



*As the season picks up, so does your hometown story. Thanks for reading.*

# PUTNAM VILLAGER

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**Friday, May 29, 2026**

Complimentary to homes by request

## *Putnam Science Academy celebrates memorable graduation ceremony*



### **Killingly taking measures to address swatting threats**

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — Killingly is one of several school districts throughout the state that has been the victim of numerous swatting incidents, many over just the last few months. The district has begun working with both local and federal law enforcement to better respond to and anticipate these incidents, which Superintendent Dr. Susan Nash said are more than just pranks.

Dr. Nash explained to the Board of Education on May 13 that the district has been working with several different agencies to help respond to the growing trend of swatting which she said are usually the product of national and international organizations rather than students trying to get out of school or interrupt the school day. Swatting is defined as the malicious reporting of a threat, such as an active shooter or a bomb, with the intent of drawing emergency responders to the target location. Killingly's most recent incident was on May 11, their fifth just during this school year.

"Killingly has been the target of several swatting episodes in maybe the last eight weeks, just a significant amount of swatting," said Nash. "I reached out to the Commissioner of Public Safety at the state level and said, 'I don't know if you know what's happening here, but we need help.' When it's happening to you, you think the entire world knows this is happening. You feel that pressure, but he really didn't. He knew a couple of northeastern towns had gotten hit with swatting, but not to the extent."

State Commissioner of Public Safety Ronnell Higgins called together a team that includes representatives of Homeland Security, the Center for School Safety, the Connecticut State Police, and crisis prevention leaders from across Connecticut to engage in discussions with Killingly regarding this disturbing trend.

Killingly Assistant Superintendent Andrea Drake said these meetings have been productive, but creating a universally effective solution is quite difficult, especially as the district practices taking every threat seriously for the safety of students and staff.

"There were proactive measures that had already been established even before we received some of these swatting reports. We've updated our threat assessment protocols to align with state evidence-based standards, something called the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) that lets us evaluate threat risk to our schools. We're really proud of that work and were actually commended when we were meeting with some of these agencies about some of the work that's been done here as it relates to school safety, so that was nice to hear," said Drake.

Some immediate efforts put in place were coordinated training involving principals and secretaries working with state police to ensure they are on the same page in responding to these incidents. They also updated a swatting telephonic intake form and electronic threat intake

Turn To THREATS page A10

PUTNAM — Putnam Science Academy celebrated its 24th graduation ceremony on Saturday, May 16, on the school's campus, marking one of the largest and most memorable graduating classes in school history.

The day was absolutely beautiful and was filled

with inspiring speeches, emotional moments, and celebration as 93 students received their diplomas — making it one of the biggest graduating classes in PSA history.

"It was one of the best graduations we've had yet," school officials said. "The weather was great,

the speeches were fantastic, and the students were unbelievable. It truly was a special day."

The ceremony featured keynote speaker Eric Kapitulik, a motivational speaker from Thompson, Connecticut, who captivated the audience with a message of leadership,

perseverance, and personal growth.

The welcome speech was delivered by Martyn Poliuchovic, who came to the United States after the war in Ukraine began four and a half years ago. His message resonated with

Turn To GRADUATION page A10

### **Locals join Governor's blue ribbon commission**

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

REGION — Two local representatives from the Quiet Corner have been named to Gov. Ned Lamont's Blue-Ribbon Commission on K-12 Education Funding & Accountability.

The commission was announced in April with the

goal of developing a strategic plan to reform the funding streams used to support the operations of K-12 public schools throughout the state. Their responsibilities will include examining aspects of the funding like the Education Cost Sharing grant, the state's main funding formula which the Governor calls "outdated." The commission will be

charged with producing a report containing strategies to optimize funding streams the state provides to support public education.

While the general assembly recently approved millions of dollars for supplemental education grants and municipal aid to support educators and programs, the governor feels the state needs to do better in its

approach to its education funding formula.

"Connecticut has been making significant investments in our schools, and the aid we secured this session was critical to keep teachers in classrooms and protect programs that students depend on," Lamont said in a statement. "But investment alone isn't

Turn To COMMISSION page A10

### *Brooklyn Middle School graduate receives Patrick Wood Prize*

POMFRET — Brooklyn Middle School graduate Josie Ywarsky was awarded the Patrick Wood Prize at Pat's memorial tree near the Pomfret School chapel on a late spring day.

Ywarsky is a straight-A student and the top middle-school discus thrower in Connecticut. She is the 2025 Quinebaug Valley Junior Conference (QVJC) discus champion. This year, she won the CT Middle School discus championship and broke the Brooklyn Middle School girls' discus record with a throw of 95 feet, eight inches. This summer, she's hoping to win the QVJC and CT state championships and qualify for the USA Track and Field Junior Olympic Championship in Los Angeles.



Courtesy

The Patrick Wood Prize presentation to Josie Ywarsky in front of Pat's memorial tree, Pomfret School chapel, with Victoria and John Ywarsky, Libby Wood, Josie, Lisette Rimer, and Louisa Jones, Director of Student Activities.

In the classroom, Ywarsky achieved straight A's and was accepted into the National Junior Honor Society. Her favorite subject was high-school algebra. She also played clarinet for the Brooklyn Middle School band and was selected for the Quinebaug Valley Middle School Music Festival.

Patrick's scholarship was presented by his twin sis-

ter, Libby Wood, and his mother, Lisette Rimer. Josie was joined by her parents, John and Victoria, along with Louisa Jones, Director

Turn To PRIZE page A10

# “Dads Climb Free” this Father’s Day at The Adventure Park at Storrs



STORRS — Father’s Day plans sorted. The Adventure Park at Storrs, Storrs’ premier zipline and climbing Park, is celebrating dads with a Buy One, Get One Free ticket promotion on Sunday, June 21.

Purchase one three-hour Father’s Day BOGO climbing ticket and Dad’s ticket is on us. It’s the kind of adventure the whole family will be talking about long after the summer ends.

“There’s something special about watching families challenge themselves together outdoors,”

said Jesse Pasacreta, Park Manager. “Father’s Day at the Park is always one of our favorite days of the season.”

How to claim the Father’s Day BOGO Deal Online: Visit <https://myadventurepark.com/event/dads-climb-free-sap> and select the “Father’s Day BOGO” ticket. Add two tickets to your cart—one will be free at checkout.

By Phone: Call 860-946-0606 and ask for the Father’s Day BOGO promotion. Our team will help

you find the perfect climb time and apply the discount.

The Father’s Day promotion is valid only on Sunday, June 21, 2026, during regular Park hours: 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. One free ticket per order. Cannot be combined with other promotions or events. Tickets are non-refundable but may be exchanged for

Adventure Park Account Credit in the amount paid.

Kick off Father’s Day weekend: Rad Dad ‘80s Glow in the Park — June 20

Why wait until Sunday to celebrate Dad? On Saturday, June 20, the Park goes full neon for “Rad Dad: An 80s Glow in the Park.” Think retro tunes, glowing trails, and whatever Dad considers a great outfit. It’s the ultimate Father’s Day Eve warm-up—and honestly, climbing through a glow-in-the-dark forest might be the coolest thing Dad’s done since 1987. Tickets and details at [myAdventurePark.com/SAP](https://myadventurepark.com/SAP).

Summer hours begin June 17

The Park shifts into full summer mode starting Wednesday, June 17, open Wednesdays through Sundays through Aug. 23. Visit [myAdventurePark.com/SAP](https://myadventurepark.com/SAP) for the complete schedule and upcoming events.

Affordable climbing all

summer with a monthly pass

For families who can’t get enough, the “Adventure Anytime” Monthly Pass is the ultimate summer upgrade. Unlimited climbs all month long for just 50% more than the cost of a single ticket—no per-visit tickets, no math. Whether Dad (or the kids) want to come back every week or every weekend, the monthly pass makes it easy and affordable to make the Park your summer headquarters. Learn more at <https://myadventurepark.com/location/storrs-ct/prices-promos/season-pass/monthly-passes/>.

First-timer or seasoned climber, there’s no better place to unplug and get outside this summer than The Adventure Park.

About The Adventure Park at Storrs

The nine trails at The Adventure Park consist of various challenges in the trees, including bridges, tightropes, ladders, and 28 ziplines. Participants wear harnesses with clips that

connect to the trail’s safety system, ensuring that they are always locked on to the course until they reach the end. The main trails are designed for ages seven to adult, and an Adventure Playground provides a low-to-the-ground adventure experience for little climbers ages three to six.

Non-climbing participants are admitted free of charge to share the experience on the ground and enjoy the property’s nature trails, picnic tables and community firepit.

The Adventure Park at Storrs is open to the general public and is located minutes from the UConn Campus. The address is 2007 Storrs Rd. in Storrs. Walk ins are welcome on a space available basis, but guests are encouraged to book ahead on the Park’s website or by calling 860-946-0606.

The Adventure Park at Storrs is designed, built and operated by Outdoor Venture Group.

## Should grandparents fund 529 plans or use trust strategies instead?

As families begin to think more intentionally about generational wealth, one question tends to come up fairly often: what’s the best way to support the next generation in a meaningful, thoughtful way?

Often, that conversation leads to two options—a 529 plan or a trust. And while it’s tempting to look for a clear answer, the better approach usually depends on what you’re trying to accomplish, how your family operates, and how much structure or flexibility you want over time.

A 529 plan is one of the most straightforward ways to support education. It’s designed specifically for that purpose, and in many cases, it does that job very well. You have tax-deferred growth, and when funds are used for qualified education expenses, those withdrawals are tax-free. Contribution limits are high, and there are estate planning benefits, including the ability to front-load multiple years of gifts.

Just as important, the account owner—often the grandparent—retains control. Recent rule changes have also made these plans more practical, with distributions from grandparent-owned 529 plans no longer counting as student income on the FAFSA, removing a concern that used to come up frequently.

Where 529 plans tend to work best is when the goal is clear. If the focus is education, and simplicity and tax efficiency are priorities, this can be a very effective tool. At the same time, it’s helpful to recognize that 529 plans are built for a specific purpose. That clarity is a strength, but it also creates limitations. The funds are tied to education, and if they’re used for something else, there may be penalties.

Although, that has changed a bit in recent years. Now, 529s can be converted to a Roth IRA if the child doesn’t use them on education. In addition, if one child doesn’t use the funds, they can be transferred to another relative.

That being said, if your intention is to support broader life goals, or to guide how money is used over time, a 529 plan may not fully address that.

This is where trusts come into the conversation. A trust allows you to take a more intentional approach—not just to what the money is used for, but how and when it’s used. You can define distribution rules, build in protections, and create a framework that supports multiple life stages.

For example, a trust might fund education early on and later support a first home purchase or a business opportunity. It can also help protect assets from risks like creditors or poor financial decisions.



FINANCIAL FOCUS  
LEISL L. LANGEVIN

And importantly, it introduces structure. A significant portion of family wealth is lost over time, often not because of poor intent, but because there wasn’t enough planning or guidance in place. A trust can help address that by building in guardrails that align with your values.

That level of flexibility does come with added complexity. Trusts require legal setup, ongoing administration, and coordination with tax and estate planning professionals. They’re not something you put in place and forget about—they’re part of a broader, coordinated strategy.

In many cases, the most thoughtful approach isn’t choosing one or the other—it’s using both. A 529 plan can handle education funding in a tax-efficient, straightforward way, while a trust provides flexibility and structure for everything beyond that. Together, they allow you to support immediate needs while also thinking about the longer-term picture.

Ultimately, this decision isn’t just about choosing between a 529 plan and a trust. It’s about being clear on what you want this money to do and how it fits into the bigger picture of your family’s financial plan.

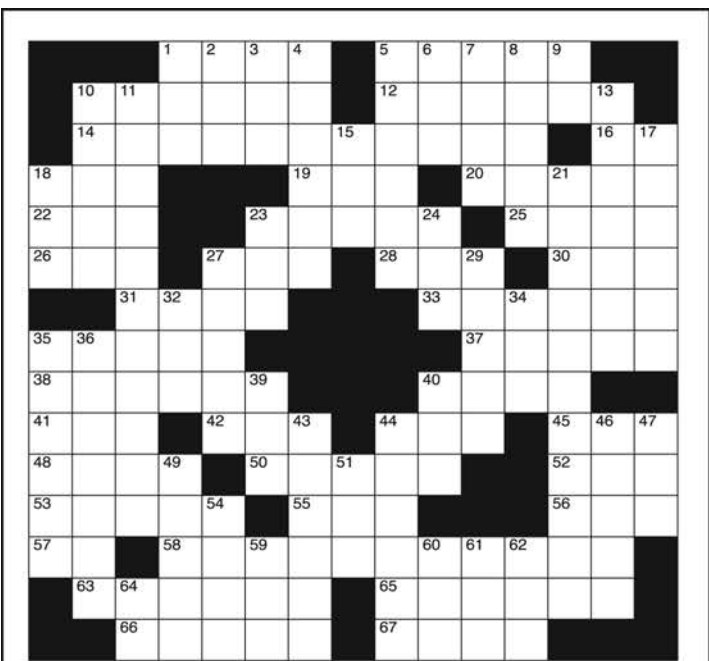
If you’re considering how to support your children or grandchildren in a way that’s both meaningful and strategic, this is where thoughtful planning can make a real difference. At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, we help families bring these pieces together—education planning, tax strategy, estate planning, and long-term wealth transfer—into one cohesive approach. You can schedule a discovery session at [whzwealth.com](https://whzwealth.com) or call us at (860) 928-2341 to start that conversation and build a plan designed to give you Absolute Confidence, Unwavering Partnership, For Life.

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### 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.

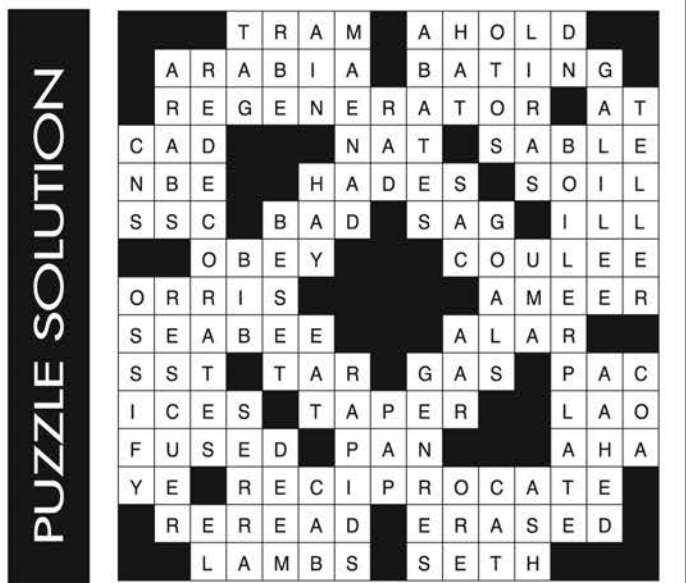


#### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Streetcar
- 5. Take \_\_\_ of it!
- 10. SW Asia peninsula
- 12. Beating wings to escape from a perch
- 14. One who revitalizes
- 16. Indicates position
- 18. Dishonorable man
- 19. Singer King Cole
- 20. Short-tailed marten
- 22. One point east (clockwise) of due north
- 23. The god of the underworld in ancient mythology
- 25. Dirt
- 26. Superconducting super collider
- 27. Not good
- 28. A way to sink
- 30. Unwell
- 31. Follow orders
- 33. Deep ravine
- 35. Perfumery practice
- 37. Indian film director Sultan
- 38. Member of U.S. Navy
- 40. Wing-like
- 41. Very fast airplane
- 42. Slang for cigarette
- 44. Most cars still need it
- 45. Political war chest
- 48. Cools down
- 50. Diminish toward one end
- 52. Indigenous person of Thailand
- 53. Combined
- 55. Container
- 56. Expression of satisfaction
- 57. Thou
- 58. Return a favor
- 63. Go over once more
- 65. Removed
- 66. “Silence of the \_\_\_”
- 67. Comedian Rogen

#### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Children’s game
- 2. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 3. Own (Scottish)
- 4. Female follower of Bacchus
- 5. Subsidies
- 6. Protects from weather
- 7. Spanish municipality
- 8. Supermarket chain
- 9. Domain name
- 10. Semitic peoples
- 11. Designs anew
- 13. City associated with Jesus
- 15. Cool!
- 17. Bank employee
- 18. Central nervous system
- 21. Standardized piece of text
- 23. A type of fever
- 24. Baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 27. Threaten persistently
- 29. Aspirations
- 32. Baby’s eating accessory
- 34. Actress Thurman
- 35. Turn into bone
- 36. One who saves you
- 39. Consume
- 40. Swiss river
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Categories
- 46. Expressed amazement
- 47. It’s important in respiration (abbr.)
- 49. Greek war dance
- 51. Bland, semi-liquid food
- 54. Regard in a specified way
- 59. Taxi
- 60. Naturally occurring solid material
- 61. Feline
- 62. Post-burning residue
- 64. Elevated railroad



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PUZZLE SOLUTION

# Mountain Laurel Floral Designs releases family-friendly lineup of June workshops

**DANIELSON** — Mountain Laurel Floral Designs is welcoming the community to a vibrant lineup of hands-on workshops this June, offering opportunities to explore creativity through needlework, watercolor painting, floral arranging, and family-friendly styling tutorials. Hosted at the shop's Main Street location, the workshops are designed to bring together artists, crafters, and community members of all skill levels in a welcoming and inspiring environment. "Our workshops are intended to be a place where you can relax, meet new friends and learn something new, or enhance

your existing skills," said co-owner Pam Blinten. "In June, we have a wide range of options to fit your needs. We are excited to be partnering with Face Design Company and Dollhouse Art Studio for the first time to bring family-friendly, affordable workshops to the shop. We hope to see you there!" To register for upcoming workshops, visit [mountainlaurelfloralct.com](http://mountainlaurelfloralct.com). Customers are also encouraged to sign up for Mountain Laurel's email list to receive special monthly workshop offers and updates. June Workshops: Needle Potted Sunflower

June 4 | 6 - 8 p.m. \$55 - Learn how to create a 3D felted sunflower in a pot using wool and a needle. Led by local artist Susan Scott Kenney. Stitch Club: Crocheted Bee Stuffers June 7 | 3 - 5 p.m. \$5-15 - Stitch Club is a cozy, creative hangout where you can bring any stitching project (cross stitch, crochet, knitting, etc.) and meet fellow crafters. This time around, our guide Chelsea will be showing interested participants how to make crocheted bee stuffies! New to stitching? We'll show you the ropes for cross stitch or crochet, and basic supplies will be

available to purchase so you can jump right in. Watercolor 101 June 20 | Noon to 3 p.m. \$35 - Prepare for any upcoming celebratory events by having your own hand-painted cards to give! We will be making a birthday card, floral card and summer beach scene card. Led by local artist Caryn Pierce of Dollhouse Art Studio. Parent & Kiddo Styling Tutorial June 28 | 1 - 3 p.m. \$20 - Bring your kiddo and join us for a fun hands-on styling workshop! Learn easy hair tutorials together — from ponytails and

buns to braids — plus face styling tips led by beauty experts from Face Design Company & Creative Space. The perfect Father's Day gift for dads and kids to create, laugh, and learn together! Fourth of July Flower Arranging July 1 | 5 - 7 p.m. \$70 - Create two mason jar centerpieces using fresh, locally grown blooms. Perfect for a simple, seasonal Fourth of July celebration. About Mountain Laurel Floral Designs Mountain Laurel Floral Designs is more than a flower shop—it's a space

where community, sustainability, and artistry flourish. Owned by local flower farmers Gabby and Pam, the shop is located at 98 Main Street in Danielson, Connecticut, and specializes in fresh, seasonal blooms grown in southeastern New England. The business began with a shared love of the land and a commitment to sustainable flower farming. Today, Gabby and Pam create floral arrangements that honor the rhythms of the seasons and host a variety of hands-on workshops that celebrate creativity and connection.

## Roseland Park to hold open house June 6

**WOODSTOCK** — Free tours of Roseland Cottage, 556 Route 169, Woodstock, will be offered on Saturday, June 6, in celebration of Historic New England's Open House day. Tours are offered on the hour, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., with the last tour starting at 3 p.m., and are on a first come, first served basis. Other upcoming events include free Twilight Lawn Concerts on June 26 featuring The Little Big Band; July 10, with Souls on Fire; and Aug. 21, when Wooden Horse will play. All concerts are at 6:30 p.m. On June 28 from noon to 4 p.m., celebrate Connecticut's Historic Gardens Day with a free tour of the historic parterre

garden and then make a garden in a teacup—bring your own or use one we'll provide. Known locally as The Pink House, National Historic Landmark Roseland Cottage is one of the finest remaining examples of the Gothic Revival style, which was popular in the 1840s, when Roseland was built. It served as the summer home of prominent 19th-century businessman and abolitionist Henry Chandler Bowen and his wife Lucy Tappan, who entertained many luminaries at Roseland, including four US Presidents. The picturesque landscape includes the original boxwood parterre garden, which is planted with over 5000 annuals each

spring, an icehouse, aviary, carriage barn, and, remarkably, the nation's oldest surviving indoor bowling alley. The Pink House is as beautiful inside as out, with elaborate wall coverings, heavily patterned carpets, stained glass, and furnishings in the Gothic Revival style that date back to the construction of the house in 1846. Roseland Cottage will be open in 2023 from June 4 to October 18, Thursday through Sunday, 11-4. Tours are always free for Woodstock residents and Historic New England members and for all visitors on June 6. Please call 860 928-4074 for more information, or to arrange group tours.

About Historic New England Roseland Cottage is one of 38 historic sites owned and operated by Historic New England. Historic New England's shares the region's history through vast collections, publications, public programs, museum properties, archives, and family stories that document more than 400 years of life in New England. For more information, visit [www.HistoricNewEngland.org](http://www.HistoricNewEngland.org).

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## Northeast CT Education Foundation awards \$201,000 to local students at Scholarship Night



**DAYVILLE** — On Wednesday, May 6, the Northeast CT Education Foundation (NCEF) held its second annual Scholarship Night at Killingly High School in Dayville. The ceremony celebrated Windham County residents pursuing higher education. In total, over \$201,000 was awarded to 107 local students, many of which are new or continuing students at CT State Community College Quinebaug Valley. NCEF scholarships support direct educational expenses including tuition, books, fees, technology, and other course requirements. During the ceremony, NCEF Scholarship Chair Eddie Graff shared his personal story with 2026 recipients, "Fourteen years ago, when I was a Quinebaug

Valley Community College student, Foundation scholarships changed my life and provided opportunities I could never have imagined. It gives me such pride to now serve as a board member of the Northeast Connecticut Education Foundation and as chair of the scholarship committee. I truly hope that our 2026 recipients will be inspired to one day help others achieve their educational dreams." The Foundation extends sincere appreciation to all who assisted with making the annual Scholarship Night a success, including the scholarship committee members, volunteers Maureen Brodeur, Kathy Borner, Martin Charette, Lynne Comtois, Dan Donahue, Susan Harrod, and Bruce Wolanin, as well

as Killingly High School administration and staff for providing their auditorium. The mission of the Northeast Connecticut Education Foundation is to provide scholarships and other financial support to residents of Northeast Connecticut who want to pursue higher education. To learn more about the NCEF, visit [www.ncteducationfoundation.org](http://www.ncteducationfoundation.org). For more information on how to support local students at CT State Quinebaug Valley, please contact Director of Institutional Advancement Monique C.K. Wolanin at (860) 932-4174 or [monique.wolanin@ctstate.edu](mailto:monique.wolanin@ctstate.edu).

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## DAUGHTERS OF ISABELLA HOLD ANNUAL TEA

On Sunday, May 17, the Daughters of Isabella Circle 543 hosted their annual tea focusing on community, faith and fellowship. Highlights included local vendors from Mary Kay Cosmetics, Divas Fine Collections, massage therapy benefits by Sandi Lachapelle and the published works of author Pearl Dexter, of "Tea: A Magazine." The Circle also honored devoted member Priscilla Dowd celebrating her 25th year with the Daughters of Isabella. Priscilla, known for her compassion, mentorship, willingness to serve and caring manner to all, is a very active parishioner of St Mary/St Therese parish in Putnam. In addition, she volunteers countless hours to many local organizations and charities.

Courtesy

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 PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

**BRENDAN BERUBE**  
 EDITOR

# OPINION

*Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### A loss of EMS services in Brooklyn

To the Editor:

There is a proposed change to our ambulance provider in Brooklyn. The decision to make this change has not been presented to the town. At their member meeting on March 30, the Mortlake Board of Directors orchestrated a fraudulent vote which has determined going forward with an ambulance contract with American Ambulance, a division of Hartford Healthcare. At their vote, the Board of Directors did not follow their bylaws and handpicked which members would not be able to vote because of a conflict of interest shared by other members not singled out. Ironically, these members, that were excluded from voting, were those with the most ambulance experience, several of them volunteers for our ambulance service. This is an ethical violation and is being addressed at the town level.

The two ambulance services being considered at the vote were American Ambulance, and Vintech (who currently staffs our ambulance during the day with added shifts at night). In the budget numbers presented to the Fire Commissioners on April 8, the numbers for Vintech were inflated, making them look like a much more expensive option than American Ambulance. Here are the facts for both ambulance services:

American Ambulance has offered to fulfill 24/7 ambulance service for our town for \$100,000 per year, with a \$5,000 increase annually for five years. They will be losing money on this contract, with the idea that they can get their foot in the door as an ambulance provider in our area of state. When year 6 comes, I'm sure they will no longer take a loss. With this option, we would sell our ambulances and likely lose our volunteer EMTs, as their role in our emergency services would be significantly reduced. We would also cut our town emergency medical services from 2 ambulances to only 1. Although Medicare and

Medicaid fees for using the ambulance cannot be changed, rates would increase for those of us not on Medicare or Medicaid. We do have the option of leaving this contract at any point, but once our ambulances have been sold and we would no longer have volunteer EMTs, our options to do anything else would be limited and our hands would be tied.

Vintech will allow us to keep both of our ambulances and our volunteer EMTs will be able to take second calls with the second ambulance. Recently we had 4 second calls over the course of a weekend and I'm sure that the patients involved in those calls were grateful that they didn't have to experience longer response times waiting for mutual aid. Vintech is offering 24/7 ambulance service for \$423,000. This would be offset by the ambulance billing the town would receive at \$614,830. The rest of the expenses associated with this option (fuel, repairs, billing costs, medical supplies, etc.) would be \$193,634.80, leaving a net cost of \$1,804.80. The one thing that this doesn't account for is the capital expense of periodically replacing an ambulance. Budgeting for \$100,000 a year (the same cost as American Ambulance) would take care of this, leaving both options at essentially the same cost to the town.

The Mortlake Board of Directors has not been transparent or objective with their presentation of these options and achieved their vote through unethical maneuvering. I urge all town residents to attend the town forum on May 28 at 7 p.m. at the Middle School. Please ask questions and urge the Mortlake Board of Directors and Fire Commissioners to retrace their steps, allowing for public input into this decision and scheduling a re-vote which does not exclude those fire department members most knowledgeable about the emergency medical services in our town.

COURTNEY CROFTS  
 BROOKLYN

### Science requires debate, not consensus

To the Editor:

Following is my response that I believe pushes back firmly while staying intellectually grounded instead of sounding emotional or dismissive.

The response titled "A Chance to Learn More" to my original letter spends a great deal of time attempting to discredit me personally while largely avoiding the central issue I raised, and that is the repeated pattern of catastrophic climate predictions failing to materialize as advertised.

The Maldives example was never presented as proof that climate changes do not occur. Climate has always changed. Always. We've all heard of the Ice Age, but that largely disappeared, though last winter may cause some to disagree. The point was that we have been told for decades that the Maldives faced imminent disappearance from rising seas, yet instead we see expanding infrastructure, booming tourism, artificial island growth, and continued long-term investment. If the threat were truly existential on the timelines repeatedly claimed, global investors and governments would not be pouring billions into development there.

Ironically, the author confirms part of my argument. He acknowledges that beaches are being replenished, sea walls are being built, and engineering solutions are being implemented successfully. That is not evidence of inevitable climate catastrophe; it is evidence of human adaptability and resilience. Civilization has always adapted to environmental conditions, whether through dams, levees, irrigation systems, air conditioning, or coastal engineering.

The author also accuses me of "confirmation bias," yet immediately appeals to consensus rather than engaging honestly with scientific uncertainty. Science is not decided by popularity contests, political pressure, or the number of papers published. Throughout history, scientific consensus has been wrong many times (see COVID-19). Real science welcomes skepticism because skepticism is essential to testing assumptions.

Yes, NASA reports measurable sea level rise

### When will it be enough?

To the Editor:

"Late Night with Stephen Colbert" is history. No big deal, right? Shows get cancelled all the time for various reasons. But this is different. Our thin-skinned egomaniac president wants to silence anyone who disagrees with him or makes fun of him, and he's using the power of The Oval Office to make it happen.

Every American (regardless of political preference) should be worried and angry. Freedom of Speech and Freedom of the Press are cornerstones of this great nation. Generations of my fellow veterans have shed blood and died to preserve those rights. Obviously, that means nothing to the self-cen-

tered draft-dodger sitting in our White House.

Trump continues to act like a third-world dictator. He's trampled on the Constitution, started a senseless war, uses the DOJ for revenge on political adversaries, lines his family's pockets with foreign business deals, and spends taxpayer's money for vanity projects while the cost of living goes through the roof. When will Congressional Republicans show some backbone and say "Enough" to this out of control corrupt lunatic?

TODD PATRIE  
 POMFRET CENTER

## When every threat must be treated as real

Few things strike fear into a community faster than hearing there may be a threat inside a school building. Parents freeze. Teachers move into action. Police officers rush toward uncertainty. Students, even when they try to appear calm, absorb the stress in ways that can linger long after the day is over.

That is what makes swatting incidents so damaging and so deeply irresponsible.

The recent discussion by Killingly school officials about the repeated swatting incidents targeting the district should concern every resident of Northeastern Connecticut. Five incidents in a single school year is not a harmless prank. It is a direct attack on a community's sense of safety and stability.

What makes these situations especially difficult is that schools and emergency responders do not have the luxury of assuming a threat is fake. Every call must be treated seriously. Every procedure must be followed. Every classroom must respond as though the danger could be real, because one day it might be.

That reality creates enormous pressure not only on students and staff, but also on police officers, dispatchers, firefighters, parents, and school administrators trying to make critical decisions in real time.

It was encouraging to hear Superintendent Dr. Susan Nash and Assistant Superintendent Andrea Drake speak candidly about the seriousness of the issue and the coordinated effort now underway involving local law enforcement, Connecticut State Police, Homeland Security, the Center for School Safety, and federal authorities. The fact that Killingly officials reached beyond the local level for additional support reflects the scale of what districts across the country are facing.

Their comments also highlighted something the public sometimes overlooks during emergencies: communication takes time when accuracy matters.

In the social media era, rumors often travel faster than facts. A single vague post can spread panic throughout a town in minutes. Parents understandably want information immediately, but officials also have an obligation to verify details, coordinate with investigators, and avoid releasing inaccurate or incomplete information that could worsen confusion.

That balancing act is not easy.

There is also an emotional cost that cannot be measured in reports or statistics. Students who repeatedly experience lockdowns or emergency responses begin carrying a level of anxiety no child should have to normalize. Teachers and school staff, meanwhile, must continue creating calm and productive classrooms even after stressful disruptions. Over time, repeated false threats chip away at the sense of security schools work so hard to build.

What stands out most in Killingly's response is the emphasis on preparation rather than panic. Updating threat assessment protocols, coordinating with law enforcement, improving intake procedures, and refining visitor access policies are all practical steps rooted in caution and professionalism. Those efforts deserve community support.

At the same time, this issue serves as a reminder that technology has made it easier than ever for malicious actors, sometimes operating far outside the local area or even outside the country, to disrupt small communities. Rural districts are no longer insulated from national trends. A town like Killingly can suddenly find itself dealing with the same coordinated threats affecting major cities and suburban districts across the nation.

That can feel unsettling, but it also reinforces the importance of strong local relationships between schools, law enforcement, parents, and municipal leaders. In moments of uncertainty, trust matters.

There may never be a perfect solution to swatting. As long as individuals seek attention, chaos, or disruption through anonymous threats, schools will remain vulnerable to these cruel acts. But preparation, communication, and community cooperation remain the strongest tools available.

The people making these false reports may view them as entertainment or disruption from behind a screen. In reality, they are forcing children to fear for their lives, pulling emergency personnel away from legitimate emergencies, and placing enormous strain on entire communities.

That is not mischief. That is harm.

And communities like Killingly are right to treat it that way.



The Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar is open for the season and will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., or by appointment. Volunteers are wanted. Could you donate two and a half hours a month? Training supplied. For additional information, please call (860) 207-6044 and leave a message.



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

Office will be open every Wednesday and Sunday, from 1-5 p.m. through Oct. 11, and by appointment throughout Walktober. Handicapped-accessible.

Celebrate America 250/Putnam. Putnam Public Library. Retired Connecticut State Archaeologist Nicholas Bellantoni will present a program on Revolutionary War Archaeology in CT on Saturday, May 30 at 12:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Putnam Public Library and the Aspinock Historical Society.

I wanted to see some of the area's May happenings, so looked at extracts of the

1936 Windham County Transcript, which Marilyn Labbe had given me. The May 21, 1936 issue had an article about the dedication of the Catholic Church in Brooklyn. "Brooklyn's new Roman Catholic church, known as St. Mary's but hereafter to be designated as Our Lady of LaSalette, is to be dedicated on Sunday by Rt. Rev. Maurice F. McAuliffe, Bishop of the Hartford diocese, with impressive ceremonies. There will be a mass at 8.30 a.m., and the dedication program will open at 11 a.m., with the laying of the cornerstone and the blessing of the chapel to its patron saint by Bishop McAuliffe. In the cornerstone will be placed various relics and records to be preserved for posterity. Immediately following this ceremony, a solemn high mass is to be celebrated by Rev. Anthelme F. Mollard, M. S., pastor of St. James' parish, with which the Brooklyn mission is affiliated. Rev. Arthur R. Vegiard, M. S., of Louisiana, who is spending a vacation at his home here, will be master of ceremonies. Other officers of the mass will be announced later. Music will be by St. James' choir under the direction of Mrs. Joseph Gareau. After the mass, Bishop McAuliffe and visiting priests will be guests at luncheon at the home of Daniel Smith.

"The chapel of Our Lady of LaSalette is a beautiful little edifice of stone in simple Gothic style of architecture, situated on an eminence on the Danielson road in Brooklyn Center. Constructed of carefully selected native stone, the building gives an impression of solidarity and its setting is ideal, broad lawns sweeping down to the highway and numbers of handsome shade trees in the near vicinity. At the rear is an ample parking space, which will make it unnecessary for motorists to leave their cars on the heavily traveled thoroughfare. Entering the chapel, one is impressed by the beauty of its sanctified simplicity. Prominent over the white and gold altar is a statue of the Crowned Virgin of LaSalette, brought from Lyons, France. Placed in a niche, with daylight filtering through from a concealed window above, it is most effective. The altar, statue, golden candlesticks and crucifix, stations of the cross and stained glass memorial windows are all gifts of devoted parishioners... Actual work on the construction of the building was commenced about a year ago and had progressed sufficiently so that the first

MICHAEL DOUGLAS  
 BROOKLYN

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Earth — Sunburned

To the Editor:

I remember a lot about the 70s. One thing that comes to mind is getting sunburned. It seemed a summer ritual to get a wicked burn on your first annual trip to the beach, sleep terribly that night because of it, then have your little sister peel the dead skin off your back over the next few days. I have no memory of sunscreen at all until well after college.

After college, in the early 90s, I lived in Southern California and worked in a branch office of a mid-sized environmental engineering firm. Included among the 20 or so people there was Dee, the office manager's wife. Nobody really knew what she did other than express strong opinions about everything while smoking a cigarette. She always had one burning between her fingers. Dee was a hardcore sun worshipper too, and though she couldn't have been much older than 50, she looked every bit of 80. I don't know what ever happened to her, but I always thought that if anyone would get melanoma or lung cancer, it was Dee.

In the '70s, I also remember my dad pushing the lawn mower in the backyard in his white undershirt with a pack of cigarettes rolled into the sleeve. His old pal Larry and my uncle Bruce also did the same thing. They'd hold the pack against their shoulder and fold the sleeve over it, and there it stayed neatly tucked. As a little boy, I thought this looked cool and was something most men did. This exact image was portrayed in an episode of the TV show "Mad Men." Don Draper was out in the yard smoking with his pack rolled up in his sleeve, and to me, this one scene gave the show a feel of authenticity. Legend has it that in the 1950s, when new Navy recruits like my dad, Larry, and Uncle Bruce were issued their foot lockers, the quartermaster slapped two cartons of cigarettes on top — standard issue. If you didn't already smoke, you were practically instructed to!

"More doctors smoke Camels than any other brand." Do an internet search and you'll find old TV commercials and magazine ads from the 1940s and 50s saying laughable things like that. In one "Leave It to Beaver"-era commercial I watched, an actor dressed in a white lab coat while smoking a Camel cigarette, said: "This is the brand I recommend to my patients."

Looking back, we might feel humanity was remarkably clueless about things that seem remarkably obvious today. Spending half my career in risk management, I think about that idea often — the lag time between doing something risky, destructive, and downright stupid, and finally realizing how destructive it is. The widespread use of Roundup (glyphosate) in the U.S. is a modern example. Although it's been banned across much of the world, including the EU, Mexico, and Vietnam, Trump recently issued executive orders on glyphosate that encourage its expanded domestic use and making the U.S. government its biggest buyer. This despite more than

180,000 lawsuits totaling over \$12 billion in claims against the manufacturer for toxic effects including lymphoma. Glyphosate is also widely known to kill pollinating bees critical to humanity's food supply.

Far and away, the most dangerous thing some 25 percent of Americans still deny, well into the 21st century, is the harm of climate change. Some doubt is of course understandable, until you examine how that position is formed. Since 97 percent of the world's climate scientists agree climate change is real, man-made, and could imperil civilization, nonbelievers must put their trust in the remaining 3 percent. Of course, some credible scientists genuinely hold contrary views. After all, a 100 percent consensus on anything is nearly impossible. But as the years pass, they are an ever-shrinking minority.

Most climate change denial rhetoric today comes from hired guns that craft their opposing argument intentionally to instill doubt in hard climate science. Their job as a hired gun is quite literally to sell doubt. Harvard Professor, Naomi Oreskes tells this deeply disturbing story of deceit and betrayal in her remarkable book "Merchants of Doubt."

In her book, Dr. Oreskes describes a strategy where hired guns publish articles and reports with virtually none of the peer review or scientific scrutiny legitimate science undergoes. To ordinary people, hearing that "Dr. So-and-so says climate change isn't real" can sound credible. That position is quickly accepted and broadcast across many media platforms that do not rely on credible science sources. In addition to lacking peer review, also missing from a given report is the critical fact that the "scientist" who wrote it was been paid \$400,000 by the American Petroleum Institute or another oil company. This hired gun strategy was used by the tobacco industry for more than 50 years to delay action (and responsibility) for killing millions.

Seeing the effectiveness of selling doubt, the fossil fuel industry has taken Tobacco's playbook as their operating manual to deny, obfuscate, and delay change. It shouldn't surprise you to learn — though it still does — that the fossil fuel industry is not merely mimicking tobacco's strategy; it's actually hiring the exact same PR firms, law firms, and even the same dubious scientists who worked for tobacco in the '60s, '70s, and '80s.

While the kingpins of the oil industry sacrifice our planet for money, it doesn't change these basic truths most of us have come to accept: cigarettes have killed millions and can kill you, too much sunburn can cause skin cancer and kill you, Roundup kills pollinators and even our citizens by the thousands, and, climate change is real, it is primarily caused by burning fossil fuels, and it jeopardizes our children's future.

KEN WOLSLEGAL  
WOODSTOCK

### Thanks, Paws — I knew I was right

To the Editor:

The Paws Cat Shelter folks' attempt at a rebuttal just reinforces every point I was making about how we need to send bottle deposits into the history books.

I've known for a while about nonprofits collecting cans and bottles in bulk for recycling, and I've even heard of businesses with equipment to mass-process cans and bottles for people who don't want to fight the ill-maintained can and bottle machines one container at a time. All of this is just hard evidence that bottle deposits are a woefully outdated form of recycling from a generation ago, and instead of acknowledging the passage of time, the state of Connecticut is spending your tax dollars chasing people cashing in cans and bottles from out of state because our deposit's higher.

Whether profit or nonprofit, these workarounds just showcase how bottle deposits are such an outdated waste of time, a waste of our tax dollars, and a pittance of a micro-tax on beverages. These numerous groups will step up to the plate to try to help you get out of this senseless chore that's completely not worth your time or annoyance. Ultimately, the way this system is supposed to work is so ineffective that organizations are trying to convert it into something else.

Recycling is established now. The technology has advanced by a generation. I don't expect a return to litter being abso-

lutely everywhere, like in the days where people were adjusting to the rollout of bottle deposits and previous cans said, "Please Don't Litter" or "Put Litter In Its Place." Recycling has also been around long enough to know where we're getting the most bang for our buck. Metal is the runaway winner. Plastic and paper struggle to be worth it outside of niche applications of recycled materials.

The nonprofits and can recyclers don't need to shut down either, if we ended this system and stopped skimming off the top of people's love for beverages. I say fold cans and bottles into regular recycling, including recycling in bulk with similar materials. Let the nonprofits continue making recycling runs, but deal with the materials as a whole instead of some workarounds or fighting with a can machine all afternoon.

Inflation averages three percent a year, except maybe in recent years where we've had trouble controlling it. Can and bottle deposits went up a nickel in 30 years. If can and bottle deposits are supposed to be a carrot on a stick to encourage recycling, it is now a fossilized rotted out carrot dangling from a weathered rotted termite-infested tree branch or whatever visual you want to use.

No thanks. It's time to stop living in the past.

JAY GERHART  
PUTNAM

### It is up to us to hold those we elect accountable

To the Editor:

This July 4, we will celebrate 250 years as a country. Sure, we are a young country, but we have accomplished much in our 250 years and made life better for our citizens.

Connecticut had a lot to do with the birth of our United States. Fifty-six men would sign the most important documents that birthed our country. Four of those men were local men, some educated, some not so much, some lawyers, others farmers. Although not as educated, the farmers had the gift of common sense which helped in their decision making. All of them had strong beliefs about what this new country should entail.

Some of our founders are buried nearby. Roger Sherman's grave is in Grove Cemetery in Eastford. He was one of the two Connecticut signers of the Constitution. His distinction includes being the only founding father to have signed all four of our founding documents.

Samuel Huntington was born in the Scotland Society of Windham and lived in Norwich. He was elected to represent the colonies at the 2nd Continental Congress in 1776. He signed the Declaration of Independence after several weeks of discussion among the founders. Our founders had plenty of heated disagreements among themselves and yet were able to come together for the good of the republic. They

put aside those disagreements to make the new republic work. There is a valuable lesson there for today.

In 1861, Nathaniel Lyon of Eastford was the first general of the Union army to die in the Civil War. He is buried in a small cemetery in Phoenixville on the banks of the Natchaug River. Israel Putnam left his plow in the field and marched to Boston to join other New Englanders in fighting the British. He is buried under the monument of him astride his horse in Brooklyn.

Both of those men saw the importance of fighting for their country.

Our founders sacrificed everything because they truly believed in freedom and making the Constitution the supreme law of the land. They also believed in checks and balances to make the Constitution lasting. Now it is up to us to keep this document alive and working as it was intended.

The Presidents we elect, the members of Congress and the military all take an oath to uphold the US Constitution. It is up to us, the citizens who support them, to hold their feet to the fire to ensure that they live up to the oaths they took. They represent us, not the President.

God Bless  
America.

G. TOD STEVENSON  
WOODSTOCK

### Stop the \$1.776 billion slush fund — your money, your voice

To the Editor:

The Trump administration has created a \$1.776 billion "Anti-Weaponization Fund" a.k.a. "slush fund," drawn from the federal Treasury without a congressional vote to appropriate a single dollar.

This settlement involves Trump suing two agencies he himself oversees, the IRS and the Treasury Department, both of which were represented by a Justice Department (DOJ) that Trump is using in pursuit of his personal interests. The settlement deal also bars the government from pursuing tax claims against Trump, his family, and his businesses. (An adverse ruling from an audit could potentially have cost the president \$100 million, according to a New York Times analysis of his earlier tax returns.)

Critics across the political spectrum, including legal experts, watchdog groups, Democratic lawmakers, and Senate Republicans have raised concerns about the lack of oversight and eligibility standards surrounding the fund. Reuters reported that the attorney general will appoint the five-member commission overseeing payouts, that decisions may not be appealable, and that public disclosure of payouts is not required.

Concerns intensified after Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche declined to say whether people convicted of assaulting Capitol Police officers on January 6 would be excluded from receiving compensation. Former Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrio has publicly said he intends to seek \$5 million from the fund. Others are already sending letters to request funds.

Here are the facts about the fund:

The fund was established as part of a settlement of Trump's \$10 billion lawsuit against the IRS, meaning the president sued the very government he controls, and awarded himself a nearly \$2 billion fund as a result. (Time)

Two U.S. Capitol Police officers who defended the building on January 6 filed suit to block the fund, arguing that paying rioters could increase the risk of future vigilante violence against law enforcement. (The Daily Caller) The police officer's lawsuit describes it as "the most brazen act of presidential corruption this century." (PBS)

Sen. Susan Collins stated plainly: "I do not believe individuals that were convicted of violence against police officers on Jan. 6 should be entitled to reimbursement of their legal fees." (CNN)

Sen. Bill Cassidy said, "People are concerned about paying their mortgage or rent, affording groceries and paying for gas, not about putting together a \$1.8 billion fund for the President and his allies to pay whom-ever they wish with no legal precedent or accountability." (NPR)

The fund is already so toxic that Senate Republicans, blindsided by the announcement, couldn't muster 50 votes, derailing a priority GOP spending package and sending Congress home for Memorial Day recess in disarray. (CNN)

Whether you support or oppose Donald Trump, taxpayers deserve transparency, accountability, and clear legal guardrails when billions of public dollars are involved. Democracy depends on checks and balances, regardless of who is in power.

It is time to act. Republican senators are finally taking a stand. Your call right now can tip the balance. Spread the word.

Call Congress: (202) 224-3121 — Ask for your senator by name.

Tell them: Stop the \$1.776 billion Slush Fund. No guardrails, no vote, no accountability — kill the fund.

The window is narrow. Congress returns the first week of June with a self-imposed deadline. Make your voices heard now.

LISA ARENDS  
BROOKLYN

Members of the public are invited to

### CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

#### VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

State Project No. 0172-0541

Eastern Connecticut Accessible Pedestrian Signal Upgrades

Monday, June 1, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Learn More & Register: [portal.ct.gov/DOTEasternCT0172-0541](https://portal.ct.gov/DOTEasternCT0172-0541)

The purpose of this meeting is to provide the community with an opportunity to learn about the proposed project and allow an open discussion of any views and comments concerning the proposed improvements. A Q&A session will immediately follow the presentation.

Meeting accessibility and traffic control requirements, these features are expected to enhance pedestrian usage at traffic signals and is intended to reduce crashes between pedestrians and vehicles.

Right-of-way impacts are expected to be minimal around new pedestrian equipment and sidewalks at some project intersections.

Construction is expected to start in spring 2028, depending on funding, right-of-way acquisition, and permits. The estimated cost is \$6 million, with 90% federal funds and 10% state funds.

The public can submit comments and questions during two-week public comment period following meeting. Direct comments and questions by Monday, June 15, 2026, to Balazs Szoke at [DOTProject0172-0541@ct.gov](mailto:DOTProject0172-0541@ct.gov) or 860-594-2020.

#### ACCESSIBILITY

Non-English language closed captioning will be available on Zoom. The recording will also be posted following the meeting in CTDOT's public meeting playlist at [portal.ct.gov/ctdotVPIArchive](https://portal.ct.gov/ctdotVPIArchive).

For audio access, call 877-853-5257 with Meeting ID 852 7784 2505. Project information can be mailed within one week by contacting Balazs Szoke at [DOTProject0172-0541@ct.gov](mailto:DOTProject0172-0541@ct.gov) or 860-594-2745.

For hearing/speech disabilities, dial 711 for Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). Request language assistance from CTDOT's Language Assistance at (860) 594-2109 at least five business days before meeting.

### Additional Letters To The Editor, See A-6

#### Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## We already have a ballroom

To the Editor:

Just over a mile from the White House sits the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, described as a “show-stopping masterpiece of Neoclassical architecture.” The grand room is capable of hosting around 650 seated guests and up to about 1,000 people in total—about the size for Donnie-Destructo’s ego-show. By the way, the Mellon Auditorium has been used by many Presidents, including Donnie-Dimwit. So why do we need another? And let’s try to understand why he wants a bunker underneath, unless he needs it to survive a civil uprising or refuses to leave office.

His proposed \$1.77 billion slush fund is rank corruption. The Constitution is clear that only Congress has the power to authorize expenditures. This was set up specifically to prevent one person taking control of spending to bribe his supporters.

In my naive view of the law, why isn’t RICO being used against Donnie-Dingbat? His entire existence and Administration

constitute a criminal enterprise. He has defiled the Constitution repeatedly and has ignored laws intended to control corruption or to protect the health and safety of our people. There is overwhelming evidence for RICO conviction, but that same evidence is being ignored by the very people it would convict. Catch-22?

This Memorial Weekend, I watched a number of war movies. In almost every one, there was someone explaining why they were fighting. In the 1949 WWII movie “Battleground,” about a squad in the Battle of the Bulge, an Army Chaplain says the reason they were there was to defeat Fascism. Then he added, “Never let anyone say you were a sucker for being here”. Today that “anyone” is Commander in Chief Donnie-Demented. I challenge any of you MAGA’s to write an Op-Ed letter justifying this egregious insult to those who protected the USA.

STEPHEN ETZEL  
PUTNAM

## KILLINGLY

continued from page A4

mass was celebrated there on Christmas Day.”

“The cornerstone of Our Lady of LaSalette chapel is the original cornerstone of the first Catholic church in Danielson, which was located on Mechanic street. (Editors Note: The church was on Winter Street.) It was recut and relettered before being placed in the new building at the dedication ceremony last Sunday. Among the relics and articles of historical interest placed within the stone was a copy of The Transcript for May 21 containing a story of the building of the church.” (WCT May 28, 1936)

I wanted to see what was happening locally 100 years ago, but was having difficulty accessing the Windham County Transcripts from home, so turned to the online Putnam Patriots at Genealogy Bank. com. The front page of the Friday, May 28, 1926 issue highlighted, “Condition of Geo. A. Hammond Critical...One of Putnam’s Most Widely Known and Most Public Spirited Citizens. Eighty-fifth Birthday Wednesday. Word comes from the bedside of George A. Hammond at his home on Oak Hill, that his condition is critical and the end is expected hourly... His last appearance was on Decoration Day some years ago when he occupied an automobile in the parade. (My late grandmother always called Memorial Day, Decoration Day). Mr. Hammond was for many years one of the foremost citizens of the county and state and he also had a statewide acquaintance due to his interest in public affairs and election to office. He was elected three times to serve in the house of the General Assembly, once from Mansfield where he spent his early days, and twice from Putnam. In 1908 he was elected state senator from this district. He had also served on the state central committee and was one of Connecticut’s representatives to the republican national convention when

McKinley was nominated... He was a factor in securing electric lights and a public water supply for the town... But it was as a silk manufacturer that he was best known being one of the pioneer silk thread makers of the state. The Hammond, Knowlton Company was nationally known for the quality of its products...” (p.1)

“Miss Hazel Leola Ware of Worcester will hold her annual revue at the Bradley theatre tonight. Her Putnam pupils will give a number of interesting exhibitions of a variety of fancy dancing and there has been a good advance sale of tickets. Following the revue there will be dancing in Odd Fellows’ hall with music by the Crescent orchestra of Worcester. Miss Ware has taught the art of dancing in Putnam for several years...” (p.1)

Have you heard of Green Recreation Farm at Quaddic? “The Green Recreation Farm on the shores of Quadic (sic) pond has been opened for the summer season. People who have never been to this spot little realize its natural beauties. The pond is a beautiful body of water and the recreation grounds contain a beautiful grove of virgin pines where it is always cool and comfortable. There is boating and bathing and a chance to hike in a beautiful countryside. The place has come into prominence during the past several years and is used as a picnic ground year after year by those who have learned of its beauties.” (p.3).

“Memorial Day to Be Observed Monday. Spanish and World War Veterans Will Have Charge.-Stores Closed All Day. Putnam Heights and East Putnam to Have Community Exercises...The graves of all soldiers will be decorated and there will be exercises at the Soldiers’ monument, Grove Street at 10.30 o’clock...The following general order has been issued and sets forth the day’s plans. General Orders No. 1.A. Wilder Merriam Camp, No. 9, United Spanish War Veterans, and Anselm Mayotte Post, No. 13, American Legion will assemble at the Chamber of Commerce

rooms, Memorial Day, Monday, May 31 at 8.45 a.m. daylight saving time. Automobiles will be provided for all Civil War veterans and comrades taking part in the exercises at St. Mary’s cemetery at 9 a.m., at Grove Street cemetery at 9.30 and at the Soldiers monument at 10.30...”

I am old enough to remember when Memorial Day was celebrated on May 31 and was not a Monday holiday. I’m sure there are a few readers that remember that too. An internet search revealed that the Uniform Monday Act was passed in 1968, but Memorial Day was not officially celebrated on the last Monday in May until 1971. (Airborne and Special Operations Museum and others).

“The origins of Memorial Day can be traced back to the aftermath of the American Civil War. As the conflict ended in 1865, people across the country began holding ceremonies to honor the Union and Confederate soldiers who had died in the conflict. One of the earliest known ceremonies took place in Charleston, South Carolina, in May 1865, when a group of freed slaves gathered to commemorate fallen Union soldiers buried in a local racecourse. The first national observance of Memorial Day, then known as Decoration Day, was declared by General John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic on May 5, 1868. The day was designated as a time to decorate the graves of the fallen with flowers and to hold ceremonies to honor their sacrifice.” (https://carrytheload.org/carry-the-flag/memorial-day/?gad\_source=1&gad\_campaignid=17349076739)

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, May 2026. Special thanks to Marilyn Labbe for Transcript extracts. 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.



Courtesy

Six time Martial Arts Hall of Fame inductee and current US Martial Arts Team Member, 7th Dan Master Daryl Laperle announces promotion of Luke St. Jean, Caryssa Adams and Tracy St. Jean from 1st Dan Black Belt to 2nd Dan Black Belt & Melinda Densmore from Apprentice to 1st Dan Black Belt. For more information regarding classes, please call 860-779-0699 or visit their Web site at danielsonmartialarts.com.

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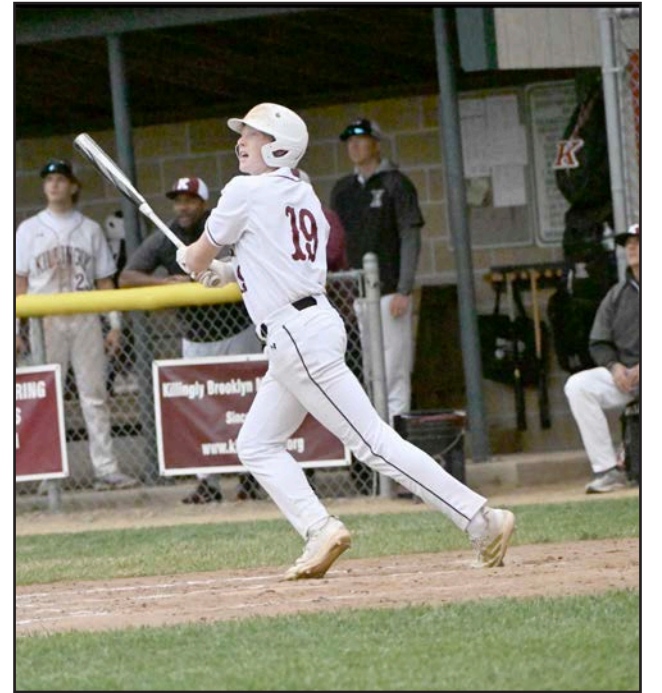
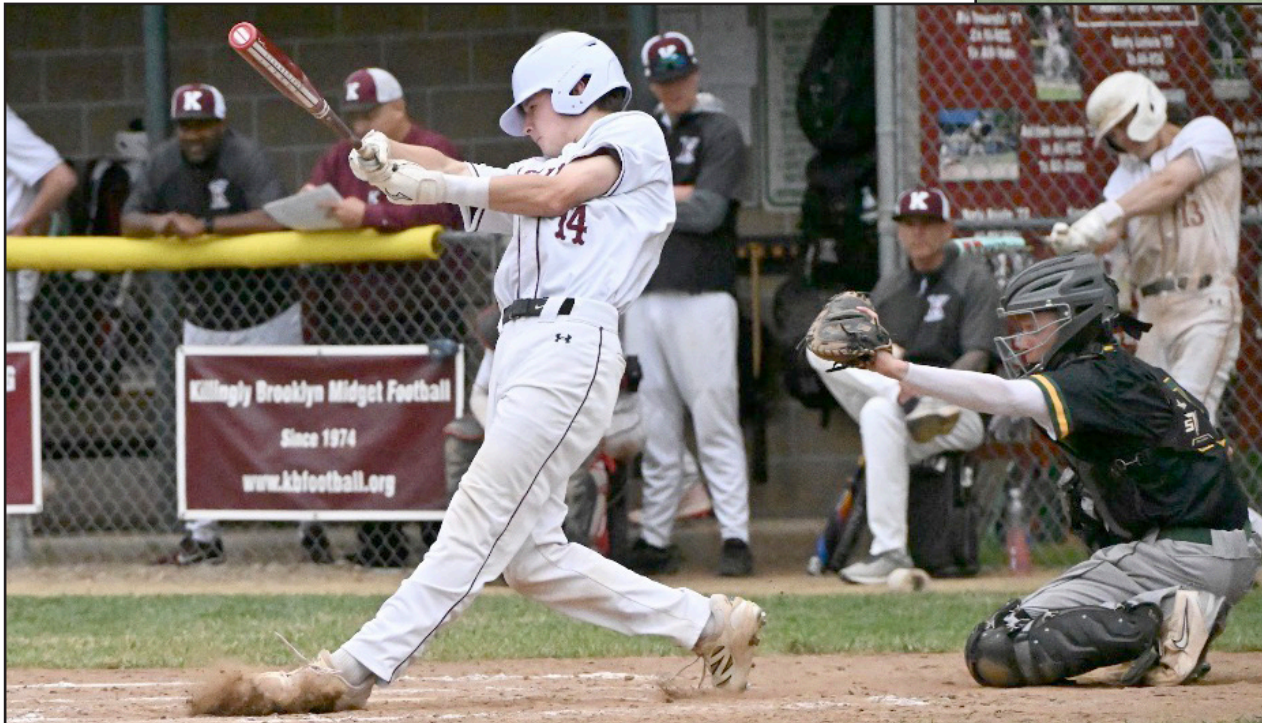
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# Killingly High School Weekly Sports Wrap-Up



## Track & Field

On May 21, Killingly Boys Track & Field competed at Griswold for ECCs against a total of 10 teams in our Division! With 10 teams and all athletes having to qualify, competition was at its best for the season as we start our playoff run!

In the 4x 100, the Freshmen team showcased Ossie Lugo to Liam LaMotte to Brandon Harrison Jr to Braydee Testa who flew for 5th place, a Personal Record, and Medals!

In the 4x 400, Liam to Jon Palmer to Ossie to Brandon bolted to finish 5th with a Personal Record and Medals!

In the 100m, Isaiah Benoit absolutely sprinted his way to a great time and a 12th place finish! Isaiah also competed in Pole Vault with Gabriel Covington, Isaiah finished 5th to medal, and Gabe finished 7th!

In the 110 Hurdles, Jeremiah Smith continues to do what Jeremiah Smith does; he took 1st again! He also competed in the Long Jump with Cooper Logee, Jeremiah finished 3rd with a Season Best and a medal and Coop finished 7th with a great jump as well! The two gentlemen along with Brady could also be seen representing at High Jump, where they locked up 3 of the top 5 spots! Jeremiah finished 1st, Coop finished 4th, and Braydee finished 5th ALL medaling! Annd down by the throwing pits, Ezekiel Benoit and Larry Cote represented Killingly proud, absolutely chucking their Shots in Shot Put for 8th and 14th respectively!

Gentlemen, all season it has been a pleasure getting to know the great people you are and working with the great athletes you are! Whether the season ended today or you are moving on to States, Monday, June 1, you have all represented yourselves and Killingly proudly on and off of the track and couldn't be prouder! Also, special shout out to all the parents, grandparents, and friends that showed up! It was a hot one, but we could hear you as always and the team really appreciates your support!

## Baseball

Killingly Baseball (11-9) took the win on Senior Day at Owen Bell Park over New London (10-10) May 23 by a final score of 5-1!

Michael Fabiano Jr. started for Killingly on worked 4 innings allowing only 1 Hit and no runs with 4 K's! He worked around a double and walk in the top of the 1st inning to hold New London scoreless, before the Killingly bats struck first in the bottom of the 1st. Alex Murdock walked and stole 2nd base, then he was moved to third on a base hit from Fabiano Jr! Jake Beaudreault drove a sac fly to left to score Murdock and give Killingly a 1-0 lead!

In the 3rd, Fabiano, Jr. drove in Jake Voyer on a grounder to short before Jake Beaudreault deposited a 2 run homer into the woods in right field to give Killingly the 4-0 advantage!

In the 4th inning, after two men reached by way of error and Beaudreault was intentionally walked to load the bases, Gaighe DeBella hit an RBI single to give Killingly a 5-0 lead!

Beaudreault pitched the 5th and 6th innings, allowing

only 1 run on 2 hits and striking out 3, before giving way to DeBella for 7th! DeBella went 1-2-3 to secure the save and the Senior Day victory for Killingly!

## Girls Golf

On Tuesday, May 19, the Killingly High School Girl's Golf team traveled to Mohegan Golf Course for their match vs. Lyman Memorial and earned the victory. Killingly posted a score of 208 with Lyman memorial posting a score of 220. Killingly was led by Mackenzie Pothier who earned medalist honors with a score of 46. With the win Killingly improved their overall record to 9-1 on the year.

On Wednesday, May 20, the girls hosted Woodstock Academy and came up short with a final score being Woodstock Academy 185 and Killingly 194. Despite impressive rounds from Kate Crowley with a 45, Mackenzie Pothier with a 47, and Gracie Pekarovic-West with a 48; it just wasn't enough to come away with a victory. With the loss Killingly's overall record falls to 9-2 on the season.

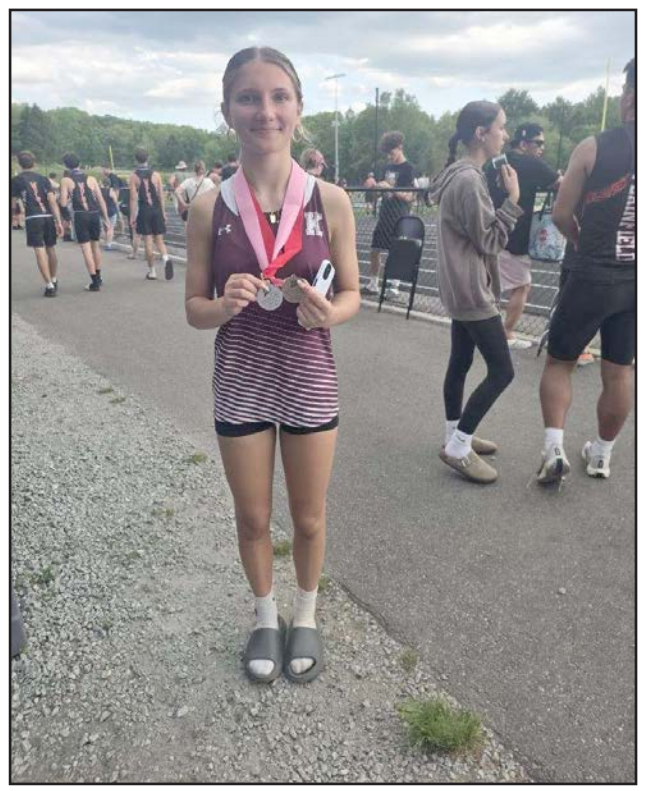
On Thursday, May 21, the girls traveled to Bacon Academy and earned a victory. Killingly posted a score of 197 with Bacon Academy posting a score of 228. Killingly was led by Mackenzie Pothier who earned medalist honors with a score of 43 and Gracie Pekarovic-West with a score of 47. With the win Killingly improved their overall record to 10-2 on the year.

## Girls Lacrosse

The Killingly girls lacrosse team celebrated our seven

seniors on May 20: Riley Ritchotte, Catrina Turgeon, Alexa Gregoire, Julianna Rodriguez, Morgan Deojay, Ella Dunn and Chloe Moniz. The girls game out on fire and held that energy the entire game. With a final score of 23-1 in Killingly's favor. Riley Ritchotte had 6 goals for the Trailblazers and 13 draw controls, beating the single game record for draw controls. Catrina Turgeon had 4 goals and 2 assist. Ella Dunn had 2 goals and 2 assist. Tilly Jarvis had 3 goals. Ellsie Antonbenedetto had a goal and 2 assists. Lylah Connetti had a goal and an assist. Morgan Deojay added a goal. We also had 5 girls get their first career goal: Julianna Rodriguez, Olivia Cesolini, Chloe Moniz, Reese Ritchotte, and Kalia Rosado. The team played together from start to finish and with the win locked their position in the ECC quarterfinals. The team will be heading to East Lyme on Saturday.

The team lost to East Lyme in the ECC quarterfinals on May 23. Riley Ritchotte had 3 goals and 3 caused turnovers for Killingly. Catrina Turgeon had 6 draw controls. Alexa Gregoire had 6 saves for Killingly including her 200th career save!



# Three WHZ advisors named to Forbes SHOOK 2026 Best-In-State Wealth Advisors List

LANGEVIN ALSO EARNS TOP WOMEN WEALTH ADVISOR HONOR



James Zahansky



Laurence Hale



Lisa Langevin

POMFRET CENTER/TOLLAND — WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors is proud to announce that three of its advisors have earned recognition on Forbes SHOOK's prestigious 2026 national rankings.

James Zahansky, AAWMA®, Senior Managing Partner and Chief Strategist; Laurence Hale, AAMS®, CRPS®, Senior Partner and Chief Investment Officer; and Leisl L. Langevin, CFP®, CDFA®, Managing Partner, Advisory, have all been named to the 2026 Forbes SHOOK Best-In-State Wealth Advisors list for Connecticut. Additionally, Langevin is among just 58 women advisors recog-

nized with the Top Women distinction statewide and remains the only advisor from Windham and Tolland counties to receive it. She is also one of three WHZ advisors named to the 2026 Best-In-State list.

The Forbes Best-In-State Wealth Advisors ranking, now in its ninth year, was developed by SHOOK Research and published April 7, based on data from June 30, 2024, through June 30, 2025. The ranking is based on both quantitative and qualitative factors, including in-person, virtual, and telephone due diligence interviews, client impact, industry experience, client retention, compliance records, best practices, credentials, assets under

management, and revenue. This year's honorees collectively oversee \$20.6 trillion in client assets across the country.

The Forbes Top Women Wealth Advisors Best-In-State ranking was published Feb. 4, also based on data as of June 30, 2025, and developed using the same rigorous qualitative and quantitative methodology. Out of more than 51,000 nominations received nationally, just over 2,800 women advisors earned recognition on this year's list. Langevin is among just 58 women advisors in Connecticut to receive this statewide distinction.

As Senior Managing Partner and Chief Strategist,

Zahansky leads WHZ's overall firm strategy, bringing decades of experience in business strategy as well as deep experience in comprehensive wealth management to individuals, families, business owners, and executives across 25 states. As Founder, Senior Partner and Chief Investment Officer, Hale oversees WHZ's investment philosophy and portfolio strategy, combining rigorous market analysis with a personalized client focus. Langevin, as Managing Partner, Advisory, plays a central leadership role overseeing advisory strategy while continuing to serve clients directly.

"Having three of our advisors recognized on Forbes SHOOK's Best-In-State list is an incredible validation of what we've built together at WHZ," said Zahansky. "This recognition reflects the commitment our entire team brings to every client relationship; the deep planning, the strategic thinking, and the genuine care that defines everything we do. We maintain a 99 percent client retention rate because we treat every client's financial future as if it were our own."

"Being named to this list, alongside my partners Jim and Leisl, speaks to the culture of excellence we've cultivated as a firm," said Hale. "We never take these recognitions for granted. They remind us of our driving focus: to provide the best possible wealth management experience for our clients, at every touchpoint and through every stage of life."

"Being recognized on both lists this year is deeply meaningful to me," said Langevin. "It reflects the trust our clients place in us every day. At WHZ, financial planning is about far more than numbers — it's about listening, educating, and building financial confidence for our clients. I'm so passionate about that, and I'm proud to be part of a team where that commitment runs so deep."

The triple recognition comes after a string of other such recognitions in recent years for all three

advisors. Laurence Hale has earned the Five Star Wealth Manager distinction for 12 consecutive years (2014-2025), and Zahansky and Langevin have also earned the distinction in every year that they were eligible (2019-2025 and 2021-2025 respectively)\*. Langevin was also ranked 34th on Forbes' 2026 Top Women Wealth Advisors Best-In-State list and named to the Hartford Business Journal's 40 Under Forty list in 2023.\*\*

These achievements for WHZ come at a pivotal moment in the wealth management industry, with an unprecedented generational wealth transfer underway. Approximately \$84 trillion in wealth is expected to pass from baby boomers to Gen X, millennials, and Gen Z over the coming decades.

"At WHZ we've made it a priority to provide tailored planning strategies that address the unique financial challenges and opportunities that individuals and families will face during this transition and beyond, and I think it's that individual attention along with our strategic approach that's behind our firm's continued evolution and growth as well as these types of industry recognitions," Zahansky said.

WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors is an independent, fiduciary asset management firm serving individuals, families, business owners, executives, and not-for-profit institutions from offices in Pomfret Center and Tolland, Connecticut. The firm's mission is to provide every client with Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life. through its proprietary Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™ strategic financial planning process. To learn more, visit [www.whzwealth.com](http://www.whzwealth.com) or call (860) 928-2341.

2026 Forbes Best-In-State Wealth Advisors, created by SHOOK Research. Awarded April 2026; data compiled by SHOOK Research LLC based on the time period from 6/30/24-6/30/25 (Source: Forbes.com). The Forbes Best-In-State Wealth Advisors rat-

ing algorithm is based on the previous year's industry experience, interviews, compliance records, assets under management, revenue and other criteria by SHOOK Research, LLC. Investment performance is not a criterion. This rating is not related to the quality of the investment advice and based solely on the disclosed criteria. Not indicative of advisor's future performance. Your experience may vary.

2026 Forbes Top Women Wealth Advisors Best-In-State, created by SHOOK Research. Published February 4, 2026; based on data as of 6/30/25. Opinions provided by SHOOK® Research, LLC and based on in-person, virtual and telephone due-diligence meetings that measure best practices, client retention, industry experience, credentials, compliance records, firm nominations, assets under management, and firm-generated revenue. Investment performance is not a criterion. Not indicative of advisor's future performance. Your experience may vary.

\*Five Star Wealth Manager Award is based on a rigorous, multifaceted research process that evaluates candidates using criteria such as industry experience, professional credentials, client retention, and regulatory history. A total of 3,641 Connecticut-area advisors were considered for the 2025 award; 236 advisors (6.5%) were recognized. Wealth managers do not pay a fee to be considered or selected for the award, although a fee is paid for use of marketing materials. The award is not indicative of future performance, and individual client experiences may vary.

\*\*2023 Hartford Business Journal's 40 Under 40, created by Hartford Business Journal. This award recognizes young professionals in the Greater Hartford area for their leadership and contributions to the community and is not specific to financial services and does not imply an endorsement, recommendation, or reflect the performance of the advisor.

## Abbie O'Brien elected to membership in Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi

BATON ROUGE, La. — Abbie O'Brien of Dayville was recently elected to membership into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society, at Clarkson University.

O'Brien is among approximately 20,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10 percent of seniors and 7.5 percent of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10 percent of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify,

as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 under the leadership of undergraduate student Marcus L. Urann who had a desire to create a different kind of honor society: one that recognized excellence in all academic disciplines. Today, the Society has chapters on more than 300 campuses in the United States and its territories. Its mission is to "cultivate a community that celebrates and advances the love of learning."

About Phi Kappa Phi Founded in 1897, Phi Kappa Phi is the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for

all academic disciplines. Phi Kappa Phi inducts approximately 20,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni annually. The Society has chapters on more than 300 select colleges and universities in the United States and its territories. Membership is by invitation only to the top 10 percent of seniors and graduate students and 7.5 percent of juniors. Faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction also qualify. The Society's mission is to "cultivate a community that celebrates and advances the love of learning." For more information, visit [www.PhiKappaPhi.org](http://www.PhiKappaPhi.org).

## Putnam Rotary installs more music on the River Trail



PUTNAM — Simple fact: You can't have too much creativity. Members of the Putnam Rotary Club last week added four more instruments to the River Trail near Simonzi Park. Three or four years ago the club put a colorful set of musical instruments on the trail. This year, using Rotary grant funds, the club's budget and about \$5,000

left over from former President Amanda Kelly's year, four more delightful metal instruments joined the original ones. Rotarian Karen Osbrey, who has spearheaded the effort for several years, said ordering the Musical Gardens pieces required patience. It took a couple months of checking, but finally the four she had picked out went on special — no shipping. That wait turned out to be a good thing because one of the instruments, in the form of a dragonfly, wasn't even available originally. This spot was chosen by Kelly, right next to the original set. A set has already been installed by the club at Pomfret Community School and at the public school's playground area in Thompson. The intent is to put one in each of the club's five service area towns. Incoming President Martha Paquette would like to put one in Roseland Park in Woodstock next year, if all the renovations are finished there. That would leave Eastford. Rotarians Doug Porter and Woody Durst helped install the instruments. Whatever challenge presented itself, they worked through as a team to get it done. Passers-by were trying them out, even before all four of the instruments were finished.

## Sips for Snips fundraiser to benefit Paws Cat Shelter

WOODSTOCK — Paws Cat Shelter is holding a social fundraising event on Wednesday, June 3 from 4-8 p.m. at Taylor Brooke Brewery, 818 Route 171 in Woodstock. Join us for Sips for Snips benefiting our feline spay or neuter programs. Beer and wine will be available for purchase, basket raffle, light snacks for purchase or bring your own.

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

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# UConn announces Spring Dean's List

**STORRS** — The University of Connecticut congratulates the following students on being named to the Dean's List for the spring semester of 2026.

**Brooklyn**  
Ella Anderson, William Carver, Kaitlyn Dalbec, Devin Exarhoulias, Caroline Frost, Kayleigh Murray, Phillip Purcell, Isabel Sumner

**Danielson**  
Emma Gilbert, Addison Montville, Drew Noble, Usa Sacksith

**Dayville**

**Soudachane**  
Khaomongkhoun, Erin Paquin

**Killingly**  
Samantha Goulston

**Moosup**  
Paityn Caron

**North Grosvenordale**  
Hanna LeClaire, Jackson Santos, Luke Senosk

**Pomfret**  
Maya Bullied

**Pomfret Center**  
Claire Anderson, Maddie Bloom, Emma Costa, Jack Heroux, Caydan Jonasch,

**Graham Scribner, Anastasia Serating, Camryn Woodin**

**Putnam**  
Eric Belske, Carter Morissette

**Thompson**  
Avery Butler, Eric Levesque

**Woodstock**  
Charles Caggiano, Paige Campbell, Anya Farutin, Xandar Miller, Paige Owens, Evan Rhault, Todd Viano, Nicholas Webster

**Woodstock Valley**  
Maddie Jezierski, Kadin Shepherd

## Quiet Corner Garden Club plants trees in celebration of America's 250th



Courtesy

Scout Troop 43 planted the tree at Phaiah's Dog Park in Danielson. Front row: Jariel Jerez, Lucas Barnes, Alex Liguz, Zachary Ferland, Leon Johnson, Amy Ferland, and Adriel Jerez. In the back row are Lisa Danbury and Susan Viera, Quiet Corner Garden Club; Mariel Jerez, Shelley Johnson, Chris Liguz, John Barnes.

**REGION** — The Quiet Corner Garden Club continues planting white oak trees in celebration of America 250 with the help of Scout Troops. A grant from National Garden Club's Plant America program and funds raised from the Club's Annual Plant Sale were used to purchase the trees. In April, trees were planted in Danielson, Pomfret and Woodstock.

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

This project also has ecological and historical significance to this area. The white oak is

Connecticut's state tree, honoring the Charter Oak, a majestic white oak that grew in the state capital of Hartford and in which American colonists hid Connecticut's Royal Charter in 1687, to prevent its confiscation by British authorities. A violent storm felled the Charter Oak in 1856, when it was an estimated 500-600 years old.



Courtesy

And the winner is...Amy Favreau, who bought the winning ticket for the quilt raffle held over the past year to benefit the Woodstock Historical Society. We thank Laura Salo, who created the quilt in honor of America 250, and all of you who participated in the raffle. We also invite the community to the season opening of the Historical Society's extensive exhibition of pictures of Woodstock from 1870 to 1920. We are also launching a changing monthly series of spotlight exhibitions of quilts by area quilters and organized by Laura Salo. It will be on view during our opening hours on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and at other times by appointment. See our Web site for additional visiting options and inquiries at [centerforwoodstockhistory.com](http://centerforwoodstockhistory.com).

## VEGETABLE GARDENS



Courtesy

Members of Cub Scout Pack 21 of Putnam transplanted their own personal vegetable gardens during their weekly meeting on Wednesday, May 20. Back on March 25, expert gardener Jim Tetreault taught the Cub Scouts how to prepare containers of soil and plant tomato, lettuce and beet seeds. They took their planted seeds home and raised them up to seedlings indoors until now, when Mr. Tetreault showed the children how to put them into buckets of compost and plant them outside for the growing season. This is just one of the many fun and challenging activities Cub Scout Pack 21 does throughout the year, all under experienced adult supervision. Pack 21 welcomes boys and girls ages five through ten. To join, call John Ryan, at (860) 928-5873.

**GRADUATION**

continued from page A1

those in attendance as he reflected on how life can change in an instant and encouraged classmates to embrace life's unexpected challenges.

Valedictorian Ethan Graham spoke about the importance of stepping outside of one's comfort zone in order to achieve success. He shared his own experience of taking a chance by attending Putnam Science Academy and the opportunities that followed.

Salutatorian Cecile Lufungula focused her remarks on gratitude, thanking everyone who supported her throughout her educational journey.

The Class of 2026 represented the global diversity that has become a hallmark of Putnam Science Academy. Students came from more than 30 countries and throughout the United States, including local communities such as Shrewsbury (MA), Webster

(MA), Pomfret, and Norwich.

"This class was filled with unbelievable kids," said Thomas Espinosa, the school's athletic director. "This was the 24th graduation and the 24th graduation that I've attended. I've been the longest-serving employee at the school. This class goes down as one of the best in school history, and I felt graduation day ranked in the top five all-time."

Espinosa added, "I can't wait to see what the future holds for these young men and women. They surely will be missed on Maple Street."

As graduates celebrated with family and friends, the ceremony marked not just the end of their time at Putnam Science Academy, but the beginning of new journeys ahead.

- List of Graduates
- Adama Tamedou
- Aderwyn Figueroa Rondon
- Adria Hurtado
- Adut Tour
- Alejandro Batista
- Alvin Rosario

- Amadou Samba Diallo
- Andres Jurado
- Anthony Mejia
- Brayden Gelinias
- Brayson Green
- Byron Stevens
- Caio Da Silva
- Cecile Lufungula
- Cristian Nin-Reynoso
- Chiara Marco
- Christian Maplanka
- Christopher Promades
- Claudio Martinez
- Daniel Lewandowski
- David Gaymon
- Dereck Nunez
- Diego Dilone
- Dylan Avant
- Egbuna Favour
- Elliot Abreu
- Erix "Erica" Chen
- Ethan Gilvert
- Ethan Graham
- Fernando Domingues
- Fernando Souza
- Fernando Torralba Perez
- Francisco Laureano Mendez
- Hayden Dorsey
- Israel "Izzy" Mansaray
- Jacob Mondo

- Jacqueline Koki
- Jalen Taggart
- Jamell Hatchett
- Janvier Diaz
- Jayson Serrano
- João Lavandoski
- João Massette
- Jose Manon
- Jordan Skyers
- Joseph Adebayo
- Justin DeJesus
- Kamai Samuels
- Kelvin Valdez
- Kendy "KJ" St. Cyr
- Kieran Sullivan
- Layla Woodward
- Liam DaSilva
- Loyiso Mangcu
- Luis Melo
- Lwandle Ncube
- Maikel Soriano
- Manoela Silva
- Maria Eduarda Guedes
- Maria Giulia Carvalho
- Martyn Poliuchovic
- Mateus Furio
- Matheus Teodoro
- Maximo Sanchez Sano
- Maximus Pires
- Michael Therrien

- Miles Bickel
- Molka Mares
- Nikolas Neo Larrucea Wiegandt
- Nolan Rodman
- Omar Rodriguez
- Owen Crowley
- Paola Diouma
- Paolla Uwase
- Parish Edmond
- Pedro Bitencourt
- Pedro Seade
- Petar Vukcevic
- Ronald Florian-Moreta
- Schuy Fillis
- Sedar Sene
- Shenghao "Jason" Gao
- Shiloh Reyes
- Tyler Wallace
- Tzu-Yu "Jasmine" Feng
- Vadim Brezillon
- Valentina Vrcan
- Vega Larru
- Wenqi "CiCi" Zhao
- Wyatt Polletta
- Yash Sukhwani Lalwani
- Yeongha Ricky Yoon
- Zhiyi "Dolores" Luo

**THREATS**

continued from page A1

form. They will continue to consult with officials on the state level and when they inform Troop D of a call, it will go right up to additional authorities to streamline the process towards an official investigation. The district also updated visitor access procedures and supervision practices.

Both Drake and Nash stressed the importance of being deliberate in their messaging as well to make sure that all the information is shared properly, condemning early reporting of incidents on social media prior to official releases from school leadership.

"It's really important that what we share with the community is accurate and up to date and has all the most relevant information," said Drake. "We take time when crafting that. We make sure the information we share captures what police allow us to share because we have to be careful with that as well, so we take that into consideration, and we follow the feedback of our local responders."

"Once we know we are secure and we are doing our due diligence for investigation with police and the FBI, we then start crafting our message to families and we want to make sure we are deliberate in what we are saying, and clear, and precise, and that takes a little bit of time," added Nash, who said early reporting without official statements from the district can cause panic among families and residents.

On May 15, two days after the Board of Education meeting, the administration and board released an official joint statement laying out the different measures taken over recent weeks to address these swatting incidents, many of which have been reflected in this story.

**COMMISSION**

continued from page A1

enough. Our funding formulas are outdated, and we need to take another look at how we're maximizing student outcomes across the

**PRIZE**

continued from page A1

of Pomfret School Student Activities and a long-time supporter of Patrick's award. Rimer said, "Josie will be a tremendous asset

state. I created this commission to do serious work, and by January I expect serious, actionable recommendations on my desk."

Among the members are two Quiet Corner representatives: Mary Calorio and

Eric Protulis.

Calorio is a Regional Town Administrator, President of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns, and Director of Transit at the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments.

She serves Canterbury, Chaplin and Pomfret.

Protulis is the Executive Director of EASTCONN, one of Connecticut's six Regional Education Service Centers, which provides educational and related ser-

vices to 36 school districts in northeastern Connecticut.

The commission is expected to hold its first meeting on June 4 with a deadline of Jan. 15, 2027 to provide a report to the governor's desk.

to Pomfret School on many levels. She is a high achiever in everything she does."

Patrick graduated at the top of his class at Pomfret Community School and won a full scholarship to Pomfret School. He graduated as valedictorian in 2001

with perfect SAT scores and went on to graduate from Stanford with honors.

"Most importantly, Patrick was loving, kind, and humble about his gifts," Rimer said. "But depression overpowered his brilliance and goodness."

Patrick passed away in 2006 and now represents the need for mental health and suicide awareness. His story is explained in Rimer's memoir, "Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick," available on Amazon.

Rimer will be giving a presentation on the book and the stages of suicide at the Eastford Library, Wednesday, Sept. 16, 6 p.m. More information is available on: <https://www.backfromsuicide.com>.

# A birthday reflection: Looking back, living forward



TIPS FOR SUCCESS  
MIKE BOGDANSKI

A few weeks ago, I celebrated my birthday. I am usually a look-forward kind of guy, but this one pulled me back — deeper than most.

On birth and love  
As a father, I marveled at the birth of my own child. Now, as a father and grandfather, I find myself wondering what it must have felt like for my parents on the day I arrived — I am second born, one year after my sister Jean.

What I know for certain is this: the day our grandchildren were born, I fell instantly in love with them. And then, inexplicably, that love has grown every single day since. I still don't know how that happens.

My roots  
My parents were house builders and realtors — hardworking, driven, and dedicated to building a great life for our family. Because they were always busy, I spent much of my childhood with my maternal grandmother. She raised us with enormous love, treated us like her own, and instilled in us a deep respect for our Polish heritage. She always spoke to us in her native language.

A few months ago, I had the chance to travel to Poland on an ancestral tour to visit the birthplaces of my grandparents. Every time I heard or spoke a little Polish, I was transported right back to her kitchen, to her love. I even have a video of her holding my one-week-old son James, saying:

"I can't believe I am holding your son."

Yes, Babci — I know exactly how you feel.

I never met my paternal grandfather; he passed before I was born. I recently came across his wedding photo and was struck by our resemblance. It left me with so many questions I can no longer ask.

Growing up  
By age 12, I had lived in a dozen houses — my parents were always building, selling, and moving us on to the next one. It was an unusual childhood, but it taught me adaptability early.

My teen years had some

turbulence. Bullied and beaten up as a teenager, that experience changed the course of my life. It became fuel for a mission that still drives me: helping kids who've suffered the same kind of trauma, and guiding them from hate toward hope. I graduated from Norwich Free Academy, and while high school had its ups and downs, I had great friends who helped me, many of whom I'm still in touch with today.

My parents were my bedrock in life. My Mom preached, "Think positive." My Dad passed on entrepreneurial spirit and his sharp mind, even though he had to drop out of high school after one year to go to work — something he always regretted.

Karate changed everything

Who could have predicted that karate would reshape my life and career so completely? It gave me confidence, national and international championships, a world of travel, and friendships that have lasted decades. I am still best friends with Grandmaster Steve Best, whom I met at

age 18. I still teach an occasional karate class, and love every minute.

Career, community, and coming home

I started my career in guidance counseling, wanting to help kids. For many decades later, I did exactly that — teaching martial arts, empathy, and anti-bullying skills whenever I could. I also spent many years running a gym that served people of all ages to improve their health and longevity.

After college, I tried Los Angeles for several months. I confirmed quickly that I am, at heart, a small-town guy. I've lived in Ledyard, Norwich, New Britain, Killingly, and Woodstock, but several years ago, my wife Linda and I knew: we are Putnam people, through and through. The people of Putnam and northeast Connecticut have been extraordinarily good to us. I'm proudly giving back as a former small-business owner, Putnam advocate, and selectman.

The travel bug  
My parents gave me the travel bug. My first trip to Europe was at age 12 — with Mom cleverly weaving history into every turn in London, Poland, and Paris. She made sure we saw Auschwitz, and the experience pierced my soul

in a way I will never forget (Lesson learned, Mom).

Looking back, living forward

Now, in my '70s, I find myself thinking about legacy. About a life that has been, by any measure, extraordinarily blessed — full of love, purpose, friendship, and meaning.

And yes — I'm still called Mr. Miyagi by a certain radio personality, and "Karate Kid" by the Putnam senior group. Some things never change.

Mother's Day has passed, and Father's Day is coming up fast. I do have a few tips for you. If you have your parents and grandparents around, please write them a letter about what they mean to you. Write it with love and appreciation. I know they will love it.

If you are a parent or grandparent, record a thoughtfully scripted video about your life and the things you appreciate in this rapidly moving time. Record your legacy with some of the questions you may have wanted to know from your parents or grandparents that you regret never asking.

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



Courtesy

Signed copies of "Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick" are now available at Pourings & Passages bookstore after a successful book signing there in May. Patrick's twin sister, Libby Wood, and his mother, Lisette Rimer, were warmly received by readers. Back from Suicide details how even the most successful young people are stricken with mental illness. Pourings & Passages is located at 103 Main St., Danielson, and open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. More information is available at [www.backfromsuicide.com](http://www.backfromsuicide.com).

## Woodstock's Poet Laureate releases new book

poem after poem, 'the strangeness we were born to.'

WOODSTOCK — W.H. Auden said about poetry, "there is only one thing / that all poetry must do; it must praise all it can for being / and for happening." For 40 years, Robert Cording's poems have sought to praise a world that need not be, but is. His poems embrace what cannot be changed: that living brings us face-to-face with suffering and injustice, beauty and grace.

From the start, his work has explored three questions: Why does it feel that life is "good," even in the face of so much suffering and grief? How can he be grateful for what he has been given despite the almost daily onslaught of affliction and sorrow in the world? How, finally, can he not only embrace, but praise the opposing sides of what's possible: the utter grief and utter joy of being alive?

In the words of poet Eamon Grennan, Cording is always "transforming his naturalist's scrutiny of the world into moral interrogation, bringing to our attention, in

What's Possible: New and Selected Poems makes clear what many have long known: that Robert Cording is among his generation's finest poets, and that his work has been both deeply consistent and yet constantly evolving. Here is a poet both unsparing and generous, a voice that has always heeded Shakespeare's injunction to "speak what we feel, not what we ought to say."

Robert Cording is professor emeritus at College of the Holy Cross where he taught for 38 years and served as the Barrett Chair of English and Creative Writing. After his retirement, he worked for five years as a poetry mentor in the Seattle Pacific University low residency MFA program. He has published ten collections of poems, the most recent of which is In the Unwalled City (Slant). Three of his books were finalists for the Connecticut Book Award, and "Walking with Ruskin" (CavanKerry Press) was also a runner-up for the Poet's Prize.

# OBITUARIES

## Dr. Francoise Gauthier 1944 - 2026



Putnam - Dr. Francoise Gauthier, 81, of Putnam, passed away suddenly on Sunday May 3, 2026, at Matulaitis Rehabilitation Center. Born August 3, 1944 in Biddeford, Maine, she was the only child of Raymond and Viola (Pomerleau) Gauthier. After graduating from St Bernard High School in New London, Francoise entered the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. She was then known as Sr. Raymond Francoise. She received her BA in education from Annhurst College and a MA in Spanish Language and Literature from Universidad Ibero-Americana in Mexico. Francoise also received 2 PhD degrees: Biblical Theology from I.B.I.S in Orlando, Fl. and Theology and Parish Administration from the International Seminary, also in Florida.

Francoise began her ministry in education as a teacher and assistant principal at All Hallows School in Moosup. She continued as a teacher at Putnam Catholic Academy then a professor of Spanish and English at Annhurst College. From 1983 to 1995 she served as principal at St Mary School in Putnam and again from 2006 until it closed in 2010.

Francoise separated canonically from the Daughters of the Holy Spirit in 1998 but remained attached in her heart. In 2001, what started as a part-time summer

job coordinating the cars and drivers at the Provincial House eventually led to taking on the role of Development Director, a task she was still fulfilling at the time of her death. In that role, she coordinated with many individuals and groups, including the Knights of Columbus.

She loved to travel and her fluency in French, Spanish, Italian and some Portuguese and German helped. Her proficiency in languages was an additional asset as she translated numerous documents and meetings, both large and small, for religious congregations, especially the Daughters of the Holy Spirit and the Bon Secour Sisters in Baltimore for over 25 years.

Under her stern, no nonsense exterior was a generous spirit. She shared her time, talent and resources with a vast network of friends who will miss her greatly.

Calling hours will be on Wednesday June 3, 2026, from 9:30 to 11:00 at Holy Trinity Church, 568 Pomfret St., Pomfret, CT. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held there at 11:00 AM followed by burial at St Mary Cemetery in Putnam.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to DHS Retirement Fund, P.O. Box 497, Putnam, CT 06260 or Interfaith Human Services of Putnam, Inc., 53 Grove St, Putnam, CT 06260 for Daily Bread of the Greater Putnam Area. The Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT is in charge of arrangements.

## Wayne David Tanson September 14, 1957 – May 17, 2026



Thompson - Wayne David Tanson of Thompson CT, passed suddenly on Sunday May 17, 2026.

Wayne was a special man. He was well loved and appreciated by all that knew him. He was a

boy scout from boyhood, and a scout leader for his sons. He was part of CT Troop 66 and the Jesse Hay Memorial Association. For many years Wayne was a counselor with The American Legion Boys State. In this roll he helped young men develop civic leadership and pride in American citizenship. He was a longtime member of the Security team at the Woodstock Fair. "Every Labor Day Weekend!!" Because of his friendly nature, this role suited him well.

Wayne attended Bridgewater State College ( MA) for both his undergraduate degree and for his master's degree. Over the years he taught Physics, Math, and played a part in the development of STEM programs. He helped write the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment

System, MCAS, for STEM, (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). He began his teaching career at Norwich Technical High School in Norwich CT. He taught at Dimond High School in Fall River, MA, Walpole High School in Walpole MA, Milford High School in Milford, MA and retired from Uxbridge High School in Uxbridge MA.

He leaves his wife of 40 years, Christine Mary (Connolly) Tanson, as well as his mother Patricia Jane (Patten) Tanson, of Rockport, MA, and his brother Phillip D. Tanson and his wife Julie, of Rockport, MA. In addition, Wayne leaves two sons, Matthew Wayne Tanson of Thompson, CT, and Jacob James Tanson and his fiancé Emilia Rose Bordeleau and their son Sullivan Nash Tanson, of Moosup, CT.

Wayne was predeceased by his father, Matthew Tanson Jr.

The family is planning a Celebration of Life, to be determined at a later date. Donations in Wayne's honor may be made to Boy Scout Troop 66 of Thompson CT, 108 Mountain Hill Road, North Grosvenordale, CT 06255.

## Harriette F. Wolslegel 1937 - 2025



Woodstock - Harriette Felicia Wolslegel of Woodstock and recently, Brooklyn, CT, died Christmas morning after a brief illness and wonderful life. Born in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, on December 7,

1937, she grew up during World War II and the happy days of the 1950s. From the age of 18 to 20 she worked at Rhode Island Hospital as a phlebotomist, where her gentle caring nature flourished. Daughter of Armand and Angela Lizotte, and sister of Larry, Barbra and Shelly, she met her loving husband, Walter at a University of Rhode Island dance and hayride in the fall of 1956. Married two years later to the day, they remained lovingly devoted to each other for the next 67 years.

Harriette and Walter (92) raised five children who will miss her dearly: Thomas (66) married to Marianne, William (65) married to Lisa, Steven (64) married to Jeanne, Kenneth (61) married to Mae, and Kristen. Five grandchildren all grew in character and depth because of their loving grandmother: Nicholas (28), Krista (25), Olivia (25), Sofia (13) and Benjamin (12). The grandchildren will especially miss their Nanna's kindness and her famous tea parties.

Deeply devoted to her family and faith, she was a true instrument of peace. Her vast circle of friends was fed by her nature - "it is in giving that we receive". In the 1980s as her kids pursued college and career, she worked as the church secretary at Saint Philips Catholic Church in Ashford, CT. During this time, she also served as regional president of Aglow International, a worldwide organization that spread biblical principles as solutions to the challenging issues of our time.

She loved traveling to warm places in the winter, first to Palm Springs, CA, then to Florida, where she and Walter built a home in Port Charlotte. Her love of gardening, flowers and a natural green thumb that could make anything grow, was a source of great peace. She cooked from scratch, and raised her children on the vegetables she and Walter grew themselves. Even at 87, she still loved tending her son's garden and would get right down to the soil and feel the earth and nature in her hands.

Everything about Harriette's make-up as a human being and her example as a daughter, sister, wife, mother, aunt, grandmother and friend was just as it should have been. Her whole life she helped other people grow, heal and succeed, never seeking the spotlight for herself. She was the best listener, and many friends expressed: "she always made me feel I was the most important person in the world". Her wonderful sense of humor allowed her to freely laugh at herself. She even was her children's first "rock star", playing acoustic guitar and singing to them when they were young. She was creative and artful and always made the space she lived in more beautiful. Humility, dignity, selflessness, and unfailing love emanated from her eyes, all the way to her last moments. Even her death created beauty and healing for her family, allowing them to learn from not just her profound life, but from her graceful loving departure from this world.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend a Mass of Christian Burial on Saturday June 6, 2026, at 10:00AM in St. Philip Church, 64 Pompey Hollow Rd., Ashford, CT, burial to follow in Barlow Cemetery, Woodstock. Arrangements have been entrusted to the Gilman Funeral Home & Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT. For memorial guestbook 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.

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# LEGALS

### Auction

The equipment was owned and abandoned by John Carpenter of Carpenter Molds, located at 316 County Home Road, Thompson CT 06277. The items listed are HURCO CNC MILL. The auction will be held at 342 Compass Circle, Unit B4 North Kingston, RI 02852 June 12, 2026 at 9am

May 21, 2026  
May 22, 2026  
May 28, 2025  
June 4, 2026

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF

**David R Oleszewski (26-00169)**  
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated May 19, 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:  
Deborah J Vieira  
c/o MARK R BROUILLARD,  
ST ONGE & BROUILLARD,

50 ROUTE 171,  
WOODSTOCK, CT 06281  
May 29, 2026

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF Lina M Bellanceau (26-00118)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated May 19, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Brenda Duquette, Chief Clerk  
The fiduciary is:  
Gregory Bellanceau  
c/o ERNEST J COTNOIR,  
MAHER AND COTNOIR,  
163 PROVIDENCE STREET,  
P.O. BOX 187,  
PUTNAM, CT 06260  
May 29, 2026

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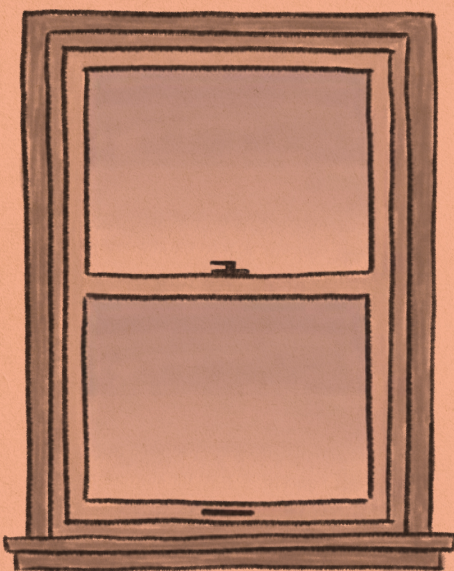
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