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Twin band directors from Woodstock Academy, Norwich Free Academy to represent CT in Macy's Parade



WOODSTOCK — When Lauren Churchill, band director at The Woodstock Academy, was encouraged by her identical twin sister Kristen Motola, band director at Norwich Free Academy, to apply to march in The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, she never imagined they'd both be selected as the Connecticut representatives in the America's Band Directors Marching Group. The marching band, assembled by the

non-profit organization Saluting America's Band Directors, consists of 400 band directors from across the nation. In a couple short weeks, Churchill and Motola will join them in New York City (playing the trumpet and clarinet respectively), for a week of rehearsal and special events, culminating with their performance in the World-Famous Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. "Marching in this

parade is an absolute bucket list item for us," said Churchill, who's looking forward to sharing the special experience with her sister. "Our dad was our high school band director and we both followed in his footsteps, but we haven't really had the opportunity to play and march together since college." Churchill and Motola were the first-ever twin drum majors in the University of Connecticut Marching

Band in 2004. Since 2005, Churchill has served as band director at The Woodstock Academy, where she was the 2022-2023 Teacher of the Year. In addition to teaching in WA's music department, she is an advisor for Tri-M Music Honor Society, conducts the jazz band, serves as musical director for the annual spring musical, and manages the private music lesson program.

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Quiet Corner holds annual town elections

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

REGION — Election Day has come and gone in the Quiet Corner, with towns electing new leadership on a variety of boards and commissions on Nov. 7. In some cases, battles saw familiar names facing off to lead their towns into the future while others brought some new faces into the mix to shake up the status quo. Other towns had less active, but still important elections to determine their new leadership. Our election recap presents the results of each town's election in alphabetical order. All election results are considered unofficial until certified by the Secretary of State.

Brooklyn: Tanner defeats Ives in latest rematch
In Brooklyn, incumbent Republican First Selectman Austin Tanner easily maintained his position over perennial Democratic rival and former First Selectman Rick Ives who once again failed to earn a spot on the Board of Selectmen proper with the lowest number of votes among nominees at 587. Tanner earned 925 votes while his running mate Ray Preece earned 868. Democrat Joe Voccio, another incumbent, earned 649 votes to round out the Board of Selectmen. Democrat Heather Allen and Republican Lance Metzger were the highest vote getters for the Board of Finance. Republican Cindy Dehner was elected over Democrat Carrie Barna to fill a Board of Finance vacancy. Democrats Mae Lyons and Ailla Wasstrong-Evans along with Republican Debra Metzger were the highest vote getters for Board of Education with incumbent Republican Isaias Sostre finishing fourth. Republicans Joanne Eiler and Justin Phaiah and Democrat Susan Wasstrom were the winners for Board of Assessment Appeals. Katherine Bisson was unopposed, and will return as Town Clerk.

Eastford: Richards re-elected in quiet election day
Eastford's Election Day was relatively uneventful, with incumbent First Selectwoman Deborah Richards cross-endorsed and earning her seat for another term. She is joined by incumbents Ashlyn Ellsworth, a Democrat, and Paul Torcellini, a Republican, to round out the Board of Selectmen. Martha Burgess and Christine Hustus were unopposed for Town Treasurer and Tax Collector respectively. The Board of Education sees the return of Republicans Adam Minor and Robert Ellsworth and Democrats Jessica Perry and Michael Bilica, all incumbents. Guy Grube and Douglas Curving were unopposed for Board of Assessment Appeals. Christopher Bowen received the most votes for constables followed by Nathaniel Fabian, Arvind Shaw, and Randal Chinnock. Jeannine Spink, Nancy Gingras, Rachel Budd, and Mary Degostin all return to the Library Board of Trustees as incumbents with Daniel Belanger running unopposed to fill a vacancy on that same board.

Killingly: Democrats gain seats as GOP dominance wanes
Killingly saw one of the more compelling results on Election Day with Democrats finding some success in a town that has been dominated by the GOP in the 2020s. For the first time this decade Killingly will have more than one Democrat on the Town Council and a Democratic majority on the Board of Education. The Town Council featured a series of uncontested races with Republican Tammy Wakefield, Democrat Ed Grandelski, and Republican Ulla K. Tiik-Barclay all winning reelection unopposed for Districts 1 through 3 respectively. The seats for Districts 4 and 5 were both contested, with Democrats flipping the District 5 seat as incumbent Republican Raymond Wood was defeated by Democratic challenger Tony Giambattista by 60 votes. Republicans appear to have maintained a hold of the District 4 seat, but not by much. Republican incumbent Kevin Kerttula secured the win over Democratic challenger Chloe Markley by a scant margin of only four votes, which required a recount that ultimately confirmed Kerttula's win. The Board of Education race was much more decisive in favor of the Democrats. While incumbent Republicans Laura Dombkowski, Laura Lawrences, won reelection, Democrats Danny Rovero, Kevin Marcoux, and Meredith Giambattista overpowered current Board

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Clothing drives help keep locals warm



(Courtesy Photo)
Evelyn, age five and a half, and her grandmother donate boots for children at the fourth annual Boot Drive for TEEG sponsored by Woodstock Democratic Town Committee on Nov. 4. They are pictured with WDTC volunteer Tim Cutler.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT
REGION — A pair of annual fundraisers kicked off November with the goal of keeping local children and families warm as the New England winter approaches. Cocoa for Coats in Putnam and the yearly Boot Drive in Woodstock both sought donations from locals on Saturday, Nov. 4, with all proceeds going to a pair of local non-profits to help prepare those less fortunate for the colder weather. In Putnam, Cocoa for Coats continued its annual fundraising effort for the eighth year setting up a collection site for monetary and physical coat donations at the Putnam Farmers Market Pavilion. The event offered cups of hot cocoa to anyone bringing donations with all the money and coats going to the Putnam Family Resource Center who will connect local families in need. Cocoa for Coats founder Pam Kempain said she is proud to see the event become a local tradition for many. "It is approaching a decade, but I have so

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Turn To **CLOTHING** page **A11**

Thompson Fire Department collects food for TEEG

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

THOMPSON — The giving season has officially begun, and for the second year in a row, two local fire departments have teamed up to help support those in need. On Saturday, Nov. 4, the East Thompson and Thompson Hill Fire Departments joined forces to collect food for TEEG, a local non-profit that provides a community market and holiday food security resources for families in Pomfret, Thompson, and Woodstock. The effort really started in 2022 when East Thompson approached Thompson Hill with the concept and the two departments held a modest but still successful food drive. In 2023, they wanted to go



Volunteers from Thompson Hill and East Thompson Fire Departments collected food to benefit TEEG on Nov. 4.

even bigger, and so both departments recruited volunteers and set up a donation site on the Town Common where they collected monetary and food

contributions throughout the morning and early afternoon. Thompson Hill Fire Chief Matthew Grauer said the 2023 event far

surpassed the 2022 collection and gave members a chance to be an even bigger part of their local

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Early deadlines for Thanksgiving

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the submission deadline for any press releases or letters to the Editor intended for publication in next week's edition of the Villager has been moved up from the usual Monday to Friday, Nov. 17 at 4 p.m. Submissions can be e-mailed to Editor Brendan Berube at brendan@villagernewspapers.com. The staff of Villager Newspapers thanks our readers for their cooperation, and wishes them a safe and happy Thanksgiving.

ACT Performing Arts Magnet High School recruiting students for Spring 2024 semester and 2024-2025 School Year

WILLIMANTIC — EASTCONN's Arts at the Capitol Theater (ACT) magnet high school is currently accepting grade 9-12 students seeking intensive study in the performing arts.

Housed in Willimantic's historic Capitol Theater, ACT enrolls students from eastern Connecticut in its NEASC-accredited, interdisciplinary and arts-infused academic program. Students in grades 9-12 study with certified academic teachers and professional artists in a small, arts-focused learning community. Each grade is about 35 students, making ACT an intimate, focused educational environment.

"We are actively seeking arts-motivated students to join the ACT community," said ACT principal Sarah Mallory. "In a time where students have more choices for their high school experience, consider our small, arts-focused, personalized environment for your high school-aged student. I look forward to

meeting new families and students!"

ACT students select a pathway from among seven arts disciplines that include Acting, Creative Writing, Dance, Integrated Arts & Management, Media Arts, Music and Technical Theater (sets, lighting and costuming).

Students have daily creative experiences in ACT's state-of-the-art facility that features a fully equipped theater, a scene shop, audio/video editing suites, dance studios and a costume shop.

A partnership with Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) allows qualified ACT upperclassmen to enroll in college classes and earn free college credits through the state university system while still attending ACT.

All grade levels have the opportunity to participate in numerous professional-quality performances and showcase their artistic talents in competitions throughout the



Courtesy

EASTCONN's ACT performing arts magnet high school in Willimantic.

year. In recent years, many ACT students have been recognized for their artistic endeavors in Young Writers publications, Scholastic's Art & Writing Awards contest, DMV-Travelers' Teen Safe Driving Video Contest, the Quiet Corner Film Festival and other state and nationwide contests and competitions.

To enroll, students can visit www.eastconn.org/act for an application. Applications for the Spring 2024 semester will be accepted through Friday, Dec. 22. Spring registrants will begin at ACT on Monday, Jan. 22, 2024. Applications for the 2024-2025 academic year are due Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2024.

EASTCONN, which administers ACT, is a public, non-profit Regional Educational Service Center that has been serving the education needs of northeastern Connecticut's schools and communities since 1980. Learn more at www.eastconn.org.



Courtesy

Starting the day after Thanksgiving and going through the week of Christmas, Old Sturbridge Village's 200-acre campus turns into a Christmas wonderland decorated for the holiday season and their annual Christmas by Candlelight event. None of this would be possible, however, without the help of local volunteers like Claire Williams from Eastford. For the past 16 years, Williams, a retired office worker, has been volunteering at Old Sturbridge Village as an interpreter, and working behind the scenes to make events including Christmas by Candlelight a success.

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Commemorative brick program paves the way to Veteran's Park

PUTNAM — The Putnam Veteran's Advisory Committee (VAC), comprised of members from various military organizations, are collaborating once again on the Veteran's Park project to celebrate, bring honor and give thanks to Veterans.

Effort has been ongoing, and in conjunction with the town Highway Department, Recreation Department, and Ellis Tech High School. The goal is to reconstruct Veteran's Park while making it a beautiful memorial to veterans of all times and conflicts.

An honor/memorial site consisting of engraved bricks recognizing the service of veterans of yesterday and today will be

one of the outstanding features at Veteran's Park, located at the intersection of Church and Bridge Streets.

You can participate and help pave the way with this community commemorative brick program by having your service recognized or the service of a loved one honored.

The bricks are a striking gray with black lettering. They are engraved with your choice of wording, and military logos can be added for no extra cost.

The VAC will offer an in-person opportunity to meet with them to fill out brick order forms on Saturday, Nov. 18, from 9 a.m.-noon in the Community Room at the Town Complex at 200 School

St. This is a perfect caring gift opportunity. Each eight-inch-by-four-inch brick is \$100.

Order forms are also available now on the Putnam Town Web site: <https://www.putnamct.us/government/commissions/veterans-advisory-committee>, in the Recreation Office, from any VAC member or at their club location, and at WINY Radio.

All funds raised from this effort will be used to help in funding the construction of our Veteran's Park.

The VAC reports that bricks will begin being placed once that stage of the project is reached and will keep the community up to date.

Eastern to host community Thanksgiving meal Nov. 22

WILLIMANTIC — Eastern Connecticut State University will host a traditional Thanksgiving meal for the community during its 17th annual Day of Giving on Wednesday, Nov. 22, at Hurley Hall. Upwards of 400 residents from the Willimantic community who might otherwise not have a Thanksgiving meal are expected to attend.

The meal will be served continuously from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Eastern will provide shuttle buses from Ashton Towers (at 10:45 a.m.), Father Honan Terrace (at 11:10 a.m.) and the Covenant Soup Kitchen (at 11:30 p.m. and noon). Residents from the Windham Senior Center also will attend. Parking is available on campus and accessible parking is available at the Student Center lot.

Food for the annual celebration is donated by the ECSU Foundation and prepared by Chartwells, Eastern's food service provider. The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) at Eastern will staff the event with student volunteers, many of whom also volunteer at agencies and schools in the community. The CCE is working with Arka Mikel, resident service coordinator for the Willimantic Housing Authority; Kate McCarthy Cox, program coordinator for the Windham Senior Center; and Kim Clark, executive director of the Covenant Soup Kitchen.

"The Day of Giving provides a wonderful Thanksgiving meal to many Willimantic residents," said Lana O'Connor, CCE director. "The CCE provides student volunteers to help out with the day, doing such things as greeting and directing guests, providing assistance for guests with mobility issues, and clearing and resetting tables, but most importantly, the students get to engage and talk with community members. It truly is a feel-good event for everyone," O'Connor said. "This event is a collaboration between Eastern's Office of Institutional Advancement, CCE and Chartwells and wouldn't be successful

without the help of everyone, including Eastern faculty, staff, administration, students and our community partners in Willimantic."

The Day of Giving was first held in 2007 and, after an interruption from COVID-19, returned to campus last year.

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First Congregational Church of Woodstock to host auction and Holiday Fair



Courtesy

Church members are creating beautiful arrangements for Christmas on the Hill on Nov. 18. Pick up a table centerpiece, doorstep decoration, or cemetery box with fragrant holiday greens.

WOODSTOCK — The First Congregational Church of Woodstock has been hosting the “Christmas on the Hill” fundraiser for well over 50 years. This year the tradition continues— with two components. The indoor/outdoor holiday bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 18 will be preceded by a week-long online auction.

The Silent Auction opens at noon on Friday, Nov. 10 and runs online for a full week, until 8 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 16. The auction features over

125 lots—antiques, collectibles, sporting equipment, and handcrafted artwork, not to mention homemade mincemeat and blueberry pies offered by the baking pastor, Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer. Bidding is through www.BiddingOwl.org

Saturday, Nov. 18 is the Indoor/Outdoor Holiday Bazaar from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The public is invited to stop and shop for gifts when they pick up pre-orders and auction items. There will be a bake sale on the church lawn with pumpkin rolls and

a variety of cookies. Shoppers can select from greens arrangements and

balsam wreaths to prepare for the holidays.

The kitchen will be serving corn chowder, butternut bisque, and hot chili, along with apple crisp for lunch. More than 225 ready-to-bake chicken pot pies with homemade cranberry relish will be available for pre-order and purchase. Order forms can be found on the church Web site and the deadline is Nov. 12.

Inside, visitors will find Aunt Mimi’s Attic Treasures which features an array of heirloom and costume jewelry. The SERRV table has beautiful fair-trade items from third world countries and all proceeds from that table benefit native artisans. Our Country Corner has handmade goods and unique decorative items.

“Shoppers can find gifts in all price ranges. There is something for everyone, said Debby Kirk, fair coordinator. “Santa’s Toy Chest has new and gently used toys, games, and puzzles for all ages. There are bargains on hundreds of holiday decorations at the All Things Christmas tables.”

“Now, more than ever, we need a little Christmas! And what a great way to usher in the holidays and support the local community,” commented Pastor Kevin Downer. “The monies raised help fund church ministries, especially our support to non-profits such as

Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group (TEEG), Community Kitchens of Northeastern CT, The Last Green Valley, and Quiet Corner Refugee Resettlement.”

The First Congregational Church of Woodstock is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. The church is located at 543 Route 169, Woodstock, CT

06281, just south of the Woodstock Common. For more information about the auction and the event, go to www.firstchurch-woodstock.org or call the church office at 860-928-7405.



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Danielson American Legion invites high school students to compete in speech contest

DANIELSON — High school students attending Killingly High School, Ellis Technical School, QVCC Middle College, and students who reside in Killingly, Brooklyn and Pomfret who are home-schooled or attending a high school not listed above are invited by L’Homme-Burdick Post 21 of the American Legion to compete in the annual American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program. The contest will be held on Saturday, Jan. 13 at 10 a.m. in the Quinebaug Valley Community College auditorium. The invitation to enter the competition is extended by Post Commander Robert Kelly.

The subject in the prepared oration portion of the contest must be about some phase of the Constitution of the United States, emphasizing the duties and obligations of a citizen to the U.S. government. The prepared oration must be the original effort of each contestant and must be 8-10 minutes in length.

Scholarships will be awarded at the Post, District and State levels.

In addition to the awards by winners of the various elimination rounds of competition, college scholarships of \$25,000, \$22,500, and \$20,000 will be awarded to the first through third places in the national finals. Each state winner who competes in the first round of the national contest will receive a \$2,000 scholarship. Participants in the second round who do not advance to the national final round will receive an additional \$2,000 scholarship. The National contest will be held on May 17-19 at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan.

The American Legion will pay the expenses of state winners at the National Contest.

High school-age students who are interested in entering the competition will find complete rules and Contest information as well as videos of past winning speeches at legion.org/oratorical.

Contact Charlie Crowley at chuck.crowley392@gmail.com or 860-481-2963.

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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

Worry less about gifts, more about quality time

As the holiday season approaches, many of us find ourselves caught up in the whirlwind of gift shopping, decorating, and party planning. While these festive traditions bring joy and excitement, it's essential to remember the true meaning of the holidays. This year, let us consider shifting our focus from the materialistic components of the season to something more precious: quality time spent with friends and family.

In recent years, the holiday season has become synonymous with consumerism. We are bombarded with advertisements enticing us to buy the latest gadgets, toys, and luxury items, often causing stress and financial strain. The pressure to find the perfect gift can overshadow the real essence of the holidays – the opportunity to connect with our loved ones on a deeper level.

One of the greatest gifts we can give each other during this season is our time and undivided attention. In our fast-paced lives, it's all too easy to let precious moments slip away. This holiday season, try to slow down, unplug from our screens, and fully engage with our friends and family.

Quality time is at the heart of strong and meaningful relationships. It's a chance to create cherished memories by simply just hanging out.

Instead of stressing over finding the most extravagant gifts, consider alternatives that emphasize experiences over possessions. Plan a family hike, a cozy movie night, or a day of volunteering together.

It is worth noting that this shift doesn't mean abandoning gift-giving altogether. Thoughtful, meaningful gifts can still play a role in the holidays, but they should complement the primary emphasis on quality time spent with loved ones.

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.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

America under attack by Democrats

To the Editor:

Wars, wars and rumors of wars. The daily news around the world rings true in America. Even so, the war from within is destroying this country.

The Mayor of New York, Eric Adams, spent taxpayers' money on a "crack pipe vending machine" that cost \$676,000. Seriously. Now drug addicts can get "free" crack pipes. Not services for rehabilitation for lives that are dying on the streets at alarming rates. Eric Adams was complaining about his city being destroyed while city services that have been cut because of an alarming rate of illegals coming into his city and the cost, but then again...you got it...crack pipes. New Yorkers are beside themselves over this stupid idea. Please, Mayor; stop complaining about the illegals when you boasted about being a sanctuary city, welcoming everyone. Stop complaining about Joe Biden's failed policies at the borders. Democrats voted for this in New York.

So why \$676,000? Well, some non-profit organizations also got a cut of the money. S.US Services got \$200,000 for services they do for the homeless. Let me see — the homeless stay on the street while illegals get hotel rooms, monthly payments, food stamps, health care and a warm bed. Don't worry, American homeless, you might just die on the street with a new crack pipe in hand thanking Adams, and then New York won't have to worry about you.

Another non-profit called Vocal NY also received money. Who are they? Well, Democrat Chuck Schumer got some PACC money from them, and then Schumer asked Congress for \$3 million so they can build a new headquarters in New York. Well, that sounds very much how politicians work in this country. It's politicians who get away with this kind of crap, but if you are Donald Trump, Democrats have a breakdown.

I know of some that write here about Trump being a racist. Martha's Vineyard gets a pass when they rejected illegals coming to their island; especially the elite, with all their money and power; certainly did not stand up for them. Did anybody call them racists? I am sure none of you called them racists. Come on, Obama; your \$11 million home has plenty of room. Racists? Na, just kidding.

Did you know that I had a dream about Hunter Biden flying into New York on Air Force One, and was seen standing in line at the crack pipe vending machine? Then next thing I knew, they found crack/cocaine at the White House, and then for some reason, the dream ended.

Have any of you here traveled to Sturbridge, Mass.? The people are up in arms there because the hotels and motels are filled with illegals and they need the money for tourists. Please, Sturbridge, stop complaining; you Democrats voted for this.

Now Democrat Gov. Maura Healey of Massachusetts is also complaining. They are spending \$65 million in taxpayers' money a month to house illegals. Plenty of homeless living in Boston living on the street.

Biden's open door policy is killing Americans all across the country, with overdoses that are killing Americans daily. Biden will go down as the worst president in his-

To the Editor:

First, which "news" network was sued and this company paid out \$750 million as a settlement for pushing the "Big Lie" about an election? Hint: it was not MSNBC. They may have to pay out more soon.

Second, the corporate & business slogan for some American businesses might as well be "[Abuse] thy Fellow American" and/or blame Joe Biden. Make record profits, CEOs making a ton of money in salary and stock dividends, even in some cases even if they failed to do a good job, while most Americans work hard to keep pace even with their salaries going but much less in comparison to the boss. Corporations live by the creed, Capitalism on the way up and socialism on the way down in an economic cycle. Leave us alone when we are piling up the dough, but we will be first in line at the public trough for a bail out... Remember too big to fail in the financial fiasco 2006-2009? Has anyone gone to jail yet? Nope, just go to gov't for bailouts with hands open. presently, most are keeping the margins high and using inflation as an excuse. A CEO last week said since inflation was at 8 percent for his company keeping the prices high, inflation is at the moment at less than 4 percent, still high, when asked where he got the 8 percent figure the answer was vague and not coherent. Blaming Covid, supply chains and of course, the present administration.

Third, watching the GOP play spin the wheel on a Speaker of the House, finally after three weeks, settling on one. To hear them blame the Democrats for their inability to lead was comical. Leadership is tough; doing what is best for the country is their job. They do what is best for them. Israel, Ukraine and passing a budget is not easy; doing it with their internal petty disputes was, along with going on three-day vacation when there was no one to do the people's business, is a colossal shame.

Fourth, the rats are deserting the sinking ship. As people start to turn on the four times indicted, twice impeached, three times bankrupt, being sued by three or four peo-

tory. Fentanyl is coming across the border at alarming rates, and he is doing nothing. Nothing! More fentanyl has been seized than at any other time in our history. Under Biden, the cartels are making billions. Crime in our major cities is out of control. New York, San Francisco, Oakland, L.A., Baltimore, St. Louis, New Orleans, Detroit, Chicago and other Democrat-run cities are taken over with gangs.

Remember, you Trump haters, that under Trump, over 13,000 MS 13 gang members were deported back, and now, under Biden, they are coming back. So far this year, over 165 known terrorists have been caught trying to cross the border. Since Biden, that started increasing since he took office. Under Trump, 18 known terrorists were caught in his last year. Yup, he was a racist.

Under Biden, we now have over six million illegals crossing the border, with the border control officers overworked and underpaid. Oh, I forgot; we need more taxpayers' money for the illegals.

Trump had strict sanctions on Iran. Joe Biden softened those restrictions, and now we have Iran backed groups sending missiles to kill our American soldiers. Why were Obama and Biden so hung up on Iran? They knew that they are the leading supporters of terrorist organizations around the world. Why did Biden allow them to make billions and billions of dollars on their oil exports? He stopped the US from being energy independent, but allowed our enemies to rake in billions of dollars so they can build more weapons and use them against our allies and us. What is wrong with this president?

Biden bought oil from Russia, gave them more money for weapons, and now we have Ukraine draining our taxpayer money, draining our military weapons supply and now our strategic oil reserves are down 300 million barrels. Dangerously low. This will cost the taxpayers more than double the money to refill it back. It is known that our military weapons for our own military is dangerously low also. No wars under Trump; America was doing just fine until China and the pandemic. No American soldiers killed, gas was cheaper, oil was cheaper, interest rates were lower, inflation was lower. But here the Trump haters post some off-cuff writing written about his life outside of politics, about women who chased after him. I am sure you purposely forget Bill Clinton. At least Trump didn't stain the White House. Melania didn't act like pathetic liar Hillary Clinton is; she didn't destroy e-mails that were subpoenaed by Congress. She didn't take furniture from the White House when she left like Hillary did. She never called Americans "deplorable" that voted for Trump. That woman needs to be reprogrammed.

So please, your obsession with Trump, I am sure, will never end, but the destruction that Biden and the Democrats are doing from within is way more destructive than any of the changes against Trump. And yes, what the "big man" has done will make Trump look like an angel.

Trump 2024!

KEVIN MACK
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

A few things...

ple, honestly hard to keep track. I wonder about those who stormed the Capital and how they feel and will feel to hear that he knew, all along, he lost and didn't care. Just keep the Big Lie' alive and let me raise money for me and hope you all enjoy your prison time. They believed him and had their lives ruined; it would [upset me] no end. Cult leader is about the cult Leader only. Gratitude runs just one way with him, upwards. He lies, cheats, commits fraud, attacks women. Speak up against him, he is going to be all over you. In one word, he is a bully. Threatening your life? Ask Gen Milly, John Kelly, Michael Cohen, judges and next, Mark Meadows. What will be the reasoning for going after Meadows by the cult leader? "I never knew him; he is a RINO, bitter man who needs me." Reason for Meadows is simple; he wants to stay out of jail himself. There are plenty of people in prison who may wish for a do over. They must feel like pawns in the cult Leader's insecure and childish behavior. This country deserves better than him. Amen.

Lastly, AK-15 rifles and high capacity magazines, what purpose do they serve? As far as mass killings, America does lead the world in the amount of mass shootings in the world, second to none. Whether it be elementary and high schools, colleges, churches and synagogues, grocery stores, movie theatres, bowling alleys, bars and nightclubs, outdoor concerts, etc., where are you safe? Do hunters use this gun? No, since they would destroy a deer/moose or whatever beyond use. These guns were made for war (Vietnam) not personal use. High capacity ammo makes killing fast and easy. Do not have to spend time reloading. If a guy who spends time in a facility for his mental health and retains his guns, even after he had dreams of doing something like this, makes it a nightmare for 18 families in three small towns in Maine, go in a lockdown, just heard he took his life. Stop the madness. Again, why? Money is why.

DAVID CASSETTARI
E. KILLINGLY

The Law of Averages

For many of us, a never-ending stream of worries dominates our thoughts. These persistent fears disturb our peace of mind and impact our ability to enjoy life.

Will the economy crash? Are we headed for nuclear conflict? Is my partner going to leave me? Will my child be lost to addiction? It's one worry after another, a never-ending cycle, like a hamster running on a wheel.

Yes, it's normal to worry at times, but there is a point where it can impair your physical health, causing you to be worried sick!

Imagine a universal law that can help manage these fears. If you're constantly burdened with fear and worry, keep reading because this law is so simple and easy to understand that you don't need anyone to teach you how to use it.

When fear overwhelms you, you must ask yourself, "What are the odds?"

Why, you ask? Because the law I'm talking about is called "The Law of Averages."

This principle, described by Dale Carnegie in his book "How to Stop Worrying and Start Living," is a pragmatic approach to tackling the worries that plague our minds.

The Law of Averages teaches us to analyze our fears logically and statistically.

Carnegie once said, "Ninety-nine percent of the things we worry about never occur!"

Imagine Sarah is about to board a flight for a long-awaited vacation. She should be excited, but a nagging worry clouds her: the fear of a plane crash. Each sound during takeoff and bit of turbulence inflates her anxiety.

Now, let's apply the Law of Averages to Sarah's situation. This principle suggests evaluating the likelihood of an event based on statistical probability, rather than subjective fears. So, what do the numbers say?

Plane crashes are rare, with odds of about one in 11 million. To put this into perspective, you're more likely to be struck by lightning or win a major lottery jackpot than experience a plane crash.

Knowing these stats, Sarah can see her fear doesn't match how safe flying is. Like millions before, the Law of Averages tells us that her flight is overwhelmingly likely to be safe and uneventful.

Let's consider John, a dedicated employee at a large corporation. Recently, there have been rumors of layoffs, and John is increasingly unable to focus, plagued by the fear of being laid off.

Every meeting invite or email from his boss heightens his anxiety, and he starts imagining the worst-case scenarios.

Now, let's apply the Law of Averages to John's situation. This principle encourages us to evaluate the likelihood of an event based on statistical data and realistic assessment rather than fears and rumors.

First, John can look into the economy and his industry's stability. Are widespread layoffs happening in his field, or is it relatively stable? Next, he should consider his position within the company. Has he received positive performance reviews? Does he have unique skills or experiences that are valuable to the team?

Suppose John finds that his industry is stable and his performance has been consistently strong. In that case, the Law of Averages would suggest his chances of being laid off are relatively low. While it's not impossible, the probability doesn't warrant the level of worry he's experiencing.

This approach doesn't dismiss your fear but puts it into a rational framework. The Law of Averages is a Turn To **POSITIVELY** page **A5**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I'll just call it NDDHGate

To the Editor:

The Putnam Board of Selectmen meeting on Monday the 6th was one of the rowdiest I've seen yet due to the discussion on the current issues with the Northeast District Department of Health. In some cases, the rowdiness crossed the line and really called the professionalism of our town leadership into question.

I could easily join the "We Hate NDDH" crowd having heard the discussions at that meeting, seen the previous town letters on the matter, and heard some of the fiery opinions of Putnam residents while the board was in executive session. Fortunately, I know better, and did some digging to get the part 2 of the story.

By the time people were trying to patronize me with this hatred of the NDDH and Sue Starkey, I had already gotten the NDDH's side of the story, so I knew about the rate increase concessions they had previously made that were stinging harder now due to inflation, affecting service and staffing capability, and as Plainfield recently found out with Uncas Health, the grass isn't greener on the other side of the county line.

Dig even deeper, and you'll find out very quickly that public health has faced many woes all around the country in the wake of the Covid pandemic and the widespread disinformation that led to a culture of harassment in public health as hysterical people all around the country turned local public health workers into their own personal Dr. Faucis to take out their pandemic frustrations on. I've heard the stories of exhausted nurses in hospitals and clinics whose jobs were made unnecessarily harder by people who wouldn't mask or get vaccinated or boosted, but at least that was the private sector. Public health harassment stories include bullying, death threats, doxing,

vandalism of public property, the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder, and numerous other nasty details that say loud and clear that we shouldn't be surprised when public health departments have trouble staffing up.

With how lousy public health looks as a career and its effects on staffing, if Sue Starkey were gone tomorrow, who would replace her? This is The Great Resignation era after all, and I can't imagine the job opening being all that attractive following a high-profile multi-town railroading campaign to oust the position's predecessor. As a bonus, if you are perceived as slipping up the towns will dogpile you and threaten to leave or get you fired. That sounds more like a Quiet Corner answer to how House Republicans treat their speakers these days.

Our towns want change, and in Putnam's case, maybe even reinventing the wheel and building a whole new health department from scratch just to change who's in charge. However, town leadership needs to be willing to intervene to streamline the transition, not just complain for political points.

Let's begin at the top. If Sue Starkey needs to go, the towns should hand pick a replacement. Bring in new leadership and skip the vacancy period that's sure to follow the dismissal. This assumes, of course, that they can find someone. My guess is that they can probably fill the position, but probably would struggle to find someone who produced better results.

Hopefully, our politicians' egos don't get stung too much during this process, especially when they'll gladly sound off on inflation and the state of the labor market any other time when a health department isn't in their political crosshairs.

JAY GERHART
PUTNAM

Our freedom has not come easily

To the Editor:

Nov. 11 is Veterans Day — a day of reflection to remember all who have served in our Armed Forces — a day to say thank you. As a veteran, it is another day to celebrate life.

Life is full of choices. I chose to enlist at the age of 18 in the Air Force, as I felt it offered the best educational opportunities of all the military branches. I was just finishing my original four years of active duty obligation in Japan when I learned about Vietnam, which was then heating up. Not wanting to miss out on any action, I volunteered to serve one more year on the condition that I be promoted to Sergeant, as I wanted to lead a patrol. I don't regret my decision, but I could have made a better choice.

Not all of life's lessons are learned in

school classrooms, but rather learned afterward, in the real world. As a combat trained military policeman in Vietnam, I learned more than I really needed to know, but am grateful for having had the experience. It had an inherent purpose; it left one with an education unmatched in the civilian world.

God bless our ability to adapt and our right to make choices, even though some don't always work out as expected. We are one of the few countries in the world where its people have this freedom. Never take it for granted! Tens of thousands have died so we can live. Our freedom didn't come easily. Ask any veteran.

G. TOD STEVENSON
WOODSTOCK

Harry Trask

To the Editor:

Trask's Store, a nondescript, one-room, hole-in-the-wall on Route 169 next to English Neighborhood Brook, was the preeminent landmark in North Woodstock for decades. People came to forgo a trip to town for necessities, cigarettes, gas, snacks, and sodas; farmers and tradesmen for parts and tools; and tourists for directions. Eventually, Harry Trask and his store became a weekend-ride-in-the-country-for-ice cream destination. Despite layers of dust on walls, glass displays, stacks of cardboard boxes crumbling on shelves, and a hazardous wasteland of dirt and grime on the floor, customers sat contently on the stone wall outside licking their favorite ice cream flavor heedless of his oily fingerprints on their cones.

ROY RUTANEN
PUTNAM

Double standards seem to sit well with Canning

To the Editor:

First off, let me thank Mr. Canning for the additional facts that he provided, and though they were enlightening, it doesn't change my mind that Talib and others quickly jumped the gun with their assumptions.

Maybe the fact that Omar said of 9/11 that "some people did something" sits well with him? Maybe he feels that as long as you're a Democrat, you can instigate an occupation of the Capitol, or pull a fire alarm to disrupt Congressional proceedings? Maybe he also thinks the border is secure because a Democrat said it was? Also, how come whenever letter writers have criticized Donald Trump or the Republicans, and called them whatever names and showed their rudeness, we didn't hear a thing from Mr. Canning? Yes, silence is revealing.

Mr. Canning (seemingly) accuses me of listening to «Trump news.» Fair enough, however, ABC 7 NY (Nov. 12) reported that pro-Palestinian protestors (and perhaps Democrats?), after vandalizing the front of the New York Times building, then forced the closure of Grand Central terminal? Is there a need to remind anybody that ABC and the New York Times are both "left of center" and Biden news sources?

In another incident, pro-Palestinian protestors stormed the White House gates. The verdict there was because there was no real damage done the affair got brushed under the rug. Maybe I'm returning to the well here, but had people wearing MAGA hats

done the same there would be investigations galore.

Also, on Veteran's Day, a pro-Palestinian protestor climbed up a pole and tore down American flags in New York City. I wonder if there will be any charges filed against that person? Do you remember when a man was arrested and charged with a hate crime and criminal mischief because he destroyed LGBTQ+ pride flags? (Probably not, and I'm not saying that what he did was right.) Also reported (as I'm writing this) is that (same cause) protesters are now forming for a march on President Biden's Delaware home; hopefully, that wall he built around it will now prove useful.

Now, Talib is threatening President Biden's 2024 election hopes by saying: «We will remember this in 2024» if she doesn't get her way, and this was reported by multiple news sources.

At the start of the Patriots/Colts game in Germany last Sunday, our National Anthem was sung in both English and German, and there was total respect shown. I'd be willing to bet that there were both democrats and republicans among the Americans in attendance, but on that day, they were all proud to be citizens of the United States of America. Now there's a message we should send to Talib and the rest of the squad, and when I see them show some respect for this country, I'll show the same to them.

ED DELUCA
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

Family caregivers deserve recognition: Surprising stats everyone should know

November is Family Caregiver Month, a time to shine a light on the two out of 10 people in America who provide custodial care, many in addition to their full-time jobs.¹ With a fifth of adults preparing to or already providing care for aging loved ones, it's important to recognize the financial and physical sacrifices they make every day.

The majority of caregivers are women — a fact that I observe often when working with my female clients — but with the overall population aging, more and more people are, or will find themselves, taking on this role regardless of gender.

Here's a look how this responsibility can impact you and your finances (or those of your loved ones, if they are caring for you), and how to prepare for the future costs of custodial care.

What is custodial care?

Custodial care is considered non-medical care that is provided to those in need of assistance when performing activities of daily living (ADLs). Examples of ADLs include using the bathroom, getting dressed, eating, moving around the house, grooming and bathing. It is most often provided at home by family caregivers, but in some cases, it may be provided in a nursing home or long-term care facility.

Who are family caregivers?

Around two-thirds, or 66 percent, of family caregivers are women — spouses, sisters, daughters or daughters-in-law.¹ Custodial care may also be provided by a professional caregiver, but professional care can get expensive. The national average cost for professional caregiving is \$23 an hour.²

While being a caregiver is often an act of love, family members who provide custodial care often suffer from:

- Temporary or permanent pause on career and/or family life
- Emotions including stress, fatigue, anger or depression
- Resentment or anger among siblings
- Financial loss
- Worry and guilt
- Impact of caregiving on women

Family caregivers spend around 24.4 hours per week providing care, but nearly 25 percent of caregivers spend 41 hours or more per week providing care.³ Women in the workforce already face a lifetime wage gap. Women are typically paid about 82 cents to every dollar a male counterpart earns. Over the span of a year, this wage gap translates to a loss of about \$10,194 in median

earnings.⁴ With women already facing their own financial hurdles in the workplace, the effects of becoming a family caregiver can further exacerbate the issue.

As family caregivers, many women have had to make tough decisions that negatively impacted their own financial well-being, including:

- 33 percent decreased their work hours
- 29 percent passed up a job promotion, training or assignment
- 22 percent took a leave of absence
- 20 percent switched from full-time to part-time employment
- 16 percent quit their jobs
- 13 percent retired early

Does Medicare or Medicaid cover custodial care?

Custodial care has enormous practical, physical and emotional consequences for family members who provide this care — including stress, anger and substantial financial loss. One of the most important components of financial planning is addressing the need for custodial care.

Medicare considers custodial care by a family member to be "unskilled" care. In some cases, Medicare will cover "skilled" care that's provided by a qualifying health professional. This could include a Registered Nurse (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

These "skilled" services are typically considered to be short-term and an alternative to recovering in a hospital or nursing facility. Examples of these services include:

- Patient monitoring
- Wound care for a pressure ulcer or surgical incision
- Administration of intravenous drugs or nutrition therapy
- Injections
- Catheter changes
- Education for caregivers and patients

When Medicaid may cover custodial care

Your state's Medicaid program may provide payment for custodial care. The rules will vary state by state, but Medicaid may pay after someone has spent the vast majority of their personal assets.

Preparing financially for custodial care

With proper planning, caregiving can be a fulfilling and satisfying experience. Having solid financial resources can be a massive relief to caregivers because it enables them to hire a professional to provide all or part of the necessary care. Allowing the family member to coordinate the bulk of the

care instead of being the primary provider of that care can make a huge difference.

It may be worthwhile to consider products specifically designed to cover custodial care costs. Some products may cover the care costs altogether, while others could be used to generate income. Your financial professional can provide details on long-term care insurance, hybrid products, life insurance and annuities.

Having a plan in place to fund custodial care can greatly benefit family caregivers by allowing them to supervise a plan of care rather than deliver it. And for those worried they may need custodial care one day, it can help make sure you have the means to get the care you need without the guilt of interfering with your loved one's life. Solutions can create peace of mind, better health and a better quality of life for caregivers and beneficiaries alike.

If you seek assistance in shaping your financial future, or with long-term care planning for yourself or a loved one, get in touch with us at Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors and request a complimentary consultation. We'll show you how we can help you create a strategic financial plan for you and your future using our Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well™ process. Contact us at (860) 928-2341 or info@whzwealth.com.

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<https://www.caregiver.org/resource/women-and-caregiving-facts-and-figures/>
www.whatcarecosts.com

<https://www.caregiver.org/resource/caregiver-statistics-demographics/>
<https://nwlc.org/resources/women-and-the-lifetime-wage-gap-how-many-woman-years-does-it-take-to-equal-40-man-years/>

"By the law of averages, it won't happen." is the phrase Carnegie said has destroyed ninety percent of his worries and made years of his life beautiful and peaceful beyond his highest expectations.

Next time you find yourself in the grip of fear, pause, breathe, and embrace the Law of Averages to transform fear into a catalyst for confidence and clarity.



POSITIVELY

continued from page A4

powerful tool to counteract our exaggerated anxieties about rare events.

The Law of Averages is beautiful for its simplicity and usefulness.

It doesn't ask you to stop worrying cold turkey, which is nearly impossible. Instead, it offers a pathway to reframe your worries into something manageable. By analyzing the probabilities, we often find that many fears are less likely to materialize than we think. And even if they do, you're mentally prepared to handle them and work towards a better outcome.

Every ad tells a story

Note: The Killingly Historical & Genealogical Center will be closed the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, Nov. 22. It will be open regular hours on Saturday, Nov. 25.



KILLINGLY AT 300

MARGARET WEAVER

Are you looking for an unusual Christmas gift? There's a New Book for Sale: "New England's Haunted Route 44." Have you heard of the White Ghost Train in Putnam? Do you like ghost stories, tales of hauntings, etc.? The Killingly Historical Center now has the book "New England's Haunted Route 44" by Thomas D'Agostino and Arlene Nicholson for sale for \$20. Stop in at the Center on Wednesdays and Saturdays during regular hours (10-4). If you would like to have a copy mailed to you, please send a check for \$20 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling made out to the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society P.O. Box 265 Danielson, CT 06239. There are a number of "haunted" sites in Putnam, Pomfret and the surrounding vicinity.

"Images of America Killingly and Killingly Revisited" and maps are also for sale.

Killingly Historical Center volunteer and researcher Sue Gosselin was looking in a notebook at the Killingly Historical Center entitled "Tidbits and Business Ads from Various Dates" (compiled and indexed by Bernard Mitchell) and thought I might be interested in the ads. This one quickly caught my eye. "For Sale, An Excellent Farm of 100 Acres. Handsomely situated in the north society in Killingly, adjoining the Boston and New York stage road (present day Putnam Pike/Route 12), within 40 rods of a good grist and saw mill, blacksmith shop's shop, and distillery. Said Farm is well wooded and watered, has a good proportion of pasturing, plow land, mowing and orcharding, with an extraordinary privilege of watering Land. The buildings consist of two Houses and two Barns. Said farm may be reckoned among the best in the County of Windham, and if applied for soon may be had on terms that cannot fail of suiting the purchasing. Also about 75 acres of wood and pasture Land, adjoining the

above mentioned Farm. For further particulars inquire of Aaron Whitmore, living on the premises." (Norwich Courier, May 27, 2818; p. 61 section 2 of notebook). This farm would have been not far from where Bernie Mitchell, president of the Killingly Historical Society, lives in Attawaugan near the bridge over Five Mile River. The Whitmores were among the earliest settlers of the northern part of Killingly.

By 1810, there was also cotton mill situated on the Five Mile River in that greater vicinity in what is now Attawaugan. As indicated in the above ad, the area also was home to a distillery. Another ad mentioned the need for an individual to take charge of that distillery. "A First Rate Distiller, who can come well recommended, is wanted to take charge of a Gin Distillery. Liberal wages will be given. Inquire of the subscriber, at the Stone Chapel Factory, in Killingly (Con.)" Harvey Blashfield. Killingly, September 20, (Manufacturers' & Farmers' Journal, Providence and Pawtucket; Sept. 25, 1820, Vol. 1, Issue 77, p.3; p. 62 section 2 of notebook).

The following ad for a site at the southern end of present-day Danielson, predated the 1810 opening of the Danielson cotton mill and gave me a new perspective on how that area was developing. (The Danielsons had had saw and grist mills and an iron works on the Five Mile River there even prior to the Revolution). At that thriving site the new innovation, "Carding Machines. The subscribers have now in readiness, Machines for carding sheeps wool into rolls, at the Mills of Col. Danielson in Killingly;--the wool must be prepared in the same manner as if to be carded by hand, only not to use so much grease, and that well mixed. Those that will favor us with their custom, will please to forward their wool in cloths suitable to contain the rolls, and marked with the owners name. Ezra Worthier & Co. Killingly, June 26, 1804." (Courier, July 4, 1804; Issue 33, p. 4; p. 66 section 2 of Tidbits notebook). This is the first I had heard of Ezra Worthier & Co.

I found a nice explanation about carding

the museum came from South Waterford, Maine and is dated c. 1840. "Carding mills prepared wool for spinning by brushing the fibers to evenly align them. Farm families sheared, sorted, picked, and scoured wool before bringing it to the mill. Then wool was loosened in the picker to ready it for the carding machine. The 'carding engines' brushed the wool into rolls for spinning or into batting for quilts. As industrialization proceeded, carding, spinning, and weaving machinery were combined in New England's expanding woolen factories. But some rural carding mills remained in operation through the middle of the 19th century, catering to a dwindling market of home spinners. Carding machines took only 20 minutes to produce what required all day to card by hand!" (www.osv.org/building/carding-mill/)

There was even a very early ad in the ote-book for the Danielson Manufacturing Company, which was established in 1810 across from the present Danielson Post Office. "For Sale. At the store of the Subscriber. A General assortment of cotton-yarn and CLOTH, made by the Danielson Manufacturing Company in Killingly, Con. (note the abbreviation for Connecticut). Also, West India Goods and Country Produce." (Rhode-Island American, published as The Rhode-Island American and General Advertiser; Nov. 8, 1811; p. 61 section 2 of Tidbits notebook).

Following the construction of the first Danielson mill and the second by 1819, the area apparently attracted various entrepreneurs. "Tailoring. Vaughn & Bates. Elisha B. Vaughn and Ezra D. Bates, respectfully beg leave to inform the inhabitants of the town of Killingly and its vicinity, that they have taken a shop at the Danielsonville Factory, in Killingly, where they intend carrying on the Tailoring Business in all its various branches, according to the latest improvements. Cutting and making done in the newest style & in the neatest manner. They flatter themselves, that, with their experience, they shall be able to give general satisfaction. N. B. Particular attention will be paid to cutting--All garments warranted to fit if properly made. Killingly, Dec. 3, 1821.." (See Norwich Courier 12-4-1822, section 2 of Tidbits notebook, p. 56).

"Welcome W. Buck Would inform his friends and the public, that he has on hand and is constantly manufacturing, at the Danielson Factory, a good

assortment of Boots and Shoes, of the best quality, and most approved fashions, which he offers on the most reasonable terms. Wood, grain, and many other articles will be received in payment for the above. Killingly, May 2, 1831" (Norwich Courier, May 11, 1831, Vol. X;I; Tidbits notebook, section 2, p. 57).

Next week is Thanksgiving so I want to wish you all a wonderful day. If you are able, help someone in need in our area. In Killingly the Friends of Assisi are giving out Thanksgiving baskets and can use your help. The St. James Knights of Columbus, Council 2883 is collecting coats for both children and adults. (Contact Shawn at 860-383-5897 for additional information). I'm sure other places in our area are also busy collecting items so take time to share whatever bounty you have. Happy Thanksgiving!

Pomfret Historical Society Meeting
The next Pomfret Historical Society meeting is Saturday, Nov. 18 at 1:30 p.m. at the Pomfret Community Center. Photographer and professor of photography, Hunter Neal will describe the history of photography since its creation, up to and including the period from 1880-1910, showcasing the photos of the Grosvenor family and Edward Douglas Holyoke, a Baptist Minister from Providence, R.I. and ancestor of Hunter's wife Amanda. Join us for refreshments and Meet & Greet at 1:30 p.m. The program begins at 2 p.m.

Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam has released a new book Manhasset Village, Gone But Not Forgotten by Fab Cutler and Sandra Ames. It is based on interviews with over 100 families who lost their homes and belongings during the devastating 1955 flood, which swept

through the village. The book is available for \$30, with an additional \$5 for shipping, tax included. To reserve a copy call 860-963-6800, ext. 300 or email historicalsocietyaspinock@gmail.com.

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



Courtesy

Pictured left to right are Walmart Supercenter Store Manager Sandra Klein and Kristen Willis, director of development, DKH.

Walmart awards community grant to Day Kimball At Home services of HomeCare, HomeMakers, and Hospice & Palliative Care

PUTNAM — The Day Kimball Healthcare Foundation recently received a community grant of \$2,000 from the Walmart Supercenter in Putnam in support of Day Kimball At Home services of HomeCare, HomeMakers, and Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Connecticut.

These agencies have a 44-year history of providing a wide range of compassionate and personalized in-home care in the form of skilled nursing, therapy, personal care, homemaking, companionship, and end-of-life needs for the residents of thirteen communities in northeastern Connecticut.

Walmart's grant helps ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community are provided with the continuum of high-quality and compassionate care that they need and so richly deserve in the comfort of home. Walmart and the Walmart Foundation aim to help our neighbors live better by strengthening the local communities where their associates and customers live.

Last year, Walmart provided more than \$1.5 billion in cash and in-kind annual giving to support programs and focus on areas where they can do the most good — combining the unique strengths of the business alongside their philanthropy. Day Kimball Healthcare Foundation is thankful to be a Walmart grant recipient and continues to make a difference in Northeast Connecticut.

Must-have gifts for your favorite gardener

Every gardener, new or experienced, appreciates tools to help them better enjoy their hobby. Some may be looking for ergonomically designed tools to help them garden longer while newbies may need some basic tools as they are getting started. A peek in their shed may help you decide which must-have tool to give them this holiday season.

Every gardener needs a bypass pruner for dead-heading, trimming and pruning stems between a quarter inch and one inch. Bypass pruners have two sharp blades like scissors, making a clean cut that closes quickly.

Bypass loppers allow your gift recipient to cut larger diameter branches and long handles for greater leverage and long reach. The extra reach makes it easier to prune all parts of small trees, shrubs and roses. Consider gifting one with a compound cutting action that boosts cutting power with less effort.

If your favorite gardener doesn't have one, your gift of a weed knife also



GARDEN MOMENTS

MELINDA MYERS

known as a Hori Hori knife will soon become a favorite tool. It is useful for cutting through sod and roots, planting small bulbs, digging weeds and so much more. Select one like Corona's Hori Hori Garden Knife with a ComfortGel grip (www.coronatoolsusa.com) to help reduce muscle fatigue. The metal runs all the way through, providing added durability and leverage. Include a sheath so they can keep this universal tool handy whenever working in the garden.

Digging small holes for planting in containers and garden beds is a seasonal reality and a hand trowel is the perfect tool for the job. Gift a new durable trowel or upgrade the existing one. Look for one that is sturdy, lightweight and has an ergo-

nomic grip. A long-handled pointed shovel is a versatile tool. You can plant, transplant, dig holes and more. Look for one with a foot pad to help reduce foot fatigue and shoe damage. Avid flower gardeners may prefer a short-handled spade that makes working in tight spaces easier. Perhaps your gift recipient needs both.

With an expandable leaf rake, you can adjust the width of the teeth, allowing you to reach into tight spaces or cover larger areas. An iron rake is great for moving soil and one with a bow head makes it easier to adjust the depth.

For something different, consider an auger bit available in a variety of lengths and bit diameters. Attach this to a cordless drill and you have the perfect tool for planting bulbs and small transplants, aerating soil, and vertically mulching planting beds.

Perhaps you're just looking for a few stocking stuffers. Safety glasses are

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Nov. 17

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Secrets of the Gila Wilderness

BY DENNIS BLANCHETTE
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

To those devoid of imagination, a blank place on the map is a useless waste; to others, the most valuable part.” — Aldo Leopold

Every now and then, one gets a hankering to wander around a desert. But which one? In the U.S., the Mojave is the smallest and driest, the Sonoran is the hottest, and the Chihuahuan is the largest. The Sonoran also has mountains which form “sky islands” of greater biodiversity and cooler climate. My wife and I looked at a map of the Gila National Forest that showed the road ending in a blank space on the map. That clinched it for us.

It turns out that the Gila National Forest is located in a transition zone of both the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts, so a trip there gets us two desert ecosystems for the price of one trip. The road to Gila National Forest led past two beautiful State Parks, Rockhound State Park in the Florida Mountains, and City of Rocks State Park, famous for its rock formations of hardened lava, eroded over the years forming towering

pinnacles and bulbous formations.

From Silver City, last stop for gas, the Trail of the Mountain Spirits National Scenic Byway switchbacks northerly through the Pinos Altos Range and dead ends 93 miles later at Gila Hot Springs. The village consists of a hot spring, a campground, a corral and the Airbnb we had booked. The deck looked out over the East fork of the Gila River; hoodoos loomed in the distance, raptors rode thermals, and herons descended into the nearby rookery.

Patrice, the Airbnb owner, stopped by to meet us. After she left, I looked through her substantial book collection and found many of my old favorites – Abbey, Krakauer, Matthiesen. But there was one book I had never heard of, “A Song for the River” by Philip Connors. The first page was signed by the author, which piqued my interest. According to the introduction, it was about attempts to dam the upper Gila River; the last wild river in the west. I was hooked. What better way to discover the secrets of a place than by reading something besides a generic travel guide?

The next day, we hiked Little Bear Canyon to the Middle Fork of the Gila River. The hiking was tremendous both in views and solitude. Jordan Hot Springs lay on the other side, but Patrice had said it was too high for fording. Nevertheless, we passed a couple of groups with backpacks and guitars optimistically heading for the hot spring. The EE Canyon Loop passed through an area burned in a 2021 forest fire, giving it a stark, otherworldly look. Dead blackened trees, some standing, some fallen, littered the barren landscape. It was ugly. I had no knowledge of forest fire management but that didn’t stop me from opining on what a tragedy it was. Forest regeneration was already underway with green areas of new vegetation showing through the burnt underbrush, but still I questioned why the fire was allowed to ruin this gorgeous canyon.

The Gila Wilderness was the nation’s first designated wilderness. Combined with the adjacent Aldo Leopold Wilderness, there is more designated wilderness here than any other forest in the Southwest. Aldo Leopold got his degree in Forestry from Yale in 1909 and joined the Forest Service that same year. Author of “Sand County Almanac,” he was an early conservation pioneer and philosopher

of environmental ethics. At that time the philosophy of the government for forested land was “highest and best use.” The National Parks Service was accomplishing this by building roads and trails to allow as much access to the natural wonders as possible. The Forest Service interpreted “highest and best use” as maximizing timber sales, and fire suppression as a means of protecting that crop.

Leopold saw the over-development caused by the roads constructed into the National Parks and wondered if there could be such a thing as too much progress. He saw that it would be easier to protect wilderness than to create it. Because so little of the original Southwestern wilderness remained without roads, Leopold felt it was imperative that a portion of what was left be preserved in that state, in order to provide a recreational experience that would otherwise vanish. In 1924, his plan to preserve the Gila River headwaters as the nation’s first designated wilderness was approved. As such, it is a place where no roads can be built, no mechanized equipment is allowed and travel is only allowed by foot or horse.

That evening, I read “A Song for the River.” Philip Connors was a fire lookout and the book is a tour de force of nature writing, an homage to the Gila River. Connor

also recounts the tragic series of events that led to three local teenagers getting killed in the crash of a small plane on the way back from viewing a science project to which they had been denied ground access. When I read that one of their parents was named Patrice, a sense of dread came over me. As I read further, the book confirmed what I hoped it wouldn’t. One of the teenagers who died in the plane crash was our host Patrice’s only child. And I realized that some of the events in the book took place in the house in which we were staying. When I told Patrice that I didn’t think I could carry on if I were in her place, she replied, “Yes, you would carry on. Because humans do. And our children want us to.”

“It’s what we learn after we think we know it all that counts.” — Kin Hubbard.

The exquisite quality of Connors’ writing drew me to his first book, “Fire Season – Field Notes from a Wilderness Lookout,” a philosophical masterpiece on the subject of forest fires. A policy debate erupted among government officials and pro-development forces after the massive forest fires of 1910 in which at least 79 firefighters were killed. Some favored light burning to remove undergrowth and dead wood, some favored development in the form of roads, settlements and timber harvesting.

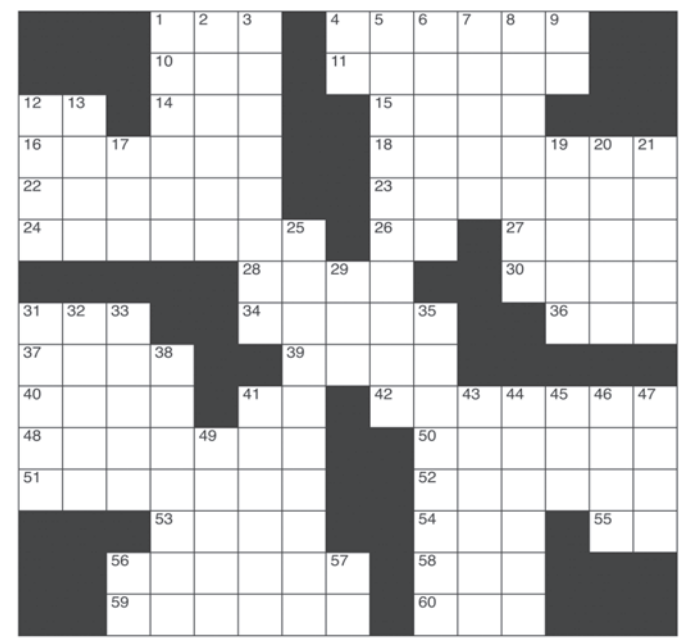
The third option was complete suppression – fire was evil and must be stopped. The latter became policy and pre-vailed for 60 years.1

Connors disagreed and wrote that complete suppression leads to a build-up of dead wood, fuel for a forest fire, and he predicted the massive fires of today in 2012. Letting all fires burn can endanger homes, people and ancient artifacts. One course of action attempted was to suppress only man-made fires and allow natural fires to burn. But what happens when the natural fire approaches a stream with an endangered trout population? One answer is to electroshock the stream, capture the trout and then restock them after the fire. The issues are complex, with many competing interests.

It was a great trip in more ways than I expected. I went to see and experience the desert solitude and learned about forest fires along the way. Somehow, I’m always surprised to realize that travel not only opens your eyes to new sights, it opens your mind as well.

Dennis R. Blanchette is a semi-retired civil engineer and travel writer.

Connors, Philip. “Fire Season: Field Notes from a Wilderness Lookout.” Ecco, 2011.

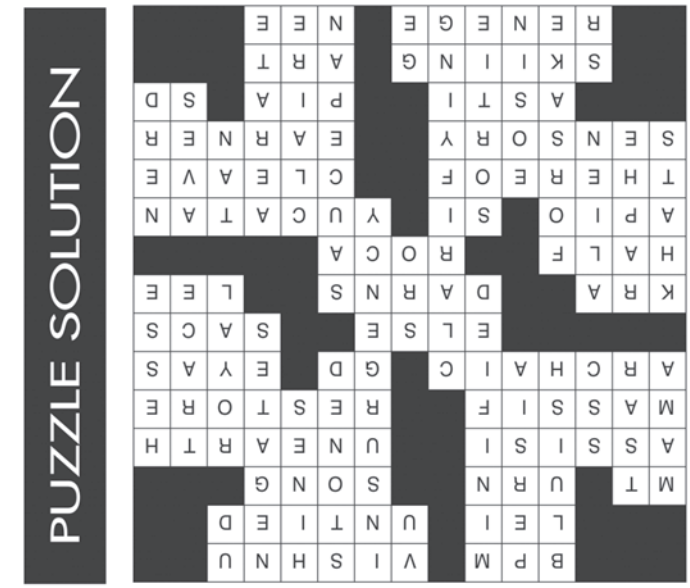


CLUES ACROSS

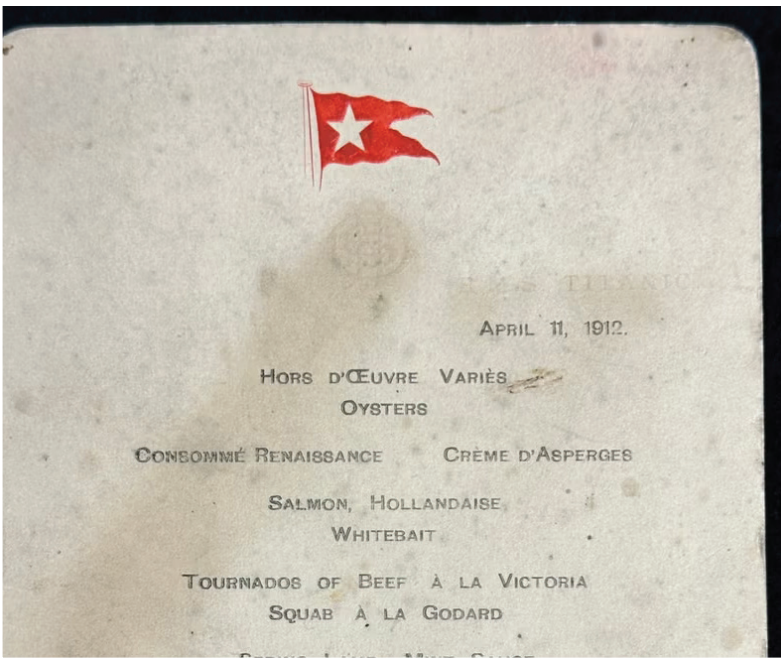
1. Beats per minute
4. Hindu deity
10. Polynesian garland of flowers
11. Not chained to
12. Metric ton
14. Tall, rounded vase
15. Musical composition
16. St. Francis of ____
18. Discover the location of
22. Compact group of mountains
23. Mend
24. Not current
26. Atomic #64
27. Young hawk
28. Or ____
30. Pouches
31. Southern Thailand isthmus
34. Mends with yarn
36. Downwinds
37. One of two equal parts of a divisible whole
39. Italian archaeological site
40. Cold appetizer
41. Yes
42. Peninsula
48. Of that
50. A way to divide
51. Relating to the physical senses
52. One who makes money
53. ____ Spumante (Italian wine)
54. Inconvenience (abbr.)
55. South Dakota
56. Snow sport
58. The products of human creativity
59. Change mind
60. Born of

CLUES DOWN

1. Similar to the color of a clear unclouded sky
2. Former name of Iran
3. Made smaller
4. Type of meter
5. Revolt
6. Killed with rocks
7. Gregory ____, US dancer
8. Nullifies
9. Home to the Flyers
12. Female parent
13. Pre-1917 Russian emperor
17. Outsourcing (abbr.)
19. Regal
20. Line
21. Hermann ____, author of “Siddhartha”
25. Clearing up
29. No seats available
31. Leaves of an Arabian shrub
32. Groove in organ or tissue
33. Not of this world
35. Cooking device
38. Forget
41. Operational flight
43. Actress Danes
44. Poke holes in
45. A way to discolor
46. Shouts of welcome or farewell
47. Pharrell’s group
49. Red fluorescent dye
56. Jr.’s dad
57. Electronics firm



Latest antique and collectibles auction news



This week’s article will focus on major auction news coming out of Europe, specifically. Some Titanic artifacts and a piece of Star Wars memorabilia sold in England and one of the most expensive diamonds on Earth, which was auctioned in Geneva, Switzerland.

A menu from the Titanic and a passenger’s pocket watch recently sold at an auction in the United Kingdom. The menu was from the first-class passengers’ dinner on April 11, 1912, three days before the ship hit an iceberg and sank. The menu shows some water staining that occurred the night the ship sank. Some of the items on the menu included Squab a la Godard, Spring Lamb and Mint Sauce, Apricots Bourdaloue (a type of tart), and Victoria Pudding. The menu was found in the estate of Canadian historian Len Stephenson, according to CBS News. It’s not known how Stephenson acquired it, but he lived in Nova Scotia, where many of the victims’ bodies were brought after it sank. The Guardian reported that the

menu sold for £83,000 (\$101,450 U.S.) on Nov. 11. Also offered in the same sale was the pocket watch of passenger Sinai Kantor. He was 34 years old when he and his wife decided to emigrate from Russia. He died when the ship sank but Kantor’s wife, Miriam, survived the tragedy. She received his personal effects including a silver watch with Hebrew characters on the watch face. The watch was heavily corroded from the salt water but still had an auction estimate of £50,000 (morethan \$61,000 U.S.).

Sticking in the UK, the actor who played “Star Wars” character C-3PO sold the head from the popular character this month. I had discussed the head was going to auction in a previous column. Anthony Daniels is 77, and decided “to sell the costumes, props and scripts he kept from the iconic films,” according to the BBC. Daniels told the BBC that they were in his “sitting room” and he wanted them to go to someone who will

cherish and display them. The auction featured over 200 items from his collection, including some parts from the Millenium Falcon spaceship. He said he rescued them from being burned in a bonfire at the movie studio after the “Return of the Jedi” was filmed. There were some items that he decided to keep, though. He’s not selling a Lego figure of his character given to him for his work in a Star Wars Lego movie or a C-3PO statuette made to look like an Oscar award, which he received from the production company Lucasfilm. Daniels told the BBC “I’ll take those to the grave.” The auction house reported that it sold for £687,500 (\$840330 U.S.).

A fancy flawless vivid blue diamond just became one of the most expensive diamonds in the world when it sold at auction in Switzerland. The 17.61-carat diamond was so desirable because of its deep, rich blue color and unmodified pear shape design, according to Reuters. The diamond easily outshined its estimate of \$35 million, selling for \$44 million.

For those of you looking to spend a lot less than \$44 million, we have a large quantity of gold, platinum, and silver jewelry with diamonds and other gemstones in our next auction. We also have the best collection of art we’ve ever offered, along with many sets of sterling silver, mid-century modern furniture and accessories from multiple estates and a wide variety of other items. We plan to begin the online event later this month or early in December. We also have an online estate auction of a Concord home beginning soon and ending in December. Please visit our website https://centralmassauctions.com for links to upcoming events.

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

nonprofit needs our support. The wonderful East Woodstock Congregational Church, has offered a potluck fundraiser opportunity for Flying Free on Saturday, Dec. 9 at 5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. There will be live music, raffles, and lots of delicious food. \$25 donation per person, prior to or at the event. Checks can be made out to Flying Free TRC, Inc. Please come and support this wonderful nonprofit in need! The church is located at 220 Woodstock Rd.

Church potluck to host Flying Free Therapeutic Riding Center

WOODSTOCK — Flying Free Therapeutic Riding Center is a 501(c)(3) that supports children and adults with special needs through horses. It was founded just over a year ago. This deserving



Courtesy

On Friday, Nov. 10, Pomfret Community School dedicated this day to honor our veterans. Veterans were invited for breakfast and to attend a special assembly hosted by the 5th grade students. Thank you, Mr. Gagnon, Mrs. Abram and Ms. St. Jean for coordinating the Veterans Day Assembly. Mrs. Abram said, “I have been working with my Team to put on the Veterans Day Assembly since 2007. It has been an extremely fulfilling fifth grade project that both educates our students and connects the community, while honoring family members & local citizens who have fought for our country. It has proven to be a beautifully impactful annual event that we hope to continue for many more years to come!”



TEEG continued from page A1

community. “We probably have at least twice as much food as we raised last year. We combined that with a boot drive so we’re collecting cash at the intersection and people have been very generous. We’re looking forward to providing a great donation for the holiday season,” said Grauer. “We’re an organization that gives back to the community every day. It’s an expectation I guess as a fire department, but we all also strive to give back on a personal level. It’s a great opportunity and it makes us all feel good.” Kristal Simon, Assistant Chief of East Thompson, agreed with Chief Grauer commenting on how important the collection has become to members of both departments. “I think this just adds an additional sense of purpose for our crews. It was our firefighters that came to us and wanted to do this. We said let’s run with it and see what we can do for TEEG. They help out our community all the time and times have been tough for many recently so if we can make it a little easier for someone this holiday season that’s what we’re striving to do,” she said. Following the food drive, TEEG reported a grand total of 350 pounds of non-perishable food donations that will help fill the organizations Community Market and provide for their annual Thanksgiving and Holiday food distribution events. The event also produced \$4,119.01 in monetary donations through their fill-a-boot efforts.

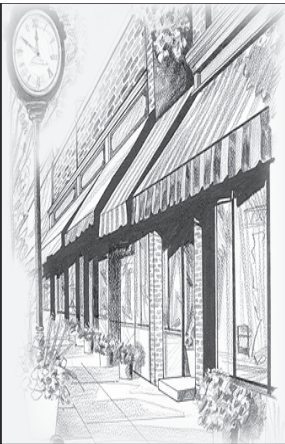


Let the season begin at Saint Nicholas Victorian Fair

POMFRET — The annual Saint Nicholas Victorian Fair in Pomfret will be held on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (snow date Dec. 9) at Christ Church in Pomfret, one mile south of the Vanilla Bean on Route 169. The Saint Nicholas Fair is locally famous for offering holiday gifts at great prices and supporting many area charities and agencies. There is also an On-line Silent Auction Nov. 18 – 29. Auction purchases should be picked up in person at the Fair on Dec. 2. Shop local and give back to your community for the holidays this year. Last year, the Silent Auction raised more than \$8,500 to support community outreach. Auction items include gift certificates donated by local businesses and numerous other items to bid on. The auction is accessible at www.biddingowl.com/ChristChurchPomfret. It goes live November 18th at noon and closes on Nov. 29 at noon. The in-person Saint Nicholas Fair features holiday gifts for everyone on your list! This year, themed gift booths include baked goods (including ‘Rudolph Nut Mix’ available only at the Fair), homemade chocolates, crafts, toys, cheese, holiday plants and wreaths, vintage jewelry, “Give It Again” items, and the bottle board. New booths this year are pocketbooks and puzzles. Luncheon at the Fair will feature chicken salad and soup, which can be pre-ordered for takeout through the online auction website link. All proceeds from the Saint Nicholas Fair are allocated for outreach programs, including TEEG, the Access Agency, Day Kimball Hospital Hospice, ARC of Quinebaug Valley, Relay for Life, Habitat for Humanity, Deary Memorial Cancer Fund, Community Kitchens of NECT and more. Questions? Call 860-315-7780 or email christchurchpomfret@gmail.com. Christ Church is located at 527 Pomfret St., Pomfret. To learn more, visit ChristChurchPomfret.org. Follow them on Facebook at [@christchurchpomfretct](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchpomfretct).

WOODSTOCK BY THE WEEK

November 20-26, 2023	Nov. 26 Red Lion Burger Food Truck, Taylor Brooke Brewery, noon-5 p.m. Live Music- Rich Polseno, Taylor Brooke Brewery, 2- 5 p.m.	Center for the Arts, 7 p.m.
TOWN HALL MEETINGS (agendas and minutes at woodstockct.gov)	UPCOMING EVENTS	Dec. 9 Woodstock Winter Festival, townwide, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. map and passport at woodstockct.gov/recreation-department/pages/events
Monday, Nov. 20 Agriculture Com., 1 p.m. Zoning Bd. of Appeals, 6 p.m. Recreation Com, 7 p.m.	Nov. 30 Wooden Holiday Ornament Workshop, Taylor Brooke Brewery, 6-8 p.m.	Dec.10 Christmas Tea at Roseland Cottage, 1 p.m., tickets my.historicnewengland.org
Tuesday, Nov. 21 Arboretum Com., 3 p.m.	Dec. 2 Art & Craft Show, East Woodstock	Dec. 15 Woodstock Academy Winter Concert, The Loos Center for the Arts, 6-8 p.m.
Wednesday, Nov. 22-Friday, Nov. 24 Town Hall Closed Happy Thanksgiving	Nov. 25 Red Lion Burger Food Truck, Taylor Brooke Brewery, noon-5 p.m. Live Music- Nate Cozzolino, Taylor Brooke Brewery, 2- 5 p.m.	Dec. 17 Live Nativity, South Woodstock Baptist Church, 5 p.m.
COMMUNITY EVENTS	Dec. 3 2023 Holiday Pops, The Loos Center for the Arts, 7 p.m.	To submit calendar items: woodstockbytheweek@gmail.com
Nov. 24-25 Artists Open Studios, throughout northeast CT	Dec. 8 New York Bee Gees, The Loos	



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Putnam Legion post honors last remaining WWII veteran

PUTNAM — Putnam’s Mayotte Viens American Legion Post 13 held their annual Veterans Day Guest Bartending and Veteran Recognition event at the Black Dog Bar & Grille on Thursday night, Nov. 9. The Master of Ceremonies for the event was Post 13 Commander Michael Rocchetti.

The event opened with the singing of the national anthem by Army National Guard Specialist Emily Lajoie. After that, the guest bartenders worked the bar collecting tips for the American Legion.

According to Rocchetti, “The Guest Bartenders really brought in a tremendous amount of donations for the Post. This is really important for us because it helps pay for our scholarships, American Legion Baseball, Boys State, the State Police Youth Academy, the youth oratorical contest,

our Veterans in need fund, and our ongoing Americanism initiatives.”

The guest bartending teams included the Putnam Town Hall (Barney Seney, Travis Sirrine, Brian Lynch, and Denise Geeza), the Putnam Business Association (Richard Loomis, Gary Osbrey, Earl Rosebrooks, and Jeff Rawson), the Putnam Rotaract (Tayler Shea, Matt Gardner, Hailey Messier), the Putnam Lions Club (Leia Faucher, Melody Cassio, Doria Daviau, Mikayla VanDam), the Day Kimball Health Care team (Crystal Lanning, Roger Franklin, Dan Durand, Brian Fulton, Bob Kovaleski), and the Gates Automotive Group (Mike & Joann Gallo, Chelsea Cormier, Nick Dojay). Rocchetti also recognized the generosity of the many donors that made the event successful: “Dozens of gift baskets were donated by

members and friends as raffle items. Local artist Jonathan Fitz donated two original paintings which were auctioned off. Big Gary’s Discount Liquor Store donated a custom betched bottle of Woodford Reserve bourbon which was auctioned off. Also Foxwoods Resort Casino donated one of our auction items an overnight stay for two people in a deluxe room at their luxury hotel.”

According to Post 13’s Finance Officer, Chas Mackenzie: “between the tips, donations, raffle ticket sales, and auctions, this event raised \$12,804 for the Post – I am overwhelmed by the generosity of all of the people who made this possible, especially Gates auto group, Dr. Steven Raheb, Putnam Lions club, Roger Franklin, Putnam Area Foundation, Christopher and Kathleen Johnson, Diane and Richard Tremblay, Rawson

Materials, Loomis Real estate, WINY Radio, Fluid Coating Technology, Tenaya Desaulnier, and Rick and Dee Carnahan.”

During the evening, Mayor Barney Seney and Dave Gilbert spoke briefly about the work being done by the Putnam Veteran’s Advisory Committee to finance repairs and upgrades to Putnam’s Veteran’s Park through the sales of commemorative paving bricks. Dave Gilbert also displayed some samples of the bricks and passed out information on this program.

The highlight of the night was when Post 13 honored their last remaining WWII veteran – 96 year old Raymond K. Williams, who was born in 1927 in New Britain. His family moved to Woodstock in 1941. During WWII, Williams was drafted into the military in 1945, and served in the US Army Air Force. He

was trained as an aircraft radio operator, and was sent to Japan shortly after their surrender in August 1945. He was assigned to the 5th Air Force and his occupation duties were at an airbase in Nagoya Japan. He was honorably discharged from the Air Force in 1947 as a sergeant. His awards and decorations include the WWII Victory Medal, the Asian Pacific Campaign Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal. He returned to Northeast Connecticut and worked for many years as a machine operator for manufacturers in Northeast Connecticut. He has been an American Legion member since 1948.

His certificate of honor citation reads: “to Raymond K Williams in recognition and grateful appreciation for serving during WWII in the

United States Army Air Forces, Fifth Air Force in the name of freedom and democracy, and for allegiance to God and country in courageously protecting our liberty and independence.”

Rocchetti mentioned, “It was great to see Ray at this event with his extended family. He doesn’t get out to often because of mobility issues – but he did really well and we were honored to have him as our guest.”

Rocchetti also lamented the dwindling ranks of WWII and Korean War veterans: “Post 13 recently lost three WWII vets – Peter Trama a US Merchant Mariner, Carl Eisen an Air Force bomber crewman, and George Olson a US Coast Guardsman. They truly were part of the greatest generation.”

Woodstock Academy’s Peter Sumner named Technology & Engineering Education Association Teacher of the Year



Peter Sumner

WOODSTOCK — Peter Sumner, a dedicated and innovative Career and Technology teacher at The Woodstock Academy, has been recognized as the 2023-24 Connecticut Technology and Engineering Education High School Teacher of the Year by the Connecticut Technology and Engineering Education Association (CTEEA). This award acknowledges Sumner’s outstanding contributions to the field of engineering education and his commitment to fostering a passion for engineering within the classroom. In May 2023, Sumner was also named CTEEA Teacher of the Month for Technology and Engineering High School Education, which qualified him for consideration of CTEEA Teacher of the Year.

Sumner has been instrumental in creating and implementing innovative and engaging curriculum, providing his students with real-world,

hands-on experiences to deepen their understanding of engineering. His ability to make complex concepts accessible and enjoyable has earned him the admiration and respect of both students and colleagues.

“Mr. Sumner brings the perfect mix of professional expertise and fun and enjoyment to his classes. While taking the engineering CAD course, you are always engaged with an interesting project that connects to an aspect of the engineering process,” said Evan Rhault ’24, one of Sumner’s current students.

“Mr. Sumner led me to a greater understanding of engineering through his superb teaching skills and his great depth of knowledge in the subject matter,” said another student, Joel Koleszar ’24.

Recent accomplishments of Sumner’s teaching career at WA include starting a competitive robotics team, becoming members of the Technology Student

Association and Youth Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative, starting a chapter of the National Technical Honor Society, and with the help of generous donors and grants, introducing his students to 3D printing, robotics, lasers, simulators, CNC machining, state of the art computers, drones, and latest design software, that are all continuing to evolve.

“The greatest thing about technology and engineering is that tools are always evolving, nothing stays the same, there is never a dull moment. Everyday there is something new for students to learn,” said Sumner. “I am not big on awards but this one is a testament to the people that have guided me along the way, including mentors, colleagues, and WA’s administration.”

“Peter’s state-wide recognition is not a surprise. His classroom instruction is superior, creative, and cultivates strong student agency.

Over the years, he continues to lead robotics teams to regional, state, and national success,” said Associate Head of School Holly Singleton. “And he has guided the engineering program at The Academy to align with industry standards and innovative thinking.”

Along with being recognized at the CTEEA State Conference on November 7, Sumner will also be honored by the International Technology and Engineering Education Association (ITEEA) at their annual convention in Memphis, Tenn. in March 2024.

“As Teacher of the Year, Peter joins a long line of distinguished educators who have received this honor over the years. His leadership and desire to continuously improve the program at The Woodstock Academy is paramount to our profession,” said Dan Grenier, CTEEA State Champion and presenter of Sumner’s award.

SCORE Eastern CT to host free Webinar

REGION — SCORE Eastern CT (<https://www.score.org/easternect>), Mentors to America’s Small Businesses, presents a free Small Business webinar: “The ABCs of a Business Plan and Understanding a SWOT Analysis,” Thursday, Dec. 7 from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

How important is it to have a business plan? Do you know what a SWOT analysis is? Can the two be connected? In this workshop, you will learn the importance of both, what they are used for, what information they should contain, and what they say about your business.

Workshop Presenter Tanisha Baptiste is an Economic Development Specialist at the U.S. Small Business Administration, Connecticut District Office, acting as a Business Opportunity Specialist, and as the Assistant to the Veterans Business Development Specialist. Ms. Baptiste is also a Veteran of the United States Army and holds a Master of Business Administration from the UCONN School of Business.

About SCORE

SCORE® is a nonprofit association that offers free and confidential advice on starting your own business or improving and growing your existing small

business. Since 1964, SCORE has helped more than 11 million current and aspiring entrepreneurs. Each year, SCORE’s 10,000 volunteer business experts provide hundreds of thousands of free small business mentoring sessions, workshops, and educational services to clients in 300 chapters nationwide. In 2022, SCORE volunteers shared 4.65 million hours of expertise and advice with their clients, helping people start over 30,000 new businesses, and creating over 82,000 additional non-owner jobs. With 50+ workshops/webinars and special events each year, and advances in remote mentoring tools, SCORE Eastern CT helps small businesses across Southeastern and Northeastern CT. For more information on upcoming free workshops and how to schedule a free small business mentoring session with our counselors, visit <https://www.score.org/easternect>. Would You Like To Become A SCORE Volunteer? Your business knowledge and experience can help others start or grow a small business. Learn more about becoming a SCORE volunteer at: <https://www.score.org/page/volunteer-score>.

Shop Thompson small businesses this Black Friday

THOMPSON — Six Thompson small businesses have joined together for Small Business Saturday, Nov. 25. The idea is simple: pick up a card at any of the participating businesses and have it stamped at each business that you visit. Each business will award a door prize of a commemorative mug and unique products from their business. The drawing will be held before Dec. 1 and winners will be notified.

Who are the participating businesses?

Morning Beckons Farm, 343 Sand Dam Rd., is one of the largest alpaca farms in the US with more than 400 alpacas. Their gift shop provides a wide range of alpaca and emu products, including household goods, toys, apparel and emu products.

Christine Tanson Pottery, 4 Chase Rd., creates beautiful handcrafted pottery in a rich pallet

of glazes, capturing the essence of earth, sea and sky. Pieces are unique, practical, expressive and vibrant. She works in porcelain and stoneware for high firing in wood, reduction and oxidation firing methods, as well as Raku.

Abby’s Quiet Corner Gift Shed, 91 Chase Rd., features handcrafted items, from embroidered clothing, jewelry, wooden crafts, goat’s milk soap, glass art and turned wooden pens. Check out the beautiful handwoven baskets by Denise Rondeau and Abby’s wooden snow men.

Woodland Whimsy, 174 Chase Rd., is filled with the creative talent of Laura Reynolds. As you step in, you will be transported to a magical world of Christmas past, with ornaments, stuffed sculptures, scenes painted on small furniture, cards printed from Laura’s original watercolors, and cookies and baked goods.

A La Mode Market, 1105 Quaddick Town Farm Rd., is a new business offering their own baked goods, fudge, beverages, ice cream, meals, soups, and sandwiches, all created on the premises. Just what is needed on a beautiful Saturday! Their market has local eggs, milk and meat, South Wind Farm preserves, and local jewelry, candles and gifts.

Sunrun Gardens and Gift Shop, 1121 Quaddick Town Farm Rd., offers a variety of gifts inspired by Nature: handwoven scarves, purses, placemats and pillows, Tie dyed clothing, socks and accessories, dream pillows, everlasting wreaths and organic catnip.

Each of these businesses bring color and character to our community. Their products evoke care in their creation and will be treasured by the recipients. Please support our small businesses on Saturday Nov. 25.

Two diverse poets to read at Vanilla Bean Café Nov. 25

POMFRET, Conn. — Chase away the post-Thanksgiving blues with a night of spoken word/poetry at The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Rd., Pomfret, on Nov. 25. The show will start at 7 p.m. and admission is \$15, which includes a chance at a give-away. Featured readers will be poets Paul Word Richmond and Victoria Nordlund. There will also be an open mic. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to sign up. Recommended for ages 14 and up.

Massachusetts-based Paul Word Richmond was named Beat Poet Laureate for Life in 2022 by the National Beat Poetry Foundation and he previously served

as National Beat Poet Laureate (2019-2020), and as Beat Poet Laureate for Massachusetts (2017-19). Richmond is internationally known and hosts monthly readings and organizes yearly Word Festivals in Holyoke and Greenfield, Mass., and he has a stage at the Garlic & Arts Festival each fall. He is the owner of Human Error Publishing and has overseen the publications of 55 poets and authors. His own works include “Living in the Breakdown Lane,” “You Might Need a Bigger Hammer,” “Quadrillions Down the Pentagon Drain,” and “Swimming on the Titanic.” He is also a member of the Funkadelic band “Do It Now.”

Victoria Nordlund is the creative writing director at Rockville High School in Vernon, Conn., an adjunct professor at the University of Connecticut, and lead master teaching artist of the The Nook Farm Writers Collaborative at The Mark Twain House & Museum. Her poetry collections “Wine-Dark Sea” and “Binge Watching Winter on Mute” are published by Main Street Rag. She is a Best of the Net and Pushcart Prize Nominee, whose work has appeared in PANK Magazine, Rust+Moth, Chestnut Review, Pidgeonholes, Connecticut Literary Anthology, Maudlin House, trampset, Drunk Monkeys, and elsewhere.

First responder emergency cards released to Putnam seniors

PUTNAM — The Town of Putnam’s Commission on Aging (COA) released the initial batch of “Life File Cards” to Putnam Seniors. The idea for these “Life File Cards,” an info card for First Responders to reference when arriving at emergency situations in elderly homes, was brought to the Putnam COA by friends in a neighboring community.

Thanks to generous sponsors, Archambault Insurance Associates and Jennifer Lehto of Kazantzis Real Estate, these valuable cards

came to fruition with no cost to taxpayers or our seniors.

Tammy Szpyrka, Putnam EMS Administrator, is looking forward to getting the “Life File Cards” out to the seniors in the town, and then having access to the cards, filled with medical and contact information, when they respond to calls.

Adding to the community effort on this project, Chase Graphics designed and supplied the cards, while the Relay for Life team at Putnam High School under leadership

of Shane Donahue packaged the cards for distribution.

Mayor Barney Seney was pleased that this all came together so easily, but knowing how well the community works together for the betterment of all, it did not surprise him in the least.

To learn more about what the Commission on Aging has to offer our community members aged 50 and over, contact the Putnam Recreation Department at 860-963-6800, ext 140 or marcy.dawley@putnamct.us.

OBITUARIES

Laura Volz



Woodstock Valley, CT- Laura (Salmon) Volz, of Woodstock Valley, loving wife and best friend and soul mate for over 38 years of David Lee Volz, passed away peacefully at home with David by her side on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. Funeral services and burial in East

Cemetery, Manchester are private. Ladd-Turkington & Carmon Funeral Home, 551 Talcottville Road, in Vernon is in care of the arrangements. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Laura may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or to a no kill animal rescue organization. To share a memory or leave a condolence for her family, please visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com

Rebecca Sue Babbitt, 46



Rebecca Sue Babbitt, 46, of Dayville, CT passed unexpectedly on November 4th. She was born on October 22nd, 1977 in Putnam, CT, the daughter of the late Charles Babbitt & Bonita (Babbitt) Woodward who she leaves broken-hearted, along with her step-father Dwayne (Woody); sister Kerian Massey, husband Chad, nieces Kiera and Chloe'; Fiancé Michael Hilton; Mother Hubbard, aka Donna Lee; sad aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins & many friends. Rebecca was predeceased by her husband, Robert Marburger and son Gabriel Tate Babbitt. She especially loved spending time with three of her favorite girls;

Kat, Josie & Neveah who will deeply miss her. After high school she moved to Arizona to join her sister and met Bobby who she married on 1/2/3, a date they could both remember. Rebecca was a gift, always giving so much of herself to make others lives brighter. As a child she reminded so many of a porcelain doll and began collecting them. After a lifetime of difficulties her collecting changed to colorful sugar skulls. Her passion was hairdressing, but spending time with individuals who have mental health difficulties seemed to feed her soul. She struggled for many years with her own mental health issues but had finally arrived in a good place. A celebration of her life will be held at the Music Lady in Central Village on December 1st at 12-3pm.

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

RESULTS

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of Education Chair and Republican Norm Ferron who was not reelected receiving the lowest number of votes in the race. Democrat Misty Murdock also defeated Republican Jennifer Hegedus to fill a vacancy on the board giving Democrats the majority. The Killingly Board of Education has been rattled with controversy over the past few years including debates over the use of "Redmen" and "Redgals" as the athletic team names and mascot and the GOP-driven decision to reject a mental health clinic in the schools which has evolved into a debate at the state level. Democrat Russ Lavigne and Republican Dale Dauphinais both earned spots on the Board of Assessment Appeals.

Pomfret: Democrats dominate in uneventful election day While Pomfret didn't hold an election for Board of Selectmen, there were still plenty of seats to fill on Election Day. Democrats owned the day securing fifteen overall seats while Republicans earned three in uncontested races. Cheryl Grist was elected Town Clerk as the only candidate for the seat. Democrats Debra Thompson and Kristin Sapp secured spots on the Board of

Finance over Republican Christopher Coyle who did end up earning a spot as a Constable along with Democrats Michael Blackmer, Richard Huoppi, and Stephen Chouinard. Democrats Peter Lusa and Barbara Riley along with Republican Dawne Demarais earned spots on the Board of Education. Democrat John Dilorio was unopposed for Board of Assessment Appeals while fellow Democrats Raymond Washart, Jr. and Barry Reingold earned spots on the Planning & Zoning Commission. Republican Jared Sheldon was unopposed for a seat on the Planning & Zoning Commission as an alternate. Democrats Noah McNamara and Dawson Woodard were unchallenged for Zoning Board of Appeals, while fellow Democrat Sean Gilmartin earned a spot on that board as an alternate. Democrat Cris Cadiz was elected to the Library Board of Trustees.

Putnam: Seney returns as mayor; familiar names return to board of selectmen Putnam's election was relatively uneventful. Mayor Barney Seney was uncontested for reelection and will be joined on the Board of Selectmen by Republican incumbents Rocky Hayes, Michael "Tow Truck" Paquin, and Roy Simmons as well as returning Democrats

Scott Pempek and Gloria Marion. Republican David Pomes also joins the board as a newcomer. Democrats Carolyn Riendeau, Michael Morrill and Kelly Gozzola were elected to seats on the Board of Education along with Republicans Chris Stewart, Christopher Steinbrick and Julie Blouin. Democrats Peter Vitale and Paula Nalon were elected to the Board of Finance along with Republican David Coderre. Democrat Leonel Konicki, Jr. was elected unopposed to the Board of Assessment Appeals. Democrat Louise Brodeur and Republican Peggy McHugh earned seats as Library Trustees. Finally, Republicans Norm Perron, Steven Gagnon and Brian Maynard and Democrat Kathy Noel-Johnson won election to the Special Services District Authority.

Thompson: St. Onge ticket fights off Democrats, write-ins for re-election Thompson's elections were among the most compelling of 2023, at least in terms of the Board of Selectmen race. Incumbent Republicans Amy St. Onge and Suzanne Witkowski ran for First Selectman and Selectman respectively but faced a challenge from within their own party as Republicans Bill Warner and his running

mate Don Brown ran as write-in candidates after previous loosing in a rare party primary. The St. Onge ticket won out at the primary despite Warner and Brown being endorsed by the Thompson Republican Town Committee. Many of Warner's slate ran as write-ins although none were victorious on Elecdtion Day. St. Onge and Witkowski also fended off a familiar challenger with Democratic Ken Beausoleil running for First Selectman once again. Beausoleil would retain his seat on the Board of Selectmen while his running mate Geoff Bolte was the odd one. Warner and Brown earned 368 votes each in an attempt to upset the established nominees. Renee Waldron and Scott Antonson were each elected Town Clerk and Tax Collector respectively with no competition. Republicans Brian Lynch and Nicola Chrzanowski earned seats on the Board of Finance. Republicans Justin Yong and Kathleen Herbert won seats for Board of Education and were joined by Democrat Kristin Schultz after a counting error revealed she had received more votes than the initial winner, fellow Democrat Sheryl Horniak who was left as the low vote getter and did not earn a seat. Scott Faunce and James Niedzialkoski earned spots on the Board of Assessment

Appeals. Michael Krogul, who was cross endorsed, was the high vote getting for Planning & Zoning Commission followed by Republicans Russell Robin and Ryan Cournoyer and Democrat David Poplawski. Republican Jason St. Onge earned a seat as a Planning & Zoning Alternate. Krogul was also the high vote getter for the Water Pollution Control Authority and will be joined by Jeffrey Beaurline and Kenneth Sabourin on that board. Republicans Michael Meehan was the high vote-getter for Zoning Board of Appeals followed by fellow Republican Sandra O'Neil and Democrats Daniels Santerre and Brian Loffredo. Dianne Lenky was unopposed for an alternate seat for that board. Finally, Mary Fatsi and Linda Jarmolowicz earned spots as Library Trustees.

Woodstock: Swan wins re-election, board of selectmen unchanged The Board of Selectmen in Woodstock will remain unchanged follow-

ing Election Day with Republican Jay Swan winning another term along with his running mate Chandler Paquette and Democrat Kathryn McDonald. Democratic First Selectman candidate Charlene Perkins Cutler received the fewest votes and won't join the board. Republican Nora Valentine won a contested race for Tax Collector over Democrat Deana Pajak. Democrat Frederick Chmura and Republicans Michele Woz and Philip Parizeau earned seats on the Board of Finance while Republican Marilyn Barker earned a seat as an alternate. Democrat Adam Keser and Republicans Amber Gould and Hans Frankhouser were elected to the Board of Education. Planning & Zoning Commission seats went to Republicans Timothy Young, Dean Gould, Jeffrey Marcotte, and Mark Blackmer as well as Democrat Aaron Farbo. Democrat John Day, Jr. and Republican Dwight Ryniewicz were elected as Planning & Zoning Alternates.

CLOTHING

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many followers now that just know that I do this and every year it gets bigger. We always have some new people that show up that hear about it for the first time, too. I just feel like it's important to make sure our children are warm and to me it's just something small I can do for the community. I enjoy doing this and, to me, it's just really important," said Kempain. The numbers for Cocoa for Coats were not available for this story, however the event has traditionally been a huge success and even halfway

through the day coats had filled the clothesline set up for hold the donations. Those in Putnam in need of warm coats can contact the Putnam Family Resource Center at 860-963-6940 or visit <https://www.putnamschoolsct.org/putnam-family-resource-center> to learn more about the Center's programs. Not far down the road at the Woodstock Trading Post, the Woodstock Democratic Town Committee was holding their own fundraising effort, a boot drive to benefit TEEG. Greg Kline, head of the Woodstock DTC and coordinator of the boot drive, touted the success of the 2023 event

as one of their most successful. "We had wonderful supporters and volunteers, and I would say the donations are strong. This turns out to be a really nice location for this event. It's a huge need in the community. We know the number of individuals and families that TEEG has served annually in Woodstock just keeps going up, so we know that the need is there," said Kline. The event was, indeed, a record year for the DTC which collected more than 125 pairs of boots and around \$1220 eclipsing the previous records of around 90 boots and \$950 set in 2022. All pro-

ceeds and donations will not be turned over to TEEG which will work to connect them with locals in need. Those in Woodstock, Pomfret and Thompson in need of warmth or other resources can contact TEEG at 860-923-3458 or visit www.teegonline.org for more information.

TWINS

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"Mrs. Churchill is always staying late to ensure that her students are taken care of and can succeed," said junior Kate Ritzau. "Now, we can't wait to see her perform as the incredible musician that she is. I'm really proud of her!" An hour's drive south from WA, Motola has been directing the band at Norwich Free Academy for 12 years, and her students are excited to watch her in the parade. "They want to hear all about the behind-the-scenes details (like

rehearsals at 1 a.m. and marching two miles at 144 bpm)," said Motola, "and they're very proud to have their director representing their school and state." WA Centaurs & NFA Wildcats alike will be cheering on the America's Band Directors Marching Group when they make their way down 34th Street on Nov. 23, in front of a crowd of more than 25 million television viewers and throngs of parade-goers. The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade airs on NBC and streams live on Peacock from 8:30 a.m.-noon on Thanksgiving morning.

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LEGALS

TOWN OF THOMPSON
Planning and Zoning Commission
LEGAL NOTICE
At the Thompson Planning and Zoning Commission meeting to be held on Monday, November 27th, 2023, at 7:00 PM in the Merrill Seney Community Room in the Thompson Town Hall, 815 Riverside Drive, North Grosvenordale, CT 06255 and via ZOOM, a Public Hearing will be held on the following Application:
PZC 23-50 Applicant Eastwood Thompson 49 LLC, property owner of 0 Riverside Drive, Map 61, Block 88, Lot 16, Zone DMRD, 54.27 Acres request to the construction of a large-

scale ground mount solar array, Zoning Regulations Article 14, 275.5. Approved for a Public Hearing on November 28th, 2023. Respectfully submitted. Joe Parodi-Brown, Chairman Files may be reviewed at the Planning and Zoning Office November 17, 2023 November 24, 2023

TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
At the November 6th, 2023 meeting of the Woodstock Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency, application 09-23-02 was approved, with conditions: 94 Plaine Hill Road (MBL 5781-

50-04B), Subdivision for (2) new Single-Family Homes. Mark Parker, Chairman On November 9th, 2023, the Woodstock Wetlands Agent granted agent approval for the following applications: 10-23-01, 27 Loyola Road (MBL 6393-65-96), Frank Halle for John Napoletano, teardown & new Single-Family Home, with conditions. Dan Malo, Wetlands Agent. November 17, 2023

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF Albert LaFleur, AKA
Albert G. LaFleur (23-00401)
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of

the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated November 8, 2023, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim. Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk The fiduciary is: Gail LaFleur c/o MARK BROUILLARD, ST ONGE & BROUILLARD, 50 ROUTE 171, WOODSTOCK, CT 06281 November 17, 2023

27
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