



# THOMPSON VILLAGER

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## Woodstock woman stitches a trail of generosity and love



WOODSTOCK — For the last year, Teresa Laurens has been at her sewing machine in Woodstock, creating dresses for little girls she will never know, and who will never know her.

The dresses are made in sizes 4, 6, and 8 and, remarkably, not by using a pattern. Laurens uses measurements only, as this is the method she learned as a child. This talented seamstress is part of Interfaith Stitchers, located at Westfield Church in Danielson, Connecticut. Tere learned about

When Teresa married Bob Laurens, all she wished for was a sewing machine, but the cost was too much for the newlyweds' budget. One morning Bob heard of a used machine on WESO's Cracker Barrel radio show, the precursor to today's on line marketplaces. Tere applauds her husband "for making her dream come true" because his offer was accepted. Teresa went on to do alterations, create wedding gowns, baptismal dresses, and some upholstery. Whatever her customers needed, she "would figure it out." Old Sturbridge Village hired Teresa as a seamstress which was challenging work. All the clothing worn by the docents is historically correct. No zippers, snaps or fasteners of any kind, except buttons, can be used for the hats, aprons, and costumes. Most of the striking ecclesiastical banners at Zion Lutheran Church have been designed and sewn by Teresa. Of all the liturgical seasonal banners, her favorite, the head of Christ with a crown of thorns, is displayed during Lent. She has patiently taught many of Zion's women how to work on these pieces. Throughout her career, Teresa never forgot how "poor children

in Mexico suffered and didn't have clothes." She wanted to give joy to these children. And she certainly does. She has sewn 60 dresses so far this year!

This is how she describes her creative process that blesses little girls: "My mind goes into another galaxy and I can picture the child's face, her hands in the pockets of a full skirt, as her parents stand there smiling."

As you can see in the accompanying photograph, each dress is beautifully embellished with buttons, lace, and piping. Tere doesn't plan each dress ahead of time. She says, "The donated material talks to her."

Certainly, each young recipient feels very special in these one-of-a-kind garments. Tere asked that credit be given to her husband, Bob, for securing "the best bargain" on her sewing machine and taking care of their children and kitchen so she could sew during the daylight and finish her commitments. If you would like to help in this ministry, you can share material, lace, buttons, zippers with Tere at Zion Lutheran Church, 70 Main St., Oxford. It will be fun to see which galaxy this generous, talented woman travels to with your gifts.

## Brooklyn launching employee voice initiative

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

BROOKLYN — The Town of Brooklyn is launching an employee voice initiative to help gauge how employees are responding to recent changes in the community and ensure their input is respected as Brooklyn continues to evolve as a community and workplace.

During a Board of Selectmen meeting on Aug. 18, First Selectman Joe Bellavance said that with changes to the Board of Selectmen and the town pursuing a town administrator he wanted to put a focus on the thoughts and concerns of the town's employees and what improvements and focuses they hope the town considers in the coming years.

"What I want to do is kind of formalize this employee voice where we're going to have a committee of eight to ten people," said Bellavance. "It'll be a mix of (the

Turn To INITIATIVE page A11

## Tickets for TEEG's Empty Bowls event available online

NORTH GROSVENORDALE — The annual Empty Bowls fundraising event to benefit TEEG's food programs will be held on Saturday, Sept. 26, and tickets are now available on the TEEG website: [www.teegonline.org](http://www.teegonline.org).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Abington Congregational Church, built in 1751, is the oldest meeting house in continuous use in Connecticut. The church is celebrating its 275th anniversary this year and has recently published a book about the history of the church which will be for sale during the supper theater on Oct. 3.

The Church supper will begin at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 3, featuring pulled pork and ribs, beans and traditional fixings with a modern twist by local chef, Nathan Gould of Pintail Restaurant in Pomfret. The meal will be served in the church hall, (Tracy House) 542, Hampton Rd., Pomfret Center (Abington), followed by a theatrical interpretation of a debate between Loyalist Godfrey Malbone, and Patriot Israel Putnam at 7 p.m. in the historic church. The play was written by local historian, Donna Dufresne with Chip Lamb, and is based on the letters from Malbone to his brother John from 1769 to 1780 in which he espouses his opinions about his Pomfret neighbors and their "treasonous acts"

against the King and his own Loyalist views.

Loyalist vs Patriot will be performed by actors Chip Lamb and Kenneth Noll. Chip Lamb, actor, director, and playwright will portray Godfrey Malbone. He has been a theater educator for over thirty years. He has performed in New York and in regional theaters, directed over 70 pro-

ductions in colleges and independent schools, and has written several plays. Kenneth Noll, Professor Emeritus of molecular biology from the University of Connecticut has spent nearly two decades performing in community theater and historical reenactments. Besides his portrayal of Israel Putnam, he has performed as the historical

figures Charles Darwin and Charles Dickens for libraries, museums, and universities.

Tickets for the supper theater event are \$42.50 (for the 250th) including the dinner and the Loyalist vs Patriot debate and must be purchased in advance. They are available online

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Courtesy

"Jack and the Beanstalk" is the first in a series of three metal sculptures hand crafted by Master Metalsmith Michael Saari for Putnam. Saari, a Woodstock resident, is an internationally renowned craftsman with more than 40 years experience. This was crafted with generous donations from the Putnam Business Association, Putnam Area Foundation and Putnam Arts Council along with materials donated by Rawson Materials. Mayor Barney Seney, PBA President Kate Cerrone and Selectman Mike Bogdanski are pictured at the ribbon cutting of Putnam's newest artwork.

TOWN OF PUTNAM

Position Advertisement for Executive Assistant for the Town of Putnam. This position performs a variety of confidential and complex administrative, technical, and secretarial duties for the Mayor and Town Administrator.

This full-time, hourly, non-union position is set for 35 hours per week with a pay range of \$30.00 - \$36.00 per hour based on experience. Overtime is applicable for Recording Secretary duties during Board meetings, typically 3 or more times per month.

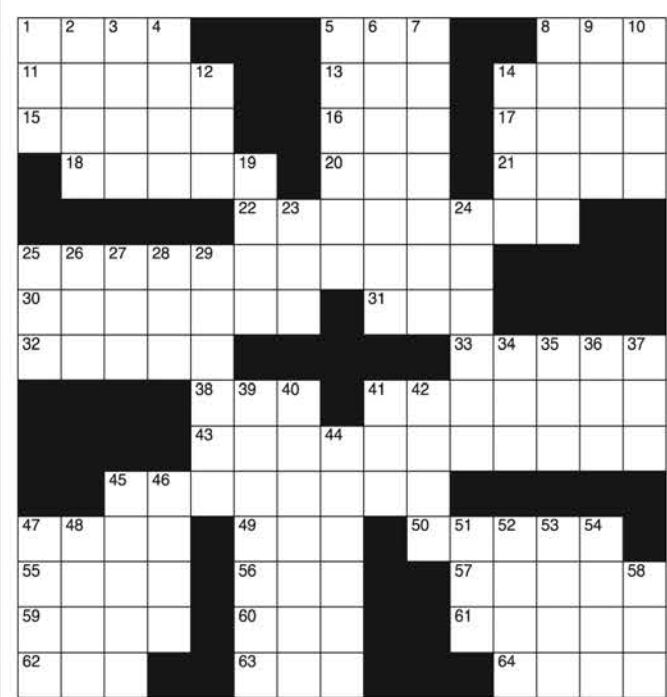
Full Posting, including requirements, and submittal details, can be found on the Town of Putnam's website under the Human Resources Department.

TOWN OF PUTNAM

Position Advertisement for Highway Services Coordinator for the Town of Putnam. This position performs a variety of professional administrative support related to daily operations within the Highway Department by answering public inquiries and resolving complaints, inventory and budget management, entering purchase orders, filing contracts and quotes, and maintaining vehicle and equipment inventory.

This part-time, hourly, non-union position is set for 15 hours per week with a pay range of \$21.49 - \$31.34 per hour based on experience. Days of work is negotiable but must remain during Highway open hours.

Full Posting, including requirements, and submittal details, can be found on the Town of Putnam's website under the Human Resources Department.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Egyptian bull god

5. A young canine

8. North Carolina university

11. "Oddbod" actor Tom

13. Midway between northeast and east

14. A place to shop

15. Mysterious "Severance" family

16. Single Lens Reflex

17. Malaria

18. Informal loan organizations

20. Twitching

21. Holm oak

22. Willing to consent

25. In an early way

30. Stuck it out

31. Language in Ghana

32. Obtain

33. Ancient Greek currency

38. One point east (clockwise) of due north
41. Popular baseball movie

43. Group of islands

45. Church building

47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea

49. Late AC/DC frontman Scott

50. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation

55. Thick piece of something

56. Breakfast food

57. One mole of solute per kilogram of solvent

59. Ancient Greek City

60. Bitterly regret

61. Don't forget it

62. Dishonorable man

63. Affirmative

64. "\_\_\_ and flows"

CLUES DOWN

1. Bridge-building degree

2. Expression of sorrow or pity

3. Lizard species

4. Turkish leader title

5. A way to bother

6. Blank

7. A fine, closely woven cotton fabric

8. Sports broadcaster Ian

9. Popular whodunit board game

10. Alkali flats mineral

12. Large African antelope

14. It's delivered most days

19. Satisfy

23. Water soaked soil

24. Of a past era

25. Chest muscle (slang)

26. Ribonucleic acid

27. Doctor of Education

28. Coffee receptacle
29. Where rockstars work

34. International airport in Connecticut

35. Russian river

36. It's used to make cabins

37. OJ trial judge Lance

39. A means to persuade

40. Short poem

41. A way to begin hostilities with

42. Multi-function radar (abbr.)

44. Joints

45. Blatted

46. Swedish rock group

47. Millisecond

48. \_\_\_ podrida: Spanish stew

51. Doctors' group

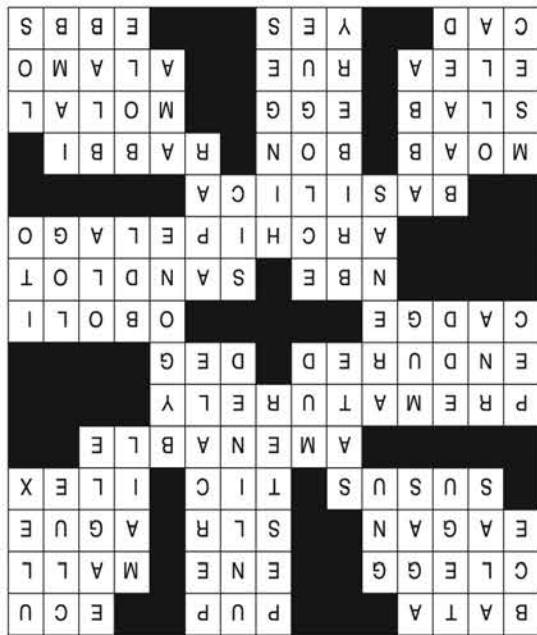
52. Trunk of a tree

53. Tattle

54. Metrical foot

58. \_\_\_ Angeles

PUZZLE SOLUTION



Hometown Heroes: Lillie Leach, the woman behind Putnam's Civil War Monument



Lillie Leach

BY MICHAEL J. ROCCHETTI  
COMMANDER  
MAYOTTE-VIENS AMERICAN LEGION POST  
#13  
PUTNAM

PUTNAM — At the intersection of Grove and Ring streets in Putnam stands a monument to the local soldiers and sailors who defended the Union during the Civil War. Unveiled on Memorial Day in 1912, it has served for more than a century as a place of remembrance and a visible expression of the community's gratitude.

Although the monument honors the men who went to war, it also represents the tireless work of the women who preserved their memory. Foremost among them was Marilla Elzade "Lillie" (Oliver) Leach. Through her initiative, foresight, leadership, and fundraising ability, Lillie and the members of the Woman's Relief Corps of the A.G. Warner Post #54, Grand Army of the Republic, raised the money needed to give Putnam the Civil War memorial that its veterans had long deserved.

Marilla Elzade Oliver was born on Aug. 9, 1854, in the coastal town of Phippsburg, Maine. She was the daughter of Captain Alden Sprague Oliver and Eliza Jane Mayall Small Oliver. One of eight children, she grew up with three sisters and four brothers. Her devotion to the Civil War generation was personal. Her father was a Civil War veteran, and Lillie understood the sacrifices made by the men who served and by the families who waited for them at home.

On July 5, 1870, when she was 15 years old and approaching her sixteenth birthday, Marilla married George Edward Leach (1847-1912), a carpenter from Kennebunkport, Maine. The couple had one daughter, Mary Florence Leach, generally

known as Florence, who was born around 1872.

By 1880, the family was living in Haverhill, Massachusetts. In 1894, Florence married Ellsworth L. Kelley, and they moved to Putnam, where Florence became the manager of a steam laundry. Lillie also settled with them in Putnam and became an energetic participant in the city's civic and patriotic life.

Her most important work was performed through the Woman's Relief Corps, the official women's auxiliary of the Grand Army of the Republic. The GAR was the nation's leading organization of Union veterans. Its local posts offered veterans fellowship and assistance while protecting the memory of their wartime service. Putnam's post was named in honor of Putnam High School Principal Addison G. Warner, who was killed in action during the Civil War.

The Woman's Relief Corps assisted veterans, widows, and orphans; decorated soldiers' graves; encouraged patriotism among the young; and helped ensure that the sacrifices of the Union veterans were not forgotten. Its members performed much of the quiet, persistent work that held local commemorative traditions together.

Lillie's greatest undertaking began with the campaign to erect a permanent soldiers' monument in Putnam. The city's Civil War veterans were growing older, and many had already answered what their comrades called the "final roll call." Lillie and the members of the W.R.C. understood that the opportunity to honor them while some were still alive would not last indefinitely.

The proposed monument would be a prominent public memorial, but securing it required a substantial fundraising campaign. There were no large government appropriations waiting to finance the project. The necessary money had to be raised through local subscriptions and community activities. Lillie was appointed chairman of the committee responsible for soliciting contributions. In June 1910, the Putnam Patriot reported that she and her committee were canvassing the town and receiving numerous subscriptions. Canvassing meant approaching local residents and business owners personally, explaining the project, requesting donations, keeping records, and repeatedly reminding the community of the cause. It was

demanding work. Contributions that appeared modest individually had to be gathered and combined until the Corps possessed enough money to commission a suitable monument.

The campaign required more than fundraising skill. It required faith that the people of Putnam would respond if given the opportunity to participate. Lillie's foresight enabled her to understand that the memorial was not being built for one day or one generation. Long after the veterans and the women who knew them were gone, the monument would continue to tell their story. After years of work, that vision became a reality.

The monument was unveiled during Putnam's Memorial Day observance in 1912. The W.R.C. was placed in charge of the unveiling ceremonies. The Putnam Patriot gave the women full credit for the achievement. It described the monument as a "labor of love," but emphasized that it had also been a difficult and self-sacrificing undertaking. The newspaper declared that it was because of this "band of patriotic workers," led by Lillie Leach as chairman, that Putnam at last possessed the memorial to its soldier and sailor dead that had long been desired.

Joseph McKachnie, a past commander of A.G. Warner Post, told the crowd that it was "wholly and completely fitting" that the ceremonies should be entrusted to the WRC. He recounted how the monument fund had grown from a small beginning and how the women had worked "in season and out of season" to achieve their goal. McKachnie then singled out their leader, declaring that "a large share of the honor and credit is due to Mrs. Leach."

Lillie welcomed the assembled citizens and offered a stirring tribute to the men in whose honor the monument had been erected. She reminded the crowd that their patriotism had preserved a united country and made possible the blessings enjoyed by later generations. The WRC state department president, Bertha M. Lounsbury of Branford, congratulated Putnam on its new monument and praised the women who worked to instill the principles of liberty and patriotism. "If the women did not win the war," she observed, "they did all in their power to help the men win it."

That same spirit guided Lillie's life after the monument was completed. Her service to the WRC continued for many years. She served as senior vice president in 1918 and remained active on entertainment and executive committees during the 1920s. She helped organize anniversary programs, patriotic observances, social gatherings, and other activities that sustained the Corps and its mission.

In January 1928, the organization escorted Lillie to a place of honor and recognized her as president emeritus. The Putnam Patriot credited her with 44 years of active service, including four years as president. She accepted the honor with what the newspaper described as pride and pleasure.

Lillie Leach lived during a period when women could exercise little formal political power. When she began her civic work, women did not possess the right to vote in national elections. Nevertheless, women such as Lillie shaped their communities through voluntary associations, relief organizations, churches, patriotic societies, and personal service. She showed that leadership did not require public office. It required vision, credibility, perseverance, and the ability to inspire others to work toward a common purpose.

Marilla Elzade "Lillie" Leach understood that memory could not be left to chance. Through her leadership, the WRC gave Putnam a memorial that has endured for more than a century. For ensuring that Putnam's Civil War soldiers and sailors would not be forgotten, Lillie Leach deserves to be remembered as one of the Hometown Heroes of the Quiet Corner.

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Students from the 2026 ESOL Summer Bridge program gathered with faculty and staff on Aug. 6 to celebrate the end of the free 10-week program at CT State Community College Quinebaug Valley in Willimantic.



The pinning ceremony for the first cohort of students from the Licensed Practical Nursing program was held in the Steven '23 and Marjolaine '87, '88 Townsend Community Room at the CT State Quinebaug Valley Willimantic Center on Aug. 14.

## NCEF celebrates culmination of two successful programs at CT State Quinebaug Valley

WILLIMANTIC — As the fall semester begins, the Northeast Connecticut Education Foundation (NCEF) is proud to share news of two NCEF-supported programs that successfully concluded in August of 2026. This includes the end of the fourth annual ESOL Summer Bridge program, as well as the pinning ceremony for the first cohort of Licensed Practical Nursing students in mid-August. Both programs were hosted at CT State Quinebaug Valley's Willimantic campus.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts (SFEEA), the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Summer Bridge Program has been offered for four consecutive summers as a free 10-week program for high school graduates and adult learners enrolled at CT State Quinebaug Valley. The program enables students to bridge academic transitions from spring to fall and minimizes the summer regression in English acquisition and proficiency, through a combination of coursework as well as academic and cultural field trips. The students, along with Quinebaug Valley faculty and staff gathered at the Willimantic Center on August 6th to mark the end of the 2026 program, celebrating with a shared meal. CT State Quinebaug Valley Director of Institutional Advancement Monique Wolanin noted the impact this program has on students, stating, "Over the four years of this program, we have seen so much growth with our students. In addition to building confidence and communication skills, many ESOL students have continued to pursue additional programs and career paths at the college. We are proud of their achievements and dedication to learning."

In summer 2025, CT State Quinebaug Valley launched the state's first public Practical Nursing program. The certificate program, hosted at the Quinebaug Valley campus in Willimantic, includes courses in fundamentals, medical-surgical, maternal-child, well-child and mental health nursing and is designed as a four-semester-aligned nursing curriculum (summer, fall, spring, summer). Thanks to support from Steven '23 and Marjolaine '87, '88 Townsend, the first cohort of students was given \$25,500 in scholarship funds, which covered tuition for the summer 2025 session and provided funds for additional educational expenses. On Friday, August 14th, this first group of Licensed Practical Nursing students received their pins in a ceremony with QV administration, staff, and loved ones in attendance.

"This is a truly exciting moment for our students, our college, and the communities we serve," said Anne Lamondy, CT State Interim Academic Division Director of Nursing and Allied Health. "As we celebrate the first class of Practical Nursing students to reach this important milestone, we are also celebrating the beginning of their careers and the meaningful contributions they will make to the local health care workforce. Our region continues to need dedicated, compassionate nurses, and we are incredibly proud that these graduates are prepared to step forward and meet that need. Their hard work, perseverance, and commitment to caring for others are an inspiration, and we look forward to seeing the difference they will make in the lives of their patients, families, and communities."

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

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Spoken Word Poetry and Music return this fall to The Vanilla Bean Café in Pomfret when **POETS AT LARGE** continues its 2026 series.

- 9/26 Frederick Douglass Knowles II  
Aeroelastic Flutter
- 10/24 Sharon Arsego  
John L. Stanizzi
- 11/21 Tommy Twilite  
Scott Laudati

All events begin at 7 p.m. \$10 donation suggested  
contact [karen.warinsky@gmail.com](mailto:karen.warinsky@gmail.com) for open mic  
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**FRANK G. CHILINSKI**  
PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

**BRENDAN BERUBE**  
EDITOR

# The gifts we carry can become gifts to others

Some talents are learned for a career. Others are picked up as hobbies. And then there are those skills that become so deeply woven into a person’s life that, decades later, they can still find entirely new purposes.

For Woodstock’s Teresa Laurens, that skill is sewing.

She learned it at age seven in Mexico, under the watchful eye of her mother, Sofia. Her first attempt at making a skirt was, by Laurens’ own recollection, “a disaster.” It is difficult not to appreciate the distance between that childhood project and the 60 dresses she has sewn this year for girls she will probably never meet.

There is something especially meaningful about that kind of generosity. Laurens is not simply donating money or dropping something into a collection box. She is giving hours of her life and drawing upon a skill developed over decades. Every button, piece of lace and bit of piping represents a small investment of attention in a child whose name she does not know. That is service at its most personal.

Laurens’ story is also a reminder that the talents people acquire during their lives can have purposes they never anticipated when they first learned them.

Her sewing took her from alterations to wedding gowns, baptismal dresses and upholstery. It eventually brought her to Old Sturbridge Village, where she faced the demanding task of producing historically accurate clothing. Her work can also be found closer to home in ecclesiastical banners she designed and sewed for Zion Lutheran Church.

Now, through Interfaith Stitchers at Westfield Church in Danielson, those same hands are producing dresses for children in need. There is a lesson in that progression that reaches well beyond sewing.

Communities depend upon people who recognize that something they know how to do might be useful to somebody else. A retired teacher can tutor a struggling student. Someone who knows carpentry can help repair a neighbor’s porch. A gardener can contribute vegetables to a food pantry. A musician can perform at a nursing home. Someone comfortable with computers can help a senior navigate technology. A person who knows how to sew can turn donated fabric into a dress for a little girl.

Volunteerism does not always require joining a committee, organizing a fundraiser or taking on an enormous commitment. Sometimes, it begins with a simpler question: What can I do well, and who might benefit from it?

Laurens also provides another important reminder. Acts of service are rarely accomplished entirely alone. She credits her husband, Bob, with finding the used sewing machine that made her dream possible when the newlyweds could not afford a new one. She also remembers the support he provided by caring for their children and handling the kitchen while she worked during daylight hours to finish sewing commitments. Generosity often has that kind of supporting cast.

Perhaps the most touching element of Laurens’ work, however, is the imagination behind it. She pictures the child who will eventually receive each dress, hands tucked into the pockets of a full skirt while her parents smile. That child may never know Teresa Laurens. Laurens may never know whether the dress was worn to school, church, a birthday celebration or on an ordinary afternoon. She may never see the smile she imagines while sitting at her sewing machine in Woodstock. But none of that diminishes the gift. In some ways, it makes it greater.

There is a particular beauty in doing something carefully for someone who can never repay you, thank you or even know your name.

A little girl somewhere will put on a one-of-a-kind dress because a woman in Woodstock remembered children who had too little, sat down at her sewing machine and decided she could do something about it.

That is how kindness travels.

# OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Critical thinking in a time of fantasy

To the Editor:

Perhaps one of the most unsettling developments of the last ten years has been the attack on thinking itself and on the critical tools we use to make sense of the world. If nothing is true, and science is no more reliable than a fairy tale, what then? We lose our critical faculties. We fall prey to “brain rot” and the outsourcing of our minds to machines, despots, and trillionaires.

Let’s remember that human beings have always relied on stories, traditions, sacred texts, and sometimes magical explanations. But critical thinking asks us to do something more difficult: it asks us to examine our own beliefs. Where do they come from? What evidence supports them? What might we have overlooked? What is it so hard to change our minds?

The habit of questioning authority, of church, king, and tradition, helped give rise to the scientific method and the use of evidence to build a model of the world. Science is not perfect, but it brings us closer to understanding the processes of cause and effect that shape our lives.

Recently, power-hungry leaders on the political and religious right have learned to exploit our fear and our desire for certainty. They attack critical thinking as indoctrination, disloyalty, or nothing more than a political agenda. But critical thinking belongs to no political party. It is the human mind’s ability to reflect on itself and question itself. It requires humility and, dare I say, encourages the recognition that we are all in this thing together.

Critical thinking does not mean believing that nothing is true. It means accepting that no belief should be protected from examination. The attack on critical thinking has emboldened those who cling desperately to false certainty and claims of unquestionable revelation. It has also become an attack on science and the methods science uses to establish reliable knowledge. If we cannot agree that causes produce effects, and that reliable evidence supports our knowledge, it becomes difficult to agree on anything.

It’s true that living in a world of cause and effect can leave us without a comforting story that explains everything, simplifies our problems, and reassures us that someone else is in control. The fear of uncertainty leaves us vulnerable to despots and tyrants who want to rob us of our agency and our humanity.

Living with uncertainty is hard. So is working together to achieve social progress, justice, and community. All of it requires people willing to face difficult facts, reconsider fixed beliefs, and accept responsibility for the consequences of their choices.

Life is short. Let’s get busy. Let’s leave our children and grandchildren a world we can be proud of. Good stewardship begins with facing reality and taking responsibility for how things came to be. That requires the courage to think critically about ourselves, our beliefs, and the world around us.

JOSEPH ZORNADO  
DANIELSON

### Cournoyer will return integrity to the 51st District

To the Editor:

Thank you for the issue of the Aug. 27 The Thompson Villager. John B. Lenky’s letter to the Editor titled “The Thompson RTC Needs to Recover its Integrity” was an important statement for Thompson’s voting citizens.

Professional integrity in our upcoming November election, of its rule making (possible future zoning issues) body, if not held account-

able, will have set (if electable, i.e. Democrat candidate) a corrosive pattern for our state future rule makers.

That is why I urge Thompson’s voters to elect Ryan Cournoyer to represent our interest for the 51st District of Connecticut.

Alvan R. Hill  
Thompson

### Pomfret Republicans want representation? Put down the keyboard and step up

To the Editor:

Pomfret recently had two vacancies on the Board of Education that, because of minority representation requirements, could only be filled by Republicans or unaffiliated voters. Both seats were vacated by Republicans who resigned.

Five unaffiliated residents stepped forward and applied. Not a single Republican did. Interesting.

We hear plenty of complaints from Pomfret Republicans about the lack of Republicans appointed to boards and commissions. Yet when two seats opened on one of the most important boards, where were the Republicans?

Apparently, representation is easier to demand than to volunteer for.

Perhaps the relentless negativity coming from the current Republican Town Committee has something to do with it. Reasonable Republicans might think twice about serving when having an independent thought—or working cooperatively with someone from another party—risks criticism from their own side for straying from the party line.

Meanwhile, five unaffiliated residents did more than complain. They stepped up. Their willingness to serve should be welcomed, not met with criticism or intimidation because they weren’t carrying the preferred party label.

Criticism is easy. Facebook posts are easy. YouTube videos are easy. Showing up for meetings, reading budgets, doing the homework, working with people you don’t always agree with, finding solutions, making difficult decisions and putting your name behind those decisions—that’s harder.

It’s time to stop complaining that Republicans aren’t represented on Pomfret’s boards and commissions. Want representation? Put down the keyboard. Put up your hand. Step up and serve. And maybe most importantly, support the people who do—regardless of party.

Raymond E. Wishart, Jr.  
Pomfret Democratic Town Committee

### Trump’s purge of immigrants flies in the face of true patriotism

To the Editor:

Patriotism is something Americans are raised with. It is based on our shared history. The good and the bad. President Trump is trying to take this sense of devotion to a faux fascist level by purging museums and national parks of any perceived blemish. This includes public and private schools as well as military academies. Trump is constructing a slew of glitzy new national monuments with his name as well as renaming bodies of water, barreling toward a more authoritative state.

He and MAGA constantly proclaim that America is the greatest country in the world. But driving trucks with flags is not a substitute for a course in US history. Indeed, one could hazard to guess that many America first believers have never actually visited the rest of the world to reach an objective opinion.

Is America really the world’s best country? We are not the happiest. Finland is number one. America a middling 23. We are not the safest country. Iceland is. The US ranks a dismal 134. Nor are we the healthiest. That would be Taiwan or Iceland. America is 33rd.

So, is there justification to call America the world’s best country? This writer would argue yes. What makes us special is something unique not only in comparison with today’s world, but spanning the breath of human kind. That is, never have so many so different peoples lived together in peace. Up until now every empire has collapsed. Rome, the Monguls, Persia, Macedonia, Spain, and Britain to name but a few. They all eventually splintered as vassal states revolted.

Yet America has grown and blossomed and that is the beauty of the Founding Fathers experiment. They recognized that all men are created equal and entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is these ideals that have attracted people from every nook and cranny of the world. Able to live together under the same laws.

That is why our current xenophobic administration is so dangerous. Declaring America a White Christian nation ignores that America is a

melting pot. In 1776, 20 percent of the country was black. In fact S Carolina the ratio was 2 to 1 black. Not to mention the millions of Native and Latino Americans who can trace their American roots back tens of thousands of years. Europeans are newcomers.

It is true that America was founded by Christians. But it was not the Christian faith that they had in mind as a blueprint but rather Christian values. Some of these are etched into the base of the Statue of Liberty. “Give me your tired your poor your huddled masses yearning to be free.” Jesus himself could not have come up with a more compelling adage. Trump on the other hand labels the less fortunate as belonging in their “shithole countries.” He has called them “animals” and said they are “not human.” This is despicable and defiles the nation’s soul.

All this is why the current purge of immigrants flies in the face of what makes us us. True, an open border threatened to overwhelm our social systems, and the President has closed our pious boundaries and deserves credit. On the other hand, statistics show that over 70 percent of ICE detainees have no criminal record while only 5 percent have been convicted of a violent crime. Rounding up mothers and children, factory workers and business owners, soldiers and their families, who are not guilty of a serious infraction is wrong. Locking them up and denying them outside contact, food, and medical attention and dumping them in some random third world country is immoral, un-Christian and fundamentally un-American.

The United States has always been an ever-changing tapestry of color. A kaleidoscope of every culture, religion and race able to co-exist in peace. The Great Experiment. And if current polls critical of ICE prove correct, and barring some black swan coup, we should come out of the current scourge stronger and with a greater self-awareness of just how fragile this holy venture is.

LEE WESLER  
WOODSTOCK

# School days, school days



**KILLINGLY  
AT  
300  
MARGARET  
WEAVER**

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

invites you to From Colonies to Independence: Songs of America’s Transition by historian-musicians Rick Spencer and Dawn Indermuehle who will perform songs of the Colonial era, Revolutionary War, and the Early American Republic from 1750-1825. Public invited. Refreshments served.

Support one of Killingly’s Historic Properties. Killingly Grange No. 112 will sponsor a Chicken BBQ on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 4:30-6:30p.m. Half a chicken, Corn on the Cob, Potato Salad, Roll and Dessert. \$16 per meal. Dine in or take out. Limited number of meals. Call 860-884-1813 to reserve a meal. At the door pay by cash, check or credit card.

“School days! School Days! Good old Golden Rule Days! Reading & ‘Riting and ‘Rithmetic...” It’s that time of year again, and students of all ages are headed to classes. I knew that in the mid 1800’s, there were many district grammar schools. In fact, some of the buildings are still standing as private homes. However, higher education was more difficult to come by, and families had to pay for their children to attend. The Aug. 5, 1852 Windham County Telegraph printed ads for three academies here in Northeastern Connecticut---Woodstock Academy, Thompson Academy, and West Killingly Academy. “Woodstock Academy. The fall term of this Institution will open on Wednesday, September 1, 1852. Mr. J. R. Davenport, who has been for three Terms so successfully connected with the School, will remain as Principal. The department of Music, French, and Drawing will continue to be ably superintended...Board will be furnished at \$1.75. No student will be received for less than one term. For further particulars, apply to the Principal. Jonathan Curtis, President of the Board of Trustees.” The Thompson Academy ad read, “The Fall Term of this Institution will commence on Wednesday, August 25th under the instruction of Mr. H. S. Parker as Principal, and continue eleven weeks. Board in good private families can be had on reasonable terms. Catalogues furnished on application. J. B. Gay, Sec’y.”

West Killingly Academy was located on present-day Broad Street in Danielson on the site of the former St. Albans Episcopal Church. That is how Academy Street (where the Danielson

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

There is a cancer at the heart of our country, with only one cure

To the Editor:

I very much appreciate Ed Clement’s taking the time and effort last week to respond to my critique of his previous letter warning of the dangers of socialism/Communism, and, in particular, his highlighting of the fact that some Democratic candidates have been termed socialist or, in a number of cases, have themselves touted the fact that they were actually “democratic socialists” or “social Democrats.” I can quibble with a number of Mr. Clement’s statements (such as his referring to our current government as being a social democracy — we are in fact nothing of the sort, and come closer to being a functional oligarchy than anything else) but very much appreciate the collegial tone with its echoes of many a long-ago high school or college debate.

Several things, though, are relevant:

First, in discussing individual candidates’ positions and beliefs, I think it is probably best not to paint with a broad brush — fascist, communist, socialist, antisemite, war-monger, or the like. Far better to refer to specific statements or policy positions of a candidate and begin from there. In fact, some of these more general terms might actually hold up after extended scrutiny of a candidate, but it’s really not fair to start there.

Second, to take the case of Abdul El-Sayed. He is adamant that he is not a socialist and his major policy issue is universal health care, specifically a Medicare-for-All plan. I would still be interested in Mr. Clement’s thoughts about such a plan. As a physician of 45 years who daily did battle with insurance companies, who is now happily enrolled in traditional Medicare and appreciating its simplicity and freedom, I developed a loathing of the profit-focused and patient-gouging insurance industry. They are parasites feasting on a largely helpless population, as well as government infrastructure. I have a hard time seeing how the traditional Medicare program, extended to all, cradle-to-grave, could undermine capitalism. After all, the current Medicare didn’t, Medicaid didn’t, and Social Security didn’t. The vast majority of those candidates who have been touted as “dangerously left” are firm supporters of capitalism; they just want it to be regulated and made to behave.

Third, in so many ways, this discussion about “socialism” is the classic red herring. Our country is experiencing an existential crisis. We have a leader and an administration unlike any we have experienced in 250 years. He, and it, are hellbent on destroying a nation painstakingly constructed by consensus as quickly as they can. I don’t know why they are but they are.

Take the dismantling of environmental protections. Stating that the rollback of 31 environmental regulations in March of 2025 would “drive a dagger straight into the heart of the climate change religion,” EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin loosened regulations on air pollution from oil and gas extraction, weakened regulations governing neurotoxic and carcinogenic air pollutants such as benzene and arsenic, rewrote the rules governing greenhouse gas emissions from power plants, and terminated the “Good Neighbor Plan” rule intended to protect downwind states from nitrogen oxide pollution crossing state lines.

Our newfound love of coal, coupled with rollbacks of regulations governing mercury and arsenic will have a devastating effect: as the New England Journal of Medicine puts it: “Airborne mercury from coal combustion enters the food chain as

methyl mercury, is consumed by pregnant women, crosses the placenta, and causes brain damage and decreased cognitive function in their infants.” And “airborne arsenic increases lung-cancer deaths.”

Briefly, decreased air pollution regulation leads to increased cardiovascular morbidity (strokes and heart attacks), increased respiratory morbidity (lung cancer, asthma, worsened chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), delayed implementation of stricter silica rules for miners leads to increased silicosis and pneumoconiosis, reduced emissions standards leads to increased nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, and particulate pollution in turn leading to increased cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. As if this were not enough, some wetlands will be excluded from the Clean Water Act, and greater wastewater discharges from oil and gas production will be allowed, almost certainly leading to a higher incidence of bladder cancer. All of the progress we have made in this country, beginning in the early 1970’s, toward cleaning up our air and water is being rolled back.

But...so, so much more: The incomprehensible and failing war with Iran. Blowing fishing boats out of the water in international waters and killing who, exactly? Withdrawing from the World Health Organization. Withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement. The half-hearted support of Ukraine. The undermining of NATO. The coddling of Russia. The love affair with North Korea. A chill toward South Korea. The destruction of USAID. The crazy quilt tariffs, used as a weapon. The devaluation of alliances. The turning on a dime. The firing of inspectors general. The firing of 20-25 senior military leaders, with a total, including blocked promotions, of over 80 generals and admirals who have left/are planning to leave. The FCC investigating every news outlet but Fox News.

The inexplicable targeting of and rift with Canada. Hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on Washington “beautification,” a ballroom monstrosity, the destruction of the Rose Garden, the Arch. Doubling down on the 2020 “stolen election” claim. The pardoning of the violent January 6th rioters who attacked the Capitol and its police. The targeting of political opponents. The unraveling of the food safety network. The war on vaccines led by a mentally ill ex-junkie, now with measles, once vanquished, ascendant. The bond market. Inflation. Data centers. Trump-class battleships. Battleships modified to resemble WWII battleships. Steam-powered catapults. Running out of both offensive rockets and defensive interceptors. Nonexistent voter fraud vs. real attempted election fraud. The list is pretty much endless.

So...the slavish Republican Congress? A cowed Republican Party? A weak Democratic minority in Congress? Citizens United? Presidential immunity? A gelded press? Pointing fingers does nothing. The fact is that this country is in a place it has never been before. You can say it was predictable, but that doesn’t help a whit. Worrying whether or not this or that candidate might want to have a couple of city-run grocery stores, or wants universal pre-K, or wants every American to have health care is really not the point. The point is simple: the country now has a cancer, and the only effective treatment is electoral.

John A. Day, Jr.  
Woodstock Valley

Statement clarification

To the Editor:

In a statement dated Sept. 5, the Tony in 2026 campaign said it was disappointed by a mischaracterization in the Woodstock Villager in a letter to the Editor by Charlie Tracy. The letter mentions, among other things, that the Republican candidate has questioned Pat Boyd’s integrity. The campaign goes on to state that this comment is neither accurate nor their position.

I am very glad to hear the campaign clarify their position on this matter. The basis for my original comment concerning the Republican candidate’s statement about Pat Boyd’s integrity is taken from a statement

made on Aug. 11 by Tony in 2026.

The statement, in part, reads: “I hope to bring integrity back to this role and provide the 50th District with the full attention, common sense, and steady leadership it deserves.”

Pat Boyd has been the 50th District’s Representative for almost ten years.

I believe Pat Boyd has acted with integrity, common sense, and steady leadership during his tenure as our Representative.

I support Pat Boyd.

CHARLIE TRACY  
POMFRET

Let’s take a page from “Network”

To the Editor:

As important as local and state issues are in every election, we must put aside most of these in the midterms and focus solely on ousting Donnie Dimwit and his cabal. This must be our overriding purpose. Donnie Destructo will continue to tear down our democracy, our systems and our protections. He has admitted to doing so many things just to perpetuate his name because no one will do so after he’s gone. This is perhaps the only true thing he’s ever said.

We cannot get smug about how badly he’s doing in the polls, even among Republicans. Not that the polls are true, but we need to get out and vote in overwhelming numbers. There can be no question about the outcome in spite of Donnie Dimwit’s claims of voter fraud. We need to be quite sure that he will do everything he can to compromise

the election, including declaring a national emergency to cancel the entire election, restricting mail-in ballots, voter intimidation, ICE involvement and flooding the media with gobs of money.

I am quit upset with how the Democratic candidates, almost to a person, pussy-foot with their campaign rhetoric. Most avoid vilifying Trump and none use his name at all. I’ve avoided using his name to belittle him as much as I can. But why are the candidates so afraid to bluntly show their constituents the peril we are in with Trump? Why can’t our candidates take a quote from the movie “Network” and say, “I’m mad as hell (at Trump) and I’m not going to take it anymore.” Please.

STEPHEN ETZEL  
PUTNAM

Straw man arguments are not a substitute for critical thought

To the Editor:

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

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

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

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

There are serious arguments to be made about the proper balance between markets and government, taxation and public

spending, and individual and collective responsibility. Those debates deserve better than name-calling, guilt by association and predictions masquerading as evidence.

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

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

Paul Cotnoir  
Putnam

Additional Letters to the Editor, See Page A-7

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.

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Courtesy  
On Wednesday, Sept. 2 Putnam Cub Scout Pack 21 practiced pitching a tent, as they get ready to go camping later this month. This is just one of dozens of fun things Pack 21 does throughout the year, guided by trained and experienced adults. Pack 21 welcomes boys and girls ages five through ten. To join, call John Ryan at (860) 928-5873 and leave a message.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Record diesel money, record time off:  
Who’s working for the American people?

To the Editor:

Americans just celebrated Labor Day with the highest diesel gas prices in U.S. history. The national average reached \$5.85 per gallon on Friday, Sept. 4, according to AAA data. The national average is up more than \$2 a gallon from just a year ago, when diesel sold for \$3.70. The illegal war with Iran with no plan, no objective and no end in sight is now at six-months and continues to disrupt the world’s fuel supply. Diesel gas powers trains, tractors, and trucks that move the American economy. Every school bus, every delivery truck, every combine tractor harvesting fall crops runs on that fuel. When diesel prices go up, it shows up in our grocery bills and the higher cost of living in the U.S.A.

We are in an affordability crisis because of the policies out of Washington. Trump promised he would lower costs on day one. He said our grocery prices would fall. He said the pain at the pump would go away. Republicans control the House, the Senate, and the White House and yet costs continue to rise. They chose to let Trump and Hegseth go to war with Iran which has propelled fuel costs to record highs. They chose tariffs that are a tax on everything from lumber to produce. They chose a budget that added trillions to the national debt while cutting taxes for billionaires and trimming services and healthcare for everyday Americans. You don’t have to be an economist to feel the squeeze at the pump or checkout line.

After the House returned from a five-week break, Republican Speaker Mike Johnson abruptly canceled votes for the final two weeks of the September session rather than pass laws regarding the war on Iran, data centers, the Epstein Files, the affordability crisis or any of the litany of other issues currently burdening Americans. Republican Representative Thomas Massie called out his own party’s leadership over it, noting the Speaker has

sent Congress home for a record 100 paid days off at the taxpayer’s expense.

Trump has said on his Truth Social platform that “too many non-working holidays in America” were costing the country billions and that “it must change.” The Republicans argue that American workers should work longer. They have a plan to gut Social Security after the mid-terms and want to increase the retirement age to 70. Meanwhile, members of Congress collect a taxpayer funded paycheck of \$174,000, up to \$223,500 for the Speaker, while spending most of their time at home on “paid days off”. The current administration and the Republicans in Congress lecture working families about doing more, while they enjoy reduced work schedules, health insurance, pensions at age 62 with five years of service and benefit from illegal insider trading. They are not prioritizing the American people who are struggling to fill their gas tanks, pay for groceries, housing, utilities or healthcare.

The cost of living in the U.S. is a top issue for most Americans. When the party in full control of Washington delivers record diesel prices, a ballooning deficit, unfettered corruption, and tax breaks for billionaires while ordinary people try to stretch their pay checks to make ends meet, that’s a policy record voters get to judge.

So, judge it. Connecticut gives us 14 days of early voting, starting October 19 through November 1, before Election Day on Nov. 3. Check your registration now, before October. Whether you’re a Democrat, an unaffiliated voter, or a Republican rethinking things at the pump, you don’t have to wait in a long line on Election Day to let Washington know their policies are not working for you. Beat the crowds and vote early and make your voice heard.

LISA ARENDS  
BROOKLYN

To: Friends of Barlow Cemetery  
From: South Cemetery Association,  
Overseers of Barlow Cemetery – Woodstock Valley, CT  
Subject: Preservation of Barlow Cemetery

Dear Friends:

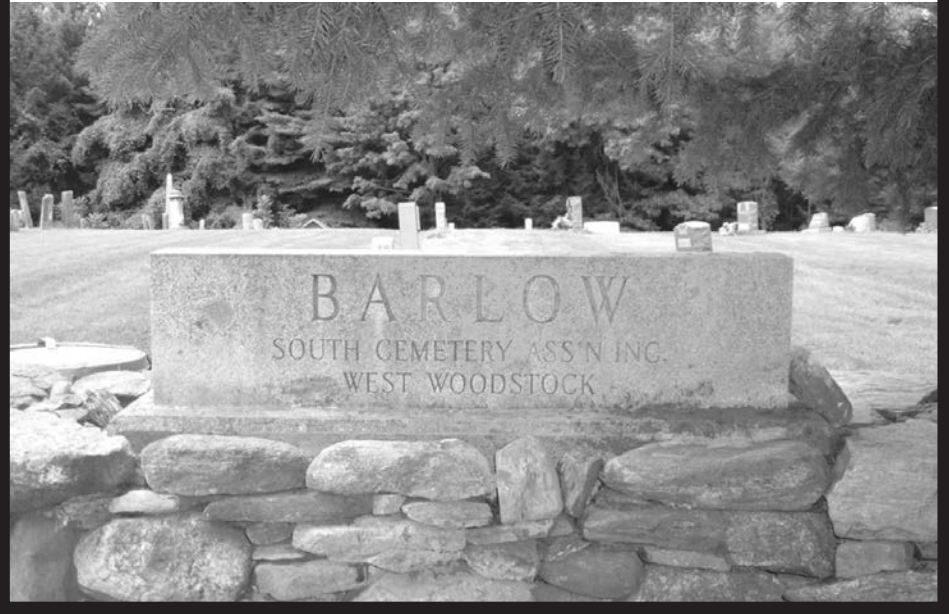
To owners of burial plots in Barlow Cemetery, located on Barlow Cemetery Rd. Woodstock Valley, where many of our beloved relatives and friends are interred, and to those of you who appreciate the importance of maintaining these historic places, we would like to make you aware of the constant and ever-increasing costs of caring for our historic cemetery.

The volunteer officers and members of the association would like you to know there will come a time, in the not too distant future, when our remaining plots will all be sold and further expansion is impossible. This leaves annual maintenance expenses (lawncare, insurance, repairs, etc) that will no longer be offset by plot sales.

We are requesting donations to the association in any amount to help us maintain this valuable historic site. As we are classified as a charitable organization (501c13), your donations are tax deductible. Consult your tax advisor.

Your check should be made out to South Cemetery Association and mailed to: PO Box 100 Woodstock, CT 06281-0100.

Yours very sincerely,  
The Board of South Cemetery Association



# The IRS has fewer auditors and smarter algorithms: What to know about tax filing now

BY LEISL L. LANGEVIN

There is an old rule of thumb about enforcement: fewer police on the road means fewer speeding tickets. That logic no longer holds at the IRS.

The agency is smaller than it has been in decades. It also has better software. For high earners, business owners, and anyone filing a return with partnership income, S-corporation activity, or a long list of 1099s and K-1s, that combination changes the shape of the risk rather than removing it. The odds of a revenue agent knocking on your door have dropped. The odds of an automated system noticing a mismatch have not.

What actually changed at the IRS

The workforce shrank quickly. The agency started 2025 with about 102,000 employees and finished the year with roughly 74,000, a reduction of about 27%, concentrated in experienced enforcement and technical staff. Those are the people who work complicated returns.

Audit targets fell alongside them. The IRS began 3,692 new audits of filers reporting at least \$10 million in income in fiscal year 2025, roughly half the 6,786 it had originally planned. For fiscal year 2026, the target is 2,264. Partnership audit targets were reduced as well, even though partnerships are an area with substantial compliance risk.

Then comes the pivot. IRS leadership has told Congress the agency is modernizing enforcement through expanded use of artificial intelligence, advanced analytics, and improved data integration; all tools intended to identify high-risk noncompliance and focus resources on higher-value cases. Roughly 80% of IRS audits already arrive

by mail rather than in person. Increasingly, the first contact is a notice generated by a system, not a letter from someone who read your return.

Four things the algorithms look at first

1. Third-party document matching. W-2s, 1099s, K-1s, brokerage statements, and digital asset reporting all reach the IRS independently of your return. Automated matching compares the two. It does not require judgment, only a difference. K-1s that arrive late or are amended after you file are a common source of mismatch.
2. Flow-through income. Partnership and S-corporation returns carry the most moving parts: basis, at-risk limits, passive activity rules, and reasonable compensation for owner-employees. Analytics tools are built to find outliers here because the dollars per case are large.

3. Deductions outside the expected range. Charitable contributions well above the norm for your income level, large non-cash gifts, vehicle and aircraft business use, home office claims, and real estate professional status all draw attention. None of these is improper. Each carries a documentation standard that is easy to fall short of.
4. Foreign accounts and digital assets. Global exchange reporting and foreign account disclosure rules give the IRS comparison points it did not have a decade ago. Penalties in this category are severe relative to the balances involved.

Why documentation matters more, not less

When a human examiner works a case, there is room to explain. When an automated notice arrives, you are responding to a computed difference inside a fixed window, often 30 days. Miss the window and a proposed adjustment can become an assessment.

Two consequences follow. First, contemporaneous records beat reconstructed ones every time: mileage logs, qualified appraisals for non-cash gifts, board minutes supporting compensation decisions, and basis schedules updated annually rather than rebuilt under pressure. Second, response speed matters. Notices go to the address on the return, and if that routing is stale, the clock runs without you.

What to do this year

Reconcile before you file. Match every third-party form to the return line by line. If a K-1 is outstanding, extending may be preferable to filing on an estimate.

Keep a running basis file. For each partnership and S-corporation interest, maintain the schedule annually instead of reconstructing it years later.

Document the judgment calls. Where a position depends on facts, such as hours worked, business purpose, or valuation, record the support in the year it happens.

Confirm your address and check your IRS online account. Notices are the new front door.

Coordinate your CPA and your financial advisor inside the tax year. Charitable timing, Roth conversion sizing, business distributions, and entity decisions all read differently on paper than in a conversation held the week before April 15.

Fewer auditors is not the same as less scrutiny. It is a different kind of scrutiny, one that reads your return against everyone else's data before anyone reads it as a story. The



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families and business owners who fare best in that environment are not the ones taking the most aggressive positions. They are the ones whose files can answer a question quickly.

At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, our Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well. process is built to evaluate opportunities and exposures like these in context. The goal is not simply to lower taxes in one year; it is to build a coordinated, tax-aware strategy that holds up under review and supports the decisions that matter most to your family or your business.

Schedule a complimentary discovery session at [whzwealth.com](http://whzwealth.com) or call us at (860) 928-2341

to review how your filing positions, entity structure, and documentation fit within your broader plan. Together, we can help you move forward with Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.

Authored by Leisl L. Langevin, CFP® CDFIA®. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. The fees, expenses, and features of 529 plans can vary from state to state. 529 plans involve investment risk, including the possible loss of funds. There is no guarantee that an education-funding goal will be met. In order to be federally tax free, earnings must be used to pay for qualified education expenses. The earnings portion of a nonqualified withdrawal will be subject to ordinary income tax at the recipient's marginal rate and subject to a 10 percent penalty. By investing in a plan outside your state of residence, you may lose any state tax benefits. 529 plans are subject to enrollment, maintenance, and administration/management fees and expenses. WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide legal or tax advice. You should consult a legal or tax professional regarding your individual situation. Investments are subject to risk, including the loss of principal. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret St., Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Rd., Tolland, CT 06084, 860-928-2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com>.

National Taxpayer Advocate, "2025 Annual Report to Congress," Taxpayer Advocate Service, January 2026. <https://www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/news/tax-news/2026-arc-press-release/2026/01/>

2 Tax Law Center at NYU Law, "The 2026 Tax Filing Season Has Had Serious Problems and More Tax Administration Challenges Are on the Horizon." 2026, citing IRS data. <https://taxlawcenter.org/blog/the-2026-tax-filing-season-has-had-serious-problems-and-more-tax-administration-challenges-are-on-the-horizon>

3 Frank J. Bisignano, Chief Executive Officer, Internal Revenue Service, written testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee, March 4, 2026. <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/written-testimony-of-the-honorable-frank-j-bisignano-chief-executive-officer-internal-revenue-service-before-the-house-ways-and-means-committee-to-discuss-the-2026-tax-filing-season-and-irs-operations>

## KILLINGLY

continued from page A1

Fire Station is located) got its name. A much larger ad ran for that institution which would open the following week.. "The Trustees of the West Killingly Academy, would most respectfully inform its patrons and the public generally, that this Institution will commence its Fall Term August 12, 1852; Winter Term, November 11; Winter and Spring Term, February 11, 1853 under the supervision of Mr. John H. Freeman as principal. The course of instruction is liberal, embracing the various branches of science and literature usually taught in High Schools and Academies, together with Vocal and Instrumental Music, Drawing, etc...The Trustees have been at great expense in procuring valuable sets of apparatus in the departments of Geography, Astronomy, Philosophy, Chemistry, Physiology, and Anatomy, which serve in no small degree to facilitate the study of these branches, and to awaken an interest in the pupil. Rare advantages present themselves to those wishing to prepare to teach, as a Teacher's Class will be organized at the commencement of each term, if desirable... Good board may be obtained in respectable families at \$1.00 to \$1.75 per week. Terms of tuition: Common English Branches per term of. 11 weeks \$3.50; Higher English Branches and Classics, \$4.50; French, \$1.00; Monochromatic Painting and Drawing, per course, \$2.50; Vocal Music, \$1.00; Instrumental Music, \$8.00. By order of the Board of Trustees, Joseph D. Bates, Sec'y." (all p. 3).

I wrote about Putnam's "Candy" LaChance in the Aug. 21 Villager, and was pleased to receive a message on the Killingly Historical Society answering machine from an unidentified caller about Rollie Sheldon (Roland Frank), another pro baseball player, a pitcher, who was born in Putnam (son of Frank and Elsie Sheldon) and attended Woodstock Academy. Archivist Lynn LaBerge heard the message first and quickly did an internet search about Rollie. Wikipedia noted that he was born in Putnam Dec. 17, 1936. (Several other sources on Ancestry.com indicate that his residence as a child was likely Woodstock. The family was there in the 1940 census). Rollie was signed by the New York Yankees at age 23 after one season as a baseball and basketball player at UConn preceded by a semester at Texas A&M, and four years of service in the United States Air Force...In "Ball Four," teammate and author Jim Bouton claimed Sheldon lied about his age by telling the Yankees when they signed him that he was 19... and was actually 26." Sheldon played for the New York Yankees (1961-2, 1964-1965), Kansas City Athletics (1965-1966), Boston Red Sox (1966). He batted right and threw right, had a win-loss record of 38-36, an earned run average of 4.05, and recorded 371 strikeouts. (Some additional research was from Ancestry.com.)

The caller also mentioned several other pro baseball players who had connections to this area: Bob Auger, a pitcher and first baseman and Brian Murphy, a relief pitcher. Lynn went to the Web site Baseball-Reference.com for a little about them. Both played pro baseball in the minor leagues. Auger was born Nov. 15, 1949 (place not given) and was "drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the 6th round of the 1968 MLB June Amateur Draft from Putnam High School and the St. Louis Cardinals in the 4th round of the 1969 MLB January Draft-Secondary Phase". He played in the minor leagues through 1972 when he was with the Modesto Reds in the California League. Brian K. Murphy (b. Aug. 6, 1956) attended Tourtellotte Memorial High School and was drafted by the New York Yankees in the 23rd round of the 1979 MLB June Amateur Draft from Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic. Brian played two seasons in the minor leagues with the Paintsville Yankees and the Greensboro Hornets.

Thank you again to the unknown caller. If you see this, please call and leave your name and contact information on the Killingly Historical Center answering machine or email me. To my other readers, please send the names of other professional sports figures from this area so we can add them to our files and I can mention them.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, September 2026. Special thanks to the unidentified caller with additional local baseball players and Lynn LaBerge for her research. For additional information email me at [margaretmweaver@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety). For Windham County Transcripts, visit [killingly.historyarchives.online](http://killingly.historyarchives.online) courtesy of the Killingly Public Library. For Putnam Patriots and Windham County Observers visit the home page of the Putnam Public Library and look on the right hand column for links.

## Lebanon Historical Society's antique show returns for 59th year

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

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

Sept. 26.

Up to 60 dealers will offer antiques and high-quality collectibles to buyers who come from around the state and through-out southern New England. The event started in 1966 as a money-making effort to fund Society programs and, eventually, to help pay for the land needed to build a Museum. Today, the Antique Show is still the Historical Society's largest and most important fund raising event with proceeds supporting school programs, exhibits and historical presentations.

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

textiles, glassware and jewelry.

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

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

For more information, contact the Lebanon Historical Society 860-642-6579 / [museum@historyoflebanon.org](mailto:museum@historyoflebanon.org). or visit us on the Web at [www.historyoflebanon.org](http://www.historyoflebanon.org).

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

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

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

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

Old Sturbridge Village staff Marlene

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

Katherine Fecteau, Curator of Exhibitions at Old Sturbridge Village, will host the presentation on Oct. 8, “After the First Fifty.” This will explore national transformation in the United States after the first fifty years of a new nation through the eyes of the

people who experienced it firsthand. Learn about 11 Americans whose lives shed light on the change, innovation, and emerging spirit of reform that influenced this period in our history.

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

To learn more, please visit [www.centerforwoodstockhistory.com](http://www.centerforwoodstockhistory.com).





Country star Drew Baldrige was one of the main attractions of the weekend bringing his popular tunes like “Somebody’s Daughter” to the newly revamped Brooklyn Fair stage.

# Brooklyn Fair brings Fall to the Quiet Corner

BROOKLYN — The Brooklyn fair returned for another year in 2026, continuing its legacy as the longest continuously running agricultural fair in the country. Combining new and old favorites, the fair offered a little something for everyone from animal exhibits to music, games, rides, delicious food, vendors, and more. The fair often serves as the unofficial start to fall in the Quiet Corner and once again helped ring in the season in style.



Young cattle showers present their animals during one of the many competitions throughout the fair weekend.



The Rock Star was one of many rides that provided thrills in the carnival section of the fair



The annual lawnmower races are always a fun draw at the fair and returned for another year in 2026.



Guests looking for a more unique thrill could get the experience of riding along in a monster truck as it performed donuts and other tricks in the horse arena.



Blacksmiths show their skills creating hand-made goods.



7. This cute puppy was a popular guest at the fair driving around in his patriotic vehicle and taking photos with fans.

September: A season of new beginnings

Paddle 4 Hope to support Neighbors Against Cancer

BY CLAUDETTE STOCKWELL  
DIRECTOR  
KILLINGLY PUBLIC LIBRARY

September is often the time when excitement is in the air. School is back in session, friends reunite, and new opportunities are ahead. This season, it's not solely for students. In partnership with the Connecticut Labor Department, and the American Job Center, the Killingly Public Library is hosting a Job Fair on Thursday, Sept. 17 from 10 a.m. to noon. This event is designed for adults, recent graduates, those in transition, or anyone seeking a career change.

Are you hesitant to approach companies but

curious about what they have to offer and whether it might be the right fit for you? This is your chance to discover more. You'll have a chance to meet with representatives from Aptiv, Electric Boat, Frito Lay, Generations Family Health Center, Killingly Public Schools, Loos & Co, Putnam Plastics, and Westminster Tool. The Connecticut Department of Labor and Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board are Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employers and equal opportunity program and service providers. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Email requests to [dol.beu@ct.gov](mailto:dol.beu@ct.gov)

Are you still feeling anxious? You can receive help preparing for a job interview or writing your resume with our JobNow database which connects you with Brainfuse Interview Coaches who can assist you in the process. Whether you are exploring a new path, returning to the workforce, or simply curious about what is out there, the Killingly Public Library's Job Fair is a great place to start. Registration for this event is not required. We hope you'll join us, take advantage of the resources available, and leave feeling more confident about what comes next.

Connect with us at 25 Westcott Rd., Killingly, online at [killinglypl.org](http://killinglypl.org), or call us at 860-779-5383.

BROOKLYN — Paddlers will take to the water at Riverside Park this month for Paddle 4 Hope, a community fundraiser benefiting Neighbors Against Cancer and its efforts to assist local residents facing financial challenges following a cancer diagnosis.

Paddle 4 Hope will be held Sunday, Sept. 13, at Riverside Park, 26 Greenway Dr. in Brooklyn. Registration will open at 8:30 a.m., with participants launching at 10 a.m.

There is no registration fee, although participants are encouraged to make a tax-deductible donation to Neighbors Against Cancer, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

The event is open only

to nonmotorized watercraft, and a personal flotation device, or life jacket, is required for all participants. Organizers are asking paddlers to arrive early enough to unload their watercraft, register and be ready for the 10 a.m. launch.

Participants can determine how far and how long they would like to paddle. Options range from an approximately eight-mile round trip to shorter excursions upstream, allowing paddlers of varying experience levels to participate.

Proceeds will support Neighbors Against Cancer's work assisting individuals and families dealing with the financial impact of a cancer diagnosis. The organization has provided

assistance with expenses including mortgages, rent, car payments, food and gasoline.

"Paddle 4 Hope is your opportunity to help us help our neighbors," organizers said in announcing the event.

Neighbors Against Cancer focuses on providing direct financial assistance to people in the community during a time when medical challenges can also create significant household expenses and financial strain.

The organization sums up its mission with the phrase, "We have a NAC for helping people."

For more information about Paddle 4 Hope, contact Bev at 860-974-1202.

Poets at Large presents Knowles and Aeroelastic Flutter

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

Knowles is a Hartford Poet Laureate Emeritus, an English Professor at CT State Community College and author of "BlackRoseCity" (Author

House 2011). He is the recipient of The Nutmeg Poetry Award, a Connecticut of the Arts Fellow in Artistic Excellence in Poetry/Creative Non-Fiction, and a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee. He will be showcasing work from his newest book, "Sinking in Moonlight Alone."

Aeroelastic Flutter is a spoken word and sound collaboration, combining the often-absurdist poetry of Jim Whitten with the guitar work and sound exploration of Nicholas Pecsok. Their project experiments with lo-fi audio and borderline

performance art, challenging audiences to reevaluate how poetry can be performed and defined.

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

Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum, there's new art coming to Putnam!

PUTNAM — The beauty of Main Street is being revitalized with new metal sculptures starting with a feature of Jack and the Beanstalk. Jack and the Beanstalk is the first in a series of three metal sculptures hand crafted by Master Metalsmith Michael Saari. Saari, a Woodstock resident, is a skilled craftsman with more than 40 years of experience. Mr. Saari boasts an impressive resume with works featured in New York City, Mount Vernon Virginia and Marianapolis Preparatory School, among many other locations.

This sculpture project came to fruition from the efforts of the Putnam

Business Association looking to enhance the appearance along the sidewalks of Main Street. In previous years, trees that had dotted the sidewalks were removed due to overgrown roots and four locations were determined to need new features. The first installation was in 2025; an Ivory Silk lilac tree in front of 130 Main Street. This tree was provided by the Town Economic Development Department, Mary Ann Chinatti.

The next sculpture will honor Putnam's historic role in the textile industry, and the third sculpture will be a shopper on Main Street. Plans and construction for those installations are for

late 2026 and Spring 2027.

This project is supported by the generous donations from Putnam Business Association, Putnam Area Foundation and Putnam Arts Council. Materials generously donated by Rawson Materials.

The Main Street Sculpture Committee includes Sheila Frost, Dick Loomis, Mayor Barney Seney, Tom Borner, Mary Ann Chinatti, Beth Johnston, Elaine Turner, Michael Saari.

The Committee wishes to thank all the generous sponsors, the Town of Putnam Highway Department, Mayor Barney Seney, and PBA President Kate Cerrone.

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.

Paws Cat Shelter holding can and bottle drive

PUTNAM — Paws Cat Shelter is holding a Can and Bottle Drive on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 11pm - 2pm at the shelter located at 74 School St. in Putnam. Please separate two-liter bottles. Pet food and donations are always welcome and greatly appreciated.

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

WA Basketball camps draw more than 100 young hoopers this summer



WOODSTOCK — The Woodstock Academy Prep boys' basketball program had a successful summer as its two Drills and Skills Basketball Camps attracted more than 100 young players from the local area.

The program, directed by Woodstock Academy Prep Head Coach Thomas Espinosa, hosted its second camp of the summer this past week with a three-day clinic on the school's South Campus. Approximately 50 campers participated in the

latest session after nearly 60 attended the first clinic in July, bringing the summer total to more than 100 boys and girls ages six to 16.

"This week's camp was so much fun," Espinosa said. "The kids really got after it and competed, while also showing great sportsmanship and having fun at the same time. These camps are always a highlight of my summer. I really enjoy meeting and getting to know all the young hoopers in our area."

Campers were divided into two age groups. The younger division competed in the Big East, while the older players participated in the Overtime Elite (OTE) division.

The Overtime Elite championship was won by Jelly Fam, coached by Mike Schmidt. In the Big East division, Coach Martyn Polinchovic's Villanova Wildcats captured the championship.

Several campers earned individual honors through-

out the week.

In the Overtime Elite division, Bryce Espinosa won the Free Throw, Elbow Shooting and Hot Shot competitions, while James Lin claimed the One-on-One Championship.

In the Big East division, Quinn Hammond captured the Elbow Shooting and Hot Shot titles, while Mason Andrzejewski won both the Free Throw and One-on-One championships.

The camp also recognized players for their effort, attitude and overall performance with three major awards presented by each division's commissioner.

Hustle Award  
Overtime Elite: Bishop Arnold  
Big East: Wes Wojcik

Coaches Award  
Overtime Elite: Johnny Marcuccio  
Big East: Mason Andrzejewski

Most Valuable Camper (MVP)  
Overtime Elite: Bryce Espinosa  
Big East: Wesley Hammond

With another successful summer in the books, the Woodstock Academy Drills and Skills Basketball Camps continue to provide local youth with an opportunity to develop their basketball fundamentals, compete in a fun environment and build lasting friendships on the court.

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OBITUARIES

James E. “Jim” Lamoureux, 91

James E. “Jim” Lamoureux of Dayville, CT, passed away peacefully on August 31, 2026, at the age of 91. Born and raised in West Greenwich, RI, he was the younger son of the late Emile and Cora (Harrington) Lamoureux.

Jim graduated from Coventry High School in 1952, where he played football and baseball, was inducted into the Rhode Island Honor Society, and voted “Best Personality.” He attended the University of Rhode Island, where he earned his degree in education after serving in the U.S. Army as an Artillery Instructor. He continued his education at the University of Connecticut, earning a Masters degree and 6th Year advanced graduate certification.

In 1958, Jim married Ella May Rathbun and began what would become a 34-year career in education. He taught science and coached at Plainfield High School before becoming Head of the Science Department at Parish Hill High School and later at Killingly High School, where he completed his career. Teaching was more than a career for Jim—it was a calling. He was a knowledgeable, demanding, and compassionate educator who believed strongly in the value of education. He cared deeply about his students, encouraged their efforts, and took great pride in hearing of their accomplishments long after they had left his classroom. His students were never forgotten.

Above all, Jim was devoted to his family. He worked hard to provide a comfortable life for his wife and children and took immense pride in their accomplishments. In retirement, he embraced his favorite role of “Grampy,” giving his grandchildren and great-grandson his time, attention, stories, and unconditional love. The memories he created with them will be his lasting legacy. He was also a loyal Indianapolis Colts fan, Boston Bruins supporter, and lifelong Red Sox fan.

Jim is survived by his wife, Ella May; his children, Suzanne Lamoureux of Methuen, MA, James Lamoureux, Jr. of Dayville, CT, and John Lamoureux and his wife Angela of Plainfield, CT; grandchildren Dr. Kathryn Oskar (Luis Mejia), Carly Oskar (Lexus Bacon), Andrew Lamoureux (Tori Cote), and Olivia Lamoureux (Elijah Brady); and great-grandson Ryder Lamoureux. He also leaves many nieces, a nephew, and their families. He was predeceased by his brother, Dr. Charles H. Lamoureux.

At Jim’s request, there will be no funeral services. The family extends its sincere gratitude to the healthcare workers who provided Jim with kindness and compassionate care. [tillinghastfh.com](http://tillinghastfh.com)



John W. Nutter

John W. Nutter of Putnam, CT passed quietly at home surrounded by his family on August 13th, 2026. He was the beloved husband of Kathleen (Szkutak) Nutter. John was born July 6th, 1956, in Ware, MA. He was the son of Raymond A. Nutter and Edna R. (Stevens) Nutter. Mr. Nutter resided in West Warren, MA from 1956 to 1968, at which time he moved to Putnam, CT, where he resided for the rest of his life. He and his wife enjoyed 46 years of marriage.

Mr. Nutter had spent a 42-year career in banking. He was first employed by Putnam Savings and Loan Association, Inc., later known as Cargill Bank of CT, in Putnam from 1974 to 1988. He then moved to the Citizens National Bank in Putnam, where he worked for 15 years. He finished his career at Hometown Bank in Oxford, MA, where after 13 years he retired from his roles as Vice President, Loan Officer, and Security Officer.

Mr. Nutter was a director of the Putnam Area Chamber of Commerce, serving as Treasurer from 1978 to 1980. He later served as President from 1980 to 1982.

Mr. Nutter served as a Director and Treasurer of the Putnam Pomfret Ambulance Service, Inc., later known as the Putnam E.M.S. Ambulance Service, Inc. He served as Treasurer for 39 years, retiring in 2022.

Besides his wife, he leaves a son, Raymond Nutter, of Putnam, CT; a daughter and son-in-law, Linda and Steven Snay of Leominster, MA; and grandchildren Aidan Snay and Isabelle Snay of Leominster, MA.

Funeral arrangements are private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Putnam E.M.S. Ambulance Service P.O. Box 365 in Putnam, CT 06260, or Day Kimball Health at Home 415 Riverside Dr. Suite 3, North Grosvenordale, CT 06255

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



INITIATIVE

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Town Hall), the Clifford B. Green Building, and the town garage, employees who have been here for a number of years, fairly new employees, and what I really want is just a formalized process where as a group the employees can bring things forward to the first selectmen or to a select board for things for us to consider.”

Bellavance said this committee will work with local official Susan Wasstrom, and he, as First Selectman, will not be involved directly to ensure that all input is nonbiased. The goal is

to gather honest feedback from the employees to see how Brooklyn can create a better, more consistent, and welcoming workplace.

He added that the idea didn’t come from any specific issue but rather was inspired by the search for a town administrator who would be a new boss for these employees. Town officials need to know the values and concerns of their workers to choose the right candidate and ensure that the candidate is not inundated upon their arrival.

Bellavance also stressed that this group is not the result of any complaints against the town.

“It’s not a grievance thing, it is not a union thing;

this is literally just representation of employees from the different departments and different buildings so that we don’t forget about their voices as we make changes because they’re at the front line of this every day,” he said.

The first step of the process will focus on the shared values among the employees before moving into policy and procedures or exploring if any changes can or should be made in that department. Bellavance called it a “sounding board” for the board to hear from employees with the goal of creating the best work environment possible for the future.

SUPPER

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using the QR code below. Seating is limited and tickets are selling fast, so please order tickets as soon as

possible. For more information about buying tickets, details about the program, and updates about the Reenactment Visit the Pomfret 250 Commission website [pomfret250commission@gmail.com](http://pomfret250commission@gmail.com) OR

contact Donna Dufresne, chair of the Pomfret 250 Commission at [windsong@snet.net](mailto:windsong@snet.net) or [pomfret250commission@gmail.com](mailto:pomfret250commission@gmail.com).

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

Quiet Corner Garden Club to dedicate Founders Garden

WOODSTOCK — The Quiet Corner Garden Club will dedicate the new Founders Garden at the Center for Woodstock History, 523 Route 169, Woodstock, during a ceremony on Sept. 14 at 6 p.m. The public is invited to attend both the ceremony and a program about Bee Keeping by Master Beekeeper Scott Herbert in Palmer Hall immediately following.

The Founders Garden, a project funded by a Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut Bee Resilient Garden Grant, is designed as a memorial to the founders of the Quiet Corner Garden Club, formerly the Woodstock Area Garden Club.

Planned to complement the historic Palmer Auditorium building, the Founders Garden includes Doug Tallamy’s Keystone plants, a butterfly house, and pollinator watering station.

Members of the Quiet Corner Garden Club created and have been maintaining the gardens at the Center for Woodstock History since 1978.

For more information about the Quiet Corner Garden Club, find us on Facebook or our Web site at [quietcornergardenclub.com](http://quietcornergardenclub.com).

Killingly library invites children to read to a therapy dog

KILLINGLY — Young readers will have a furry audience waiting for them later this month when the Killingly Public Library hosts a special “Read to a Therapy Dog” program.

The program will be held Friday, Sept. 25, from 3 to 4 p.m., coinciding with an early release day for Killingly students. It is open to children ages 6 to 12.

During the afternoon, participating children will have an opportunity to spend individual time reading to a visiting therapy dog from Cold Noses, Warm Hearts.

The program offers young readers a relaxed and friendly setting where they can practice reading aloud while spending time with a trained therapy dog. Rather than reading in front of a classroom or group, children can settle in with their canine listener and enjoy a book at their own pace.

Library officials describe the program as an opportunity for “budding bookworms” to combine reading with quality time alongside a friendly, tail-wagging visitor.

Registration is required and can be completed through the Killingly Public Library website at [killinglypl.org](http://killinglypl.org) or by calling the library at 860-779-5383.

The Killingly Public Library is located at 25 Westcott Rd. Additional information about library programs and services is available through the library’s Web site or by calling 860-779-5383.

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LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE  
TOWN OF POMFRET  
INLAND WETLANDS AND  
WATERCOURSES COMMISSION

At the August 5, 2026, meeting of the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission, the following application(s) was acted upon:

a. **Show Cause Hearing for Mr. & Mrs. Lane, 161 Putnam Road** Obstruction of a watercourse on property located at 161 Putnam Rd. resulting in damage to wetlands and upland areas **Was upheld with modifications to the original.**  
Town of Pomfret  
Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

Dated this 26<sup>th</sup> day of August 2026  
Sarah Healey, Clerk  
September 11, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
ESTATE OF  
Lona Mae Wood (26-00309)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated August 21, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk  
The fiduciary is:

Myron J Wood  
c/o NICOLE D VIDAL, VIDAL LAW,  
LLC, P.O. BOX 438,  
LEDY ARD, CT 06339  
September 11, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE  
TOWN OF POMFRET  
PLANNING AND ZONING  
COMMISSION

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

1. **26-6SP, 61 Wade Rd, Alex Jezeriski** requesting a special permit to construct a 72’x48’ storage build-

ing with 32’x20’ open sided lean-to off back of building. Frost wall and slab foundation. Stick frame construction.

A copy of this application is on file in the office of the Planning & Zoning Commission, 5 Haven Road, Pomfret Center, Connecticut. The file is available for review during normal business hours.

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

# Bysiewicz visits Westview Child Care Center



DAYVILLE — The students and staff of Westview Child Care Center recently hosted an illustrative campus tour for Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Office of Early Childhood Commissioner Elena Trueworthy, and members of the Connecticut OEC leadership team. The presentation highlighted the facilities, fun, and friendships to be found at the Dayville destination.

Katy Holzer, Director of Westview Child Care Center, led the distinguished guests to explore individual classrooms, visit the large indoor Gross Motor space, and sing along with a Prekindergarten class. The visit concluded outside under brilliant sunshine. Guests were happy to close their time learning the nuances of brightly-colored bubbles, cheering for determined riders along the tricycle path, and encouraging playful creativity on the stage set before the base of “Imagination Castle.” The young students approached the moment with joyful innocence—they were purely delighted to encounter new friends, exhibit playground features, and share a few extra smiles on a sunny afternoon.

Westview Executive Vice President David T. Panteleakos appreciated this recent visit by Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz as a mark of continued connection spanning many years and successes, and valued the opportunity to talk with the Office of early Childhood leadership about present and prospective goals.

“We are delighted to share this moment with Lt. Gov. Bysiewicz, Commissioner Trueworthy, and all our guests on the Westview campus. We are happy to celebrate the growth of the Westview organization as well as all of the achievements here in Northeastern Connecticut!” Panteleakos said.

Operating proudly as an employer-based child care center, Westview Child Care Center is capable of care provisions for children as young as 6 months old, preschool education for each stage before Kindergarten, and after-school care for students up to 15 years old. The Dayville child care facility offers services prominently—but not exclusively—to all staff members of Westview Health Care Center and Country Living

at Westview Commons. The Westview family of facilities felt honored to showcase the impact that high-quality early childhood education has on children, families, and the workforce.

Westview Child Care Center Director Katy Holzer expressed gratitude for this opportunity to further inform the discussions that Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz holds on important early childhood matters.

“Recognition like this means the world to our team and reaffirms our commitment to providing exceptional care every day,” Director Holzer remarked. “Thank you to Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz, Commissioner Trueworthy, and the OEC leadership team for spending the morning with us. To all of our incredible early educators, families, and children—thank you for making Westview a place we’re so proud to share with our state leaders!”

Westview Child Care Center is part of the Westview family of services, alongside Westview Health Care Center and Country Living at Westview Commons.



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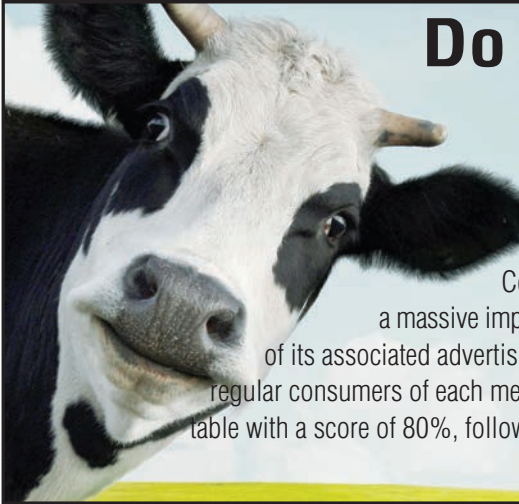
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