located at 60 Providence Turnpike, Putnam CT. Access will receive a \$1 donation for every \$10.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet pur-

chased in December. All the funds raised will go directly to the Access Food Pantries located in Danielson, Willimantic, and the Mobile Food Pantry to help families in need this year.

"What a beautiful way to give back, help to fight hunger in our local community, and make a room, or home even brighter,"

Kathleen Krider, Senior Director of Community Engagement and Resource Management of Access. "Now they can fight hunger too! We are thrilled to be chosen to benefit from this unique and impactful Stop & Shop Program, as the demands of those in need are higher than ever this year."

The Access Community Action Agency is designated by the federal and state government as the anti-poverty agency in northeast Connecticut. Access provides food, affordable housing, job readiness services, and other pathways to economic self-reliance for vulnerable limited-income families and indi-

viduals throughout the region. Learn more about Access by visiting <https://accessagency.org/>.

For more information about the Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program, please visit stopandshop.bloomin4good.com.



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Courtesy

CALLING ALL ANGELS...AND SHEPHERDS

Christ Church Pomfret's annual Christmas Pageant performance will be on Sunday, Dec. 17, at 10 a.m. at the Rectory School's Tang Center. Donna Bessette is directing the pageant, and welcomes all children from the community to participate, who may email her at bessettedonna@gmail.com for rehearsal information.

First week of Putnam Rotary Club Interact bell ringing nets more than \$3,000



Courtesy

Pictured: Viviana Hill, Kaitlin Mercer, and Owen Mercer.

PUTNAM — Once again, the Putnam Rotary Club Interact Club organized the Putnam Salvation Army Kettle Campaign for its 26th year, beginning on Nov. 24 and Nov. 25.

The campaign will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every Saturday coming up, including Dec. 23, at Putnam Supermarket, Price Chopper, Walmart and Stop & Shop.

"This year we had a new device attached to our kettle stand that allows people to tap (their credit card for) a \$5, \$10 or \$20 donation," said Roberta Rocchetti, Interact advisor. "Hopefully, this will help those that want to make a donation but do not carry cash."

The total for the first weekend was more than \$3,000.

Rocchetti praised Putnam High School students Paige Perry and Gabriell Cerasiello who rang for eight hours. She thanked the bell ringers and volunteers -- from PHS: Kayns Robillard, Madeleine Kimball, Delta Wagner and Danny Boriboun; from Tourtellotte Memorial High School: Jordyn Butler, Eric Levesque, Patricia Peterson, Noel Racicot Caitlin and Eoin Mercer and Vivianna Hill; from The Woodstock Academy: Greysen Dery, Kiley Elliott, Elizabeth Ladzinski, Kira Greene, Phoebe Griffin, Maddie Jezierski, Hunter Larson, Taylor Lamothe, Madie McMahon, Ava Simoes, Lillian Conway, Amelia Haynes, Logan Casteen, Cade Jones, Jared Nielsen, Emma Kerr, Gianna Dicola-Keddy and Eden Lusignan.

Boy Scout Troop 21 volunteers included: Ethan Latandrice, Adric Devil, Romeo Devil, Cody Keene, Advisor Patty Gaffney and Marysia Cournoyer with Adam Rumrill, Maryann and Calvin Heath (Putnam). UConn volunteer: Austin Crim.

Ashford volunteers included: Claudia Ursin, Donna Drasch. Rotaract volunteers included: Shannon Fagan, Hailey Messier. From American Legion Post 13: Garry Brown, Mike Rocchetti.

Putnam Rotarian volunteers included: Woody Durst and Dottie Durst, Roberta Rocchetti, Richard and Kathy Naumann, Joseph Adiletta, Paul Pikora, Barry Shead and Marc Archambault.

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Presented by Woodstock Recreation

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Courtesy

Volunteers gather before the opening of the annual holiday fair at the First Congregational Church of Woodstock.

WOODSTOCK — Members and friends of the First Congregational Church of Woodstock ushered in the holiday season with “Christmas on the Hill,” an indoor/outdoor bazaar on Nov. 18. The community was invited to shop for handcrafted and unique items, jewelry, toys, baked goods, wreaths, and greens. There was a take-out window for hot soup and chili, as well as chicken pot pies to go. An online auction was held in conjunction with the event and winning bidders picked up their items.

“Even though it was a chilly day, there were lots of warm greetings. This event is always a joyful start to the holiday season,” commented Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer, pastor. “The monies raised help to fund church ministries, especially our support to non-profits such as Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group (TEEG), Community Kitchens of Northeastern CT, The Last Green Valley, and the Quiet Corner Refugee Resettlement.”

During Advent, the church will host several special events, and all are welcome. There will be an outdoor carol sing with candles and cocoa on Sunday, Dec. 10 at 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10 is also the annual gift collection for TEEG. A Christmas Pageant for all ages will be offered on Dec. 17 at 10 a.m., followed by a potluck meal. The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with carols and readings will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 24. All events and programs are open to the public.

The First Congregational Church of Woodstock is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. The church is located at 543 Route 169, Woodstock, just south of the Woodstock Common. Sunday worship is at 10 a.m. in person and 7 p.m. on Facebook. For more information, go to www.firstchurchwoodstock.org or call the church office at 860-928-7405.

Cookie sale & basket raffle to be held



a wide variety of homemade cookies. Holiday boxes are provided.

The raffle has around 50 lovely baskets with various themes on which customers can take a chance. The drawing will take place on Sunday, Dec. 17 at noon. There is no need to be present to win.

There is usually a line out the door by 8:45 a.m., so come early to ensure getting your favorite cookies. This event has become a tradition for many, and it may become one of yours.

BROOKLYN — The Social Committee at Our Lady of La Salette Church will hold their annual Cookie Sale and Basket Raffle on Saturday, Dec. 16 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the church basement. The church is located at 25 Providence Rd. in Brooklyn. Cookies are sold by the pound, with the buyer selecting from

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First Congregational Church ushers in the holiday season



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BRENDAN BERUBE
 EDITOR

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Would Talib risk her own head in Gaza?

To the Editor:
 Steven Ahle, via The Billings Report (on Nov. 14), reported that the Palestinian people are starting to fight back against Hamas. The report said they are now arming themselves with sticks and knives and standing up to the Hamas bullies who've been helping themselves to, and hoarding, the limited supplies whenever they've become available. Maybe Talib and Omar should take all those protesters and go over to Gaza to see what they can do about that, but I doubt they'd even be welcomed there. Do you really think they'd go to where they might end up having their heads put on a stick? In another report, Hamas was said to be using innocent civilians as shields from the Israeli armed forces.

Recently, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) decided to allocate a significant budget of up to \$100 million for primary challengers that go up against «the squad» members of Congress. A Democrat that I hope wins is Don Samuels, who is running against Omar in 2024. Arizona State University recently made the decision to cancel an event titled «Palestine is an American Issue», which was to feature Tlaib, whose continual big mouth finally got her censured.

So now the mob has stormed the office of the DNC. They attacked the police and injured six officers; however, they only arrested one person who slammed a policewoman into a wall and punched her. Do you think the FBI will track down these rioters in early morning raids with heavily armed agents? Any cries of insurrection yet? Again, just more examples of the Democrats' double standards.

House Republicans have compiled a report that claims House Speaker Pelosi's office was directly involved in the creation and editing of the Capitol security plan that failed during the Jan. 6, 2021 riot and that security officials were «denied again and again» the resources needed to protect the Capitol. The report also alleges that House Sergeant at Arms Paul Irving, who served on the Capitol Police Board, «succumbed to political pressures from the Office of Speaker Pelosi and House Democratic leadership lead-

ing up to January 6, 2021.» It claims that Irving coordinated closely with Pelosi and her staff and excluded Republicans from important discussions related to security. After the events of Jan. 6, when Pelosi forced Irving to resign, a staffer in the House sergeant at arms office sent an email suggesting that the Democratic leadership had made Irving and Capitol Police Chief Steve Sund the fall guys to cover up the failure of lawmakers to provide adequate security resources. Pelosi, who was quickly removed from the premises on Jan. 6, later said she was willing to take off her high-heeled shoes and do hand to hand combat with the demonstrators; now that would be something to see. Pelosi, after being removed as House Speaker and then getting thrown out of her Capitol office, is again facing the disgrace associated with her husband's attack, and I hope the House Republicans report at the least causes her many sleepless nights.

I'll show some respect for Gavin Newsom, who at least had the guts to admit that he only cleaned up the streets of San Francisco for Xi Jinping's visit. That city is also represented by «Nanny» Pelosi who's done nothing in that effort, and shame on her.

So far, all the Soros backed attempts to have Donald Trump thrown off the 2024 ballot in certain states have failed. Among other democrats, Richard Blumenthal is concerned with President Biden's low polling numbers which is an obvious sign that the American people now have buyers' remorse. Nov. 20 was President Joe Biden's birthday, and though I am not a fan, I do respect the Office of the President, and I wish him a Happy Birthday. On his birthday, the IJR (Independent Journal Review) reported that President Biden has received the lowest approval rating «ever measured» in an NBC poll. (Is NBC a Trump channel, Mr. Canning?) Anyhow, sleep well you Trump haters, and kudos to Kevin Mack for his most informative letter. Trump in 2024!

ED DELUCA
 NORTH GROSVENORDALE

Putnam Trash 2.0 keeps getting worse

To the Editor:

Exactly how much does Casella have to milk the town of Putnam before we all start mooing?

The Putnam Board of Selectmen meeting on Monday the 20th revealed yet another ugly detail about the upcoming trash program revamp. Landlords can only buy in at the number of residences per physical address and have little real ability to scale and control costs if they own multiple adjacent properties. If you have a three-family with three tenants who don't generate all that much trash, or three single families with the same situation, congratulations. You're getting punished by paying for trash containers your tenants won't fill. Then you'll try to raise the rent due to this cost increase and you'll be punished yet again by tenants screaming in your face about how all you care about is money and the only good landlord is a dead landlord, et cetera et cetera et cetera.

Good job, Mayor Barney. Bonus points for the dismissive attitudes whenever myself or other concerned constituents bring this up and exercise our First Amendment rights to peacefully assemble to petition the government for a redress of grievances. Oh, that pesky U.S. Constitution.

Usage-based billing was one of those things that Putnam got right with the trash sticker program, and CT DEEP, the EPA, and other folks outside of our part of Connecticut agree on the merits of usage-based trash billing. It's also worth noting that if we're talking costs per ton for municipal solid

waste and recycling at the town level that the folks in charge get usage-based billing, but you – the customer – do not.

Earth to Putnam Republicans. You can't go on about supporting small businesses while overlooking the small business owners known as mom-and-pop landlords. Run them out of the market and rentals become easy prey for much larger and far less cooperative entities like private equity. If folks think this town has a blight problem now, imagine a Putnam with rentals all owned by someone like Blackstone Capital who squeezes every last penny they can out of this town and has deep enough pockets to spend their way out of any real accountability for any ordinance the town cooks up.

«Oh, but landlords can just opt out if they don't like whatever we come up with.» Yup. Good ol' divide and conquer and surrendering the town as a negotiating bloc in the process. That'll make the shareholders of these publicly traded trash companies happy. It's hilarious how town leadership keeps dodging the hard cold fact that this trash revamp is an exhibition of their ability to negotiate on behalf of their constituents, or lack thereof. To make it simpler and blunter, the results of this trash program revamp will reflect directly on how well these people are doing their jobs.

Putnam voters, united we bargain, divided we beg, even with trash pickup.

JAY GERHART
 PUTNAM

The ten-cord sled

Massachusetts Bay Colony was founded by religious separatists called Puritans. The Puritan Church, later known as the Congregational Church, was an organized gathering of believers (the congregation) who signed a covenant agreeing to uphold congregational principles. The congregation elected their own officers and usually included an elder, a deacon, and prominent lay people. The officers of the congregation arranged to hire a minister, an educated man who preached, administered the sacraments, and often served as a teacher. Although the Puritans believed in the separation of church and state, the local government and the local

WOODSTOCK THROUGH
 THE YEARS
 CHARLENE PERKINS CUTLER



built and orchards planted. Roads, bridges and a pound were constructed. The selectmen established a burying ground.

church were closely aligned.

After the founding of Woodstock in 1686, the 13 Goers and others who followed them worked to divide the lands and build the first structures of the new settlement. They created a local government and elected «John Chandler, Nathan Johnson, Jos. Bugbee, Jas. White and Joseph Peake as selectmen.» Collectively, they put in place a corn mill, saw mill, clay pits and a hearthstone quarry to support the construction. Fences were

In 1690, the people of Woodstock came together to form a church. On Sept. 28, 1691, «The Town then voted that a Meeting house shall be built in the Town, of 30 feet long 26 feet wide, 14 feet stud, with 1 gable on each side...» Two years later the minister's house was completely sufficiently to host public meetings and in March of 1694, the house was «delivered» to Rev. Dwight. [Proprietors' Records.]

The Woodstock Church was a local, self-governed
 Turn To **WOODSTOCK** page A5

Kindness is a balm in a broken world

My family and I have been on the receiving end of a great deal of kindness lately. My husband underwent surgery in Boston, and is now recuperating at home. In the days before his operation, people wished him well and sent notes of encour-



NANCY WEISS

agement. A remarkable number said that they would be praying for him, a sentiment that can sound a bit flat until it is directly relevant to one's own

situation.

At the church we attend, the first names of people for whom prayers are requested are read during the service. As I listen to the roster, I try to picture their faces in a personal practice that I've made up. I tell myself the story that if I can see them in my mind, my prayer will help them. Of course, much of the time I don't know the people. My mind wanders or gets stuck on the image of a person I know or someone who died long ago, perhaps at the same time of year. The moment passes and it's easier to notice that my feet are cold or the light through a stained glass window is especially luminous.

Last year we had Covid at Christmas. It was so awful that my husband, perhaps still spiking a fever, bought an artificial Christmas tree. Once we grew Christmas trees ourselves. We gave them away at an annual party and sold some in quantity until all the good ones were gone. Years later a group of long-eared owls escaping the frigid north took up residence in the scruffiest branches and bird lovers crept into the tangles to see them. The tiny birds never returned and later we sold the farm. Owls are my totem and our plastic tree, like all the real ones of the past is bedecked with owl ornaments. Every ornament was given to me. Perhaps hanging them is a form of prayer.

A neighbor decorates a tree every year at a busy four-corners in my town. Sometime ago I wrote about her and her quiet gift to the community which involves hours of stringing lights from a bucket truck in the cold. This year, her family experienced a tragedy. She would have every reason not to repeat her annual effort. When I saw her at work, our eyes met and filled with tears. Nothing needed to be said. The tree glistens in the darkness. It surpasses mere words.

In the plain Protestant world of my childhood, few families had Nativity sets with elegant figurines depicting the Christmas story. When I started traveling, I wanted to buy one, perhaps from France or Italy. Instead, we purchased a whimsical array, largely from Patty, who owned a bookstore in Putnam. I was drawn to the animals and the colorful Three Kings. Does it trivialize the Christmas story? Probably, but as I assemble it, up pops images of children and grandchildren performing in pageants that capture the essence of it all.

The poet, Naomi Shihab Nye in her poem «Kindness,» wrote: «Before you know what kindness really is/you must lose things, /feel the future dissolve in a moment/like salt in a weakened broth.»

At this time of year in what seems a broken and chaotic world, kindness is both universal and individual. We can be kind to each other and we can cherish kindnesses done for us. Our prayers can take whatever form we wish to give them. A friend made a list of all the people she has lost. Remembering is kindness and prayer, too. My husband is better. Kindness and prayers made a perfect balm.

The power of small changes

In a world that often celebrates instant results and quick fixes, the true path to personal growth and self-improvement lies in the steady accumulation of small changes. We live in an age where we're bombarded with information about radical transformations and overnight success stories. However, it's essential to remember that lasting change often comes from the consistent practice of good habits, one small step at a time.

The journey of self-improvement can be daunting. Whether it's striving for better health, financial stability, or personal development, the thought of making significant changes can be overwhelming. But here's the secret: progress is not about massive, dramatic actions. Instead, it's about the cumulative effect of tiny, daily efforts.

Developing good habits requires patience, persistence, and an understanding that meaningful change doesn't happen overnight. Instead, it unfolds gradually.

Small changes are sustainable because they don't disrupt your life drastically. When you start with tiny steps, you're less likely to feel overwhelmed and give up. These changes become integrated into your daily routine, making them easier to maintain over the long term.

Consistency is the backbone of habit formation. By taking small actions every day, you reinforce positive behaviors and build momentum. Over time, these behaviors become second nature, and you don't have to rely on willpower alone.

Large changes can trigger resistance and anxiety. Our brains are wired to resist big, sudden shifts. In contrast, small changes are less threatening, making it easier to overcome the resistance that often accompanies change.

Celebrating small victories along the way boosts motivation and confidence. Each small change achieved is a step forward, reinforcing your commitment to your goals.

Life is unpredictable, and sudden disruptions can derail even the best-laid plans. When your habits are built on small, manageable changes, you can adapt more easily to unexpected challenges without losing sight of your goals.

Identify one habit you want to cultivate and break it down into the smallest possible steps. For example, if you want to exercise regularly, start with just five minutes of activity each day.

Set specific goals: Make your goals clear and measurable. Instead of saying, «I want to get in shape,» say, «I will walk for 10 minutes every morning.»

Establish a daily routine that includes your new habit. Consistency is easier to maintain when your habit becomes part of your daily life.

Track your progress: Keep a journal or use habit-tracking apps to monitor your daily efforts. Seeing your progress can be motivating and help you stay on track.

Stay accountable: Share your goals with a friend or family member who can offer support and encouragement. Having someone to hold you accountable can be a powerful motivator.

Remember, the journey of self-improvement is not a sprint but a marathon. Embrace the process of making small changes every day, and in time, you'll look back and be amazed at the significant transformation that these incremental efforts have brought to your life. By cultivating good habits one step at a time, you'll not only achieve your goals but also develop the resilience and discipline necessary for a lifetime of positive change.

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.

Despite volatile markets, 2023 brought bright spots for investors, too

With 2023 quickly coming to a close, we all tend to look back in the rearview at the year that just was and think about the highlights (and lowlights). For investors, it's certainly been a wild ride. But stock investors tend to be an optimistic lot, looking on the bright side of life and willing to invest for the long term. So, let's consider some additional things the markets have given us to appreciate this holiday season.

While it's true that the S&P 500 fell 10.3 percent from July 31 to Oct. 27, prompting some understandable handwringing from investors, it's important to remember the bigger picture: The S&P 500 is up 13.5 percent this year through Nov. 3. That result is almost twice the index's long-term average and another reason to give thanks this season.

Many stocks & sectors have rallied. The stock market may have hit a rough patch during the historically tough months of September and October, but many sectors of the S&P 500 have risen—sometimes by substantial amounts—if you look at returns over the full year.

The S&P 500 Communications Sector, which includes stocks like Meta Platforms (Facebook's parent) and Alphabet (Google's parent), has risen 42.4 percent from Jan. 1 through Nov. 3. The S&P 500 Information Technology sector, which is home to semiconductor stocks and software stocks, like Microsoft and Adobe, has gained 40.4 percent over the same period. And the S&P 500 Consumer Discretionary sector jumped by 26.2 percent, helped by Amazon, Tesla, and homebuilders' stocks.

Some individual stocks have also had a truly spectacular year, even though they may have given back some of their gains in recent months. Nvidia, Meta Platforms, Palo Alto Networks, Royal Caribbean Cruises, and Tesla are among the top performing stocks in 2023, gaining anywhere from 75 to more than 200 percent! Nvidia shares have jumped because the company is at the forefront of producing semiconductors needed to process artificial intelligence programs. Proving, once again, that in good times and in bad, US companies have always



**FINANCIAL
FOCUS**
• • • • •
**JIM ZAHANSKY
INVESTMENT
ADVISER**

continued to innovate.

Each of these stocks are included in your portfolio today, and these fluctuations in returns are a good reminder of why we keep your portfolios diversified.

Investing for the long run. Stock declines have always received lots of news coverage from traditional media outlets like newspapers and television, but now news about the markets is amplified on social media platforms. When the markets fall sharply there are always tweets on X and posts on Instagram and Facebook that appear 24-hours a day on our computers, phones, and watches.

What's lost amid all the negativity is that over the long run, stocks go up far more than they go down. During the average bull market, the S&P 500 gains an average of 265 percent over 67 months,

while in the average bear market, stocks fall by 33 percent over 12 months, according to research by Capital Group. Investors willing to hold on through bear markets have historically been rewarded: After the 18 biggest market declines since the Great Depression the S&P 500 was higher five years later with annual returns of more than 18 percent.

Trying to time the market is tough. If the market's volatility has you on edge, remember that timing the market may be even tougher than investing for the long run. When you time the market, you need to make two good decisions to be successful. First, you need to exit the market when it's high and about to fall, and then you need to jump back in when the market has bottomed and is about to rise.

Investors who exit the market but don't get back in at the right time, might find they're sitting on the sidelines as the recovery passes them by. Consider the investor who places \$10,000 in the S&P 500 index from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2023. The investor would live through two bear mar-

kets during the decade, but in the end, the portfolio's value would nearly triple to \$27,248, Capital Group reports.

If the investor timed the market and was sitting on the sidelines during the market's 10 best days, the portfolio's returns would shrink to only \$14,922. If the investor missed the best 20 days, the portfolio would only appreciate to \$10,838. Moreover, if that investor missed the market's best 30 days or 40 days, the portfolio's value would decline to \$8,347 and \$6,553, respectively.

Over the coming holidays, instead of getting a rise out of family members talking about politics, turn your focus to longer-term thinking. Remind them that with innovation, capital markets will continue to improve over the long-term, even during times of war and economic upheaval. The endurance of the US stock markets is something for which we can all be thankful.

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Live Well™ strategic process and an ongoing, proactive approach to partnering with them to help them achieve their goals. If you'd like to start off 2024 with a strong financial plan and strategic long-term financial strategy of your own, contact us for a complimentary consultation by calling (860) 928-2341, or request one on our website.

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The local news in 1917

Would you like an interesting and unusual item for a Christmas or Hanukkah present? The following items are for sale at the Killingly Historical Center, 196 Main St., Danielson. "Images of America Killingly" by Natalie L. Coolidge and Robert A. Spencer, \$20; "Images of America Killingly Revisited" by Natalie Coolidge, \$20; "Images of Rail--New London County Trolleys" (includes Putnam Line), \$20; "New England's Haunted Route 44" by D'Agostino & Nichelson, \$20; "Mills Along the Whetstone Brook" by Richard C. Adams, \$10; "Danielson Before the War: The Antebellum History of the Borough of Danielson" by H. V. Arnold, \$10; "Williamsville" by Ray C. Smith, \$15; "Dear Transcript: Letters from Windham County Soldiers During the Civil War 1861-1865," \$32; "Literary Salad: Memories of Windham County Transcript Columnists from 1800-1900," ed. by Marilyn Labbe, \$30; "Random Memories of Neighbors and Places on Chestnut Hill & East Killingly" by Herbert Oatley, \$3.50; "Perspectives of Putnam" by Margaret M. Weaver, \$15; "The Blumenthals in Danielson and Beyond" by Natalie L. Coolidge, \$15; "Killingly Moments & Mementos" by Wayne Magao, \$20; "Killingly

Keepsakes" by Wayne Magao, \$17; "Killingly Treasures & Antique Advertising Cards" by Wayne Magao, \$16; "Views of Plainfield, CT--Postcard Album," \$20; Reproductions of the 1869 Maps from Grey's Altas of Killingly and Danielsonville, \$3.00 each; Reproductions of other old maps from Northeastern CT towns, assorted prices; old postcards, \$2; Killingly Historical Center cloth tote bags, \$3. Stop in at the Center on Wednesdays and Saturdays during regular hours (10 a.m.-4 p.m.). If you would like to have a copy mailed to you, please send a check for \$20 plus \$5 shipping and handling per book made out to the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 265, Danielson, CT 06239.

I thought I'd do some newspaper tidbits in this column, so I opened the book that Marilyn Labbe had done of Windham County Transcript extracts from November 1917. Keep in mind that this was during World War I, so there were a number of articles related to what was happening to our boys. Even the home guard was busy. "The regular weekly drill of the Home Guard of Danielson was held at the State Armory on Tuesday evening. Under the careful eyes of the officers the men are showing great improvement in their mastery

of military movements. After the drill the basketball team, which is to whip everything in sight this winter, went on the floor for practice, and showed up well under the instruction of Coach Sidney P. Marland. Those who compose the team as far as is now known are Francis Teatreault, Richard Reeyes, Edward Fuller, Sam Meurnier, Clare Turner, and Earl Winslow." (Nov. 18, 1917).

Did you know that Liberty Bonds were being sold to help support the cause? The same paper included an essay by Gertrude Poirier, aged 13, an 8th grade student at St. James School. "The 'Liberty Loan' campaign is on. Shall it be unheeded by American ears? Surely not. We all hope that the people will give as freely as for the 'First Liberty Loan,' and we expect it to be oversubscribed. These 'Loans' are made because first: our soldiers are giving their lives for the country and the government has to feed them, so as to help win the war. Second: the government needs money to buy necessary ammunitions and supplies for the army. Third: heavy taxation would follow if it were not for these 'Loans', and Fourth: If we do not help our country win the victory, we will be the slaves of Germany. Let us buy 'Liberty Bonds' and help our country, and if we are generous God will give

it back to us one hundred fold. Every patriot that loves his native land will not go unheeding this appeal and will be proud to be the owner of a 'Liberty Bond.'" Did someone in your family have a Liberty Bond?

In the World War I era, the social clubs at the various mills in Killingly and vicinity provided the employees and families with a variety of entertainment. Goodyear's club was quite active in November 1917. "We wish to announce that on Tuesday, November 20th, there will be a box party and social in the basement of the Goodyear church. A cordial invitation is given to all and a pleasant time is assured to everyone. Those who are not attending the dances of the Goodyear Social Club Saturday nights are missing some fine music and splendid dancing. The Goodyear Singing Orchestra is winning many laurels and the people of Goodyear should appreciate them more by attending these social times...At the Goodyear Social Club last Wednesday night a bowling tournament was held between the married and single ladies. The single ladies had the pleasure of entertaining the married ladies, as winners, to a supper after the match was won. A cordial invitation is extended to visitors to witness these games on Wednesday evenings." (Ibid). If any-

one knows more about the Goodyear Singing Orchestra, please email me. I wonder if there were any instruments?

Do any of you remember when trolley tracks could still be seen in Northeastern Connecticut? By the mid 1920's, the trolley had ceased running through this area so plans were underfoot to remove the tracks. The age of the automobile had arrived. "Removing Tracks on Furnace, Cottage Streets.

Employees of the Connecticut Company are now removing the rails of the old trolley tracks on Furnace and Cottage Streets. Later the rails are to be taken up along Water, Franklin and Dyer Streets, but it is probable that those through Main Street will remain until the time when new pavement is installed, as their removal would entail considerable labor and expense and greatly inconvenience the traveling public. The tracks north of the borough have already been taken up. The work now being done will improve conditions for motorists on the streets involved, particularly at the corner of Main and Furnace Streets, and near the junction of Furnace and Cottage. (WCT, June 24, 1926)

How many of

you remember when Danielson had a Grant's store? "New Grant's Store Opens in Danielson. The W. T. Grant Company, which operates a nationwide chain of department stores, is opening its 104th store Saturday in Danielson. B. G. Smucker is the manager of the new store, which is occupying quarters in the Exchange Block." The Exchange Block was located opposite the present Danielson Surplus Sales. (WCT, Dec. 9, 1926).

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, November 2023. Special thanks to Marilyn Labbe for compiling the Transcript extracts. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Center Wed. or Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or www.killingly-historical.org or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook at www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety. Mail for the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society, Inc. or the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Center should be sent to PO Box 265, Danielson, CT 06329.



**KILLINGLY
AT 300**
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**MARGARET
WEAVER**

WOODSTOCK

continued from page A4

erning institution. The town's taxpayers were also members of the church. The minister and the church building were supported by local taxes. Only church members could vote in elections prior to the Revolution. Townspeople provided food and housing for the minister, and cordwood for fuel.

A tale of the wood harvesting has survived, first printed in a small publication called "Youth Companion," (no date) and later incorporated into a scrapbook that belonged to Mrs. Louise Child. It was retold by Margaret McClellan in Winds of Change. The age of the tale is lost except to date it by the use of a sled to transport wood, a fact that could put it anytime from the settlement of Woodstock in 1686 to the nineteenth century.

The minister was supplied with wood by members of the congregation. The acceptable size of a cord

of cut wood is 128 cubic feet, or a stack four feet high by four feet wide by eight feet long – about 5,000 pounds of wood. Wood cutting usually occurred in the winter months and sturdy sleds were used to haul it from the wood lots to homes. Each man would cut a cord of wood from his wood lot and deliver it to the minister. There was one man, however, who consistently shirked his obligation to provide the necessary fuel. He is referred to in the story only as Brother Z.

During a period of particular religious zeal, there was a meeting at the church where Brother Z spoke stirringly about the need for everyone to give generously not only to the parish but "to all benevolent things." He committed himself to give the minister an entire sled load of wood as a demonstration of his newfound religious passion.

Shortly after, the deacons of the church met and Squire McClellan purportedly had this to say: "Truly ... the Lord must have opened Brother Z's heart; but it may close soon and it may

never open again. It behooves us in the parson's interest, to avail ourselves of it. Let us build a sled that will carry ten cords – and do it at once."

The new sled was quietly but "expeditiously" built in someone's backyard. The famous Ten-Cord Sled was thirty-two feet long, three feet wide, with beams eight by eight inches and runners over a foot wide. As soon as there was snow on the ground, a group of neighbors appeared at Brother Z's house with "apparently all the ox-teams in town drawing the titanic sled," followed by a large and curious crowd.

Although Brother Z hemmed and hawed, he had to make good on his promise and provide the full load of wood – ten cords. It is said that the ox-teams strained considerably transporting the large load to the door of the minister. Upon seeing the wood, the minister exclaimed, "Have the windows of heaven opened?" To which, the Squire replied, that "the Lord has opened Brother Z's heart and that so

great a gift could have issued from so small a receptacle is one of the wonders of saving grace."

Today there are many churches in Woodstock, including the First Congregational Church, located on Woodstock Hill, that has been serving the community for 333 years. However, cords of wood are no longer provided by members of its congregation.

Books on Woodstock history available at any of the town's four libraries:

Bowen, Clarence Winthrop. History of Woodstock. Boston: James R. Osgood, 1882.

Larned, Ellen D. History of Windham County, Connecticut. 2 vols. Worcester, Massachusetts: Printed by Charles Hamilton, 1874.

Woodstock Tercentenary Committee. Heritage and Horizons, Woodstock Remembers 300 Years. Woodstock, CT, 1968.

2023 auction results



I hope that you had a Happy Thanksgiving! As we near 2024, I'll use today's column to share some results from our 2023 auctions.

In previous columns, I've discussed how comic

books are classified. As a refresher, Golden Age comics were printed from 1938 to 1956. The Silver Age of comics lasted from 1956 to 1970. The Bronze Age spanned from 1970 to 1985 and the Modern Age

began in 1985 and continues today. A Golden Age superhero comic book in great condition could make you a millionaire. More recent ones can still be valuable, though. We sold a group of Bronze Age and Modern Age X-Men Comic Books that brought \$2,880 in November.

Old and newer collectible toys also brought strong prices this year, including two cast iron toys from our June auction. Kenton Toys of Kenton, Ohio began manufacturing toy trucks in 1903, according to the National Museum of American History. An early 1900s Kenton Toys Cast Iron Police Patrol Horse Drawn Carriage brought \$960. "Samuel F. Pratt, Pascal P. Pratt, and William P. Letchworth established the Buffalo Malleable Iron Works in 1836," according to worthpoint.com. They began toy production in 1889. A late 19th century

Pratt & Letchworth Cast Iron Horse Drawn Steamer Fire Engine sold for \$1,020.

Some more modern toys also sold well in our 2023 auctions. "The Munsters" was the 18th highest-ranked TV show for the 1964-65 season. A 1964 Talking Herman Munster figure by Mattel with original box sold for \$900. The intro for "Six Million Dollar Man" became a 1970s catch phrase: "We can rebuild him; we have the technology." A 1970s The Six Million Dollar Man Venus Space Probe in the box went for \$960. Even newer toys can be valuable. A 2016 Lego Ghostbusters Fire House MIB (mint in box) sold for \$780 earlier this year.

Baseball and other sports cards continue to be popular with collectors, especially graded cards of star players. Cards featuring two Hall of Famers brought strong prizes in our June

auction. A 1954 Topps Hank Aaron #128 PSA 5 (out of 10) Baseball Card fetched \$4,425. Mickey Mantle cards in good condition are highly desirable. A 1952 Bowman Mickey Mantle #101 PSA 6 (out of 10) Baseball Card knocked it out of the park, selling for \$5,000.

We are expecting more strong auction results at our major multi-estate online auction which starts soon and ends on January 10th. We will be offering fine art including paintings by listed artists (those whose works have sold at auction), Pablo Picasso limited edition pottery, and bronze sculptures. We have gold, platinum, and diamond jewelry and a large amount of sterling silver. There's



ANTIQUES,
COLLECTIBLES
& ESTATES
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WAYNE TUISKULA

also a wide range of mid-century modern furniture and accessories. We will also offer aviation and Civil War memorabilia and much more, including a book from the 1600s. Our online estate auction of a Concord, Mass. home is also currently running and will end on Dec. 12. The Concord home has fine furnishings, oriental rugs, an antique tall case clock, and more. Please visit our Web site, <https://centralmassauctions.com>, for links to upcoming events.

Contact us at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/ Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services www.centralmassauctions.com (508-612-6111).

Outdoor winter container gardens

Photo
Melinda Myers
Winter container gardens made of natural materials add beauty and color to the winter landscape.

Outdoor winter container gardens

By Melinda Myers

Add a bit of greenery to your front steps, window box or patio with a winter container garden. You'll find all the ingredients you need at your local garden center, craft store, and maybe even a few in your backyard.

Start with a walk through your yard and look for evergreens and other potential ingredients for your winter containers. Fruits like rose hips, winterberries, holly berries, crabapples and others add color to the container. Fluffy seedheads of grasses make a nice vertical accent and add a bit of motion to the arrangement.

Next, convert one or two of your summer or fall containers into a winter display. The container should be able to tolerate the winter conditions in your area. Concrete, iron, metal, wood and fiberglass containers are best suited for year-round use. Even plastic pots will last for a few years when left outside.

Or start a new container for winter. Repurpose or purchase a container. Nursery pots that once housed trees and shrubs make excellent options. These black containers provide the perfect backdrop for greenery and are available for free from most garden centers and fellow gardeners.

Make sure the pot has drainage holes to prevent water-logged soil and water from overflowing the pot. Fill the container about seven eighths full with a well-drained potting mix. The soil helps hold the greenery, twigs



GARDEN
MOMENTS
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and other materials in place and adds weight to keep the pot upright throughout the winter.

Consider using a mix of greens for a variety of textures and various shades of green. Pine, spruce, arborvitae, boxwood and junipers may be growing in your landscape and most are available at garden centers. Spruce tips are popular, allowing you to add "mini" trees or create vertical accents in your containers.

Use greens to cover the pot and create an attractive base for your winter display. Place some branches upright and others at a 45-degree angle so the greens drape

over the edge. Secure the stems by placing them at least four inches deep in the soil.

Now add some color and vertical interest with stems of red twig dogwoods, paper birch branches, berry-laden stems from holly and winterberry and curly willow branches. Artificial material and outdoor ornaments can also be used. It's your opportunity to get creative.

Do consider adding other elements such as evergreen cones, seed pods, allium seedheads, and balloon plant pods. Leave them natural or add some paint and glitter.

Water thoroughly to remove air pockets and lock your ingredients in place. Keeping the soil moist until the potting mix freezes can help extend the beauty of the greenery. The winter containers will also last much longer in cooler temperatures. And those



Melinda Myers

Winter container gardens made of natural materials add beauty and color to the winter landscape.

displayed in more sheltered locations out of direct sunlight and wind will suffer less drying.

Once your container is complete it is time to relax and enjoy your holiday celebrations.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great

Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. Myers Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

The strength to overcome obstacles lies within you

We sometimes find ourselves standing at the feet of towering giants and facing impossible battles. The types of battles that make you question everything you thought you knew, making you feel as if you don't have what it takes and that you should give up and die.

What if I told you that this perception, this daunting outlook, is often a mere illusion?

There is a truth that many of us find hard to believe: that deep within you lies everything you need to triumph over your giants.

At an early age, Stephen Wiltshire received an autism diagnosis, a condition that faced significant stigma during his childhood. He was non-verbal until the age of five; few could have imagined his disability would eventually become one of his greatest strengths.

Stephen had a love for

drawing; he was passionate about it. It was his way of connecting and communicating. Being autistic, I'm sure nobody thought Stephen had any chance in art.

Soon enough, Stephen had the attention of a teacher who noticed his remarkable talent. His drawings, characterized by their stunning detail and complexity, were entered into competitions and started winning awards.

As fate would have it, Stephen discovered that he had an eidetic memory that allowed him to draw complex landscapes and cityscapes even after just a glance.

Against all odds, Stephen's perceived disadvantage also came with an advantage that gave him everything he needed to become a world-class artist.

Ludwig van Beethoven,

POSITIVELY
SPEAKING

TOBY
MOORE

a renowned musical genius, faced an unimaginable challenge as he began to lose his hearing. Many might have thought this marked the end of his illustrious career. Yet, in an astonishing turn of events, this loss became a transformational force in his musical journey.

His compositions got better as he lost his hearing; they soared in depth and expression. Astoundingly, Beethoven's most celebrated works emerged when he was entirely deaf.

This profound loss forced him to listen in a new way, feeling the vibrations of each note. He began to perceive and compose music in a way he never had before.

This unforeseen challenge became the catalyst that propelled his

artistry to unprecedented heights.

What seems like a crippling setback can be precisely what's needed to bring you toward your destiny.

Aron Ralston, an adventurer and mountaineer, lived for the thrill of conquering the great outdoors. His passion for exploring remote canyons and scaling rugged peaks was not just a hobby but a profound expression of his connection with nature. Ralston's adventures showed his profound love for the wilderness, a love that would be tested in ways he probably never imagined.

In April 2003, a routine solo canyoneering trip in Utah became a life-or-death struggle. While navigating a narrow canyon, a dislodged boulder trapped his right arm against the canyon wall. For five agonizing

days, Ralston battled the elements, his physical limits, and mounting despair.

With dwindling supplies and no hope of rescue, he faced an unimaginable decision: amputate his trapped arm with a dull pocketknife to escape. This harrowing choice marked a turning point not only in his ordeal but in his entire life.

Ralston was undoubtedly forced to alter his relationship with the outdoors dramatically. What had once been a playground became the scene of his most profound challenge.

Yet, it deepened his respect and appreciation for the wild and led him down a new path.

He penned his memoir, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," recounting his extraordinary survival and the lessons learned in the canyon.

His story inspired millions, leading to speaking engagements and even a film adaptation, "127 Hours," that brought his tale to a global audience.

In losing a part of himself, Ralston found a deeper purpose and discovered that even with losing his arm, he still had everything he needed to get to the next level of his life.

Each of us has an untapped well of inner strength. More often than not, we possess the tools necessary to navigate life's biggest challenges. Sometimes, the presence of a daunting obstacle reveals the actual depth of our ability. Next time you feel overwhelmed or insufficient, hold onto this truth: within you lies everything you need to overcome and succeed.

Eastern to present "The Reluctant Dragon" Dec. 3

WILLIMANTIC — Eastern Connecticut State University's music program will present John Rutter's comic opera "The Reluctant Dragon" on Dec. 3 at 2:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Instructional Center (FAIC) Concert Hall.

This performance will be a charming retelling of Kenneth Grahame's original story from 1898

about a fearsome dragon and the gallant knight St. George. The 30-minute program will be a treat for audience members of all ages. This event is supported by a grant from the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation.

Eastern voice students Manuel De La Flor (Dragon), Micah Dubitzky (St. George) and Sierra McElroy (Boy)

will be joined by members of Eastern's Concert Chorale under the direction of David Belles, professor of music. "The Reluctant Dragon" is directed by Emily Riggs, associate professor of music, and accompanied by pianist Eric Ouellette.

Tickets are required for admission. Tickets are free for Eastern students and for attendees

aged 18 years or younger. Adult tickets are \$10.

For more information or to reserve your tickets, please visit <http://easternct.showare.com/reluctantdragon/>.

Eastern Students can reserve their free ticket (upon completion of a short survey). To reserve your Eastern Student ticket, visit: <https://forms.gle/F8jbmFgz9p9PbW89>.

For reservations,

phone the FAIC Box Office at (860) 465-5123 or email theatreboxoffice@easternct.edu

The Music Department will be holding a Food Drive for the Covenant Soup Kitchen in conjunction with their Dec. 3 performance of "The Reluctant Dragon." Please consider making a

donation of any non-perishable food items. Collection boxes will be available before the performance. Thank you in advance for supporting our community.



United Services celebrates 40 years for President/CEO Diane Manning



Courtesy

United Services Longevity Awards recognized at its Annual Dinner on Nov. 16 at The Mansion at Bald Hill in Woodstock.

WOODSTOCK — United Services recognized long-serving staff, including a 40 year milestone for its President/CEO Diane Manning and welcomed new board members with its Annual Dinner Thursday Nov. 16 at The Mansion at Bald Hill.

United Services President/CEO Diane L. Manning reflected on exciting changes the agency undertook in the last year, including certification in the rigorous federal standard Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) and the upcoming launch of its Integrated Primary Care program.

United Services is the non-profit, commu-

nity-based outpatient behavioral health center and Local Mental Health Authority for northeastern Connecticut. The agency operates more than 30 programs under its one administration, including outpatient mental health and addiction services, parenting and family programs, youth programs, crisis programs, domestic violence programs and community education and prevention programs.

Founded in 1964, United Services marked its 59th anniversary this year.

United Services elected new board leadership for the 2023-24 year as well as two new members at its annual meeting Wednesday.

United Services' continuing board leadership includes chairman Diane Sauer of Storrs, vice chairman Peter Manilow of Willington and treasurer Christopher Dooley of Brooklyn. New leadership includes secretary Philip Gaudette.

Newly elected to the United Services Board of Directors were Doria Daviau of Woodstock and Cheryl Feuerman of Coventry.

Returning board members include Kevin Bernier of Woodstock, Terry Berthelot of Mansfield, Romeo Blackmar of Woodstock, Carlita Cotton of Mansfield Center, Gerard Gagne of Pomfret Center, Maximo Garcia of North

Windham, Carol Kent of Canterbury, Roland Lupien of Dayville, Jeanne Nuhfer of Columbia, and Linda Parsons of Brooklyn.

United Services also honored retiring board members Valentine Iamartino of Thompson, who served six years on the board, and Anne Konczakowski of Windham, who served nine years on the board.

United Services staff were honored for their long-standing service to the organization. Manning was recognized for her incredible leadership with significant fanfare, including tributes from USI's former long-time Medical Director Dr. Jay Patel, Deputy Commissioner for the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Colleen Harrington, who is also a former longtime USI employee, and State Rep. Brian Lanoue, R-Griswold. Manning was also honored with citations from the Connecticut General Assembly and U.S. Senators Chris Murphy, D-Conn., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.

"It's been a remarkable journey with remarkable people," Manning said. "I am truly proud at how far we have come in providing behavioral health services, not just as an agency but as a state and country."

In addition to Manning, United Services recognized many long-serving staff.

Celebrating 35 years was Quality Assurance and Corporate Compliance Division Director Sandra Long. Celebrating 30 years were Data Compliance Manager Debra Rivard and Data Compliance Specialist Patti McClanahan. Celebrating 25 years were Comprehensive Care Division Director Holly Fish, Director of Human Resources Cassandra Mantoni and Accounts Payable Specialist Sharon Pulver. Celebrating 20 years with the agency were: Client Accounts Manager Cindy Perry, Controller Barbie Soler and Milner House Adjunct Marisol Danehy. Data Compliance Analyst Meghan Silvestri, Employment Specialist Katherine Anderson and

Client Support Assistant Lisa Shaw all marked 15 years with the agency. United Services also recognized seven employees who have been with the agency for five and 10 years.

About United Services, Inc.

United Services, Inc. is a private, non-profit and comprehensive behavioral health center, creating healthy communities throughout northeast Connecticut for more than 55 years by providing psychosocial, behavioral health, chemical abuse, primary care, care coordination, wellness and prevention services to the community, and employee assistance program services for business and industry. With 12 locations and a staff of over 250, United Services operates more than 30 separate behavioral health programs, including the only domestic violence shelter for women and children in the region. United Services, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. To learn more, visit www.UnitedServicesCT.org.



Courtesy

Volunteers and veterans from the Eastern CT Veterans Center place America flags on the graves of all service members in the Willimantic New Cemetery and the Willimantic Old Cemetery the week before Veterans Day to honor those who served our country. More than 500 flags are placed and then removed in December for Wreaths Across America. Flags are also placed the week before Memorial Day. George Lemien, a Veteran Center member and volunteer, places a flag after saluting the soldier's grave.



Courtesy

CONGRESSMAN HEARS CONCERNS OF LOCAL VETERANS

On Friday, Nov. 17, Congressman Courtney met with the leaders of Windham's Veteran Service Organizations at the Eastern CT Veterans Community Center to listen to the concerns of veterans in his district. The group shared their legislative priorities with the Congressman who is one of the most supportive and influential members of Congress, especially with issues concerning the military. From left to right: Pastor Roger Bolduc from the Eastern CT Veterans Center, Shawn Starkel, Willimantic Elks, Chris Paulhus, Willimantic FFW and Amvets, Congressman Joe Courtney, Tom Riquier, Willimantic American Legion, Diane Nadeau, Eastern CT Veterans Center, John Morin, Willimantic American Legion, Alvin Lasalle, Eastern CT Veterans Center.



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- Jeff S., Mystic, CT

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SPORTS

Killingly trips up Centaurs on Thanksgiving before advancing to State Tournament



Jason Mckay photos

Killingly's Soren Rief battles his way through a Woodstock Academy defender while gaining ground toward the end zone.



Woodstock Academy's Teddy Richardson makes a quick pass while a Killingly defender rushes him.



Brandon Rosas of Killingly uses blazing speed to work his way through Woodstock Academy's defense.



Jacob Lizotte of Woodstock Academy attempts to maneuver his way around a Killingly defender.



Killingly quarterback Quinn Sumner has the time to throw a pass down the field.



Woodstock Academy's David Bunning makes his way down the field with a Killingly defender rushing in.



Hayden Allard of Killingly slices through the Woodstock Academy defense.

BY DEAN P. ST. LAURENT
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — After scoring to end the first half of play, the Killingly High football team received the second half kickoff and drove 70 yards, capping a scoring drive with a Soren Rief 5-yard scamper to extend their lead to 29-8 early in the third quarter. Killingly used the 14-point swing to gain momentum and cruise to a 42-15 win on Thanksgiving morning over rival Woodstock Academy.

"It was great," expressed Killingly head coach Chad Neal about winning on Turkey Day. "It was a little back and forth in the beginning, but I thought about the score before the half and I always believe that if you can score before half, get the ball at half and score again, that 14-point swing is huge in high school football."

The win not only felt good for Killingly since it was against their rivals,

but it also cashed them a ticket to the Class L State Tournament, which got underway after press time.

"It feels amazing because an 0-2 start and we lose that game to Fitch," stated Neal. "It looked pretty bleak then, but the kids stayed the course and kept working hard and based on our strength of schedule we played we were able to get those points. Even teams that have the same number of losses we are going to pass them because of our strength of schedule. It is special for these kids because the Soren Riefs, Devin Exarhouliases, Darin Exarhouliases, Alex Ortizes, all those guys we didn't want their season to end today. We wanted them to have the opportunity to play in the playoffs for the fourth straight season."

The first half on Thanksgiving was back and forth and Woodstock was able to counter Killingly's first

score with one of their own with some trickery. Junior tailback Gabe Luperon retrieved the ball on a toss and instead of running it, threw a lofted pass to a wide-open senior Lucas Theriaque in the end zone.

Killingly's next two drives were successful due to sophomore Quinn Sumner connecting on passes to open up the offense. Sumner connected on a 27-yard pass to Payton Wallace and a 32-yard toss to Hunter Allard.

"Great composure, three sophomores making those plays in a big game," stated Neal. "That is just a sign of where they have come from

week one to now week ten. They have improved a whole lot."

Rief did his usual and accounted for much of the Killingly offense with 276 yards on the ground and five touchdowns.

Woodstock Academy's seniors were unable to win their last high school game, but head coach Sean Saucier made it known how much he enjoyed coaching this group.

"They were a joy," expressed Saucier. "It was one of those seasons where you just enjoy coming to practice every day and being around them and that is awesome because it is not always like that or hasn't

always been like that in my career. So, to have a group that buys into what you're trying to do and work hard and is a joy to be around, that is pretty cool."

Lastly, the future is bright for the Centaurs. They will bring back a good core next year that looks to have success.

"It starts with Sam Clark, number 11, he is injured right now. He

broke his collarbone against Bethel, but he is our guy. We got Gabe Luperon our running back and Jacob Say on the line, number 53, and a couple of linebackers Dylan Phillips number 20 and Kyle Grist number 56. We have a core. They have grown a lot and matured a lot and it is their turn now," stated Saucier.

Quinebaug Valley football ends season on strong note, pitches shutout against Thames River on Thanksgiving Eve

BY DEAN P. ST. LAURENT
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

PUTNAM — With just under four minutes to play in the fourth quarter, Thames River had the ball at the 24-yard line in a third-and-goal situation. Thames River's signal caller dropped back and let a pass fly toward the middle of the field and, out of nowhere, Quinebaug Valley junior Deven Lamothe jumped the route for a game-clinching interception to seal a hard-fought 14-0 win on Wednesday, Nov. 22 to bring the Thanksgiving rivalry trophy back to the Pride.

"Fantastic athlete, very smart player," Quinebaug Valley head coach Joe Asermelly stated about Lamothe. "There are not enough positive adjectives for that kid. He is the total package."

The junior tailback and defensive back scored on a 20-yard run in the first half for the second score of the game and also came up with the biggest defensive play of the game to keep the shutout intact.

"We came into this game knowing it was going to be a dog fight and that is what it was,"

said Lamothe. "We scored early in the first half and just kept that lead. Our defense played amazing, we all played amazing. Our defense didn't give up a single point this game and I couldn't be more proud of them."

The other score for Quinebaug came on a 2-yard quarterback sneak from sophomore QB Drew Gisleson. Gisleson also set up Lamothe's touchdown run by converting a crucial fourth down with his legs. The sophomore scrambled for 14 yards on fourth-and-4 and on the next play Lamothe got into the end zone.

"Absolutely," Asermelly stated about the importance of the fourth down conversion. "That is a sophomore making a heck of a play, Drew Gisleson at the quarterback position. It has a lot to do with a lot of guys playing unselfish football and I am super proud of the team. The fourth down decision a week ago we didn't get, but tonight we did."

For much of the night, the defense came up with big play after big play to keep Thames River out of the end zone. Thames River threatened many

times inside the red zone, but the Quinebaug Valley defense seemed to buckle down and make plays when it was most crucial.

"Coach Darrell Brown is one of the best defensive coaches in the state, bar none," Asermelly stated. "That is not blowing smoke, he was ready tonight and did a great job. Our seniors like Aidan DeFilippo and Travis Fredette, those seniors on the defensive line, did a fantastic job. I just can't say enough good things. They are just tough. Good old school toughness and mental toughness too. They got inside the five I don't know how many times and we still stopped them. Fantastic, it seemed like the more pressure we got the more we responded."

Quinebaug Valley has a good group returning, but Asermelly expressed how great it is ending the season at .500 and with a win for his seniors.

"Five and five and I will tell you, I know five losses, but how many games in the fourth quarter," expressed Asermelly. "We were knocking on the door all year and I think this is going to roll into next season. I think we have a great group

coming back, but tonight it was about the seniors and I am super proud of them.

"This class has been through it. As freshmen they had to deal with

COVID, sophomore we lost a heartbreaking three-way tie for the postseason and they had a change of coaches as juniors and a change of coaches as seniors,"

added Asermelly. "These guys have an unbelievable amount of resiliency and all those good things you can say about kids you can say about this group of men."

The Woodstock law firm of St. Onge & Brouillard is pleased to announce that its senior partner, Mark R. Brouillard, has been named a Connecticut Super Lawyer for the 10th year. Attorney Brouillard has been named in the practice areas of personal injury and family law and will appear in the November edition of Connecticut Magazine.

Attorney Brouillard concentrates his practice in the areas of civil litigation, personal injury, workers' compensation and business litigation as well as divorce and custody matters. He is a graduate of Providence College and Loyola University School of Law. He is a member of the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association where



he formally served on the Board of Governors, the American Association of Justice, the Connecticut Bar Association and is presently serving as president of the Windham County Bar Association. Attorney Brouillard is also a member of the National Trial Lawyers Top 100 and is listed in Best Attorneys of America. Only 5% of the attorneys practicing in Connecticut receive a selection to Super Lawyers. Attorney Brouillard resides in Woodstock with his wife, Attorney Nancy Fraser.

**Office: (860) 928-0481
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WOODSTOCK BY THE WEEK

Dec. 4-10

TOWN HALL MEETINGS
(agendas and minutes at woodstockct.gov)

Monday, Dec. 4
•Inland-Wetland Com., 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 5
•TEEG Mobile Market, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Thursday, Dec. 7
•Board of Selectmen, 7 p.m.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Each Weekday
•Stepping into Sobriety Meetings, South Woodstock Baptist Church

Dec. 4
•Community Kitchen Free Lunch, Woodstock Hill Congregational Church, noon
•Knit & Crochet Club, Senexet Grange, 7 p.m.

Dec. 5
•Craft Adventure, West Woodstock Library, 7 p.m.

Dec. 6
•Story Hour, West Woodstock Library
•Knitting Group, Town Hall
•Youth Group, South Woodstock Baptist Church and Evangelical Covenant Church
•Wine & Stitch Society, Taylor Brooke Brewery, 6-8 p.m.

Dec. 7

•Knit & Crochet Club, Senexet Grange, 1 p.m.
•Indoor Cornhole League, Taylor Brooke Brewery, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Dec. 8

•Story Time Hour, May Memorial Library, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
•Red Lion Burger Food Truck, Taylor Brooke Brewery, 3-8 p.m.
•New England Trivia, Taylor Brooke Brewery, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
•New York Bee Gees, The Loos Center for the Arts, 7 p.m.

Dec. 9

•Woodstock Winter Festival, townwide, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. map and passport at woodstockct.gov/recreation-department/pages/events
•Victorian Christmas at Roseland Cottage, 12-4 p.m.

Dec.10th

•Christmas Tea at Roseland Cottage, 1 p.m., tickets: myhistoricnewengland.org
•Christmas in Woodstock LIVE, Evangelical Covenant Church, 1-4 p.m.
•Tex & Yo, 2-5 p.m., Sip & Shop, 2-8 p.m., Taylor Brooke Brewery,
•Woodstock Holiday Lights Contest, dusk-8 p.m. Voting 12/9-16th. Woodstock Recreation Dept. website
•Mack's Catering Food Truck, Taylor Brooke Brewery, noon-6 p.m.

Dec. 10

•Woodstock Through the Camera's Eye, Woodstock Historical Society, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
•Red Lio Burger Truck, Taylor Brooke Brewery, noon-5 p.m.
•Turas, Taylor Brooke Brewery 2-5 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 14
•Scrabble, West Woodstock Library, 2 p.m.

Dec. 15
•Story Time Hour, May Memorial Library, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
•Woodstock Academy Winter Concert, The Loos Center for the Arts, 6-8 p.m.

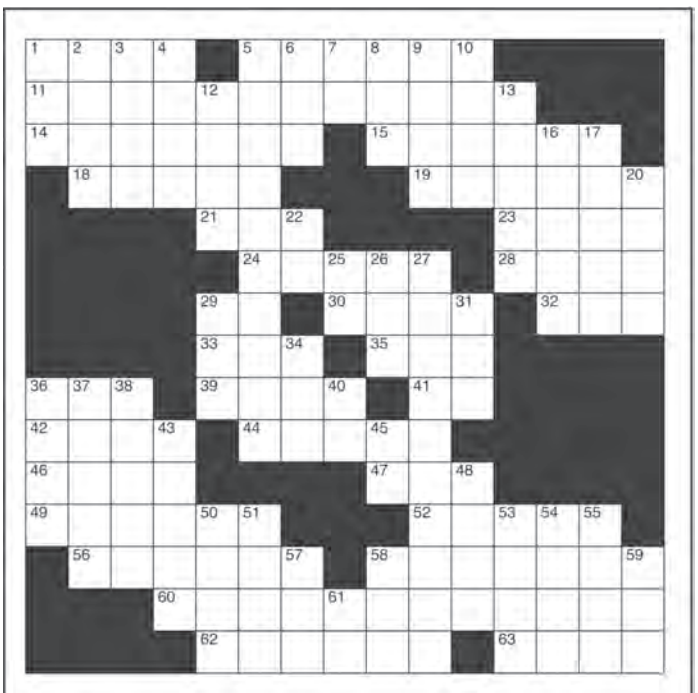
Dec. 17
•Live Nativity, South Woodstock Baptist Church, 5 p.m.

Dec. 21
•Quilting, Senexet Grange, 1 p.m.

Dec. 28th
•Scrabble at West Woodstock Library, 2 p.m.

Jan. 26
•Outlaws, Loos Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m.

To submit calendar items: woodstockbytheweek@gmail.com.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Old English letters
- 5. Sculpture
- 11. Showing up again
- 14. Tie the knot again
- 15. Washington city
- 18. Stiff structures in invertebrates
- 19. Mark over a vowel
- 21. Explosive
- 23. Popular race: __ 500
- 24. Pile up
- 28. Mint
- 29. Commercial
- 30. A minute amount (Scottish)
- 32. Small Eurasian deer
- 33. Baseball stat
- 35. Numbers cruncher
- 36. Japanese masked drama
- 39. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
- 41. Blood group
- 42. Assist in wrongdoing
- 44. Language spoken in Cameroon and Chad
- 46. Grayish-white
- 47. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- 49. Microorganism
- 52. Place under prohibition
- 56. Calm, dependable
- 58. Congressman
- 60. Force
- 62. As a result of this document
- 63. One of two main branches of Islam

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Make a mistake
- 2. Gordon and Snider are two
- 3. Geographical region of Finland
- 4. Ejected saliva
- 5. A way of performing
- 6. Scotland's longest river
- 7. One of the six noble gases (abbr.)
- 8. Body art
- 9. Two-toed sloth
- 10. Electronic counter-countermeasures
- 12. Foolish person (Brit.)
- 13. Of the wind
- 16. Grand home
- 17. Sound
- 20. English river
- 22. Symbol indicating ownership
- 25. Exclamation of surprise
- 26. Pouch
- 27. Apart from
- 29. Satisfaction
- 31. The bill in a restaurant
- 34. Sea bream
- 36. Port in southern Japan
- 37. Double-reed instruments
- 38. Center
- 40. South Dakota
- 43. An orderly crowd
- 45. Indicates position
- 48. __-pedi
- 50. Nonsense (slang)
- 51. Republic of Ireland
- 53. Nocturnal flyers
- 54. American state
- 55. Clusters in fern fronds
- 57. Patriotic women
- 58. A person's brother or sister
- 59. Breed of sheep
- 61. Popular film "Despicable __"



WOODSTOCK MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

WOODSTOCK — Woodstock Middle School has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-2024 school year.

Grade 6

High Honors: Jack Ankowiak, Amy Beausoleil, Sophia Benoit, Henry Boucher, Isla Brady, Tucker Chamberlin, Thomas Converse, Delaney Cross, Luciana Drake, Oliver Hayden, Grace Hebert, Braylon Hill, Julia Huynh, Calianne Joy, Ella Keser, Samantha Mills, Madelyn Morin, Lana Powell, Hazel Rigney, Isabella Sandholm, Adriana Turner, Killian Wamback, Natalie Wamback, Sofia Wolslegel, Liam Yank

Honors: Avery Andrews, Addison Antaya, Zachary Bernier-Garland, Colin Bickoff, Joshua Bolduc, Gavin Bottone, Reagan Bourget, Aubrie Chenevert, Cameron Crowley, Katharina Da Silva, Devin Depina, Tanner Desmond, Lydia Dorez, Mason Fish, Alison Foley, Kellan Frazier, Gregory Hart, Elizabeth Jolliff, Antoinette Madden, Mimi Magee, William Magee, Audrey Martin, Levi Milford, Charles Murphy, Carter Rhodus, Kaden Romanik, Maggie Salvus, Lorena Silva, Margaret Stockwell, Grace Syme, Maizey Szydlo, Claire Elizabeth Vinal, Mattingly Vogt, Ezekiel Walen, Arden Whitley

Recognition: Cameron Bennett, Dakota Betty, Joseph Carlone, Alyxander Cassell, Meadow Corsetti, Addison Covello, Coby Gagnon, Farrah Hogarty, Jamis Kocis, Jenelys Love Marrero, Audrey Neeland, Audrey Puchalski, Katie Record, Jayden Sargent

Grade 7

High Honors: Kalena Fortner, Marina Jennings, Archie McDonald, Georgia Myers, Jude Sargent

Honors: Olivia Barker, Kestrel Brousseau, Alexander Cournoyer, Noah Damaso, Grayson De Oliveira, Tucker Faber, Autumn Gatchell, Alexa Heersink, Jacob Hull, Avery Manbeck, Bao Novotny, Cooper O'Brien, Benjamin Shamp, Mikai Shepherd, Brooklyn Sherman-Wessell, Emma Stacy

Recognition: Jason Daniels, Hayden Ferguson, Moira O'Neill, Samantha Stillitano, Harbor Wotton

Grade 8

High Honors: Carolina Ahearn, Grace Audet, Georgia Cross, Nathaniel Drake, Ava Eaton, Jax Golden, Sophia Groves, Scarlett Hogarty, Emma Johnson, Abigail Keser, James McHugh, Kaitlyn McQuiston, Stella Puchalski, Lily Smock, Caroline Walen

Honors: Isabella Amlaw, Rhys Asikainen, Jacob Bickoff, Ayla Calabrese, Ava Carlone, Zoe Cloutier, Colby Deary, Alexander DeCarli, Charlotte Donovan, Kaylee Letourneau, Haven Magnan, Tristen Maloney, Oliver Moulton, Patrick Raftery, Abel Rigney, Erin Russell, Muhammad Zameer

Recognition: Drake Abdulloviski, James Carlone, William Collige, Zachary Dusoe, Summer Goodell, Henry Griffin, Hailee James, Daniel Jameson, Owen Murdock, Colbie O'Connor, Luana Portilla, Rainie Singleton, Zahra Troy, Lauren Young

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Putnam rings in the holidays with Dazzle Light Parade

PUTNAM — The Annual Holiday Dazzle Light Parade in Putnam stepped off for the 22nd year, lighting up the night with more than 150 floats, displays, and vehicles making their way through the center of town to celebrate the official kickoff of the holiday. Participants from throughout Northeastern Connecticut used the parade as an opportunity to spread some holiday cheer as countless spectators lined the roadways from Grove Street down to the corner of Kennedy Drive and Providence Street to catch a glimpse of the festivities. WINY Radio, whose leader Gary O. has traditionally served as parade MC, was the Grand Marshall leading the parade in a different capacity in 2023.

Jason Bleau

At left: Gary O., leader of community radio station WINY in Putnam, has usually served as the MC leading the parade through town, however 2023 was even more special as WINY was named the Grand Marshall with Gary's entire staff on hand to celebrate.



Relay for Life of Northeastern Connecticut used the parade to spread the word of their 2024 event coming in June.



The Brooklyn Fair embraced agriculture for its float as the annual event prepares for another successful year in 2024.



The Danielson Veterans Coffeehouse included a variety of decorated military vehicles in the parade as onlookers cheered on the veterans behind the wheel.



Killingly FFA had a few fun additions to the parade for 2023, namely these equine marchers.



Cub Scout Pack 9059 of Canterbury waves to the crowd as their float heads through Putnam.



Local Girl Scouts embraced their holiday spirit dressing as colorful Christmas lights to light up the night.



Creation Church of Thompson entertained parade viewers with a series of songs from a live band.

Putnam rings in the holidays with Dazzle Light Parade



Stonehurst, a wedding destination in Hampton, brought a unique vehicle for their display showing off one of their trolley-style buses.



Countless colorful holiday characters filled the parade route as it seemed every entry had some kind of mascot to entertain spectators.



JSC Management Group, which operates several local Burger Kings, pulled out all the stops for their float, not only displaying the restaurant logo, but also handing out fresh made burgers and including the likenesses of the King and his rival mascots, Wendy and Ronald McDonald.



ReMax brought their famous hot air balloon torch for 2023 where they embraced the theming of "The Polar Express."



One of many festive vehicles decorated for the occasion, sights like these were common along the parade route.



Danielson Martial Arts brought nearly their entire class of students for the parade, many giving personal demonstrations on the back of a moving float.



The Grinch proved to be a popular character for many floats in the parade, although it seemed most were embracing his more festive persona.

PIANOS

continued from page A1

supporting vital services not generally covered by insurance and ensuring that our patients continue to receive high-quality, compassionate in-home care programs.”

“We were so excited to bring Savage Pianos to Northeast Connecticut again this year, and it was topped off by an overwhelming response from the community with a sell-out crowd in attendance,” said Director of Development Kristen Willis, Day Kimball Healthcare. “This was more than a fundraiser in support of our at-home services of HomeCare, HomeMakers, and Hospice and Palliative Care; it was a joyous celebration of the community support that we receive for a vital part of the continuum of care at DKH and the skilled and compassionate caregivers who make that care possible.”

Special thanks go to the community members and local business owners who made the evening possible through sponsorships, raffle donations, dessert platter donations, and ticket sales. Diamond Record Sponsors of the event included Linemaster Switch, Putnam Walmart and Sever Pharma Solutions. Weiss, Hale, & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Partners were the Platinum Record Sponsors while Gold Record Sponsors included Gerardi Insurance Hill Group, Heritage Valley Ford, Rick & Amy Ponte, Putnam Plastics Corporation, and Rawson Materials. Hit Single Sponsors

included Amplisound Hearing Care Centers, Christopher Heights of Webster, Grohing Houses into Homes, and The Medlyns. Top 100 Sponsors were Saul and Sandra Ahola, Daughters of the Holy Spirit, Peter Deary & Kim Lane, Jewett City Savings Bank, Jezierski Plumbing & Heating, Inc., Dennis and Kathie Kelly, NE CT Healthcare Credit Union, and David and Judith Rzuclidlo

Day Kimball Healthcare at Home, a service division of Day Kimball Healthcare, offers a wide range of compassionate and personalized in-home care services throughout Northeast Connecticut. Day Kimball Healthcare at Home's services include Day Kimball HomeCare, Day Kimball HomeMakers, and Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Connecticut. Learn more at www.daykimball.org/athome or call (860) 928-0422.

About Day Kimball Health

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

FIRE

continued from page A1

that are very close to the mill site did have melted siding, but no other damage. While they did initially have to evacuate properties to secure the site, they were able to allow those residents back into their homes. Nobody got displaced and there were no injuries or fatalities, which is really stellar work by our firefighters,” said Calorio.

The mill was demolished following the fire as it had become a safety hazard. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Environmental Protection Agency reported to the scene to monitor the situation while the Connecticut State Police Major Crimes Unit and State Fire Marshall's Office have taken over the investigation. As of this report, no official cause has been determined.

Unfortunately, the fire has significantly impacted plans for the site. Killingly was preparing to begin site remediation with the help of a \$250,000 Community Investment Fund Grant and a significant portion of another grant from the EPA. The goal was to prepare the property for potential buyers. Now that the mill is gone the town will not be able to proceed, putting the grant funding in a state of flux.

“The original grants afforded the opportunity to finalize environmental testing and do remediation. That's not feasible any longer because it's now demolished. It's not accessible to remediate anymore. The fire completely changes that. The Community Investment Fund money that we had was going to provide conceptual feasibility and community engagement into what made sense going forward as well as what that would look like for renovation. Clearly, we can't move forward with that either, there's no longer a building there. That completely changes the availability of those funds and, likewise, there's not exactly available funds that we're aware of at the moment for the town to access for removal of debris. All of that debris has to now be tested and a plan has to be developed with the EPA as to what that removal will even look like. It's far more complicated and, likely, far more expensive,” Calorio explained.

The destruction of the mill has also eliminated any hope that a potential buyer could benefit from historic preservation tax credits now that anything historic about the site has been lost.

Although the loss of the mill erases a lot of hard work, Calorio said those efforts should not be ignored. She commended Economic Development Director Jill St. Clair for her tireless efforts to pursue the grants and said it was difficult for everyone to see the mill destroyed.

“It's hard to watch all of that work disappear in front of you, but we're all committed to finding that path forward for this property,” said Calorio. “I really want to commend all of the various agencies that responded to the scene. Everyone from our fire departments to Eversource, CT DEEP and the EPA, it was a multi-agency response and I appreciate the level of dedication on that site to help manage the situation.”



Fire crews attack a fully involved fire that destroyed the historic Ballouville Mill in Killingly.

A Victorian Christmas at Roseland Cottage

WOODSTOCK — Step back in time and see Roseland Cottage decorated for the holidays as featured in Victorian Homes magazine. Woodstock's festive Pink House, a National Historic Landmark, will be open for tours on Saturday, Dec. 9 and Sunday, Dec. 10 from noon to 4 p.m., at no charge. No reservations are required. Tours are on a first come, first served basis.

Costumed interpreters will lead visitors through the first floor of the museum, decorated according to the Bowens' written account of the family Christmas of 1887. Such accounts are rare—Roseland Cottage is fortunate to have such a detailed record to share with the public. The special tour will highlight the traditions, decorations, and festivities that were a part of the Bowen family's holiday. Included is an explanation of why, by law, Christmas Day fell on Dec. 26 in 1887.

“Each topic is addressed by a different family member. The memoir is full of humor which may cause more groans than chuckles,” according to Roseland Cottage Site Manager Laurie Masciandaro.

In addition to free first floor tours, tea will be served in the carriage room at 1 p.m. on both days. Tea, hot cider, cookies, other holiday treats, and every Victorian's favorite teatime snack, cucumber sandwiches, will be served. Reservations for tea are required. Tickets can be purchased on the Historic New England Web site. For more information, call or email Roseland Cottage at 860-928-4074 or RoselandCottage@HistoricNewEngland.org.

How to clear out home office clutter

Home offices have garnered more attention in recent years. Restrictions implemented as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic forced many professionals to start working from home, which created a greater need for home office space.

Though millions of professionals have now returned to the office full-time, millions more have continued to work from home five days a week or are now working on a hybrid schedule. As a result, home office spaces have maintained their utility even as restrictions related to the pandemic move further into the rearview mirror.

Since home office spaces remain vital for so many, it's important that these spaces are conducive to productivity. Conquering home office clutter is a step in that direction.

- Cut through the piles of paper. Home offices have a tendency to transform into paper repositories over time. Work files, notes, monthly bills, receipts, and junk mail



can quickly overwhelm a home office. Professionals who spend ample time working from home can resolve to cut through the piles of paper. Use a paper shredder to discard documents with sensitive information, such as bank statements and utility bills. Signing up for e-statements can prevent the piling up of paper in the future. Invest in a small file cabinet to store important personal and professional documents.

- Discard old devices. Old devices are another space eater in many home offices. In fact, a recent survey from Material Focus found that more than 20 million

unused electrical items are currently hoarded in homes throughout the United Kingdom. Old smartphones and laptops that users are afraid to throw out can be wiped clean and discarded in adherence with local laws. Contact your local government to determine how to safely discard old devices rather than simply tossing them in the trash once they've been wiped clean.

- Buy a bigger bookshelf. Home offices often double as reading rooms, which makes them vulnerable to clutter associated with leisure time as well. Books stacked in a corner or taking up space

on your desk can create a cluttered look, but also compromise your ability to concentrate. A 2011 study from researchers at Princeton University published in The Journal of Neuroscience found that clutter can make it difficult to focus on a particular task. If books are strewn about your office, purchase a bookshelf that can hold them. Once books are shelved, the less cluttered space can make it easier to concentrate.

- Go digital. If space is limited, forgo traditional file cabinets in favor of digitizing important records and documents. Scan important receipts and statements and store them on a desktop or backup hard drive so they're never out of each. This creates space and makes it easier and quicker to find important files.

Home offices can quickly become overwhelmed with clutter. Some simple strategies can help any professional transform their home offices into more organized spaces.



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OBITUARIES

Albert L. Cormier, 80



Putnam – “On the Wings of Love” Albert Louis Cormier, 80, of Vandale Street, passed away peacefully on Sunday, November 26, 2023, at Hartford Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut, after an unexpected illness. Born on July 24, 1943, in Putnam, Connecticut, Al was the son of the late Louis V. and Eva (Marion) Cormier and resided in Putnam for the majority of his life. He attended St. Mary’s School and Marianapolis Preparatory School, graduating from St. Francis College (University of New England) in Biddeford, Maine, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in French in 1967.

After enlisting in the U.S. Army in 1968, Al studied at the 528th Military Intelligence School at Fort Meade, Maryland, in the Interrogation Prisoners of War School, and was assigned to the 25th Infantry Division – 25th Military Intelligence Detachment at Cu Chi, halfway between Saigon, Vietnam, and Cambodia, where he served from August 1968 until November 1969, receiving a Bronze Star Medal for his service. He then served in the Army Reserves until 1974 and enlisted in the Connecticut Army National Guard in 1981, retiring as a Major in January 2001. Al was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal from the U.S. Army, Medal of Merit from the State of Connecticut, and the Meritorious Service Award with Bronze Medal from the Selective Service System. His combined military career spanned 26 years.

In November 1974, Al married his sweetheart, Joyce Jewell, at St. Joseph Church in North Grosvenordale; together, they had two daughters, Carrie and Mandy, as well as two grandsons, Marcus and Miller. Al worked at area schools as a teacher, counselor, and administrator for 40 years, retiring from The Woodstock Academy in June 2010 after 22 years. As a beloved and highly respected educator, Al provided wisdom, humor, and love as he supported countless students and colleagues in Northeastern Connecticut. He had the ability to truly see the good in everyone as he provided the guidance that so many high school students needed. Because Al believed in them, he inspired them to believe in themselves. Beyond his work as a counselor, he coached soccer and used his GI Bill to earn graduate degrees, including a Master of Arts Degree in Psychology and Counseling from Assumption College. He was involved in numerous student, counseling, professional, and community service-related activities and organizations at the local, state, regional, and national levels and received countless awards and hon-

ors over his lifetime, including the Warren E. Shull National Student Council Adviser of the Year Award from the National Association of Student Councils (NASC/NASSP) in 1998 and the Melvin Jones Fellow Award from the Lions Clubs International Foundation in 2014.

A dedicated community member, Al was active with the American Legion Post 13 and was a member of the Danielson Veterans Coffeehouse. He conducted a Veterans Coffee House at Matulaitis Nursing Home and was a member of the Military Officers Association, the 25th Infantry Division Association, and AMVETS. In addition, he was a Life Member of VFW Post 1523 in Putnam, the Putnam Knights of Columbus, and the Putnam Lions Club, where he founded the Putnam Leo Club and served as an adviser-team member.

Called “Chief” by those close to him, Al loved spending time with his wife and family, as well as attending Putnam and Thompson senior luncheons and ROMEO breakfasts with his retired teacher friends. He adored his two grandsons and was able to share in the joys of their activities. He is survived by his wife, Joyce (Jewell) Cormier; his daughters Carolyn (Cormier) Rienneau (and her husband Christopher, and their sons, Marcus and Miller) and Amanda (Cormier) Bernat (and her husband, James); his sisters Claire (Cormier) Emond (and her husband, Philip) and Janet (Cormier) LaBelle (and her husband, John) and their families; as well as his sisters-in-law Jane Ellison and Sandra LaBonte (and her husband, Lawrence); many cousins, nieces, nephews, and their families; and countless close friends, who were an extension of his family.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Al’s family from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 3, 2023, in the Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory, 104 Church Street, Putnam, CT 06260. Additional calling hours will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Monday, December 4, 2023, also in the Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 a.m. at St. Mary’s Church, 218 Providence Street, Putnam, CT 06260. Burial will follow at 12:00 p.m. in West Thompson Cemetery, Riverside Drive, Thompson, CT. A memorial guestbook is available at www.gilmanandvalade.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Al’s memory may be made to the Putnam II Leo Club, P.O. Box 535, Putnam, CT 06260-0535 or the Danielson Veterans Coffeehouse, c/o Putnam Elks Lodge, 64 Edmond Street, Putnam, CT 06260-2221.



Claire M. Gregoire, 74



Claire M. Gregoire, 74, of Dayville, CT passed away, after a brief illness on Thursday, November 16, 2023 at Hartford Hospital in Hartford, CT. She was born on January 3, 1949 in Putnam, CT, daughter of the late Raymond A. and Dolores (LaBelle) Mathieu. Claire was the beloved wife of the late Victor J. Gregoire for 40 years, he died February 5, 2023.

Claire graduated from Killingly High School and from Eastern Connecticut State University with her BA in English. She then went on to obtain her Masters in Theater. She was a Communicant of St. Anne’s Church, St. Joseph Church and Our Lady of LaSalette Church. Claire was an actor, director and helper

at the Bradley Play House. She worked as an Interpreter for Old Sturbridge Village, spinning and weaving textiles. Claire had a passion for all animals. Most of her pets were rescues from shelters.

She leaves her brother Raymond J. Mathieu of Gorham, Maine and several nieces and nephews. In lieu of flowers, Donations in her memory can be made to NECCOG Animal Shelter, 125 Putnam Pike, Dayville, CT 06241

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 10:00 AM at Our Lady of La Salette Church, 25 Providence Road, Brooklyn, CT, burial followed at St. Joseph Cemetery, Dayville, CT. Calling hours were held on Monday, November 27, 2023 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Gagnon and Costello Funeral Home, 33 Reynolds Street, Danielson, CT. Share a memory at Gagnonandcostellofh.com

Elaine Barbeau Femino

Brooklyn, CT - Elaine (Viens) Barbeau Femino passed away on November 13, 2023. Born October 30, 1943 in Putnam, CT to the late Archie Viens and Lillian (Lacombe) Viens.

After graduation from Killingly High School (1961) she attended Roger Williams General Hospital, School of Nursing in Providence, RI and graduated as an RN (1964).

Her nursing career spanned decades with the most rewarding years practicing at Pierce Memorial Baptist Home, Brooklyn, CT. She cared for generations of families having spent 52 years there as an RN in various capacities.

Elaine is survived by her husband, Joseph E. Femino, whom she married in 2000.

Also survived by daughter Michelle E. Barbeau, son Marc J. Barbeau (and spouse Dawn), granddaughter Stephanie M. Daley and sister Jeanine V. Lisee Haggerty. Elaine is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

She is also survived by step-children

Robin Stott, Joseph Femino Jr., Janet Coburn and Sherry Femino. Also four step-grandchildren and 2 step great grandchildren.

She was predeceased by first husband Joseph L. Barbeau in 1988, an infant son in 1966 and her brother Raymond P. Viens in 2016.

Elaine loved to be with family and friends. She always had a ready smile and was eager to enjoy country dancing, riding on the motorcycle and the trike with Joe. Dinner out with girlfriends was always welcomed. Many trips to the casinos brought her much pleasure.

Spending time with granddaughter Stephanie meant the world to her, whether it be playing cards, teaching simple cooking skills or just chatting.

Elaine’s wishes were for no memorial service and that your memories of good times together keep you smiling.

Remember her RED cowboy boots and the song “Prop Me Up By The Jukebox When I Die”.

FOOD DRIVE

continued from page A1

ies donating to people they don’t even know,” Trooper Tucker said. “You have people from the community spending their hard-earned money for people they’ll never meet. These people are giving to others so they can enjoy Thanksgiving as well. It’s a great point of contact and it’s great for us as police officers to be out here having positive interaction with the community and doing our part.”

The Putnam Police Department also chips in every year stationing officers at Price Chopper

in Riverfront Commons to assist in the program. Mard Coderre, an auxiliary officer with the Putnam Police Department, said they look forward to Handcuff Hunger every year because it brings out the best in everyone involved.

“The community is always very generous with giving a lot of turkeys, hams, canned goods, monetary donations, and all of that. Sometimes you see families that are so generous that it’s overwhelming. People are so kind and caring so it’s a great example of the giving nature of this community. You meet so many people doing this and you get to form a good

report with these people,” said Coderre.

Although Handcuff Hunger has come and gone, the giving season will continue into December as the Connecticut State Police prepare for the Christmas holiday season with their annual toy drives for the Tommy Toy Fund. Like handcuff hunger, the police will be stationed at numerous local stores like Walmart in Putnam and Brooklyn, Target in Killingly, Ocean State Job Lot in Brooklyn and possibly a few Dollar General stores. The Chaplin Fire Department will also be collecting toys on Dec. 2 with the help of the State Police.

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LEGALS

TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
The Planning & Zoning Commission approved the following application with conditions on 11/16/23: #659-09-23 Woodstock Inn Associates, c/o Robert Reger, 94 Plaine Hill Rd – 3-lot re-sub-division (map 5781 block 50 lot 04B). Chairman Jeffrey Marcotte. December 1, 2023

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF Marcia Melton (23-00402)
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated November 14, 2023, 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:
Aaron D. Clymens, 12706 Willow Grove Way, Huntersville, NC 28078
December 1, 2023

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF Mary Rose Mills (23-00385)
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated November 14, 2023, 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:
Jennifer Lynn Mills, 175 Goodwin Road, Unit A, Canterbury, CT 06331
Gordon Mark Mills Jr., 175 Goodwin Road, Unit A, Canterbury, CT 06331
December 1, 2023

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF Susan E. McMahon (23-00395)
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated November 21, 2023, 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:
Candace Foster
c/o JAMIE DAVIS ALEMAN,
LAW OFFICE OF JAMIE DAVIS
ALEMAN, LLC, 33 BROAD STREET,
DANIELSON, CT 06239
Kathryn Huntington
c/o JAMIE DAVIS ALEMAN,
LAW OFFICE OF JAMIE DAVIS
ALEMAN, LLC, 33 BROAD STREET,
DANIELSON, CT 06239
December 1, 2023

Woodstock Hist Dist Comm public hearing Nov 15, 6:30 pm for Town of Woodstock replacement of historical marker and Dawson 582 Rt 169 for security cameras. Zoom. G. Usher, Chair.
December 1, 2023

Woodstock Hist Dist Comm public hearing Dec 6, 6:30 pm for Dawson 582 Rt 169 for mailbox; Atwood 493 Rt 169 for generator. Zoom. G. Usher,

Chair.
December 1, 2023

Town of Eastford Connecticut Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission Notice of Decision
On November 16, 2023, the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission made the following decision:
• **File # 23-004 Jeff Love, Route 44 Map 35, Block 25, Lot 2, Eastford, CT. Driveway with two wetlands crossings. DENIED DUE TO INCOMPLETE APPLICATION.**

Details can be found in the minutes filed at the Town Clerk’s Office, Town Office Building, 16 Westford Road, Eastford, CT. Dated at Eastford this 21st day of November 2023.
Susan Welshman
Recording Secretary
December 1, 2023

Woodstock Building Associates opens new workshop in Putnam's historic Candy Company building



PUTNAM — This fall, Woodstock Building Associates, LLC, finished a restoration project in Putnam, turning a historic but derelict building into a large, airy carpentry workshop for the benefit of their clients, their tradespeople and the neighborhood. Woodstock Building Associates completely renovated the property for their needs while

maintaining original structural features and some architectural details. The site brings a fresh look and positive economic growth to Woodstock Avenue.

“The town is delighted to see the redevelopment of this property,” said Putnam’s Director of Economic and Community Development Carly

DeLuca. “Putnam has a rich history of entrepreneurs, and this structure is giving way to that next generation. It’s important to continue developing Putnam as a walkable community. Investing in areas of town—not just the Downtown—is essential to making that a reality. It is especially cool to see this building with its historical significance being renovated. I com-

mend the folks at WBA for taking on this project.”

Originally built in 1938, the building has had several uses over its 85-year existence. In the 1940s, it was home to Kelly Tire before they moved to their current School Street location. Union Textile and Engraving used the space for manufacturing in the 1950s. After the 1955 flood, the lower level was used by a local car dealer for storage until their new building was completed on Pomfret Street.

Most locals will remember the building as the Putnam Candy Company. This business was owned and operated by Normand and Rose LaRose and later Thomas Beaudry and his family. The business eventually closed, and the building lay vacant for several years before being purchased by WBA.

According to DeLuca, “One member of the Historical Society, Jeanne Benoit, remembers her father, a barber, would go in to buy 100 lollipops every week.” Many local civic groups bought their fundraising supplies from Putnam Candy Company.

The renovated space at 60 Woodstock Ave. features 2,600sf on the main floor plus a full lower level for storage. The wide open floor plan has work benches along either side and wooden racks at the back for trim storage. WBA Managing Partner Doug Porter says that while they completely renovated the building—fully abating asbestos and updating all mechanicals including electric, heat and plumbing—they also retained some original features, including beautiful wood flooring, doors and hardware. They even saved metal racks once used for candy to be used for lumber storage in the basement.

“We tried to maintain the character of the building, but it should be good for the next 30 years,” says Porter.

WBA is well known for custom mud rooms, bathrooms and kitchen projects as well as additions and new homes. They also provide plumbing and heating services, including Mitsubishi mini split systems. The entire building will be heated and cooled with Mitsubishi heat pumps. The large, open space is ideal for making and finishing trim work and cabinetry.

“We wanted a place to work so we don’t interfere with clients in their houses,” says Porter. “We can fabricate everything here and bring to clients’ homes so we don’t interrupt their day to day lives.”

The building’s original five-by-eight-foot front door is wide enough for deliveries and will be ideal for WBA to move cabinetry in and out. The lower level is perfect for storing cabinetry, plumbing supplies or other large items if a building site is not ready for installation. The building is also conveniently located just three minutes from WBA’s new office and showroom space in Woodstock’s Village Plaza.

Steven Keene, WBA Architect and Head of Design & Estimating, also notes that it’s a good space for their tradespeople and to train apprentices.

“Having a nice workshop and an efficient work environment makes the guys happy, both seasoned workers and apprentices. They can get the sense that we are going to be here for a while—the knowledge of long term job security,” he said.

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