



KILLINGLY VILLAGER

©2026, Issue #32

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Friday, August 7, 2026

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Run for Ryan hosts Eighth Annual race at Owen Bell



Winners Seth Varin and Katie Stevens.

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

DAYVILLE — The annual Run for Ryan event returned for its eighth year on July 18 honoring its namesake Ryan French, a Thompson naive who passed away in 2017 while attending Killingly High School.

The run presserves his life and legacy in many ways. Not only is it a cross-country race on the track at Owen Bell Park he once ran as a member and eventual captain of Killingly's cross-country team, but it also raises money for a scholarship program through a foundation founded by Ryan's parents,

Joselyn and Jeffrey French, to support Killingly High School Regional Agricultural Education students, a program Ryan himself was enrolled in while at KHS.

The 2026 race was one of the biggest years to date according to Ryan's parents, and it also resulted in major milestones for the winners including a course record. An estimated 232 people signed up for the run and walk portions of the event, 148 participating in the run alone. While the final financial take from the race was not available for this story, the couple estimated the foundation has provided \$34,100 in scholarships to date benefitting 59 seniors from Killingly High Schools Agricultural Education program.

Ryan's mother, Joselyn French, said the annual support they receive for the cause has made Run for Ryan an uplifting experience for all involved.

"It's actually the greatest gift we could really receive is keeping his memory alive and having people continue to talk about him and remember him," Joselyn French said. "We're still finding out things about him that we didn't even know that he did behind the scenes at the school, and it always warms our hearts when we hear that. We feel so fortunate to be part of this corner of Connecticut. The fact that people choose to come to our event, to support us, to be part of this and remember him, it's all very special."

Ryan's father Jeffrey spoke about how he thinks his son would feel seeing how his mem-

ory has helped create such a great cause for everyone to get behind.

"I think he would be pleased that we're doing this and that the event is helping to turn tragedy into something positive by helping out Ag-Ed seniors," he said. "We found out after he passed away some things about Ryan like that he helped kids who were being bullied. He was the kind of kid where if there was a younger classmate who was sitting alone at lunch, he would come over and invite them to join him and his friends. Because he was a giving kid, he would be pleased that we're doing something positive to help other students."

The winners of the cross-country run were Seth Varin as the first male and overall winner, and Katie Stevens as the first female across the line. The victories were milestones for both in this event. Varin has placed second or third three times prior but finally broke through for the overall win with a time of 16 minutes and 50.96 seconds. Stevens, who was friends with Ryan in school, set a new record for a female besting the previous record which was held by another of Ryan's friends, Angie Rafter, until this year. Stevens crossed the line with a time of 18 minutes and 36.99 seconds just barely beating the previous record of 18 minutes and 37 seconds by the smallest margin.

The family has already announced that Run for Ryan will return in 2027 with the ninth iteration set to take place on July 17 next year.

Livestrong's 343-mile First Responder Ride for Resilience to pass through area

THOMPSON — Ahead of the 25th anniversary of Sept. 11, Livestrong, a nonprofit dedicated to improving the daily lives of cancer survivors, is hosting a landmark First Responder Ride for Resilience, a five-day, 343-mile cycling journey from Boston to the 9/11 Memorial in New York City honoring the 343 firefighters lost on September 11, 2001. Riders will move through northeastern Connecticut on Monday, Sept. 7. Local residents are invited to cheer on riders, volunteer at a water stop, or donate to show their support.

According to research from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, firefighters are nine percent more likely to be diagnosed with cancer and 14 percent more likely to die from it than the general public. The ride brings together first responders, cancer survivors, and community members to raise funds benefiting Friends of Firefighters, the Boston Fire Cancer Foundation, and Livestrong, expanding access to cancer survivorship and mental health programs for first responders and their families.

"This ride wouldn't be possible

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Keeping Killingly's history alive



Courtesy

Madeleine Hutchins presents on the experiences of Indigenous tribes during the Revolutionary War at a recent meeting of the Killingly Historical Society.

KILLINGLY — History is more than a record of the past—it is the story of the people, places, events, and ideas that have shaped who we are today. Our families, neighborhoods, communities, and natural environment all contribute to our shared heritage. Preserving those stories for future generations is the mission of the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society.

Founded in 1972, the Society is dedicated to promoting knowledge, interest, and research in the history of Killingly and Windham County. Whether you are researching your family tree, a historic home or business, the town's role in the Revolutionary War, or simply want to learn more about our community, our volunteers are eager to help or connect you with valu-

able resources.

The Society continues to bring local history to life through educational programs and public presentations. Most recently, the Society hosted a program at the Killingly Public Library featuring "Up and Down the River," a documentary produced by the Mohegan Tribe. The presentation was led by Mohegan educator and storyteller Ms. Hutchins, who shared the history of the Mohegan people leading up to the American Revolution.

The documentary explored how the Thames River connected Indigenous communities and early settlers, highlighting their shared experiences during the Revolutionary War 250 years ago. The video and talk by storyteller Madeleine Hutchins presented the differing viewpoints among tribal members regarding participation in the conflict and examined how life changed for the Mohegan people after the war. The primary river associated with the Mohegan Tribe in Connecticut is the Thames River. Historically known in Mohegan as Massapequotuck (Great Water).

The Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society also recently held its Annual Meeting at the Killingly Public Library. As a registered nonprofit organization, the Society is operated entirely by dedicated volunteers who generously donate their time to preserve and share the history of our community.

During the meeting, officers and board members were elected to three-year terms. The officers are President Bernard Mitchell, Vice President Frank Aleman, Secretary Lynn LaBerge, and Treasurer Teresa Barton. Newly elected board members are Margaret Weaver, Sue Gosselin, and

Danielson tackles Hawkins Street fire

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

DANIELSON — A fire on Hawkins Street in Danielson brought multiple departments to town with fears of entrapment inside the building creating a dire situation for first responders.

According to a report published on social media by the Danielson Fire Department, a first-alarm fire was struck at 6:44 a.m. the morning of July 27 with reports of people trapped inside the burning building at 32 Hawkins St. in the Danielson Borough of Killingly.

Killingly-Brooklyn Ambulance was the first on scene only minutes later, arriving at a fully engulfed building. Fire crews soon arrived on scene sparking a second alarm. It was confirmed that all occupants had safely escaped the building, with one civilian sustaining burns and smoke inhalation injuries and transported to a hospital. Occupants of neighboring buildings were also evacuated due to the home's proximity to nearby structures.

While the human occupants survived, the report from the Danielson Fire Department confirmed that



numerous cats perished in the fire, although one was rescued.

"A KB medic, assisted by firefighters on scene, successfully revived the cat before a good samaritan transported it to a local veterinary hospital for further care. Tragically, despite the efforts of firefighters, approximately 30 cats perished in the fire," the Danielson Fire Department report stated.

One firefighter also sustained injuries after being struck by falling debris. They were treated on scene but then transported to a hospital for further evaluation.

The fire came in the midst of a difficult time for the Danielson Fire Department. The department has endured several changes since more than half of its membership resigned in May during a

Turn To FIRE page A10

Turn To HISTORY page A10

Claws & Applause” launches call for performers and sponsors

PUTNAM — The stage is set, the music is ready and now Claws & Applause: A Lip Sync Battle for Paws is officially calling on local performers, business and community members to join the show!

Taking place Friday, Aug. 28 at Montana Nights Axe Throwing in Putnam, this fundraising event will bring the community together for an unforgettable night of over-the-top lip sync performances, outrageous costumes, audience voting and friendly competition.

And right now, organizers are looking for performers and sponsors ready to step into the spotlight!

Individuals, groups, businesses, organizations and friends are invited to form a team, choose a song and put together a show-stopping lip sync performance. Whether performers go for hilarious, dramatic, glamorous or completely over-the-top, no actual singing talent is required, just creativity, enthusiasm and willingness to have fun for a great cause! No professional experience necessary. If you can commit to the bit, work a crowd and have fun, there is a place for you on the Claws & Applause stage!

“We want people to come ready to laugh, cheer, compete and have an incredible

night of fun, as we look to raise money to help shift our focus from constant crisis management to prevention and long-term care for the cats in and beyond our shelter” says event organizer Jennifer Lowell. With more than 400 cats currently in care, including those placed in foster homes, Paws Cat Shelter continues to face tremendous demand for rescue, rehabilitation and rehoming services. The event aims to raise critical funding for a spay and neuter ini-

tiative to help address the cycle that contributes to overcrowded shelters in the first place.

Local businesses and community partners are also invited to become part of the event through a variety of sponsorship opportunities. Sponsorships range from \$100 – \$2,000 and offer opportunities for recognition through event signage, promotional

materials, VIP experiences, stage recognition and more. Sponsors can make a meaningful community impact while helping Paws Cat Shelter work toward a long-term solution.

One Night. One Stage. All for the cats! Get involved today by forming a team, becoming a sponsor, purchasing tickets, voting for your favorite performers or making a donation.

Paws Cat Shelter is dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming cats in need while promoting compassionate animal welfare throughout the community. Through the support of volunteers, donors and local advocates, the organization continues to provide life-saving care and adoption opportunities for homeless cats.

Why are more trees failing in Northeastern Connecticut?

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

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

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

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

Many homeowners may also

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

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

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

Our region is known for its

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

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

Area residents named to Goodwin University Dean’s List

EAST HARTFORD — Kelsie Boulet-Briere of Putnam, Stephanie Michaud of Killingly, and Willow Charles of Dayville each earned a spot on Goodwin University’s Dean’s List for the spring 2026 semester.

The Dean’s List is reserved for those who demonstrate exemplary academic performance. Dean’s List inclusion requires a student to earn a minimum 3.5 GPA, the equivalent of an A- average, during a given academic session. The student must also be enrolled in a minimum of six academic credits to qualify.

Goodwin University congratulates Kelsie on making the Dean’s List and demonstrating such a high standard of excellence in the classroom and beyond!

Goodwin University in East Hartford, Connecticut, is an innovative learning community that empowers hard-working students to become sought-after employees. We tailor our programs to address the needs of employers, and we shape them to fit the lives of students. Classes are conveniently offered year-round - days, evenings, weekends, and online. Degrees may be flexibly layered across certificate, associate, bachelor’s, and master’s programs in a variety of in-demand fields. Better still, we surround our students with the personal support and the professional guidance they need - not just to earn degrees, but to change lives for themselves, their families, and their communities. For more information, please visit www.goodwin.edu.

Quiet Corner Al-Anon group meets Wednesdays

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

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

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PUBLISHED BY STONEBRIDGE PRESS

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The Killingly Villager (USPS 025-004) is published weekly by Stonebridge Press, 10A Beeches Ln, Woodstock Ct 06281. Periodical postage paid at Putnam, CT and additional mailing office(s). POSTMASTER: send address changes to Villager Newspapers c/o Stonebridge Press, P.O. Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550

Day Kimball Health recognizes Ana Savvidis as Employee of the Month



Ana Savvidis

PUTNAM — Day Kimball Health (DKH) has named Ana Savvidis, human resources generalist, as its June 2026 Employee of the Month in recognition of her dedication to supporting employees and leaders across the organization.

Savvidis joined DKH in March 2023 and has become an integral member of the Human Resources team. In her role, she supports a variety of human resources functions, including employee relations, recruitment, performance management, policy compliance, and training and development.

“Ana embodies the commitment, professionalism, and dedication that help make Day Kimball Health a great place to work,” said Kyle Kramer, CEO of Day Kimball Health. “Her ability to support employees,

partner with leadership and foster a positive workplace culture has made a meaningful impact across our organization. We are grateful for her contributions and pleased to recognize her as our June Employee of the Month.”

“Ana’s recognition as Employee of the Month is a reflection of the exceptional dedication, professionalism, and leadership she has consistently demonstrated since joining our Human Resources team more than three years ago,” said Tenaya Desaulnier, senior vice president of human resources at Day Kimball Health. “She has made a tremendous impact by providing invaluable support to management, strengthening accountability, and continuously stepping up to take on responsibilities beyond her role. Ana has grown into a trusted and respected team

member whose commitment, integrity and pursuit of excellence are evident in everything she does.”

“I feel fortunate to work with such a dedicated team, and I’m grateful to be recognized for the work I do each day,” Savvidis said. “This recognition motivates me to continue supporting our employees and the organization to the best of my ability”.

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, Savvidis grew up in Brooklyn, Connecticut where she resides today. She earned a Bachelor of Science in health care administration from Rhode Island College and a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in human resource management from Southern New Hampshire University.

About Day Kimball Health
Day Kimball Health is a nonprofit community healthcare system composed of Day Kimball Hospital, Day Kimball Medical Group, Day Kimball Health at Home, and healthcare centers in Danielson, Dayville, Plainfield, and Putnam. Its service area includes Northeast Connecticut as well as nearby Massachusetts and Rhode Island communities. Day Kimball Health’s comprehensive network employs more than 1,000 staff, including nearly 300 associated, highly skilled

physicians, surgeons, and specialists. Its Web site is daykimball.org.

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BY CLAUDETTE STOCKWELL
DIRECTOR
KILLINGLY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Over this past year, I’ve written articles celebrating how vital libraries are to their communities — the resources we offer, the programs we create, and the

countless ways we support learning, connection, and curiosity. Today, though, I’d like to return to the beginning, to the foundation on which every library was built: the books.

Over the last decade, I’ve heard people joke that libraries are “dead,” that

everyone is online now, and that no one reads anymore. It’s hard not to take those comments personally when you work in a place devoted to reading and discovery. But the truth is simple: those statements aren’t based on fact.

People are still reading — young, old, and everyone in between.

I could show you our book drop after a long weekend, overflowing with returns. I could show you the carts lined up behind the desk, filled with books waiting to be reshelved. But you don’t need me to prove it. If you pause for a moment and look around your own daily life, you’ll see that books are everywhere.

Readers are everywhere. They’re in break rooms at work, in hospital waiting areas, in doctor’s offices. They’re standing in line at the grocery store with a paperback tucked under an arm. They’re at the beach, on vacation, on porches and park benches. And just recently, I saw one sitting quietly on the stone wall at St. Mary’s Cemetery — a beautiful summer day, a book in hand, head slightly bent, completely absorbed.

Libraries began with books, and books remain at the heart of who we are. They’re still being read. They’re still being loved. And they’re still connecting us in ways that matter.

Connect with us at 25 Westcott Rd., Killingly,

online at killingly-pl.org, or call us at 860-779-5383.

Pomfret Public Library hosts “Life in Balance” at weekly Memory Café

POMFRET — The Pomfret Public Library invites community members to a special edition of its weekly Memory Café featuring Life in Balance on Wednesday, Aug. 19 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Presented by Laurie String and Matthew Chuck of Rude Dog Boxing, this engaging program will focus on practical ways to maintain mobility, balance, and strength while aging. Participants will learn simple techniques and exercises that can help improve stability, support everyday movement, and promote healthy, active living.

Designed for older adults, caregivers, and anyone interested in healthy aging, “Life in Balance” offers an encouraging and welcoming environment where attendees can discover strategies for staying active and reducing the risk of falls. No prior fitness experience is required.

The program will be held at the Pomfret Public Library, 449 Pomfret St., Pomfret, as part of the library’s weekly Memory Café. Memory Cafés provide a friendly, supportive gathering place for individuals living with memory loss, cognitive changes, and their care partners.

Admission is free, and all are welcome.

For more information about Life in Balance, the Memory Café, or other upcoming library programs, contact the Pomfret Public Library at 860-928-3475 or visit www.pomfretlibrary.org.

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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

Turning memory into momentum

Every community hopes to leave something meaningful to the next generation. Sometimes that legacy comes through new buildings or public projects. Sometimes it comes through a scholarship fund. And sometimes it begins with a single family deciding that even in the face of unimaginable loss, they will choose purpose over despair.

That is what the Run for Ryan has become. Eight years after the inaugural event, what started as a tribute to Thompson’s Ryan French has grown into one of the Quiet Corner’s most inspiring traditions. Hundreds of participants now gather each July at Owen Bell Park, not only to run or walk, but to celebrate a life that continues to make a difference.

The numbers tell an impressive story. More than 230 people registered this year. Nearly \$35,000 in scholarships has been awarded to 59 graduates of Killingly High School’s Agricultural Education program. A course record fell. Familiar faces returned, and new participants joined for the first time.

But those statistics are only part of the story.

The true measure of the event lies in the conversations that happen along the course and afterward. Friends share memories. Former classmates reconnect. Students who never had the opportunity to know Ryan learn about the kind of young man he was. His parents continue to discover stories of quiet acts of kindness that never sought recognition. Those accounts of inviting lonely classmates to lunch or standing beside students who were being bullied reveal a legacy far greater than athletic accomplishments alone.

In an era when headlines often focus on division, the Run for Ryan reminds us that kindness has staying power. It creates ripples that extend far beyond the moment in which they occur.

There is also something fitting about the event taking place on the same course where Ryan once competed as a member and captain of the Killingly High School cross-country team. Running has always been a sport built on perseverance. Every mile requires determination. Every finish line represents countless unseen hours of preparation. The annual race reflects those same qualities, with a community steadily building something meaningful year after year.

Equally important is where the proceeds go. Supporting students in Killingly’s Agricultural Education program honors Ryan’s own interests while investing in young people preparing for careers in agriculture, environmental science, mechanics, animal care, and other skilled professions. The scholarships recognize not only academic achievement but also the values of hard work, service, and commitment that Ryan’s family believes he embodied.

The event’s competitive side deserves celebration as well. Congratulations are certainly due to Seth Varin for earning his first overall victory after several near misses and to Katie Stevens, whose new women’s course record came by the narrowest possible margin. Their accomplishments add another chapter to the event’s history, but even they unfolded within a larger purpose. On this day, personal victories become part of a shared community achievement.

Perhaps the greatest lesson from the Run for Ryan is that remembrance does not have to be passive. It can be active. It can inspire generosity, encourage healthy living, support education, and strengthen community bonds all at once.

Many towns search for traditions that bring people together. Dayville, Thompson, and the surrounding communities already have one. It is built on compassion, sustained by volunteers, supported by neighbors, and fueled by the determination of one family that chose to transform heartbreak into hope.

As plans are already underway for next year’s ninth Run for Ryan, the event continues to prove that while a life may end too soon, its influence does not have to. Some legacies are measured not by years lived, but by the good they continue to inspire long afterward. Ryan French’s legacy is clearly still running strong.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Danielson Legion grateful for support of golf tournament

To the Editor:
Danielson American Legion Post #21 thanks the following businesses and individuals for their support of our Golf Tournament held on July 20:
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Special thanks to Maura Brunell & her crew at CT National Golf Course, G-7 Caterers, Mike Barta, Mary Jane Burke, Joanne Crowley, Quin Crowley, Tom Gaylord, Bob Kelly, Greg Kozma, Dave Mulford, Georgette Rohrig, Mark Seiffert and anyone else we may have inadvertently missed. And a big thanks to all the golfers! Hope to see you all next year!

Due to the generosity of our Golfers, we were able to donate \$2500 to the Tunnels to Towers organization.

CHARLIE CROWLEY
DANIELSON AMERICAN LEGION POST 21

Make this make sense

the lack of transparency? Did you know that there is a 6.33 percent increase in the fiscal year 2027 budget for the libraries? The description on the fiscal year 2026-27 budget is “Libraries (4)”. Was it left this way to deceive constituents? It is not budgeting constraints that contributed to the complete defunding of the North Woodstock Library. If the three libraries being funded in fiscal year 2027 are “doing so much to help themselves,” why are they getting more money? Make this make sense!

The rationale for the complete defunding of the North Woodstock Library is ever changing. When someone points out the glaring contradictions Chandler has spewed as facts, the grounds for the decision simply change. This is not good policy.

The North Woodstock Library was commended by the State Librarian during her recent tour of the library. Our “social club” behavior is consistent with the evolution of the modernization of the libraries within our society, and we were doing it all on a very limited budget. Libraries have historically been social gathering places...

Sincerely,

JUDY GILLILAND
WOODSTOCK

Earth — close to the edge!

ity now lights billions of fossil fuel fires every single day. Each of these fires thickens up the carbon dioxide blanket in the atmosphere, making our planet hotter.

Prior to that first well, all oil was sequestered within the Earth’s geologic formations. But today, much of it is now part of the atmosphere. And with that, the 58-degree temperature of the Holocene has climbed to about 60 degrees. Spread across the entire Earth, this rapid warming is wreaking havoc on the natural planetary systems that support life and civilization. Scientists now argue these changes have pushed the Earth beyond of the Holocene and into a new geologic epoch: the Anthropocene. The precise moment of this change is debated, but many regard the first nuclear bomb test in 1945 as a compelling start date.

The Anthropocene—literally “the age of humans”—is marked by our growing influence over the atmosphere, oceans, biosphere, freshwater systems, and climate itself. Human activity now determines not only the composition of the atmosphere but also the abundance and distribution of countless other species. We have become a planetary force.

Among the most concerning examples of this influence is our effect on the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, or AMOC—a vast network of ocean currents often described as Earth’s circulatory system. Scientists warn that this critical current is weakening and may be approaching a tipping point. A significant slowdown, or even a collapse, would dramatically alter weather patterns across the planet.

This is big stuff - very big, and it tells us humanity has entered unfamiliar territory where we are now steering the planetary systems foundational to civilization, without fully understanding how to control them.

That realization can feel overwhelming. Some respond with optimism, believing technology will solve every problem. Others retreat into denial because the implications seem too daunting to confront, or worse, because of politics. But beneath those different reactions lies a growing sense that something fundamental has changed.

Deep down, many of us feel it.

Preserving a healthy livable planet for our kids and generations to follow should be humanity’s highest priority. Elon Musk’s pipe dream of colonizing Mars only distracts us from this. With all his brilliance, he fails to recognize the simple fact that this miraculous and beautiful place called Earth is and will remain our only home. If we fail to preserve it, it may end up looking like his dream home—Mars. But last I checked, nobody lives there.

KEN WOLSLEGEL
WOODSTOCK

A visit to Wheatland



KILLINGLY
AT
300
MARGARET
WEAVER

America
2 5 0
Killingly,
Saturday,
Aug. 8,
1 p.m.
Music of
the
Revolution
in New
England
with
Richard
Franklin
Donahue.
Killingly
Historical
Center.
196 Main

Street. Richard will perform a collection of “New Songs” & Hymns that were published during the American Revolution from the Stamp Act through the British Surrender at Yorktown. Free. All are welcome. Sponsored by the Killingly Historical Society.

Putnam Public Library.
200 School St. Baseball’s Own Civil War: 1848-1865. Wednesday, Aug. 12. 6-7:30 p.m. “An exploration of the early days of ‘base ball’ and the conflict between the 1848 ‘Knickerbocker’ (New York) game rules, and the 1858 ‘Town Ball’ (Massachusetts) style of play. Learn how the American Civil War helped to settle the debate as to which variant would become our national pastime. Co-sponsored by the Aspinock Historical Society.

Killingly Grange #112, 801 Hartford Turnpike, Agricultural Fair. Saturday, August 15 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. Entry Day Friday, Aug. 14, 4-6 p.m. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC! Download hand-book & forms from the Facebook page-www.facebook.com/KillinglyGrange/ or contact Terry Barton at 860-884-1813 or tmbartonkillinglygrange@gmail.com for additional information.

Recently, I traveled to Pennsylvania for my sister’s memorial service. While with my daughter in Lancaster, I decided to have a “busman’s holiday” and visited Wheatland, the home of our 15th President, James Buchanan, Jr. (1791-1868), the only president from Pennsylvania and the only bachelor. Buchanan served as president from 1857 -1861 and was in office at the beginning of the Civil War. “Historians often rank him poorly because his weak response to rising tensions over slavery failed to prevent the American Civil War.” “Presiding over a rapidly dividing Nation, Buchanan grasped inadequately the political realities of the time. Relying on constitutional doctrines to close the widening rift over slavery, he failed to understand that the North would not accept constitutional arguments which favored the South. Nor could he realize how sectionalism had realigned political parties: the Democrats split; the Whigs were destroyed, giving rise to the Republicans.” Prior to becoming president, Buchanan served in the house of Representatives five times, was a minister to Russia and later Great Britain and also Secretary of State.” “President James Buchanan was personally and morally opposed to slavery, but politically he acted as a ‘doughface’—a Northern politician who consistently appeased and protected Southern pro-slavery interests.” (history.com, national archives, https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/james-buchanan/).President Buchanan never married but became the guardian of an orphaned niece and nephew, thus living in a family situation. His niece Harriet Lane (Johnston) served as his hostess while he was president. “She is considered the ‘first First Lady,’ as she was the

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Get out and vote in Connecticut’s Primary

To the Editor:

People don’t think their vote counts for much in a Primary. The truth is that Primaries are where the real choice happens and how candidates are chosen on the ballot in November. If you want a say in who’s on your ballot this fall, now’s the time.

Here are the dates and rules you need to know.

The important Primary deadlines and voter registration details to cast a vote in Connecticut’s Primary election are as follows:

July 21 - First day absentee ballots are issued.

July 24 - Last day to register to vote by mail.

Aug. 3 - First day of early voting.

Aug. 9 - Last day of early voting.

Aug. 10 - Last day to request an absentee ballot and register to vote in person.

In Connecticut, only voters registered with a political party may vote in that party’s Primary, making it a closed Primary state:

Democratic Primary – Only registered Democrats can vote.

Republican Primary – Only registered Republicans can vote.

The deadline for voters to change parties was May 11.

Unaffiliated Voters – Voters who are not registered with any political party cannot participate in the Primaries unless they register with a party by the deadline, which is before noon on Monday, August 10, the last business day before the Primary on August 11.

A new voter who wants to register to vote in Connecticut’s Primaries must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of Connecticut, and at least 17 years old (turning 18 by Election Day). New voters must register in person before noon the business day before voting during Early Voting. New voters who want to vote on Primary Day must register to vote in person by Noon on Aug. 10.

Check your registration, figure out how you’re going to vote in the Primary — absentee, early, or on the 11th — and go do it. Make your voice heard. Vote.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

Ballots, bullets & anti-Blackness

To the Editor:

Growing up in the Quiet Corner, I was taught that my country’s founders were brave men seeking to escape the religious persecution and unchecked greed of the English crown. As I grew older, I came to understand that the U.S.’s promise of freedom, enshrined in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, only granted voting rights to property-owning white men. Even more disturbingly, the Constitution’s Three-Fifths Compromise, Slave Trade Clause, and later, Congress’ Fugitive Slave Act defined Black people as property, who, like all women at the time of the country’s inception, were legally denied the right to vote, and thus excluded from U.S. citizenship (The Counter-Revolution of 1776; Horne 2014).

It would not be until 1870, when Congress ratified the Fifteenth Amendment, that Black men—in theory—were given the right to vote, though poll taxes, literacy tests, grandfather clauses, and gun-backed voter intimidation prevented most from safely or legally casting their ballots (Jim Crow North: The Struggle for Equal Rights in Antebellum New England; Archer 2017). Even after the CT state legislature passed the Gradual Emancipation Act in 1784 (which mandated that all those born into slavery after March 1, 1784 be freed at the age of 25), it took our state another half century to totally prohibit chattel slavery (“No Taxation without Representation: Black Voting in Connecticut”; Harris 2016). In 1920, the nation further expanded the right to vote to white women by ratifying the 19th Amendment. Women of color, however, had to continue fighting for—and well past—Congress’ passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to be granted the same.

To this day, legacies of Jim Crow, racialized violence, and class inequity place barriers between everyday Americans and the voting booth, all whilst Republicans attempt to gerrymander away the power of Black and Brown votes (The Counter-Revolution of 1776; Horne 2014). Under the Trump administration, these multi-state efforts haven’t stalled. If anything, they’ve only gained steam, fueled by Republicans lawmakers’ proposed SAVE Act, a policy that would require voters to present documentary proof of U.S. citizenship, such as a passport, a birth certificate, or a naturalization certificate to register to vote, despite more than 21 million voting-age Americans lacking access to such documents (“21.3 Million American Citizens of Voting Age Don’t Have Ready Access to Citizenship Documents”; Brennan Center for Justice 2024).

If our elected officials believe so strongly that proof of identity and citizenship are essential to the integrity of American elections, why don’t they apply the same rigor and scrutiny to Americans’ ability to purchase firearms? Even when looking only at Connecticut, between 2019-2023, firearms were the third leading cause of death among

young people, and between 2014-2023, gun violence across the state increased by 24 percent («225 Gun Deaths in Connecticut»; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health 2023). While Connecticut’s rising rates of gun violence might lead you to believe that the federal government has consistently failed to restrict Americans’ access to firearms, in 1967, the National Rifle Association (NRA) worked with the state of California to pass the Mulford Act amidst one of the largest open carry crackdowns in U.S. history. The targets of these brutal, violent and cross-state crackdowns? The Black Panther Party (“When an irresistible prejudice meets immovable politics”; Higginbotham et al 2023).

At one time, I would have thought of the right to vote and the right to bear arms as two disparate issues, with “liberals” and “conservatives” sitting neatly on either side. Our national history, however, paints a far more nuanced picture, one of a country whose policies are steeped in the anti-Blackness of its founding fathers (and this state is not immune). Just as local, state and federal governments have punished Black people for arming themselves against repeated racial violence, the state of Connecticut has long denied its Black residents access to the right to vote, serving as the first ever state in the country to implement voter literacy tests (“Connecticut needs its own Voting Rights Act”; Zaccagnino 2023).

If state and federal lawmakers are willing to burden millions of voters (disproportionately young people, women, transgender folks, and people of color) in the name of “voter fraud,” a problem so rare that election officials struggle to document more than a handful of cases (“Prosecutors struggle to turn voter fraud claims into criminal charges”; Stein and Arnsdorf, 2026), shouldn’t they be half as willing to require background checks for firearm purchases, given that gun violence kills over forty thousand Americans a year (“What the data says about gun deaths in the U.S.”; Gramlich 2024)?

So, as you prepare to head to the voting booth this fall, it’s worth asking why so many of the very lawmakers who champion the SAVE Act as a «common-sense» integrity measure decry gun safety policies like background check expansions, red flag laws, or safe storage requirements as government overreach. It’s worth asking who stands to profit from increased documentation for voter registration. And it’s worth asking which of our friends, family, and neighbors will be first affected if we fail to stop the SAVE Act.

Don’t forget to vote on November 3rd!

ALYSSA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

Give him a chance?

To the Editor:

They keep saying to “give him a chance.” Let’s look at the public record-not rumors, social media posts, or partisan talking points. Just documented events.

The record:

- At least seven flights on Jeffrey Epstein’s plane.
- Invoked the Fifth Amendment more than 400 times during a single deposition involving his business practices.
- Convicted on 34 felony counts in the New York hush-money case, becoming the first former U.S. president to be criminally convicted. He also faced 91 criminal charges across four separate indictments.
- Accused of sexual misconduct or assault by at least 26 women.
- Six corporate bankruptcies involving businesses that bore his name.
- Five draft deferments during the Vietnam War era.
- Twice impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives, making him the first president in American history to be impeached twice.
- Two Trump Organization companies were convicted on 17 criminal tax fraud counts in 2022 and fined \$1.6 million.
- Trump University settled fraud claims for \$25 million, and the Trump Foundation was dissolved after he agreed to pay \$2 million for misusing charitable assets.
- Found liable for sexually abusing and defaming E. Jean Carroll. A jury awarded \$5 million in damages, followed by an additional \$83.3 million in a separate defamation case. The \$5 million judgment was later upheld on appeal.

- Found liable for business fraud in New York for inflating the value of his assets. Although the monetary penalty was later reduced on appeal, the fraud finding remained in place.

- Granted pardons or commutations to roughly 1,600 people convicted in connection with January 6, including leaders of the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys who had been convicted of seditious conspiracy. Some recipients have since been arrested or charged with additional crimes.

- The national debt exceeded \$39 trillion, increasing by roughly \$11 trillion since his first inauguration.

- Presided over multiple government shutdowns, including the longest shutdown in U.S. history during his first term. In 2026, the federal government shut down twice, with the second lasting from mid-February through the end of April.

- Tariffs are estimated to increase costs for American households. According to the Yale Budget Lab, the average annual impact is estimated at approximately \$1,700 to \$2,400 per household.

None of these events are secret. They are matters of public record.

When someone says, “Give him a chance,” it’s reasonable to ask another question: How much weight should voters give this record when deciding whether he deserves another chance?

Every voter will answer that question differently. Make sure your answer is based on the documented record, then vote accordingly.

BRUCE P. SHAY
POMFRET CENTER

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Contact Mikaela Today,
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**GIANT INDOOR
TAG SALE!**
Sunday, August 9
8AM-2PM
Congregation B'nai Shalom
125 Church St., Putnam, CT



**THE WOODSTOCK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



This month’s installation of
*Crazy for Quilts is the latest in our series of small
spotlight exhibitions of quilts by local quilters*

Also on view is our major exhibition
*Woodstock Through the Camera’s Eye
in Post-Civil War America*

Will are open on Sundays from 10 am. to 1 pm.

The Center for Woodstock History
Palmer Memorial Hall, 523 Route 169
*Research appointments and scheduling visits at other times
may be made at our web site*
www. centerforwoodstockhistory.com

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.

MERCURY RECOVERY PROGRAM

Mercury is an element that can be harmful to human health and the environment if not disposed of properly.

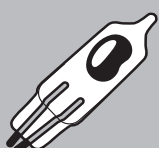
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WIN WASTE INNOVATIONS



Courtesy

Grandmaster Mike Bogdanski dropped in to the Putnam Rec summer camp to teach martial arts. The kids learned basic self defense techniques, some Asian history and philosophy as well as basic life skills like self-control and respect.

Pluck-A-Duck raffle event bigger than ever

PUTNAM — Quack Quack! The Putnam Business Association proudly announces the 2026 Pluck-A-Duck Raffle Event is taking place on Sunday, Aug. 9 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. and Monday, Aug. 10 at noon, because one day simply isn't enough for this unique fundraising event.

The PBA Pluck-A-Duck Raffle Event joins forces with the Town of Putnam's Main Street Car Cruise on Aug. 9, the largest Classic Car Show in Connecticut! Attendees will enjoy viewing more than 2,500 classic cars, live music & more, including the colossal Kids Corner in Rotary Park, where free family fun awaits! Kids of all ages will delight in Xen's Critters Petting Zoo, Bounce Houses, Balloons By Bella, Art by Simone Facepainting, Destination Events Co. Photo Booth, Arts & Crafts Tent, Popcorn Station, games, mascots, Balloon Delightz Stuff-A-Pet, vendors and exhibitors with fun activities and giveaways. The popular Wonderful Waddle treasure hunt returns this year, where young attendees will visit various activities and exhibitors to have their form stamped. Completed forms are turned into the Putnam Business Association's Kids Corner tent, where one lucky win-

ner will be randomly selected to receive a backpack filled with school supplies along with a BMX Kink Curb Bicycle from Cobble Classic, valued at \$450. The Wonderful Waddle forms will be available for download on the Putnam Business Association and Discover Putnam Facebook pages and day-of-event at the Wall Of Wishes display.

Is there a special wish that would make you feel "just ducky?" Post it on the Creamery Brook Village Wall Of Wishes, and a donation will be made to Make-A-Wish Connecticut, in support of creating life changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. The Wall Of Wishes was designed and created with the assistance of Putnam Science Academy's Director of Visual Arts, Sarah Stoll, and PSA art students.

Making a splash once again is the Celebrity Dunk Tank, where local celebs like Attorney Kate Cerrone of The Northeast Law Center; Influencer Billy Palazzo; Lindsey Stark of Leona's Bakery and ten additional area business owners and professionals will tempt event-goers to donate a minimum of \$5 for two chances to make our celebrities take the plunge. Or donate \$20 or more for a guaranteed dunk! The

three celebrities that successfully raise the most funds, will have a donation made in their name to their preferred charity, from a grateful Putnam Business Association. Online donations can also be made in support of the celebrities through Aug. 8 at <https://www.discoverputnam.com/pbarubberduckrace>.

The Aug. 9 event is the final opportunity to purchase the 2026 Pluck-A-Duck Raffle tickets at stands in Rotary Park, downtown Putnam on Main Street, and the roving photo-worthy Duck Mobile.

Are you a Jeep owner? Don't miss our Duck, Duck, Jeep Contest! Jeep owners are encouraged to turn heads by creating the most duck-tastic ride in town with this rubber duck-themed decorating contest, held at this year's Aug. 9 Main Street Car Cruise. JEEP owners can deck out their Jeep with ducks, yellow flair, and splashy style, and compete to win one of three categories, with trophies & gift cards awarded, sponsored by Runnings!

Thousands of rubber ducks will be released at our secret duck pond on Monday, Aug. 10 at noon, swimming happily and then plucked for over 130 fantastic prizes, including

the grand prize of a \$1,000 VISA Gift Card, sponsored by Breezeline and Byrnes Agency/HUB International Co. Viewers can cheer on their lucky ducks during the live broadcast on WINY Radio 1350 AM & 97.1 FM, and the Putnam Business Association and WINY Radio's Facebook pages, powered by Jewett City Savings Bank. The first 2 viewers responding to WINY Radio or the PBA's Facebook pages correctly identifying the total number of ducks floating in the pond will win a \$75 gift card to ANYA restaurant, courtesy of J.B. Concrete Products.

And just when you think it's over, the final 9 ducks waddling out of the pond will be selected for our popular "Last Lucky Duck" prizes, sponsored by D.B.C. Solutions, ERW LLC and 85 Main. Plus, one lucky business sponsor will be awarded the Corporate Duck raffle prize of a \$750 VISA Gift Card and their name engraved on the Corporate Duck Trophy.

The 2026 Pluck-A-Duck Raffle Event is the Putnam Business Association's largest annual fundraiser supporting their advocacy for local businesses and beloved free community events like the Great Pumpkin Festival,

Zombie Fashion Show and SuperHero Day that draw thousands of visitors to northeast Connecticut. Thirty-seven non-profit organizations and schools will also make a splash this year from selling duck raffle tickets to raise critical funds for their mission and those they serve. Organizations like Bags of Hope CT, Hale YMCA Youth & Family Center, United Services, Nutmeg Acres Wildlife Rehabilitation, PAWS Cat Rescue, Danielson Veterans Coffee House, Anchors of Hope, NAMI Windham County NWC, Cub Scouts Pack 43, Quinebaug Valley Senior Center, St. James Parochial School, Riley Farm Rescue, VFW Auxiliary Post 1523, TVCCA Meals-On-Wheels Program, The Arc Eastern Connecticut, TEEG, Quiet Corner NEMBA and many more will also greatly benefit from the 2026 event.

Pluck-A-Duck Raffle Tickets can be purchased at these essential non-profit organizations, and local businesses, including WINY Radio (45 Pomfret St., Putnam), Centreville Bank (40 Main St., Putnam; 100 Averill Rd., Pomfret; 11 Pratt Road, Plainfield CT and 125 Wauregan Road, Danielson CT), bankHometown (182 Main St., Putnam; 13 Canterbury Rd., Brooklyn,

835 Riverside Dr., North Grosvenordale, and 4 Gore Rd., Webster, Mass.), Sparrow Soaps Company (350 Kennedy Dr., Putnam), and Woodstock Creamery at Valleyside Farm (210 Child Hill Rd., Woodstock), at upcoming community Farmers Markets and events, and online at www.discoverputnam.com/pba-rubberduckrace.

The Putnam Business Association and our more than 8,000 feathered friends extend appreciation to our event sponsors Beacon Bank, Tom & Kathy Borner, Breezeline, Byrnes Agency/HUB International, Centreville Bank, Christopher Heights of Webster, Creamery Brook Village/PierceCare, Day Kimball Heath, Green Valley Orthodontics, JT's Appliance, Jewett City Savings Bank, New York Pizza Company, Renewal By Anderson of Southern New England, Runnings, Spicer Propane & Oil, The Last Green Valley, The Sunshine Shop, Thompson Smiles, Xfinity, WD Home Services LLC and WIN Waste Innovations, along with local businesses who generously donated raffle prizes in support of this beloved community tradition.

Don't panic — do this!

Safety tips to teach your children if lost

One holiday season, while at the Auburn Mall, when my son was six years old, we were shopping with friends. While I was busy chatting, my son stopped to look in a store window while we continued. When I glanced down, I saw he was not with us, and I began to panic. After a look around our immediate area, I retraced my steps, checking the sales desk at each store. I was able to find him quickly because he knew to go to the register and ask for help. Crisis averted.

Parents, don't be afraid to talk about it, and even role-play; it can make a difference. I always like to highlight this in my strategy: "Perfect planning prevents

poor performance".

Stop moving- I taught my son to stay put. I retraced my steps, kept scanning, and was able to find him in minutes. Then I managed to bring my jacked anxiety back to normal.

Identify and Approach Safe Adults. First, stay calm- both the parent and the child should take three long, very slow breaths.

Teach your children how to identify safe adults they can approach for help. These choices should include police officers, store employees, security personnel, or women with children. Instruct them to avoid speaking to strangers who don't fit these categories.

Give them a simple script to use (and please practice), such as, "I'm lost. Can you help me find my parents?" Reassure them that most adults are kind and willing to help, but they should still be cautious.

Your child must know that leaving a park or building with a man is a no-go proposition.

Additionally, show them how to recognize uniforms and name tags that indicate someone's official role.

Memorize names - Kids need to know their full proper names. Not just their nickname or shortened kid name, but full first and last name.

Your children should know your real first and last name, not just Mommy or Daddy.

When kids realize that you're not in their line of sight, they should practice

shouting your first and last name (like -John Smith!), not just Mommy or Daddy.

Memorize your phone number- Ensure they have memorized your phone number. To practice this, you can make a game or a song out of your number (think the alphabet song).

Establish a meeting spot- When visiting crowded places like parks, malls, or events, establish a clear meeting spot (this is my recommendation for older children) in case you get separated. Choose a location that is easy to find and recognizable, such as the main entrance, a specific landmark, or the sales desk in a store. Show your children the spot when you arrive and explain that if

they get lost, they should go there and wait for you. If they can't find the meeting spot and you have already indicated it, they should seek help from a safe adult to guide them there. The very best choice for assistance is always a woman with children. A pre-planned spot serves as a reliable point of reference, giving you and your child a known location to reunite.

For you, the parent- Take a photo right when you go to an amusement park so you can show someone what your child was wearing. Staff can't recognize similar-looking children but can grab a color combination much more easily.

Dress them in bright colors so they stick out in a crowd (picture the cop directing traffic). You can always use a digital tracker like an AirTag. You do this for your luggage; why not your kids?

One parent can stay in the

spot where you first noticed your child was missing while the other parent/adult retraces your steps.

Please assure your kids that you are not angry, only scared for their safety. Everyone's emotions will run high in these situations, and I will remind you that in times of stress, long, slow breathing will help you manage your stress. By teaching your children these essential tips, you equip them with the knowledge and confidence to handle situations where they may become separated from you, ensuring their safety and your peace of mind during summer outings. Like anything else, role-playing and regular practice make these habits stick.

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



TIPS FOR SUCCESS
MIKE BOGDANSKI

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Roth Conversion or not?

How to decide in the new tax landscape

For years, the big question hanging over Roth conversions was a guessing game: would tax rates jump when the 2017 tax cuts expired? That uncertainty is gone.

With the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA) signed into law in July 2025, the lower tax brackets we’ve grown used to are now permanent — including the top rate, which held at 37 percent instead of climbing to 39.6 percent in 2026 (Tax Foundation, 2026). For high earners who are still in their building years, that changes the calculation in a few meaningful ways.

So let’s walk through how to think about it.

First, a quick refresher

A Roth conversion is exactly what it sounds like: you move money from a traditional IRA or 401(k) — where you’ll owe ordinary income tax on every dollar you eventually withdraw — into a Roth account, where the money grows and comes out tax-free in retirement. Think of it like paying tax on the seed instead of the harvest. You pay tax today on the amount you convert, and in exchange, all the future growth escapes taxation entirely.

One thing a lot of high earners don’t realize is that while you may earn too much to contribute directly to a Roth, there’s no income limit on converting to one (SDO CPA, 2026). That’s exactly why conversions are such a useful tool for higher-income households. The catch, of course, is that you’re voluntarily creating



FINANCIAL FOCUS
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HOLLY C. WANEGAR
INVESTMENT ADVISER

a tax bill right now, and for a high earner, that bill can be steep. So the real question is always: will I pay a lower rate now, or later?

Why the new landscape tilts the scale

Here’s where permanence matters. In the old world, you might have rushed to convert before rates went up. Now, with brackets locked in, the decision is less about beating a deadline and more about your own trajectory — and that’s where it gets interesting.

If we think about three things, the picture comes into focus.

First, your own future tax rate may be higher than you assume. Many high earners picture retirement as a lower-tax chapter. But if you’re a strong saver, your traditional accounts can balloon and required minimum distributions, stacked on top of Social Security and other income, can push you right back into a high bracket later. Paying 32 percent now might genuinely beat paying 35 or 37 percent on a much larger balance decades from now.

Second, OBBA quietly trimmed the value of itemized deductions for top earners. Starting in 2026, taxpayers in the 37 percent

bracket face a new limitation that reduces the benefit of their itemized deductions (IRS, 2025). The one thing to consider there is that the deductions you’d normally lean on to soften a high-income year are a little less powerful now, which can make the clean, predictable cost of a Roth conversion comparatively appealing.

Third, estate goals are clearer than ever. A Roth IRA passes to your heirs income-tax-free, and there’s no required distribution during your lifetime. If part of your plan is leaving a tax-free gift to the next generation, conversions are one of the most elegant ways to do it.

A real-life example

Let’s make this concrete. Say you’re 48, married, with taxable income around \$250,000 — comfortably in the 24 percent bracket, which for 2026 runs up to \$256,225 for joint filers (IRS, 2025). You’ve got \$600,000 in a traditional IRA you don’t plan to touch for decades. You’re disciplined, so that account could realistically grow well past \$2 million by the time RMDs begin.

This is where a “fill-the-bracket” approach shines. Rather than converting a giant lump sum, you convert just enough each year to reach the top of your current bracket without spilling into the next one (College Investor, 2026). In years when your income dips, that headroom grows. Pay tax at today’s known rate on a smaller balance now,

and everything that grows afterward comes out tax-free later.

J.P. Morgan’s Guide to Retirement illustrates this relationship well: the lower your tax rate today relative to your expected rate in retirement, the more a conversion works in your favor, and the wider that gap, the bigger the lifetime payoff.

The trade-offs (because there always are some)

I’d never present this as a slam-dunk, because it isn’t one for everyone, especially during peak earning years. When wages, bonuses, and other income are already stacking up, piling a large conversion on top can mean paying tax at your highest marginal rate, which is the opposite of smart planning (Defiant Capital, 2026).

Here are a few things to consider: Always pay the conversion tax from outside the retirement account — ideally a taxable brokerage account. If you have to dip into the IRA to cover the tax, you lose much of the benefit. A conversion also raises your taxable income for the year, which can ripple into things like Medicare premium surcharges (IRMAA) down the road or the 3.8% net investment income tax. And remember, once you convert, it’s permanent — recharacterizations were eliminated back in 2018 — so accurate income projections really matter.

This is genuinely a “show me the numbers for my situation” decision. There’s no rule of thumb that replaces modeling it against your actual income, balances, and timeline.

Your next step

If you’re a high earner with sizable traditional retirement balances, this is worth mapping out, ideally before year-end, when conversion timing matters most. Action is the best remedy to anxiety: you don’t need every answer first, you just need to start the conversation.

At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, our “Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™” process coordinates tax-smart strategies like Roth conversions with your broader plan, so each piece works together. We’d be glad to help you decide whether a conversion fits — that’s just one way we work to deliver “Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.” Schedule a complimentary discovery session at whzwealth.com or call us at (860) 928-2341.

Authored by WHZ Vice

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LiR-QV Open House

DANIELSON — The public is welcome to attend a Fall Open House sponsored by Learning in Retirement (LiR-QV) on Friday, Aug. 21, at 1 p.m. in the Killingly Community Center, 185 Broad St., Danielson.

All are welcome to hear about the Fall programs and enjoy a presentation by noted storyteller and journalist Mike Allen, on The Importance of Connecticut to the Revolution. Connecticut played an important role in winning independence from the British Empire. Many local figures contributed to the formation of the new country, while Connecticut earned the nickname “the provision state” because of its supplies of food and ammunition to the Continental Army. Light refreshments will be served following the program.

LiR-QV programs are held on Monday and Fridays, from September through November. Space is limited. For further information about LiR visit li-r-qv.org

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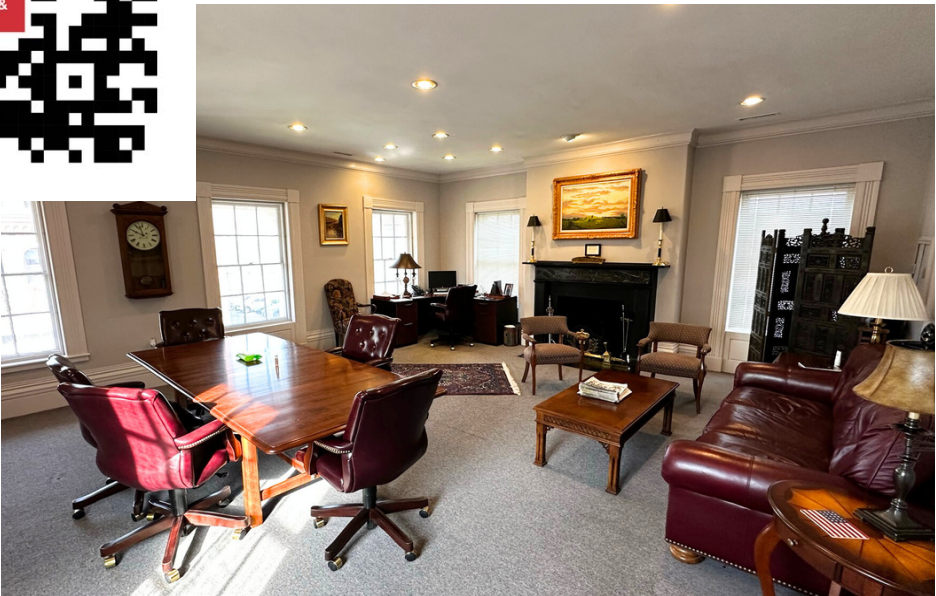
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JONAH D. GLICKMAN
Vice President

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Regis College students named to Spring Dean’s List

WESTON, Mass. — Regis College announces the students named to the Dean’s List for the spring 2026 semester, including Shannon Cunniff (Class of 2027) and Gracie Scott (Class of 2028), both of Woodstock.

To qualify for the Dean’s List, students must earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher. First-year students qualify with a GPA of 3.25 or higher.

Founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph nearly a century ago, Regis College educates students to lead with integrity, purpose, and compassion. Through an inclusive and innovative learning community, Regis prepares graduates to build meaningful careers and make a positive impact in the world.

Emmanuel College announces Spring Dean’s List

BOSTON, Mass. — In recognition of their outstanding academic achievement, Emmanuel College has named more than 850 students to the Dean’s List for the Spring 2026 semester, including Sofia Thurber of Thompson and Gabriel DiPierdomenico of Woodstock.

To earn a spot on the Dean’s List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

With more than 80 majors and areas of study, Emmanuel College combines outstanding classroom instruction and real-world experience to prepare students for lives of professional achievement, lifelong learning, and purpose. Voted the #1 college location in America in 2026 by Niche.com, Emmanuel offers ready access to world class medical, cultural, and business organizations in the Heart of Boston, all with a tight-knit 17-acre campus and 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Learn more at Emmanuel.edu.

Pomfret student named to Dean’s List at Washington University in St. Louis

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Yishen Zhao of Pomfret was named to the dean’s list for the spring 2026 semester at Washington University in St. Louis. Zhao is enrolled in the university’s McKelvey School of Engineering.

To qualify for the Dean’s List in the McKelvey School of Engineering, students must earn a semester grade point average of 3.6 or above and be enrolled in at least 12 graded units.

About WashU

Among the world’s leaders in teaching, research, patient care and service to society, WashU is committed to addressing scientific, social and economic challenges locally, nationally and globally and educating the next generation of purpose-driven leaders.

WashU draws students and faculty to St. Louis from all 50 states and more than 100 countries. The total student body is more than 16,000 and about 4,500 faculty teach in nine schools: Arts & Sciences; Brown School; Bursky School of Public Health, McKelvey School of Engineering; Olin Business School; Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts; School of Continuing & Professional Studies; School of Law and the School of Medicine.

The university offers more than 90 programs and some 1,500 courses leading to bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in a broad spectrum of traditional and interdisciplinary fields, with additional opportunities for minor concentrations and individualized programs.

The work and research of 26 Nobel laureates has been associated with WashU. The university is deeply rooted in St. Louis, serving as an economic anchor, global talent magnet and contributor to the city’s vibrant culture and communities. Learn more about WashU by visiting washu.edu.

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RIDE
continued from page A1

without the communities that welcome it along the way,” said Suzanne Stone, President and CEO of Livestrong. “Every stop gives people an opportunity to honor the firefighters and first responders affected by September 11 while supporting organizations that continue to serve them. We hope people will see this as a chance to come together around something that matters: honoring the heroes we lost, and standing with those still fighting today.”

“Friends of Firefighters was born out of 9/11 with the promise that firefighters would never have to face the weight of the job alone,” said Nancy Carbone, Executive Director of Friends of Firefighters. “In the last 25 years, we have lost nearly 800 members of the FDNY to September 11th and 9/11 cancer, and job-related cancer remains one of the greatest risks our firefighters face every single day. Whether you ride, volunteer, or donate, you’re providing hands-on support for the physical and mental toll cancer takes on our first responders.”

To register, volunteer, donate or view the local route through northeastern Connecticut, visit 911ride.org.

About Livestrong

Founded in 1997, Livestrong has supported more than 10 million people living with, through, and beyond cancer, providing the trusted information, programs, and community that help survivors navigate every stage of the journey. Livestrong helped establish survivorship as a formal field of study in cancer care and continues to expand access to the practical and emotional support that cancer survivors and their families deserve. Because surviving is just the beginning. To learn more or to donate, visit Livestrong.org.

HISTORY
continued from page A1

Richard Weinberg.

The Historical Society invites everyone to join us for our next public program on Saturday, Aug. 8, featuring Richard Franklin Donahue. His presentation, “Music and Hymns from the American Revolution,” will feature period music, historical interpretation, and authentic clothing from the Revolutionary era, offering an engaging look at the lives of those who lived through America’s founding.

The Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society welcomes new members, volunteers, and anyone with

an interest in preserving our local heritage. Through community support, educational programming, and historical research, we continue to ensure that the stories of Killingly’s past remain alive for future generations.

As the United States commemorates the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society looks forward to presenting programs that explore our nation’s founding while preserving the unique history of Killingly for generations to come.

Please learn more about us, and visit our Web site, KillinglyHistorical.org.

FIRE
continued from page A1

dispute over the hiring process for a new chief and the perceived lack of support from the town. Kevin McNeill was eventually appointed chief.

Despite the recent controversies, the department was able to respond and manage the scene effectively. The department’s official release did not shy away from addressing the controversy stating that, despite everything, the department remains focused on protecting the community.

“The Danielson Fire Department extends its sincere appreciation to all of our mutual aid partners for their rapid response, professionalism, and teamwork. Since early May, the department has been focused on rebuilding and strengthening relationships with neighboring agencies through collaboration, joint training, and a shared commitment to providing the highest level of service to our communities. Today’s incident serves as a powerful example of those efforts and demonstrates what can be accomplished when agencies train together and respond as one unified team,” the department wrote.

The cause of the Hawkins Street fire remains under investigation by the Killingly Fire Marshal’s Office and the Connecticut Office of the State Fire Marshal.

KILLINGLY
continued from page A1

first person to be given the title of “First Lady” by the American press. (lancaster-history.org...)

Wheatland (no s) was built in 1828 in a Federal style and was acquired by Buchanan in 1848 while he was Secretary of State under President Polk. There are aspects of the interior which remind me of Bowen’s Roseland Cottage in Woodstock (the Pink House). The guided tour we took spent quite a while in the dining room where the table was already set. The guide said that it was common to have dinners served by courses as it was easier to keep the food warm that way. It had to come from the kitchen in the basement, by way of steep stairs, to the butler’s pantry adjacent to the dining room where there was a small stove which could keep food warm. I was intrigued by a large oval, glass bowl-about 4 inches deep, at each place setting, since I’d never seen one. It was for rinsing out your wine glass between courses. I was unable to climb the stairs to the second floor but was given a very informative “virtual” tour on an ipad. A costumed docent explained the

clothing of the day, which included very wide hoop skirts for women (think Mrs. Lincoln). A woman had to put on what looked like a cage, then a number of petticoats, then her dress to achieve the desired fullness. I don’t know how she would have been able to sit down! I’m very glad that I didn’t have to wear that. I was very glad that I had taken the time to visit the house. If you’re in the Lancaster area, you might also enjoy it. (Visit lancasterhistory.org for photos and more).

I thought I would see what the headlines were in early August 1966, a year many of you might well remember. The Aug. 4 Windham County Transcript front page carried the headline, “Ground Breaking today for Building to expand Rogers Headquarters Here.” The plans were for a 10,000 square foot addition. Another headline read, “Airplane For Missionaries Set to Arrive Here Sunday. This coming Sunday, August 7, is the day when a Piper Cub airplane, purchased for the use of the LaSalette Fathers on the island of Madagascar, is scheduled to arrive at the Danielson Airport at 3 p.m. The Rev. Armand Nadeau, M.S., pastor of St. James Parish, previously announced that the plane

had been bought and that the transaction had been made with trading stamps, mostly 3,000,000 of the well-known S & H Green Stamps.” Imagine, buying a plane with green stamps! “Reopening of Soap Street Termed ‘Not Reasonable by Highway Commissioner Ives ...Soap Street was closed to permit the construction of a bridge over Route 52 (now 395) which is in a twenty-foot cut at that location...The possibility of temporarily reopening Town Farm Road has also been considered. It has been found, however, that it crosses Route 52 where there is a twenty-foot fill.” Did any of you ever use Town Farm Road? If you’re new to the area or a younger resident, think of Owen Bell Park in Dayville and the location of the Killingly Town Highway Garage on Route 12. Town Farm Road cut from 101 to 12in that area.

“Marshall C. Dowe Dies at 44 from Accident Injuries...Marshall C. Dowe, popular owner of Dowe’s Inc., a century-old Danielson Main Street business, died last Friday of injuries sustained on July 17 after the motorcycle he was driving struck a dog on Cucumber Hill Road in Foster, R.I...The business was founded by his grandfather Marshall P. Dowe in 1860.”

(All p. 1. Visit killingly.historyarchives.online courtesy of the Killingly Public Library for photos).

Do you remember Quinnequack Farm Stand west of Dayville (corner of Lake Road)? They were advertising sweet corn and fresh vegetables. (p.2). The movie of the week at the Orpheum in Danielson was “The Russians are Coming, The Russians are Coming.” The Parkway on Route 12 had Elvis Presley in Paradise Hawaiian Style scheduled during the coming week. Sundown Beach at Alexander’s Lake was advertising docks, floats, and a waterwheel. Roller Skating Every Wednesday and Sunday evenings. (p.2). Perhaps you have fond memories of some of these entertainments. Please feel free to share them.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, August 2026. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main St., Danielson, Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety. For Windham County Transcripts visit killingly.historyarchives.online courtesy of the Killingly Public Library.



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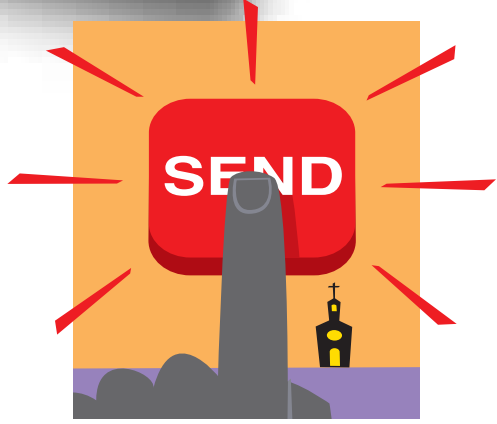
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OBITUARIES

Kathanne Harter Webster
26 Apr 1930 - 11 Jul 2026



Our beautiful Mom left us on Saturday the 11th of July at the age of 96. We will honor her privately this week and hope to hold a more extensive memorial next summer.



A great lady, she was Kathanne, Kate, even Annie to some; to most she was Kathy, and to us Maman, Mom, Mama, Nanni.



After graduating in Physics from Wellesley College, she worked at Harvard University, but chose to devote her life to her husband Richard (Dick) and to raising a family abroad. She was bold and courageous in all her undertakings, learning fluent French and adapting to life in

Paris in the 50s and 60s. Over 55 years as a US expat, she lived in France, Belgium and the United Kingdom. Her volunteering skills led to commendations from the

US State Department for her work on voting rights and citizenship transmission for all Americans living abroad. She is widely loved and much celebrated in American Women's clubs across the globe.

Kathy is remembered as a highly intelligent and beautiful lady - graceful and always elegant, an unparalleled hostess, an accomplished reader and speaker, thus setting a really high bar for all around her. Strong willed, determined and opinionated, she was an inspiration to many and certainly paved the way for us daughters to become spirited women in our own rights.

She will be missed by her many friends and relatives. She leaves behind a cosmopolitan family of four daughters (Claire in France, Susan in CT, Lucy in RI, Amy in Switzerland), ten grandchildren (Olivia, Daniel, Aymeric, Severin, Bastien, Georgia, Salomé, Celia, Loriane, Julia) and fifteen great-grandchildren (Sacha, Ella, Isidore, Elina, Eli, Marlo, Côme, Aria, Jane, Isla, Ascanio, Alma, Lawrence, Oliver, Lia). Plus our spouses, whom she also loved dearly.

Our gratitude and love for Mom/ Mama/ Nanni are limitless and eternal.

Lynda M. Blackmar
August 17, 1948 - July 26, 2026



Killingly - Lynda (Ayers) Blackmar, 77, of 93 Maple Court, Killingly, died Sunday, July 26, 2026. She was the loving wife of Robert Blackmar. Born in Putnam, CT, she was the daughter

of Shirley (Mountford) Ayers and the late John Ayers.

Lynda started her professional career early in life as a waitress at Deary Bros in downtown Putnam. From there Lynda worked in retail, as a para at Putnam High School, and for many years she worked as a CNA at Matulaitis Nursing Home.

Lynda had many passions in life. Perhaps her greatest passion was in music and dance. She loved music from the 60's and 70's, especially the Beach Boys and Neil Diamond. Lynda and her husband, Bob, traveled all over the country, making countless memories and sharing them with their two sons, Kevin and Kristopher. Lynda was quite passionate about her sons' activities. She served as Den-Mother to Troop 21 in Putnam for the Boy Scouts of America. She also served as Treasurer

of the WPTP football program, also in Putnam. She would always be found at Murphy Park anytime her boys were on any field.

Lynda is survived by two sons, Kevin and Wendy of Pomfret, CT, Kristopher and Christy Rust of Putnam, CT; sisters, Susan Ayers of Manchester, CT, Nancy Wendus and Bruce of Pomfret, CT, Patricia Cream and Danny of Texas, Elaine Ayers of Texas; brother, Douglas Ayers of Pomfret; grandson, Gavin Blackmar.

She was predeceased by her brothers, Wayne and Ronald Ayers.

A celebration of life for Lynda will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Foundation of America. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Paul Fitze

80 years old of Eastford, CT.
Passed away May 26, 2026.
Husband of Maria Fitze of Eastford, CT
Born in Dodge City, Kansas.
Son of Henry and Elsie Fitze.
Survived by Ruth Group
Service will take place on August 8th at 10am at the Federated Church of Christ in Brooklyn, CT.

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

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LEGALS

**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 August 19, 2026, starting at 7:00 PM.

1. 26-5SP of Rory Apperson requesting a Special Permit to construct an 864 square foot barn with a loft on property located at 249 Peterson Rd.

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 30th day of July 2026
Sarah Healey, Assistant Land Use Clerk
August 7, 2026
August 14, 2026

**TOWN OF POMFRET
PLANNING & ZONING
COMMISSION
LEGAL NOTICE**

Town of Pomfret Planning & Zoning Commission

At the July 29, 2026 meeting of the Pomfret Planning & Zoning Commission, the following legal action(s) were taken:

1. 26-4TA of the Pomfret Planning and Zoning Commission seeking to modify the Zoning Regulations to conform with mandated housing legislation per PA25-1 (HB8002). Modify the Definition of Mobile Home, Add definition of Mixed Use Development, Add Section 12.30 Mixed Use Development, Add Mixed Use Development to each of the Commercial Districts, modify Section 15.10.4 residential parking requirements to conform with PA25-1, modify Section 13.5.3 Notification to Abutters to comply with current case law.

APPROVED
Dated at Pomfret, Connecticut
July 29, 2026

Sarah Healey, Land Use Clerk
Planning & Zoning Commission
August 7, 2026

**Town of Putnam
Planning & Zoning Commission
Legal Notice**

The Town of Putnam Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a Hybrid Meeting on August 19, 2026, at 7:00 P. M. in Room 201 at the Putnam Municipal Complex, located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. A public hearing is scheduled for the following: Docket # 2026-11 Jacob Paradise request for a Customary Home Occupation Permit in accordance with Section 706 of the Town of Putnam Zoning Regulations to operate a small engine repair business. Property located at 125 Heritage Road, Town Assessors Map 038, Lot 007, Zoned R-40. Patricia Hedenberg, Chairperson
August 7, 2026
August 14, 2026

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Nalio D'Orazio (26-00254)**

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated June 29, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Brenda Duquette, Chief Clerk
The fiduciary is:
Anthony N D'Orazio
c/o EDWIN C HIGGINS, EDWIN C. HIGGINS III, 168 MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 528, PUTNAM, CT 06260
August 7, 2026

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Westley S Ferris (26-00299)**

The Hon. Carolanne Rowe, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated July 22, 2026, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to

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

Brenda Duquette, Chief Clerk
The fiduciary is:
Michelle Rodriguez
c/o MICHELE ANN PALULIS, ATTORNEY MICHELE ANN PALULIS, LLC, 158 MAIN STREET, SUITE 2, P. O. BOX 616, PUTNAM, CT 06260
August 7, 2026

**TOWN OF KILLINGLY
BOROUGH OF DANIELSON
SOUTH KILLINGLY FIRE DISTRICT
TAX NOTICE**

The first quarter installment of real estate and personal property taxes for the Town of Killingly, the Borough of Danielson, and South Killingly Fire District listed on the October 1, 2025 Grand List are due August 1, 2026. Also motor vehicle taxes are due August 1, 2026. Taxes will become delinquent after September 1, 2026. All bills are subject to interest at the rate of 18% per annum, 1.5% per month or any fraction of a month, from the due date of August 1, 2026. A minimum of \$2.00 interest will be charged for each delinquent bill and installment. FAILURE TO RECEIVE A BILL DOES NOT RELIEVE OR EXCUSE THE OBLIGATION OF TAX OR INTEREST DUE PER STATE STATUTE 12-130. Payments will be received in the Revenue Office, 172 Main Street Killingly CT 06239, during the posted hours, by mail, online, or in our drop box. Please visit our website for full details and online payments at www.killingly.org.

April Lamothe, CCMC
Revenue Collector
Town of Killingly

July 24, 2026
August 7, 2026
August 28, 2026

**TOWN OF POMFRET
INVITATION TO BID**

Sealed bids for the lease of three town-owned agricultural parcels will be

received by the Town of Pomfret at the Office of the First Selectman, Pomfret Town Hall, Five Haven Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259 until 1:00 PM, Local Prevailing Time, on Monday, August 24, 2026. Bidders are invited to submit bids for one, two or three of the three available parcels.

The four-year term of said leases will commence in the Spring of 2027 and expire in the Fall of 2031. Descriptions of properties for lease, bid specifications, and proposal packages are available at the Pomfret Town Hall, First Selectmen's Office, Five Haven Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and are available on-line at www.pomfretct.gov/departments/first-selectmans-office

No Bidder may withdraw his/her bid for a period of forty-five (45) days after the actual date of the Bid opening. The Town of Pomfret reserves the right to waive all formalities or to reject any or all Bids.

Dated at Pomfret, Connecticut
Maureen Nicholson
This 7th day of August, 2026
First Selectman
August 7, 2026

**Town of Putnam
Zoning Board of Appeals
Legal Notice**

The Town of Putnam Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a hybrid meeting on August 18, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. in Room 201 on the second floor at the Putnam Municipal Complex, located at 200 School Street, Putnam, CT. A public hearing will take place on the following: Appeal # 2026-006 Joseph Scott & Chery L. Pempek request for a variance from the required 50' side yard setback down to 35' for the construction of a 24' X 30' 1.5 story garage. Property is located at 90 Five Mile River Road, Town Assessors Map 32, Lot 73, Zoned AG-2.
Scott Zadora, Chairman
August 7, 2026
August 14, 2026

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^aValues are based on comparison of Renewal by Andersen® double-hung window U-Factor to the U-Factor for clear dual pane glass non-metal frame default values from the 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018 International Energy Conservation Code "Glazed Fenestration" Default Tables. ^bIt is the only warranty among top selling window companies that meets all of the following requirements: easy to understand terms, unrestricted transferability, installation coverage, labor coverage, geographically unrestricted, coverage for exterior color, insect screens and hardware, and no maintenance requirement. Visit renewalbyandersen.com/nationsbest for details.