

THOMPSON VILLAGER

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Security concerns become priority for Thompson selectmen

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

THOMPSON — Security concerns have become an ever-growing priority for Thompson First Selectman Nicholas Donohue following a string of problems including vandalism and threatened violence against town employees and elected board members.

During the Board of Selectmen’s Sept. 1 meeting, Donohue made it clear security has become one of his primary goals noting that in the ten months since his election

SEE SECURITY PAGE 10

Courtesy

Cub Scout Packs 21 of Putnam, 27 of Woodstock and 93 of Hampton spent the weekend of Sept. 11 camping together at Camp Waldron in Thompson. Packs 21, 27 and 93, along with the other Cub Scout packs in northeastern Connecticut, offer great programs for boys and girls ages five through ten, where kids have fun while building character and self confidence. To join a Cub Scout pack near you, call John Ryan at (860) 928-5873.



Killingly approves changes to winter operations ordinance

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — The Killingly Town Council has approved amendments to a town ordinance regarding winter operations changing requirements for clearing rights-of-way in winter storm events and altering the scope of town-assisted sidewalk clearing.

The Town Council held a public hearing on Sept. 8 with little major debate after which they approved the amendments unanimously. The changes effectively

codify requirements that obstructions from rights-of-way be removed during winter storm events and limits town-assisted sidewalk clearing to prioritized area only rather than covering the entire town.

Town Manager Brian Palaia said the changes do not alter the liability or responsibility of citizens to clear sidewalks within 24-hours of snow but rather add language that supports the town’s “messaging” on what is expected when a significant winter storm event is imminent or occurs.

Regarding right-of-way, Palaia said this was the more significant of the two major alternations to the ordinance.

“Right now, we have some language in there. It doesn’t cover things we encounter like people leaving their trash cans in the road right of way, basketball hoops and other things, so putting that in an ordinance will allow us to, first, message around that in advance of a storm and it will also allow the highway staff or police officers to go to

SEE CHANGES PAGE 10

Abington Congregational Church to host Loyalist vs. Patriot supper and program Oct. 3

POMFRET — The Abington Congregational Church will host a thematic dinner and theater program in collaboration with the Pomfret 250 Commission as part of the Revolutionary Pomfret Reenactment and Living History Events which will be taking place throughout the weekend from Oct. 2 to Oct. 4.

Abington Congregational Church, built in 1751, is the oldest meeting house in continuous use in Connecticut. The church is celebrating its 275th anniversary this year and has recently published a book about the history of the church which will be

for sale during the supper theater on Oct. 3.

The Church supper will begin at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 3, featuring pulled pork and ribs, beans and traditional fixings with a modern twist by local chef, Nathan Gould of Pintail Restaurant in Pomfret. The meal will be served in the church hall, (Tracy House) 542, Hampton Rd., Pomfret Center (Abington), followed by a theatrical interpretation of a debate between Loyalist Godfrey Malbone, and Patriot Israel Putnam at 7 p.m. in the historic church. The play was written by local histo-

rian, Donna Dufresne with Chip Lamb, and is based on the letters from Malbone to his brother John from 1769 to 1780 in which he espouses his opinions about his Pomfret neighbors and their “treasonous acts” against the King and his own Loyalist views.

Loyalist vs Patriot will be performed by actors Chip Lamb and Kenneth Noll. Chip Lamb, actor, director, and playwright will portray Godfrey Malbone. He has been a theater educator for over thirty years. He has performed in New York and in regional the-

SEE SUPPER PAGE 10

Joseph Botta, M.D. and Associates now Northeast Concierge Medicine



PUTNAM — Joseph Botta, M.D. and Associates, L.L.C., the membership-based concierge primary care practice at 24 South Main St. in Putnam, is now Northeast Concierge Medicine. The practice has also launched a new website at NECMed.com, which details its concierge medicine model, services and how it delivers on its brand promise of “Personalized. Patient. Care.”

The new branding and website, along with the increased clinical capacity, are the visible pieces of a strategic plan by the practice to ensure it can continue providing the best

possible concierge medical care to more residents of the region into the future.

“The old name told you who started the practice,” said practice founder Joseph Botta, M.D. “It didn’t tell anyone what’s special about what we do, or why we do it. There are thousands of people in this corner of Connecticut who lost their primary care when a practice closed or a physician retired, and they are searching for somewhere to go. We wanted a name and a tagline that answers them in three words.”

Concierge medicine is a membership model of primary care. Patients pay

a monthly fee for longer appointments, same-day availability, and direct access to their physician. Northeast Concierge Medicine bills health insurance for office visits as any practice does, and the separate membership fee covers the time and access insurance no longer pays for: thirty-minute minimum appointments, an hour or more for a physical, and the on-call physician’s cell number after hours – even a home visit program.

A Web site built around the questions people ask before they call NECMed.com is orga-

nized around what prospective patients want to know first: how a membership practice works, what the fee does and does not cover, how insurance fits in, and who the providers are. It also carries detail on the areas where the practice has the most depth: chronic condition management, geriatric and memory care, cardiovascular care, medication review and reduction, and preventive care.

The practice’s previous web address, mydoctorct.com, now redirects to the new site. Patient portal

logins, appointments, and physician cell numbers are unchanged.

Two additions to the provider team

The rebrand follows two additions to the clinical staff. Drs. Botta and Candow are continuing to function at full capacity.

Dr. Mae Wolslegel, board certified in internal medicine by the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine, joins the practice in early November 2026 and is accepting new patients now. She brings

more than 15 years of experience in internal medicine and comes to Putnam from Reliant.

Suzanne Reardon was promoted from registered nurse to Family Nurse Practitioner in August 2026, becoming the practice’s fourth clinical provider. A Windham resident, Reardon has been a nurse for 11 years, including two decades at Windham Hospital, much of it in the emergency department, and most recently worked in care management with

SEE MEDICINE PAGE 10

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Your Fall tax planning checklist: Five high-impact moves to make now

BY HOLLY C. WANEGAR

When it comes to taxes, Fall is the last stretch of the year when you still have real options. Once the calendar turns to 2027, most

of the levers that matter for 2026 are gone. A few contributions can be made after year-end, but conversions, distributions, gifts from an IRA, and realized losses must be completed by Dec.

31. If we think about year-end planning in terms of what carries a hard deadline, a handful of items rise to the top for households at or near retirement. Here are five high-impact financial moves to consider before the end of the year.

1. Look hard at your Roth Conversion window

The years between retirement and the start of required minimum distributions at age 73 or 75 are often the lowest-income years of a lifetime. That gap is where partial Roth conversions do their best work, moving money out of a growing pre-tax balance at a bracket you choose rather than one the RMD schedule chooses for you later.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA) made the current tax brackets permanent, which takes away the rush of converting before rates rise. But not the rush to convert during a period when you're in a lower bracket than you previously were and will be in the future is still on. The one thing to consider there is that a conversion raises your income in the year you make it, which can reach the new \$6,000 per-person senior deduction (phasing out above \$75,000 of MAGI for single filers and \$150,000 for joint filers) and your Medicare premiums two years later. However, the long term benefits of this strategy can potentially outweigh the short term costs. Conversions must be completed by December 31. There is no extension.

2. Confirm your RMD before the December rush

Required mini-

mum distributions generally begin at age 73 or 75, depending on when you were born. If this is your first RMD year, you may delay that first distribution to April 1 of next year, but then you would take two distributions in the same tax year, which can push you into a higher bracket. Every other year, the deadline is Dec. 31.

The penalty for falling short is 25 percent of the amount not taken, reduced to 10 percent if corrected promptly, so a missed distribution is expensive. IRA amounts can generally be aggregated and taken from one IRA, but employer plan balances such as 401(k)s or 403(b)s are calculated and distributed plan by plan.

3. Use qualified charitable distributions to give more efficiently

Charitable giving got more complicated in 2026. Itemizers must now clear a floor equal to 0.5 percent of adjusted gross income before charitable gifts become deductible at all, and taxpayers in the top bracket see the value of the deduction capped at 35 cents on the dollar.

A qualified charitable distribution steps around both issues. If you are 70 and a half or older, you can direct up to \$111,000 in 2026 from an IRA straight to a qualifying charity. Spouses with separate IRAs each have their own limit, so a couple can direct up to \$222,000. The amount is excluded from income rather than deducted, so it both counts toward your RMD and lowers AGI. That can help with Medicare premiums and the taxable portion of Social Security.

A few things to consider with this strategy: QCDs work only from IRAs, not from 401(k) or 403(b) plans. They cannot go to a donor-advised fund or a private foundation. And the funds must actually leave the account by December 31, so start the paperwork early rather than waiting until the last week of the year.

4. Harvest losses while the market is broadening

Even in a strong year, individual holdings fall out of step with the index.

Selling positions at a loss lets you offset realized gains dollar for dollar, potentially applying up to \$3,000 against ordinary income, with anything left over carrying forward indefinitely.

A broadening market makes this more useful than it sounds, because it often creates a reason to trim a concentrated winner at the same time. The gain from rebalancing and the loss from harvesting can meet in the middle. Just watch the wash sale rule: buying the same or a substantially identical security within 30 days before or after the sale disallows the loss.

5. Re-check beneficiary designations against your estate plan

This is the item most often skipped and the one most likely to cause real damage. Beneficiary designations control the account regardless of what your will says. An outdated form can send a retirement account to a former spouse, to an estate that then pays it out on an accelerated schedule, or to a trust that no longer exists in the form it did when you named it.

The rules on the receiving end have changed too. Most non-spouse beneficiaries must empty an inherited IRA within 10 years. If the original owner had already begun taking distributions, annual withdrawals are required during that window as well. That timing often lands on an adult child in their peak earning years. Any marriage, divorce, death, birth, or estate plan change since your last review is reason enough to pull the forms.

Bonus tip: Watch the two-year Medicare lookback

Medicare income-related surcharges are based on the income you reported two years earlier. A large Roth conversion, property sale, or realized gain in 2026 shows up in your 2028 premiums. That is not a reason to avoid a good decision, only a reason to price it before December.

Put the checklist to work

None of these moves are complicated on their own. What makes year-end plan-

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ning hard is that they interact. A Roth conversion changes your QCD math. A harvested loss changes what you can afford to rebalance. An RMD changes the deduction you qualify for. The value comes from sequencing them together, in October and November rather than the last week of December.

At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, our Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well. process is built for this kind of coordinated review, working alongside your CPA and estate attorney so the pieces line up before the deadline.

Schedule a complimentary discovery session at whzwealth.com or call us at (860) 928-2341 to review your year-end opportunities while there is still time to act. Together, we can help you move forward with Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.

Authored by Holly C. Wanegar, CFP®. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide legal or tax advice. You should consult a legal or tax professional regarding your individual situation. This material is for informational and educational purposes only and is not a recommendation to buy, sell, or hold any security or to pursue any specific tax strategy. Tax figures cited are for the 2026 tax year and are subject to change. Roth conversions are taxable in the year of conversion and are generally irrevocable. Investments are subject to risk, including the loss of principal. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret St., Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Rd., Tolland, CT 06084, 860-928-2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com>.

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Job change?

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- Move it to your new employer's 401(k) plan, if you've changed employers and your new employer plan allows for it.
- Roll the account over to an individual retirement account (IRA).
- Cash it out, which is subject to potential tax consequences.

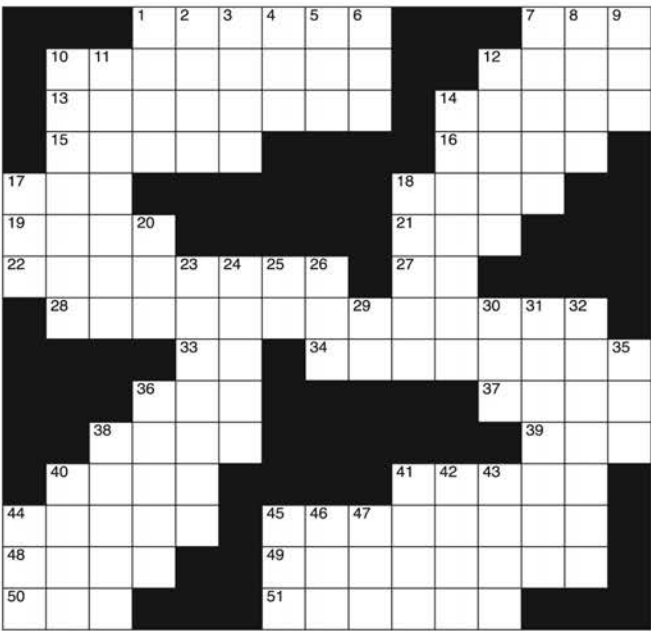
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Financial Advisor

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CLUES ACROSS

1. A place for worship

7. Referee declaration

10. Torsos

12. Used to introduce something

13. Healing method

14. Takes to the sea

15. Make law

16. French coastal city

17. Hawaiian dish

18. Young of domestic cattle

19. Women's undergarments

21. 60-minute intervals (abbr.)

22. One after another

27. It's a hot topic these days

28. Folk band frontman
33. They precede C

34. Heavenly

36. Fiddler crabs

37. Major Hindu deity

38. Hebrew given name

39. Cost per mile

40. __ Romeo, car

41. Rural municipality in Manitoba

44. Narratives

45. "A tragedy had __ him"

48. Iranian city

49. Praises publicly

50. Founding Father Franklin

51. Herbal tea

CLUES DOWN

1. Indian unit of mass

2. "Tears in Heaven" singer Clapton

3. Part of a sailing vessel

4. Part of (abbr.)

5. Polynesian garland of flowers

6. Keyboard key

7. One who steals

8. Large oven

9. Former CIA

10. Idea

11. Solomon Islands capital

12. Afrikaans

14. Remove thatch

17. Television network

18. Jalen Brunson is one

20. Title of respect

23. Flowering trees

24. Occurring in a tube
25. Exists

26. Woman (French)

29. Expression of doubt

30. NHL legend Bobby

31. Accomplished

32. Makes slightly wet

35. National Assn. of Manufacturers

36. Not sated

38. Poe's middle name

40. Swiss river

41. Rhythmic pattern in Indian music

42. "Shane" actor Ladd

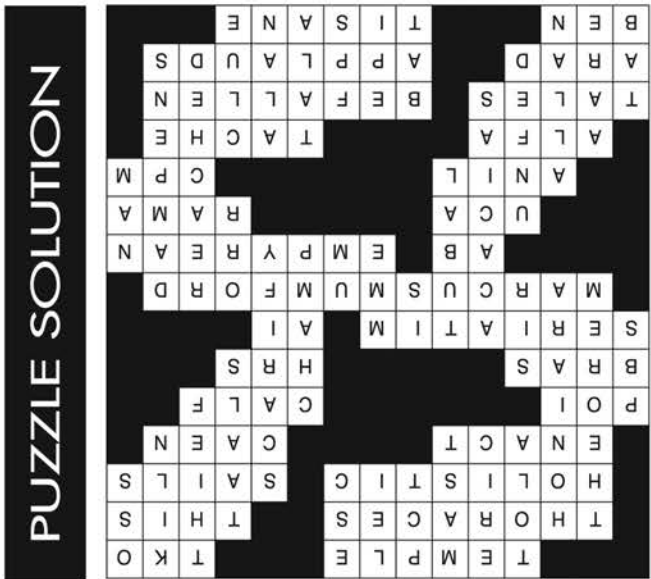
43. Popular whodunit board game

44. Bar bill

45. Ballplayer's tool

46. Indicates near

47. Feet per second



KILLINGLY HIGH SCHOOL WEEKLY SPORTS WRAP-UP

Field Hockey

Mercy defeated Killingly 2-0 in a competitive field hockey matchup on Sept. 8. Jaynie Macquarrie played a strong game in goal, recording 6 saves to keep the Trailblazers in the contest. Trinity Eldridge and Avery Main anchored a solid defensive effort, helping limit Mercy's scoring opportunities throughout the game.

Killingly fell to E.O. Smith 8-0 in their game on Sept. 10. Jaynie MacQuarrie had a strong performance in goal, recording 16 saves throughout the game. Olivia Cesolini and Attilea Jarvis had strong performances in the midfield, working hard on both sides of the field.

The team continued to compete and battle throughout all four quarters, showing effort and determination until the final whistle.

The girls battled throughout their Sept. 12 game against Somers, falling 5-0. Jaynie Macquarrie had a strong game in goal with 12 saves. Trinity Eldridge played a strong defensive game, while Maddie Plumadore and Attilea Jarvis worked together to move the ball up the field and create opportunities. The team continued to work hard and compete through the final whistle.

Boys Soccer

Killingly boys soccer battled Griswold to a 3-3 draw in a back-and-forth match on Sept. 11. The Trailblazers got goals from Bryce Lemovitz, Kaiden Cayer, and Christian Tremblay, with Aveion Janton-Adams and Liam Sierakowski recording assists. Gab Covington made 8 saves in goal. Killingly held the lead until Griswold scored in the final seconds to tie the game.

Girls Soccer

Killingly Girls soccer hosted Griswold on Wednesday, Sept. 9 in their home opener. Both teams were scoreless at half. Kezlee Morrarty started the scoring off with a header off a corner kick from Gracie West. Followed by an unassisted goal from Ashley Bourdeau and Kezlee added another for the day. Killingly finished the day 3-0, they will travel to Plainfield on Saturday.

On Sept. 12, the girls traveled to Plainfield for an ECC matchup. Adalyn Malarkey scored the lone goal of the game on a break-away run. Defensively, Lylah Connetti, Kate Crowley, Lianna Hutchinson, and Layla Raymond had a strong performance, allowing just one shot and requiring McKenna Mulvey to make one save for the day. The Trailblazers are now 2-0 on the season.



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Willimantic native Maebel Haynes receives prestigious Newman Civic Fellowship



BY KYLE BERSON '26
EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

WILLIMANTIC — Eastern Connecticut State University student Maebel Haynes, a junior political science major from Willimantic, has been selected to represent Eastern and advocate for the Willimantic community through the Newman Civic Fellowship. The competitive, year-long leadership program is sponsored by Campus Compact, a nation-

al organization that supports civic-minded student leaders through mentorship, professional development, and networking opportunities. Named after Campus Compact co-founder Frank Newman, the fellowship provides mentorship programs, mini-grant funding, and professional development opportunities. Haynes is one of 150 students nationwide to participate in the 2026-27 fellowship

cohort. A Willimantic native, Haynes is excited to spend the next year growing professionally, researching, and developing creative solutions to issues facing the local community. In high school, Haynes participated in the Connecticut Governor’s Council on Climate Change’s (GC3) Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council. The council analyzes and advises the GC3 on current and historical environmental inequities and dangers facing Connecticut residents. In 2021, Haynes became involved in Sunrise Movement Connecticut, a youth-led environmental activism group focused on halting the effects of climate change and ensuring environmental justice, and has served as its director for more than three years. Under her leadership, the organization has successfully lobbied for the mandatory implementation of climate change education in Connecticut’s K-12 curricula. Currently, the organization is pushing for proportional fines on environmental damage caused by fossil fuel corporations and reimplementing free transit passes for high school students. “They had [free transit] during COVID, but then it went away, and there was a significant decrease in

attendance in things like after-school sport participation,” Haynes said. The Newman Civic Fellowship is designed to develop future civic leaders by providing project-based learning, mentorship, and professional development opportunities. Through its mentorship program, fellows are allowed to work with a local mentor to build skills. Haynes chose Sydney Clements, professor of geography, whom Haynes currently serves as a teacher’s assistant. “She is extremely driven and engaged in issues around the environment and politics,” Clements said of Haynes. “I’m always amazed by how much she has accomplished. Her passion is infectious.” Clements also commented on the importance of mentorship to professional development. “I would not be where I am today without an army of mentors in each stage of my life,” said Clements of her motivation to pay it forward. “They helped me find confidence in my work and uplifted me every step of the way.” Throughout the

fellowship, Clements will act as a role model, a supportive voice, and someone for Haynes to simply bounce ideas off of. Additionally, Haynes will complete a year-long project aimed at making real impacts in the Willimantic community, and has expressed an interest in natural disaster response and preparedness. “We’re going to do some research into what Willimantic is at risk for, then try to create resources for a disaster preparedness plan.” Haynes said she hopes the fellowship will help her make a meaningful contribution to the place she calls home. “I hope I’d be able to

feel like I did something to support the place where I grew up,” she said. “Seeing how often needs are not met - everyone can’t do everything in a community.” Clements, who also grew up in Willimantic, explained the value of civic leadership programs like the Newman Civic Fellowship in supporting local initiatives. “This is a wonderful opportunity to continue to strengthen the relationship between the University and Windham,” she said. She added, “We’re not just building up our community - we’re building up our citizens and our students - of which Maebel is both!”

Local DAR chapter hosts American Revolution Experience traveling exhibit at Killingly Library

KILLINGLY — The Deborah Avery Putnam Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution is excited to announce the opening of the American Revolution Experience Exhibition at Killingly Public Library on Saturday, Sept. 19. The innovative pop-up exhibition includes display panels and interactive digital kiosks that use storytelling, illustration, technology and unique artifacts and primary accounts to connect modern audiences with the people and places that shaped the birth of our nation. Created through a collaboration between the American Battlefield Trust and the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, the exhibit is also made possible by generous matching funds from the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program battlefield interpretation grants. The exhibit will run from Sept. 19 through Sept. 30 at the Killingly Public Library, 25 Westcott Rd., Danielson, and is free to the public.

Hours:
Monday 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Tuesday 9:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday 9:30am - 6:30pm
Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Friday 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Saturday 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
The American Revolution Experience launched online in its first digital-only iteration during the summer of 2022 to rapid acclaim and received a Bronze Award in the Education, Art, & Culture division of the second annual Anthem Awards, an initiative of the Webby Awards celebrating purpose and mission-driven work. It was also a finalist in the “People’s Choice” category of the Webbys themselves. “The overwhelming response to the American Revolution Experience perfectly illustrates the passion of DAR members and chapters, as they look to introduce their communities to the remarkable men and women who rose to the challenges demanded of them along our path to liberty,” said DAR President General Ginny Sebastian Storage. Killingly Public Library is the only library in Northeast, CT to bring this experience to our communities. Scores of libraries, historical societies and museums will host the American Revolution Experience through 2027.

About the Organizations
From a grassroots organization started by historians nearly 40 years ago, the American Battlefield Trust

has grown into one of the most successful land preservation and education organizations in the nation. The Trust has protected more than 60,000 acres associated with the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War, representing 160 sites in 25 states from Massachusetts to New Mexico. Its 350,000 members and supporters believe in the power of place and the continued relevance of our shared history to modern American society. Learn more at www.battlefields.org. The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to promote historic preservation, education, and patriotism. Its members are descended from the patriots who won American independence during the Revolutionary War. With nearly 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters worldwide, DAR is one of the world’s largest and most active service organizations.

Killingly library invites children to read to a therapy dog

KILLINGLY — Young readers will have a furry audience waiting for them later this month when the Killingly Public Library hosts a special “Read to a Therapy Dog” program. The program will be held Friday, Sept. 25, from 3 to 4 p.m., coinciding with an early release day for Killingly students. It is open to children ages 6 to 12. During the afternoon, participating children will have an opportunity to spend individual time reading to a visiting therapy dog from Cold Noses, Warm Hearts. The program offers young readers a relaxed and friendly setting where they can practice reading aloud while spending time with a trained therapy dog. Rather than reading in front of a classroom or group, children can settle in with their canine listener and enjoy a book at their own pace. Library officials describe the program as an opportunity for “budding bookworms” to combine reading with quality time alongside a friendly, tail-wagging visitor. Registration is required and can be completed through the Killingly Public Library website at killinglypl.org or by calling the library at 860-779-5383. The Killingly Public Library is located at 25 Westcott Rd. Additional information about library programs and services is available through the library’s Web site or by calling 860-779-5383.

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EDITOR

An open Town Hall must also be a safe Town Hall

Town Hall should be one of the most accessible buildings in any community. It is where residents pay taxes, obtain permits, attend meetings, register to vote, speak to local officials and participate in the everyday work of local government. The doors should be open, residents should feel welcome and elected officials should expect to hear from people who disagree with them. But an open government does not require town employees, volunteers or elected officials to tolerate threats, harassment or fear for their physical safety. That is the troubling line Thompson appears to have reached. First Selectman Nicholas Donohue told the Board of Selectmen Sept. 1 that security has become a growing concern following a series of incidents involving town employees, poll workers and board members. He described threats, alleged assaults and a case involving a town employee seeking a protective order because of alleged stalking and harassment. Those are serious circumstances. They deserve a serious response. The issue becomes particularly important when security concerns begin affecting the public's ability to participate in government. According to Donohue, Planning and Zoning meetings have been held entirely remotely because of security concerns involving board members. There is an unfortunate irony there. Moving a meeting online may protect officials from an immediate threat, but it can also make government less accessible. Residents without reliable internet service, those uncomfortable with technology and people who simply participate more effectively face-to-face can find themselves at a disadvantage. The goal, therefore, should not be to retreat from public access. It should be to make public access safe enough to continue. Security cameras, controlled employee entrances and designated staff parking areas are hardly extraordinary measures in 2026. Schools, businesses, hospitals and countless other public buildings have adopted similar precautions. Thompson Town Hall serves not only as the center of municipal government but also as meeting space and part of the town's emergency infrastructure. There is, of course, a legitimate question about cost. Thompson taxpayers have already faced difficult budget decisions, and security improvements cannot receive a blank check simply because the subject is important. In fact, Town Hall and garage security cameras were proposed at \$32,183 in the town's fiscal 2026 capital budget before that expenditure was eliminated during the budget process. That history makes careful cooperation between the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance particularly important now. Officials should determine what measures are necessary, what they will cost, what existing funding might legally be available and whether improvements can be implemented in phases. They should also remain mindful of privacy. Cameras should protect public spaces and document incidents without intruding into areas where residents conduct confidential municipal business. Most importantly, Thompson should distinguish between vigorous disagreement and intimidation. Residents have every right to challenge a zoning decision, criticize a budget, question an elected official or argue passionately for a different course. Local government works best when citizens exercise those rights. Threatening an employee, intimidating a volunteer or making a board member afraid to attend an in-person meeting is something entirely different. That behavior does not strengthen democracy. It makes participation more difficult for everyone else. Thompson's challenge is therefore larger than installing cameras. The town must preserve a Town Hall where people can disagree, sometimes strongly, while still recognizing that everyone who enters the building is entitled to basic safety and respect. An open door remains an important symbol of local government. Making certain people can safely walk through it is equally important.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Monthly dinners returning this fall!

To the Editor:

As cooler weather approaches, there is something special about gathering around a table with good food, good conversation, and good neighbors. The Senexet Grange #40 is bringing that spirit back to the community with the return of our Monthly Community Dinner Fundraisers. For years, our community dinners have provided an opportunity for neighbors to come together at the Grange for a home-cooked meal, enjoy one another's company, and support the work of the Grange at the same time. Last year, we took a break from hosting the dinners, and we quickly realized just how much the community missed them—and, truthfully, how much we missed hosting them, too. So we're bringing them back, and we're starting earlier than ever! Rather than waiting until January as we traditionally have, our first dinner will be held Thursday, Sept. 24 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the Senexet Grange. We'll be serving a hearty ham and baked bean dinner, complete with potato salad, coleslaw, apple crisp, and a drink. Dinner is \$18 per person. We think meals are best enjoyed around a table with friends and neighbors, so we encourage everyone to dine with us at the Grange. But if you can't stay, takeout will also be available so you can bring a meal home to share with your family. Most importantly, these dinners are about more than good food. All proceeds support Senexet Grange #40 and allow us to continue our community programs and events, including the annual

Winter Boot Drive, Locally Grown Day, future community dinners, and other efforts that benefit our Quiet Corner community. And September is just the beginning! Mark your calendars for our upcoming dinners:

- Sept. 24: Ham & Baked Beans
 - Oct. 29: Shepherd's Pie
 - Jan. 28, 2027: Chicken Pot Pie
 - Feb. 25, 2027: Soup & Salad Supper
 - March 25, 2027: Shepherd's Pie—a repeat of a community favorite!
- Note that there are no dinners in November or December so we can continue the tradition of holiday pie sales. We offer the same handmade pies that have been sold at the Senexet Grange for decades for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. They are perfect for those who want pies like grandma used to make without having to bake them yourself. Whether you come for the food, the conversation, or simply the chance to catch up with neighbors, we hope you'll join us. Come hungry, stay awhile, and help us bring the community back around the table. We'd love to fill your belly, share a few laughs, and see you at the Grange on Sept. 24! Follow Senexet Grange on Facebook to keep up with all that is happening at the Grange. On behalf of Senexet Grange #40,
- DANIELLE DUQUETTE
VICE PRESIDENT
SENEXT GRANGE #40

Ten questions

To the Editor:

10 questions concerning the Cult Leader and his speech at the convention. Wow.

1. \$5,000 if you vote for the GOP at the midterms. Do you really expect to see it? Another promise? Is it a bribe?
2. The war in Iran will be over soon. How many times have you heard that line? Gas will be going down to \$2 a gallon. Some time after the election. What will the prices be by the \$5,000? How much for diesel, which delivers many of your groceries and home heating oil?
3. Could the war in Iran be more poorly planned, executed and carried out by some of the worst cabinet officials this country has ever had?
4. He said that Iran wanted the Democrats to win because they are weaker and easier to deal with. Civics 101 Congress handles the purse strings (appropriations) and the Executive branch handles foreign policy...in reality, the President (him). They occupy space in his mind. Does he have one?
5. Health insurance will be going up and some parts eliminated after Jan 1st. Did you know the GOP set it up that way so there could be nothing you can do about it? Medicare? Hospitals will be

closing for many Americans in many states?

6. What do you think their plan is for the upcoming election? Will he negate the results when he does not like them? He will try to confuse the voter and intimidate and scare the voter, anyone unable to get a mail in ballot or unable to get to the polls not to vote? HIS mail in ballot will count.
7. Why are we at odds with Canada, our loyal friend from the North for years, is it because the Prime Minister of Canada did not bend the knee and let the Cult leader walk all over him?
8. Do you think the guy waving the Mexican flag was a plant? Are only Republicans in this country now the only ones that are scared by him?
9. Did he put to sleep the audience in the arena and the limited people who watched on TV to change the channel?
10. Is the deep, dark stained period of our country almost over?

This could be a very wary, strange holiday season. Please vote. early if possible. This one is for all of us Americans. We need it.

DAVID CASSETTARI
EAST KILLINGLY

40 states said no to data centers — why hasn't Connecticut?

To the Editor:

The "Terminator" franchise warned us about technology racing ahead of humans. Today, that warning seems less like science fiction and more like policy failure unfolding in real time.

What do Sam Altman (OpenAI), Dario Amodei (Anthropic) and Elon Musk (xAI) have in common? In this divisive country, these three men agree on something. That is that the U.S. and the world needs to slow down AI development. Their concern is being echoed by the people who helped build AI.

Jacob Coxon, a researcher who spent three years in AI pretraining at both OpenAI and Anthropic, resigned this month, warning that the companies are "racing straight to self-improving superintelligence and gambling with our lives." Days later, a former OpenAI researcher Daniel Kokotajlo told Joe Rogan's podcast that AI systems are being integrated into "everything," including the military, and that "we're basically on a track to put them in charge of basically everything." These researchers, who built the technology, are walking away from it. They are warning that "the race to develop increasingly powerful AI systems could pose an existential threat to humanity." (Newsweek)

If that danger feels distant, the infrastructure behind it is not. Data centers are being built in real communities, bringing concerns about electric rates, water usage, noise, land use, air quality and the installation of hundreds of diesel backup generators at some sites. As of September 2026, 40 states have an active data center ban or moratorium, and 95 local moratoriums and bans have been passed so far. Six more states, including

Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Virginia, are weighing additional restrictions.

Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey recently signed an Executive Order giving communities a voice and protecting them against irresponsible data center development and higher energy bills. Under the Executive Order, if a data center doesn't have local approval, state permitting agencies will not advance the project. The Governor also directed state agencies to require data centers to comply with her comprehensive Data Center Framework, including bringing their own clean energy supply, protecting water resources and engaging transparently with the surrounding communities. (mass.gov)

Connecticut has no comparable framework. That needs to change before the next data center project lands on a town agenda with no local say and no guardrails.

Connecticut residents should call their state senators and state representatives and demand a pause on AI data center approvals until clear protections are in place: local resident approval, clean energy requirements, water protection, noise and air quality protections and guarantees that ratepayers will not be stuck with the bill. Communities, not developers, should decide what gets built in their backyards.

We've all seen how "Terminator" ends when nobody stops technology that can eclipse human intelligence. That was fiction. This is Connecticut's chance to write a different script.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

Have you heard of the Turtle?

America 250. Walktober Event #32. Saturday, Sept. 19. 12:30-1:30 p.m. PowerPoint presentation on Revolutionary Families of Northeastern Connecticut by Killingly Municipal Historian Margaret M. Weaver. Sponsored by the Putnam Public Library & the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam. Margaret will talk about how the Revolution was affecting families here in the Quiet Corner. Have you heard about the House the Women Built? All are welcome.

Walktober, sponsored by the Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor kicks off this weekend. Calendars of events (258 this year) are available at local town halls and libraries. The brochure encourages use of the calendar "in conjunction with our website, TheLastGreenValley.org. to



KILLINGLY
AT
300
MARGARET
WEAVER

3300.

Have you heard of the Connecticut-built submarine that the Patriots used during these early days of the Revolution? The Turtle (so dubbed due to its shape) was the first submarine ever to be used in combat, but it was actually constructed as an afterthought. (David) Bushnell (of Westbrook) and fellow Yale University intellectual, Phineas Pratt, had developed an underwater bomb with a time delayed flintlock detonator. The one-man, hand-propelled submarine was then designed in order to transport the bomb to the enemy vessel. The Turtle was successfully launched in the early morning of Sept. 7, 1776. It then went on to complete a mission against the British flagship, HMS Eagle, a 64-gun frigate moored in New York harbor. The Turtle made its way underwater to the rudder of the Eagle's hull. Unfortunately, the augur first struck metal rather than wood with the screw intended to attach the bomb to the enemy's hull. Two more times the Turtle was launched, both resulting in a failure to attach the bomb. The submarine was scuttled by the British while stationed in a sloop." (https://ctrivermuseum.org/turtle-submarine/). Visit a replica of the Turtle at the Connecticut River Museum in Essex, Connecticut.

Men from Northeastern Connecticut were quite involved with fighting the British in the New York City area during the month of September, 1776. "Early in the morning of September 16, 1776, General George Washington began composing a letter to the President of Congress. 'We are now encamped with the main body of the army on the Heights of Harlem,' Washington explained, 'where I should hope the enemy would meet with a defeat in case of an attack.'1 The Continental Army had retreated to the northern end of Manhattan fol-



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Earth — We’re all in this together

To the Editor:

In 1972, the Apollo 17 space mission came home with the photograph that came to be known as The Blue Marble. Often called the most important photo ever taken, it shocked and touched humanity like never before. We’d never before seen our world from afar, suspended in the vast, black emptiness of space. For the first time, humanity saw the earth as small, vulnerable, and even lonely.

I still remember the first time I got onto a jet and experienced air travel, flying to California when I was 19 years old. Looking down from 40,000 feet, my perspective of the Earth began to change. Flying high above the Rocky Mountains and, later in life, across the globe many times, I realized that our world is smaller than I used to think.

When I wrote my first [letter] for the Villager nearly three years ago, I never expected there would be a second, but this is my 40th. As an environmentally minded person, I’ve long been concerned about the planet. But thinking about it more deeply over these past three years has changed me. Researching for each article, then putting my thoughts into words, has helped me understand more deeply just how small, vulnerable, and special the Earth is.

The headlines today can rob us of the simple joy of being alive on a beautiful place we call Earth. Whether it be the wars in Iran and Ukraine, the next absurd billionaire mega-something project, the 35,000 Europeans who lost their lives in a record-breaking heatwave this summer, or, most recently, the headline story about the employee who recently quit his job at Anthropic. In resigning only three weeks before Anthropic’s IPO (which would have made him extremely rich), this senior employee publicly posted that artificial intelligence could kill all humanity within the next decade. How are we supposed to take this all in and still feel “normal?” It sometimes makes me wish I could be 12 again, building a fort in the woods with my childhood pals. All we worried about then was, “Did we pack enough peanut butter sandwiches?”

Growing up in the ’70s and ’80s here in Connecticut’s Quiet Corner, I felt equal parts Huck Finn country boy and world dreamer. All I really had to worry about was eventually finding my place in the world. But today, kids have to worry about the world ending before they even get to grow up, never mind having kids of their own.

Some disregard the increasing warnings simply because they come from a scientist. Scientific findings about the global collapse of insect populations, “forever chemicals” in our drinking water and bloodstreams, climate change closing in, and even the risks of artificial intelligence are conveniently

packaged as “doomism” and dismissed, like they have no basis in reality.

Once upon a time, we humans were so ignorant of basic science that doctors would open a vein to drain out the “bad blood” when a person was sick. Bloodletting, as it was called, killed our first president, George Washington, when it was used in an attempt to cure his sore throat. Imagine that? But it’s the 21st Century now and thankfully, science has come a long way. We should be grateful for that, take heed, and quit the bloodletting of our planet.

Like most of us, I feel pretty helpless in the face of climate change and artificial intelligence. But I recently reread an old email I’d gotten from author and environmentalist Bill McKibben and it helped me. Bill is the author of 20 books, including the first book ever written on climate change in 1989—“The End of Nature.” Three years ago, he kindly helped me by reviewing a multimedia presentation I created called Earth2023(now called Earth2026). Bill provided important editorial feedback and also advised me that there is a place we can find strength in the face of this uncertain future. It was simply this: “the most important thing an individual can do is be a little less of an individual.”

To me, this means, giving my neighbor a hand on his tree farm, and in return he loans me is heavy tractor anytime I need it. Or, with another neighbor, trading a few black currant bushes for a load a wood chips. Or, with the parents of my kids friends, taking turns carpooling for after school events. By letting go of our individualism, we not only conserve resources and lessen our impact on the planet, we become more connected with each other. With such big uncertainties in the world today, we need that more than ever.

If you’ve ever thought, “What can I do? How can I help protect the Earth and my kids’ future?” The simple answer is: Join a community of people who are already working on it. Two great places for that are 350.org, an international climate campaign operating in 188 countries, and Third Act, which mobilizes people over the age of 60 for action on climate and justice. Both organizations are also the creations of Bill McKibben, and they welcome your support. Right next door, another great community you can join is the Connecticut Audubon in Pomfret. Sarah Hemminway does a wonderful job running the place and invites all to attend their winter speaker series. Links to to all three organizations can be found on my website: earth21stcentury.com.

Thank you for reading my Earth series, and for caring about this beautiful Blue Marble that we also call “home.”

KEN WOLSLEGEL
WOODSTOCK

Encouragement, not partisan scolding

To the Editor:

The five unaffiliated Pomfret residents who applied for the recent Board of Education vacancies deserve sincere recognition. Board of Education service requires time, preparation, difficult decisions, and a willingness to accept public accountability. Anyone who steps forward to take on that responsibility should be welcomed and thanked.

Unfortunately, Mr. Wishart did not stop at recognizing the applicants’ willingness to serve. His letter uses their applications as a partisan cudgel—contrasting them with Republicans to portray an entire group of neighbors as unwilling to contribute, more interested in criticism than service, and intolerant of independent thought. That is not a fair reading of one appointment process, and it is not the kind of civic conversation Pomfret deserves.

No one should assume they know why another resident did not apply for a particular vacancy. Work schedules, family responsibilities, health, existing commitments, and the significant time demands of Board of Education service all matter. The absence of Republican applicants in this instance does not establish a lack of commitment to Pomfret, nor does it erase the work of Republican residents who serve through elected office, town boards, schools, volunteer organizations, youth

activities, churches, charitable groups, and quiet assistance to their neighbors.

Mr. Wishart’s assertion that Republicans complain from behind keyboards rather than participate in town government is especially disappointing. Residents have every right to ask questions about appointments, budgets, transparency, and local decision-making.

Such questions are not an attack on the unaffiliated applicants, who deserve respect for volunteering. They are part of the ordinary public discussion that should accompany important decisions affecting Pomfret’s schools and taxpayers.

The town’s decision to disable comments on its social-media posts may have been applied equally to everyone, but it also eliminated a readily available avenue for residents to ask questions, offer criticism, and express differing views. If Pomfret wants meaningful community engagement, it should welcome respectful disagreement and use clear, viewpoint-neutral rules to address genuinely improper content—not remove the opportunity for public discussion altogether.

His suggestion that reasonable Republicans may avoid public service because their own party will criticize them for working with others is also an unsupported and divisive claim.

Pomfret Republicans, like Democrats and unaffiliated voters, are not a monolith. They hold differing views, make independent judgments, disagree when necessary, and cooperate when doing so serving the town. Pomfret needs more people willing to serve, regardless of political affiliation. But people are more likely to step forward when public discussion is honest, respectful, and open to differing viewpoints. Civic engagement does not mean agreement. It means residents can volunteer, question, disagree, and participate without being stereotyped or demeaned because of their political affiliation.

Pomfret will be better served by encouragement than sarcasm, by transparency rather than dismissiveness, and by respectful participation rather than partisan scolding.

MARTHA B. EMILIO
POMFRET

We’re not going back

To the Editor:

Outside of the US, it’s readily apparent to the rest of the world that America has repudiated its traditional values and the rather stable (and largely peaceful) world order that it established following the horror of World War II. It is attacking its traditional allies with threats of conquest, insults and stupid trade wars. And unbelievably, it is punishing democratic countries that came to our defense after 9/11 and during other crises such as the Iranian Revolution that took Americans hostage in Tehran. America would rather cozy up to countries with authoritarian murderers in charge such as Russia, China and North Korea than aid Ukraine, a budding democracy trying to survive daily, unprovoked Russian war crimes.

All the while, the heads of the companies speeding the development of AI warn us that it could destroy humanity. All the while, human induced climate change is out of control, and the US sticks its head in the (tar) sand. All the while, America witnesses the steady erosion of law, the dismantling of our constitutional system and institutions so that one profoundly sick man can address his unlimited lack of self worth by self-aggrandizement and illegally enriching himself, his family and his friends at the expense of the rest of us.

And all the while, we do nothing. Or, at the least, nothing effective. Our vaunted Constitution and legal system are either inadequate to stop our self-destruction or too slow to react. We have these nice little protests a few times a year that maybe 5% of the population participates in to make us feel better but do nothing else. We’re more interested in the start of the NFL season than anything that really matters. Most of us are understandably fixated on paying for the necessities and providing for our families given the extreme level of income inequality that both major political parties have built into our rigged economic system with tax cuts for the obscenely rich, monopolies in vital industries, and the destruction of unions. Regardless of politicians’ promises, most prices are not coming down. People can’t afford them because they’re cheated out of an adequate portion of the wealth that their labor produces.

The current president may not be the first to defy the Judiciary, but he’s taken it to previously unimaginable lengths.

The Republican-controlled Congress refuses to uphold its oath and exercise its constitutional duties. With few exceptions, Republicans are too cowardly to stand up to their dear leader on anything. No one would want to find themselves in combat alongside these spineless individuals.

Many are tempted to assume that the upcoming elections in November will help return America to a better place if there is a Democratic wave. I don’t believe it. The presidency is out of control, and this president has not been bound by any laws. Putting Democrats in control of Congress may bring investigations that expose the fraud and lawlessness of the administration but little else. I suppose even that is something to be thankful for, but we are not going back.

The rest of the world knows it. It recognizes that America’s word is no longer good, that it rejects liberal democratic values, engages in senseless wars and promotes racist, radical right-wing causes around the world. Both former allies and the enemies that the administration prefers have seen us demonstrate that even the best, biggest, baddest military in the world cannot bend a third-rate power like Iran to its will through force alone. Our security, power, and prestige are at their lowest point in 80 years.

I just returned from Canada. Canadians have clearly heard the flood of threats and insults, including the threat to make them the 51st state. They hear Americans’ excuses and apologies but understand that an unstable, dying democracy with an electorate that chose a depraved, lying, sex offender twice to lead it, understanding full well what it was doing, can no longer be trusted. Canada, and many other countries, are sick of the excuses and tired of waiting for the US to come to its senses. It is busy forming trade relationships with Europe and even China. It is getting military equipment from Germany and Sweden instead of the US. The Canadian military is actually making plans to defend the country from a US invasion.

The world knows we’re not going back regardless of the midterm election results. This will not end well. We won’t be the first, or the last, empire to fall. And it’s all self-inflicted because we couldn’t, or wouldn’t, act.

BILLY G. TAYLOR
KILLINGLY

Additional Letters to the Editor, see Page A-8



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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.

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Courtesy

On Wednesday, Sept. 9, Putnam Cub Scout Pack 21 visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Wall That Heals at Murphy Park in Putnam. The Wall That Heals is a three-quarter scale traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. It contains 58,281 names of those who were lost in the Vietnam War. Pack 21 is chartered to the Albert J. Breault VFW Post 1523 of Putnam. Pack 21 welcomes boys and girls ages five through ten. To join, call John Ryan, at (860) 928-5873 and leave a message.

Private Rocco DeFilippo: The Thompson paratrooper killed in the Battle for Corregidor



Rocco DeFilippo (1922-1945)

Pvt. Rocci DeFilippo

BY MICHAEL ROCHETTI
COMMANDER

AMERICAN LEGION POST #13
PUTNAM

Three days after parachuting onto one of the most heavily fortified islands in the Pacific, Private Rocco DeFilippo of North Grosvenordale was killed in action. He was only 22 years old.

DeFilippo served with Company G, 3rd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, of the 11th Airborne Division. On Feb. 16, 1945, he participated in the regiment’s daring assault on Corregidor, the island fortress guarding the entrance to Manila Bay.

His final battle helped erase the memory of one of America’s most painful defeats and restore the American flag to the place where United States and Filipino troops had made a heroic stand three years earlier.

Rocco DeFilippo was born in Thompson, Connecticut, on Sept. 7, 1922. He was one of the 10 children of Raffaele and Antonetta DeFilippo, Italian immigrants from Siano, a town near Salerno in the Campania region of southern Italy. The couple left Naples and arrived in Boston on June 25, 1906. The DeFilippis settled in North Grosvenordale. Like many immigrant families in northeastern Connecticut, their lives became closely connected to the region’s textile mills.

On Dec. 5, 1942, almost exactly one year after the attack on Pearl Harbor, DeFilippo enlisted in the Army at Hartford. He was single, with no dependents, he stood five feet seven inches tall and weighed 123 pounds. He was selected for one of the

Army’s most demanding assignments, in one of their most elite fighting forces, the parachute infantry.

The 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment had already established a distinguished combat record in the Southwest Pacific before DeFilippo joined the unit. On Sept. 5, 1943, the regiment parachuted into the Markham Valley at Nadzab, New Guinea. Its arrival helped force the Japanese evacuation of their important base at Lae. In July 1944, elements of the 503rd made another combat jump onto Noemfoor Island, off the coast of Dutch New Guinea. The unit suffered numerous casualties during the landing and the fighting that followed.

The regiment later moved into the Philippines where DeFilippo joined them. After landing on Leyte, it conducted an amphibious assault on Mindoro on Dec. 15, 1944. The capture of Mindoro permitted American engineers to construct airfields from which Allied aircraft could support the liberation of Luzon.

The 503rd’s most famous and costly operation, however, came at the island of Corregidor. The island possessed enormous symbolic and military importance. Located at the entrance to Manila Bay, the island had been the scene of a desperate American and Filipino defense during the opening months of the war. The defenders of Corregidor held out until May 1942, delaying the Japanese timetable in the Pacific. When the island finally fell, its exhausted survivors entered captivity, and many endured years of brutal treatment.

By February 1945, American forces had returned to Luzon and were fighting to liberate Manila. Before Allied shipping could safely use Manila Bay, Corregidor had to be recaptured. American commanders believed approximately 850 Japanese troops defended the island. In reality, its tunnels, bunkers and gun positions concealed a garrison numbering several thousand men. Some estimates place its strength at more than 6,000.

On the morning of Feb. 16, 1945, aircraft carrying approximately 2,000 paratroopers of the 503rd appeared over Corregidor. The designated landing zones were extremely small and surrounded by cliffs, ruined buildings and enemy positions. Strong winds made the jump even more dangerous. Some men landed in trees or among shattered buildings. Others were blown over the cliffs and into Manila Bay. Japanese soldiers opened fire while the paratroopers were still descending. Nevertheless, the 503rd quickly organized and began attacking the enemy’s defenses. Private DeFilippo came down with Company G, part of the regiment’s 3rd Battalion.

Capturing the surface of Corregidor did not end the battle. The island was honeycombed with tunnels, caves, artillery positions and reinforced concrete bunkers. Japanese troops remained hidden underground, emerging to fire upon the Americans or launch sudden counterat-

tacks. The paratroopers fought at extremely close range. Flamethrowers, grenades and demolition charges were employed against cave entrances and pillboxes whose occupants refused to surrender. Every ravine, ruined building and tunnel opening could conceal an enemy soldier.

On Feb. 19, three days after the airborne landing, the fighting remained intense, with the American paratroopers under continuous small-arms, machine-gun and sniper fire. It was during the fighting on Feb. 19 that Private Rocco DeFilippo was killed in action. He had been in the Army for more than two years and overseas with the paratroopers for approximately four months.

The struggle for Corregidor became one of the most violent battles in the 503rd’s history. The regiment lost 169 men killed, while many more were wounded or injured. Nearly the entire Japanese garrison perished. For its capture of the fortress, the 503rd received a Presidential Unit Citation and became known as “The Rock Regiment.”

News of DeFilippo’s death reached North Grosvenordale in March 1945. The Putnam Patriot reported the loss on March 29 under the headline “Rocco DeFilippo Killed in Pacific.” The War Department telegram informed Ralph and Antonetta DeFilippo that their son had died on Feb. 19. The newspaper noted that three of Rocco’s brothers were also serving in the

armed forces. Private Dominic DeFilippo was then serving in the Philippines. Private First Class Anthony DeFilippo was a Marine in the Southwest Pacific, and Samuel DeFilippo, a specialist technician, was serving in the United States Navy. In addition to his brothers in arms and parents, Rocco left another brother, Alphonse, and five sisters: Mary, Antoinette, Philomena, Dora and Evelyn.

Private Rocco DeFilippo’s body was returned to the US for burial. Following a high requiem mass, he was laid to rest with Military honors at St. Joseph Cemetery in North Grosvenordale on Jan. 8, 1949. He had grown up in a working-class Italian immigrant household, labored in the mills and entered the Army while still a young man. Less than three years later, he jumped from an airplane into enemy fire above one of the most formidable fortresses in the Pacific. Corregidor was eventually secured, Manila Bay was reopened, and the liberation of the Philippines continued. Rocco DeFilippo did not live to witness the Allied victory or the end of the war. Today, he rests only a short distance from the North Grosvenordale community that he once called home. His grave preserves the name of a quiet young mill worker who became an American paratrooper—and who gave his life helping to liberate the Philippines.

Poets at Large presents Knowles and Aeroelastic Flutter

POMFRET — Poets at Large will continue its seventh season on Saturday night, September 26th with two disparate types of poetry. The show begins at 7 p.m. at The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Rd. in Pomfret, and featured that night will be Frederick-Douglass Knowles II and performance artist duo Aeroelastic Flutter. Suggested donation is \$10.

Knowles is a Hartford Poet Laureate Emeritus, an English Professor at CT State Community College and author of “BlackRoseCity” (Author House 2011). He is the recipient of The Nutmeg Poetry Award, a Connecticut of the Arts Fellow in Artistic Excellence in Poetry/Creative Non-Fiction, and a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee. He will be showcasing work from his newest book, “Sinking in Moonlight Alone.”

Aeroelastic Flutter is a spoken word and sound collaboration, combining the often-absurdist poetry of Jim Whitten with the guitar word and sound exploration of Nicholas Pecsok. Their project experiments with lo-fi audio and borderline performance art, challenging audiences to reevaluate how poetry can be performed and defined.

Poets at Large has brought over 150 published and awarded poets to the area since 2020 and dozens of people have participated in the open mic portions during that time. Poets at Large is a project of Windham Arts. All events are ADA compliant and are recommended for ages 16 and up. Readings for the rest of the season are sponsored in part by donations from bankHometown, Charter Oak FCU, WHZ Financial and The Putnam Area Foundation. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to sign up for the open mic; five-minute max as time allows.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Anne Dauphinais is truly for the people

To the Editor:

I am writing to express my support for the re-election of Rep. Anne Dauphinais.

During one of the most difficult and frightening periods my family has ever experienced, Rep. Dauphinais was there for us. My family was falsely accused of harming our children when, in fact, our children were ultimately found to have a rare genetic disorder. After the circumstances were investigated, the allegations against us were found to be unsubstantiated.

Throughout this experience, Anne listened to us, took our concerns seriously, and advocated for our family. She demonstrated compassion, determination, and a genuine commitment to making sure that the truth was heard. When a family is going through something as overwhelming as what we experienced, having someone willing to listen and stand up for what is right can make an enormous difference.

What stands out to me about Anne is that her commitment to children and families is not simply something she talks about—it is something I personally witnessed. She has shown me that she cares about protecting chil-

dren while also recognizing the importance of listening to parents, examining the facts, and making sure families are treated fairly.

I believe Anne is an exceptional leader and a strong advocate for the people she represents. She has demonstrated that she is willing to ask difficult questions, seek the truth, and advocate for change when she believes something needs to be addressed. Her work on issues affecting children and families is also reflected in her service on the Connecticut General Assembly’s Committee on Children.

I would encourage voters to consider supporting Anne Dauphinais for re-election. I am grateful for the way she stood with my family during a time when we felt overwhelmed and unheard. Her willingness to listen, her concern for children, and her commitment to seeking the truth are qualities that I believe are important in a public servant. I will be voting Anne; she is truly for the people.

Respectfully,

ALICIA JACKSON
PLAINFIELD

Thanks to all who helped bring the Wall That Heals to Putnam

To the Editor:

Highest praise for Mayor Seney and all those involved in organizing and presenting the Wall That Heals memorial and ceremonies recognizing the valor and sacrifice of all our veterans, especially those who served in Vietnam. My best friend of 48 years, Al Eichorn, was in an artillery unit for over a year and suffered PTSD. His strength in dealing with it still amazes me. Well done to all.

Nor should we forget 9/11. I watched most of it on TV as it happened. It was so horrifying that it was quite surreal. This can’t be, but it was. We all shut down for three days. Almost 3,000 more souls to be remembered and grieved for. A quiet and somber weekend.

STEPHEN ETZEL
PUTNAM

Planning for the Thompson we actually have

To the Editor:

I want to address two pieces of misinformation that deserve to be discussed honestly: Career Pathways and regionalization.

First, there has been considerable discussion suggesting that Career Pathways are simply optional.

There is something a little ironic about calling Career Pathways “optional” while the state is actively building an education system that increasingly emphasizes career readiness, workforce development, and multiple pathways for students after high school. If you are unsure what I am referring to, I encourage you to review Governor Lamont’s Executive Order 26-2.

Career Pathways give students options. They can provide opportunities for students who want to enter the trades, pursue technical careers, attend a two-year college, attend a four-year university, or combine education and employment.

Our responsibility is not to force every student into the same definition of success. Our responsibility is to ensure that every student has a meaningful pathway to success.

So why would we dismantle programming that is moving toward becoming a state expectation, only to potentially spend more money rebuilding it later? That does not make financial sense, and it certainly does not make educational sense.

The second issue is regionalization.

Regionalization is often presented as though it is the obvious answer to our financial challenges. But we need to be realistic. Regionalization is not something Thompson can simply decide to do on its own. It requires a willing partner district; a community prepared to commit to shared governance, shared costs, and a shared structure for the long term.

That kind of commitment requires stability on both sides. Budget volatility is not unique to Thompson. It is affecting communities throughout our region. No community wants to enter into a long-term structural partnership without confidence in what that partnership will look like financially from year to year.

And we are in the same position when looking outward. We cannot ask another district to take on that uncertainty when our own financial picture has not been stable either.

What should be highlighted, however, are the steps already being taken toward collaboration. The district is working with neighboring districts to explore shared services and other opportunities for cooperation. That is a reasonable, achievable step that can provide meaningful efficiencies without pretending that regionalization is a simple or guaranteed solution.

We should pursue partnerships where they make sense. But we also need to be honest about what regionalization can and cannot accomplish.

We also need to be honest about what it costs to operate a full municipality.

Thompson has roads and infrastructure. We have public works, fire and emergency services, recreation, libraries, and countless other municipal services that residents rely on every day.

All of those services require investment. We cannot simply continue saying, “Cut more.”

At some point, cutting stops being efficient and starts becoming a reduction in the services our community depends upon.

And yes, that includes our schools.

Our schools are part of this community, too. They educate our children, prepare our future workforce, and provide services that families rely on.

We do not have to choose between a functioning town and a functioning school district.

We need both.

What we need is responsible investment; investment in our infrastructure, public services, emergency services, and yes, our schools.

We should absolutely look for efficiencies. We should absolutely pursue partnerships when they make sense. But we also need to stop pretending there is one simple solution to a complicated problem.

Career Pathways are part of the future of education. Regionalization may be one tool, but it is not a guarantee, and it does not eliminate financial uncertainty.

Let’s plan for the future we actually have; not the one we wish existed.

Thank you,

JESSICA BOLTE
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

Straw man arguments are not a substitute for critical thought

To the Editor:

The Sept. 4 letter by Mr. Edward Clement of Thompson which describes socialism as “Communist training wheels” illustrates a growing problem in our political discourse: substituting labels and slippery-slope arguments for critical thought.

Social democracy, democratic socialism and authoritarian Communism are not interchangeable political or economic systems. Nor does establishing five publicly owned grocery stores in a city containing hundreds of private ones demonstrate that government is preparing to seize control of food production and distribution. One may reasonably oppose that policy, but disagreement does not turn speculation into fact.

Consider the facts behind Mr. Clement’s main example. New York’s plan calls for five city-owned grocery stores—one in each borough—not government control of the grocery industry. The city will subsidize the stores, but experienced private grocery operators selected through a competitive process will run their day-to-day operations. One can certainly debate whether that is wise public policy. But claiming that five municipal stores represent a step toward government control of food production and distribution is a classic slippery-slope argument unless evidence

for that progression is provided.

Likewise, pointing to Cuba and North Korea as the inevitable destination of democratic-socialist policies commits the same logical error. By that reasoning, Social Security, Medicare, municipal utilities, public schools and fire departments would all be milestones on America’s march toward communism. More than ninety years after Social Security was enacted, capitalism somehow survives.

There are serious arguments to be made about the proper balance between markets and government, taxation and public spending, and individual and collective responsibility. Those debates deserve better than name-calling, guilt by association and predictions masquerading as evidence.

Words have meanings. Facts require evidence. Opinions should be identified as opinions. Before warning our neighbors that political ideas with which we disagree represent the road to communism, we owe them—and ourselves—the courtesy of doing the research and understanding the political and economic principles we are discussing.

Democracy depends upon disagreement. It also depends upon our willingness to distinguish an argument from an assertion, and a fact from an opinion. We can do better.

PAUL COTNOIR
PUTNAM

KILLINGLY
continued from page A4

lowing its humiliating loss at the Battle of Long Island the previous month. But before Washington could finish his letter, an alarm went up in the camp. British soldiers were spotted heading north toward the American position. Washington sent 150 rangers under the command of Lieutenant Thomas Knowlton and his Adjutant General Joseph Reed to investigate. Subsequently, Washington rode two miles from his post at the northern end of the American camp to its southernmost point to observe the situation himself. When Washington arrived, he met General Reed who had raced back to tell him that Knowlton’s rangers were in a skirmish with an advance party of British regulars in the woods just to the south. Reed recommended that Washington send reinforcements immediately. Before Washington could agree, Knowlton’s rangers made their way back to the American camp with the redcoats in hot pursuit. The British were soon close enough for Washington to hear their bugle calls. The British, however, were not directing their troops to advance or deploy. Instead, they were playing “Gone Away,” the tune sounded when a fox has been killed and the chase was over in a hunt. It is unknown whether the call was meant to mock the retreating Continental Army or was a direct insult to General Washington, well-known for his many foxhunts at Mount Vernon. Either way, the effect was the same.” Washington chose to counterattack. Unfortunately plans went awry and Knowlton was among those killed during the battle. (<https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/battle-of-harlem-heights#note1>)

Thomas Knowlton was from Northeastern Connecticut. He was born Nov. 22, 1740 in West Boxford, Massachusetts, the son of William and Martha (Pinder) Knowlton. When he was eight, his family moved to Ashford, Connecticut. Knowlton served in the French and Indian War so was an experienced soldier by the time the Revolution commenced. “On August 12, 1776, General of the Army George Washington promoted Knowlton to lieutenant colonel. He was ordered to select a group of men from Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts to carry out reconnaissance missions. America’s first official spies, ‘Knowlton’s Rangers’ were also the first organized American elite troops. The American spy, Captain Nathan Hale, was under the command of Knowlton. The date “1776” on the modern U.S. Army’s intelligence service seal refers to the formation of Knowlton’s Rangers.”(Wikipedia)

Sad to say Thomas Knowlton was not the only casualty from this area. Jonathan Buck, who lived in what would today be Putnam, was either “killed or taken” (Larned, Ellen D., History of Windham County, CT, Vo. II, Swordsmithe ed., p. 138). Because he was missing, his probate was not settled for years. His inventory, taken March 25, 1784, says the following, “We the subscribers being appointed to apprise the Estate of Lieut. Jonathan Buck late of said Killingly who has been absent ever since the month of September AD 1776 and supposed to be dead...”(Ancestry.com; Pomfret District Probate, Vo. 5-7, 1776-1794). Larned reported, “Captain Stephen Crosby of Thompson, Conn., Third Battalion, Company 5, ‘being over hot went into a house and drank cold water, and died immediately.” (Ibid).

“The buckwheat field that saw the heaviest fighting during the Battle of Harlem Heights fought on September 16, 1776, is now the location of Columbia and Barnard Universities, bisected by Broadway, in New York City. This American victory gave the Patriot forces a brief but sorely needed boost of morale as British forces fought their way into New York. American forces abandoned the city and retreated into New Jersey by the end of the following month” (<https://www.battlefields.org/visit/battlefields/harlem-heights>).

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, September 2026. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main Street Danielson Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety. For Windham County Transcripts, visit killingly.historyarchives.online courtesy of the Killingly Public Library. For Putnam Patriots and Windham County Observers visit the home page of the Putnam Public Library and look on the right hand column for links.

Woodstock
Commission on
Aging launches
Senior Resource
Guide

WOODSTOCK — The Woodstock Commission on Aging has officially launched the new Woodstock Senior Resource Guide, a comprehensive tool designed to help older adults and their families easily navigate local care, programs, and support services.

The guide brings together key local resources on aging in place, healthcare options, financial and legal planning, food assistance, transportation, and social or recreational opportunities.

How to Access the Guide:

Online: Download the document directly via the Town of Woodstock Web site.

Mobile Access: Scan the printed QR code using a smartphone camera to view the guide instantly on mobile devices.

Physical copies: View a print copy at Woodstock Town Hall, local libraries, fire stations, or community worship centers.

About the Woodstock Commission on Aging

The Woodstock Commission on Aging works to evaluate, develop, and support services and initiatives that enhance the quality of life for senior residents in Woodstock. For inquiries, feedback, or to suggest resources for future guide updates, please contact 860-928-6595 or email AgeFriendlyWoodstock@gmail.com.

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brendan@villagernewspapers.com





Register for Northeast CT’s unique race in an amazing place

DANIELSON — Since 2014, Tackle the Trail™ has become a destination event as Northeast CT’s unique race in an amazing place. Always the third Saturday in October, the race offers various distances: marathon, marathon relay (up to 5 runners per team), half marathon, 10K, and TackleJR. The scenic course traverses 26.2 miles of the northern portion of the Air Line State Park Trail from Windham through downtown Putnam, CT during the peak fall foliage season. With registration closing at midnight on October 4th, there is still time to sign up and secure your spot.

Race Director Monique Wolanin, a lifelong runner and former cross-country coach, shared, “Each year, we are proud to welcome runners from near and far to Tackle the Trail and to our community. Tackle embodies the spirit of northeast CT, including our many local partners, sponsors, and 130 volunteers. The best part is that race proceeds support Windham County residents pursuing their higher education goals.”

Tackle the Trail™ has quickly grown to become a nationally recognized race, with runners from 35 states and five countries over the 13-year history of the event. As race day approaches, there are many ways to take part in Tackle the Trail, as a runner, a sponsor, or volunteer. All race information, including registration and volunteer sign-ups, is available at <https://tacklethe-trail.org/>.

Courtesy

Local Tackle the Trail10K finishers: Stacey Trottier, Bruce Dexter, Jessica Jellison, and Dominique Rabitor at the 2025 race.

Christ Church Pomfret hosts end-of-life planning workshops

POMFRET — Christ Church Pomfret will host the second in a series of end-of-life workshops on Sept. 27 at 1 p.m. at 527 Pomfret St. in Pomfret. This free event is designed to help people at all stages of life and health consider the major dimensions of end-of-life planning and ease stress and uncertainty for participants and loved ones responsible for closing an estate.

Living your life with purpose and intentionality promotes a fulfilling legacy. Preparing for and sharing your end-of-life wishes is a gift to your loved ones.

Led by Becca Allen, LCSW, the workshop series aims to ensure the practical and emotional work of dying is met with clarity, dignity, and love. Allen, who specializes in end-of-life planning, explores how we might live a life consistent with our values, how we want to be remembered, and how we prepare for the end of life, both spiritually and administratively.

During the first workshop, held in April, participants discussed how faith and values inform our daily lives and how we approach end-of-life topics.

During the Sept. 27 workshop, Allen will focus on “getting your house in order” to address essential aspects of end-of-life planning. Allen will guide participants, room by room,

to clarify values, document legal and legacy wishes, organize administrative duties, address after-death preferences, and explore physical belongings and emotional unfinished business.

Sponsored by the Christ Church Pomfret Vestry and task force of the Third Century Society, the workshops are free and open to the community and relevant to adults of all ages interested in exploring the big questions of living and leaving a meaningful legacy. Childcare will be provided.

A vibrant church community since its founding in May 1828, Christ Church Pomfret, an Episcopal Church for northeast Connecticut, is a place where faith and real life intersect. From here, we are called to share God’s love in the Church and in the world through generous hospitality, serving one another, community involvement, and providing a safe place to explore a relationship with God. Whether you are a Quiet Corner native or have recently moved here, a committed Christian or someone inquiring about the faith for the first time, we want you to feel at home. Please know that you are invited to participate in all aspects of our worship. We are so glad that you’re here.

Lebanon Historical Society’s antique show returns for 59th year

LEBANON — It’s a tradition — fall colors, antiques, chowder and pie all enjoyed outside on the historic Lebanon Green as the Lebanon Historical Society celebrates 59 years of its outdoor antique show. Many historic homes surround the beautiful Lebanon town green often referred to as the heartbeat of the Revolution.

For more than half a century, rain or shine, antique dealers and collectors gather on the Green in Lebanon. Once a common sight in Connecticut towns, outdoor antique shows are now almost gone from the landscape. The show on the Lebanon Green offers a bit of nostalgia for everyone. Now in its 59th year, the Lebanon Historical Society’s Outdoor Antique Show is open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 26.

Up to 60 dealers will offer antiques and high-quality collectibles to buyers who come from around the state and through-out southern New England. The event started in 1966 as a money-making effort to fund Society programs and, eventually, to help pay for the land needed to build a Museum. Today, the Antique Show is still the

Historical Society’s largest and most important fund raising event with proceeds supporting school programs, exhibits and historical presentations.

Some dealers have been participating for many years, but new-to-the-field dealers are added every year. Visitors can expect to find everything from 19th century furniture to vintage tools and from traditional pottery to textiles, glassware and jewelry.

For the \$8 admission fee visitors can spend the day wandering the field, talking with dealers and finding a bargain. Lunch and snacks are available for purchase all day including homemade chowders, sandwiches as well as grilled burgers and dogs and end it all with a slice of home-made pie!

Parking is free and the event goes on rain or shine.

For more information, contact the Lebanon Historical Society 860-642-6579 / museum@historyof-lebanon.org or visit us on the Web at www.historyof-lebanon.org.

Dealer spaces still available. \$90 for a 20-by-24-foot space. Call 860-423-8876 or 860-642-6579.

Tickets for TEEG’s Empty Bowls event available online

N O R T H GROSVENORDALE — The annual Empty Bowls fundraising event to benefit TEEG’s food programs will be held on Saturday, Sept. 26, and tickets are now available on the TEEG website: www.teegonline.org.

In partnership with Sawmill Pottery of Putnam, patrons will sample a variety of delicious soups donated by local restaurants, served at the TEEG offices at 15 Thatcher Rd., North Grosvenordale. Two seatings are offered: 4 and 6 p.m., and the \$30 ticket price includes a handmade pottery bowl filled with all-you-can-eat soup. For an additional \$5 participants will enjoy an after-soup scoop of ice cream.

Empty Bowls is a grassroots movement by artists and crafts people in cities and towns around the world to raise money for food related charities to care for and feed the hungry in their communities. Dot Burnworth, Owner and Head Custodian of Sawmill Pottery, along with volunteers she recruits, crafts the beautiful bowls in which the soup is served. Additional handmade bowls will be available for sale at the cost of \$20, as long as supply lasts.

Take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the power of community, raise funds to help provide food and hope in our communities, and be reminded that even the simplest meal can make a lasting difference.

TEEG operates community markets in North Grosvenordale, Pomfret, and Woodstock, to ensure adequate nutritional resources for every member of the community. A recent agricultural grant now allows TEEG to offer fresh produce to all recipients along with shelf-stable foods.

For further information about this event, contact Chelsea French at 860-923-3458 during business hours or via email at chelseaf@teegonline.org.

TEEG is a 501(c)3 social service agency serving critical needs of low-income individuals and families in the towns of Pomfret, Woodstock, and Thompson, with food insecurity as a cornerstone of its mission. As TEEG continues to grow, it has established itself as a vital resource to our community, offering youth and family programs in addition to several basic needs programs including heating assistance, state and federal benefits assistance, holiday programs, homelessness support, summer camp scholarships, client care coordination, and the food markets. For more information about the work of the organization, please visit www.teegonline.org.

TEEG prize calendars available online

THOMPSON — TEEG October Prize Calendars are now available on the TEEG website, www.teegonline.org, as well as from members of the organization’s Board of Directors. For a \$10 donation, participants will be eligible to win daily prizes worth between \$50 and \$150, as well as a grand prize of \$500 cash. The last day for sales is Sept. 28.

The daily prizes are gift certificates to local restaurants such as Crowe’s Nest, Grill 37, and Anya; to local businesses such as Mackey’s and Green Valley Floral; and no-special-occasion shops such as Main Street Gelato and Black Pond Brews; and are often combined with a cash prize. Spicer Oil also donated two \$100 gift certificates!

Perhaps the most special prize on this year’s Calendar is a lasagna meal that includes fresh focaccia and a family salad, generously donated by Chef Sarah Eddy at New Boston Beef, who will prepare the meal on a mutually agreeable date.

Take advantage of this winning opportunity to visit new or favorite local businesses while helping to provide food and hope in our communities.

For further information about this event, contact Chelsea French at 860-923-3458 during business hours or via email at chelseaf@teegonline.org.

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Woodstock Historical Society, Old Sturbridge Village collaborate on “After the Revolution” programs

STURBRIDGE, Mass. — The Woodstock Historical Society is collaborating with Old Sturbridge Village on two evening presentations on Sept. 24 and Oct. 8. These presentations will provide a fascinating look into the lives of rural New Englanders in the decades after the American Revolution.

With the Revolutionary War at an end, rural New England could not simply return to old habits and traditions. Everyday life had been impacted despite the fact that after initial campaigns, the active battle ground moved south. And while the local economy had been buoyed by the production of war material, including arms, food and clothing, the world suddenly looked different.

Old Sturbridge Village staff Marlene Healey, Coordinator of Households, and Jean Contino, Coordinator of Domestic Crafts, will host the presentation on Sept. 24, “Far Above the Country Mediocrity.” This will explore how everyday life changed in the decades following the Revolution. They will compare life in a rural New England home of the 1770s to that of the 1830s, exploring questions like “How were homes furnished and decorated?” and “How did manufacturing and transportation transform the availability of goods?”

Katherine Fecteau, Curator of Exhibitions at Old Sturbridge Village, will host the presentation on Oct. 8, “After the First Fifty.” This will explore national transformation in the United States after the first fifty years of a new nation through the eyes of the people who experienced it firsthand. Learn about 11 Americans whose lives shed light on the change, innovation, and emerging spirit of reform that influenced this period in our history.

Both presentations will begin at 6:30pm in the Center for Woodstock History at 523 Route 169, Woodstock, CT 06281. Reservations are required for entry. Programs are free, but contributions are essential to the ongoing work of the historical society.

To learn more, please visit www.centerforwoodstockhistory.com.

SECURITY

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he has received reports of threats, both physical and emotional, against staff and members of the community approaching boards to sway their decisions through favoritism and other questionable tactics.

This has culminated in Donohue pursuing ways to increase security and monitoring at the Thompson Town Hall, which currently lacks cameras and other security measures common among public buildings. Some immediate changes have been implemented, including creating an employee-specific parking area and making one entrance accessible only to employees with an access badge. But these small fixes do not solve the larger problem.

“We’ve had pole workers threatened and berated at our last vote. We have one instance where we have a town employee that has applied for a restraining order, a protective order from someone who is criminally stalking and harassing a town employee. We’ve had alleged assaults in our hallway, and it’s now time that we make some security changes,” Donohue told his fellow selectmen.

Cameras were a major

focus for Donohue especially since the Town Hall serves many purposes from town services and events to meeting space and an emergency shelter for the neighboring schools. While cameras may be costly, especially considering Thompson’s recent budget struggles, he is in talks with the Board of Finance about how they can prioritize installations as soon as possible using existing funding sources.

Another part of the problem is that some of the instances have forced boards to move their meetings to virtual only, which Donohue admits is directly connected to threats against board members from the public.

“I’m really committed to keeping our staff safe and our citizens safe, and our elected members, our commissioners safe,” said Donohue. “Currently, because of security issues right now, planning and zoning are fully remote. It pains me that they’re still fully remote. They’ve been remote for approximately 30 days. I’d love to get them back to in-person this month - It’s causing people undue stress. It’s marginalizing populations that don’t have access to technology, and I respect that and I’m committed to getting them back in person, but we

need to make these security upgrades.”

Donohue acknowledged that security upgrades have been a focus for prior administrations, often coming into conflict with the Board of Finance due to costs. There were also talks about where these cameras would be placed with Donohue assuring that the cameras would respect confidentiality while ensuring any incident was recorded to make sure the safety of everyone, employee or otherwise, was preserved.

The First Selectman declared that the rising trend of violence and threats has made these upgrades a requirement for the protection of all involved.

“We’re at a point where it’s no longer a want, it’s a need. Just like access control and security cameras are a need at the school, and they’re a need at banks, and they’re a need at police stations, it’s a need at a municipal town hall,” Donohue said. “I apologize that society has come to that because it’s very disheartening.”

Donohue received the blessing of his fellow selectmen to pursue matter of security with the Board of Finance and seek out methods of funding these upgrades and what channels were available to make the improvements.

CHANGES

continued from page A1

the public to (enforce it),” Palaia said during the public hearing.

He then specified how the ordinance changes impact the scope of sidewalk cleaning. Town staff will no longer cover the entire estimated 25 miles of sidewalk but will instead prioritize the central business district and sidewalks connecting to schools.

Part of the justification for the changes came from issues with citizens in the past who were asked to move obstructions from a right-of-way or take care of certain clearing responsibilities but questioned where that responsibility was written in town regulations.

“Sometimes, we encounter arguments or resistance from people who say, ‘where is that written down’ or ‘why do I have to move that,’” Palaia admitted.

He said the changes will now make it clear what citizens’ responsibilities are and allow for enforcement if these rules are broken.

The council had few questions regarding the changes, and there were no citizen comments regarding the proposals during the public hearing. The Council’s approval effectively puts the new wording into effect just in time for the upcoming winter season.

SUPPER

continued from page A1

aters, directed over 70 productions in colleges and independent schools, and has written several plays. Kenneth Noll, Professor Emeritus of molecular biology from the University of Connecticut has spent nearly two decades performing in community theater and historical reenactments. Besides his portrayal of Israel Putnam, he has per-

formed as the historical figures Charles Darwin and Charles Dickens for libraries, museums, and universities.

Tickets for the supper theater event are \$42.50 (for the 250th) including the dinner and the Loyalist vs Patriot debate and must be purchased in advance. They are available online using the QR code below. Seating is limited and tickets are selling fast, so please order tickets as soon as

possible. For more information about buying tickets, details about the program, and updates about the Reenactment Visit the Pomfret 250 Commission website pomfret250commission@gmail.com OR contact Donna Dufresne, chair of the Pomfret 250 Commission at windsong@snet.net or pomfret250commission@gmail.com.

Tickets available at <https://square.link/u/SUg48wT6>.

MEDICINE

continued from page A1

Trinity Health of New England.

“Growth in a practice like this one has to be deliberate, because the whole product is time and relationships,” said Dr. Botta. “We limit how many patients each of us carries. That is the only way an appointment can run thirty minutes, or an hour for a physical, and the only way you can call the practice’s cell on a Sunday and speak to a physician. Adding Dr. Wolslegel and Suzanne Reardon lets us take care of more of our neighbors without giving that up.”

a community open house on Saturday, Sept. 19, from 10 a.m. to noon at 24 South Main St. in Putnam. Anyone is welcome, including current patients as well as anyone who has been wondering what this kind of practice is actually like. There is no appointment needed and nothing to sign.

Questions about membership, the new Web site, or the open house can be directed to the office at (860) 315-9026.

About Northeast Concierge Medicine

Northeast Concierge Medicine is a membership-based concierge primary care practice for adults, located at 24 South Main St. in Putnam, and serving patients across northeastern

Connecticut and surrounding Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Founded in 2009 by Dr. Joseph Botta, the practice provides unhurried primary and preventive care, with added depth in chronic disease management, cardiovascular health, geriatrics, memory care, medication management, and medically supervised weight management. Its providers are Dr. Joseph Botta (board certified in Internal Medicine and Geriatrics), Dr. David Candow (board certified in Family Medicine), Dr. Mae Wolslegel (board certified in Internal Medicine), and Suzanne Reardon, FNP. For more information, call (860) 315-9026 or visit NECMed.com.

OBITUARIES

Roland “Rollie” Frank Sheldon, 89



Roland “Rollie” Frank Sheldon, age 89, of Lee’s Summit, MO died Monday, August 31, 2026.

Roland was born on December 17, 1936, in Woodstock, CT to Frank and Elsie Wallman Sheldon. He was raised and educated in Woodstock and was a 1954 Graduate of Woodstock Academy. Rollie was a Varsity Lettered Athlete in Basketball, Baseball, Cross Country Running. Following graduation, he and three classmates enlisted in the United States Air Force where a late maturation process resulted in an additional six inches of height and fifty pounds in weight. At a newly amassed stature of six-four, 185 pounds, he played at the Base level basketball and baseball while serving in Germany. Following an honorable discharge in the fall of 1958, he attended and played freshman basketball at Texas A&M. After a semester of studies, he transferred to the University of Connecticut. By transfer rule, he had to lay out (not eligible) for a year. In February 1960, he played 10 games of varsity basketball and then a schedule of baseball games for UConn. In June of that year, he signed a professional contract with the New York Yankees and was assign to Class D in Albany, where his record as a pitcher was 15 and 1. He was invited to early Spring Training in 1961 and was a member of the New York Yankees until 1965, helping them win 2 World Series in 1961 & 1962. He then played with the Kansas City Athletics and the Boston Red Sox. He joined Allstate Insurance Corporation in 1970 and retired in 1992. In 2012, Rollie was proudly Inducted into the first Woodstock Academy Athletic Hall of Fame, and his last trip back to his beloved home town. Rollie enjoyed the Old Timer’s Games,

Baseball Card Signing Events, Fishing, Golf and took great pride in his home and landscaping.

His first marriage to Wanda McConnell in 1962 brought into the world two daughters, Ronda Lynn and Lori Ann. They divorced after 18 years of marriage. He later met and married Shirley Ann Denton Brants. She brought two sons, Cliff and David Brants into the family.

Roland is preceded in death by his mother Elsie and her two brothers Ray (Evelyn) and Stanley Wallman of Worcester; his father Frank and his thirteen Sheldon siblings, his first wife Wanda Holland (Van), and sister-in-law Jimmie Davis. Survivors include sister Carol Swanberg (Sigurd) of Woodstock, daughter Ronda Sheldon of Texas, daughter Lori Setley (Scott) of Lee’s Summit, granddaughters Sierra and Savannah Setley, wife Shirley Ann Denton Brants, sons Cliff Brants (Patty), David Brants and grandson Drew Brants, niece Karen Swanberg of Woodstock, niece Donna Messier (Mike)and their daughter Becky of Woodstock, niece Terry Randel, niece Angela Rank (Mike)and son Spencer.

Roland has a special place in his heart and is so grateful to Manager Ralph Houk for believing in him and making his dream come true in 1961 of becoming a professional baseball player for the New York Yankees.

Donations may be made to the Woodstock Little League P.O. Box 94 Woodstock, CT 06281 by check or to [@WoodstockCTLittleLeague](mailto:Venmo) in Rollie Sheldon’s name and he will be smiling to know future generations will learn to love Baseball at the Roseland Park Little League Fields.



Sr. Anne Marie Berthiaume, DHS
April 8, 1935 – September 3, 2026



Sr Anne Marie Berthiaume, 91, A member of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit, died on Thursday September 3, 2026 at St Joseph Living Center, Windham, CT.

Born Marie Anne Louise Berthiaume in Waterbury, CT, she was the daughter of Lawrence (Loronzo) Berthiaume and Alice (Beland) Berthiaume. After graduating from Waterbury Catholic High School as the business valedictorian in 1953, she entered the Daughters of the Holy Spirit and professed her vows on April 13, 1955. She was then known as Sr. Lawrence Marie.

After receiving her BA in Education, Sr Anne Marie was a business teacher in CT and VT. In 1962 she was one of the first Daughters of the Holy Spirit to be missioned to Chile. There she held a variety of education positions until 1971 when she returned to Putnam to take on the responsibility of Provincial Secretary. Sr Anne Marie’s next mission in 1978 was as District Coordinator of the DHS in California and Pastoral Minister for the Catholic Churches of Merced, CA as well as on the Pastoral Team of Merced Community Medical Center. This was followed by a 5 year term as a Provincial Councilor in Putnam. She then followed her heart back to California, this time as pastoral minister at Sacred Heart Parish in Patterson. Sr Anne Marie was called

back to CT to again take on the position of Provincial Councilor from 2003 – 2008. She then returned to Patterson where she had left her heart and was involved in many volunteer activities. She returned to the east coast for the last time in 2018 and resided at The Card Home in Willimantic before joining the community at St Joseph Living Center in 2024.

Sr. Anne Marie is survived by the Daughters of the Holy Spirit spiritual family – her Sisters in community, the Consecrated Seculars and the Associates. She was predeceased by her brother Lawrence Bertiaume but is survived by her sister-in-law Carol Berthiaume and her niece Jaime Berthiaume, both in Oklahoma.

Calling hours were held on Saturday September 12, 2026 at 10:00 AM at Corpus Christi Parish/ St Joseph Church, 99 Jackson St., Willimantic, CT with a prayer service at 10:15 AM. A Mass of Christian burial was held at 11:00 AM followed by burial in St. Mary Cemetery in Putnam, CT at 2:00 PM.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the DHS Retirement Fund, P.O. Box 497, Putnam, CT 06260. The Gilman-Valade Funeral Home, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT is in charge of arrangements. For memorial guestbook please visit www.GilmanAndValade.com

Link for live stream <https://www.youtube.com/@CorpusChristiCatholicParish/streams>

How to Submit an Obituary

Guidance in Your Time of Need.

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

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Photos and symbols included at no extra charge.
For obituaries over 400 words, the charge is \$ 250 for each additional 400 words or less.
Please note this price is per newspaper.

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SEND

OBITUARIES

Dorothy M. Butler, 99



Dayville - Dorothy M. Butler, age 99, of Dayville, CT, formerly of Holden, MA and Woodstock, CT, passed away peacefully on September 1, 2026, while being held by her son, Wendell P. Butler

III. Born and raised in Worcester, MA, Dotty was the daughter of the late Nicholas and Clorinda LaConte, and was the ninth of ten siblings. Growing up she was affectionately known as ‘Wiggles’, and that sassy walk and joyful stride matched her ebullient personality for her entire life. She met the love of her life, Wendell P. Butler, Jr., ‘down the lake’ at Lake Quinsigamond. Even though he showed up for their first date in a zoot suit that she thought was awful - prompting her to immediately take him clothes shopping so it would never happen again - they were married in 1954 and shared a remarkable 58 year partnership until his passing in 2013. After his death, her beautiful love story continued as she wrote to him in diaries every single day. Most of their married years were spent in Holden, MA, where Dotty was legendary for bringing high energy to her kids’ sporting events, even humorously tormenting judges and referees. She always had snacks and food at the ready for any visitors, whether human or four-legged. Together Wendell and Dotty were truly best friends, enjoying everything together - especially gardening, traveling, bike riding, long walks, and spending time with their family. Dotty was a rarity in that she grew long

hair in her 90s, forsaking the pixie cut that had been her signature for most of her life. Her snow white hair color was truly beautiful and the envy of all. More than three years ago, she enjoyed a wonderful ‘Act Two’ when she relocated from a lovely apartment at her son’s house in Woodstock, CT, to the Westview Independent Senior Living Center in Dayville, CT. At Westview, she quickly became the belle of the ball and Miss Popularity, making new friends and sprinkling joie de vivre everywhere she went. Almost reaching a 100-year lifespan, Dotty belonged to that precious category of a ‘super-ager’. She was a Super Wife, Super Mom, Super Nana, and a Super GG, and will be remembered fondly by anyone who ever met her. She is survived by her son, Wendell P. Butler III and his wife Beth Butler of Woodstock, CT; two daughters, Claudia Ezra and her husband Neal Ezra of Atlantic Beach, NY; and Heidi Butler and her husband Gary Didio of Plymouth, MA; four grandchildren, Alexander, Natalie, Sophia, and Wendell IV; two great-grandchildren, Oliver and Gemma; and many beloved nieces and nephews. A Celebration of Life will be held at 1:00PM, October 17, 2026, at Miles Funeral Home, located at 1158 Main Street, Holden, MA. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Dotty’s name to: St. Joseph’s Indian School, PO Box 100, Chamberlain, SD 57325-0100 Or to any veteran charity of your choice.



Murial L. Lariviere, 97



WEBSTER - Murial L. (Desilets) Lariviere, 97, died Friday, September 4, 2026 in Lanessa Extended Care Facility after a period of declining health. Her husband of 43 years, Laurent Lariviere, died in 1993. She leaves her companion and caregiver of over 30 years, Jeremiah “Jerry” DiDonato; a nephew, Larry Leclair of South Carolina and also Gerry DiDonato of Dudley; a Niece, Anne Marie of Connecticut and several cousins, including Sister Janine Blanchard of North Grosvenordale, CT. She was preceded in death by her brother Bernard Desilets. She was born at home in North Grosvenordale, CT on May 27, 1929, the daughter of Frank and Flora (Blain) Desilets and graduated from Putnam Catholic Academy in

1946. She moved to Webster in 1996. Muriel was clerk at her family’s store, Desilets Variety in North Grosvenordale, until 1966. She was a member of Saint Joseph’s Church in North Grosvenordale. She loved cooking, baking, shopping, traveling and visiting the casino. She participated in several Poker runs on a Harley Davidson with her dear friend Jerry to sponsor charitable activities. Together they attended many car shows, particularly in Hershey, PA. Her funeral was held on Saturday, September 12, from Scanlon Funeral Service, 38 East Main Street, with a Mass at 11:00 AM in Saint Joseph Church, 12 Main Street, North Grosvenordale. Burial will be held privately. Visitation was held Saturday in the funeral home from 9:30 to 10:30 AM, prior to the Mass. Donations in her name may be made to St. Joseph Food Pantry, c/o St. Therese of Lisieux Parish, PO Box 665, Putnam, CT 06260-0665. www.websterfunerals.com

Albert R. Audet (Brother Thomas Aquinas, MICM) 1947 – 2026



Former Putnam resident Dr. Albert R. Audet, known in religious life as Brother Thomas Aquinas, MICM, died unexpectedly on the feast of St. Rose of Lima, August 30, 2026, in Glendale, California, near his home in Arcadia, where he was recovering from a stay in the hospital. Born on May 10, 1947, in Stamford, Connecticut, to Claire Veilleux of Beauceville and Raymond Audet of Bellechasse, both in the Province of Quebec. His love of and pride in his French-Canadian heritage, and in his beloved French language were quickly apparent to all who met him – second only to the Holy Catholic Faith, to the propagation of which he gave his life. Graduating from Norwalk’s Central Catholic High School in 1966, Albert attended Sacred Heart University for two years, before working at a number of jobs, attempting to discern his future. In 1973 he graduated from the non-denominational American Christian College in Oklahoma, with a B.A. in Bible Study and History, later earning a doctorate in theology from Maranatha Bible College. Moving to Putnam in the early 1970s, in 1974 Albert joined the Connecticut Army National Guard, attaining the rank of sergeant and serving, often full-time, until he left to enter religious life. A popular figure throughout the Putnam area, in addition to his tireless advocacy for the Catholic Faith, he worked selflessly for years on behalf of veterans, the Knights of Columbus and the Boy Scouts of America. Active in Putnam politics, he served as the town’s Republican Registrar of Voters for two years, famously winning election by one write-in vote – his own. Albert sought a vocation with various religious orders, until he joined the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, moving to the Los Angeles area for his vocation in 1986. He would remain there with the Order for the rest of his life. From that time until his death, he distributed Catholic literature, directed enquirers to various parishes, counseled innumerable seekers as to how enter, rejoin, or be reconciled with the Catholic Church. Devoted to the Traditional Latin Mass, he refused to accept internal divisions within

the Faith - so long as the Four Creeds were upheld. Believing in Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus, he took every possible opportunity to find the lost sheep others too easily ignored. Predeceased by his beloved parents and his dear sisters, Marguerite Audet Crescitelli and Marie Therese Audet Holmes, he leaves behind his brothers and sisters in the Order and many nieces and nephews: John Crescitelli (Lisa), Lisa Crescitelli Zala (Jamie), Seth Richards (Kathleen), Jennifer Richards, Kathleen Valentino, Susan Viets, Michael Crescitelli, Teresa Crescitelli Merkle, Diane Crescitelli, Kathy Crescitelli Beiers, Jonathan Prince Holmes (Sarah) of Minnetonka, Minnesota, and their sons Paxton and Kiernan Holmes, Jennifer Robbins Holmes Weston (Gareth) of Hartford, Connecticut, and their children Julia and Andrew Weston, his beloved great-niece, Olivia Crescitelli; his Coulombe cousins in California, especially Charles, Augustine and Guy; his brothers in Cargill Council 64, Knights of Columbus in Putnam and the Mayotte-Viens American Legion Post 13, also in Putnam and many devoted friends throughout California and Connecticut – especially Edouard Patron, Ignatius Duggan, Mario Marquez, Chris Iseley, Rico Aguirre, David Meunier, Sr., David Meunier, Jr., Alan Rondeau and John D. Ryan. Of your charity, please pray for the repose of his soul and for the consolation of his family and friends. A Mass of Christian Burial to be held at St. Mary Church of the Visitation, 218 Providence Street in Putnam on Friday, September 25, at 11:00 a.m., with military honors to be rendered by the Mayotte-Viens American Legion Post 13. Cargill Council 64, Knights of Columbus, will hold a public memorial service in the church immediately before the Mass, at 10:45 a.m. A public burial will follow the next day, Friday, September 26, at 10:00 a.m. in the Audet family plot in New Sacred Heart Cemetery, 559 Mount Pleasant Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts. Funeral arrangements are entrusted to the Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory 104 Church St., Putnam. For memorial guest-book please visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.



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

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LEGALS

Woodstock Hist Dist Comm public hearing Sept 23, 2026, 6:30 pm for Woodstock Hill Cemetery Assoc, Woodstock Hill Burying Yard, Hill Cemetery Rd, for vault repair and retaining wall; Dawson, 528 Rt 169 for two run-in sheds. G White, Chair. September 18, 2026

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
TOWN OF POMFRET
PLANNING AND ZONING
COMMISSION**

The Pomfret Planning & Zoning Commission will hold the following Public Hearing(s) at the regular meeting on September 30, 2026, starting at 7:00 PM.

1. **26-6SP, 61 Wade Rd, Alex Jezeriski** requesting a special permit to construct a 72’x48’ storage building with 32’x20’ open sided lean-to off back of building. Frost wall and slab foundation. Stick frame construction. A copy of this application is on file in the office of the Planning & Zoning Commission, 5 Haven Road, Pomfret Center, Connecticut. The file is available for review during normal business hours.

**Town of Pomfret
Planning & Zoning Commission
Dated this 19th day of August 2026
Sarah Healey, Land Use Clerk
September 11, 2026
September 18, 2026**

**Town of Putnam
Inland Wetland Commission
Legal Notice**

The Town of Putnam Inland Wetland Commission held a hybrid meeting on September 9, 2026, in Room 201 of the Municipal Complex located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. APPROVALS were granted for the following: Application # 2026-07 Ryan Krohn - 204 Park Road, Installation of underground utilities Application # 2026-08 Strategic Commercial Realty, Inc. - 28, 44, & 48 Technology Park Drive, Excavation & Removal – 1.9 million cubic yards of rock. Application # 2026-09 Town of Putnam - Wicker Street, Bridge No. 115011; repair over Wheaton Brook Adam Paquin, Chairman. September 18, 2026

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Arthur J Miller (26-00361)**

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated September 4, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Lisa Miller & Clifford Miller c/o STEPHEN ROBERT TURNER SEABOURNE, MALLEY & TURNER, 30 MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 487, THOMASTON, CT 06787, (860)283-3147. September 18, 2026

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Daren W Lucchesi,
AKA Darren W Lucchesi (26-00329)**

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated August 28, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure

to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Darcy L Palmer & Tara L Sherman c/o EDWIN C HIGGINS, EDWIN C. HIGGINS III, 168 MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 528, PUTNAM, CT 06260 September 18, 2026

**Borough of Danielson
Notice of Public Hearing**

The legal inhabitants of the Borough of Danielson qualified to vote at Borough meetings are hereby notified that a Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 7 p.m. at the Danielson Fire Station, 47 Academy Street, Second Floor, Danielson, CT for the following purpose to wit:

1. Authorization from qualified others to allocate \$64,000.00 funds received from the Borough Treasurer’s Account to the Protective Clothing line item of the Fire Department Operating Expenses. Date this 8th day of September 2026 Janice Thurlow, Administrator September 18, 2026

Paws Cat Shelter to hold chicken BBQ fundraiser

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter is hosting its 11th Annual Chicken BBQ fundraiser on Sunday, Sept. 27 from 5-6:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 68 Providence St. in Putnam

Meal includes half chicken, baked potato, salad and roll. Eat in or take out. Tickets are \$15 each and can be purchased at Paws Cat Shelter, 74 School St., Putnam, Joseph Jewelers, 153 School St., Putnam and at Knights of Columbus.

Paws is a non-profit, all volunteer organization caring for the cats of our communities. For more info or how you can donate, contact Paws at 860-315-1228.

*Celebrate the International Day of Peace
with Greater Putnam Interfaith Council*

PUTNAM — The Greater Putnam Interfaith Council invites residents to a celebration in honor of the United Nations International Day of Peace on Thursday, Sept. 24 at 6:30 p.m. The program will be held at the Daughters of the Holy Spirit offices, 508 Pomfret St., featuring music, readings, and prayers. Donations will be collected for the Putnam Congregational Church, which recently suffered damage from a ceiling collapse.

Quiet Corner Al-Anon group meets Wednesdays

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

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

Why are more trees failing in Northeastern Connecticut?

REGION — If it seems like more trees have been coming down in recent years, you're not imagining it.

Across northeastern Connecticut, homeowners in communities like Putnam, Pomfret, Woodstock, Thompson, Killingly, Brooklyn, and surrounding towns have experienced stronger storms, heavier rainfall, and damaging wind events that have taken a toll on our trees. Combined with the lingering effects of the spongy moth outbreak, these conditions have contributed to an increase in hazardous trees and property damage throughout the region.

At Stately Tree Service, we've seen a noticeable increase in calls from homeowners dealing with fallen limbs, uprooted trees, and trees that appeared healthy from the outside but were actually weakened from within.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that a tree must look dead before it becomes dangerous. In reality, many hazardous trees still have green leaves and appear healthy while suffering from internal decay, structural damage, or weakened root systems.

Many homeowners may also remember the widespread gypsy moth infestation that affected our region several years ago. While many trees survived the initial outbreak, repeated defoliation left thousands of oaks under significant stress. Today, we're still seeing the effects, as many of those weakened trees continue to decline and become more vulnerable to failure during storms.

Weather has only added to the problem. Prolonged periods of heavy rain can saturate the soil, reducing the stability of a tree's root system. When strong winds follow, even trees that have stood for decades may suddenly uproot or lose large limbs.

Homeowners should periodically inspect the trees on their property, especially after severe weather. Warning signs may include dead or hanging branches, cracks in the trunk, mushrooms or fungal growth near the base, thinning canopies, exposed roots, or a tree that has recently begun leaning. While these signs don't always mean a tree needs to be removed, they shouldn't be ignored.

Our region is known for its beautiful, mature trees, which add character, shade, and value to our homes and communities. Taking a proactive approach to tree safety can help reduce the risk of property damage and improve safety for homeowners, neighbors, and anyone enjoying the outdoors.

As weather patterns continue to change and the long-term effects of the gypsy moth outbreak remain evident across northeastern Connecticut, regular tree inspections and early action can make all the difference in preventing avoidable damage.

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JAMES GLICKMAN
Principal

508-769-5007

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