



PUTNAM VILLAGER

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Thompson Recreation renews focus on Bull Hill Recreation Area

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

THOMPSON — Talks around resolving drainage issues at the Bull Hill recreation area have resurfaced in Thompson thanks in part to urgency from a local soccer club.

The Thompson Recreation Commission received a letter from the NECONN Soccer Club based in Putnam urging the town to prioritize resolutions to ongoing issues that have halted use of the Bull Hill recreation area which once played host to local soccer leagues prior to the pandemic. Issues with drainage surfaced in the late 2010s and only a few years later the property stopped hosting sports entirely.

Alexandra Robin, the NECONN Soccer Club's Fundraising Chair, submitted a letter to Thompson Recreation Commission that sought an update on the situation at Bull Hill, noting that the last assessment of the property that was made public occurred in 2017 courtesy of UConn Department of Civil Engineering. NECONN expressed their continued stake in supporting local soccer programs and urged Thompson Recreation to provide an update regarding any further testing, a capital improvement timeline, and collaboration opportunities between the club and the town to prioritize the fields.

Turn To BULL HILL page A10

Danielson Martial Arts leader receives prestigious G.O.A.T. Honors Award



DANIELSON — Master Daryl Laperle of Danielson has been selected as a recipient of the prestigious 2026 G.O.A.T. Honors (Greatest of All Time) Martial Arts Award, recognizing his exceptional lifetime of leadership, teaching, and service to the martial arts community.

The G.O.A.T. Honors Awards, founded by Grand Master Lawrence Arthur, recognize distinguished martial artists from around the world whose lifelong commitment to excellence, leadership, instruction, and service has made a lasting impact on generations of students and instructors. The 2026 awards ceremony was held on July 25, 2026, in Lynchburg, Va.

Master Laperle began his martial arts training at the Danielson Martial Arts Academy in 1986 and earned his Black Belt in 1990. At just 18 years old, he became Chief Instructor of the academy in 1994 and has since dedicated more than three decades to teaching and mentoring students. A 7th Dan black belt in the Cheezic Tang Soo Do Federation, he set multiple federation records as its youngest 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Dan master, reflecting his lifelong commitment to technical excellence and leadership.

Throughout his distinguished career, Master Laperle has competed nationally and internationally as a member of Team USA, earning victo-

American Legion Post 67 needs you

HISTORIC POST
FACES POSSIBLE
LOSS OF
CHARTER
UNLESS LOCAL
VETERANS STEP
FORWARD

THOMPSON — For more than a century, American Legion Post 67 has represented the military veterans of Thompson. Now, after 106 years, that tradition is in danger of disappearing.

Post 67 was chartered in 1920, in the aftermath of the First World War, when communities across America were welcoming home a generation of young men who had served their country overseas. During the decades that followed, the Post became a familiar part of community life in Thompson.

Today, however, Post 67 faces a crisis that money

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Putnam Cub Scouts walk among the patriots at historic Aspinwall Cemetery



PUTNAM — On Wednesday, Aug. 5, members of Putnam, Connecticut's Cub Scout Pack 21 took a walk through more than three centuries of local history when they visited historic Aspinwall Cemetery, one of the oldest burial grounds in northeastern Connecticut.

Led by Scoutmaster John Ryan, the Cub Scouts toured the cemetery and visited the graves of more than 40 local veterans of the American Revolution. Their guide for the evening was Putnam resident, local author and historian Michael Rocchetti, Commander of the Mayotte-Viens Post #13, American Legion, in Putnam.

As the Scouts moved among the weathered slate and stone markers, Rocchetti told them about the men from Killingly, Pomfret, Woodstock and the surrounding communities who answered the call to arms during America's War of Independence from 1775 to 1783. "This cemetery is hallowed ground," Rocchetti told the Scouts, "because it is the final resting place of the local men and women who sacrificed so much for our freedom."

A cemetery older than the United States

of European settlement in what is now Putnam. Lieutenant Peter Aspinwall, one of the area's earliest settlers, donated land for use as a community burial ground in the early 1700s. At the time, the area was part of the much larger town of Killingly. Putnam itself would not be incorporated until 1855.

The cemetery contains the graves of generations of the region's earliest families, along with town leaders, ministers, soldiers and community figures. Some of its surviving slate grave-stones date from the first half of the 18th century.

Many of the Revolutionary War veterans buried at Aspinwall Cemetery first entered military service following the fighting at Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. When news of the fighting reached Connecticut, militia companies throughout the colony mobilized and began marching toward Massachusetts. Men from Killingly, Pomfret, Woodstock and neighboring towns were among them.

A remarkable number of the men now buried at Aspinwall Cemetery appear on the surviving rolls of northeastern Connecticut militia companies responding to what became known as the Lexington Alarm.

Some served only a matter of days during the original alarm. Others soon enlisted for longer periods and went on to fight throughout the Revolution.

For the Cub Scouts walking among their graves more than 250 years later, these were no longer simply names printed in a history book. They had been farmers, tradesmen, fathers, sons and neighbors who once lived along the same roads and in the same communities the Scouts know today. Each grave represents a different piece of the larger struggle for American independence.

A family tradition of service

One striking aspect of Aspinwall Cemetery is the number of families represented by more than one Revolutionary War veteran. In an era when communities were small and extended families often lived close together, military service became a shared family experience. Fathers marched beside sons. Brothers served together. Neighbors found themselves standing in the same militia formations. For a community such as Killingly, the Revolution was not a distant event taking place somewhere else. It reached directly into local

Turn To WALK page A12

Chelsea Groton Foundation awards grant to Ragged Hill Woods program



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

The Foundation’s mission is to support their ongoing commitment in partnership to the long term growth in the local community. We are very grateful for this award

which will allow us to keep tuition costs as low as possible to allow access to more participants. This is the second year that we have received support from this Foundation and as you can see, it made a lot of campers smile.

Our fall homeschool days for children in second through fifth grades will run from 12:30 – 3:30 p.m. on Mondays as follows: Sept. 14 – Nature Detective Training, September 21 – Mapmakers and Trailblazers, Sept. 28 – Tree Time Travelers, October 5 – Forest

Feasts: Seeds, Nuts, and Survival, Oct. 19 – Forest Floor Recycling Crew and Oct. 26 – Rocks, Roots and Hidden Trails. Cost is \$45 per child per class or \$250 for all six weeks. Topics are being selected for our six week Wednesday afternoon programs from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. for children from Kindergarten to grade 6 from Sept. 9 to Oct. 21. All programs are held rain or shine. You can email raggedhillwoods@gmail.com to inquire about topics and specific dates for this series.

For Advertising Information Call 860-928-1818 Ext. 326 email: mikaela@villagernewspapers.com

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TOWN OF POMFRET POSITION OPENING – HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Qualified self-starter wanted for Town of Pomfret Highway Department. Must hold Class B CDL license/valid medical card and have a background in operating heavy equipment. Position includes, but is not limited to, assignments on all municipal road work including road grading, snowplowing, landscaping, building maintenance, and any other duties as needed and assigned. Five years of driving/equipment operation experience is preferred. Thirty-five hour work week but must be available to work nights and weekends as needed, able to lift up to 100 pounds, possess mechanical aptitude in heavy equipment repair, pass a DOT physical and drug screen, and consent to random drug/alcohol testing as required by the DOT. Salary dependent upon qualifications and experience. Attractive benefit package. Interested persons should forward resume/application and three references to the Selectman’s Office, 5 Haven Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259 on or before August 26, 2026. Application form available at www.pomfretct.gov/first-selectmans-office . EEO/AA

TOWN OF POMFRET PART-TIME ASSISTANT TREASURER

The Town of Pomfret seeks to hire a PT Assistant Treasurer. Responsibilities include receipt and deposit of town funds, reconciliation of accounts, processing purchase orders and invoices for disbursement, transfer of funds and entry of expenses into town’s accounting system, and perform any and all duties as may be required with this position and as required under CT General Statutes. Work in cooperation with municipal officials and provides financial reports as needed. Must be able to work independently. Flexible work hours. Offices closed on Fridays. Knowledge of Tyler Infinite Vision Accounting Software preferred. Five years of related experience in accounting/bookkeeping, municipal work is a plus. Salary dependent upon qualifications and experience. Interested persons should forward resume/application and three references to the Selectman’s Office, 5 Haven Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259 or email Selectmansclerk@pomfretct.gov on or before August 31, 2026. Application and full job description is available at www.pomfretct.gov/first-selectmans-office . EEO/AA

LiR-QV Open House

DANIELSON — The public is welcome to attend a Fall Open House sponsored by Learning in Retirement (LiR-QV) on Friday, Aug. 21, at 1 p.m. in the Killingly Community Center, 185 Broad St., Danielson.

All are welcome to hear about the Fall programs and enjoy a presentation by noted storyteller and journalist Mike

Allen, on The Importance of Connecticut to the Revolution. Connecticut played an important role in winning independence from the British Empire.

Many local figures contributed to the formation of the new country, while Connecticut earned the nickname “the provision state” because of its sup-

plies of food and ammunition to the Continental Army. Light refreshments will be served following the program.

LiR-QV programs are held on Monday and Fridays, from September through November. Space is limited. For further information about LiR visit lir-qv.org



Courtesy

Putnam Cub Scout Pack 21 is grateful to receive a \$150 donation from St. Mary’s Circle 543, Daughters of Isabella, of Putnam, to support the pack’s programs. Regent Sue Levesque is shown here, presenting the gift to Pack 21 Cubmaster Christopher Jodoin. Most things the pack does, such as filed trips, camping and their just-completed summer camp, costs money, and help from the Daughters of Isabella and the pack’s other supporters makes it possible. We couldn’t support our children without support from them. Pack 21 does fun and educational things all year long, guided by trained and experienced adults. Pack 21 welcomes boys and girls ages five through ten. To join, call John Ryan at (860) 928-5873 and leave a message.

Goodwin University announces President’s List

EAST HARTFORD — Goodwin University’s President’s List for the spring 2026 session includes 306 students, all of whom scored a perfect 4.0 GPA.

Among the local students named to the Dean’s List were Danielle Bakanowsky and Haley Bruley of Danielson.

Goodwin University in East Hartford, Connecticut, is an innovative learning community that empowers hard-working students to become sought-after employees. We tailor our programs to address the needs of employers, and we shape them to fit the lives of students. Classes are conveniently offered year-round - days, evenings, weekends, and online. Degrees may be flexibly layered across certificate, associate, bachelor’s, and master’s programs in a variety of in-demand fields. Better still, we surround our students with the personal support and the professional guidance they need - not just to earn degrees, but to change lives for themselves, their families, and their communities. For more information, please visit www.goodwin.edu.

Benson-Flugal Legion Post sponsors Concert on the Green

WOODSTOCK — The Benson-Flugal American Legion Post 111 is sponsoring the annual Concert on the Green on Aug. 20.

The concert starts at 6 p.m. on the South Woodstock town green. Bring your own chairs and enjoy the music. Our post will be selling food and beverages.

Quiet Corner Al-Anon group meets Wednesdays

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

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

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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

One more call to service

For more than a century, generations of Thompson veterans have made certain that those who served before them were remembered. Now, American Legion Post 67 needs another generation to step forward.

The situation facing the Post is serious. Chartered in 1920, Post 67 has survived for 106 years, through enormous changes in Thompson and in the nation itself. Yet its future is threatened by a problem familiar to veterans organizations throughout New England: declining membership and, more importantly, a shortage of members willing and able to take on leadership responsibilities.

There is something particularly unfortunate about the possibility that Post 67 could disappear. This is not an organization without history, property or potential. It has all three.

Its Thompson Hill Road property includes a substantial building of approximately 9,000 square feet, with meeting and recreation areas, a bar, a large upstairs function room and a commercial-style kitchen. Outside are ample parking, picnic tables and a covered barbecue area.

In other words, Thompson does not need to build a veterans center from scratch. Generations before us already did the difficult part. What is needed now are people willing to keep it alive.

That distinction matters because it would be easy to look at declining membership and conclude that the era of organizations such as the American Legion has simply passed. Perhaps Americans do not join civic organizations as readily as they once did. Perhaps younger veterans have different interests and different demands on their time. But organizations can change without abandoning their purpose.

Post 67 does not need to recreate 1950 or 1975. It needs to determine what a veterans organization should look like in Thompson in 2026 and beyond.

Its building alone offers possibilities. Functions, community dinners, veterans breakfasts, fundraisers, reunions and other events could help transform the property into an active community gathering place while generating revenue to support its operation. More important, the Post can continue serving as a connection between generations.

The veterans of World War I who established Post 67 eventually gave way to those who served in World War II. They were followed by veterans of Korea and Vietnam and, later, the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan. That succession did not happen automatically. At some point, someone had to accept the responsibility. That moment has arrived again.

The request being made of Thompson's veterans is not that hundreds suddenly become active Legion members. The immediate need is far more achievable. Post 67 needs a relatively small group of responsible veterans willing to provide leadership, examine the organization's finances and property, work with American Legion officials and develop a sustainable plan.

Military service teaches many things, among them responsibility, teamwork and the understanding that sometimes a job belongs to whoever is willing to step forward and do it. Those qualities are needed here.

There is also something larger at stake than ownership of a building. Veterans organizations have long helped communities understand why Memorial Day and Veterans Day matter. They have maintained traditions, supported young people, participated in ceremonies and ensured that the names and sacrifices of earlier generations were not forgotten.

Once an institution carrying 106 years of that history disappears, recreating it is extraordinarily difficult. That is why the time to act is before the doors close, not afterward.

Post 67 has survived the Great Depression, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War, the attacks of Sept. 11 and two decades of war that followed.

Its greatest challenge should not be finding a handful of people willing to carry it into its second century.

The veterans who founded Post 67 in 1920 could not know who would come after them. They built something anyway, trusting that future generations would find value in preserving it. For more than a century, that trust was honored.

Thompson's veterans now have an opportunity to honor it once again. Post 67 needs a few people willing to answer one more call to service. This time, the place they are being asked to serve is home.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Vote Blue no matter who?

To the Editor:

The Democrat party has been joined (and is often controlled) by supporters of socialism / Communism and antisemitism in many of its most important and largest precincts. I recently heard longtime influential Democrats (Bill Maher and James Carville) say that the party's leaders better separate immediately and vehemently from these un-American influences or lose both houses in November.

Towards that end, two Democrats (U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi / D-New York and Congressional candidate Adam Gray / D-California) penned a pledge for all their Democrat Congressional colleagues to sign in order to get the "We ain't socialists" ball rolling. Their "Promise To America" read ... "We are capitalists, not socialists. We want safety not lawlessness. We are proud, not ashamed of America." Ten out of 212 Democrat Congress folks signed the pledge. Seriously - 10 out of 212 - less than 5 percent of our Congressional Democrats signed this simple pro USA pledge. Democrat "anti Americanism" extremists have become the party's new taste makers because the moderate DNC approach to politics has not worked - Trump is President, and

the DNC is in debt \$2 million (when they should have a \$100-million-plus war chest on the brink of mid-term elections). Many Democrats feel that going forward, they must preach "Vote Blue no matter who" in order to get Democrat traditionalists on board with the Mamdani's / AOC's / Pikers and El Sayed's as the only way to effectively unite the party.

Thinking ahead, then, the question, in my mind, becomes: If 95 percent of our Democrat Congress folks would not sign such a simple pro USA pledge - and the socialist / Communist / antisemitic leaning candidates and officeholders continue gaining in the Democrat party : how will the Democrats keep our real enemies from infiltrating our governing institutions and changing America to accomplish a socialist / communist / hate Israel takeover? I'll be looking for answers and I hope they come very soon in order to keep the Democrat party viable. Free competition has made the USA strong and prosperous - we need a strong (Pro America) Democrat party and a strong Republican party to keep our blessings. Socialism / Communism will take them away.

EDWARD CLEMENT
THOMPSON

Earth — The Matrix has you!

To the Editor:

Who among us isn't concerned about artificial intelligence (AI) and the monstrous data centers that feed it? Beyond predictions that AI will eventually take our jobs, rendering us humans useless, the physical footprint of AI is becoming impossible to ignore. The U.S. currently has about 5,000 data centers, with some approaching a square mile in size. Beyond the vast tracts of land they consume, they also devour enormous amounts of water and electricity—even in regions already suffering severe shortages, such as the American Southwest.

Nothing is more fundamental to a community—or a nation—than reliable, affordable energy. Oil, first commercially drilled in Pennsylvania in 1859, transformed human civilization. But more than a century and a half later, we're realizing its enormous hidden costs: petro-states, endless conflicts, economic dependence, pollution, and, above all, climate change.

With fossil fuels, humanity has entangled itself in a system so vast, destructive, and undemocratic that it increasingly seems beyond our control. From the air conditioner to the gas pump, and now the AI data center, our insatiable appetite for energy has shaped foreign policy, driven military interventions, empowered petro-states, and turned strategic waterways such as the Strait of Hormuz into geopolitical choke points. President Trump would like us to believe America controls the fossil fuel industry, but increasingly we see the industry with a choke hold on America.

Our fossil fuel energy system has become eerily similar to the machine world in the 1999 science fiction classic "The Matrix"—everywhere, all-powerful, and nearly invisible because we have grown so accustomed to it. Like the characters in the film, we are trapped inside a system that dictates the rules, kills off any attempts at change, and destroys the world around us.

The Fossil Fuel Matrix has had a remarkable run. But every dominant system eventually faces a better alternative. As AI accelerates the demand for electricity and the Matrix begins to overheat, another path has emerged, and just in time. Breaking through the thick black cloud of fossil fuels, renewable energy offers humanity a cleaner, more democratic future—one capable of liberating us from the Matrix and perhaps even preserving the world we leave to future generations.

No country understands this better than China who has wagered its future on clean energy, and the payoff has been extraordinary. It now dominates the global manufacturing of solar panels, batteries, electric vehicles, and other green technologies—many of which were originally pioneered in the United States. As a result, China's economic influence has only grown while its dependence on oil-producing nations such as Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Iran has declined.

Meanwhile, under President Trump, the United States has chosen not to compete for this defining industry of the twenty-first century. Instead, he

has folded our cards and let China take all the chips.

Rather than embracing a cleaner, cheaper, and ultimately safer energy system, President Trump has pushed America backward toward an aging fossil fuel economy. That direction traces back to a promise he made during a 2024 meeting at Mar-a-Lago with executives from major U.S. oil companies—asking them for \$1 billion and pledging in return to reverse President Biden's clean energy initiatives and environmental protections. In the end, they gave him half a billion, and for that, he the richest industry in history everything they ever dreamed of and more.

In one example that should outrage us all, Trump has paid \$2.6 billion to wind energy companies not to build facilities that had already been fully vetted and permitted. Those wind farms would have added desperately needed electric capacity to the grid while lowering power costs for millions of households. Yes, the Fossil Fuel Matrix recognizes the threat it faces from clean energy and has entered full self-preservation mode—with American households footing the bill.

The risk that comes with fossil fuels are profound. When I began this article, smoke from 1,000 Canadian wildfires was drifting across one third of the U.S., in and out of Connecticut's Quiet Corner. Europe was into it's second month of record-breaking heat, which has killed more than 20,000 people, and Oregon was living through it's worst fire season in history. Climate-driven disasters are producing losses so severe today that they threaten the collapse of one of the world's largest and oldest industries—insurance.

And the warnings do not end there.

Scientists are increasingly concerned about the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), the vast system of ocean currents that regulate climate, rainfall, and the distribution of nutrients throughout the Atlantic Ocean. Evidence suggests the AMOC is weakening and potentially leading to a major disruption that would profoundly alter global weather, agriculture, ecosystems, and economies. It would rank among the gravest climate risks humanity has ever faced.

Either President Trump is inexcusably ignorant of these well publicized catastrophic risks to our world, or he has decided the Fossil Fuel Matrix that funds him is worth the price. Either way, the facts remain unchanged; renewable energy is now the cheapest source of new electricity on Earth, its is the fastest to deploy, and it's our best opportunity to meet the soaring energy demands of the AI age.

The choice before us is becoming impossible to ignore. We can remain trapped inside the Fossil Fuel Matrix and hope the worst risks of climate change don't materialize, or we can build the energy system that finally sets us free and leads us to a safer and cleaner future. As for the risks of AI taking over, that's another story altogether.

KEN WOLSLEGEL
WOODSTOCK



From Revolutionary songs to Danielson's whip socket past

Killingly Grange #112, 801 Hartford Turnpike, Agricultural Fair. Saturday, Aug. 15 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. Entry Day Friday, Aug. 14, 4-6 p.m. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC! Download handbook & forms from the Facebook page-www.facebook.com/KillinglyGrange/ or contact Terry Barton at 860-884-1813 or tmbartonkillinglygrange@gmail.com for additional information.

On Aug. 8, I had the great pleasure of listening to a rousing program of Revolutionary era music by Richard Franklin Donahue, Cromwell's town historian. Dressed as a Minuteman and accompanying himself on a harpsichord, Richard sang a number of songs which would have been popular in New England taverns of the era. He explained that newspapers such as the (Hartford) Courant published lengthy poems which were to be sung to well-known tunes of the day. Often, but not always, the songs themselves were mentioned. In some cases, both pro-Patriot and pro-Tory verses were composed to the same melodies. He provided the members of the audience with handouts of the words which made it very nice to follow along. He visits towns all over the region. If you have an opportunity to hear What A glorious Crash They Made, do try to attend.

While I was in Pennsylvania, I received several emails about the fire on Hawkins Street in Danielson. One individual had heard that the home had been a funeral home at one time, and wondered if I had any information about that. Now, that was a new one to me. I checked and none of the regular Killingly Historical Center volunteers had heard that either. The Center does have a number of sources that contain funeral home references, so Society president Bernie Mitchell and I started checking. Bernie looked through our directories, which go back to the late 1800's and are basically the forerunner of the telephone books. There was no mention of a funeral home on Hawkins Street, although there were several on Academy Street. I decided to check the Historic House Surveys which were done in the 1980's and 1990's. Hawkins Street was surveyed by Bruce Clouette and Mathew Roth of Historic Resources Consultants, Inc. in 1981 (See Book 7). Again, I came up empty. However, I did learn of a business which I had not known about and which intrigued me—a whip socket factory. (Remember the late 1800's are still before the age of automobiles!). Whip sockets were a necessity and were used to secure the whip when the carriage, buggy, or other vehicle was not in motion.

In 1885, Erastus W. Scott of Wauregan purchased land from Charles Hawkins at the corner of Broad and Hawkins Street "for the purpose of erecting a residence and a building to accommodate his whipsocket manufactory... his whipsockets now find their way not only to all parts of America, but also in foreign countries. He will employ at first 20 hands. (Natalie L. Coolidge-Killingly Business Encyclopedia-reference Windham County Transcript March 18, 1885). The June 30, 1886 Transcript reported that "it will be ready for occu-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Vote like your “White” House depends on it

To the Editor:

Washington, D.C. is supposed to be a shining example of our nation’s values, patriotism, and storied history. Since Trump took office, the city has become a battlefield of bulldozers and cement. According to the Atlantic’s Matt Viser, the South Lawn and the Ellipse — the 52-acre park between the White House and the Washington Monument — are completely torn up. Last month, the once-green grass became a temporary arena for a bloody UFC fight. Now, the park is a brown dirty mess. Viser describes the White House as an active construction site, cement trucks rolling through the same gates typically reserved for the president’s armored limousine, with a gaping hole where half of the building once stood.

That hole is where the East Wing used to be. Trump demolished it last October to make way for a new ballroom — a project whose price tag has climbed steadily. Trump’s own estimates rose from \$200 million when announced, to \$250 million, to \$300 million, and now to \$400 million. It was pitched as costing taxpayers nothing. But a Washington Post investigation found the project’s true cost could reach \$600 million, with roughly half of that borne by taxpayers.

Congress said no to funding it directly. This spring, Senate Republicans tried to tuck \$1 billion in Secret Service funding tied to the ballroom into a GOP reconciliation bill, only to have the Senate parliamentarian strip the provision out before it ever reached a floor vote. So, the administration found another way. In June, the White House’s own budget office quietly apportioned \$352 million from Trump’s tax cuts law for “White House Security Measures,” even though that law specifies the money can only be used for “United States Secret Service resources, including personnel, training facilities, programming, and technology.” A source familiar with the matter told the Post the funds will support construction of the new East Wing, including the 90,000-square-foot ballroom. Republican Senator Susan Collins said with frustration: “I’ve said repeatedly that the President has promised only private donations would be used for the ballroom, and I believe he should keep that promise.”

Change must start at the top

To the Editor:

It’s that time again; we’re getting bombarded with campaign ads — TV, radio, and direct mailings. Doesn’t matter if it’s Republican or Democrat, local, state, or federal races, there seems no limit on how nasty the messages can get. Politics is a dirty business — we all know that, but sorting through the noise to make the best decision in the voting booth can be very challenging. Sadly, the choice is usually “the lesser of two evils”. We end up just voting against someone.

I think most Americans agree that our political system is broken. Can it be fixed? Sure, but not without some hard work and soul-searching from the people we elect. Term limits, elimination of big money influence, and basic decency in political speech would be a good beginning. Real change has to start at the top — by example, not empty words. I’m not optimistic about that happening anytime soon.

TODD PATRIE
POMFRET CENTER

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.

Then, on Aug. 7, a federal appeals court weighed in on the ballroom itself, ruling 2-1 that the White House lacks authority to build it without Congress’s approval. The D.C. Circuit said: “Each President is a temporary tenant, not the owner, of the White House and its Executive Residence. The President has no—and claims no—constitutionally assigned authority over that property, which is designed and maintained for the use of all Presidents, current and future, and for the American people.”

The court went further, writing that it was “aware of no instance in American history in which a President unilaterally and using privately collected funds demolished substantial portions of the White House that Congress authorized to be built and American taxpayers paid for. Until now.” The panel stayed its ruling for two weeks to let the administration appeal to the Supreme Court, which Trump has said he will do.

Trump tore down part of a building that belongs to the American people, got rebuffed by his own party on direct funding, and then redirected money Congress had earmarked for something else entirely — all for a project a federal court now says he never had the authority to build in the first place.

Meanwhile, families are dealing with high gas, grocery and housing costs, and polling consistently shows Americans want leaders focused on affordability — not ego-driven construction projects, tax breaks for billionaires, and endless wars.

Now that the primary election is over, voters will choose representatives in November who will decide how taxpayer dollars are spent in Connecticut and Washington. I urge everyone to register to vote, review where Democratic midterm candidates stand on affordability issues — including housing costs and availability, property taxes, everyday expenses, and energy costs in Connecticut — and make a plan to vote.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

Democratic disconnection

To the Editor:

It ought to be crystal clear by now that the Democratic Party is completely disconnected from the majority of US voters when it comes to the welfare of women. The contrast between Democratic values and those of Republicans, whose party venerates and embodies the values of President Donald Trump, couldn’t be starker.

Consider the differences. Trump, credibly accused of sexually assaulting multiple women and adjudicated in court as having raped one according to the trial judge, was elected twice to lead this country. Republicans credibly accused of committing violence against women (and children) are serving in and running for Congress while their party offers its complete support.

Democrats quickly disown candidates and elected officials facing similar accusations. Ohio Republican Max Miller refuses to end his reelection bid despite his ex-wife’s assertions that he held a gun to her head, threw scalding water at her, and broke their daughter’s collarbone. Previously, he was accused of sexual harassment by a Republican White House staffer. Maine senatorial candidate Graham

Platner was forced by “Woke” Democrats to end his campaign after being accused of multiple assaults on women.

American voters continue to elect national candidates, almost exclusively Republican, who gleefully facilitated an ultraconservative Supreme Court majority which revoked women’s right to abortion and life-saving reproductive healthcare. Women have suffered and died as a result. No worries. Those consequences were easily predictable, but of no concern to Republicans, and the wealthy can always afford to travel wherever they need to receive reproductive healthcare.

Further proof that the welfare of women is not really important to the majority of voters is that polls indicate that Republicans could very well maintain their Senate majority or even increase it this November. Democrats need to acknowledge that issues affecting women don’t resonate with voters or, at most, are a minor consideration. Republicans get it. Domination, and often abuse, of women by MAGA leaders like Trump and Hegseth are rewarded by voters.

BILLY G. TAYLOR
KILLINGLY

Our only hope is to vote for people who care

To the Editor:

I remember a time when I didn’t obsess about politics or worry about who was in the White House, and that time spanned most of my adult life. For all of those years, I knew that no matter who was there, Democrat or Republican, someone I voted for or against, that person was a serious-minded, concerned human being who tried to do what was right for the country, keep his campaign promises if possible (even if I disagreed with them), respected the constitution, populated his cabinet with reasonable, capable people and tried to hold the United States as a shining example of freedom and democracy. In other words, I could go about the business of my life without concern for the future of democracy or a worry that my freedoms might be taken away. That was a time we could be proud of our country for maintaining enduring partnerships with our allies which helped to ensure our safety as well as theirs, for helping immigrants make their dreams become a reality, and for giving help to countries in need.

We have now entered a phase in our country’s history where the most powerful person in the United States has no apparent interest in our economy, our freedoms, our reputation, the world population and by his denial of global warming, the world itself. We wake up every morning asking ourselves

what we can do to change the trajectory of this course. The Republican lawmakers have stepped down from their jobs out of greed, fear or indifference to allow a delusional, egotistical, cruel old man to stumble around persecuting his perceived enemies and concentrating on frivolous pursuits.

Americans are starting to feel drained, mentally and physically. Our wallets are being raided while the President and his family gets richer and richer. Our fears are numerous and grounded in facts. Social Security, health care, finances, international threats, climate change, the government taking over the media, the judicial system, the educational system and law enforcement in a way reminiscent of authoritarian countries.

The Trump supporters will tell you they aren’t worried because it’s all fake news. They are willfully blind to what is actually happening. Well guess what? We now have a fake president who is rapidly going down a path of destruction and dragging us with him. The only hope left for this country is to get out there and vote for people who actually care about our future and the democracy of this country. People who will put some reins on the President and his Cabinet, and who will mend the shattered pieces of what was once a great nation.

JEAN McNALLY
WOODSTOCK

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Eastford’s Old Colony Road Bridge set for replacement



Courtesy

The Old Colony Road bridge in Eastford is set to be replaced in 2028.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

EASTFORD — Plans are in full swing to replace an aging bridge along Old Colony Road in Eastford at no cost to the town. The Connecticut Department of Transportation held a public hearing on July 28, which revealed the finer details of the replacement of the 93-year-old bridge over Bungee Brook. The \$5.2 million project, designated as Bridge No. 04642 by the DOT, is funded 80 percent by federal funds and 20 percent state funds at no cost to the town. Deborah Richards, First Selectman of Eastford, kicked off the hearing expressing she gratitude for the project. “The Town of Eastford is once again partnering with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and CHA Consulting on this important bridge replacement project. They have consistently demonstrated their expertise, professionalism, and commitment to collab-

oration, and I’m grateful for their guidance as we work together on our second bridge replacement project,” Richards said. Much of the project detail was provided by Stephany Dubina, a Senior Engineering Designer at CHA Consulting, Inc who also happens to be an Eastford resident. She explained that the bridge was constructed in 1933 and rehabbed in 1970. The 45-foot structure sees an average daily count of 949 vehicles per day. Wear and tear, age, and structural concerns all led to the bridge being a priority for CTDOT and its partners. “This bridge has a spread footing sounded on soil which is identified to be scour critical. There’s the potential that if there’s a large storm event the soil around the footings could be washed away and ultimately this is one of the primary reasons this project was taken on,” Dubina said. Also among the larger overall concerns are its inventory load rating which is below the 1.0 standard

following inspections in 2024, the scour conditions in several parts of the structure, the hydraulic performance of the bridge, and its overall age all necessitating a brand-new structure as opposed to repairs. The proposed replacement would be a single-span prestressed concrete deck unit bridge. It would be 57 feet by 6 inches with a 75-year service life and a 26-foot roadway. The foundations would be better built for scour and improve the hydraulic conditions with no weight restrictions. The current bridge has been deemed safe for travel until the construction begins. The bridge will be closed during construction with a detour planned through Old Colony Road, Schoolhouse Road, Route 244, and Route 198. The eight-month-long replacement process is expected to take place in spring 2028.



Courtesy

Nikki’s Dog House is proud to partner with the Danielson Veterans Coffeehouse by putting out their Army figurines for donations. The donations collected recently totaled \$100. Thank you to the customers that made those donations for our Veterans!





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WOODSTOCK — The Woodstock Academy Prep boys’ basketball program had a successful summer as its two Drills and Skills Basketball Camps attracted more than 100 young players from the local area.

The program, directed by Woodstock Academy Prep Head Coach Thomas

Espinosa, hosted its second camp of the summer this past week with a three-day clinic on the school’s South Campus. Approximately 50 campers participated in the latest session after nearly 60 attended the first clinic in July, bringing the summer total to more than 100 boys and girls ages six to 16.

“This week’s camp was so much fun,” Espinosa said. “The kids really got after it and competed, while also showing great sportsmanship and having fun at the same time. These camps are always a highlight of my summer. I really enjoy meeting and getting to know all the young hoopers

WA Basketball camps draw more than 100 young hoopers this summer

in our area.”

Campers were divided into two age groups. The younger division competed in the Big East, while the older players participated in the Overtime Elite (OTE) division.

The Overtime Elite championship was won by Jelly Fam, coached by Mike Schmidt. In the Big East division, Coach Martyn Polinchovic’s Villanova Wildcats captured the championship.

Several campers earned individual honors throughout the week.

In the Overtime Elite division, Bryce Espinosa won the Free Throw, Elbow Shooting and Hot Shot competitions, while James

Lin claimed the One-on-One Championship.

In the Big East division, Quinn Hammond captured the Elbow Shooting and Hot Shot titles, while Mason Andrzejewski won both the Free Throw and One-on-One championships.

The camp also recognized players for their effort, attitude and overall performance with three major awards presented by each division’s commissioner.

Hustle Award
Overtime Elite: Bishop Arnold
Big East: Wes Wojcik

Coaches Award
Overtime Elite: Johnny

Marcuccio
Big East: Mason Andrzejewski

Most Valuable Camper (MVP)
Overtime Elite: Bryce Espinosa
Big East: Wesley Hammond

With another successful summer in the books, the Woodstock Academy Drills and Skills Basketball Camps continue to provide local youth with an opportunity to develop their basketball fundamentals, compete in a fun environment and build lasting friendships on the court.

‘Big Money Matt’ finally nabs NASCAR Modified win at Thompson Speedway

THOMPSON — Defending NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion Austin Beers earned the pole position Wednesday night with the 19.154-second fast lap and quickly ran with the lead at the start of the Thompson 150. Matt Hirschman followed on the tail of Beers throughout the opening circuits while mechanical trouble took fan-favorite Jon McKennedy out of action early on.

Matt Hirschman made his way into the lead around a loose Austin Beers in turn two, slowly but surely extending that lead through the first third of the event. Andrew Krause met an early end on lap 60 as he slammed the turn one wall to call out the first caution. All but three lapped cars took the chance to jump to pit road with Hirschman winning the race to the backstretch while Eric Goodale and Matt Swanson nearly collided for the runner-up spot.

After hanging around sixth, Patrick Emerling entered the top-five picture to chase down Mike Christopher, Jr., Beers and Hirschman. It was all for not as Matt Hirschman ran away in the 80+ green flag run to the checkered flags to take his first career Thompson Speedway NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour win over Austin Beers and Patrick Emerling. Chase Dowling kept it clean all race long to finish fourth with Matt Swanson climbing back from a pit-road gamble to finish fifth.

The Crown Vics kicked off Wednesday’s racing action with their feature event. Ethan Williams looked strong enough to take his first win of the season but it was July’s winner Jack Emerson who took over at the halfway point. Emerson ran away with it to take win number two with Williams relegated to second over John Dulac.

The SK Light Modifieds got things started with a bang as Dennis Sneade and Milania Shilosky made contact coming off turn four, plowing up the infield grass and pit wall before coming to a halt on lap 4. Back under green, Austin Goff got the jump on Corey Caddick and began to run from RJ Marcotte. Marcotte made contact with Goff, spinning the 07 into the turn one wall to call up the lap 17 caution. With Marcotte sent to the rear, Caddick and point leader Kevin Davis went to war at the front for the final three circuits with Davis getting the win over Caddick with John O’Sullivan taking third.

It was a battle for the ages between top Late Model aces Jake Johnson and Matt Lowinski-Loh throughout their 25 lap feature. The two top guns ran side-by-side, slamming doors on one another, beating and banging around the Thompson highbanks for twenty-three laps until Jared Roy’s spin in turn four. The green-white-checkers sealed the fate for Johnson, who slid sideways on the final lap to give Matt Lowinski-Loh the Wednesday night victory.

Following NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour time trial qualifying, Derek Ramstrom took the lead early in the Thompson Sunoco Modified feature with Bryan Narducci and Todd Owen in hot pursuit. Point leader Keith Rocco made his way into third and then second as Ramstrom fell back behind Narducci. Bryan Narducci never faltered in the caution-free feature to take his first win of the season over Rocco and Owen at the line.

Rookie Charles Beal lost the pole position on the initial green, falling back through the top five leaving Ryan Lineham and Al Stone III out front. Jarrod Soucy motored his way underneath Stone by the halfway point as former track champion Ryan Waterman and former Thunder Road Speedbowl champ Jason Woodard battled for fourth. In the end, no-one had any steam for Lineham who took the night-ending win over Soucy and Stone.

Thompson Speedway roars back to life on Wednesday, September 16 for the Eden Raferty Attorneys Fall Showdown Late Model Special! The Late Models take center stage in their extra-distance showdown alongside the Thompson Sunoco Modifieds, SK Light Modifieds, Street Stocks and Crown Vics with a 6:00pm Post Time.

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

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

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

tage of marketing opportunities please call 207-577-1836 or inquire at OPSMarketing50@gmail.com.

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

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

Wednesday, August 5, 2026
Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park
NWMT Thompson 150
pres. by FloSports.com

NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour – Thompson 150 (150 Laps) (Fin. Pos., Car #, Driver, Sponsor, Laps Completed)			
1	60	Matt Hirschman	Bar Harbor Bank & Trust; Pee Dee Motorsports
2	64	Austin Beers	Lumiere Electrical; G&G Electrical Supply
3	1	Patrick Emerling	USNE Power
4	44	Chase Dowling	S&S Paving / Harshaw Paving
5	89	Matt Swanson	Ceravolos Auto; Swanson GMC
6	58	Eric Goodale	GAF Roofing
7	73	Paulie Hartwig III	Professional Therapy LLC; Jersey Shore Contracting
8	21	Stephen Kopcik	Wanick Construction; Newtown Pools
9	28	Doug Coby	NuCar
10	3	Tyler Rypkema	Northeast Drilling; SYP
11	54	Tommy Catalano	FX Caprara; USNE Power
12	31	Michael Christopher	Elite Towing; Elite Racing; Baker Racing
13	05	Teddy Hodgdon	Business Time Motorsports; Montanari Fuel
14	82	Andrew Molleur	Horton Avenue Materials; Village Springs Water
15	36	David Sapienza	Sapienza Enterprises
16	18	Ken Heagy	Merkel Racing
17	56	Trevor Catalano	USNE Power
18	8	John-Michael Shenette	Eighty-Two Services
19	95	Cory Plummer*	Tuckers Fabrication & Welding
20	6	Cory DiMatteo*	Manafort Brothers; Sargis Associates
21	50	Ronnie Williams	Empower Financial Advisory
22	24	Andrew Krause	Supreme Mfg Co.
23	20	Max Zachem	Lu-Macs Package Store; USNE Power
24	79	Jon McKennedy	Stuarts Automotive; Christophers Towing

Thompson Sunoco Modifieds – (35 Laps)			
1.	1	Bryan Narducci	Colchester, CT
2.	09	Keith Rocco	Berlin, CT
3.	81	Todd Owen	Somers, CT
4.	35	Derek Ramstrom	Worcester, MA



Jim DuPont — Courtesy

Northampton, Pennsylvania’s Matt Hirschman has finally shaken the monkey off his back, taking his first Thompson Speedway NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour win in the Thompson 150 on Wednesday night.

5.	7	Jon Puleo	Branford, CT
6.	24	#Mikey Flynn	Hampden, MA
7.	2	Danny Cates	Chaplin, CT
8.	24MA	Nathan Pytko	Oxford, MA
9.	27	Chase Cook	Norwich, MA
10.	12	Rob Schultz	Neptune, NJ
11.	99	Mike Mayberry	Naples, ME
12.	86	Robert Georgiades	E. Hampton, CT

Late Models – (25 Laps)			
1.	17	Matt Lowinski-Loh	Thompson, CT
2.	31CT	#Travis Hydar	Woodbury, CT
3.	73CT	Jared Materas	Somers, CT
4.	91CT	Jake Johnson	Rehoboth, MA
5.	32	Jason Williams	Colchester, CT
6.	1CT	Jared Roy	Moosup, CT
7.	28	#Shaun Kekacs	Bristol, CT

SK Light Modifieds – (20 Laps)			
1.	10	Kevin Davis	Somers, CT
2.	27	Corey Caddick	Richmond, RI
3.	51x	John O’Sullivan	Norwich, CT
4.	6	Todd Douillard	Palmer, MA
5.	21	Sami Anderson	Wolcott, CT
6.	95	Leo Nunes	Somers, CT
7.	05	Ian Nunes	Somers, CT
8.	51	Ryan West	Brooklyn, CT
9.	07	Austin Goff	Stafford Springs, CT
10.	26	RJ Marcott	Millville, MA
11.	80	#Thomas Herrington	Grafton, MA
12.	99x	Dylan Houghton	Springfield, MA
13.	55	Dennis Smeade	Oxford, MA
14.	99	#Milania Shilosky	Colchester, CT
15.	36	Eddie Gomarlo	Swanzy, NH

Street Stocks – (20 Laps)			
1.	19	Ryan Lineham	Warwick, RI
2.	42	Jarrod Soucy	Wales, MA
3.	25	Al Stone III	Durham, CT
4.	75	Ryan Waterman	Danielson, CT
5.	68VT	Jason Woodard	Waterbury Ctr., VT
6.	85	Michael Viens	Seekonk, MA
7.	67	Aaron Plemmons	Uncasville, CT
8.	55	Nick Anderson	Oxford, MA
9.	86	Jon Porter	Baltic, CT
10.	66	Tyler Cinamella	Willimantic, CT
11.	77	Andrew Gillis	Ashland, MA
12.	30	#Charles Beal	Ledyard, CT

Thunderstock Crown Vics – (20 Laps)			
1.	52	Jack Emerson	Caterbury, CT
2.	4	Ethan Williams	Promfret Ctr., RI
3.	2	John Dulac	Swansea, MA
4.	53	Wes Monson	Charlton, MA
5.	9	Ty Mello	Millville, MA
6.	19	Dylan Cabral	Richmond, RI

Pomfret hires boys squash coach with top prep school experience



Ryan Tyree

POMFRET — Pomfret School is excited to announce that Ryan Tyree has been appointed head

coach of the boys’ varsity squash team for the 2026–2027 season.

Coach Tyree brings a wealth of experience and success to Pomfret’s squash program. He most recently served as the boys varsity squash head coach at Deerfield Academy, where he oversaw one of the top programs in New England for three seasons.

Prior to Deerfield, Coach Tyree served as the inaugural director of squash at Mercersburg Academy in 2019, where he elevated both the boys’ and girls’ programs. The girls’ team secured a US Squash Division IV National Championship in 2022 before playing alongside Division II schools such as Middlesex, Choate, and Exeter. The boys team pro-

gressed from competing in Division V to Division I over three seasons.

Tyree has also coached at Eaglebrook School and later at Williston Northampton School, where he led the boys squash team to a US Squash Division VI National Championship. His coaching philosophy has been shaped by the mentorship of legendary Trinity

College Men’s Coach Paul Assaiante, whose emphasis on leadership and team building has had a lasting influence on his approach to developing student-athletes.

Beyond the court, Tyree is an accomplished English educator, holding a Master’s degree in secondary education from the University of Phoenix and a Master’s degree in English

literature from Middlebury College, where he was twice awarded the Robert Haiduke Poetry Prize.

Please join us in welcoming Coach Tyree and his family to the Pomfret community. He will begin his duties as an English faculty member at the end of August and can be reached at rttyree@pomfret.org.

Five things to check in your executive compensation package in 2026

If you take a step back and look at executive compensation right now, the headline is actually good news: the tax brackets we’ve been working with are now permanent. The OBBBA, signed into law in July 2025, made the lower TCJA rates (topping out at 37 percent instead of jumping to 39.6 percent) a permanent fixture. For anyone managing a complex compensation package, that certainty is a gift. It means you can finally plan multi-year strategies without guessing where rates are headed.

But here’s the catch: the same law quietly reduced the after-tax value of certain benefits high earners have leaned on for years. So let’s walk through this as a checklist — the moves worth thinking through, and why each one matters for the money you actually keep.

Item One: Rethink deferred comp now that rates are locked in

Nonqualified deferred compensation (NQDC) lets you push a chunk of today’s salary or bonus (and the tax on it) into a future year, ideally one where you expect to be in a lower bracket. The whole strategy rests on a bet: that your rate later will be lower than your rate now. Permanent rates change how you make that bet. You’re no longer guessing whether Congress will let rates spike; the brackets are set. That makes NQDC a cleaner, more predictable planning tool: if you’re deferring from peak earning years into retirement

years when your income drops, the math is more reliable than it’s been in a long time. What’s really beneficial is that you can now model a deferral schedule — staggered payouts across several retirement years — with real confidence about the rates on the other side.

The one big thing to weigh: NQDC isn’t protected like a 401(k). Your deferred dollars are an unsecured promise from your employer, exposed to company credit risk, and you can’t roll them into an IRA later. So the discipline here is the same one we stress often at WHZ: don’t over-concentrate. Defer enough to smooth your tax picture, but only after you’ve maxed your protected, qualified accounts first.

Item Two: Time your stock option exercises around the new deduction cap

Here’s a rule that took effect in 2026 that every option-holding executive needs to know: for taxpayers in the top 37 percent bracket, OBBBA caps the value of itemized deductions at roughly 35 cents on the dollar instead of 37 (the so-called “2/37 rule”). In plain terms: once you’re in that top bracket, your deductions are worth a little less than they used to be.

Why does that matter for stock options? Because exercising nonqualified stock options (NQSOs) creates ordinary income on the spread, and a big exercise

can rocket your income into that top bracket, where your deductions get devalued.

The critical aspect here is timing. If a large exercise would push you over the 37% threshold, consider straddling it across two tax years, exercising just up to the threshold in each, so more of your income (and your deductions) stays in the friendlier zone.

This is classic “don’t panic, plan ahead” territory. Small timing choices on a vesting or exercise calendar can meaningfully change your after-tax outcome. Map your exercises against your projected income before you click the button, not after.

Item Three: Watch the SALT phase-out at \$500,000 — especially in Connecticut

This one stings in high-tax New England. OBBBA raised the state and local tax (SALT) deduction cap to \$40,000. That’s a real win, but for higher earners it phases back out fast. Once your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) crosses \$505,000, the deduction shrinks by 30% of every dollar above that line, and by the time you hit \$600,000 you’re back down to the old \$10,000 cap.

Connecticut’s top income tax rate is 6.99 percent, kicking in above \$500,000 of income, and the state stacks property taxes among the highest in the nation on top. So a Connecticut executive earning well into the

\$500,000–\$600,000 range pays steep state and local taxes and loses most of the federal deduction that used to soften the blow.

The planning takeaway: if your income lands in that phase-out window, the value of accelerating or bunching deductible expenses is reduced. So coordinate the timing of income events (like that option exercise) with an eye on where your MAGI lands.

Item Four: A bonus you’ve probably already earned — the Social Security cap

In 2026, Social Security tax only applies to the first \$184,500 of wages. If you’re a high-earning executive, you almost certainly blew past that cap earlier in the year, which means your later paychecks, year-end bonus, or option income come in without the 6.2 percent Social Security bite.

Why care? Because it’s a small but real tailwind for year-end planning. That late-year compensation is slightly “cheaper” from a payroll-tax standpoint, which can make the fourth quarter a sensible window for things like an extra deferral election or a bonus deferral — you’ve already cleared the cap, so you’re optimizing around income that’s taxed a touch more lightly. It’s a nice example of how knowing the rules lets you make confident, informed decisions.

Item Five: Revisit agreements you set up under the old rules

Last item, and an important one. Many executive

comp agreements — deferral elections, exercise plans, charitable-giving strategies — were designed when the rules looked different and rates were set to rise. With the brackets now permanent and the deduction landscape reshaped, an arrangement that made perfect sense three years ago may no longer be optimal.

This doesn’t mean tearing everything up. It means a disciplined review: does your deferral schedule still line up with your expected retirement income? Are your charitable gifts timed to clear the new 0.5 percent AGI floor and the deduction cap? Does your exercise calendar account for the 2/37 rule? These are exactly the questions worth bringing to your advisor.

Boiling it down to best practices

If I had to boil it down to a quick recap: First, treat permanent rates as an opportunity to plan deferred comp with real confidence, but don’t over-concentrate in an unprotected plan. Second, time big option exercises around the 37 percent threshold and the 2/37 deduction cap. Third, know exactly where your MAGI lands relative to the \$505,000 SALT phase-out, especially here in Connecticut. Fourth, take advantage of the Social Security wage cap when timing late-year compensation. And fifth, revisit older agreements to make sure they still fit the new rules. None of this is about chasing a single tactic; it’s about disciplined, intention-

al planning that helps you keep more of what you’ve worked hard to earn.

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Authored by WHZ Associate Vice President, Wealth Advisor Logan Lum. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. These materials are general in nature and do not address your specific situation. For your specific investment needs, please discuss your individual circumstances with your financial advisor. WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice, and nothing in the accompanying pages should be construed as specific tax or legal advice. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret St., Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Rd., Tolland, CT 06084, 860.928.2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com>.

Pomfret Historical Society hosts program on music of Connecticut’s Revolution



POMFRET — The Pomfret Historical Society (PHS) will host a concert by tenor and harpsichordist Richard Donahue on Aug. 23 at 3 p.m. in the Pomfret Old Town House (OTH), 11 Town House Dr., Pomfret Center.

The concert is the last in the Summer Concert Series, “Music of the Revolution,” sponsored by the Pomfret 250 Commission. The well-attended concerts at

the OTH have explored multiple genres of music listened to and performed by America’s Revolutionary heroes and ordinary people from the late 1700’s to the mid 1800’s.

What a Glorious Crash They Made: Musick of Connecticut’s Revolution features a collection of “New Songs” and Hymns published in Connecticut during the American Revolution. From the time

of the Stamp Act through the British surrender at Yorktown, Connecticut’s seditious colonists used these works to foment rebellion, commemorate victory, and give thanks for preservation. Music Historian Richard Franklin Donohue, will share his original research and explore this fiery repertoire that in the words of John Adams “cultivated the sensations of Freedom.” The program spans the Revolutionary war years with selections like John Dickinson’s “Liberty Song,” William Billings’ Chester, Andrew Law’s “Middletown,” and several popular British tunes with “new” texts reflecting the cause of freedom.

Richard Franklin Donohue is a singer, private music instructor, and historian. A life-long performer, Richard specializes in historic music ranging from Middle English Carols to 19th century romantic music. He studied music at the University of Connecticut and has been teaching Piano, Voice, and Music Theory since 1992. He is the Town Historian in his hometown of Cromwell, Connecticut and has been the President and Program Director of the Cromwell Historical Society for twenty years. He is the author

of “Rosetown Review,” a monthly history article published in the Cromwell Life newspaper and presents historical lectures throughout New England on a wide range of topics.

The concert is one of many collaborations between the Pomfret 250 Commission and Pomfret Historical Society which have brought monthly educational programs to the region in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The Pomfret America 250 celebrations will culminate with the Revolutionary Pomfret Reenactment and Living History Event at the Pomfret Recreation Park on Oct. 3 & 4. Reenactor groups from Southern New England will be encamped at the town Rec Fields beginning on Friday, Oct. 2. Visitors will experience the Revolution through a local lens as we reenact the muster/enlistment of the 11th regiment at the Abington Congregational Church, a debate between Loyalist Godfrey Malbone and Patriot Israel Putnam, a Visit with General Israel Putnam and Connecticut Hero Nathan Hale, and the laying of a wreath for the 60 Revolutionary soldiers buried in the Old Abington Burial Ground. There will

be quality craft vendors, textile demonstrations, a food court, church supper, music, and military demonstrations by the reenactors.

The monthly programs and the reenactment have been generously sponsored by The Last Green Valley, Centreville Bank, CT

America 250 Commission, local civic organizations, and Pomfret’s citizens. Join us on August 23rd as we celebrate America’s Revolutionary evolution through music and as we gear up for the Revolutionary Reenactment in October.

Pomfret Public Library hosts “Life in Balance” at weekly Memory Café

POMFRET — The Pomfret Public Library invites community members to a special edition of its weekly Memory Café featuring Life in Balance on Wednesday, Aug. 19 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Presented by Laurie String and Matthew Chuck of Rude Dog Boxing, this engaging program will focus on practical ways to maintain mobility, balance, and strength while aging. Participants will learn simple techniques and exercises that can help improve stability, support everyday movement, and promote healthy, active living.

Designed for older adults, caregivers, and anyone interested in healthy aging, “Life in Balance” offers an encouraging and welcoming environment where attendees can discover strategies for staying active and reducing the risk of falls. No prior fitness experience is required.

The program will be held at the Pomfret Public Library, 449 Pomfret St., Pomfret, as part of the library’s weekly Memory Café. Memory Cafés provide a friendly, supportive gathering place for individuals living with memory loss, cognitive changes, and their care partners.

Admission is free, and all are welcome. For more information about Life in Balance, the Memory Café, or other upcoming library programs, contact the Pomfret Public Library at 860-928-3475 or visit www.pomfretlibrary.org.

POST 67
continued from page A1

alone cannot solve.

Its membership has declined dramatically, and the Post no longer has enough qualified members who are willing and able to assume the leadership positions necessary to keep the organization functioning. Officials from the American Legion Department of Connecticut and the Legion’s 4th District, which serves Northeastern Connecticut, are working to preserve Post 67. But unless qualified veterans from Thompson step forward to assume responsibility for the Post, its charter may ultimately have to be revoked. If that happens, Thompson could lose something that can never truly be replaced.

More than a Legion Post

The military history of Thompson did not begin with the American Legion.

Men from this community have answered their country’s call for generations. Thompson’s tradition of military service reaches back to the earliest settlements of the region and continued through the colonial wars, the American Revolution, War of 1812, Civil War, Spanish-American War, two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Afghanistan and the conflicts of the modern era.

BULL HILL
continued from page A1

“Our club is deeply invested in the proposed soccer field space at Bull Hill. However, the severe and persistent water drainage issues at the site continue to significantly limit its usability, particularly during critical windows of our spring playing season,” Robin wrote in a letter to the town which was a major focus of the Recreation Commission’s July 23 meeting. Thompson Recreation Director Brian Lievense explained that the town has not conducted an assessment of the property since 2017 but has recently consulted with UConn about a follow-up in the near future. While he acknowledged the value of the property in hosting local sports, he pointed out that realistically it’s not something that could be funded through the town’s budget. Thompson has faced budget constraints year after year in the 2020s and back in 2017 the estimated cost

Post 67 became one of the institutions through which that tradition was remembered and passed from one generation to another.

The veterans who founded the Post in 1920 could not have known what the next century would bring. They could not have imagined Pearl Harbor, Normandy, Iwo Jima, the frozen mountains of Korea, the jungles of Vietnam or the deserts of Iraq. But they understood something important. They knew that military service creates an obligation not only to remember those who served, but also to preserve their memory for generations that follow. That remains one of the most important purposes of the American Legion. Legion posts help communities remember the meaning behind traditions Americans sometimes take for granted. Memorial Day is more than a three-day weekend. Veterans Day is more than another date on the calendar. They exist because generations of Americans put on a uniform and served.

Some never came home. Local veterans’ organizations have traditionally been among the people making certain their communities remember them.

Post 67 has also supported community activities, including involvement with the Tri-Town American Legion Baseball Team, continuing another longstanding American Legion tradition of supporting young

for upgrades to resolve the drainage problems came in at roughly \$800,000, which has likely only increased under the current economic climate. But that doesn’t mean all hope is lost. Lievense said they’d just need to get creative, which will likely include pursuing STEAP grants and other similar fund sources and pursuing fundraising opportunities. “There’s a need for it, so I actually think it would be a pretty big candidate to win a STEAP grant or another type of grant, but it’s a long process and I think the first step is we need to have the assessment updated,” Lievense said. The reality remains that the fields are unusable for the foreseeable future. Any updates are likely years away as the town seeks next steps. But the requests from NECONN and the town’s interest in working with UConn confirm that stakeholders see continued value in the property bringing hope that the fields may once again see sports activity in the future.

people and community life.

A building worth saving

There is another reason for urgency.

Post 67 possesses something increasingly uncommon among small veterans’ organizations: its own substantial building and property, located at 17 Thompson Hill Rd, Thompson, CT 06277

The building contains approximately 9,000 square feet between its two levels and has tremendous potential. The ground floor includes an attractive bar area and large recreation rooms with pool tables and games. Upstairs is a spacious dining and function room capable of accommodating 100 or more people, together with a large, fully equipped commercial-style kitchen.

Men’s and women’s restrooms are located on both floors.

Outside is a very large paved parking area, approximately a dozen picnic tables and a covered barbecue pit.

The wood-frame, vinyl-sided building has an asphalt-shingle roof that appears to be in good condition. Heat is supplied by an oil-fired boiler and hot-water baseboard system. Three air-handling units for air conditioning are present, although they are presently not operational.

This is not simply an old meeting hall.

It is a community asset with real possibilities.

With responsible management, the facility could potentially host weddings, anniversary parties, birthday celebrations, reunions, banquets, fundraisers, club meetings, veterans’ events, a quinceañera, community dinners, youth activities and other private and public functions.

The building has the potential to generate revenue rather than simply consume it.

But first, there must be an organization—and people—willing to manage it.

What happens If Post 67 closes?

The consequences of losing the Post’s charter could extend far beyond removing the number “67” from the American Legion’s rolls.

If the charter is revoked and the Post ceases to exist, control of its assets would be handled according to applicable American Legion rules and legal requirements. The building could ultimately pass under the control of the American Legion Department of Connecticut and potentially be sold, with proceeds applied as required to outstanding liens, debts and other obligations.

Once the property is sold, the opportunity may be gone forever.

A building that Thompson veterans spent generations establishing and maintaining could pass out of veterans’ hands. And Thompson would lose its American Legion Post. That outcome is not inevitable.

It doesn’t take hundreds of veterans Saving Post 67 does not necessarily require hundreds of new members. What is desperately needed is something much simpler: A small group of qualified, responsible and civic-minded veterans willing to become actively involved

The immediate need is for veterans capable of accepting leadership responsibilities, restoring effective management and developing a realistic plan for the future of the Post and its property. There may also be opportunities for financial or organizational assistance if a credible group of veterans steps forward with the willingness and ability to rebuild the Post.

The building itself provides an enormous head start.

Imagine Post 67 once again busy with veterans’ meetings. Imagine a Saturday evening wedding reception upstairs, a community dinner, a veterans’ breakfast, a fundraiser for a Thompson family, an American Legion Baseball event or a Memorial Day gathering.

Imagine younger veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan sitting at the same tables once occupied by veterans of Vietnam, Korea and World War II.

That is possible.

But buildings cannot preserve organizations.

People do.

Thompson still has veterans

There are still hundreds of military veterans living in Thompson.

They served in different branches, different places and different generations. Some spent careers in uniform. Others served one enlistment and returned home. Some served during wartime; others served during periods of peace.

They share something relatively few Americans experience: they raised their right hand and accepted an obligation to serve their country.

Post 67 now needs some of them to serve once again—this time at home.

The commitment does not require carrying a rifle, deploying overseas or leaving one’s family.

It requires attending meetings, accepting responsibility, managing an organization, maintaining accountability and working with fellow veterans and the community.

It requires leadership.

Those qualities should sound familiar to anyone who has worn the uniform.

What will Thompson veterans leave behind?

There is a larger question facing Thompson’s veterans.

When the last World War I veterans were gone, the veterans of World War II carried the Legion forward.

As that generation aged, Korean War and Vietnam veterans increasingly assumed responsibility. Today, those generations are disappearing.

The question is whether younger veterans will pick up what they left behind.

A charter issued in 1920 has survived the Great Depression, another World War, Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War, the Persian Gulf War, September 11, Iraq and Afghanistan.

It would be a terrible irony if Post 67 survived all of that only to disappear because no one was willing to take responsibility for it.

Future generations of Thompson residents may someday ask what happened to their American Legion Post.

The answer has not yet been written.

A few good men and women

There is still time.

Post 67 does not need someone to rescue it single-handedly. It needs a team.

It needs a few good men and women—military veterans who are responsible, energetic and civic-minded—to sit down together, examine the finances, evaluate the property, work with American Legion leadership and determine what can be done.

Perhaps the Post can be reconstituted and revitalized.

Perhaps its building can once again become a busy gathering place.

Perhaps new members can be recruited.

Perhaps Post 67 can begin its second century with a renewed purpose.

But none of those things can happen unless someone steps forward.

More than a hundred years ago, Thompson’s World War I veterans came home and established American Legion Post 67 for themselves, their fellow veterans and the generations that would follow them.

They did their part.

Now it is our turn.

If you are an eligible military veteran living in Thompson—or a veteran with ties to the community—this is the time to become involved.

Don’t wait until the doors are locked, the charter is gone and a “For Sale” sign appears in front of the building.

By then, it may be too late.

Thompson American Legion Post 67 has stood since 1920. Whether it will stand for another generation may now depend upon a handful of veterans willing to answer one more call to service.

“Veterans Needed — How to Help”

Contact American Legion District 4 Commander John Whetton, phone: 860-990-5432, or email: jhwhe@outlook.com, or Putnam’s Post 13 Commander Michael Rocchetti, phone 860-933-5193, or email: michael.j.rocchetti@gmail.com. They would be glad to set up an informational meeting to further explain the needs of Post 67.

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Bradley O James (26-00317)
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated August 4, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk
The fiduciary is:
Rosalie James
c/o IAN TYLER SULLIVAN,
ST. ONGE & BROUILLARD,
50 ROUTE 171,
WOODSTOCK, CT 06281
August 7, 2026

Town of Putnam
Planning & Zoning Commission
Legal Notice
The Town of Putnam Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a Hybrid Meeting on August 19, 2026, at 7:00 P. M. in Room 201 at the Putnam Municipal Complex, located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. A public hearing is scheduled for the following: Docket # 2026-11 Jacob Paradise request for a Customary Home Occupation Permit in accordance with Section

706 of the Town of Putnam Zoning Regulations to operate a small engine repair business. Property located at 125 Heritage Road, Town Assessors Map 038, Lot 007, Zoned R-40. Patricia Hedenberg, Chairperson
August 7, 2026
August 14, 2026

Town of Putnam
Zoning Board of Appeals
Legal Notice
The Town of Putnam Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a hybrid meeting on August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. in Room 201 on the second floor at the Putnam Municipal Complex, located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. A public hearing will take place on the following: Appeal # 2026-006 Joseph Scott & Chery L. Pempek request for a variance from the required 50’ side yard setback down to 35’ for the construction of a 24’ X 30’ 1.5 story garage. Property is located at 90 Five Mile River Road, Town Assessors Map 32, Lot 73, Zoned AG-2. Scott Zadora, Chairman
August 7, 2026
August 14, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE OF DECISION
WOODSTOCK INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY
On August 3, 2026, the Town of Woodstock IWWA met and made the following decision:
Approved, Application: #06-26-01 – 523 RT 169 (MBL 5781/52/09B) Town of Woodstock/Palmer Arboretum Committee. Stabilization of Drainage Channel. Details of this approval may be obtained by contacting the Woodstock Land Use Department at landuse@woodstockct.gov
William Rewinski
Chairman
August 14, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Richard Wilbur (26-00318)
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated August 4, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

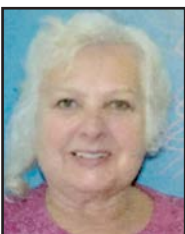
Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk
The fiduciary is:
Kevin Wilbur, c/o CHARLES KENNETH NORRIS (attorney for

Kevin Wilbur), CHINIGO LEONE MARUZO, 141 BROADWAY, P.O. BOX 510, NORWICH, CT 06360, (860)889-8900.
August 7, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
TOWN OF POMFRET
PLANNING AND ZONING
COMMISSION
The Pomfret Planning & Zoning Commission will hold the following Public Hearing(s) at the regular meeting on August 19, 2026, starting at 7:00 PM.
1. 26-5SP of Rory Apperson requesting a Special Permit to construct an 864 square foot barn with a loft on property located at 249 Peterson Rd.
A copy of this application is on file in the office of the Planning & Zoning Commission, 5 Haven Road, Pomfret Center, Connecticut. The file is available for review during normal business hours.
Town of Pomfret
Planning & Zoning Commission
Dated this 30th day of July 2026
Sarah Healey, Assistant Land Use Clerk
August 7, 2026
August 14, 2026

OBITUARIES

Barbara M. Wallen, 77



Barbara M. Wallen, 77, of Dayville, passed away peacefully after a brief illness on Friday, July 24, 2026, at Day Kimball Hospital in Putnam. She was born in Brooklyn, NY June 14, 1949, daughter of the late Peter J. Sr. and Edith Margaret (Jacobi) Klein. Barbara was the beloved wife of Niles E. Wallen, whom she met while taking flying lessons at Danielson Airport.

Barbara dedicated her career to nursing as a registered nurse, spending many years in the Emergency Departments at Day Kimball and Backus Hospitals before later working as a traveling emergency room nurse. During her nursing career, she also served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve. She was deployed to Fort Sam Houston, where she taught nursing to troops preparing for deployment overseas during the First Gulf War. She later specialized in clinical forensics, working alongside state and local law enforcement to collect evidence, support survivors, and help ensure that critical evidence was properly preserved. In retirement, she found great joy in opening her home to international exchange students from around the world.

Barbara was an avid traveler, enjoying many cruises and family trips, especially visits to England, Greece, China, Egypt, Tunisia, and the Galápagos Islands.

Barbara enjoyed swimming in the Five Mile River behind her house and playing Canasta with her friends and sisters. Above all, Barbara loved spending time with her friends, family, and her beloved grandchildren.

Whether caring for patients, welcoming exchange students into her home, or traveling the world with family, Barbara approached life with curiosity, compassion, and generosity.

Barbara is survived by her beloved husband, Niles; her sons, Daniel M. Merasco and his wife, Helen, of Moosup; and Andrew N. Wallen and his wife, Lijuan, of Dover, Massachusetts. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Sara Russo; Kyle Proulx; Taylor Merasco; Thomas Merasco; Nicholas Wallen; and Michael Wallen; her great-grandchildren, Stevie and Carter; her sister, Betty A. Kerns of Putnam; her brother, Donald F. Klein of Danielson; and numerous nieces and nephews. Barbara was predeceased by her brother Peter J. Klein Jr. and her sister Patricia M. Hopkins.

Calling hours will be held in Tillinghast Funeral Home 433 Main Street Danielson, CT on Saturday August 22, 2026, from 4-6 PM with a Memorial Service beginning at 5:30 PM.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA). tillinghastfh.com

Douglas H. Gates 1947 – 2026



Dayville, CT – Douglas H. Gates, 78, passed away on Wednesday, July 29, 2026, after an extended illness.

He was born on November 26, 1947, in Putnam, Connecticut, the son of the late Helen M. (Kimball) Gates and the late Denton H.B. Gates. Douglas grew up in Putnam and graduated from Putnam High School with the Class of 1965. To most, he was known as “Uncle Douglas,” while to some he was affectionately known as “Snipper”—though the reason for the nickname remains a mystery.

Douglas proudly served his country for four years in the United States Navy before joining the United States Army, where he spent his career as a recruiter. During his military service, he earned numerous awards, including the Army Achievement Medal. After retiring from the Army, he joined the United States Postal Service, where he worked for 20 years before retiring. He was a member of Disabled American Veterans, the American Legion in Putnam, and Putnam BPOE Elks Lodge No. 574.

Douglas found joy in life's simple pleasures. He enjoyed chatting with familiar faces at local stores and banks often brightening their day by surprising them with candy or flowers. He was happiest trying his luck at Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods Resort Casino or scratching his lottery tickets. Douglas was especially grateful for and proud of his nephew, Craig Gates, whose support and assistance meant so much to him during his time of need.

He is survived by his daughter, Nicole McLean of Cazenovia, New York; his son, Douglas Gates of Connecticut; his

brother, Lance Gates of Palmetto, Florida; five grandchildren: Hannah McLean of Herkimer, New York; Zoe McLean and Lauren McLean of Cazenovia, New York; Rylie Gates of Danielson, Connecticut; and Courtney Ebersohl of Davenport, Florida. He also leaves behind many good friends whom he considered family, including Geoffrey Wheaton and Cheryl Smith, Donna and Michael Wallace, Michelle O'Donnell, Richard and Marjorie Chase, and Joan Dusoe. The family extends their heartfelt thanks to all who offered Douglas friendship, kindness, and support throughout his life.

In addition to his parents, Douglas was predeceased by his sister, Sandra A. Gates, and his brothers, Dennis A. Gates and Gary “The Baron” Gates.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, August 15, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Black Dog Restaurant, 146 Park Road, Putnam. Military honors will be rendered at 11:15 a.m., followed by a ritual performed by Putnam Elks Lodge No. 574 and a reception. Burial will take place at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to Jolly John's Keep You Truckin' Fund and mailed c/o Craig Gates, PO Box 308, Columbia, CT 06237. This fund was established to assist families in need while coping with cancer.

Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home & Cremation, 48 School Street, Webster, has been entrusted with the arrangements. A memorial guest book is available at www.shaw-majercik.com and on the Shaw-Majercik Funeral Home Facebook page.



Janet Kenyon Hansen



Janet Kenyon Hansen, born on August 1, 1935, to Margaret and Olin Kenyon, passed away peacefully on July 30, 2026, surrounded by family. She lived a full and vibrant life, dedicated to her family and all those she loved.

Janet was married to Robert Hansen for 33 wonderful years, sharing a deep bond of love and companionship until his passing. Throughout her life, Janet exemplified devotion and care, beginning her career as an Operating Room Nurse before embracing her role as a wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother.

She is lovingly remembered by her three children: Heidi Tucker and her husband, Dennis; Robin Dempsey and her husband, Leroy; and Chris Hansen and his wife, Karen.

Janet was a proud grandmother to Brian, Jason, Dillon, and Blu Tucker; Alex, RJ, and Jordan Dempsey; and Ben Hansen. She was also blessed with three great-grandchildren, Bentley Dempsey, Lola Tucker, and Freya Tucker.

Family was the center of Janet's life. She poured her heart into nurturing, encouraging, and supporting those she loved,

always making sure they knew they were valued and cared for. Whether through her quiet strength, warm laughter, or unwavering love, Janet created a legacy that will continue through the generations of her family.

Janet embraced life with enthusiasm and gratitude. She traveled the world and treasured the adventures and memories she made along the way. She enjoyed many happy hours on the golf course and at the bowling alley. Her faith was a guiding force throughout her life, and she was an active member of the Altar Guild and regularly attended Bible Study at her church.

Her kindness, compassion, and generous spirit touched everyone fortunate enough to know her. She will be deeply missed but forever remembered in the hearts of her family and friends.

A Celebration of Janet's Life will be held on Saturday, August 29, 2026 at 11:00 am at The East Woodstock Congregational Church, 220 Woodstock Road, East Woodstock, CT. Calling hours will be held Friday, August 28, 2026 from 6 to 8:00 pm at Smith and Walker Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to East Woodstock Congregational Church, PO Box 156, East Woodstock, CT 06244. Share a memory at smithandwalkerfh.com

Elizabeth “Betty” Ann Trani 1948 - 2026



Woodstock – Elizabeth “Betty” Ann (Lawton) Trani, 78, of West View Dr., died peacefully on Sunday morning, August 2, 2026, surrounded by her family. Betty was the daughter of the late

Frank and Dorothy (Yagle) Lawton and a treated like a daughter by her late aunt, Madeline “Mal” Dolan. Mal adored Betty, who lived with her for several years. Betty was predeceased by her two brothers, John “Jack” Lawton and Richard “Dick” Lawton.

She is survived by her children, Anthony Trani and his wife Michelle and Annmarie Thibodeau and her husband Eric; her grandchildren, Leah Thibodeau and Leona and Lilly Trani; her sister and brother-in-law, Linda and Bill Chapman along with their children, Christy Yeomans, Brenna Chapman, and Jared Chapman; her brother Dicks, children, Sharon Howe, Scott Lawton, and Linda Fanfarelli and her devoted friend, Lesley Schumann.

Betty was an administrative assistant at First Congregational Church of Wethersfield, Woodstock Congregational Church, and Buckingham Congregational church in Glastonbury.

Betty loved to read and liked to chat with others about books they were reading. She always showed incredible care for her

friends and family and would check in on them frequently, especially during times of trouble or sickness. In her adulthood, she loved going to Chalker Beach and later on, Quonnie, where she spent wonderful summers with her family. In later years, one of her favorite things was to reminisce about these times, which she said were some of the happiest of her life. Betty enjoyed family holiday gatherings and was well known for her traditional Italian antipasto and funny, thoughtful gifts. The thing that brought her the most joy was spending quality time with her grandchildren, who called her “Mimi,” and going to their special events. She likewise enjoyed time with her large circle of friends. Betty loved to recall memorable occasions, and her warm and loud laughter was a constant presence at any gathering of which she was a part.

The family wishes to extend heartfelt thanks to the nurses and staff of Hospice of Northeast Connecticut for the care that was shown to their mom.

Burial is private and at the convenience of the family and a Celebration of Life is being planned for this fall.

Memorial donations in honor of Betty may be made to Hospice of Northeast CT, P.O. Box 632, Putnam, CT 06260 or the Melanoma Research Alliance (curemelanoma.org).

The family would love to hear from you and for you to sign Betty's guestbook at www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Joyce C. Suleski 1962 - 2026



Woodstock – Joyce C. Suleski, 63, of Paine District Rd., died Tuesday, August 4, 2026, in Fayetteville, WV. Born in Providence, RI, she was the daughter of June (Pipczynski) Suleski of Woodstock and the late John R. Suleski.

Ms. Suleski worked as an insurance agent for many local insurance companies.

In her youth Joyce enjoyed playing soccer and coed Softball, later in life she enjoyed singing and spending time at the beach while visiting her family's cottage in Wickford, RI.

Joyce hosted a talk show in the North Haven area, The Joyce Suleski Show, which was North Haven's longest run talk show on NHTV Cable 18. In 1996 her show won the TCI CAP Award for Documentary Public Awareness for her show, Rachael's Kitchen and Innovation award for The Joyce Suleski Show: Robert Ratner, in 1997 she was awarded top talk show at The TCI CAP awards for her show, Up With People as well as the Programming for Youth award for her show titled, A Visit to Ridge Road School, in 1998 TCI CAP awarded her in the category of Informational for her program, On

The Road to Animal Haven, and in 1999 TCI CAP award winner in the category of Arts Programming for her program titled Dawne Fritz, Decorative Artist. The Town of North Haven, by his Honor Anthony P. Rescigno, named July 15, 1994, the Joyce C. Suleski Day.

She is survived by her mother, June Suleski of Woodstock; her sister, Melanie Bonacorsi and her husband Joe of Chichester, NH; her brother in law, Richard Jette of Woodstock; her nieces and nephews, Derek Jette of Woodstock, Jessica Hill of Washington, NH, Cassandra Bonacorsi and Alexandra Bonacorsi both of Chichester, NH and her great nephews, Davis Jette of Woodstock and Bowen Hill of Washington, NH. She was predeceased by her brother, John “Johnny” R. Suleski, Jr. and his sister, Anne-Marie Jette.

Memorial donations in Joyce's memory may be made to NAMI Windham County Connecticut Chapter, National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1221 Route 169, Woodstock, CT 06281.

Funeral services are private and have been entrusted to the Valade Funeral Home & Crematory, 23 Main St., N. Grosvenordale, CT. For memorial guest-book please visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

How to Submit an Obituary

Guidance in Your Time of Need.

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

We offer easy placement and publications throughout the area
Just drop us an email, be sure to include a photo if you would like.
Include your publication choice and provide a contact number for prepayment.

Deadline is Monday at noon for this week's edition.
Our Rates: \$ 250 per newspaper for 400 words or less.
Photos and symbols included at no extra charge.
For obituaries over 400 words, the charge is \$ 250 for each additional 400 words or less.
Please note this price is per newspaper.

*Send all Obituaries to obits@stonebridgepress.news
If you have any question please call Julie at 508-909-4105*

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KILLINGLY

continued from page A4

pancy early in July.” An April 13, 1887 Transcript ad indicated that Erastus also was selling carriages, Cornings, extension tops, and carts. By 1888 he was installing a windmill on the property to provide power for the factory (WCT Sept. 12, 1888). He apparently decided to devote his factory to whipsockets and placed an ad to sell out his carriage stock in the April 3, 1889 Transcript. The 1894 Danielson Directory described Scott as a Whip Socket manufacturer. By the end of the century, he was said to be the largest whip socket manufacturer in the world. The factory is now a residence located at 49 Hawkins Street. Erastus Scott’s Queen Anne style home was located at the corner of Broad and Hawkins Street. (Historic Survey). He died in Danielson September 29,

1908, age 77 (WCT Oct. 1, 1908) and was interred in Old Westfield Cemetery. Scott’s will revealed a little more about the property which went to his sons Winfield E. Scott and Frank E. Scott. It also included an oil house and a Japan works in addition to the “manufactory” and windmill. (Ancestry.com; Ct. U.S. Wills & Probate 1609-1999).

I was curious about the Japan works and was quite challenged while doing a Google search. At first, I could not find an answer. (No, I did not want workers in Japan). Finally, I saw the word lacquer and tried that with success. “Traditional horse-drawn carriages and buggies frequently feature wood and lacquerware whip sockets mounted on the dashboard or side panels to secure driving whips. Traditional wood whip sockets are turned from hardwood and finished with multiple pro-

ductive coats of high-gloss black lacquer to withstand outdoor weather elements and match the polished finish of a high-end carriage. (ICV Carriage). I do not have enough information about Scott’s whipsockets to know if they were wood or not.

Have you ever taken a buggy ride? During the late 1800’s there were a number of styles available to suit many purposes. “A Corning (often called a Corning buggy or Corning wagon), advertised by Erastus Scott, (was) a specific style of light, Victorian, horse-drawn buggy featuring a cut-down front, deep sides, and molded panels. First built in 1875 by Brewster & Company of New York, it got its name because the very first one was sold to prominent businessman and politician Erastus Corning of Albany, N.Y. It belongs to the ‘coal-box’ or square-box family of buggy bodies, meaning the side panels forward of the driver’s seat are cleanly cut away. While popular as a light sporting or general-use open buggy, adding a closed top easily converted it into a convenient ‘physician’s phaeton’ used by doctors making house calls.” (geriwalton.com).

While I was searching the Hawkins Street area, I decided to see if I could find out for whom it was named. Charles S. Hawkins had a house and barn in that location and was listed as a farmer in the 1870 U. S. Census. The Killingly Business Encyclopedia listed him as a milkman on August 11 of that year. The Feb. 3, 1876 Transcript entry in the Killingly Business Encyclopedia noted that Hawkins had run a milk cart in this village for “a quarter-of-a century, or very near it.” Hawkins died in 1899 and was buried in Old Westfield Cemetery.

I found his will and was amazed at the number of carriages and wagons in his inventory- --a two seated carriage, a covered phaeton, an open buggy, a market wagon, and a lumber wagon (Ancestry.com; Killingly Probate Vo. 14-16, 1895-6).

I love the information that can be teased from old maps so checked the Danielsonville panel of Grey’s Atlas of Tolland and Windham Counties (1869). In that year Hawkins Street did not exist. Academy Street ended at what is now Broad Street. Reynolds Street (by Davis Park) did go over Broad, and the main road to South Killingly was Stearns Street (north of Killingly Memorial School). The area east of Broad Street was farm land although some of it may have already been designated for future house lots. The Borough was very much different than it is now. (Keep in mind that the Civil War did not end until 1865). If you like old maps, reprints of the above map and that of the town of Killingly in 1869 are available for purchase at the Killingly Historical Center. These maps give names of individuals who owned the houses at the time.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, August 2026. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main St., Danielson, Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety. For Windham County Transcripts visit killingly.historyarchives. online courtesy of the Killingly Public Library.

Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam announces discussion and review of “The Flood of 1955”



Courtesy

Ron Coderre, author of “The Flood of 1955.” He is holding an anniversary program on Aug. 19 at 3 p.m. at the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam in the Putnam Municipal Complex.

PUTNAM — As the 71st anniversary of the Flood of 1955, which devastated Putnam on Aug. 19, 1955 rapidly approaches, President John Miller of the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam, is proud to announce a special program commemorating the event.

The program is scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 19 at 3 p.m. at the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam Museum at the Putnam Municipal Complex on 200 School St. The program will feature discussion of the book “The Flood of 1955” with author Ronald P. Coderre. Attendees will be afforded the opportunity to share any remembrances and stories they may have regarding that memorable day when the raging waters of the Quinebaug River created by Hurricanes Connie and Diane wreaked unsuspected havoc on the community of Putnam.

“The Flood of 1955” was published by Coderre in 2025 with the support and endorsement of the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam, President Miller

and Putnam Historian Bill Pearsall. The publication, which features Coderre’s memories as a 14-year-old young man residing on Sunnyside Avenue, and numerous photos gathered from the Society archives. In less than one year more than 250 copies of the book have been sold with all proceeds benefiting the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam.

“I felt it was important to have something in print commemorating the event,” said Coderre.

“Many times, memories become vague or changed as they are transmitted from generation to generation. I’m hoping that those Putnam and area citizens who witnessed ‘The Flood’ will share their stories. I also recommend they jot them down for posterity,” concluded Coderre.

“We’re fortunate that Putnam has an individual who was interested enough to put his memories in print for the future of our community. As the anniversary of ‘The Flood’ approaches, this program once more demonstrates that our citizens recognize important historic events,” said Putnam Historian Bill Pearsall.

The program is presented free and open to anyone who wishes to attend. Copies of the publication will be available for those who wish to purchase one. They will be available on that day for \$25. They can also be purchased at the Putnam Public Library or the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam Museum, located in the Municipal Complex at 200 School St.

“I encourage anyone who is free that day to attend this program,” concluded President Miller.

WALK

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homes.

Connecting a new generation with the past

That connection between ordinary people and extraordinary events was one of the lessons Rocchetti hoped to share with the Cub Scouts. For the members of Cub Scout Pack 21, the August cemetery tour brought that history out of books and records and placed it directly beneath their feet. The Scouts could stand beside the graves of men who had heard the news from Lexington in 1775, marched toward Boston, fought in New York, endured defeat and retreat, defended the Hudson, survived Valley Forge, fought at Saratoga and eventually helped create the United States.

More than two centuries later, a new gener-

ation came to remember them. Aspinwall Cemetery may appear at first glance to be a quiet collection of weathered stones beneath old trees. But behind those stones are the stories of the people who built the community and, in many cases, helped build the nation. For the Cub Scouts of Pack 21, their visit on August 5 was therefore much more than a cemetery tour. It was an opportunity to stand among the hometown patriots of the American Revolution and to learn that the history of the United States can be found not only at famous battlefields such as Lexington, Saratoga, Valley Forge and Yorktown, but also in an old cemetery in Putnam, Connecticut.

And as long as new generations continue to visit their graves, learn their names and tell their stories, the service and sacrifices of those veterans will not be forgotten.

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