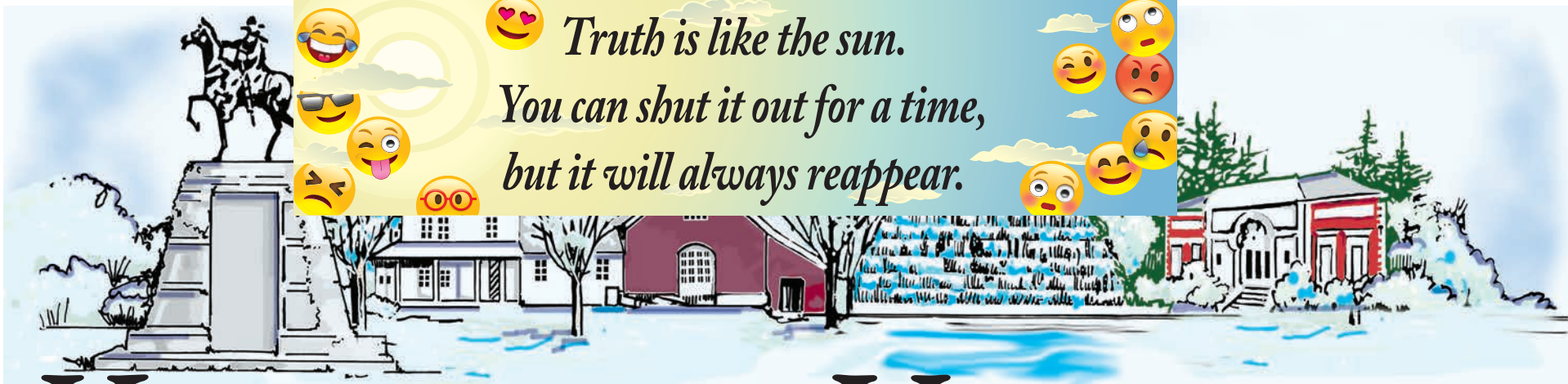




KILLINGLY VILLAGER

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Friday, February 20, 2026

Complimentary to homes by request

Day Kimball’s Tree of Life ceremony raises \$33,500 for Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern CT



Thompson Congregational Church set to begin reconstruction

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

THOMPSON — It’s been ten years since a fire severely damaged one of Thompson’s most recognizable landmarks, the Thompson Congregational Church, and now the rebuild effort appears to be proceeding into its final steps to reconstruct the most damaged parts of the facility.

Nestled in the center of town overlooking the Thompson Common, the Thompson Congregational Church has been one of the town’s most recognizable structures for 170 years. In 2016, it was struck by a devastating blaze that severely damaged the back of the church and caused the roof to collapse. In the years since, a rebuild effort has sought to procure funding and support to rebuild the church using the remaining structure as the base. Those efforts are now moving forward according to a press release posted on the church’s Facebook page, thanks to the recent approval from the Connecticut Historical Preservation Council for a \$180,000 Historic Restoration Fund matching grant award which church representatives said was the largest issued by the state from that fund in 2025.

Those funds, combined with a \$500,000 grant previously announced through the National Park Service, will allow the church to officially begin the first phase of its reconstruction, according to Church Rebuild Chair Bruce Hall.

“This approval reflects years of thoughtful planning and continuous leadership stewarding the rebuild effort, along with a shared commitment to the congregation and the Thompson community,” said Bruce Hall in a statement. “The congregation has unanimously supported moving forward, and both federal and state agencies have provided funding after careful review of the plans for the project. With that work complete, we can now begin restoring the historic church as close as possible to what it once was.”

The church is in its final architectural review which would allow them to access the National Park Service Grant. With that grant and the Historical Restoration Fund money now secured, the project is slated to go out to bid for Phase 1 of the rebuild this spring.

The plans include not only restoring the sanctuary, but also the development of the Thompson Hill of Hope Center to support services including adult education, youth and senior programming, preschool services, concerns, and more. Overall, the reconstruction effort is quoted as a \$2.2 million investment, with around 40 percent funded through the state and federal grants and historical tax credits.

The fire in 2016 was deemed accidental due to an electrical issue in the basement of the church. Architectural firm Evelyn Cole Smith Architects, LLC is leading the reconstruction effort. It’s possible that the church’s reconstruction could be well underway before the congregation’s 300th anniversary in 2030.

Family and friends gather in Putnam to light the Tree of Life in honor of Elizabeth (Betty) Smith. Pictured, left to right: Rev. Jonathan Scott, Chaplain, Day Kimball Health; Collette Emery Currier, Executive Director, Creamery Brook Village; Honorary Tree Lighters Bart Smith and granddaughter, Danielle Smith; and Simonne Braise, Physical Therapy Assistant, Day Kimball Health.

PUTNAM — On Sunday, Dec. 7, families and friends gathered on village greens in 11 communities across northeast Connecticut for Day Kimball Health’s 36th annual Hospice Tree of Life ceremony. This year’s tree-lighting tradition raised \$33,500 to support hospice and palliative care services in the region.

Roger Franklin, a long-time volunteer of more than 22 years, served as the cam-

paign’s chairperson.

Supported by local clergy, civic organizations, community members, and hospice staff and volunteers, the ceremonies were held in the towns of Brooklyn, Canterbury, Danielson, Eastford, Griswold, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Sterling, Thompson, and Woodstock. Trees at each location were

Turn To TREE page A10

Killingly officials plan public hearing on PFAS

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — In his continued update on PFAS issues affecting the Rogers neighborhood of Killingly, Town Manager Brian Palaia said the focus is now beginning to turn to determining a cause and providing a public forum for citizens to learn all the details of the contamination.

In January, Palaia confirmed that more than 100 homes had been contacted for testing, and an estimated 78 homes had gone through with the process. At a meeting of the Town Council on Feb. 10, he confirmed earlier reports that around 66 homes had tested positive. Additional testing began before Christmas, but results had not been reported as of that meeting. Meanwhile, state agencies remain perplexed as to where the contamination began, and citizens are seeking a more focused meeting to stay informed about the situation.

Reports about PFAS have now become a common segment of Palaia’s monthly report to the Town Council as numbers continue to trickle in showing a growing number of impacted homes. Members of the Council confirmed they have heard demands for a PFAS-focused informational session. Palaia said they are planning a public meeting with the Department of Public Health, tentatively scheduled for April 8, to provide a complete update to the citizens on the PFAS situation and what is being done to resolve the contamination and determine a source. A specific time and place for that meeting has yet to be announced.

Meanwhile, Palaia confirmed there weren’t many new details to report on the testing, only that state agencies are starting to put more focus on determining the origin of the contamination.

“They are getting to the phase of their work where they’re going to be more seriously looking at the investigation of where the source is and where it is going,” said Palaia. “They haven’t been seriously engaged in that part of the work yet. They’ve been focused on doing the test results, getting the remediation systems installed, and retesting some of the wells, so they don’t really have an accurate sense yet of where it’s going. They say doing that work may take them up to a year.”

Previous assumptions were that the source was the fire training site in Rogers, but those assumptions have been unofficially debunked. State agencies now believe that a

Turn To PFAS page A10

Quiet Corner Veterans Support Coalition donates to fellow support group



Presenting the check from Quiet Corner Veterans Support Coalition are coordinator/founder Patti George; location coordinators Jennifer Hegedus (absent from the picture) and Tammy Wakefield; volunteers Tammy Browning, Laurie Matrone, Mary Cazeault; and Emily Williams, volunteer and coordinator for RI National Cemetery. Dr. Keven McNeill and Hope are accepting the donation for Quiet Corner Peer Support Group.

DANIELSON — Quiet Corner Veterans Support Coalition is proud to support the work of the Quiet Corner Peer Support Group as they provide much needed services for our first responders and veterans in the region. The safety and security of our community is ensured by the work of these brave men and women who often encounter difficult and distressing situations that can leave

indelible emotional and physical marks on those individuals.

Quiet Corner Veterans Support Coalition was founded to remember and honor our veterans and to teach the next generation about our veterans and their sacrifices through the Wreaths Across America program. Every wreath that is sponsored affords us the opportunity to give back to our veteran com-

munity. The mission of the Quiet Corner Peer Support Group is to provide support to first responders and veterans at no cost and in a safe environment to promote physical and mental healing for active and retired first responders and veterans. What better cause could there be for us to get behind.

If you would like to support Quiet Corner Veterans Support Coalition in its mis-

sion, contact Patti George at www.wreathsassamerica.org/CT0149P.

If you would like to support the Quiet Corner Peer Support Group in its mission, info@qcps.net.

If you are a first responder or veteran that is in need of help, please contact Quiet Corner Peer Support Group at info@qcps.net, or 860-270-0911, and for mental health emergencies, dial #988 or #211.

Courtesy

Killingly Public Schools launches second installation of Art Around Town Artwork Trail

KILLINGLY — Killingly Public Schools (KPS) is proud to announce the launch of the second installation of the Art Around Town Artwork Trail, a creative collaboration between the school district and local businesses that celebrates student talent, creativity, and community connection.

The first Art Around Town installation was on display from May 2025 through December 2025, drawing community members into local spaces to experience student artwork and photography. Building on its success, the second installation continues this momentum, further strengthening connections between schools, families, businesses, and the broader community.

Art Around Town highlights the creativity, skill, and achievements of KPS students from Preschool- Grade 12 through artwork and photography displayed throughout the community. Serving students from 11 towns across Northeast Connecticut, Killingly Public Schools offers rich learning experiences and opportunities, and this exhibit brings student stories to life beyond the classroom.

Each piece reflects students' unique perspectives, talents, and potential. The project celebrates the arts while reinforcing KPS's role in shaping future leaders, strengthening the workforce, and nur-



turing engaged citizens. Students, families, staff, and community members are invited to explore the trail and experience the promise of the next generation through

their creative work.

Student artwork and photography are currently featured at the following locations:

- Sugarz Bakery
- Killingly Public Library (Children's, Young Adult, and Computer Sections)
- Two Dogs Coffee Shop
- Chubby Dog Coffee Co.
- Pourings and Passages Bookstore (Young Adult and Children's Sections)
- Sweet Peas Fine Foods (Brooklyn)
- The Vanilla Bean Café (Pomfret)
- Killingly Board of Education Meeting Room

To make the experience even more engaging, students are invited to participate in a scavenger hunt as they explore the artwork around town, with opportunities to win small prizes.

Jim Weigel, Proprietor of Pourings and Passages Bookstore, stated, "The student art display was a big hit! It was so good to see such wonderful products from the young talented artists in our school district. We've seen so many more families visit us on their scavenger hunt who never knew our store existed."

Brittany, owner of Two Dogs Coffee Shop, stated, "I love that the artwork represents different ages. We have a kids' corner here, so when families come in, and children see the artwork on the walls, we can say, 'One day, your artwork could be here too.'"

For location addresses, scavenger hunt maps, and additional information, visit www.killinglyschools.org, select Community Partnerships in the top right corner, then click on Art Around Town, or visit: www.killinglyschools.org/community-partnerships-new/artwork-around-town

While visiting participating locations, community members are encouraged to scan the red QR code displayed at each site to leave a message for the student artists or share feedback on the displays.

Killingly Public Schools extends its gratitude to the Community Engagement Committee for bringing this idea to life, the art teachers across the district for their continued support, and, most importantly, the talented students who generously share their creativity with the community.

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.

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC

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- CLUES ACROSS
1. Cut quickly

5. A way to state clearly

11. River in NE Scotland

14. Expansive

15. Lacking social polish

16. Amount of time

17. Frame

19. Automobile

20. Toadstools

21. High school dances

22. Utilize

23. Experimented with

25. One-sided

27. Acquisitive

31. Potted plants

34. Everyone has one

35. Kalahari Desert lake

38. Unidentified flying object

39. People 65 and over
41. Small amount

42. Daughter of Acrisius

44. Ornamental box

45. Government agents

46. Uncertain

49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish

51. Treeless plains

55. One's sense of self-importance

56. Consumer advocate

60. Type of lounge

61. Body part

62. Can be persuaded

64. Woman (French)

65. Ready and willing to be taught

66. Arab ruler title

67. Unhappy

68. Gradually went away

69. Able to think clearly

- CLUES DOWN
1. Brushed

2. Small water spirit (Germ.)

3. Heroes

4. Monetary units

5. Some don't want to share theirs

6. Free-swimming invertebrate

7. Litigates

8. Outer

9. Parallelograms

10. Uneasy feelings

11. Cross

12. A way to remove

13. Pages can be dog-__

18. Ukrainian city

24. A citizen of Denmark

26. Month

28. Hindu queens

29. Group of chemicals

30. Rider of Rohan

31. Wet dirt
32. Southwestern Russia city

33. Observed

36. Angry

37. Drivers' licenses

39. Musical composition

40. Auction

43. They __

45. Women

47. Be filled with love for

48. Thick-soled sock

49. Appears

50. Old World lizard

52. The leading performer

53. Protein

54. "Gunga Din" script writer

57. Art __, around 1920

58. __ Blyton, children's author

59. Abnormal breathing

63. A place to rest

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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Courtesy

Tomson "Huck" Flanagan has been named to the Highest honors Dean's List at the University of New Hampshire for the fall 2025 semester. Students named to the Dean's List at the University of New Hampshire are students who have earned recognition through their superior scholastic performance during a semester enrolled in a full-time course load (12 or more graded credits). Highest honors are awarded to students who earn a semester grade point average of 3.85 or better out of a possible 4.0. In addition, Flanagan, a senior at UNH, is also named to the CAA Football Commissioner's Honor Roll. This recognition honors student-athletes who earn a 3.5 GPA or greater during their competition season. The University of New Hampshire (UNH) football team is a Division I team.

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Killingly in February 1776

Inclement Weather: In case of snow, freezing rain or mixed precipitation please listen to WINY for notices about the Killingly Historical Center closings. You may also call the Center's phone about 10:15 a.m. or later and see if anyone answers.

The Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar is open by appointment. It will be open Feb. 28 during Fire & Ice from noon to 4 p.m. Stop in with your children or grandchildren and enjoy making a craft. For additional information, please call (860) 207-6044 and leave a message. Pomfret Historical Society Fireside Chat. Feb. 20, 7-8 p.m. Vanilla Bean Café. Topic will be The Amazing Mrs. Whistler, the mother of artist James Whistler. For more information, contact windsong@snet.net or call 860-465-7228.

Stop in the Putnam Library throughout the month of February and view the tiny art exhibit. A number of the artworks celebrate America's 250th anniversary.

Fish Fridays: Support Killingly Grange #112, an historic property (the old Killingly Centre schoolhouse) 801 Hartford Turnpike. Feb. 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27; and April 3 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Meal 1: Baked or Fried Fish dinner \$18-10 oz. fish fillet, potato, coleslaw, roll, dessert, drink. Meal 2: Clam cakes & chowder, \$12-6 clam cakes and 1 bowl of clam chowder. Al la Carte while supplies last: clam strips \$10; Clam cakes: 6 for \$8, 12 for \$14; clam chowder, \$6/bowl; Fried fish sandwich-\$5; Onion rings-\$4; French fries-\$3; Cheese sticks-\$3. Limited number of meals. Call or text Terry at 860-885-1813. At the door pay by cash, credit card or check payable to Killingly Grange.

\$1 per meal discount if you bring a non-perishable food item for the food pantry.

Saturday, March 7. Mary Dixon Kies of Killingly and Her Times. 12:30-1:30 p.m. Putnam Municipal Complex. Sponsored by Putnam Public Library and the Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam. Join Killingly Municipal Historian Margaret Weaver for a Women's History Month program. Mary is considered the first woman to receive a U.S. Patent in her own name. Reflect on why she applied for the patent and how life was changing in Northeastern Connecticut in the early 1800's. There will be time for questions and discussion following the program.

Have you been watching the Winter Olympics from Italy? I have. How they have changed since I was young! I was curious about how long snowboarding had been an Olympic event. An internet search revealed the following: "Snowboarding has been in the Winter Olympics for 28 years, making its official debut at the 1998 Nagano Games. It was introduced with men's and women's giant slalom and half-pipe events, and has since expanded to include snowboard cross, slopestyle, big air, and mixed team events." (AI) I love watching the halfpipe, but do find that it makes me very nervous to see men and women soaring so high. I keep praying no one will be seriously injured.

Without a doubt, my favorite events are the ice skating ones. As a young child I was so impressed that my father could cut figure eights into the ice. Are you old enough to remember when doing figures was actually part of the Olympic event? How many remember Connecticut's Dorothy Hamill who won the Gold Medal at the 1976 Winter Olympics in Innsbruck Austria? Part of me misses the gracefulness of the skaters of yesteryear. It seems to be all about the jumping now. C'est la vie! Time marches on.

I recently attended a 250th meeting in Putnam. That made me wonder what



KILLINGLY
AT
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MARGARET
WEAVER

was going on in February 1776, 250 years ago. Keep in mind that Connecticut was still a British colony since America had not yet declared its independence. George Washington and his troops were still facing off and encircling the British in Boston. They "made major strides in February. Supplies and cannon from Fort Ticonderoga were being moved into place under Henry Knox's daring 'Noble Train of Artillery.' By month's end, Washington was preparing to fortify Dorchester Heights—an action that would soon force the British to evacuate the city entirely... Colonial vessels—authorized to capture British ships—became a crucial tool in disrupting British supply lines and fueling economic support for the Patriot cause.* February marked one of the first large waves of American privateer activity... Thomas Paine's Common Sense (released in January 1776) was spreading like wildfire throughout the colonies by February. Its bold call for independence reshaped public debate, convincing thousands of colonists that reconciliation with Britain was no longer an option." *In eastern Connecticut both Norwich and New London were actively engaged in constructing and outfitting privateers.

"February 1776 is often overshadowed by later events, but it was one of the most important months in the buildup to independence. It shows how the Revolution wasn't just won on the battlefield—it was forged in town meetings, pamphlets, military planning sessions, and everyday conversations that slowly united a people around a shared vision. It's the moment the colonies began thinking—and acting—like an independent nation". (https://www.rochestermtours.com/blog_posts/the-american-revolution-in-february-1776-rising-pressure-rising-resolve/#:~:text=Rochester%20Trolley%20&%20Tour%20Co.,rules%20and%20commissions%20for%20privateer.ing.)

Conflicts were also arising in the Southern colonies. Being from Pennsylvania, and then living in Connecticut since 1967, I hadn't learned the South was involved in the conflict at such an early date. Have you heard of the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, which occurred on Feb. 27, 1776? I hadn't. The

"Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge (was) often called the 'Lexington and Concord of the South;' this was the first decisive Patriot victory in the southern colonies. A force of North Carolina Patriots defeated nearly 1,600 Loyalists (mostly Scottish Highlanders), ending British authority in North Carolina and stalling a planned invasion of the South". (AI). Keep in mind that there were a number of Loyalists in the Colonies, and some decided to fight during the Revolution on the British side.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, February 2026. For additional information email me at margaretm-weaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at

196 Main St., Danielson, Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistorical-society.

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Adult Classes:

Mon:	5:30 – 7 pm	Drawing
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	5:30 – 7pm	Oil Painting

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Fairfield University congratulates Fall Dean's List

FAIRFIELD — Sydney Lundt and Madison Whitehouse received Dean's List Honors for the Fall 2025 semester at Fairfield University.

In order to be placed on the Dean's List, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours in a semester, have no outstanding or incomplete grades for that semester, and have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better.

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The value of getting it right

There is a temptation in small-town life to rush.

Rush to finish a project before the next storm. Rush to approve a plan before a deadline. Rush to respond to controversy before the next round of social media commentary takes hold.

But one of the quiet strengths of Northeast Connecticut has always been something different: a willingness to slow down and get it right.

Across the Quiet Corner, town boards are deep into the unglamorous but essential work of budgets, facility upgrades and long-term planning. These discussions are rarely headline-grabbing. They involve spreadsheets, state reimbursement formulas, building codes and timelines. They require patience.

That patience is not weakness. It is discipline.

When a town considers a major school improvement project, such as heating and ventilation upgrades, it is not merely weighing cost. It is asking whether the proposal is sound, whether reimbursement is realistic, whether bidding procedures are correct, and whether the community understands the long-term financial impact. Getting those steps wrong can delay projects for years and erode public trust.

Likewise, when officials respond to public complaints or legal questions, the answer is not always what some residents want to hear. Constitutional limits, zoning regulations and state statutes shape what municipalities can and cannot do. Local leaders are bound by those frameworks whether the issue involves signage, land use, or public safety concerns.

In moments like these, it is easy for frustration to overshadow perspective.

Yet the rule of law and the rule of process are not bureaucratic obstacles. They are safeguards. They protect everyone, even when outcomes feel imperfect.

The same can be said for community institutions. Libraries forming partnerships with local businesses. Historical societies honoring veterans. Nonprofits organizing concerts or fundraisers. Each of these efforts reflects a deliberate approach. They do not happen overnight. They require planning, coordination and follow-through.

The truth is that strong communities are built not through dramatic gestures, but through consistent attention to detail.

Residents sometimes ask why things take so long. Why does a grant application stretch over months? Why must a building committee be reappointed? Why are public hearings required? The answer is simple: accountability.

Transparency and procedure can feel slow, but they create confidence. When taxpayers see that decisions are vetted carefully and openly, trust grows. And trust is the currency that keeps small towns functioning.

This is particularly important as we move deeper into budget season. Municipal and school officials will soon be presenting proposals that affect property taxes, capital reserves and long-term infrastructure. Some proposals will be popular. Others will invite scrutiny.

The best outcome is not the loudest one. It is the one that has been examined thoroughly and explained clearly.

Civic life in our part of the state works best when residents stay engaged without becoming reactive. Ask questions. Attend meetings when you can. Read summaries. Reach out respectfully to elected officials. But also recognize the complexity behind many of these decisions.

Getting it right often means resisting the urge to get it fast.

In an era where national politics rewards speed, spectacle and outrage, the steady pace of local governance may seem dull by comparison. It is not.

It is careful. It is grounded. And it is precisely what allows our towns to remain stable, predictable and resilient.

In the end, the strength of Northeast Connecticut lies in this simple principle: do the work, follow the process, and take the time necessary to get it right.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Emilio’s numbers are false and misleading

To the Editor:

After reading Pomfret Selectman Martha Emilo’s letter to the Editor in the Feb. 13 Villager in which the Selectman stated “property taxes have increased by more than 10 percent per year on average over the past five years,” I felt a response was needed. The Selectman’s numbers are factually false. Pomfret Board of Finance member Christian Smutnick was kind enough to run the numbers for the annual taxes imposed with this equation, “grand list / 1000 * mill rate”. Here are the increases year over year including town and fire district tax. No way near greater than 10 percent per year.

25 - 26	2.87	percent
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24 - 25	1.99	percent
23 - 24	4.41	percent
22 - 23	4.26	percent
21 - 22	2.83	percent

If Selectman Emilo attended more Board of Finance meetings and cooperated with other boards in good faith, the Selectman may have a better understanding of the budget process. Writing misleading op-eds with incorrect information insinuating corruption and backroom deals does nothing but insult our elected officials, volunteers, staff and the Town of Pomfret.

RAYMOND E. WISHART, JR.
POMFRET

Profit over people: Who wins when environmental protections are rolled back?

To the Editor:

Who benefits from Trump’s Environmental Protection Agency’s repeal of the Endangerment Findings on greenhouse gases? Fossil fuel companies and automakers. Industries that have long opposed limits on the pollution they produce will now face fewer restrictions. For them, fewer regulations mean lower compliance costs and higher profits.

But what does that mean for us?

Do you like drinking clean water that isn’t contaminated with toxic chemicals? Polyfluoroalkyl substances, known as PFAS or “forever chemicals,” are man-made compounds used in industrial processes, nonstick cookware, food packaging, and firefighting foams. They don’t break down easily. Instead, they seep into soil, rivers, lakes, and groundwater through industrial discharge, landfill runoff, and stormwater.

Millions of Americans have been exposed to PFAS through drinking water near military bases, airports, and manufacturing plants. Exposure has been linked to higher cholesterol, immune system suppression, and certain cancers, including kidney and testicular cancer. Erik Olson of the National Resources Defense Council told ABC News that PFAS contamination is “sprinkled in every single state in the country.” Even here in the Northeast corner, in Killingly, DEEP has confirmed wells have tested positive for PFAS.

Clean air is just as important. Smog and soot contribute to asthma, heart disease, and cancer. Greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane trap heat in the atmosphere. They come from coal, industrial smokestacks, oil and gas wells, and vehicle tailpipes. Regulations that limit these emissions exist for a reason. They protect public health and the environment.

This Administration doesn’t think we need regulations. It believes climate change is a hoax. Instead of proving its belief in court with scientific proof, that it cannot substantiate, it took

the path of least resistance by rolling back EPA regulations by Executive Order. For those who believe in science as opposed to industry polluters who put profit over people, the evidence is indisputable that coal and acid rain, caused by burning fossil fuels, adversely affects humans and the Earth.

The current administration argues that regulations burden businesses and slow economic growth. Scientist counter that weakening environmental protections shifts the costs from corporations to families, who bear them in the form of health issues, medical bills, contaminated water, and climate-related disasters.

We saw a small example of the human impact on air quality during the COVID-19 pandemic. As travel slowed and fewer cars filled the roads, air pollution temporarily dropped in many cities. It was brief, but it showed how closely human activity and air quality are linked. Even our exposure to COVID-19 is said to be the result of human land-use change, we’ve encroached and degraded nature so much that we are reaping the results of our human contact with wildlife.

Scientists continue to warn that greenhouse gases are causing the planet to warm at a dangerous pace. Rising temperatures contribute to stronger storms, melting glaciers, coral reef loss, and prolonged droughts. These are real problems. They affect food supply, property, insurance costs, and public health. Who should bear the cost of pollution? The companies that produce it, or the public forced to live with it.

If clean water and clean air matter to you, speak up. Contact your members of Congress. Environmental protections were built over decades because Americans demanded them. They can be preserved the same way.

Let’s leave the planet in better shape than we found it.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

Emilio will have ample opportunity for input on Pomfret’s budget

To the Editor:

After reading Ms. Emilio’s letter to the Editor in the Feb. 13 Woodstock Villager, as a former member of the Pomfret Board of Finance and a selectman, I don’t share the same opinion on how the budgets are prepared. I may not always have agreed with the outcome, but the budgets are prepared by individual town boards and commissions and various offices in the town. The selectmen put the numbers together and tweak them.

As a member of the Board of Selectmen, Ms. Emilio will have direct input in the town budget, prepared by the Board of Selectmen. There is also opportunity for her or any other citizen to speak with any Board or Commission, or Town Office to see how those budgets are prepared. There are many opportunities to attend budget meetings and hearings to provide input and sometimes dialogue, providing the dialogue is civil and meaningful. Once the budget is prepared, it can also be found on the town Web site. The final input is at a town meeting where the budgets are decided.

Education, which needs to be redefined.

The Board of Finance has the last say, as it approves both the Municipal and Board of Education budget. While the Board of Finance can reduce the municipal budget line by line, it can only reduce the Board of Education budget by a specific amount, leaving the Board of Education with the task of reducing the various lines.

Get involved and stay informed. Talk to your selectmen and to your Board of Education representative if you have questions. Sign up for the E-Alerts from the town with this link: <https://www.pomfretct.gov/subscribe>.

PETER B. MANN
POMFRET CENTER

Letter submission policy

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

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

Dear Reader

I have written for the paper since its founding about 20 years ago, or about 900 columns. I’m grateful to the late David Cutler, who hired me while I was having lunch at 85 Main in Putnam, and to Frank Chilinski, the Publisher, for providing a place for me to share my thoughts with you over all these years.

Ironically, about the same time as I was asked to cut back the frequency of my column earlier this year, a number of journalists and columnists were notified that they would be let go from the Washington Post. I don’t put my writing in the same category as them, but it does feel as if the winds of change are swirling into a tempest that strikes at the heart of individual columnists and reporters.

Locally, we have seen the end of columns by Marge Hoskins and Charlene Perkins Cutler, Ron Coderre, Kathy Naumann and so many more. When I was young, Mrs. Gilbert Danielson wrote a column that covered the goings-on in my little town, including mention of trips my mother and I took to Hartford to shop. Columns are sometimes hyper-local.

We subscribe to Yankee Magazine as an almost religious obligation. It captures the flavor of our region better than our state magazine, which focuses on ritzy Fairfield County. Mel Allen, writer and editor for 40 years of Yankee, retired this year and compiled 40 of his columns into a book, which I bought. The stories are good, of course, and have a redemptive theme that we all love. Small town people and smalltown life work in mysterious ways, but move toward good. That’s the gist of most of them. I’ll never be convinced that isn’t the truth, just perhaps not entirely.

Readers sometimes see the uglier side of individual communication in this paper’s letters to the Editor. We also read writers’ solutions to seeming intractable political and human problems. When the conversations leap to national or even international issues, biases can swamp logic and reasoned argument. The authors work hard on their letters, often writing week after week. Their names become familiar as do their arguments.

If Tom Paine or Sam Adams, who kickstarted the American Revolution through their writing, were around today, they would recognize the tradition and the passion these writers, predominantly men, possess. They would defend it. I defend it philosophically even if I often don’t always read the letters. That’s how I exercise my freedom.

The pace and nature of the changes in our county and our world is real. I feel like a dinosaur when I reflect on my upbringing, but a love of words, a response to poetry, a belief in good manners, devotion to traditions, loyalty to people just because I grew up with them, and not wearing white shoes before Memorial Day are just basic.

AI can write a column in seconds, and for free. It can create stories much like mine. So far it can’t chat with friends at the Y or watch a little girl dance in the aisle at her baptism, but it may. Reading and writing. Talking and thinking. Connecting to others through words and images. These things matter. Once a month, I will share observations filtered through my faith that we live to communicate, enjoy nature and each other, and find what’s good.

For Advertising Information

Call 860-928-1818 Ext. 326

email: mikaela@villagernewspapers.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A beacon of hope and resilience

To the Editor:

I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Quiet Corner Peer Support Group and Dr. Keven McNeill for your extraordinary work. QCPS will be a beacon of hope and resilience for trauma sufferers. Built upon decades of first responder experience, your organization is uniquely positioned to address the profound and often unseen trauma faced by those confronting life's most difficult challenges.

Your dedication to peer support reflects a deep commitment to mental health in professions that often go unrecognized for the emotional toll they carry. This work not only supports those who serve but also strengthens the communities they protect. This mission is vital, timely, and profoundly impactful.

Dr. McNeill, having seen you grow from a young kid into the benefactor you are today, I can see how your leadership and expertise have been instrumental in shaping this vision and expanding its reach. Your ability to combine professional experience with genuine empathy creates a safe and healing space. The compassion demonstrated by everyone involved in the Quiet Corner Support Group inspires hope and encourages others to seek support without stigma.

As you continue this important journey, I wish you ongoing success and the fulfillment that comes from making a real difference. Your work matters deeply, and its positive effects will be felt for years to come. I am so proud of you.

Congratulations once again on all you have achieved, and for the incredible support you provide.

Warmest regards,

MIKE BOGDANSKI
PUTNAM

Say their names

To the Editor:

Why is it that current political-speak rejects the full words? Diversity. Equity. Inclusion. It is indeed difficult to dismiss the values lurking behind the full-bodied statement of those words.

What if, as Pete Buttigieg once suggested, we explore their opposites? The opposite of diversity is uniformity. The opposite of equity? inequity. Opposite of inclusion? exclusion. Teasing out meaning in this manner uncovers the spirit of vitality, fairness, justice. It's easy - and safe - to speak in dehumanizing code such as FYI, IRS, OMG. But codifying to DEI removes the personhood and exonerates the speaker from recognizing that behind the categories are real flesh and blood human beings who are our coworkers, our neighbors, our friends, our family.

So refuse the dehumanizing acronym. Claim the real values behind those words. And Say Their Names.

KAREN RYKER
WOODSTOCK

What's happened to Martha?

To the Editor:

Martha Emilio, as head of the Pomfret Proprietors, was Pomfret's cheerleader for many years. Now, sadly, she has become obsessed with trashing our town leaving many wondering 'what's happened to Martha?' Accusations of high crimes and misdemeanors in the town hall, hidden agendas, back room deals, and forever and always 'No Transparency.' With all this negativity posted on all sorts of social media and news outlets, our town's previously enviable statewide reputation as a beautiful, well governed town in the northeast corner has gone down to "What's happened to Pomfret? Criminals have taken over."

No. Pomfret is still a beautiful, well governed town. Unfortunately, a negative extremist has taken over our formerly normal Republican Town Committee, and in order to become a selectman, Martha has signed on as Chris Coyle's devotee. She could go to the multiple, open to all information hearings the boards of finance, or education put on, but no, why learn the facts when you can just dump on the boards, the volunteers, and the town. She has a total of two months as a selectman and has not provided a single suggestion. It's a shame. I hope Martha will soon return to being a booster instead of a trasher.

TIM McNALLY
POMFRET PROUD

Justified

To the Editor:

I am not pro-gun in any way, and I think the Second Amendment is perversely being used to justify the paramilitary army of ICE and the widespread and paranoid ownership of guns.

The apologists for Donnie Tyrant's regime have been howling about how Alex Pretti should not have been carrying a weapon to a protest and therefore was tempting fate in the face of armed and provocative opposition. Well, the ICE horde with the same logic should also not have been armed at the demonstration.

However, I would posit without agreeing with the thought process, that considering he was brutally murdered that maybe, just maybe, he might have not been wrong in thinking he might need self-protection. Remember, he was an ICU nurse and daily saw the prevalence and result of ubiquitous gun ownership.

On a cheerier note, the Heritage Foundation made a study of federal elections over 24 years - 1999-2023. They discovered with 1,008,643,528 people voting, a frightening 77 were undocumented. I don't know what planet all you MAGA'ers and Republicans did your basic education on but 0.00000764 percent of voters trying to sneak by and distort the election exceeds the significant digits most of us consider important. Just another proof that Donnie Tyrant and his sycophant herd of lemmings have nothing of value or truth to support their desperate hope of winning the midterms.

STEPHEN ETZEL
PUTNAM

Lower interest rates are expected in 2026: What it could mean for your wallet and investments

FINANCIAL FOCUS
.....
HOLLY C. WANEGAR
INVESTMENT ADVISER

As we move into 2026, interest rates remain one of the most important variables shaping the investment landscape. After several years of inflation concerns, aggressive Federal Reserve policy, and market volatility, the direction of interest rates now carries meaningful implications for investors across all life stages.

Most experts anticipate interest rates to decline in the coming year. While lower interest rates are often welcomed by markets, their impact is nuanced. For investors, the key is to not react to headlines. Instead, understand how a lower-rate environment may influence your portfolio as well as your financial plan and long-term goals. Here's what to know...

Why interest rates matter so much

Interest rates act as a gravitational force for the economy. They influence borrowing costs, consumer spending, corporate investment, and asset valuations. When rates fall, money generally becomes cheaper to borrow, which can stimulate economic activity. However, lower rates also reduce yields on traditionally "safer" investments like cash, CDs, and high-quality bonds.

For investors in 2026, this tradeoff is especially important. Many portfolios were adjusted during the higher-rate environment of recent years, and a shift toward lower rates may require reassessing how different assets work together. Working with a financial advisor can help these reassessments stay streamlined and organized.

What lower rates could mean for stocks

Historically, lower interest rates tend to be supportive for equities. When borrowing costs decline, companies can refinance debt more cheaply, fund growth initiatives, and

improve profitability. Lower rates also reduce the discount rate applied to future earnings, which can support higher stock valuations.

But not all stocks benefit equally. Growth-oriented companies, particularly those with earnings expected further in the future, often benefit more from falling rates. Value-oriented or dividend-focused stocks may respond differently depending on economic conditions and earnings trends.

For investors, this underscores the importance of diversification. Rather than trying to predict which sector will outperform, a balanced approach allows portfolios to participate in opportunities while managing risk.

The impact on bonds and fixed income

Bonds typically move inversely to interest rates. When rates fall, existing bonds with higher yields generally increase in value. This can be positive for investors who already hold bonds, particularly those with intermediate or longer durations.

However, reinvestment risk becomes more prominent. As bonds mature or interest payments are reinvested, new yields may be lower than what investors became accustomed to during the higher-rate period. This is where thoughtful fixed-income positioning matters. Bond ladders, diversified maturities, and active management can help balance income needs with interest-rate sensitivity.

Cash, savings, and income considerations

Lower interest rates are not great news for savers. High-yield savings accounts, money markets, and CDs typically see yields decline as rates fall. While maintaining adequate liquidity remains

essential, holding excessive cash over long periods can quietly erode purchasing power, especially if inflation remains persistent.

For retirees or income-focused investors, this environment may require revisiting income strategies with a trusted financial advisor. Relying solely on cash and short-term instruments may no longer be sufficient to support long-term spending needs. Incorporating a broader mix of income-producing assets, aligned with risk tolerance and time horizon, becomes increasingly important.

Housing, borrowing, and personal finance

Lower interest rates can also create opportunities beyond the investment portfolio. Mortgage rates often follow longer-term Treasury yields, and declining rates may open the door to refinancing or improved affordability for homebuyers. For business owners, lower rates can reduce the cost of capital and support expansion or succession planning strategies. However, lower rates alone should never drive major financial decisions. Borrowing strategies should always align with broader financial goals, cash flow, and long-term plans.

The bigger picture: Planning matters more than predictions

Perhaps the most important takeaway for investors in 2026 is this: interest rates are just one variable. Markets often anticipate rate changes well before they happen, and reacting too quickly can introduce unnecessary risk.

At WHZ, we focus on building portfolios and financial plans designed to adapt across environments—not just thrive in one. Lower interest rates may present opportunities, but they also reinforce the importance of disciplined investing, regular portfolio reviews, and alignment with personal goals.

Moving forward with confidence

Whether you are accumulating wealth, approaching retirement, or already drawing income from your portfolio, a changing rate environment is a reminder to stay proactive rather than reactive. Reviewing asset allocation, income sources, and risk exposure can help ensure your strategy remains aligned with where you are—and where you want to go.

At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, we believe clarity creates confidence. If you're wondering how lower interest rates could impact your investments, your retirement plan, or your long-term financial strategy, now is the right time to have that conversation.

Schedule a complimentary discovery meeting with the WHZ team and take the next step toward a strategy built for every market environment. Contact us for a complimentary consultation at whzwealth.com or call (860) 928-2341. Let us help you create a strategy that provides Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.

Authored by WHZ Wealth Advisor Holly C. Wanegar, CFP®. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. These materials are general in nature and do not address your specific situation. For your specific investment needs, please discuss your individual circumstances with your financial advisor. WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice, and nothing in the accompanying pages should be construed as specific tax or legal advice. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret St., Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Rd., Tolland, CT 06084, 860-928-2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com>.

KILLINGLY CHRONICLES
FEB. 23 THROUGH FEB. 27

BOARD AND COMMISSION MEETINGS (agendas and minutes at www.killinglyct.gov)

Monday the 23rd
Town Council Goal Setting Meeting (Town Meeting Room – Killingly Town Hall) 6 p.m.
Board of Recreation Meeting (KPRD/Community Center) 6 p.m.
Republican Town Committee Meeting (Conference Room 102 – Killingly Town Hall) 7 p.m.

Tuesday the 24th
Democratic Town Committee Meeting (Conference Room 102 – Killingly Town Hall) 7 p.m.

Wednesday the 25th
Vision Committee Meeting (Town Meeting Room – Killingly Town Hall) 6 p.m.
Board of Education Meeting (KPS Central Office – Conference Room A) 7 p.m.

Thursday the 26th
Open Space Land Acquisition Committee (Conference Room 102 – Killingly Town Hall) 6:30 p.m.



ARTHRITIS?

Is your arthritis care all that you would hope it to be?
If not we may be able to help.

**Osteoarthritis
of Hands - Knees- Hips.
Back and Shoulder Problems
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Psoriatic Arthritis - Gout**

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“Committed to Advancing appropriate care to people with arthritis”



Team Mass Boys & Girls AAU Basketball Tryouts

Serving Central & Western MA for over 25 years!

Cost: \$30 Covers both tryouts (players get t-shirt)
AAU membership needed \$28 (purchase on our website, we'll pull them)

Tryout # 1: Saturday, February 21, 2026

Location: Tantasqua Jr High School (320 Brookfield Rd., Fiskdale, MA)

- Boys Grades 4th-6th 8:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.
- Boys Grades 7th & 8th 9:45 a.m. - 11 a.m.
- Boys Grades 9th-12th 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
- Varsity players sign up if still playing with school**

• Girls Grades 4th-6th 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

• Girls Grades 7th-9th 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

• Girls Grades 10th-12th 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Tryout # 2: Sunday March 1, 2026

Location: Oxford High School (100 Carbone Dr., Oxford, MA)

- Girls Grades 4th-6th 3:30-4:30pm
- Girls Grades 7th-9th 5:45-7:00pm
- Girls Grades 10th-12th 7:15-8:30pm
- Boys Grades 4th-6th 4:30-5:30pm
- Boys Grades 7th-8th 5:45-7:00pm
- Boys Grades 9th-12th 7:15-8:30 pm
- Varsity players sign up if still playing with school**

Pre Register/pay on website: teammassbasketball.com
Questions Email: teammassbasketball@gmail.com or call 413-539-1548
AAU affiliated club for over 25 years!

Varsity players cannot tryout until school season has concluded, still sign up. Will announce another March tryout (grades 9-12)



SELECT TEAMS
Boys & Girls
8th-Varsity
(12th)



LITTLE BALLERS
Grades K-3
Please email signups after AAU tryouts

Killingly High School Weekly Sports Wrap-Up



Girls Basketball

Vs. Waterford
Killingly Girls Basketball (9-8) was led in a win against Waterford (8-9) behind 17 points, 4 assists and 7 rebounds from Ella Adams while Amaya Spadola added 15 points and 14 rebounds, and Gianna Peters added 13 points and 5 rebounds!
Final Score: Killingly 57 – Waterford 34
Lucy Walker had 15 points for Waterford.

Vs. Ledyard
The girls (9-9) was led in a loss against Ledyard (14-3) behind 8 points from Ella Adams while Gianna Peters added 7 points!
Final Score: Ledyard 56 - Killingly 29
Aislynn Hassett added 5 points for Killingly.
Maggie Dykes scored 26 points for Ledyard.

Boys Basketball

Vs. Eastly Lyme
Killingly Basketball (12-5) improves to 6-0 in ECC Division II with a home victory over East Lyme on Senior Night!
Final Score: 61 - 47!
Quinn Crowley scored a game-high 23

points and 6 rebounds, while Quinn Sumner kept his double-double streak going with 16 points and 13 rebounds!
Greyson Marquez had 4 points, 6 rebounds, 8 assists, and 4 blocks for Killingly! Ethan Hall had 5 points, while Jake Beaudreault and Trevor Galarza each added 4 points!
Javi Mangual led East Lyme with 16 points.

Vs. St. Bernard's
The boys (12-6) fell on the road to St. Bernard's (6-11) by final score of 67-54.
St. B was led with 23 points from Brevin Gonzalez.
Killingly Junior Guard Quin Crowley scored 23 points including his 1,000th career point of his career to lead Killingly.
Greyson Marquez had 12 points and 7 assists, Jake Beaudreault added 10 points and 11 rebounds, and Quinn Sumner had 9 points and 11 rebounds for Killingly.

Indoor Track
On Friday, Feb. 13, Killingly battled in New Haven for the Class M Division! This meet had 46 teams from around the State that each individual had to qualify to compete... the competition was the best of the best! Killingly sent 6 hard working,



deserving, Scholar Athletes to compete!
As always, ladies first:
Adalyn Malarkey has worked hard all season, constantly working to improve her skills! She competed in the 55m dash with a tough field of 50 ladies. Adalyn blazed in her heat and finished overall 39th with a time of 8.09 seconds! There was a total of 6 Freshmen that qualified from around the State... Adalyn can PROUDLY say that she was one of them! Absolutely great job representing yourself all season and Killingly!
On to the gentlemen:
Kaiden Cayer and Ezekiel Benoit have both worked hard all season, pushing themselves to constantly improve. As a Captain, Zeke has pushed this team, morale and standards always helping with all warm-ups and the team thanks you! In the 55m dash, in a tough field of 53, both Kaiden and Zeke flew in their heats and finished 24th and 49th respectively. In the Long Jump, Aveion Janton- Adams has been practicing hard all season, and battling injury still competed at an incredible level. In a tough field of 38, you could see him flying through the air to get a distance of 20' 1" finishing 10th! Cooper Logee has

been working hard since Freshman year at High Jump and qualified for States for his 3rd time! Battling injury in a tough field of 21, Coop could be seen launching himself in the air to finish 7th with a height of 5' 10»! And Jeremiah Smith has been working hard since his Freshman year at many events and competed in the High Jump and 55m Hurdles! In the High Jump, he also flew through the air with a height of 5' 10" finishing 11th! Annnd in the 55m hurdles, in a field of 22, Jeremiah absolutely blazed his first heat finishing 1st and in the Finals, Jeremiah did what Jeremiah does, he has finished 1st in EVERY 55m hurdles he has competed in this season making him All- State for CT Indoor Track & Field and Class M Champion!
Everyone all season has worked hard, made this team sooo much fun, and represented yourselves and Killingly incredibly proud. You should all be incredibly proud of yourselves, I know I am, ALL coaches are, and Killingly is! Jeremiah, the train continues to roll Saturday, February 21st to battle at State- Opens to claim your spot at New England's!

The Week in Sports at Woodstock Academy

Girls Basketball

Woodstock Academy 53
NFA 37
Isabel D'Alleva-Bochain found the range early as the senior dropped a trio of 3-pointers in the first quarter en route to a 17-point effort to lead the Centaurs (13-4, 5-0 Eastern Connecticut Conference Division I) to their eighth straight victory.
Vivian Bibeau added 13 for Woodstock Academy.
Jada Harris and Jazin Torres each had nine points to pace NFA (5-12, 0-6).

Woodstock Academy 56
New London 33
The Centaurs clinched the Eastern Connecticut Conference Division I regular season title with the win over the Whalers.
Woodstock Academy was on fire in the first half when it connected on 14 of 25 from the field and broke out to a 22-point lead by the half. The Whalers never got closer than 17 points the remainder of the way.
Kaylee Saucier and Elise Coyle both scored 14 points for the Centaurs (14-4, 6-0 ECC Division I) while Isabel D'Alleva-Bochain added 12.
Nyahar Dudley paced the Whalers (11-5, 5-2) with 12 points and Jaidelis Rivera tossed in 11.

Boys basketball

Woodstock Academy 56

Windham 47
Drake Abdullovski scored 18 points in the first half before the Whippets cooled off the Centaurs sophomore guard.
But they could not repeat the effort in the fourth quarter when Abdullovski scored 11 more to finish with 29 and lead Woodstock Academy (9-7, 4-1 Eastern Connecticut Conference Division II) to the win.
Xawier Matwiew added 10 to the Centaurs effort.
Francisco Alvarado had 22 points for the Whippets (4-12, 2-4) and Anden Gonzalez had 10.

Woodstock Academy 64
East Lyme 53
The Centaurs finished off a three-game week on the road with its second victory as they survived a 17-0 fourth quarter run by the Vikings to improve to 10-7 overall and 5-1 in Division II of the Eastern Connecticut Conference.
The Centaurs were up, 50-29, before East Lyme closed it to just four pints with four minutes to play. Woodstock Academy sealed the win with a 7-2 run over the next minute and a half.
Xawier Matwiew led the Centaurs with 18 points despite not making a second-half field goal. He was 8-for-9 from the free throw line, however.
Drake Abdyllovski tossed in 17 points and Jamie Dean Stewart had 15

for Woodstock Academy.
Karch Kaczor led all scorers with 25 for the Vikings (3-14, 2-5).

Woodstock Academy 74
Plainfield 50
The Centaurs opened up a six-point lead at the end of the third quarter by out-scoring the Panthers, 24-6, in the final eight minutes to record their third straight victory and improved to 11-7 on the season.
Xawier Matwiew scored seven of his 12 points in the decisive fourth quarter and Woodstock Academy hit four 3-pointers, including one by sophomore guard Drake Abdullvoski who led the Centaurs with 26 points.
Brayden Marquis led Plainfield (12-7), which saw its eight-game win streak come to an end, with 17 points while Cole Cheney added 12.

Gymnastics

Centaurs finish 3rd at ECC Championship
Things went about as expected at Stonington High School as the Ledyard Co-Op captured the Eastern Connecticut Conference championship meet with a 144.85 total followed by Norwich Free Academy (138.35) and than Woodstock Academy (132.6) which is also how it played out in the regular season.

Anyah Oatley was tops for the Centaurs as she placed seventh in the All-Around (34.7) and had the third-best vault of the night (8.85).
Rhea Desota was sixth best on the bars (8.75) and Emma Long was 12th in the All-Around.

Girls Indoor track

Centaurs finish 2nd; have 2 state champs
The Woodstock Academy girls indoor track team was only 11 points behind Mercy for first in the Class M state championship indoor track meet at the Floyd Little Athletic Center Friday with three events remaining.
But the Middletown school was able to take second-third and fourth in the 3200m race and pulled away for the 66-42 win over Woodstock Academy and take the state title in the process.
The Centaurs had their own dominant event as Avery Plouffe finished with the second best throw in Connecticut thus far this year in the shotput, 40-feet, 5 ¼ inches, to win the individual state title.
Teammates Kiley Elliott and Lily Morgis finished third and fourth in the competition.
Senior Emma Weitknecht bettered her own Woodstock Academy school record and won the 55m hurdle championship in 8.33 seconds.

Ella Lidonde was fourth in the long jump and the 4x200m relay team also scored a fourth-place finish for the Centaurs.

Boys Indoor track

Manning brings home state title
The Woodstock Academy boys indoor track team had high hopes for a top-five finish but found that to be easier said than done.
Senior Eli Manning had a nice night as he won the Class M boys shotput title with a heave of 51-feet, 1 ½ inches for the Centaurs.
The Centaurs 4x800m relay team of Lucas Hecker, Sam Greene, Jackson Durand and Ronan Curran finished fourth in a Woodstock Academy school record 8:29.7 and senior Abraham McGregor was fourth in the long jump.

Girls Hockey

Woodstock Academy Co-Op 4
Ridgefield 1
The Centaurs were able to wear down the undermanned opponents who brought only nine skaters to the Jahn Ice Rink at the Pomfret School.
The two hour-plus bus ride didn't hurt the visitors early as freshman Caitlin Byrne scored just 1 minute, 13 seconds into the contest.
Woodstock Academy senior Ellary Sampson evened things up with a

goal with 6:15 left in the first and the Centaurs went ahead to stay when Paige Hinckley tallied with just 16 seconds left in the second period.
The Centaurs (4-12-1) closed the door when Zi Qing Biondo and Summer Discordia scored within 29 seconds of one another just two minutes into the third period.
Josie Hatch made 36 saves in goal for Woodstock Academy.

Boys Hockey

Wethersfield 6
Woodstock Academy 1
A five goal first period for the Eagles, including two goals in the final minute, essentially determined the outcome of the game at the Jahn Ice Rink at the Pomfret School.
Woodstock Academy (1-15) avoided the shutout with an early third-period goal from Alex Haggerty off an assist from Cam Perreault. The Centaurs had a further chance to diminish the Eagles' lead but could not cash in on a 5-on-3 power play opportunity shortly after Haggerty's goal.
Wethersfield (9-5-1) got a hat trick in the opening period from Jack Leahy and also had three assists being dished out by Nick Socha. Tyler Giangrave and Ryan Pace also scored for the winners in the opening period.

ALL WE KNOW IS LOCAL ~ VillagerNewspapers.com



When one person has cancer, the whole family has cancer

BY CALE FERLAND
BROOKLYN

In 2021, my wife Christy was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. She was 44 years old. She had never smoked a day in her life. She was active, strong, and the kind of person who believed in pushing forward no matter what. After her diagnosis, she ran multiple 5Ks. That was Christy. She didn't let cancer define her. For two years, we fought alongside her. And when I

say "we," I mean our entire family. Because when one person has cancer, the whole family has cancer. You quickly learn that it isn't just the appointments and treatments. It's the everyday things that become overwhelming. The dishes pile up. The lawn keeps growing. The floors need cleaning. Life doesn't pause just because your world has been turned upside down. And there's something else people don't always talk about. The patient feels

it. They see the strain. They see their spouse picking up more, their kids stepping in, and they carry that weight, too. Christy passed away in July 2023. She was just 46 years old. She left behind four children who miss their mom every single day. After she died, I knew I needed to do something. I kept asking myself: what would have made that time just a little bit easier? What would have helped us hold onto more of the moments that mattered?



Christy Ferland

Kell leads Clippers over Wheeler

PUTNAM — The Putnam High Clippers won their 10th game of the season last Tuesday night over division rival the Wheeler School, 69-51. The Clippers jumped out to a big lead early and was up 34-7 after the first quarter. Sophomore Camden Kell led Putnam with 24 points, 5 rebound and 5 assists. Senior Nick Devlin had 22 points, 11 rebounds and 4 assist in the win. Freshman TJ Espinosa added 15 points, 6 rebounds and 5 assists and sophomore Sam Jackel chipped in 8 points and a season high 15 rebounds. "That was the best half of basketball we played all season," said Coach Shawn Deary. "The boys played hard and they were ready to play from the start."



Courtesy

Camden Kell knocks down a three pointer in action against Wheeler.

The answer was simple. Community. During Christy's treatment, friends and neighbors showed up. They stepped in quietly and without hesitation. That support gave us time — time we could spend together as a family. That's where Christy's Angels began. Today, Christy's Angels Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit serving families in Windham County who are navigating cancer treatment. We provide house-keeping and yard work services through insured local providers, easing the burden of everyday tasks so families can focus on each other. What has surprised me most about this endeavor is the impact it has had, not only on the families and the community, but on me. When I meet with families now, I see something

powerful. When someone battling cancer knows their community is standing behind them, it lifts them. It gives them strength. It reminds them they're not alone. It's more than a clean kitchen or a freshly mowed lawn; it's dignity, it's relief, it's hope. The grief doesn't go away. It doesn't shrink with time. There isn't a day that goes by that I don't miss Christy and wish she were still here beside me. But walking alongside other families has given our loss purpose. It has shown my children that even when life throws something unimaginable at you, you still have a choice in how you respond. On Sunday, March 29, our community will gather at Grill 37 in Pomfret for "A Night of Music and Friendship" featuring

Felix and Fingers Dueling Pianos. It will be an afternoon of laughter, music, and connection. But more than that, it's an opportunity. An opportunity to look for the helpers, to look for the love, to be part of something good happening close to home. If you've ever wondered how to make a difference in your own community, this is one way. Because when one person has cancer, the whole family has cancer. And when one family is hurting, the whole community can choose to show up. For those who would like to learn more about Christy's Angels, volunteer, make a tax-deductible donation, or attend "A Night of Music and Friendship" on March 29 at Grill 37 in Pomfret, visit www.christysangels.com.



Courtesy

Cub Scout Pack 21, of Putnam, held its 2026 Pinewood Derby on Friday, Feb. 13, at its chartering organization, the Albert J. Breault VFW Post 1523 on Providence Street. Joining in on the fun were Pack 21's guests, members of Cub Scout Pack 93 from the nearby town of Hampton. The Pinewood Derby is a longstanding Cub Scout tradition where, with help from experienced adults, boy and girl Cubs from five to ten years old carve, paint and decorate their own small race cars made from a block of soft pine. Weighing no more than five ounces each, the cars can go as fast as 200 miles-per-hour or more down a specially built Pinewood Derby track. The Pinewood Derby is just one of many challenging and fun activities Pack 21 does throughout the year. For more information about our programs for boys and girls, call Pack 21's John Ryan at (860) 928-5873 and leave a message.



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ELLIS TECH ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

DANIELSON — Ellis Technical High School has released its honor roll for the second quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

High Honors
Jace Michael Joseph Fontaine, Riley Marie Fusco, Maximus James Gaetani, Katelyn Sue Lathrop, Emma Lucy Lussier, Dominic Marocchini, Maria Lynn Marocchini, Cole William Passco, Aiden Piecuch, Sophia Louise Welply, Christopher Paul Bowen, Aubrey Lane Butler, Haylee Paige Butler, Ivan Hok Wah Cheng, Arihanna Cordero, Ioannis Stavros Exarhoulias, McKenzie Lynn Gianquitti, Cogan Gosselin, Aedan Jolley, Madison Kozaczka, Gage Anthony Lacasse, Owen Michael Lamontagne, Makenzie Rose Lee, Mason Robert Lee, Lilyanna Nicole Malek, Elizabeth Hope Marshall, Lydia Aleksandra Mayo, Aaron Patrick Mesick, Analisa Elizabeth-Marie Morales, Ava Deane Moyer, Kaydence Mia Saucier, Chase Anthony Beavan, Lucas Robert Bevan, Abigail Ruth Clark, William David Fenner, Hailey Marie Haggett, Pyper Iva Kata, Savannah Jet Kokinakis, Levi Lawrence Laisi, Alexis Marie Mongeau, Kasey Lynn O'Brien, Trent Reynolds, Hunter Daniel Sharp, Drew Sperry, Adelina Kimora Tate, Noah Thomas Tudisco, Khloe Nicole Volle, Justin Ryan Clark, Jeffrey Gebhardt Coogan, Kolden Jake Garrison, Blake Ronald Irace, Rocco Michael Texera, Brett Michael Lyon, Leuxian Mykal Balcher, Cayden James Belsito, Collin Jeremiah Burdick, Jack Soren Carlsen, Lyanah Chin, Dylan Jonathan Daignault, Liam Chase Gates, Mackenzie Elizabeth Joly, Talon Bradley Miller, Evan Patric Moran, Colin Michael Noble, Cartler James Payette, Nathan George Payette, Samuel Young Richardson, Gabriel Anthony Rivera, Zakarie Rivera, Paityn Alivia Simonds, Michael Arthur Szczepan, Mia Rose Taylor, Averi Laura Benson, Simon Isidoros Bledsoe, Matthew David Carter, Jaycob Chevez, Vincenzo Gerard DiMeglio, Cardyn Elizabeth Feen, Noah Spencer Hall, Bryson Hoffner, Sadie Lynn Paquin, Gavin William Jeffs, Brayden Jamison Medeiros, Jaxon Patrick Medeiros, Kaiden Caleb Lopez, Nora Dalena Miller, Kyleigh Elise Murphy, Walker Cash Whipple, Kahaln Abreu, Alexis Marie Baton, Evan Thomas Gileau, Carter John Gladue, Logan Michael Gladue, Caelan Thibodeau, Kayleigh Hope Jaworski, Cody David Bailey, Carson Thomas Evans, Makayla Rylee Herman, Isabella Grace LaBarre, Camryn Suzanne Murray, Brayden Robeert Ouimette, Brenden Andre Ouimette, Ryan Thompson Rondeau, Matthew Christopher Boots, Cody Mathew Baker, Isabella Grace Bernier, Brody Bradley, Giovanni George, Drew Alexander Gisleson, Yaideliz Grajales-Rivera, Kenneth Robert Griggs, Julian Patrick Lawrence, Stephanie Ivelis Marcano, Daniel Michael Ormstead, Frank Henry Ormstead, Peyton Elizabeth Salley, Elezar Phamich Sarandi, Hunter Joseph St. Jean, Sean Dayrit Topinio, James Christopher Winters, Jenna Lynn Stomberg, Makayla Horan, Jason Robert Armstrong, Olivia Denbow, Matthew Gallow, Camden Arthur, Emmett Edward LaColle, Avery Anne Mayo, Nathan Fredrick Messinger, Caidence Renee Poisson, Colin Rodriguez, Kammy Annmarie Boothby, Adam Jacob Boss, Adeline Rae Brousseau, Sydney Grace Jacobson, Chloe Renee McDonald, Trinadaya Muhammad, Aiden Jay Rafferty, Parker David Ring, Josie Belle Page, Marcus Daniel Wierzbicki, Ivan C. Kettle, Dominick Reese Benniefield, George Paul Blanchette, Owen Michael Carpenter, Taylor Ernesto Corson, Landen Lee Kenneth Davis, Ava Grace Desjardins, Ryan Jacob Desjardins, Noah Devine, Richelle Jane Eaton, Ava Faith Ethier, Jack Carter Henderson, Nathaniel J. Kersting, Nicolas Kulla, Connor Jaxson Laitres, Casey Josiah Mercier, Elisa Perez Taha, Hernan Perez Taha, Jade Dylan Roberts, Cuauhtemoc Rosas Noriega, Brianna Kimberley Ryan, Easton Ryan Sanders, Kolby Sanders, Kaleb Michael Scaplen, Baileigh Sweeney, Dylan Anthony Walas, Daniel Jackson Marshall, Jackson Sean Genay, Vincenzo Philip Mazzarella, Kaiden Andersen, Olivia Ann Bedard, Benjamin Boledovic, Joshua Chausse, Landon Michael Gaugh, Joseph Michael Girard, Kaleb John Herrick, Aiden James Kilmer, Jacob Robert Lawrence, Christian Rosaire Lemire, Ava Long, Benjamin Richard Mayo, Taryn Jean Menard, Erik Robert, Jayden Robidoux, Madison Lee St. Hilaire, Jackson William St. Hilaire, Gavin Robert Sweatman, Miguel Martins Vieira, Amilia Fraser, Hailey Noel Rourke, Auster Hayward Tindall, Emily Gale Barrow, Victor Alexander Bojarski, Athena Lauren Dube, Caleb Michael Geyer, Isabella Baldwin, John Oliver Brisson, Ayden Alan Ray Cholewa, Alyssa Sarah Daudelin, Cameron William DiMartino, Draven Raymond Garrity, Jeremy Michael Hart, Mercedes Lynn Heltke, Matthew D. Johnson, Jordyn Marie Mackie, Alexander Joseph Marisi, Kian William McKenna, Ava Rose Pereira, Michael Chrisopher Plummer, Stone Dominic Shaw, Kahleiana Elaine Shear, Kaydence Olivia-Aidali Wilson, Julyanna Marilyn Barrows, Aubri Bonin, Christopher Edward Boss, Alina Collette, Emma Judith Dodd, James Allen Keough, Simon Maxwell Kowalczyk, Ava McClure, Jacob McHugh, Noah Rolland Pillsbury, Tristchion Ivorey Speight, Aleck Thurber, Connor Jacob Zimmer, Sarah Elise Anger, Kyle Nathan Beaulieu, Hannah Elizabeth Couillard, Autumn Lynn Kelly, Sophia Mae Mallett, Jett Edward Neri, Dakota Dillon Page, Josslymar Alenxy Cruz Llanos, Kyle George Parent-Cummings, Eliana Aliyah Cortez, Yaideliz Dessus Pesante, Xeineze Perez Perez, Juneisy Maria Rodriguez, Ryan Jamieson Beckman, Ryder James Benoit, Rory Patrick Darigan, James Keith Demers, Amelia Sheffield Ditzel, Julia Guimont, Mason Haley, Sadie Johnson-Teed, Zachary Daniel Rodriguez, Owen Christopher Sherman, James Richard Silva, Jonathan Edward Silva, Abigail Marion Towne

Honors
Lance Forrest, Noah Michael Howlett, Jacob Tyler Aubertine, Camden Baribeau, Kayla Cordero, Emily Rose Hernandez-Rivera, Chase David Jenkins, Spike Anthony Jenkins, Angelina Pacheco, Aiden Cooper Powell, Isaac Allen Schwager, Morgan Mary Sousa, Christopher Thomas Speranza, Caleb William Wood, Gunnar Timothy Andrew Zurowski, Aspah Judah Beauchene, Abigail Bruscato, Sarina Joe Champagne, Aiden Ray Larose, Gabriel Luis Resto, Matthew Williams, Grant John Wojcik, Logan Bryce Bennett, Blake Owen Zevetchin, Quintin Zevetchin, Anthony Ryan Baker, Janayalis Marcano, Cohen Gary Daniel Miller, Austin Montville, Lillian Papineau, Joshua Isaac Quinones, Jesse James Roberts, Blake Daniel St. Laurent, Nathan Adams, Evan Michael Bauch, Tyler Paul Duquette, Oliver Ernest Keating, Ella Doris Kettle, Krishna Tenzin Lin, Charlie Thomas Proseus, Darius Isaiah Young, Micah Sampson Young, Bryan Highley, Andrew Kuljancic, Sullivan Stehle Tedford, William Bryce Whipple, David Galstian, Austin R. Houser, Trevor Martell-Yeomans, Cael Thomas Moran, Kathlynn Ann Osborne, Nathaniel Jason Murd, Mila Elba Nazario, Dax Jack Sforza, Diego Acosta, John Richard Adams, Jacey Lois Batz, Jackson Daniel Depatsy, Chloe Marie Desjardin, Nadya Ann Dimeco, Wyatt William Ducat, Ashtin Robert Dumeer, Jeffrey Flagg, David Terrance Hedge, Luke Thomas Landry, Jailyn Storm Martin, Blake Allen Murphy, Zachary Moore Payette, Jeremy Michael Roberts, Camille Vilchis, Wyatt David Britland, Donovan Anthony Clark, Tyler Collelo, Ayden Louis Coons, Bree Michelle Czikowsky, Camden Denbow, Brandyn Jams Diaz, Chaz Dzialo, Jodryn Grace Hall, Kameron Michael Simone, Timothy Jonathan Charbonneau, Deken Leaf Labby, Herbert Wilson Rathbun, Grace Carol Ann Read, Miguel Alejandro Perez Parra, Damien Bachand, Mason Victor Benoit, Connor Gabriel Blanchette, Charles Bourassa, Stryker James Brisson, Eric Michael Bunn, Brady Stephen Campbell, Cody Ciotola, Joseph Corcoran, Logan Dickinson, Bella Emily Fountaine, Amaya Leigh Hart, Alexander James Heon, Ryder James Heon, Jayden Henry Kane, Jesus Antonio Lopez, Connor Scott Moreau, Isabella Grace Morin, Sophia Murray, Jaiden Madden Richards, Tayton Timothy Sajkowicz, Merina Bailey Smith, Tyler Nelson Spinney, Hunter David Stenhouse, Samuel Xavier Stone, Kenneth Albert Wilkinson, Dale Robert Williams, Chloe Emma Woodworth, Tanner Fortier, Jason Thomas Sirrine, Clay Dunning, Abigail Rose Riabstev, Lexi Summer Abram, Carter Bergeron, William Douglas Chartier, Avery Cruz, Amaya Garcia, Aaron Gilfoy, Gia Gillespie, Gabriel Girard, Lincoln Reid Jackel, Amber Skye Johnson, Trevor Louis Lamothe, Jameson Anthony Proulx, Joao Victor Vieira, Adela Wolczak, Amani Aliana Cross, Justin Francis Maschka, Hannah Marie Rainey, Ari Marshall Witt, Marshall Colt Watson, Elijah Atizol, Megan Brown, Beau Goulas, Nicholas Michael Iozzi, Kaleb Matthew LaCrois, Skyelar Payton LeDoux, Ryan Lee Orr, Blake Q. Porrazzo, Brody Alexander Porrazzo, Vaughan William Vallor, Sam Giroux, Parker Robert Allen Leveille, Jade McCarthy, Anthony Lawson Reed, Collin Edward Tracz, Jesse Isaiah Anger, Raymond Ducharme, Bryce Thomas Gagnon, Ivy Lynnmarie Wentzel, Leila Marie Colon, Angeline Espinoza Nava, Mikayla Rose Lopez, Victor Manuel Barrera Garcia, Jamilaet Lavallee, Jayden Lavallee, Yanellyze Malave, Waylan Prosperie, Natalie Barbara Despres, Cooper Stone Ducat, Christian Freeman, Alexander James Dusoe, Zachary Joseph Dusoe, Jonathan Edward Montanez

The map on the kitchen wall

There used to be a map on our kitchen wall.

It was nothing fancy. Fold lines running across it like wrinkles on an old face. A little tear near the corner where it had been pinned and re-pinned over the years. The colors had faded from bright reds and blues to something softer, like they had been left in the sun too long.

But that map mattered.

When I was a boy, a map meant possibility. You did not scroll to zoom in. You leaned close. You traced the road with your finger. You measured distance by how far your hand had to travel from one town to the next.

I thought about that map the other evening while waiting in the car outside a store here in Northeastern Connecticut. I looked around at the other drivers. Every head was bent the same way, lit faintly by the glow of a screen. Phones held at just the right angle. Thumbs moving in small, steady motions.

No one was lost. At least, not geographically.

Today, we have directions that speak to us. Turn-by-turn instructions delivered in calm voices. Recalculating. Rerouting. Avoiding traffic. The mystery has been removed from getting from one place to another.

It is efficient. It is convenient. It is remarkable, really.

But I wonder if we have lost something in the process.

With that old map on the wall, you had to pay attention. You had to remember landmarks. The bend in the river. The name of the next town. The stretch of road where the pavement changed color. You learned the lay of the land because you had to.

You also learned something else. You learned patience.

If you missed a turn, you did not panic. You pulled over. You unfolded the map again. Maybe you asked someone at a gas station for directions. Maybe they gave them in a way that made no sense at all. “Go past the old mill, take a left where the barn used to be.”

You figured it out.

I am not against progress. I would not trade away the safety of being able to find your way home in a storm or in the dark. And I will admit, when I am headed somewhere unfamiliar, I appreciate that calm digital voice guiding me along.

CORNER OF KINDNESS By CHIP

Still, there was something grounding about knowing your route before you left.

When my children were young, we took a few long drives together. My wife would sit in the passenger seat with the directions printed out, and I would keep my eye on the road signs. We talked more then. There was room for it. No one was staring down at a screen.

Now, if you are not careful, the car becomes another quiet bubble. Directions flow in. Messages come through. News updates interrupt.

The world is at your fingertips, but the person sitting next to you can feel miles away.

I suppose what I am really talking about is attention.

A map demanded it. You could not half-use it. You either followed it or you did not arrive.

These days, it is possible to move through a whole afternoon only half-present. Half-listening. Half-looking. Half-engaged.

And yet, when I drive through the back roads of the Quiet Corner, I am reminded that not everything can be digitized.

You still have to notice the curve near the stone wall. You still have to watch for deer at dusk. You still have to slow down when the road narrows unexpectedly.

Life here still asks you to look up.

Maybe that is our quiet advantage in this part of the state. We are not immune to distraction, but we are surrounded by reminders to stay grounded. A farm stand on the side of the road. A church steeple rising above bare trees. A hand-painted sign pointing toward a town meeting or a pancake breakfast.

You cannot swipe past those.

That old map eventually came down from our kitchen wall. I do not know where it ended up. Probably folded into a drawer somewhere, waiting.

But every now and then, when I catch myself relying too much on the blue dot that tells me where I am, I think about that paper map.

About tracing a route slowly. About learning the road instead of simply following instructions.

And I remind myself that the point is not only to arrive.

It is to know where you are while you are getting there.

University of Rhode Island students named to Fall Dean’s List

KINGSTON, R.I. — The University of Rhode Island is pleased to announce that several area students have been named to its Fall 2025 Dean’s List. Among them are:

Lily Hayes of Danielson
Aubrey Rumrill of Eastford
Brian Jameson of Woodstock
Elias Newall-Vuillemot of Woodstock
Linsey Arends of Brooklyn
Emma Korsu of Brooklyn
Emma Russell of Brooklyn
Lily Hayes of Danielson

To be included on the Dean’s List, full-time students must have completed 12 or more credits for letter grades which are GPA applicable during a semester and achieved at least a 3.30 quality point average. Part-time students qualify with the accumulation of 12 or more credits for letter grades which are GPA applicable earning at least a 3.30 quality point average.

Students named to the Dean’s List repre-

sent nearly all of Rhode Island’s cities and towns, all six New England states, New York and New Jersey, and many other states and countries.

About the University of Rhode Island
The University of Rhode Island is a diverse and dynamic community whose members are connected by a common quest for knowledge. As a global education leader and the state of Rhode Island’s flagship public research institution, URI offers distinctive opportunities designed to meet the global challenges of today’s world and the rapidly evolving needs of tomorrow. Founded in 1892, URI now enrolls more than 18,000 students and offers more than 200 degree programs across nine schools and colleges. As a land- and sea-grant institution, URI is a key driver of economic development in Rhode Island and contributes significantly to the health and vitality of the state, the New England region, and the nation. To learn more, visit: uri.edu.

PUTNAM HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

PUTNAM — Putnam High School has released its honor roll for the second quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

High Honors
Freshmen: Emma Benoit, Dakotah Bibeau, Blake Daughenbaugh, Michael Eroshkin, Emma Fischkelta, Maya Gustavesen, Leon Johnson, Sydney Kaliszewski, Katherine Partlow, Liam Purdon, Kaylee Roberts, Gage Robitaille, Gracie Rybacki, Avery Thornton, Caleb Ward
Sophomores: Kaitlin Brodeur, Amy Charron, Laura Coderre, Daniel DiNola, Eliza Garvey, Caleb LaFrance, Angelina Seymour, Mya Smith, Kaylee Tamer
Juniors: Delanie Bernier, Sean Brierley, Ayla Daniels, Leland Fisher, Sidra Jahangir, Emmelee Masterson, Nathaniel Ramos, Jillian Spalding
Seniors: Leah Benzie, Kaylee Borders, Audrina Buzanoski, Gabriell Cerasiello, Alexa DeLeon, Nicholas Devlin, Joselin Garcia Osorio, Evan Garvey, Benjamin Gustafson, Chloe Hebert, Aidan Martin, Vanessa Menard, Kaydence Morris, Paige Perry, Kasyn Robillard, Madison Thomas

Honor Roll
Freshmen: Callum Blackwood, Avery Livingston, Lily MacPherson, Jadelyn Morse, Lillian Morton
Sophomores: Bailey Champagne, Abigail Daniels, Griffin Fjellman, Devin LeBeau, Jayda Rivera, Dorian Suhocke, Ryan Szarkowicz, Gavin Weiker, Gabriella White
Juniors: Mia Cosentino, Avah Grimshaw, Laiylah Marquez, Aubrey Paquette, Jay Patel, Gavin Patterson, Savannah Zegarra
Seniors: Kenneth Goloski, Kianna Griffin, Jayce Jodoin, Casey Levesque, Kaylin Rodrigues

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!



Rotary Club gives its heart to seniors



PUTNAM — The theme of the Putnam Rotary Club this year is “Boots on the Ground,” and it’s a year-long outreach to those in need including mentally challenged, seniors, veterans and those unsheltered. For Valentine’s Day, the club members gave their hearts to the area’s senior citizens. Putnam Rotary Club President Kathy Kirk said the club members put

together 180 “love bags” that contained: Cookies, word puzzles, scented bookmarks, playing cards, motivational pocket calendars with matching pens, warm socks and handwritten Valentine cards from the Rotarians. It was all hands on deck Feb. 10 when all the Rotarians formed fun assembly line and put the bags together. From there, various

Rotarians took care of delivering the bags to seniors, including: Putnam elderly housing at St. Onge, Crabtree and Bulger; the Gladys Green senior housing in Thompson, the Pomfret Public Library for its senior dementia program; Putnam’s senior programs and the town of Eastford’s elderly program. Kirk said, “Our theme this year is Boots on the

Ground, and supporting our senior community is a big part of that. Packing and personally delivering these Valentine love bags gave us the chance to spread encouragement, connection, kindness and community support as a reminder to our seniors that they are loved and are not forgotten.”

Save the date for “Have A Heart”

WOODSTOCK — The staff and board of directors of TEEG are excited to announce preparations are underway for their 25th annual Have A Heart fundraising event. This milestone event will be held on Friday, May 1 from 6-9 p.m. at the Mansion at Bald Hill in Woodstock. In addition to the festivities fans of this event have come to love and cherish—such as an abundance of silent auction items and

eight live auction experiences—this year’s event will also feature an additional tier of raffle items. “While we want to keep the elements of success of past events, we’re trying to keep things fresh,” explained Chelsea French, TEEG’s Resource Director. Ticket prices will remain at \$35 per person and include generous appetizers, as well as lots of fun in the elegant environment of the Mansion Banquet

Hall. They will be available for online purchase on the TEEG website beginning March 15. In order to keep ticket prices affordable, the TEEG Board of Directors is soliciting sponsorship opportunities beginning at \$100; donations to the silent auction and raffles will also be gratefully accepted. Please contact Chelsea French at 860-923-3458 during business hours or via email at chelseaf@teegonline.org to donate or get more information. TEEG is a 501(c)3 social service agency serving crit-

ical needs of low-income individuals and families in the towns of Pomfret, Woodstock, and Thompson, with food insecurity as a cornerstone of its mission. Since its founding in 1988, TEEG has developed and expanded its programming to include both emergency and ongoing food assistance—including holiday meals—benefits navigation, youth programs, and personalized case coordination. For more information about the work of the organization, please visit www.teegonline.org.

New Al-Anon meeting in Pomfret

POMFRET — The recently formed Together We Can Do It Al-Anon Family Group is meeting at Christ Church in Pomfret (Route 169) on Tuesdays at noon. This is an open meeting, meaning not only family and friends of people suffering from the effects of addiction are welcome, but also professionals who may have clients they would like to recommend attend the meetings. Al-Anon is a worldwide program for people just like you, who are worried about someone with a drinking problem. This Pomfret group will also welcome folks concerned about someone suffering from drug addiction. Utilizing the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, the group will discuss the Steps, Concepts, and Traditions as well as offer support for your specific situation. No advice is given; understanding and support in a confidential setting are the largest benefits of membership in the group. For more information about Al-Anon, visit www.al-anon.org. For information about the meeting in Pomfret, call 203-561-7954.

Paws Cat Shelter to hold fundraising pasta dinner

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter is hosting a pasta dinner fundraiser on Sunday, Feb. 22 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 64 Providence St., in Putnam. Eat in or Take out. Dinner includes penne pasta with tomato sauce, sausage, meatball, salad and garlic bread. Tickets are \$15 each and are available at Knights of Columbus, Paws Cat Shelter, 74 School St., Putnam and Joseph Jewelers, 153 School St., Putnam. Walk-ins welcome. Paws is a non-profit, all volunteer organization caring for the cats of our communities. For more information or to make a monetary donation, contact Paws at 860-315-1228.

Quiet Corner Garden Club sponsors tree planting project

WOODSTOCK — The Quiet Corner Garden Club (QCGC), with a grant from National Garden Club’s Plant America program, is sponsoring a tree planting project in honor of the nation’s 250th anniversary. The Club is prepared to plant a tree in the fourteen towns in Connecticut and two in Massachusetts, representative of the Garden Club’s membership. Nine of the fourteen towns have already committed to the project. Trees planted in Connecticut will be the White oak, the state tree. In Massachusetts, it will be the state tree, the American elm. Each town will choose the location to plant. Funds raised in part by the QCGC’s annual Plant Sale

and the \$2,000 grant from Plant America will be used to purchase the trees. QCGC is recruiting local scout groups, 4H clubs and others to assist Club members in planting the trees in the spring. Involving youth groups encourages interest in gardening, horticulture and the conservation of natural resources, all part of QCGC’s mission. White oak trees and American elms have a historic resonance in their respective states. The White oak was named state tree to honor the Charter Oak, a majestic white oak that grew at the state capital. In 1687, Colonists hid Connecticut’s Royal Charter in the Oak to prevent its confiscation by British authorities. In 1856,

a violent storm felled the Charter Oak estimated to be 500 to 600 years old. Native Americans used bent oak saplings, which are extremely pliable, to mark trails. Because white oaks flourish in many different eco-regions, they are considered well suited to withstand anticipated climate changes. American elms, due to their distinctive vase-shaped arching form, were traditionally used by Native Americans as “council” trees for important meetings. Massachusetts designated the American elm as its state tree in 1941 to commemorate General Washington assuming command of the Continental Army in 1775 under an

American elm (which stood until 1923). American elms were used extensively as a street tree in many American towns and cities in the 19th century. The rapid spread of the Dutch elm disease decimated the elm population during the 20th century. Arborists have created varieties in the past few decades that are hoped to be disease-resistant. For more information, contact Noreene Stehlik, the Project Coordinator, at (301) 908-9488.



Putnam holds Art Heist fundraiser

PUTNAM — The Putnam Arts Council will be holding its annual Art Heist fundraiser on Saturday, March 7 in the Montgomery Ward Building, 112 Main St. Putnam, from 5-8 p.m. This unique and fun event is a chance for ticket holders to “steal” a great piece of art from a local artists who have donated fantastic original pieces - in many mediums - valued from \$50 up to over \$900. A limited number of tickets are now on sale at \$50 each. At the event the Art Heist tickets are randomly drawn from a drum. The lucky ticket holder whose number is announced will then “steal” their favorite artwork off the walls. The first ticket holder will get to pick any piece they like. The subsequent ticket holders select from the remaining artwork. Everyone goes home with artwork equal to, or greater than, the value of their ticket. It’s a game of chance, but most people will go home with one of their top favorites. Drinks and light hors d’oeuvres will be served. Ticket holders are welcome to bring a guest. For more information or to purchase tickets visit PutnamCtArtsCouncil.com/art-heist.

WDO Chamber hosting Business After Hours networking event

THOMPSON, Conn. — The Webster Dudley Oxford Chamber of Commerce invites the community to a Business After Hours event Monday, Feb. 23 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Raceway Golf Club, 205 East Thompson Rd. Join the Chamber for a fantastic networking event. Enjoy a cocktail at the new bar, check out the simulators, and catch up with old friends while making some new ones. Admission: \$10 per person. Cash bar. Register at www.wdochamberma.com.

Putnam Corridor Gallery features unique show

PUTNAM — Currently on display at the Corridor Gallery in the Putnam Municipal Complex is the work of Jamie Soroka, a Putnam native who specializes in avant-garde designs in multiple mediums. The show, entitled “A Quiet Communion with Nature” features ethically sourced entomology and contemporary taxidermy, photographs, and found objects. Jamie’s love of nature is evident in every piece. “I try to maintain the simplicity and integrity of the subject while highlighting the wonder and awe that speaks to my soul. As an artist, I enjoy exploring and reimagining all the beauty life’s creatures have to offer us, even in death. I hope my work inspires others to find the elegance among the oddities that surround us in everyday life,” says Jamie. The most spectacular piece in the show is a 1970s wedding dress which Jamie has refashioned with moss and other natural elements. It’s showcased in the front window of the Municipal Complex. The show will be on display until the end of March. The Corridor Gallery, sponsored by the Putnam Arts Council, is located at 200 School St., Putnam. Hours and more information are available at PutnamCtArtsCouncil.com.

Learning in Retirement to hold open house in Killingly

DANIELSON — Learning in Retirement (LiR -QV) is holding a free Open House on Friday, Feb. 27 at 1 p.m. at the Killingly Community Center, 185 Broad St., Danielson. Living History Interpreter Karlee Turner Etter will present “The Arrest of Suffragist Elizabeth Glendower Evans.” Preview spring courses. Light refreshments will be served. Limited seating will be available; no reservation required. For more information, visit www.lir-qv.org.

TREE
continued from page A1

decorated with colored lights, each bulb representing donations collected in memory of loved ones or in honor of caregivers throughout the community. Activities at each site included holiday-themed musical entertainment by local chorus groups and personal stories about the impact of hospice and palliative care on those served, culminating in the lighting of the ceremonial Tree of Life. The purchase of memorial lights on each community’s Tree of Life supports the work done by Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern Connecticut, a service division of Day Kimball Healthcare at Home, which enhances the lives of seriously and terminally ill patients and their families. Skilled professionals and trained volunteers provide care through individualized plans that meet the physical, psychosocial, spiritual, and emotional needs of patients and their families throughout end-of-life and bereavement care.

“This event is one of my favorite Hospice events and takes place during the holiday season, which I see as a season of hope,” stated Kim Durand, RN, MSN, Hospice Program Manager, Day Kimball Health at Home. “The event and the donations it generates provide comfort and hope to our Hospice patients and their families.” Funds raised through this event are used to support hospice and palliative care services provided to the community that are not covered by insurance, including bereavement programs and services, as well as comfort items that improve patients’ quality of life. In addition, these funds help provide ongoing education for the hospice team, ensuring that they remain current and equipped to deliver the highest level of care. “The Tree of Life is such a special tradition for so many families in Northeast Connecticut and one of the most significant fundraising opportunities to support hospice and palliative care services in our region,” said Kristen Willis, Development Director, Day

Kimball Health. “Most importantly, it’s an opportunity and deeply personal way to celebrate a loved one, honor a caregiver, and pay tribute to so many remarkable individuals who have forever left their mark on our community and in our hearts.” More information about the event can be found at daykimball.org/TreeOfLife. To learn more about Hospice & Palliative Care of Northeastern CT, visit daykimball.org/athome. About Day Kimball Health Day Kimball Health is a nonprofit community healthcare system composed of Day Kimball Hospital, Day Kimball Medical Group, and Day Kimball Health at Home. Its service area includes Northeast Connecticut as well as nearby Massachusetts and Rhode Island communities. Day Kimball Health’s comprehensive network employs more than 1,000 staff, including nearly 300 associated, highly skilled physicians, surgeons, and specialists. Its website is daykimball.org.

PFAS
continued from page A1

local disposal site used by several businesses might be the source, but they have yet to officially declare an origin for the chemicals. Once PFAS is introduced to the environment, it’s considered a perma-chemical that does not break down and thus once it infects groundwater and local

wells, it requires special filters to be removed from drinking water. Palaia said the situation has left inspectors with many unanswered questions. “Maybe they shouldn’t have been surprised, but they are surprised by what they found. They went out here to test the fire training center and they’re testing water in a heavily industrialized area,” Palaia said. Initial testing has involved

the areas of Cotton Bridge Road, Route 101, Litchfield Avenue, Williamsville Road, State Avenue, Weeks Lane, Arnold Lane, and Lawton Lane with each positive test increasing the focus area by another 500 feet. Palaia has implied several times that officials believe the impact will eventually prove to cover a much larger area beyond the current testing sites.

OBITUARIES

Myrtie I. Blackmer, 81



Myrtie I. (Chandler) Blackmer, 81, of North Grosvenordale, passed away peacefully on February 7, 2026. She was born to the late Chester and Helen (Law) Chandler. She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Randolph Blackmer Jr.; her sons, Mark Blackmer (Lynn), Todd Blackmer (Monique), daughter, Lori Kelley (Tiger); siblings Carol Kudzal (Joseph), Robert Chandler (Debbie); seven grandchildren of whom she was immensely proud, Christopher, Daniel (Michaela), and Rachel Kelley, Gregory (Aimee) and Nicholas (Jessica) Swope, and Kendrick and Zachary (Olivia) Dexter; her great grandchildren, who she absolutely adored; as well as her nieces and nephews. She married the love of her life when she was seventeen and lived her entire life at the family homestead. While raising her kids, she volunteered as a Cub Scout Den Mother and Boy Scout committee member for over 30 years, coached a Lassie League team she and Randy sponsored, and served as the Windham County Farm Bureau Secretary for many years. Myrtie was an avid UCONN Huskies basketball fan; if you wanted to talk to her, you better have called before the game started or waited until it was over, because even if they were ahead by 15 points, it was too close for her comfort. Myrtie’s go-to one liner was, “I never get to go anywhere.” Truth be told, she enjoyed many trips with Randy to Switzerland,

Germany, Belize, Holland, Hawaii, and numerous other locations, with their Farm Bureau friends, as well as cruises and all-inclusive vacations with her children and grandchildren. During one trip, and unbeknownst to her, Myrtie’s family decided every night would be her birthday (even though her birthday was months away). At first, she didn’t know why the waitstaff was singing Happy Birthday to her, but by the third night, she knew the drill; she enjoyed her nightly celebrations the rest of the trip, just as much as we enjoyed celebrating her. Myrtie hosted Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Fourth of July gatherings for her family and extended family for many years. If you ever drove passed her house on the Fourth of July and saw a group of people sitting on her front lawn wearing red, white, and blue accessories, while waving the American flag at each passing car, rest assured, we didn’t need to be evaluated, we were just playing along with one of her shenanigans. Together with her husband and family, Myrtie kept very busy with their two businesses, Ag Service, Inc., and Blackmer Farm. She took immense pride in providing top notch products to her customers; if she spotted a minor blemish on the vegetables, or the flowers weren’t perfect, they simply didn’t make it to the stand. We sure hope Heaven’s gardens were up to her standards when she arrived. Honoring her wishes, there will be no public services. A private celebration of life will be held, at a later date. Share a memory at Smithandwalkerfh.com

Lawrence “Larry” Bonnette, 76



CONROE, TX – Lawrence “Larry” Bonnette, 76, Died on February 5, 2026 at Houston Healthcare, Conroe, surrounded by his loving family. Larry is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Nancy (Allard) Bonnette; son, Corey Bonnette and his wife Lorie of Woodstock, CT; 2 daughters, Patricia Bonnette, and Carol Abbot and her husband Shawn all of Florida; five grandchildren, Kendra Sweetland, Julia Saint-Hilaire, Miranda Bonnette, Deven Abbott, and Victoria Bonnette; 3 great-grandchildren, Mirabella, Felicity, and Jousha; 4 sisters, Clare Casey, Ceil Spenard, Christine Bonnette all of Woodstock, CT, and Marie Flint of Delaware, MD; 5 brothers, Danny Bonnette of Webster, MA, Joe Bonnette of Florida, Paul Bonnette of Suffolk, VA, Jim Bonnette of Thompson, CT, and Bob Bonnette of Woodstock; his brother-in-law, Ronald “Ronnie” Allard of Thompson, CT; many nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his sister Carol (Bonnette) Paquette. He was born on September 1, 1949, in Philadelphia PA, a son of the late Clarence and Catherine (Novak) Bonnette. He was a graduate of Springfield Trade School, MA. Mr. Bonnette was an electronic Technician for 10 years in the U. S. Navy. After the Navy the family moved back to Webster, MA and he first worked as an electronic engineer for ITT, he then worked Digital Equipment of Littleton, MA, which later became Compaq and Hewlett Packard. While at Digital he was an integral part of some of the groundbreaking developments, including the first PC’s such as the VT 100 and many others.

He found enjoyment in building and flying radio-controlled helicopters and airplanes, and as a ham radio operator, and cooking, making everyone feel welcome and comfortable. His home was always full of family. After retirement, he continued working and creating many electronic toys and items. Volunteering his time as secretary for Yankee Flyer and Tri-County Barnstormers. His greatest joy was spending time with his children and grandchildren, whether he was coaching a baseball team, or as a league umpire, or just watching them in the pool. He was proud, along with his wife, to have been a Webster, MA town representative in the 1990’s. He was also always ready to help his brother at his brother’s service station. He was a self-made man who was highly respected, strong, creative, funny, caring and very intelligent. He liked to debate and make you think. He intentionally said no to his children, so that they had to work it out for themselves and learn to be independent. He always made his kids laugh by telling great stories and songs he made up. They would compete with him for the best story. Private services will be held at the convenience of the family. The family requests that flowers be omitted and instead donations in his memory be made to the American Heart Association, 20 Speen Street, Framingham, MA 01701. McNutt Funeral Home, 1703 Porter Road, Conroe, TX 77301. Scanlon Funeral Service, 38 East Main Street, Webster, MA is handling local arrangements. www.websterfunerals.com

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OBITUARIES

Dann Herindeen June 17, 1957 – February 7, 2026



Dann Herideen, son of the late Donn A. Herindeen, Sr. and Barbara (Menard) Herindeen passed away after a ten-year battle with cancer. Dann loved to work and his passion for woodworking meant you would find him busy in his shop every day, starting his next project singing or whistling the entire time. His talents live on in countless homes and businesses throughout Woodstock and surrounding towns. He was an avid outdoorsman – a hunter and fisherman who had great respect for nature and wildlife. He truly enjoyed his backyard birds and the majesty of the local bald eagles. Dann loved gardening and was well known for his beautiful dahlias that he happily shared with many people. He enjoyed simply

going for drives, eating good food, and Friday nights at the shop. Dann loved his family – his brother Donn, sisters Debra and Donna, as well as his uncle Tod and recently departed Aunt Ruth, and several nieces and nephews. He adored his German Shepards, Isla Mae and Cinder. But nothing meant more to Dann than friendship, and he had the good fortune of having many good friends. Dann was a great guy, and he will be sorely missed. Relatives and friends were invited to visit with Dann’s family on Thursday, February 12, from 4pm to 7pm at the Gilman Funeral Home, 104 Church Street, Putnam, CT 06260. If you would like to donate in Dann’s memory, he was a supporter of Wildlife Forever, wildlife forever. org, and Defenders of Wildlife, defenders. org

Donald E. Moreau March 9, 1946 – February 5, 2026



Donald “Don” Moreau, 79, of Pomfret, Connecticut, passed away peacefully at home on February 5, 2026. Donald is survived by his loving wife of many years, Sandra A. Moreau; his daughters, Francesca Harnois and her husband Jason Harnois, and Amanda Moreau; his brother and best friend, Denis Moreau; his grandchildren, Madyson Harnois, Katelyn Trainque, Meadow Harnois, and Harmony Shaw; and his beloved nephew, Chad Moreau. He is also survived by his dog Winnie and his “grandpups” Willow and Moose - whom he insisted were truly his - as well as his great-grandpup, Blu. As well as all of his bonus grandkids, nieces and nephews. Donald was born on March 9, 1946, in Putnam, Connecticut. Growing up on a farm instilled in him a lifelong belief that everything in life is earned through hard work and dedication. He served his country during the Vietnam War. After returning home, Donald worked for many years in bridge construction and was a proud, loyal member of the Laborers’ Union. During this time, he built his own home on family property, spending countless hours perfecting his craft and creating what he proudly considered his own empire - all

while navigating life’s challenges and raising his two daughters. After retiring, Don continued working for several years in plumbing. Those who knew him knew he could never sit still for long. Don will be fondly remembered for his big bonfires, his love of hunting, and the weekly horseshoe nights that became a cherished tradition. Bringing his close friends together to enjoy each other’s company and listening to his favorite playlist of rock music. He will always be known as someone that would give a helping hand in any scenario, to anyone and everyone that needed it. He was the true epitome of an outdoorsman. He loved Harley Davidson and just about anything that had to do with motorcycles. Most of all, his favorite thing to do was spend any and all time with Denis, especially if it had something to do with a nice ice-cold beer and some sort of fixing. A loyal friend to many, Don will be deeply missed and never forgotten by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. Those closest to him knew he was a true free spirit, always determined to live life on his own terms. Don will be forever loved and remembered. For memorial guestbook, please visit www.GilmanAndValade.com



Robert L. Bruneau, Sr., 79



Southbridge: Robert L. Bruneau, Sr., 79, of Dennison Hill Rd., passed away with his family by his side on Monday, Feb. 9th, in the UMass Memorial Medical Center, University Campus, Worcester, after a long illness. He leaves his wife of 57 years, Wanda S. (Stepkowski) Bruneau; his three sons, Robert L. Bruneau, Jr., with whom he lived, of Southbridge, Dean S. Bruneau and his wife Kristen of Brimfield and Adam D. Bruneau and his wife Jenn of Pomfret, CT; his three grandchildren, Natalie Bruneau, Noah Bruneau and Arabella Bruneau; his niece, Sheila Berg and her husband John of Florida; and his niece, Carol Lawhorne and her husband Rich of Florida. He also leaves behind his sisters-in-law, Stacia Miller of Bellingham, Washington, and Florence Stefancik of Holyoke, MA, and their families. He was predeceased by his brother, Paul Bruneau, Jr. and his two sisters, Rita Melton and Joyce Bennett. Robert was born in Southbridge the son of the late Paul and Hazel (Rathbun) Bruneau and grew up in Woodstock, CT. He was a graduate of Woodstock Academy and

attended Ellis Tech. Robert was a longtime service manager for Patrick Motors Saab and Subaru in Worcester and later worked as a service manager for Herb Chambers Hyundai in Auburn, retiring many years ago. He was a member of St. Hedwig’s Church in Southbridge and it’s St. Stanislaw Society. He was also a member of the Italian American Club in Southbridge, the Pilsudski Polish American Club in Southbridge and Southbridge Senior Center. Robert was an avid pitch player and played pitch at both the Southbridge Senior Center and the Italian Club in Southbridge. Robert had a love for light-houses. He enjoyed woodworking and was always working on a project. He was also a car enthusiast.

Calling hours for Robert will be held on Saturday, Feb. 21st from 10:00am to 12:00pm in the Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, with a funeral service in the funeral home to follow at 12:00pm. Burial in St. Hedwig’s Cemetery, Southbridge, will be held at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Second Chance Animal Shelter, 111 Young Rd., East Brookfield, MA 01515. www.morrillfuneralhome.com

Ronald Morin, Sr. June 15, 1961 - February 7, 2026



North Grosvenordale - Ronald E. Morin, Sr., 64, of North Grosvenordale, passed away unexpectedly on February 7, 2026. Born in Putnam, Connecticut, he was the son of the late Edward and Georgette (Houle) Morin. Ron graduated from Ellis Tech. He worked at Park n Shop after school and went on to work as an accountant for many years, including at the Woodstock fair. He was an avid rock collector and a member of the Worcester Mineral club. He also enjoyed reading and Viking mythology. Ron is survived by two daughters, Sarah Boss and husband David of North Grosvenordale, CT, and Kyra Morin of

FL; two sons, Ronald Morin, Jr and partner Cassandra of Brooklyn, CT, Randyn Morin of Brooklyn, CT; Grandchildren Logan, Christopher, Adam, and Joshua Boss of North Grosvenordale; sister, Diane Dudek of North Grosvenordale, CT; niece, Jennifer Dudek. He is predeceased by his stepmother Margaret Morin of North Grosvenordale and brother-in-law Walter Dudek of North Grosvenordale. Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Ron’s family from 10am to 12pm on Saturday, February 21, in the Valade Funeral Home, 23 Main Street, North Grosvenordale, CT. A service for Ron will be held in the funeral home at 12pm. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

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

Patricia A. Drouin July 8, 1952 – February 11, 2026



Putnam – Patricia (Couture) Drouin, 73, passed away peacefully on February 11, 2026, in the loving company of her family. She was born on July 8, 1952, in Putnam, CT. People who knew her prior to marriage knew her as Patty Couture. She was predeceased by her beloved parents, Hazel and Pierre Godin, and her brother, Philip, as well as her Aunt Mary Raynsford, who was like a second mother to her. Patricia is survived by her devoted husband of 54 years, Denis Drouin; her two daughters, Bonnie (Jason) Gaudreau and Heidi (Chris) Davis; and her cherished grandchildren, Matthew (Mariette) and Madison (Trevor) Sheldon, Alyssa and Shaina Gaudreau, Claudia (Mack) and Luke Davis. She also leaves behind many beloved brothers and sister-in laws, cousins and nieces and nephews, all of whom she treasured deeply. Patricia was a lifelong caregiver whose compassion shaped both her career and her personal life. She worked for many years with the CT State Department of Developmental Services, where she was a dedicated advocate for individuals with special needs. Her work reflected her gen-

erous spirit and unwavering commitment to helping others. She found great joy in gardening, ocean strolls, traveling, and especially spending winters in Florida with Denis, where they enjoyed watching the manatees and sharing laughter with the friends they made there. Pat’s hobbies included studying historical homes, participating in her towns’ historical society events and redecorating the many homes she lived in over the years. She also treasured the companionship of her beloved dogs, Louie and Lily. Pat will be remembered for her sense of humor, her resilience in the face of life’s challenges, and the deep love she had for her family and friends. Her strength, warmth, and devotion to others leave a legacy that will continue in all who knew and loved her. Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Pat’s family on Friday, February 20, from 5pm to 7pm at the Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory, 104 Church Street, Putnam, CT 06260. A short service will be held in the funeral home at 6:45pm. Memorial donations in Pat’s honor can be made to either the COPD Foundation, PO Box 160112, Miami, FL 33116-0112, or to a local animal shelter of your choice. For memorial guestbook, please visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

LEGALS

NOTICE
Pursuant to General Statutes § 16-50p (a), the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) announces that, on February 5, 2026, the Council issued Findings of Fact, an Opinion, and a Decision and Order approving an application from The Towers, LLC for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the construction, maintenance, and operation of a telecommunications facility and associated equipment located at 835 Norwich Worcester Turnpike (Route 169), Woodstock, Connecticut. This application record is available for public inspection in the Council’s office, Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, Connecticut. February 20, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Elizabeth A Ellis (26-00003)
The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated January 27, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim. Brenda Duquette, Chief Clerk
The fiduciary is:

CHAD GRAHAM GREINER, THE LAW OFFICE OF CHAD G GREINER, LLC, 122 EAST CENTER STREET, MANCHESTER, CT 06040
February 20, 2026

TOWN OF KILLINGLY METERED USE LEGAL NOTICE
Payments will be received in the Revenue Office, 172 Main Street Killingly CT 06239, as follows: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8-4:30pm, Tuesday 8-5:30pm, and Friday 8-11:30am. By mail, online, or in our drop box. The second installment of metered use is due March 1, 2026. If payment is not received on or before April 1, 2026 the installment becomes delinquent and subject to interest at the rate of 18% per annum, 1.5% per month, or any fraction of a month, from the due date. A minimum of \$2.00 interest will be charged for each delinquent tax bill and installment. Please visit our website for full details and online payments www.killingly.org. April Lamothe, CCMC Revenue Collector
Town of Killingly
February 20, 2026
March 7, 2026
March 27, 2026

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