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# WOODSTOCK VILLAGER

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Friday, February 7, 2025

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## Scramble the Duck predicts early spring



Courtesy Aaron Minor reads Scramble's prediction.

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

EASTFORD — It has become a storied tradition in Eastford that every Feb. 2, Groundhog Day, the community comes together not to

celebrate a large rodent, but rather an adorable duck who offers his own prediction for the upcoming winter in a ceremony called "Duck Day." For the last 11 years, Eastford has taken to consulting their own

mascot, Scramble the Duck, to determine how long the winter will last rather than depending on Punxsutawney Phil, Pennsylvania's more nationally known animal meteorologist, who locals feel has a track record of

inaccurate weather predictions. It's all in good fun of course as Scramble is just one of many animals that have taken the place of groundhogs in different states over the years playing off the Pennsylvania Dutch tra-

dition that inspired the annual holiday. Every Groundhog Day the residents of Eastford gather to see if Scramble has seen his shadow the duck with having 100 percent accuracy compared to

Phil. For 2025, Scramble has predicted an early spring. The ceremony was attended by both state and local officials and residents hoping that

Turn To **SCRAMBLE** page **A11**

## Putnam to celebrate 14th Annual Fire & Ice Festival this weekend

PUTNAM — This weekend, the Putnam Business Association, in partnership with The Town of Putnam, will once again host the largest single ice block competition in all of New England – the 14th Annual Fire & Ice – A Valentine's Festival. A free community family friendly event meant to be enjoyed by all ages!

This scorching hot and cool blockbuster event, scheduled from noon to 8 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 8, boasts more than five dozen ice carvings, ice photo opportunities, a 30-foot inflatable igloo, stilts walkers, a magician, a fire juggler, belly dancer, face painters, a massive heart shaped bonfire pit, food trucks, epic fire demonstrations, the "Just in Time for Valentine's Vendor Fair," a beer garden, signature pours off ice luges, winter games and the iconic Ice Bar Arena.

From noon to 5 p.m., you can watch professional, amateur and group carvers create their masterpieces using 300-pound ice blocks. All the blocks are sponsored by local businesses and carved by dedicated artists. Professional demonstrations are being sponsored by Ketel One, 85 Main, and Coca Cola. Other not-to-be-missed carvings include event-inspired photo opportunities sponsored by Woodstock Building Associates, Rawson Materials, Spirol, Girls 'N' Tools, WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, Jewett City Savings Bank, The Hare and The Hound, Rampeco Construction, Cargill Chevrolet and CDM Smith. There will be an awards ceremony at 6 p.m. and ice carvings will decorate the streets of downtown Putnam for a few days (weather permitting). For adult patrons there will be a 12-foot Ice Bar sponsored by Teremana Tequila and Jägermeister that will be serving drink specials by The Courthouse Bar and Grille. Ice Luges will be located at Sawdust Coffee House, 85 Main, The Crossings Restaurant and Brew Pub, Blackstone Putnam, Daley's Pours and The Hare and The Hound. Bear Hands Brewing Company will showcase their annual Beer Garden.

"The Warming Block," featuring a massive heart shaped bon-fire pit, will keep you nice and toasty with

Turn To **FIRE & ICE** page **A11**

## Day Kimball Health names Paula Bellavance Employee of the Month for December

PUTNAM — Day Kimball Health (DKH) has named Paula Bellavance, case manager associate in the Case Management Department, as its December Employee of the Month.

Bellavance joined DKH in May 2008 as a secretary in Behavioral Health Services before transitioning to Day Kimball Health at Home. In June 2024, she moved into her current role in the Case Management Department. Throughout her career, she has



Courtesy

Paula Bellavance, case manager associate at Day Kimball Health, has been named December Employee of the Month.

demonstrated exceptional dedication to patient care, teamwork, and professional growth.

As a case manager associate, Bellavance plays a vital role in coordinating patient transportation. She works closely with KB Ambulance and other providers to arrange Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) transports, ensuring patients receive the higher-level care or rehabilitation services they need. Additionally,

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## Henry Bowen's dream being revitalized at Roseland Park



Courtesy

Work is underway at Roseland Park for laying conduits that will provide underground electricity throughout the Park. This work is able to be accomplished thanks to the generosity of donors who have supported The Legacy Campaign "150 Years and Beyond" with pledges and gifts exceeding \$900,000.

WOODSTOCK — Buoyed by the response to The Legacy Campaign "150 Years and Beyond" the Board of Trustees of Roseland Park & Golf Course announced plans to move forward with the

next phase of its fund-raising effort aimed at the restoration and revitalization of the Property. Last year the Board along with the Capital Campaign committee embarked on its most



Prior to the recent snows and cold snap workers were able to apply the first coating of asphalt to the redesigned and safer roadways at Roseland Park. The work is part of the generous support of The Legacy Campaign "150 Years and Beyond," which has realized more than \$900,000 in gifts and pledges.

ambitious fund-raising effort since the opening of the park in 1876 by Woodstock patriot and philanthropist Henry Chandler Bowen. Recognizing Mr. Bowen's dream, the committee, led by General Chairman John Rauh, Vice Chairman Dr. Jonathan

Gradie and Honorary Chairman Paul Kelly diligently pursued its goal of \$1Million. "Thanks to the support of numerous individuals the initial phase of the campaign realized more than \$900,000, which

Turn To **ROSELAND** page **A11**

# WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors welcomes Jonathan Mathews to Tolland office as Associate VP, Wealth Advisor



Jonathan Mathews

TOLLAND — WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors has welcomed Jonathan Mathews as Associate Vice President, Wealth Advisor.

In this role, Mathews will work collaboratively with the firm's advisory team to provide strategic financial planning and wealth management services to clients. He will be based at the firm's Tolland, Connecticut office.

Mathews brings 10 years of financial services experience, specializing in high-net-worth accounts and sophisticated investment and insurance solutions. Before joining WHZ, he served as Leader of Distribution Activation at GRAIL, a Silicon Valley-based biotechnology company, where he engaged with financial services executives and their clients. His background also includes serving in insurance-focused roles with both Prudential Financial and John Hancock, as well as nearly a decade of service in the US Air Force.

"Jonathan's extensive experience in strategic financial planning and wealth management, combined with his commitment to exceptional client service, makes him the ideal person to lead our growing Tolland office," said WHZ Principal/Managing Partner and Chief Strategist James Zahansky, AWMA®. "His approach to building long-term client relationships through truly personalized service aligns perfectly with our mission to provide each client with absolute confidence and unwavering

partnership for life."

"Jonathan's broad expertise across multiple aspects of wealth management will be invaluable as we continue expanding our services to meet the diverse needs of our clients," added WHZ Principal/Managing Partner and Chief Investment Officer Laurence Hale, AAMS®, CRPS®. "His background in both retail and institutional client services, combined with his strategic approach to financial planning, strengthens our ability to deliver an exceptional wealth management experience at every touchpoint."

Mathews holds an MBA from the University of Connecticut and a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas. He currently resides in Woodstock with his four children, and is active in the local community, including coaching soccer.

WHZ is an independent investment and fiduciary asset management firm serving individuals, families, business owners, executives, and not-for-profit institutions in 25 states from its offices in Pomfret and Tolland. The firm's mission is to provide each and every client with "Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life" through hyper-personalized financial planning and wealth management services delivered within its own Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™ strategic financial planning process. WHZ is a partner of Commonwealth Financial Network®, a Registered Investment Advisor. To learn more, visit [www.whzwealth.com](http://www.whzwealth.com).

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## Relay for Life seeks to "Turn the Tide" in 2025

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

PUTNAM — Relay for Life will be here before you know it, and to start off the year, the local edition of the annual cancer benefit has revealed its new theme for 2025.

The Relay for Life of Northeastern Connecticut will take on a nautical theme this summer in an effort to "turn the tide against cancer." Participants will be encouraged to embrace underwater concepts for their campsites and promotions. Like other themes before it, the theme will allow teams to have a bit of fun with their displays as they choose anything from movies to beaches, aquariums and the like for their displays.

Shane Donahue, event coordinator for Relay for Life of Northeastern Connecticut, said they are eager to get back on the track and celebrate what has become a staple fundraising event in the region over roughly 30 years.

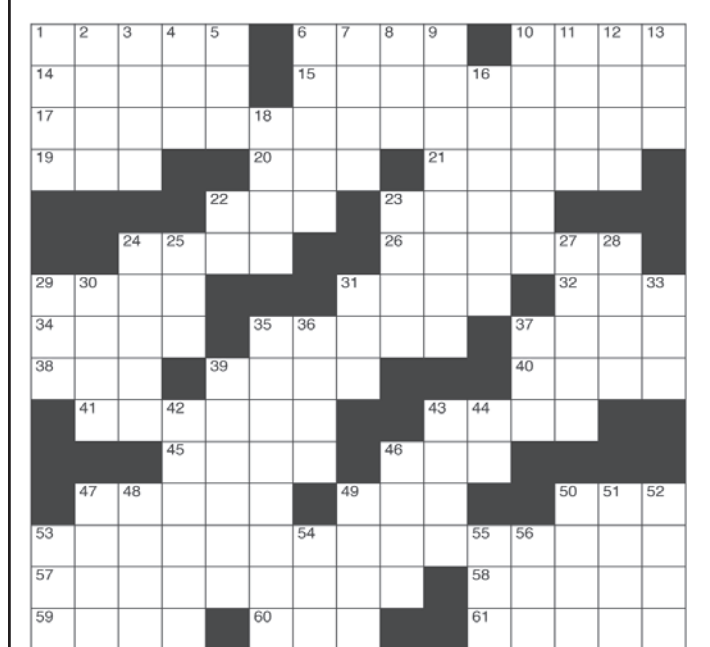
"For decades we've come together once a year to honor survivors and the loved ones that we've lost. I think it's really important for people grappling

with cancer diagnoses and the fallout from that. We have three impactful moments that stand out to most people at our ceremonies and that's the Survivor Lap, our Silent Lap and luminary ceremony where we honor the loved ones we've lost and the ones we are still fighting for, and then we have our fight back ceremony where we talk about the amazing work the American Cancer Society is doing," said Donahue.

Relay for Life sees teams from across the region organized by families, businesses, and community groups come together for one 24-hour period to raise money to benefit the American Cancer Society and its programs. Some walk the entire time while other walk in shifts, the idea being that we are all in this fight together to find a cure. The local Relay is just one of hundreds that take place across the country every year.

This year's event in Putnam will include a few new additions, specifically to cater to the younger walkers and families. A kid's circus and story hour are among the new programs and event planners are putting more emphasis on Relay as a public event this year. While the teams are registered participants, they also encourage members of the public to stop by throughout the day to help support the cause.

Relay for Life 2025 will be held from May 31 through June 1 at the Saint Marie-Greenhalgh Sports Complex on Wicker Street in Putnam. Teams still have plenty of time to sign up and can learn more about the event by visiting [relayforlife.org/northeasternct](http://relayforlife.org/northeasternct).



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. "The Las Vegas of the East"
- 6. Cook
- 10. Manning and Wallach are two
- 14. Chameleon
- 15. A way to fill up
- 17. What MLBers hope to play in
- 19. Unhappy
- 20. Indefinite period of time
- 21. Excites
- 22. Males
- 23. Mongol leader Genghis
- 24. Turfs
- 26. Soda comes in them
- 29. Not nice
- 31. Professional organization
- 32. Part of a play
- 34. Sea eagle
- 35. Emily Blunt's character in "Sicario"
- 37. Beige
- 38. Mental sharpness
- 39. Valley
- 40. Alcyone's husband
- 41. A place to gamble
- 43. Flightless Australian birds
- 45. Call out somebody's name over a P.A. system
- 46. US spy group
- 47. Pancakes from buckwheat flour
- 49. Swiss river
- 50. Disfigure
- 53. Have surgery
- 57. Formal withdrawal
- 58. Early English council
- 59. Square measures
- 60. 2,000 lbs.
- 61. Siskel and \_\_, critics

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Mouths
- 2. Buffalo
- 3. You plug it in
- 4. Each
- 5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 6. King of Thebes
- 7. English name meaning "mythical hunter"
- 8. Indicates near
- 9. More herbaceous
- 10. Gas-powered cars need one
- 11. Dishonest individual
- 12. Systems, doctrines, theories
- 13. The woman
- 16. The whole of one's holdings
- 18. Witnesses
- 22. Doctor
- 23. Paul \_\_, Swiss painter
- 24. Kids look for him on December 24
- 25. Single
- 27. Competitions
- 28. Predict the future
- 29. Cage for trained hawks
- 30. Musician Clapton
- 31. Frozen water
- 33. Semi-formal men's evening attire
- 35. Most worn
- 36. Common soap ingredient
- 37. Former EU monetary unit
- 39. Provisions
- 42. Book parts
- 43. Republic of Ireland
- 44. Partner to "Pa"
- 46. Sammy \_\_, songwriter
- 47. Dutch colonist
- 48. Clare Booth \_\_, American writer
- 49. Solar disk in Egyptian mythology
- 50. Minute arachnid
- 51. From a distance
- 52. Monthly apartment cost
- 53. Young women's association
- 54. Tourist destination
- 55. "Woman" in Ojibwe language
- 56. Pointed end of a pen

## Christ Church Pomfret hosts annual Chili Cook-Off

POMFRET—Christ Church Pomfret will hold its annual chili cook-off on Saturday, Feb. 8, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the church's Great Hall.

The event will feature a variety of chili styles—meat and bean, vegetarian, and creative—as well as several side dishes. People are encouraged to sample each and vote for their favorite. Everyone is welcome, and anyone can submit a chili dish.

The event will raise money for the church's youth programs, including its Journey 2 Adulthood group, which encourages teens to discover themselves and their faith through weekly gatherings and on pilgrimage.

Tickets, which will be available at the door, are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children younger than 12. For information and to enter a chili, please call the church office at (860) 315-7780.

## VILLAGER ALMANAC

### AT CT AUDUBON

Bird sightings at the Connecticut Audubon Society Center at Pomfret and Wyndham Land Trust properties for the week Jan. 27: Bald Eagle, Barred Owl, Saw-whet Owl, Red-tailed Hawk, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Mockingbird, Bluebird, American Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Carolina Wren, Red-winged Blackbird, Junco. Visit [ctaudubon.org/pomfret-home](http://ctaudubon.org/pomfret-home).

## BELLAVANCE

continued from page A1

she collaborates with community providers to facilitate seamless post-discharge referrals.

A key part of Bellavance's responsibilities involves preparing and submitting authorization requests to insurance companies, monitoring their status, and addressing any denials in partnership with the finance team.

Kyle Kramer, CEO of Day Kimball Health, praised Bellavance's dedication and impact, stating, "Paula is a tremendous asset to Day Kimball and our community. Her efforts in coordinating transportation, navigating insurance processes, and facilitating seamless transitions for our patients are truly invaluable. Paula is a joy to work with, and her positive attitude and collaborative spirit make a difference every day. We are incredibly proud to recognize her as Employee of the Month."

Outside of work, Bellavance enjoys spending time outdoors, capturing nature's beauty through landscape photography, exploring new destinations through travel, and cherishing meaningful moments with family and friends.

Day Kimball Health's employee of the month program is sponsored by Foxwoods Resort Casino and the Mashantucket (Western) Pequot Tribal Nation in appreciation of our healthcare workers and all they do for our community.

### About Day Kimball Health

Day Kimball Health is a nonprofit community healthcare system composed of Day Kimball Hospital, Day Kimball Medical Group, Day Kimball Healthcare at Home, and healthcare centers in Danielson, Dayville, Plainfield, and Putnam. 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](http://daykimball.org).

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# Barriers

It's too hard, I don't have enough time, it's too lofty a goal, and people like me don't do things like that. You have heard all the excuses, so now let's dig into why people never start and, if they start, never succeed.

## Taking giant steps.

I am reminded of the philosophy I learned from one of my esteemed teachers. He asked me, "How do you eat an elephant?" I thought for a minute and gave him a silly answer (being a teen at the time): "Sir, with a fork and ketchup."

He shook his head (his occasional reaction to my responses) and answered, "No, silly boy, one bite at a time!" The real lesson was that I was trying to take giant steps in my progress rather than baby steps to get things right. My lesson of setting smaller, easier, and more realistic goals has helped me over the years.

**Setting a timeline.**  
The difference between a dream and a goal is a deadline.

When I was in college, I knew if a term paper were due in six weeks, I would have it done in six weeks. I had a starting point, a midpoint, and then an endpoint. When a person has no defining parameters for accomplishing a task, it becomes one of those "I will get to it soon" moments.

Here are five barriers that may hold you back from being successful.

**Not enough information**  
I learned this from my Dad, who was a builder. He told me he built his first spec house at age sixteen. He had been working for his Dad, argued with him, and left. He figured that since he had helped build over twenty houses, he was smart enough to strike out on his own and give it a go. My Dad's first solo project was finally finished, sat empty for months, and finally sold, but he lost money. He then realized how wise his father was and learned he should depend on people who were more intelligent than him to give him all the information to succeed.

**You quit too early.**  
I once met someone who told me they had been to college for four years. I asked what degree they earned, and they told me I didn't earn a degree. He commented, "I was a freshman at four different colleges and dropped out each time!" So, four years of college and nothing to show for it. It's essential to think long-term and short-term. Short-term success helps you achieve long-term results. I once read that Sony Corporation, the electronics manufacturing company in Japan, had a hundred-year business plan. Don't just be a dreamer, be a doer too. Owning the dream is your real goal.

**No success coach.**  
Everyone needs a teacher, coach, or mentor. Even Tiger Woods has a coach. To become the greatest golfer in the world, he hired a putting coach, a driving coach, a strength coach, and a nutritionist. A coach can give you feedback and push you along when you need a kick in the butt. Just like an airplane autopilot, mentors will help you with course corrections.

**Not thinking positive.**  
Success comes in cans, not cant's. Whenever I was teaching, I always had a life lesson in mind. One of my favorite motivational sayings I want to share with you today is "Whatever Your Mind Can Conceive and Believe, It Can Achieve." - Napoleon Hill. This quote from the 1937 book "Think and Grow Rich" has gained much popularity in recent years as a way to describe the power of positive thinking, one of the most essential concepts in training your brain.

**Not enough detail on the goal and the process.**  
Whenever you set your goal, you need to describe it in intricate detail so that it becomes real to you. List the colors, smell, sound, feel, and texture if you can. Here is an example. A highly waxed metal-flake midnight blue Harley Softail deluxe with shiny leather seats with my initials, custom foot pegs, oversized tires, and a throaty growl and flames down the sides of the tank. Oversized chrome wheels that shine like a bright star. Get the idea?

Now, to make what you want to happen, please write it down. When a thought transfers into writing, it seeds in your mind what will come. I am a big fan of a small pad on which to write and rewrite notes. When writing something down, you imprint the thought, idea, or goal firmly into your brain, and that becomes indelible.

A well-known study by Dr. Gail Matthews at Dominican University found that people who wrote down their goals shared them with a friend, and provided regular progress updates were 42% more likely to achieve their goals than those who only thought about them.

I am a big fan of setting s.m.a.r.t. goals - specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-based. I hope this helps!

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

# Northeast Opportunities for Wellness comedy show raises more than \$19,000 for youth wellness

PUTNAM — "Out with the Old, In with the New," a star-studded comedy show, is thrilled to announce that its recent fundraising event has raised an impressive \$19,000 for our area youth.

The sold-out show, held on Jan. 17 at The Bradley Playhouse, brought together some of the biggest names in the community for an unforgettable night of laughter and entertainment. The show featured a talented lineup of celebrity comedians, including Dr. Marc Cerrone, Dr. Erica Kesselman, Rachel Lenda, Andrew Morrison, Linda Colangelo, Thomas Soroka, Eric Gould, Trent Pappas III, and Reverend Riley Prather, who generously donated their time and talents to support the cause. The event was emceed by Scott Higgins, who kept the audience in stitches throughout the evening.

"We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the incredible support we received from our talented performers, generous sponsors, and enthusiastic audience," said Jennifer Brytowski of Jennerate, producer of the NOW Celebrity Comedy Show.

Sponsors for the evening included: Headline Sponsors: Spicer Energy Services, CR Premier Properties, The Liv, 85 Main and Breezeline. Uproar Sponsors: Gerardi Insurance Services - Hilb Group, Ameriprise Financial Services - The O'Brien Group, Nikki's Dog House, Byrnes Insurance - A Hub



Photo credit: Collin Hamilton Photography

International Company, Gilman and Valade Funeral Services, bankHometown and Girls N' Tools. Belly Laugh Sponsors: The Inn at Woodstock Hill, SPIROL International, Archambault Insurance Services - A Division of WORLD.

We're thrilled to have raised more than \$19,000 for our youth wellness programs, and we can't wait to do it all again next year! NOW is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit human services organization dedicated to providing and promoting youth social, emotional, and physical wellness opportunities across Northeastern Connecticut through youth sports scholarships, free youth programming, and advocacy. The funds raised from the show will go directly towards supporting NOW youth programs and youth sports scholarships.

"We are so incredibly

thankful for all the support that we have received through this show. This event is only made possible through the hard work of our volunteers, generosity of our sponsors, and courage of our celebrity comedians. We would like to sincerely thank 85 Main for hosting our VIP event, as well as providing the beer and wine at the show and the Bradley Playhouse for hosting us for the second year in a row.

Finally, to our event producer, Jennifer Brytowski, for all her hard work, dedication, enthusiasm, and passion that she poured into making this event a successful reality," said Tayler Shea, NOW Executive Director.

For more information or to learn how to get involved with next year's event, please contact NOW Executive Director, Tayler Shea, at [tayler.shea@nowinmotion.org](mailto:tayler.shea@nowinmotion.org).



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 EDITOR

# Slow down— technology is stealing your time

We live in a time where technology promises to make life easier, yet somehow, we have less time than ever. Every advancement, faster Internet, instant messaging, smart devices, claims to free up space in our schedules, but instead, we're drowning in notifications, endless emails, and a to-do list that never seems to go away. Life has become a constant cycle of "work, work, work," and the simplicity many of us grew up with feels like a distant memory.

Think about it: technology was supposed to cut down on the time we spend working. Instead of making things easier, it has made us always available, always connected, always doing something. The lines between work and personal time are blurred, and instead of freeing us up to enjoy life, our devices keep us tethered to obligations. We're answering emails at dinner, checking texts before bed, and scrolling through social media when we could be outside, catching up with friends, or just doing nothing for a change.

Somehow, we've been tricked into believing that productivity equals worth, that every spare moment should be filled with checking off tasks. Half the time we spend responding to "urgent" messages, organizing digital clutter, or trying to keep up with the latest trends is time wasted. The hours we lose staring at screens, overthinking schedules, and squeezing in one more thing could be spent actually living.

Remember when life was simpler? When fun wasn't something we had to "schedule," but something that just happened? As kids, we didn't check emails or try to multitask joy. We just had fun riding bikes, playing outside, having actual conversations without checking our phones every five minutes.

It's time to reclaim some of that simplicity. Give yourself permission to step away. Carve out time not just to cross things off your to-do list, but to breathe, to laugh, to enjoy. Be deliberate about setting boundaries with work and technology. Put the phone down. Close the laptop. Go outside. Call a friend instead of sending a text. Spend an afternoon doing something just because it makes you happy.

Life isn't just about being productive. It's about being present. The world won't fall apart if you take a break. And when you do, you might just realize how much time you've been wasting trying to keep up with a pace that was never meant to be sustainable in the first place.

**Letter submission policy**

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

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

# OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### There's only one person in the world Trump cares about

To the Editor:  
 Donald Trump, our President, is a monster. Last Thursday, the day after 67 people lost their lives in an icy Potomac River following a nighttime crash between an Army helicopter and a PSA/American passenger plane, he used the majority of his time at the following morning's press conference blaming, variously, DEI (Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion), Pete Buttigieg, Barack Obama, and Joe Biden for the disaster, even before all of the bodies had been pulled from the water, families informed, and weeks before even a preliminary investigation had been completed (the full investigation will likely take six to 12 months). In the kind of moment where his predecessors (see Ronald Reagan after the Lockerbie bombing or the Challenger Shuttle disaster, or George W. Bush after 9/11, or Bill Clinton after the Oklahoma City bombing, or Barack Obama after the Charleston AME church shooting) sought to grieve, console, express humility, to call us to our better selves or, to help us heal, Mr. Trump chose to insult, divide, and inspire hate.

How did he know the crash was the fault of women, or minorities, or the disabled? "Because I have common sense," he said. God help us.

There are many reasonable questions to be asked about this tragedy in addition to how it actually happened. Did FAA chief Michael Whitaker's resignation on Jan. 20 play any role? Did the Federal hiring freeze play a role in the understaffed Control Tower? Did the January 21 disbanding of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee play any role? Is the May 2024 CNN report that, based on FAA numbers, air traffic control stations were short 3,000 controllers relevant? Were there in fact people in positions that they were unqualified for? It is dubious that any of these things contributed but worthwhile looking at nevertheless. At this point, there are only questions and we can just hope that the investigation will be unbiased, thorough, and have actionable recommendations for improvement of our air safety system. What we do not need, as Rep. Garcia of Illinois put it, is a President "exploiting disaster to continue to spread racist lies and divisiveness across the country."

Unfortunately, that's who the man is. How did he begin the main eulogy at the funeral of his father, Fred, the man who kept him afloat through his many bankruptcies? "I was having the greatest year of my business career, and I was sitting having breakfast thinking of how well things were going for me." The rest, of course, was all about Donald. And, following his father's death, he cut off Trump Organization medical insurance for his deceased brother's child with muscular dystrophy. The list of such stories is practically endless.

On the day after his second inauguration, our President attended Washington National Cathedral for an interfaith prayer service

which has been held after every inauguration for nearly 100 years. At the service, Rev. Marianne Budde preached about mercy, something which one might have thought would be familiar to a person who appealed for (and received) support from believers in the New Testament: "In the name of our God, I ask you to have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now. There are gay, lesbian, and transgender children in Democratic, Republican, and independent families, some who fear for their lives. The people who pick our crops and clean our office buildings, who labor on poultry farms and meatpacking plants, who wash the dishes after we eat in restaurants and work the night shift in hospitals. They may not be citizens, or have the proper documentation, but the vast majority of immigrants are not criminals. They pay taxes, and are good neighbors. They are faithful members of our churches, mosques, and synagogues, gurdwara, and temples. Have mercy, Mr. President, on those in our communities whose children fear that their parents will be taken away. Help those who are fleeing war zones and persecution in their own lands to find compassion and welcome here. Our God teaches us that we are to be merciful to the stranger, for we were once strangers in this land. May God grant us all the strength and courage to honor the dignity of every human being, speak the truth in love, and walk humbly with one another and our God, for the good of all the people of this nation and the world."

Trump's response, on Truth Social: he called her "a 'so-called Bishop,' accused her of bringing 'her church into the world of politics in a very ungracious way,'" called her a "Radical Left hard line Trump hater," and called her sermon "boring," "nasty in tone," "uninspiring," and demanded an apology from her and her church.

In the process of writing this letter I went to the Fox News website, interested in how they were playing the D.C. airline crash story. Three days after the tragedy, the lead story on the site featured a banner headline: "Senator Says Hiring Based on DEI a Huge Problem Moving Forward for Us." There was nothing about the people who died in the crash, nothing about either Control Tower staffing, helicopter staffing, or theories about how the crash happened and how the investigation would be conducted. In short, it was pure Trump political PR.

I suppose what I took from this is that were I a Trump supporter it might be in my interest to expand my news horizons a bit beyond Fox, OAN, Breitbart, X, or Facebook. Trump supporters might well think he has their backs, but they need to think again. He's an extraordinarily nasty piece of work — there's only one person in this world he really cares about.

JOHN A. DAY, JR.  
 WOODSTOCK VALLEY

### We must stand up to Trump's betrayal

To the Editor:

Finally, my hair is on fire. It happened over the weekend, when multiple sources reported that the richest man in the world now has access to the equivalent of our nation's checkbook, including information about our IRS tax returns; Social Security numbers and benefits; Medicare and Medicaid claim details and any other disbursements made by the federal government with OUR money that has been legislated by Congress. This means that your and my personal financial information stored by the federal government is now open to Elon Musk's—and any of his appointees'—scrutiny.

On Friday of last week, using the dubious authority of a made-up "Department of Government Efficiency" by executive order of our new President, Elon Musk somehow forced the resignation of the highest ranking Treasury Department career official, David A. Lebryk, a non-political employee who had worked at our Treasury Department since 1989. Mr. Lebryk was in charge of our U.S. government's payment system, disbursing around \$6 trillion annually. As a retired accounts payable clerk, I know that does not mean that Mr. Lebryk decided which bills to pay; he could only pay amounts that have been duly authorized by Congress.

Mr. Lebryk refused to allow Elon Musk to access the Treasury Department's disbursement records. It is important to make a distinction between proposed budget amounts, which Congress debates and votes on, and the actual payments which come to us as Social Security or Veterans or other benefits, tax refunds, and payments for goods and services. During budget debates, no one is perusing or releasing our personal financial information. But when bills are paid, private information that should remain confidential is part of the Treasury's records.

For a government body to examine budget proposals is fine with me, as efficiency measures may actually be discovered and implemented. Not so with our nation's check register and A/P files. That information should be guarded, as Mr. Lebryk rightly insisted.

Following the departure of David Lebryk, our brand-new Treasury Secretary,

Scott Bessent, allowed Elon Musk to find out whatever details are in those Treasury Department computers and, apparently, permits him to stop whatever payments he decides will make our government "more efficient." Or maybe whatever disbursements he is against, even though Congress has authorized such payment. He has taken over our federal money supply.

This has to be blatantly unconstitutional, not to mention downright frightening—and enraging—as Elon Musk is also a government contractor with apparent ambitions to ever increase his influence and his own wealth. More outrageous to me is that he was never elected by anyone to any position of public trust. And I do not trust his judgment around who gets paid and who does not.

There is more to this, I am sure, but responding quickly is crucial to ending whatever power of our pursestrings Elon Musk believes he has. Please call Congressman Joe Courtney at 860 886-0139 or 202 225-2076, Senator Chris Murphy at 860 549-8463 or 202 224-4041 and Senator Richard Blumenthal at 860 258-6940 or 202 224-2823 to express your opinion and to ask for an end to this breach of security. Yes, Elon Musk, unelected and the richest person in the world, now has your, and my, sensitive financial information, as well as whatever vendors Mr. Lebryk used to pay. My suggestion would be to initiate impeachment proceedings against Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who either does not know how to do the job, or who is complicit in this potential compromise of our nation's bank accounts. But readers can devise their own suggestions to end this invasion of our privacy. And please do!

I confess that I feel somewhat like a National Inquirer tabloid writer in composing this letter. I never dreamed that a President who just swore an oath to protect and defend the U.S. Constitution would betray us like this—even one who did not get my vote. We must stand up to these wrongs, stick together and not look away when our time to do right is so obvious.

Respectfully,  
 CLAUDIA TERWILLIGER ALLEN  
 THOMPSON

## Impermanence

The plane crash last week in Washington, D.C. reminded me of many safe trips I have made there through the years. The first time I was about ten and my parents and I were visiting my brother, who was in the Army. The plane circled the airport and I was sick, but thrilled by the adventure. As an adult, I attended a number of conferences in D.C. Dressed in the working girl outfits of the times, I felt a rush of patriotic feeling as the planes flew over the various monuments and I reached for my brief case to disembark just like the men around me in their blue suits. The horrible accident makes one think of priorities.

Only once have I ever been on a flight that I thought might crash. It was Memorial Day years ago, and I was flying from Kansas City to Boston, where my husband and daughters were to meet me. We were going to Cape Cod for the holiday. There was a terrible thunder and lightning storm and the plane dropped hundreds of feet in seconds. There was an eerie moment of quiet. I didn't worry about dying. I thought about how sad my daughters would be to lose their mother. That was a feeling I knew myself. My husband would be bereft and left with twice the responsibility. The flight continued and eventually landed safely as if nothing had happened at all. If we were changed by it, it was transitory.

We all have stories of close calls and near misses. The longer we live the more moments there are when through luck, or fate or providence, catastrophes are

avoided and life goes on. We like to think that it is due to our good sense or preparation or our superior intellect, all of which might help a bit, but not entirely. Some is due to accidents of birth where we live in safe places with good people. Some is clearly economic and the point in history where we happen to turn up.

Some of it is random. It is all unpredictable enough to make one humble.

Too much news makes us anxious. If we hear the details of the plane crash over and over again, it feels as if perhaps someone we know was on it. There were figure skaters, coaches and parents on board and the thought of young athletes with promising careers ahead of them makes it all feel even more tragic. We need to think about the people who perished just as we need to think about those who are suffering because that is what makes us human.

We live in the flight path of the Life Star helicopter that flies people from our hospital to Hartford. When I hear the distinctive thumping of the rotors overhead, I focus on the person inside who must be in serious trouble and the people helping out. It's often at night and the pilot is very well trained. It all seems like a small miracle moving through the darkness.

The plane crash was an aberration. A little research shows that there is one accident per 1.26 million flights for 2023. Flights are far safer than motor vehicles, but the impact on our consciousness is significant. Soaring in the sky is magical and falling from it unbearable.

One's priorities are a blend of what is loved, what is seen as responsibility, and ideas about legacy. There is some hope of permanence in art and beauty but loss and sorrow are always with us. An awful crash reminds us to think about what matters.

Additional  
 Letters to the  
 Editor, See  
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NANCY WEISS

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### The future rests on our shoulders

To the Editor:

The United States of America took its first step toward challenging both Russia and China as the world's leading autocracy as President Trump channeled his inner Putin and issued a flurry of executive orders aimed at usurping authority from the other two branches of government. His actions were both chilling and breathtaking not only for the sheer number, but for the scope of subjects involved.

On the domestic front, he has frozen money already appropriated by Congress to upgrade our energy infrastructure and at the same time planned to increase our production in an effort to establish his national AI enterprise. His initiative is ambitious, but it will take far more kilowatts than we currently produce and with the power plants comes a far larger grid.

What Trump is not divulging is that crypto mining also sucks energy from the grid. The fact that Trump is creating policies to ensure government support of cryptocurrency is not surprising, given it was one of his campaign promises. Nor should it be surprising

that both he and his wife Melania, have released their own versions of the secretive investment. The man knows how to game the system and stands to make billions. All this should drive up electrical costs for the average American, while making money for his oligarchy.

At the same time, Trump is dismantling domestic programs and has appointed the richest man in the world to do away with government "waste." These programs include a Biden proposal to reduce prescription drug costs, and cuts to food assistance, health insurance, housing and energy assistance, disability benefits, and educational grants.

The President's approach to the immigration problem seems to create a police state. The overwhelming number of immigrants are simple people seeking a better life and not criminals. To remove a hardworking, tax paying person threatens American businesses especially agriculture, hotels, and construction. His heavy-handed policies threaten to shut business down which in turn would lead to higher prices for American consumers. A much more targeted approach would

be to go after the gangs and other criminals while placing those here for work in a monitoring program as well as buttressing the borders which must also include our coasts. America simply does not have enough working bodies to fill these jobs, nor do most Americans want them and if Trump's goal is to attract foreign industry to America, he needs immigrants to fill the positions.

Trump's most disappointing edict was to release all January 6th convicted criminals. It's hard to understand how someone who touts being strict on crime would release domestic terrorists accused of assaulting police officers and planning the overthrow of government. Already several of those released have been involved in violent crimes including vehicular manslaughter. At the same time, he has continued his modus operandi of antagonizing all who publicly oppose him. This includes firing FBI agents and DOJ prosecutors who were assigned to investigate him, not by their own choice, and General Milley, who had the courage to disagree with Trump. His latest foil was a kindhearted Episcopalian Bishop who

asked Trump to show mercy. He called her a "Radical Left hard line Trump hater." Score Trump 1 Jesus 0. In rewarding those loyal to him and at the same time vehemently attacking those who criticize him moves Trump one step closer to all the other dictators of the world,

His foreign policy has also taken a page from Russia and China in threatening to militarily take over both Greenland and the Panama Canal.

He has thumbed his nose at the rest of the world by withdrawing from WHO and the Paris Climate Agreement. He has put a freeze on nearly all foreign aid which will leave a vacuum for Russia and China who are much savvier and understand that allies are needed to assert global dominance.

His tariff plan portends economic disaster not for only the American economy, but also for the rest of the world. It has failed every time it has been implemented in the past and in today's integrated global markets, has no chance of succeeding. In 1988 President Reagan said, "Our peaceful trading partners are not our enemies; they are our allies. We should beware

of the demagogues who are ready to declare a trade war against our friends--weakening our economy, our national security, and the entire free world--all while cynically waving the American flag..."

Trump has also mastered the art of manipulation and by taking guardrails off social media, he has brought disinformation and misinformation to the highest level of government, as the average person trades in their common sense for senseless.

A hundred years from now, if our country has not been obliterated by climate change, historians (if they still are allowed to tell the truth) will see today as a monumental turning point. Who will prove to be right? Those who embrace the Founding Fathers' vision of a government made up of three equal bodies and President Washington's belief that he and all who follow him should never be seen as kings. Or Project 2025's belief in an over-riding executive branch ruled by an all-powerful President? The history of the civilization is filled with kingdoms and empires. Democracies and Republics, though

short lived in Athens and Rome, are relatively new institutions. America's is unique. Maybe the older principles were better. Certainly, many who voted for Trump favor an all-powerful leader.

On the other hand, all of these imperia eventually fell as the common people rose up against what they saw as an intolerable injustice between haves and have nots. And then as in Russia and China there was a return to square one. Strongmen are popping up all over the world. Perhaps mankind can never be completely satisfied and is doomed to a vicious cycle of perpetual mistakes.

America was created as a rebuff to European monarchies. A place where all persons are created equal. A place which favored freedom and liberty over tyranny. A beacon of hope where the world's oppressed huddled masses could seek refuge. If all this evaporates, historians won't blame Trump. Americans voluntarily turned their backs on their birthright. Blame us.

LEE WESLER  
WOODSTOCK

### The 'Lawless and Disorderly' President and his crackpot Cabinet

To the Editor:

After the horrendous whirlwind of Trump's first ten days in office, it was a great relief to read Congressman Joe Courtney's weekly update and learn that some of the outrageous decrees by Trump have been stayed by the courts. His blatant disrespect for the Constitution and the rule of law is surely an impeachable offense. The parallels to Nazi Germany are frightful and I pray that the wisdom of our founders who built checks and balances into the legal structure of our government will abide the chaos and turmoil of this administration.

Trump's disrespect for the Constitution alone should be impeachable. However, even more disturbing is the blatant white supremacist rhetoric spewing from the White House during this week's tragic plane crash in Washington, D.C. Blaming DEI hiring

policies was certainly a dog whistle homage to the white nationalists, white Christian nationalists, and Neo Nazis, who support Trump. It was highly inappropriate for a President of the United States to clog the airwaves with blame and hate speech. Rather than consoling the families of the victims and rolling up his sleeves to ensure that the first responders were acknowledged and supported, he chose to use the moment when he had the nation's attention for his political gin mill. Only a few weeks before, during the tragedy of the Los Angeles fires Trump and his sidekick Elon Musk blamed "lesbian firefighters," Democrats and DEI for the terrible loss of life and property.

I returned from a three-day trip to Washington, D.C. on Wednesday afternoon, just a few hours before the plane crash. While my husband attended workshops with NASA

and NOAA scientists, I visited the Smithsonian Museums and the National Archives. I wept over the Founding Documents knowing that the dream of what America could be is teetering on the brink of extinction. We are stuck with a president who appears to loath the ideals of America set forth in the Constitutional frameworks by men who understood the flaws of their own humanity and a less than perfect society. Yet they dreamed, with the audacity of hope, that a government based upon reason and law could manifest a better world. I have witnessed and benefited from the life-long toil of civil servants who carried out the vision of The Clean Air Act, The Clean Water Act, The Civil Rights Act, The Equal Pay Act, Title IX, and the many laws of the land passed to protect American Constitutional rights from an unseen axis of evil. Surely, the found-

ing fathers and mothers including Abigail Adams must be rolling in their graves.

Donald J. Trump tiptoed down that escalator while we turned a blind eye and assumed that the thing that set us apart from Nazi Germany, Fidel Castro, Pinochet, the Soviet Union, and Fascist Italy could never happen here. And yet here we are. Like Germany in 1936, we have let a known despot and racist who despises American values occupy the White House with his cabinet of crackpots. Shame on those who voted for him. They are blatant traitors.

In less than ten days in office, Trump threatened to dismantle the FBI and fire agents, and he informed civil servants from agencies he doesn't like that they should resign or likely be fired. He froze federal grants and funding for non-profit organizations that provide basic

needs for millions of Americans who rely on food banks, homeless shelters, and SNAP to feed their families. His fascist decrees include canceling DEI and threatening the rights of the LGBTQ community. The non-profit organizations that rely upon Federal grants to support refugees and immigrants have been frozen. My husband's scientific colleagues have been warned not to mention climate change or environmental justice (even though their research examines the effects of Earth's changing climate), or DEI in their reports. The insane rhetoric about DEI is a declaration of war against Black and Brown People who are at the top of Trump's cancel list. If he is not impeached or stopped, millions of Americans will be deported to the Trump Concentration Camp at Guantanamo Bay. For those of you who have not yet emerged from the KoolAid stupor in

the cult of Trump, I hope to Christ you are satisfied.

Many Americans voted for Trump because they believed the rhetoric and lies that the economy was bad. Like Nazi Germany, they voted for a charismatic who's solution was to blame and otherize immigrants for everything in the American angst from the price of eggs to crime. Perhaps they didn't understand the complexity of an economy emerging from a world-wide pandemic, or they bought the false narrative that the Democrats were the "radical left." Whatever the reason, the rest of us are now stuck with trying to save the country from going to "hell in a handbasket."

DONNA DUFRESNE  
POMFRET



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# Go with the Flow Drive helps tackle period poverty



BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

REGION – The Green Valley Girl Scouts held a unique kind of goods drive on Feb. 1 to help nonprofits throughout the region tackle an often-overlooked problem in today’s society, period poverty.

Periods are a fact of life for women, but the process is often seen as a private or taboo topic making it difficult for those struggling to afford the products essential for managing menstruation to seek help or discuss their situations openly. The Green Valley Girl Scouts looked to erase the stigma and help provide goods to local agencies to allow women the resources necessary to handle their periods whether they can afford them or not.

The “Go with the Flow Drive” as the event was called saw the Girl Scouts stationed throughout

the region collecting feminine hygiene items that would be distributed to local food pantries and non-profits. Patti Denomme, one of the Scout Leaders who helped lead the charge in promoting the drive, said that the girls wanted to get involved with a unique cause to fill a significant need in their community and determined this was something the girls could do to make a difference, and a need they can relate to as they get older.

“We found that 25 percent of school-aged girls and 38 percent of menstruating women are actually facing period poverty because of the cost of period products. It’s not really something that often gets donated to the food drives or food banks so we decided that we would collect those donations and distribute them to the four main food pantries in the area,” said Denomme. “A huge part of the prob-

lem is the stigma around periods. Menstruation is gross, it’s a yucky thing, but it’s just part of life. It’s important that all teenage girls accept that and talk about it openly.”

Denomme said the public support even in the days leading up to the drive was tremendous and the day-of donations allowed them to give back to their community in a big way. Collection stations were set up at libraries in Killingly, Pomfret, Thompson, and Woodstock while WINY Radio in Putnam held a two-hour drive in their parking lot which proved to be a popular stop for donors. The group is continuing to accept donations through Feb. 19, and have set up an Amazon registry for online donations. Those wishing to donate through this method can search for “Green Valley Service Unit Patrisha - Go with the Flow Drive” on Amazon’s Web site.

## Community leaders address childcare challenges in Northeast Connecticut



Courtesy

Pictured, left to right: Maggie Francis-Gietzen (NCCN Program Manager), Eric S. Protulis (EASTCONN Executive Director), Diane Gozomba (EASTCONN Director of Early Childhood Initiatives), State Representative Gregg Haddad, State Representative Susan Johnson, State Representative Tim Ackert, Christine Rosati Randall (Northeast Early Childhood Council), Kristine Cicchetti (Northeast Early Childhood Council), State Senator Mae Flexer.

WILLIMANTIC — Local legislators and community leaders convened Friday at EASTCONN’s Community Learning Center in Willimantic to address childcare challenges facing northeastern Connecticut families. The Northeast Connecticut Childcare Needs (NCCN) Initiative hosted the meeting to discuss solutions to what they describe as a “trilemma” of access, affordability, and quality in early childhood education.

The Jan. 31 gathering highlighted a critical workforce cycle that impacts both families and childcare providers: low wages and entry barriers discourage qualified professionals from entering the field, while attempts to raise wages increase

costs for families already struggling to afford care.

“Childcare providers in our region receive significantly lower reimbursement rates compared to other parts of Connecticut, creating an unsustainable situation where providers lose wages while families cannot afford the true cost of care,” said Maggie Francis-Gietzen, NCCN Program Manager.

State legislators in attendance, including Senator Mae Flexer and Representatives Tim Ackert, Gregg Haddad, and Susan Johnson, heard proposals for no- and low-cost solutions to attract and retain early childhood educators. The discussion included innovative approaches, such as flexibility in develop-

ing early child care certification programs in high schools, allowing students to earn college credits toward a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential before graduation.

The NCCN Initiative also identified priority communities within northeastern Connecticut where expanded programs and support services are urgently needed to address child care accessibility gaps.

Community members interested in contributing to this ongoing discussion are invited to attend the NCCN Spring Forum on May 6 from noon to 2 p.m. at the EASTCONN Conference Center in Hampton.

## Endicott College announces local Dean’s List students

BEVERLY, Mass. — Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its Fall 2024 Dean’s List students. In order to qualify for the Dean’s List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5, receive no letter grade below “C,” have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester.

The following students have met these requirements:  
Bailey Sheehan, Marketing Communications/Advertising  
P u t n a m  
Mackenzie Pelouquin, Education  
Emily St. Martin, Nursing

Endicott College offers doctorate, master’s, bachelor’s, and associate degree programs at its campus on the scenic coast of Beverly, Mass., with additional sites online and at U.S. and international locations. Endicott remains true to its founding principle of integrating professional and liberal arts education with internship opportunities across disciplines. Through the Endicott Experiential Edge, students gain unparalleled hands-on learning experiences that prepare them for career success and lifelong personal growth. For more, visit endicott.edu.

### 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.

## Emily Arters of Brooklyn named to University of Alabama Dean’s List

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Emily Arters was named to The University of Alabama Deans List for Fall Semester 2024.

A total of 14,631 students enrolled Fall Semester 2024 at The University of Alabama were named to the dean’s list with an academic record of 3.5 (or above) or the president’s list with an academic record of 4.0 (all A’s). These driven students are making waves across UA’s more than 70 undergraduate programs and 12 colleges and schools.

The UA dean’s and president’s lists recognize full-time undergraduate students. The lists do not apply to graduate students or undergraduate students who take less than a full course load.

For more information visit news.ua.edu.

The University of Alabama, part of The University of Alabama System, is the state’s flagship university. UA shapes a better world through its teaching, research and service. With a global reputation for excellence, UA provides an inclusive, forward-thinking environment and nearly 200 degree programs on a beautiful, student-centered campus. A leader in cutting-edge research, UA advances discovery, creative inquiry and knowledge through more than 30 research centers. As the state’s largest higher education institution, UA drives economic growth in Alabama and beyond.

## Local students named to University of Bridgeport Dean’s list

BRIDGEPORT — Chloe Yip, of Dayville and Cheyann Tiffany of Thompson were named to University of Bridgeport’s Fall 2024 Dean’s List.

Yip was among more than 350 students named to the Fall 2024 Dean’s List.

To be named to the Dean’s List, a student must have a term grade point average of between 3.2-3.69.

University of Bridgeport offers career-oriented undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees and programs for people seeking personal and professional growth. The University promotes academic excellence, personal responsibility, and commitment to service. Distinctive curricula in an international, culturally diverse, and supportive learning environment prepare graduates for life and leadership in an increasingly interconnected world. The University is independent and non-sectarian. www.bridgeport.edu

## Audrey DeFilippo of Thompson named to Assumption University Dean’s List

WORCESTER, Mass. — Assumption University has announced that Audrey DeFilippo, of Thompson, Class of 2028, has been named to the University’s Dean’s List for the fall 2024 semester. Students named to the Dean’s List must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 for a five-class, 15-credit semester to be included on the prestigious list, which is announced at the completion of the fall and spring semesters.

“Earning the right to be named to the Assumption University’s Dean’s List is an extraordinary accomplishment and we congratulate those students who demonstrated exemplary academic excellence this semester,” said Assumption University President Greg Weiner, Ph.D. “These students have demonstrated a deep commitment to the pursuit of truth in the company of friends that lies at the heart of the Catholic liberal education Assumption provides.”

Assumption University, founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption, is a premier New England University for high-quality education, integrating career preparation and education of the whole person, drawing upon the best in the rich and centuries-long tradition of Catholic higher education. Assumption’s graduates are known for their intellectual seriousness, thoughtful citizenship, and dedication to the common good. Located in Worcester, Mass., Assumption has undergone a series of major advancements since transitioning to a university, including new academic buildings, degree programs, and athletic facilities for our NCAA Division II student athlete population. The University offers 37 majors and 50 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, nursing, and professional studies, and other areas, as well as graduate degrees and professional credentials. For more information about Assumption University, please visit www.assumption.edu.

# Killingly track joins 19 other schools at Jack Long Meet



BY MARC NEUMAN  
HEAD COACH

KILLINGLY HIGH SCHOOL INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

**KILLINGLY** — Killingly Indoor Track & Field team battled 19 schools for our last regular season meet and everyone left it all on the track & field knowing this could be the end of the season.

In the 55- meter dash...six gentlemen flew in a field of 52! Jackson Olson, Elijah Ward, Monty Niyomkham, Izayah Molodich, a fun and great new addition Aveion Janton- Adams woowed his heat finishing 1st and 14th overall and Everton Brown took on the field and stood on top finishing 1st! Jackson was also seen putting in a great time at the 300m. He could also be seen chucking his Shot Put with 4 other teammates. Calvin Vandale threw his shot mightily and Wesley Sprouse for the 6th meet in a row threw for a PR! Marley Cusson and Graciella Baublitz also chucked their shots. Marley got a nice fresh PR, and it was awesome seeing Gracie's family that showed up for the meet. Was also great to see former Track Super Star Dedrick, and special shout out to their mom yesterday showing up for her birthday! Killingly sent out our long-distance specialists for the 1000m and 1600m, Caydan Jonasch and Calvin ran great races! In the 55 hurdles, Jeremiah Smith continues his dominance finishing on top the leader board in 1st! He also took flight in Long Jump with Coop, Monty and Aveion who flew in the sky for a fresh PR! In High Jump, Jeremiah and Coop took flight, Coop got yet another fresh PR!

Way to leave it all on the Track & Field, team... you represented Killingly proud on and off the Track! We want to again thank all the parents and friends that showed up for the meet with a long drive, we could hear you and the team appreciates you! We're on to the ECCs and States... let's keep going strong all the way through!



## Sterling Concrete Corp. purchases assets of former Jolley Concrete business from CarbonBuilt, Inc.

**DANIELSON** — Sterling Concrete Corp., a ready-mix concrete supplier in Massachusetts, has purchased substantially all of the assets of the ready-mix concrete operation, formerly known as Jolley Concrete, from CarbonBuilt, Inc. The business, located at 42 Junior Ave. in Danielson, will now operate under the Sterling Concrete brand, and will notably be the first Connecticut plant for Sterling Concrete Corp. Sterling will continue to provide dependable service and products for commercial and residential concrete needs.

Discussions regarding the asset purchase had been ongoing between Sterling Concrete Corp. and CarbonBuilt, Inc. The deal became effective on Feb. 4.

Regarding the acquisition, George DeFalco, Division President of Sterling Concrete Corp., stated, "I am delighted to share the exciting news of our asset purchase. This opportunity marks a significant step forward in our journey of growth and strengthens our regional footprint in the Connecticut market and surrounding areas. Not only do we look forward to integrating their current team members with our team, but we are thrilled to leverage their expertise and local knowledge to better serve our clients and communities."

Sterling Concrete has proudly served Massachusetts & Connecticut for more than 20 years and became a part of Strategic Commercial Realty, Inc. in April of 2024 and its family of companies. Strategic Commercial Realty, Inc. is the parent company of Rawson Materials, Rawson Trucking, Rawson Manufacturing & D.B. Cotton, and Bevilacqua Asphalt. To contact the Connecticut division of Sterling Concrete Corp. for service and products, please call 860-412-4900. For more information on Sterling Concrete, contact Crystal Simonson, Director of Communications, at (860) 963-6584, ext. 1304 or visit [www.sterlingconcrete.net](http://www.sterlingconcrete.net).

## Fight hunger this winter

STOP & SHOP FLORAL BOUQUET PROGRAM TO BENEFIT ACCESS FOOD PANTRIES

**WILLIMANTIC** — Fight hunger with a simple purchase of a floral bouquet! Access Community Action Agency has been selected by local Stop & Shop store leadership as the benefiting hunger organization in the Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program for the month of February at the Stop and Shop location in Willimantic!

The Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program, which launched in February 2021, is an easy way for shoppers to give back as part of the regular shopping routine. Every \$10.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet with the red circle sticker sold supports a hunger organization local to the Stop & Shop in which it was purchased. According to Feeding America, every \$1 donation to a local hunger organization can provide 10 or more meals to someone in need.

As part of this ongoing program, every month at every Stop & Shop location a different local hunger organization is selected to benefit from the sale of the Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet. Access was selected as the February beneficiary by local store leadership at the Stop & Shop located at 1391 Main St., Willimantic CT. Access will receive a \$1 donation for every \$10.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet purchased in February. All the funds raised will go directly to the Access Food Pantries located in Danielson, Willimantic, and the Mobile Food Pantry to help families in need this year.

"What a beautiful way to give back, help to fight hunger in our local community, and make a room, or home even brighter," said Kathleen Krider, Sr. Director- Community Engagement and Resource Management of Access. "Now they can fight hunger too! We are thrilled to be chosen to benefit from this unique and impactful Stop & Shop Program, as the demands of those in need are higher than ever this year."

The Access Community Action Agency is designated by the federal and state government as the anti-poverty agency in northeast Connecticut. Access provides food, affordable housing, job readiness services, and other pathways to economic self-reliance for vulnerable limited-income families and individuals throughout the region. Learn more about Access by visiting <https://accessagency.org/>

For more information about the Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program, please visit [stopandshop.bloomin4good.com](http://stopandshop.bloomin4good.com).

[www.ConnecticutsQuietCorner.com](http://www.ConnecticutsQuietCorner.com)

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Yes, Trump raised your taxes

To the Editor:

A tariff is a tax on imports, so Trump raised your taxes.

It doesn't really get any simpler than that, and anyone with a formal business background should know this. Only in Trump World do people want to argue about really rudimentary stuff like this because Trump said something else.

Tariffs are a protectionist measure that raises money for the government while protecting local industry from potentially underhanded moves by foreign competitors. If a foreign company wants to dump stuff at prices that would destroy our domestic companies and would be considered predatory if one of our companies did that, then tariffs close the gap.

Hissy fit tariffs like the ones on Canada and Mexico are not that.

I'm starting to refer to Trump as Angry Biden, because the demented old guy thing is still very much in play especially if you actually listen to him and take what he says at face value. So supposedly, the Canada and Mexico tariffs are because of Fentanyl trafficking, except besides illegals smuggling drugs, our own citizens make drug runs as well, so the game is played both ways. However, damaging our economy because of Fentanyl ultimately means that law-abiding citizens are getting punished because of the actions of criminals in other countries and criminals from other countries, so the criminals get to set the standards here. Where's the logic in that?

Then there's Trump's justification for tariffing the EU. "Oh, they charge us VAT taxes and stuff while we don't do stuff like that here." Yeah, Trump.

## Mr. DeLuca's "opinions"

To the Editor:

In the Jan. 24 Villager, Ed DeLuca ignorantly accuses me of plagiarism. Surprise, surprise, he offers no proof. He also criticizes me and John Day, Jr. for not writing the obvious- that the crimes committed by immigrants are wrong. That's a little weird, sort of like criticizing him for not deploring Republican Presidential candidates who commit sexual assault or later pardon cop-beating insurrectionists. Don't hold your breath.

Mr. DeLuca then tries unsuccessfully to blur the difference between his opinions and those that are factually based. He cites Webster's definition that opinion is a belief based on what, "seems to be true..." Sorry, but opinions that are too often supported by feelings or lies that seem to be true but that are easily refuted by facts are of little value. If his opinions are based on lies, they have no value in honest debate.

I needed no reminder that you are under no obligation to fact-check the Villager's opinion pieces. Nevertheless, evidence based on polls conducted of 2024 voters would cause a reasonable person to worry about how badly misinformed those voters were. The media is largely responsible for that, along with the constant flood of lies repeated by national Republicans. Trump's

Have you even been listening to your own party? The EU has been lampooned by Republicans for a long time as being over-regulated and of course regulations drive up prices by driving up the cost of doing business or cost of goods sold. The EU gets to set the standards for whether or not we tariff them? In all cases with retaliatory and EU tariffs I have to wonder why "America First" is suddenly about punishing Americans for the actions of foreigners.

Trump shouldn't be so obsessed with tariffs. They're an old feature in our system, and the Founding Fathers enumerated them into our system in a time when the capitalism we supposedly stand for was somewhere between a spring chicken and an egg. Back when our country was founded mercantilism was the name of the game. The big empires wanted the economy to benefit the empire, and tariffs and duties saw to it that the imperial treasury became rich with consumers just being along for the ride... maybe. Mercantilism is why we ended up with taxes that drove early American patriots to dump tea in the Boston harbor.

Earth to Trump - the 1700s were a long time ago. Today's mixed market world is one where we want to make money and buy things as individuals. Tariffs jumped the shark back in the days of the Smoot Hawley Act when we thought we could tariff our way out of the Great Depression. It backfired spectacularly and the retaliatory tariffs in response to ours slammed the brakes on international trade and made things worse.

Bottom line - people want to buy stuff. Let them do it.

JAY GERHART  
PUTNAM

strategy is to simply double down when caught in lies. Many in the public, including Mr. DeLuca, can no longer discern the difference, or choose not to.

A few weeks ago, Mr. DeLuca contrasted the experience of his immigrant ancestors with immigrants of the current period, some of whom have committed serious crimes. The implication seemed to be that the flood of immigrants who came here from Europe one hundred years ago were overwhelmingly noble, law-abiding, and useful members of American society. Some of your readers may recall that there was an extraordinarily violent period in the country largely perpetrated by immigrant organized crime syndicates.

One final inconvenient fact about violent immigrants. Candidate Trump repeatedly told supporters that President Biden was releasing murderers, drug dealers, drug addicts, "everybody" into the US. According to the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, the data show that Trump released more criminals into the US than Biden. They further argue that "Trump's immigration policies made America less safe." No matter. Trump and the media caused many millions to believe otherwise.

BILLY G. TAYLOR  
KILLINGLY

## Democrats have their own coddling of criminals to answer for

To the Editor:

Yes, Trump supporters who were involved in the attack on the U.S. Capitol were pardoned by #47, and that included those who assaulted police officers. A person on a local social media site said that she reads my letters here, and said that I'll go along with everything that President Trump does. This may come as a shock to some, but I'll say that a lot more thought and time should have been taken in deciding on who to pardon, and that whomever was guilty of assaulting the members of law enforcement and those with felony offenses should have to suffer the consequences. (Enough said?)

And though the reason for that arrest wasn't mentioned, one of those pardoned was Isabella M. DeLuca (and no relation that I'm aware of), who said: "I was arrested by seven armed FBI agents, my apartment was raided, and my phone was seized." And that reminded me of a line from the movie "The Gauntlet," where Clint Eastwood said: "You can't trust anybody involved in the DeLuca case." (Ha ha.)

A recent letter entitled "So much for the 'party of law and order'" also referred to Trump's pardoning, and an earlier one accused the republicans of being "the party of chaos and crime." Opinions respected, and I don't blame them for feeling that way, but if anybody was to even consider these "defund the police" and "soft on crime" Democrats to be the party of law and order, I'd say

that they have very short memories. Maybe they've forgotten about the damage caused, and the many assaults on law enforcement and innocent people, that happened during the riots in these blue states because of gutless, boot-licking democrats? And how many criminals, and perhaps some "cop beaters," were released back into the streets by these Soros-backed DA's and prosecutors during the Biden/Harris administration?

Trump's Press Secretary, Karoline Leavitt, was recently grilled by Democrats whose only concern was the extent of some illegal migrants' crimes, and she had to remind them that entering this country illegally is a crime, but apparently that fact, or that there are legal points of entry, wasn't a concern for those dullards. The Governor of Illinois and the Mayor of Chicago (both Democrats) are reportedly obstructing ICE agents from accessing prisons and jails to deport illegal aliens in the sanctuary city of Chicago, and obviously those sapheads don't care how much it's costing their taxpayers to keep them in jail. Yup, the Democrats do love and protect their criminals, and one thing they, or their bow-down news media outlets, certainly won't tell you is about those New York City residents who are cheering President Trump's ICE raids for making their neighborhoods safer, or that according to Border Czar Tom Homan, illegal crossings have dropped a staggering 93 percent since President Trump returned to office.

ED DELUCA  
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

# Building generational wealth: Lessons from Black Wall Street



FINANCIAL  
FOCUS  
.....  
JIM ZAHANSKY  
INVESTMENT  
ADVISER

As we honor Black History Month, there are powerful lessons we can learn from one of the most remarkable examples of wealth building in American history - the story of Black Wall Street in Tulsa's Greenwood District. At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, we believe understanding these historical insights can help inform modern strategies for building lasting family wealth and financial security.

The power of strategic wealth building

In the early 1900s, Tulsa's Greenwood District became known as "Black Wall Street." It was a thriving hub of Black-owned businesses and professionals who built remarkable prosperity through strategic entrepreneurship, property ownership, and community reinvestment. Their success demonstrated core principles that still resonate with wealth building today:

- Strategic business ownership and investment
- Focused real estate acquisition
- Strong professional networks
- Multi-generational planning
- Community reinvestment

Modern applications for today's wealth builders

Whether you're a business owner, an executive, or a professional, there are valuable takeaways from Black Wall Street's example that apply to modern wealth building:

Take a long-term view  
The business leaders of Black Wall Street didn't focus solely on immediate gains - they planned for future generations. Today, this translates into strategic financial planning that considers:

- Retirement planning optimization
- Tax-efficient investment strategies
- Estate planning for wealth transfer
- Business succession planning

Diversify your investments

Black Wall Street's success came from multiple types of businesses and investments. In the same way, modern wealth building requires thoughtful diversification. This might include:  
A strategic mix of stocks, bonds and other assets  
Real estate investments  
Business ownership  
Alternative investments where appropriate

Build strong professional partnerships

The Greenwood District thrived because of strong networks of professionals working together. Today, having trusted advisors is equally crucial for:

- Investment management
- Tax planning
- Estate planning
- Business strategy

Creating your family's financial legacy

At WHZ, we work with many clients who share the goal of building lasting family wealth. Our strategic "Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well" process helps you:

- Develop a comprehensive financial plan aligned with your goals
- Implement tax-efficient investment strategies
- Create estate plans that protect and transfer wealth effectively
- Maximize business and executive compensation opportunities
- Build absolute confidence in your financial future

The path forward to generational wealth

Black Wall Street demonstrated the power of strategic wealth building, and everyone has the opportunity to learn from their successes and challenges. By embracing the principles of strategic investment and partnership, you can cultivate a mindset that prioritizes wealth creation and sus-

tainability.

Opportunities for lasting financial security can be achieved through careful planning and expert advice. It's essential to have a reliable partner in your journey to build wealth—whether you're currently still building your career and family, planning to retire soon, or already enjoying retirement.

At WHZ we are committed to providing each client with "Absolute Confidence, Unwavering Partnership, For Life." Our team of experienced financial advisors in Pomfret and Tolland works to deliver an exceptional wealth management experience at every touchpoint to clients throughout Connecticut and around the country.

Start building your legacy today

The lessons of Black Wall Street remind us that building generational wealth requires strategic planning, professional guidance, and a long-term perspective. If you're ready to begin creating your family's financial legacy, schedule a complimentary consultation on our website at whzwealth.com or give us a call at (860) 928-2341.

Authored by Principal/Managing Partner & Chief Strategist James Zahansky, AWMA®. 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 Road, Tolland, CT 06084, 860-928-2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com> 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.

# Understanding Cervical Cancer

BY ELENA POLOUKHINE, MD,

FACOG  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF OB/GYN  
DAY KIMBALL HEALTH

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, and it's a good reminder of the vital role that preventive care and education play in protecting women's health. Cervical cancer is largely linked to the human papillomavirus (HPV), a widespread virus that most people encounter at some point in their lives. Although most HPV infections clear up on their own, some can persist, potentially leading to cervical cancer over time.

Advances in screening and vaccination have dramatically reduced cervical cancer rates in recent decades. In the United States, approximately 13,000 new cases are diagnosed annually, and nearly 4,000 women die from the disease. These numbers, while still significant, represent considerable progress thanks to tools like Pap smears and the HPV vaccine.

TAKE  
CHARGE  
OF YOUR  
HEALTH

Screening for cervical cancer typically begins at age 21. For women ages 21 to 29, a Pap smear is recommended every three years to check for abnormal cells. From ages 30 to 65, screenings expand to include HPV testing alongside Pap smears, with intervals based on individual results and risk factors.

Screening is a straightforward process performed during a routine office visit. It involves a brief pelvic exam to collect a small sample from the cervix, and while it may cause minor discomfort, it is not painful.

Vaccination is another key preventive measure. The HPV vaccine is highly effective, protecting against the virus strains most likely to cause cervical cancer. The vaccine is ideally administered between ages 9 and 11, but it remains beneficial for individuals up to age 45. Increasing vaccination rates has the potential to significantly reduce new cases of cervical cancer worldwide.

What can I do to prevent cervical cancer?

Lifestyle choices also play a role in reducing risk. Avoiding smoking, and practicing safe sex can help lower the likelihood of HPV-related complications. For those who are immunocompromised or managing other health conditions, regular monitoring becomes even more important.

Preventive care is accessible and almost always covered by insurance, including Medicaid. At Day Kimball Health, we ensure patients have access to the screenings and resources they need to stay healthy. The important thing to remember is that early detection is key - it can save your life. Most cervical cancer cases occur in women who haven't been screened in five to 10 years.

Staying proactive about health means scheduling regular screenings and considering vaccination for yourself and your children. With these tools, we can continue to reduce cervical cancer rates and improve outcomes for women everywhere.



# The legacy of Prudence Crandall

**In clement Weather:** In case of inclement weather, check WINY or call the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Center after 10:15 a.m. to see if it is open. (860-779-7250).



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

Celebrate Black History Month. The Remarkable Women of the Six Triple Eight; The Only All-Black, All-Female Unit to be sent overseas in WWII. Saturday, Feb. 15 at 12:30 p.m. (Snow date Feb. 22). Putnam Municipal Complex. 200 School St., Putnam. Presented by Melodye Whatley.

Do you know how long ZIP codes have been used, and what ZIP stands for? I came across an article in the Thursday, Feb. 2, 1967 Windham County Transcript that explained a little, and then I did an internet search. "New ZIP Code, and Parcel Post Rates Explained. Use of ZIP Codes now makes it easier to mail package according to Danielson Postmaster Julien A. Barrette. The new rates and a new system for identifying parcel post zones went into effect on Jan. 15 as provided in leg-

islation signed into law by President Johnson on Sept. 20, 1966, the postmaster pointed out. The rate increases will average about 10 cents a parcel...Use of ZIP Code in the recipient's address will enable the sender or a mail clerk to quickly determine the proper zone.

"The five-digit ZIP code plan (Zone Improvement Plan) was announced to the public on November 28, 1962 and implemented on July 1, 1963. In 1967 these became mandatory for second and third class bulk mailers. The United States Post Office used a cartoon character, which it called Mr. ZIP, to promote the use of the ZIP Code. The lowest postal code is 00001 for the N. Dillingham area of Alaska. The highest, 99950, is for Ketchikan, AK." (www.spotzi.com; AI).

The same Feb. 2,

1967 Transcript carried an article about lowering the voting age which was then 21. "St. Onge Seeks 18-Years Olds Right to Vote. Congressman William St. Onge, Democrat of Connecticut, introduced a joint resolution in Congress (Monday January 30) proposing an amendment to the U. S. Constitution to extend the right to vote to persons who are 18 years of age or older. Adoption of an amendment to the Constitution becomes valid after it is ratified by three-fourths of the state legislatures within a period of seven years. Emphasizing the need of giving young people the opportunity to participate in Federal elections and in seeking solutions to 'the great issues of our times'... St. Onge said this would enable the younger generation 'to become better integrated into the body of our democracy.'" (The 26th Amendment to the Constitution gave American 18 year-olds the right to vote. It went into effect July 1, 1971).

February is Black History Month. I had the privilege and pleasure of attending Putnam's Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon on Saturday, Jan. 25 at the Living Faith United Methodist Church in Putnam. Donald E. Williams, former president of the Connecticut Senate and author of "Prudence Crandall's Legacy," was the keynote speaker. I had not realized the wide-reaching impact for future generations of the Prudence Crandall trials. I had read some of the Prudence Crandall story so knew that between April 1833 and

September 1834 she operated a boarding school for young Black women at her home on the Canterbury green. Local opposition turned to hostility. Quoting Williams' speech, "Regular acts of vandalism were committed. Eggs then rocks were thrown at the school. Wagons were overturned. Someone dumped manure into the school's well, and barrels of water had to be brought by wagon. Someone tried to set the school on fire, but it was put out before any significant damage was done. With the support of town officials, the State Representative from Canterbury proposed a law that prohibited the education of black students from other states, unless the local town government approved. It became known as the Black Law. Since most of Crandall's students were from out of state, this was meant to close her school. Crandall was arrested, and charged with the crime of teaching black women. She faced criminal and financial penalties."

Not only was Crandall jailed, three trials resulted, all held at the Windham County Courthouse in Brooklyn; the building is still standing and is the current Brooklyn Town Hall. In the first trial, Crandall's attorneys said that the law was unconstitutional. "They said Crandall's black students were citizens just like the white students, and could not be discriminated against, and blocked from receiving an education. The jury deadlocked and could not reach a verdict. A second trial resulted in a guilty verdict, which led to the final hearing--an appeal to the State

Supreme Court, also heard at the Brooklyn Courthouse, in 1834." Eventually, the case was dismissed on a technicality.

Throughout all of this litigation Prudence had continued to operate her school, much to the ire of her opponents. Williams wrote, "On September 9, 1834, at midnight, a mob gathered outside Crandall's school. A signal was given and men attacked the school with wooden clubs and metal poles, smashing windows on the first and second floors...Crandall and her staff gathered the terrified students into the rear of the second floor of the school, bracing for a possible break-in." (Which, thankfully, never happened)...Prudence Crandall knew she could not continue to guarantee the safety of her students...Her school closed."

Her legacy lived on. In the early 1950's, when schools were still segregated in many states, arguments by Prudence Crandall's lawyers were used to help overturn this. Williams explained, "In Brown v. Board of Education, the NAACP explained why the 14th Amendment prohibited segregation. An historian who assisted with the case, Howard Jay Graham, wrote that the origins of the 14th Amendment came from the anti-slavery movement, and the court case of Prudence Crandall... One hundred and twenty years after Prudence Crandall's school closed, the Supreme Court finally upheld what Crandall tried to do--to stop discrimination on the basis of race, color or creed, and to provide a seat in

the same classroom to all students." Paperback editions of Don Williams' book Prudence Crandall's Legacy are available from Amazon.

Learn More about the Students who attended Prudence Crandall's School. Dr. Jennifer Rycenga will present Schooling the Nation. The Legacy of Prudence Crandall's Black Students. Parson Lodge. Pomfret School. 43 Brown St., Pomfret, CT. Sunday, Feb. 16, 4 p.m. RSVP to Donna Dufresne at windsong@snet.net or 860-465-7228. The program will examine the generational activism of the students and their families before and after they enrolled in the school and their impact on Equal Education and Civil Rights on a national level. Jennifer's book will be available for sale. This program is funded by The Last Green Valley and sponsored by the following organizations: Prudence Crandall Museum, Windham/Willimantic NAACP and the Gary Ralls Youth Branch, Pomfret School, Pomfret Historical Society, and Christ Church of Pomfret.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, January 2025. Special thanks to Donald E. Williams for the information on Prudence Crandall. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main St., Danielson, Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety.

## KILLINGLY CHRONICLES FEB. 10 – FEB. 14

TOWN HALL MEETINGS (agendas and minutes at [www.killinglyct.gov](http://www.killinglyct.gov))

- Tuesday the 11th  
Regular Town Council Meeting (Town Meeting Room – Town Hall) 7 p.m.
- Wednesday the 12th  
Agriculture Commission Meeting (Room 102 – Town Hall) 7 p.m.
- Board of Education Meeting (KPS Central Office – Conference Room A) 7 p.m.
- Thursday the 13th  
Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting (Town Meeting Room – Town Hall) 7 p.m.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Lit Loot Bag (Ages 13-18) from Feb. 1 until Feb. 10 at Killingly Public Library
- Monday the 10th  
An Epic Book Quest (Ages 13-18) (Library) All Day  
Wonderful Ones & Twos (Library) 9:30 to 10 a.m.  
Monday Mystery Matinee (Ages 18 and up) (Library) 1 to 3 p.m.
- Tuesday the 11th  
Moving & Grooving (Ages five and under) (Library) 9:30 to 10 a.m.  
Bingo (Ages 18 and up) (Library) 2 to 3 p.m.  
Virtual Author Talk: Waubgeshig Rice (Library) 7 p.m.
- Wednesday the 12th  
Virtual Story Time (Ages three and up) (Library) 10 to 10:30 a.m.  
Little Listeners (Ages two to five) (Library) 11 to 11:30 a.m.  
Chess Club (All Ages) (Library) 5 to 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday the 13th  
Story Craft (Ages two to six) (Library) 10:30am to 11:00am  
Afternoon Book Club (Ages 18 and up) (Library) 2 to 3 p.m.
- Friday the 14th  
AARP Tax Assistance (Library) 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### KILLINGLY PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMS/ EVENTS COMING UP...

- Virtual High Five 2025 (Killingly Community Center/KPRD) (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday)
- Let's Get Moving February – Feb. 4 through Feb. 25 – Tuesdays (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- Senior Yoga February – Feb. 7 through Feb. 28 – 9 and 10:30 a.m. – Fridays (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- Homeschool Art Club – 3 Month Session - Tuesdays February – Intro to Mixed Media  
March – Maker Madness  
Jan. 7 through March 25 (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- Beginner Salsa Dancing – May 5 through May 19 – Mondays (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- Beginner Rhythm Ballroom Dancing - Session 2 – March 3 through March 17 – Mondays (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- 55+ Chair Pound for Seniors – Session 1 – March 3 through March 25 – Mondays (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- Outdoor Spring Strength and Conditioning – March 11 through April 22 – Tuesdays (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- 55+ Chair Pound for Seniors – Session 2 – April 28 through June 9 – Mondays (Killingly Community Center/KPRD)
- Mystic Village/Mystic Luxury Cinemas Trip – April 17

\*\*\*Send your favorite Valentine a singing Cupid, flower and chocolate from the Killingly Parks & Recreation Department on February 14th! Register at Killingly Parks & Recreation Department or call 860-779-5390\*\*\*

Check out the Killingly Parks and Recreation website for more daily class schedules, camps, trips and events!

For updates and changes, please visit the calendar on the Town of Killingly Web site at [www.killinglyct.gov](http://www.killinglyct.gov).

## DID YOU KNOW?

Sandra Cutler Ames and Fab Cutler are researching "tid bits" and also taking items from Willie Zamagni's scrapbook to include for you to enjoy.

Four presidents made a train stop at Putnam Railroad Station  
President Benjamin Harrison made a stop on July 4, 1889.  
His years as President were 1889-1893.

President Teddy Roosevelt made 2 stops. One on May 24, 1904 and June 21, 1905.  
His years as President were 1901-1909

President Taft made 2 stops. One on July 4, 1909 and March 3, 1910.  
His years as President were 1909-1913.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt made a stop on September 1920 as Vice President.  
His years as President were 1933-

1945 (he died in 1945)  
Researched by Fab Cutler

Memories from Willie Zamagni's scrapbook

There are 4 political dignitaries that visited Putnam.

President Benjamin Harrison On July 4th 1889 President Harrison arrived by train on his way to the Bowen House in Woodstock. Also at that time a big parade with President Harrison was held in Putnam.

President Teddy Roosevelt On May 24, 1904 returning from the Groton School in Groton, CT where his 2 sons attended school there, made a brief stop at the Putnam Railroad

Station on his way back to Washington. He came out of his dining car and gave a brief speech.

On June 21, 1905 President Teddy Roosevelt made a brief stop and speech at the train station on his way to Worcester, MA.

President Taft

On July 4th, 1909 President Taft made a brief stop and speech at the railroad station on his way from his summer home in Massachusetts then to Norwich for a speech on the 250th anniversary of Norwich.

On March 3rd 1910 President Taft passing through Putnam on the boat train made a brief stop and speech at the railroad station.

On September 1911 President Taft made a stop and speech at the railroad station on his way to his summer home in Beverly, MA.

On September 1920 Franklin D. Roosevelt on a train going to Hartford stopped at Putnam Railroad Station. He was a Vice Presidential candidate. He gave no speech but talked informally to a small crowd of people.

Researched by Willie Zamagni



Courtesy

## CUPCAKE WARS COME TO EASTFORD

The Congregational Church of Eastford is excited to host the seventh "Cupcake Wars" baking contest on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2 - 4 p.m. The sweet delights will be judged in categories to include recipe and display and in two age groups - junior (ages up to 13) and senior (14 and up). There will also be "people's choice" awards where the judges will be the guests. Attendees can compete or just taste, enjoy, and cast their votes for people's choice. "This event is an absolute delight. I mean, who doesn't like cupcakes and who doesn't enjoy some competitive fun? It is the stuff that weaves the fabric of community together" said Pastor Mike Moran. This community-wide event will be held at the Eastford School, 12 Westford Road. Register to compete (it's all free) at [www.cceastford.org/events/](http://www.cceastford.org/events/) Questions? 860-974-0294 or email [office@cceastford.org](mailto:office@cceastford.org).

# Dahlia combinations for gardens and bouquets

Dahlias come in various colors, shapes, and sizes making them easy to include in any garden, container, and bouquet. Grow them in their own dedicated space, mix them with other flowers, or plant a few at the end of the vegetable garden.

Consider including different varieties of dahlias for added interest and beauty in the garden and your arrangements. Select colors that you imagine will look great together in a vase. This will make it easy to create a lot of creative combinations on the fly.

Grow dahlias with flowers of different shapes and sizes to create more interesting arrangements. Dahlias offer many options and it's one of the reasons they are such a popular cut flower. Longfield Gardens provides help and inspiration in Types of Dahlias: 8 Great Looks.

You'll find the widest range of colors and styles with new varieties in the decorative dahlia group continually being released. Add a bit of elegance to the gar-



GARDEN MOMENTS  
.....  
MELINDA MYERS

den and bouquets with Mondriaan's soft pink petals tinged with pastel yellow, apricot, and lavender. Decorative dahlias make great cut flowers, and their sturdy stems make them easy to grow with other flowers in gardens and containers.

Add interesting texture to your gardens and bouquets with anemone-flowered and collarette dahlias. The anemone-flowered dahlias have a cluster of tubular florets in the center surrounded by more traditional petals. The two different lengths of petals in the collarette varieties add to their charm.

Enjoy an abundant harvest of cut flowers when growing ball and pompon dahlias. These perfectly round flowers are packed with tightly rolled petals and are long-

lived in arrangements. Their size makes them excellent additions to mixed bouquets helping to connect the various flowers for an impressive display.

The unique blossoms of waterlily dahlias have made it one of the most popular for cutting. The relatively flat flowers have tightly closed centers surrounded by several rows of flat or slightly curved petals.

Grow a few single dahlias for you and the pollinators to enjoy. The daisy-like flowers have a prominent center surrounded by a single row of petals. Their airy appearance complements a variety of late-season perennials in the garden and bouquets. Mix in a few peony-flowered varieties for a showier display. These also have a prominent center but are surrounded by two or more layers of petals.

Add a bit of excitement to any arrangement with cactus and semi-cactus varieties. Their tightly curled petals make them a standout in the garden and bouquets.

You'll only need one or

a few dinnerplate dahlia blooms to make a statement in a vase or arrangement. The large flowers can grow up to 10 inches across on four- to five-foot-tall plants. Tag team a pair of dinnerplate dahlias for the back of the border. Labyrinth and Tyrrell have apricot flowers with pink and yellow accents that blend nicely with a wide range of colors in the garden.

If you feel overwhelmed by all the choices or can't decide on the best combination, let the experts lend a hand. Consider purchasing one or more ready-to-plant dahlia combinations selected to look great in the garden and arrangements. The bumblebee collection includes pollinator-favorite Kelsey Sunshine collarette and the coral pink decorative Great Silence. Or for a big splash of purple try the Berry Spritz dinnerplate collection (longfield-gardens.com) with lavender-pink, lilac, and eggplant purple blooms.

Take pictures of your favorite combinations and notes of what you want to try next year, and most importantly, enjoy the fan-



Courtesy — Longfield-Gardens.com

**Dinnerplate dahlias, like this Berry Spritz collection, can grow up to 10 inches across on four- to five-foot-tall plants.**

tastic blooms. Fortunately, any flower combination is sure to brighten your day.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* DVD instant video

series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment TV* & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by Longfield Gardens for her expertise to write this article. Her Web site is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).

## Auction news 375

I'll get back to my top 10 antiques and collectibles list in my next column as there's been some interesting news that I'd like to share this week. Two thrift store finds, and an estate sale purchase have been making headlines.



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES  
.....  
WAYNE TUISKULA

A Goodwill store in Cincinnati, Ohio, sold some donated collectibles online last year that turned out to bring more than they expected. The shop manager of the Ohio

Valley Goodwill listed two Star Wars Jawa figures with another figure on the charity's website. The shop's Public Information Officer said that they went up around \$5,000 in the first week and "we knew it was more than just a couple Star Wars characters." Someone knowledgeable about the figures

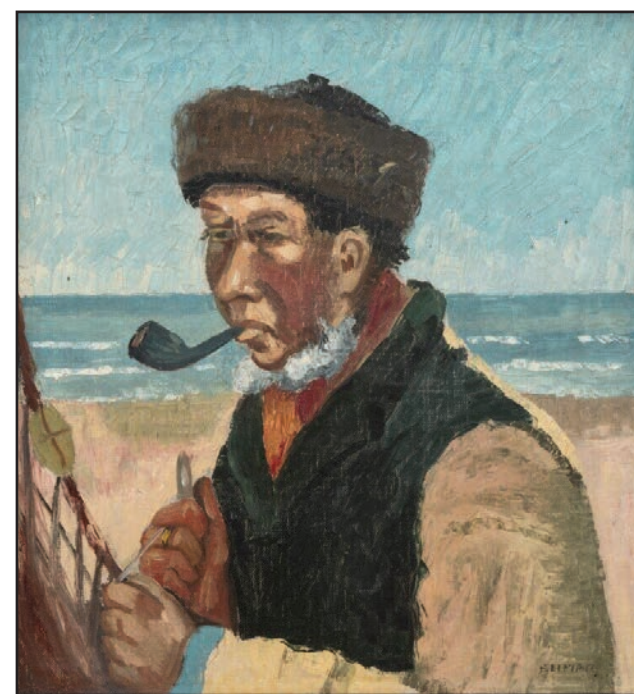
informed the staff that they were unpunched, meaning the tab was still intact where they would have hung on racks in

the store, increasing the value. The figures sold for over \$19,000. The store manager said that it will change a lot of lives "whether it be a person with a disability or a homeless veteran we're able to get in off the streets." The figures were shipped to a winning bidder in Florida.

Late last year, another valuable Goodwill find was uncovered. Baseball cards were mass produced during the 1980s and 1990s, and most produced during that time have little value now. A collector, Beau Thompson, bought pallets of cards from his local Goodwill

store in his quest to collect one million unique Chicago Cubs baseball cards, according to *Sports Illustrated*. Thompson paid \$700 for a 700-pound pallet of cards; it was the 21st pallet that he had purchased. Thompson said that he typically had to throw away 10,000 junk cards per pallet. His luck changed though when he found a 2009 Bowman Chrome Mike Trout prospect autograph card. The 1 of 150 issued card is expected to sell for \$10,000 when he auctions it at the start of baseball season. Thompson has completed his collection of one million Cubs cards and Topps presented him with his own card for his accomplishment.

There is debate as to whether a Minnesota garage sale purchase is an original work by Vincent Van Gogh or just worth the \$50 the buyer paid for it. After purchasing the painting, the buyer submitted information to the Van Gogh Museum asking them to verify the authenticity, according to ArtNet. The portrait of a man smoking a pipe with the sea in the background titled "Elimar" is said to be Van Gogh's version of a painting originally done by Michael Ancher. However, the Van Gogh Museum couldn't confirm that it was Van Gogh's work "based on stylistic features." The estate sale buyer sold the painting to



a New York based science company called the LMI Group for an undisclosed figure. LMI claims that their new analysis proves that it was painted by Van Gogh in 1889 while he was at the Saint-Paul asylum in the south of France. LMI's approach is described as one "which considers formal analysis, provenance, and historical context—with newer scientific methods." If real, it's estimated value is around \$15 million. The Van Gogh Museum remains unconvinced and stands by their original decision. It will now be up to potential buyers to make their own determination. Purchasing the painting will be like buying a very expensive scratch ticket.

Our single estate Civil War auction is expected

to be over 1,000 lots as we continue to catalog. We are also working on a sports cards, comic book and collectibles auction, a Beacon Hill online estate auction and are beginning to catalog a collection of Laurel and Hardy memorabilia this month. We are always accepting consignments of estate jewelry, sterling silver, art, coins, and other items in our top 10 list. Please visit our website <https://centralmassauctions.com> for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: [Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/ Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com](mailto:WayneTuiskula@CentralMassAuctions.com) or (508-612-6111)

## Control yourself

Life doesn't always give us the outcomes we hope for. In those moments, it's easy to let your emotions take control. But as history shows us, cooler heads prevail. Let these stories remind you of the power of keeping your composure, even in the most trying times.

Alexander Hamilton was a brilliant statesman and one of America's Founding Fathers, but he had a knack for making enemies. His sharp tongue and political writings made him no stranger to conflict, and one of his fiercest foes was Aaron Burr.

When Hamilton's private remarks about Burr being "despicable" were published, Burr demanded satisfaction through a duel. Instead of defusing the situation, Hamilton, bound by honor and societal expectations, reluctantly agreed to face Burr on the dueling grounds.

The duel, which took place in 1804, ended with Hamilton fatally shot. Burr, though victorious in the duel, saw his political career spiral into ruin due to public outrage. Hamilton's decision to defend his honor cost him everything, while Burr's inability to let go of his anger ensured his own downfall. Sometimes, swallowing your pride is better than risking everything to defend it.

"When anger rises, think of the consequences," wrote Confucius.

But pride isn't the only emotion that can cloud judgment—despair can be just as destructive.

Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, was known for her intelligence and cunning, but her love for Mark Antony led her to make a devastating mistake.

After Antony's forces were defeated at the Battle of Actium, he received false news that Cleopatra had died. Overcome with despair, Antony took his own life. Cleopatra, stricken with grief and unwilling to be paraded as a trophy in Rome, ended her life soon after.

Her death marked the end of Egypt's independence, as the kingdom was annexed by Rome under Octavian.

While Cleopatra's love and despair were deeply human, her fate also underscores the political stakes of her choices. Despair, unchecked, can lead even the most powerful to their knees.

"Do not let your emotions overpower your intelligence," wrote Marcus Aurelius.

Confidence is a valuable trait, but unchecked arrogance can lead to ruin.

General George Armstrong Custer, who famously led the 7th Cavalry, was known for his boldness but also for his tendency to overestimate his abilities.

POSITIVELY SPEAKING  
.....  
TOBY MOORE

In 1876, tasked with confronting a coalition of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors led by Sitting Bull, Custer dismissed advice to exercise caution. Underestimating the size and coordination of the Native forces, he divided his already small command and advanced with only 200 men. Outnumbered nearly 10 to 1, Custer and his men were overwhelmed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, known as "Custer's Last Stand."

Had Custer listened to his subordinates and taken the time to assess the situation, the outcome might have been different. His arrogance turned a preventable defeat into a tragic cautionary tale of hubris.

He reportedly said, "There are not enough Indians in the world to defeat the Seventh Cavalry"—a chilling testament to his overconfidence.

Anne Boleyn, King Henry VIII's second wife, was known for her intelligence and charm, but her fiery nature often made her enemies.

After rising to power and captivating Henry, Anne's outspoken nature and unwillingness to defer to him created tension in their marriage. When she failed to produce a male heir, Henry's affections turned to Jane Seymour, and Anne's enemies at court seized the opportunity to act against her.

Charged with adultery, treason, and even witchcraft, Anne was arrested and executed in 1536.

Historians agree the charges were fabricated, but her sharp tongue and ambition made her an easy target in a court where enemies were always watching.

Her story shows that unchecked emotions, no matter how justified, can erode even the strongest positions. Tempered words and actions often yield far greater power than fiery outbursts.

"If you can't control your temper, how can you hope to control your fate?" — Anonymous

Each of these stories—from Hamilton's pride to Cleopatra's despair, Custer's arrogance, and Anne Boleyn's fiery temper—reminds us that emotions can be powerful, but unchecked, they're destructive.

Losing your cool doesn't just impact the moment—it can change the course of your life.

Cooler heads prevail because they see the bigger picture, weigh the consequences, and act with clarity instead of impulse.

Staying in control isn't about suppressing emotions—it's about mastering them.

## Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Dean's List

WORCESTER, Mass. — A total of 2,393 undergraduate students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) were named to the university's fall 2024 Dean's List. The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differ from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI students are named to the Dean's List based on the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and hands-on projects.

"WPI's academic programs are rigorous and require a level of independence beyond what is required in traditional courses. WPI students work on real-world, open-ended problems on campus and in communities around the globe. Far from being simple academic exercises, the projects students complete have genuine and lasting impacts in our partner communities," said Provost Andrew Sears. "Some of this nation's best and brightest students come to WPI to study engineering, science, business, and the humanities. Those named to the Dean's List have excelled in all of their work, and we are exceptionally proud of these outstanding students."

The following students were named to the Dean's List for Fall 2024:  
Vicente Bastura of Pomfret Center, class of 2027, majoring in Mechanical Engineering  
Meredith Bergendahl of Pomfret Center, class of 2027, majoring in Biology and Biotechnology  
Connor Dunkley of Pomfret Center, class of 2027, majoring in Computer Science  
Zachary Roethlein of Pomfret Center, class of 2026, majoring in Aerospace Engineering  
Annarose Avery of Brooklyn, class of 2026, majoring in Management Engineering,

About Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
WPI is a top-tier STEM-focused research university and a recognized pioneer and global leader in project-based learning. Founded in 1865 on the principle that students learn most effectively by applying the theory learned in the classroom to the practice of solving real-world problems, WPI's continued mission is to transform lives, turn knowledge into action to confront global challenges, and revolutionize STEM through distinctive and inclusive education, projects, and research. WPI's project-based curriculum engages undergraduates in solving important scientific, technological, and societal problems throughout their education and at more than 50 project centers around the world. Today WPI offers more than 70 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs across 18 academic departments in science, engineering, technology, business, the social sciences, and the humanities and arts. To help address ongoing challenges, improve lives, and help create a more sustainable world, WPI faculty and students pursue groundbreaking research in such areas as the life sciences, smart technologies, materials and manufacturing, and global initiatives.

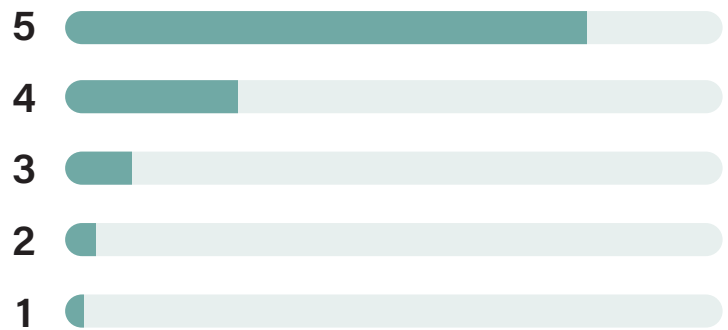




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