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## Killingly High School holds Career Pathway celebration



**KILLINGLY** — On the morning of May 28, 91 Killingly High School seniors were recognized for completing 127 Career Pathways in six career clusters at the 22nd Annual Career Pathway Celebration. Pathway completers and their guests were treated to breakfast at the high school, followed by the ceremony in which they received plaques and certificates. At graduation, pathway completers will also receive a pin to wear on their gown to signify their pathway(s). Completed pathways will also be reflected on students' transcripts and

announced at graduation. The six Career Clusters include Agricultural Education, Arts and Communication, Business and Finance, Construction and Industrial Design, Government and Public Administration, and Education & Human Development. Jacob Cozza completed the most career pathways with 5, Accounting, Business Management, Hospitality, Marketing, and Personal Finance. Each pathway completer is also required to complete a job shadow in their pathway during their junior or senior year.

The Career Center at Killingly High School has partnered with many businesses and organizations, including members of the Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce and Killingly Business Association, to provide this opportunity. Keynote speaker and Learning for Life founder, Michael Herklots, addressed

the audience and praised this year's completers. In his speech, he talked about perspective, and how perspective is critical to outcome, whether negative or positive.

"Perspective shapes success, encouraging a flexible, positive outlook even when plans don't

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## Wyndham Land Trust expands Nightingale Forest



Andy Rzeznikiewicz — Courtesy

Valuable wetlands on the property will be protected by the Land Trust.

**POMFRET** — The Wyndham Land Trust recently acquired a 360-acre parcel in Pomfret that expands their Nightingale Forest preserve to 1,600 acres of unbroken forested land. The property was owned by the Saunders family for almost 90 years and will provide a vital wildlife corridor between the existing Townshend and DiIorio sections of the Nightingale Forest. It will be known as the "Laurelwood Preserve," a section of the Nightingale Forest Preserve.

"My grandfather, Augustus Saunders, an executive at the Nicholson File Company in Rhode Island, purchased the property with his son, Lloyd, around 1940," explained Claudia Abbott. "Lloyd Saunders, my father, built a kit log cabin called Laurelwood, and it's where I grew up. I moved back with my husband, Bill Abbott, about 25 years ago. My two sons and I had the same vision: save the property from development. Any land that goes up for sale these days gets a house put on it, or as many houses as the zoning allows. We didn't want to see that. In order to protect our privacy, we redrew the property lines to create a lot that included our house along with Nightingale Pond and a protective border around its edge. The remaining land was transferred to the Land Trust. Navigating the process was daunting for me, but with the expertise, guidance, and patience of Andy Rzeznikiewicz [Land Trust land manager], our family's vision became well defined. And so Laurelwood Preserve was born."

"I first started an informal conversation with Bill and Claudia Abbott many years ago," said Rzeznikiewicz. "We knew it was a valuable parcel to protect. It's all woodland and important for forest interior nesting birds that are threatened in Connecticut because of habitat loss. True forest birds, those that are not adapted to disturbed or suburban habitat, breed only in large tracts of forest that are not fragmented. It also contains some valuable wetlands, and two streams traverse the property—Angel Brook and Nightingale Brook."

The discussion between the Abbott family and the Wyndham Land Trust became serious in the summer of 2024, after Rzeznikiewicz laid out the pathway to protect the forest.

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## Thompson receives inaugural Long Island Sound Ecosystems grant funding

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

**THOMPSON** — The Town of Thompson was among the list of recipients of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP) new Long Island Sound Ecosystems Grant Program which will help fund municipal stormwater disconnection projects.

According to Tyra Penn-Gesek, Thompson's Director of Planning & Development, the award totals nearly \$325,000 and will allow Thompson to proceed with a variety of initiatives that are part of the larger revitalization of the downtown mill district.

"Last fall, the town worked with a team from the UConn CLEAR program to explore opportunities for stormwater disconnection at several municipal properties," Penn-Gesek said in an email discussing the grant. "The student team identified three parcels as beneficial locations to install new green infrastructure. The proposed activities have significant synergy with development and redevelopment efforts underway throughout the town."

One project is a new rain garden at the Thompson Public Library. This project also received funding through a 319 Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution grant from 2025 through the Eastern CT Conservation District (ECCD). The project will see the installation of pervious pavers and the removal of invasive barberry. The rain garden itself will replace other invasive plants to treat stormwater.

The second proposal is a green roof on the Thompson Town Hall which is also supported in-part by the ECCD and NPS Grant. This will involve installing modular precast porous concrete panels in the town hall parking lot and as well as pervious pavers on the walkways. The project will reduce runoff from the building's roof.

Finally, two more rain gardens and a dry water quality swale will be installed on the Thompson Public Schools campus to infiltrate runoff from the often up-hill parking areas.

"These green infrastructure elements will help the town fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit," added Penn-Gesek. "They also are a part of the larger plan to revitalize the entire downtown mill district, including

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## Marianapolis Preparatory School announces 2026 Valedictorian and Salutatorian



Philopateer Basha



Charles O'Brien

**THOMPSON** — Philopateer Basha will deliver the valedictory address, and Charles O'Brien will deliver the salutatory address at Marianapolis' Class of 2026 commencement ceremony on May 31.

Basha, the son of Sarwat and Rania Basha, resides in Dudley, Mass., and will attend Bryant University in the fall, where he plans to study finance. Reflecting on his time at Marianapolis, Basha said, "I have enjoyed being part of such a supportive community. The people around me have pushed me to become a better version of myself, both in and out of the classroom."

He added that one of the most important lessons he learned during his time at Marianapolis was the value of stepping outside his comfort zone.

"Although stepping into unfamiliar situations is uncomfortable, these moments often lead to the greatest learning experiences," Basha said.

Marianapolis Head of

School, David DiCicco, praised Basha for his academic curiosity and commitment to learning.

"Philo has impressed us with his scholarship and intellectual curiosity," DiCicco said. "In the pursuit of knowledge and deeper learning, he asked critical and deep questions. We are excited to continue to celebrate his academic journey next year and beyond!"

Basha credited his support system for helping shape his success. "First and foremost, I owe all my success to God, whose guidance and blessings have helped me throughout every stage of my journey," he said. "I am also incredibly grateful for my family, teachers, coaches, and friends who continuously supported, encouraged, and believed in me even during challenging moments."

When asked for advice to future Marianapolis students, Basha encouraged future students to persevere

Turn To **MARIANAPOLIS**

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# Allard, of Putnam, earns degree from Clark University

WORCESTER, Mass. — Autumn R. Allard of Putnam received a degree during Clark University's Commencement exercises on Monday, May 18. Allard graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

The University awarded 612 bachelor's degrees and 636 graduate degrees and conferred two honorary degrees during two ceremonies; graduates represented 49 states and 69 countries.

Clark University President David B. Fithian urged the graduates to be engaged global citizens.

"The world needs you to exhibit the value of higher education, to exercise principles of free expression, to believe in the progress of ideas, and to defend democracy and individual rights - even, and especially, when doing so requires listening across deep differences," President Fithian said.

Dr. Wendy L. Freedman, one of the world's most accomplished astrophysicists, delivered the undergraduate ceremony address. Freedman, currently the John and Marion Sullivan University Professor of Astronomy and Astrophysics at the University of Chicago, is widely recognized for her leadership of the Hubble Space Telescope Key Project, which produced the first precise measurements of the Hubble constant

(the rate at which the universe is expanding) and dramatically refined scientific understanding of the scale, age, and expansion of the universe.

Early in her career, Freedman told the graduates, her research arrived at a conclusion different than the accepted view of those in her field. She carried on despite opposition. Freedman noted that Clark physicist Robert H. Goddard, who 100 years ago launched the world's first liquid fuel rocket, an advancement that helped pave the way for man to reach the moon, faced similar skepticism. After experiencing multiple failures and widespread derision, Goddard in 1926 launched his rocket, which traveled 2.5 minutes, rose 41 feet into the air, and landed in a cabbage patch.

"From a cabbage field to lunar and even farther missions," said Freedman, "it is an important reminder of the power of persistence."

Dr. Wendy Freedman was awarded the degree of Doctor of Science, honoris causa.

Student speaker William Stafford '26, a political science major and aspiring lawyer, spoke to his peers about how choices shape a person.

"We don't always get to choose our circumstances, but we always get to choose how we respond

to them, and who we become because of them," said Stafford. "And now we're about to step into a world that won't always give us clear directions. There won't always be a syllabus. No one's going to tell you exactly what to do next. But you will always have the ability to choose."

Sir Andrew Steer, one of the world's foremost climate experts, addressed Clark University students receiving master's and doctoral degrees, and encouraged them to act boldly and remain hopeful, no matter their path.

In his address after receiving a Doctor of Humane Letters degree, Steer acknowledged that the students are graduating into a world with several major challenges - among them, AI, the erosion of trust in facts and truth, and dysfunctional governments. The last half-century has seen unimaginable progress and growth - demographically, technologically, and economically. "But this explosion of the human economic

footprint has put unprecedented pressure on the planet and created severe inequality and social challenges."

Steer praised Clark's new School of Climate, Environment, and Society for including economics in its interdisciplinary lineup, which «is pointing precisely to the systems change we will need to address climate change.» And every single member of the Class of 2026 has a part to play, he said, whatever their field - education, finance, social work, healthcare, the arts.

Steer then turned his gaze fifty years into the future. "What will the world look like? My prediction is that it will be cleaner, greener, healthier, more prosperous, and more just. It's up to you."

Nourhan Beshir Attia, graduating with a master's in environmental science and policy, delivered the graduate student address. A native of Egypt, she shared that the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of her bachelor's

degree ceremony in 2020.

"When I came to Clark, I thought I was looking for acceptance as someone coming from Egypt," Beshir Attia said. "As a modest Muslim hijabi woman, I wondered: Will I belong here? And yes, I found people who respected me. But the most important thing I found was something I wasn't expecting. I found the moment I stopped waiting for permission to be myself."

Founded in 1887, Clark University is a liberal arts-based research university that prepares its students to meet tomorrow's most daunting challenges and embrace its greatest opportunities. Through 33 undergraduate majors, more than 30 advanced degree programs, and nationally recognized community partnerships, Clark fuses rigorous scholarship with authentic world and workplace experiences that empower our students to pursue lives and careers of meaning and consequence.

## 2026 Guide to Farm Fresh Food in Northeastern Connecticut now available

REGION — For those looking for local farmers' markets, nearby farmstands, farms that participate in the SNAP program, farms that offer 'pick-your-own' fruits, organic farms, farms that have activities for children, and farms that offer 'CSA farm shares,' they can find them all listed in the free '2026 Guide to Farm Fresh Food in Northeastern Connecticut.'

Produced annually by Grown ConNECTed, an initiative of UConn Extension, this indispensable 52-page guide is an easy-to-use reference to find whatever you're looking for when it comes to fresh, locally grown food - including treats such as maple syrup and honey. It is an essential guide to keep at hand while travelling within the scenic and rural corner of the state.

More than 175 farms and farmstands in Connecticut's 'Quiet Corner' are listed, as well as the area's 21 farmers' markets. The Guide also lists retail

stores, restaurants, and food trucks that sell or cook with fresh, locally grown produce and meats from the region. More and more farms and farmers' markets are now accepting SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) EBT cards and the Guide makes it easy to find which ones participate in SNAP.

A calendar of the region's popular agricultural fairs and farm events is also included in this colorful resource that offers a way to plan a whole season of family-friendly outings.

There is an organized list of farms by town with a beautifully illustrated map of the region's farms from the state's border with Rhode Island and west to Hebron and Stafford, and from Preston north to the Massachusetts line.

"The Northeast Corner of Connecticut has a vibrant community of small farms and Grown ConNECTed works to promote each and every one of these family operations," said Ginger Jenne, who designed the Farm Fresh Food Guide in her role as Grown ConNECTed Project Coordinator for UConn Extension.

"Our family farms are vital in providing locally grown food for our communities and we have found that when people shop at their local farms and farmers' markets they learn more about where their food comes from and feel more connected to their community," Jenne said. "So, in addition to getting the freshest, most nutritious food for their families, they are making social connections that are just as important for sustaining health as that fresh strawberry or head of broccoli they just bought."

The free 2026 'Guide to Farm Fresh Food in Northeastern Connecticut' will be available beginning in May at farmers' markets, small local food retailers, the public information area at libraries in each town, and social service agencies. It can now be viewed and downloaded at GrownConNECTed.org where a variety of other information about local farms is also available.

Grown ConNECTed is an initiative of UConn Extension to build connections between farmers and residents in Northeast Connecticut. The project supports more than 175 farms and 21 farmers' markets across 32 towns in Eastern Connecticut. The goal of the Grown ConNECTed For All campaign is to increase opportunities for all residents to find and purchase locally grown food, specifically by building awareness that those who receive SNAP food assistance are able to use their EBT cards at local SNAP retailer farms.

Grown ConNECTed works with social service organizations and municipal representatives to provide accessible information about these resources to those who face food insecurity.

Funding for Grown ConNECTed is made possible by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service through grant award number 24FMPPCT1225-00. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.

### Students with local ties earn college degrees

PUTNAM — Moe Coderre and Pam Zamagni Coderre, from Putnam, are proud to announce that two of their grandchildren earned college graduate degrees in May.

Emily Coderre received her Ph.D. in Social Work from Fordham University (Bronx, N.Y.), and Owen Coderre received his M.Ed. in Physical Education: Advanced Pedagogy from Springfield College (Springfield, Mass.).

Emily and Owen are the children of Lance Coderre, formerly of Putnam, and Lisa Tonnessen. They live in Waterford.

## Putnam to host Fourth Annual Arts and Crafts Festival

PUTNAM — The Putnam Arts Council (PAC) is pleased to announce it will be hosting the Putnam Fine Arts and Crafts Festival on June 13 and 14.

This event is becoming another major art attraction for which Putnam is known. It will bring local communities together for a day of art, music, and fun as well as being close to the wonderful restaurants and businesses in the downtown area.

The festival will take place at the Putnam Municipal Complex, 200 School St., Putnam, and will feature more than 55 artists from throughout New England, live demonstrations by area artists, music by local musicians, and more. Attendees can expect to select from a variety of mediums including paintings, pottery, photography, and more.

"We are thrilled to once again bring a fine arts and crafts festival to Putnam and to showcase the incredible talent in our area and beyond," said Beth Johnston, one of the festival's organizers. "Our Arts Council is excited to welcome everyone to experience the joy and creativity that the arts can bring, while supporting local artists, and finding the perfect gift for a loved one or the next amazing piece for your home."

An additional feature this year is the opportunity to visit the Particle Accelerator music concert in Rotary Park on Saturday. This event raises money for mental health awareness. It's sure to be an exciting day in Putnam with a variety of opportunities.

The Festival will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, rain or shine. Parking and admission are free. A free shuttle bus will also be available to take visitors to selected sights in town.

For more information, visit [www.putnamctartscouncil.com](http://www.putnamctartscouncil.com) or follow Putnam CT Arts Council on social media.

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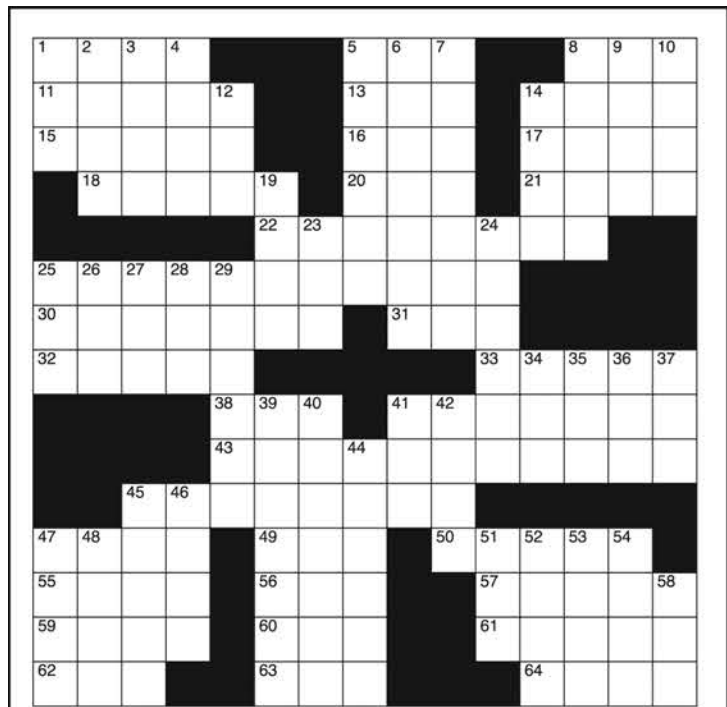
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### CLUES ACROSS

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| 1. Egyptian bull-god                  | 38. Defunct European currency         |
| 5. A young canine                     | 41. Small American songbird           |
| 8. Cologne                            | 43. One from L.A.                     |
| 11. Fictional British P.I.            | 45. After tenth                       |
| 13. Midway between northeast and east | 47. Hillside                          |
| 14. A place to shop                   | 49. Red deer                          |
| 15. Minneapolis suburb                | 50. Partner to "ooed"                 |
| 16. Single lens reflex                | 55. Indian musical pattern            |
| 17. NY Mets great Tommie              | 56. Israeli city __ Aviv              |
| 18. Informal loan clubs               | 57. Golden peas plant                 |
| 20. Habitual twitching                | 59. Breezed through                   |
| 21. Holm oak                          | 60. Midway between east and southeast |
| 22. Willing to consent or submit      | 61. Frameworks                        |
| 25. In an early way                   | 62. Danish krone                      |
| 30. Made possible                     | 63. Fall back                         |
| 31. Language in Ghana                 | 64. Influential Korean leader         |
| 32. Relating to one's birth           |                                       |
| 33. Deep-bodied fishes                |                                       |

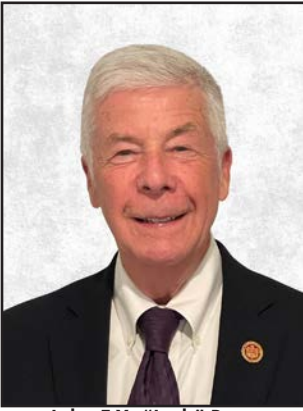
### CLUES DOWN

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|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Bridge building degree       | 34. Buddy                              |
| 2. Expression of sorrow or pity | 35. We all do it                       |
| 3. Large, stocky lizard         | 36. Chicken                            |
| 4. Turkish leader title         | 37. No seats available                 |
| 5. Nag                          | 39. Yearned to possess                 |
| 6. Blank                        | 40. Ineffectual                        |
| 7. Closely woven cotton fabric  | 41. Explosive                          |
| 8. A nice shot in golf          | 42. Turkish title                      |
| 9. Away from wind               | 44. Worn near the foot                 |
| 10. Evergreen shrub genus       | 45. Impatient                          |
| 12. Large African antelope      | 46. Set an example for others          |
| 14. Something you receive       | 47. Actor Pitt                         |
| 19. Satisfy                     | 48. Instrument of torture              |
| 23. Wet dirt                    | 51. Swiss river                        |
| 24. No longer here              | 52. Grayish white                      |
| 25. Writing utensil             | 53. A way to print                     |
| 26. Ribonucleic acid            | 54. Storied college hoops program      |
| 27. Consume food                | 58. Midway between south and southeast |
| 28. Licensed for Wall Street    |  |
| 29. Alternative forms of a gene |  |

### PUZZLE SOLUTION

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# Marianapolis announces John F.X. "Jack" Barry '71 as 2026 Commencement



John F.X. "Jack" Barry

**THOMPSON** — Marianapolis Preparatory School is proud to announce that alumnus John F.X. "Jack" Barry '71 will serve

as the commencement speaker for the school's Centennial Celebration in 2026.

A dedicated alumnus, Mr. Barry attended Marianapolis as a day student from 1967 to 1971. During his time on campus, he was a member of the National Honor Society and a three-sport athlete, playing soccer, basketball, and baseball. Notably, he is also recognized for participating in the very first game of Ultimate Frisbee held at the school gymnasium in December 1972.

Following graduation, Mr. Barry attended the University of New Hampshire's hotel

school, graduating in December 1975. While at UNH, he helped found the University's first Ultimate Frisbee team in 1973 and was involved in laying out the first disc golf course in Maine at Fort McClary State Park later that same year. In 1974, he earned the title of "Frisbee Master."

Mr. Barry went on to enjoy a distinguished 52-year career in the hospitality industry, including 35 years with Best Western International. Throughout his career, he held leadership positions in hotel training, purchasing, and hotel development and earned

recognition as Employee of the Year once and Salesman of the Year three times. From 1984 to 1988, he also served as "Mr. Friendly," the corporate mascot for Best Western International, then known as the world's largest lodging chain. He additionally earned the designation of Certified Purchasing Manager (CPM).

Now retired, Mr. Barry enjoys spending time with his wife, Corinne Racicot, their five grandchildren, and two more grandchildren on the way.

"Jack's 50th reunion was shelved due to Covid. It is only fitting that on his 55th

year of graduation, the Class of 2026 gets a chance to spend time hearing his words of wisdom," said President of Marianapolis Schools, Joe Hanrahan. "Over the past 15 years, I have had the privilege of getting to know Jack as a loyal and enthusiastic alumnus whose warmth, humor, and life experiences will undoubtedly resonate with the

Class of 2026." Jack shared that he is honored to return to Marianapolis to address this year's graduating class and celebrate the School's historic Centennial year.

# Jason Chin named Thompson's Veteran of the Month

**THOMPSON** — United States Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jason A. Chin of North Grosvenordale has been selected by the nominating committee to be recognized and honored as the June, 2026 Veteran of the Month for the Town of Thompson. He becomes the first Army National Guardsman to be selected for our monthly award and recognition.

Chin was born in Framingham, Mass. in June of 1978. He attended various schools in the Ashland, Mass. area. He had a very unusual, difficult and sad childhood. He had to overcome numerous obstacles, difficulties and family tragedies as he progressed thru his childhood and into adulthood. He had to navigate, overcome and conquer many demons along the way. Chin used his inner strength to overcome and channel his energy into eventually, many years later, becoming a decorated Veteran of the United States Armed Service.

Chin uses the phrase, "My mother is my aunt, and my aunt is my mother." His biological mother gave birth to him when she was just 16 years old, and he was subsequently raised by a much older aunt who adopted Jason at birth. Life never came easy for Chin and his siblings. He and his two sisters were physically and emotionally abused, every day, month after month and year after year until, at the age of 13, he determined that he had seen enough and left home in search of a better life. At the age of 10, Chin cut a deal with his father. He would absorb the daily beatings of his two sisters, so that they were spared from their Father's horrors.

Once he left home, Chin lived on the streets from the age 13 to 17. He moved from one location to another, attempting to survive life on his own. He lived in the back of automobiles, outdoors, vacant buildings, tents and wherever he could find shelter from the weather, and food to sustain his well-being, all doing so while continued to attend school. He was expelled from school at the beginning of his sophomore year. Getting into trouble, attempting to endure horrible existence conditions came very easy, and became his way of life. In some way, petty larceny, trespassing, drug use, and other challenging and questionable activities allowed him to provide food and shelter to sustain his well-being. He would often be arrested by the local police and temporarily incarcerated.

By 2000, Chin decided that he wanted to change his way of life and have a more normal existence. Jason decided that he wanted to join the armed services. That decision in itself became a challenge because of his long record of incarceration and general disregard for the rule of law while attempting to survive on the streets, and to get thru each and every day to remove himself from a very bad situation that he existed in, including his use of drugs. He quickly found out that that because of his long record with the authorities, not any branch of the military would allow him to sign up for the armed services. He was so determined that he wanted to do something for himself, and to join the armed forces, that he hired an attorney with money from his own pocket. His attorney was partially successful in getting some of his charges and incidences reduced, and some minor infractions eliminated so that the military recruiters would give him a second chance. Jason was successful with a recruiter from the Army National Guard, and that was enough of a break for him to begin a new chapter in his life and have an opportunity given to him that he was not about to pass on.

In 2005, Chin began his 20-year military career by deploying to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. to complete his Basic Training as a combat engineer. In those ensuing 20 years, Staff Sgt. Chin was ordered to active-duty numerous times. On two separate overseas tours, Chin was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraq Freedom. He served in a designated "imminent danger area" for a one-year period, patrolling the roadside for cleansing of undetonated bombs from the Kuwait Seaport all the way into Iraq. Chin later reclassified as 88M, a motor transport operator and joined a transportation battalion. Jason then reclassified as 11B Infantryman where he deployed to Syria as part of base defense and security and spent approximately 9 long, dangerous months.

Stateside, Chin's National Guard Unit was often activated for various state emergencies when the Governor needed urgent manpower for various duties and acts of God. He mentioned that some of those call-ups were for a number of major snowstorms, numerous Covid related issues that needed military assistance, and providing security for major state and national events. One such event was the security that the Army National Guard unit provided for the annual Boston Marathon. Chin and many other National Guard personnel were on scene during that horrific Boston Marathon Massacre event of April 15, 2013.

For Chin's extraordinary and courageous 20 year service to the military, he was awarded the following decorations: The Meritorious Service Medal, The Army Commendation Medal twice, the Army Achievement Medal three times, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the Army Reserve Component Achievement five times, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Armed Forces Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, the Non Commissioned Officer Professional Ribbon Second Award, the Army Service Ribbon, The Overseas Service Ribbon, The Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M Device second award, the Combat Action Badge, and The Driver and Mechanic Badge. As a result of his heroic actions and injuries incurred during his active duties, Chin is designated as a 100 percent Disabled American Veteran.

Chin has also volunteered as a suicide prevention officer for the United States Army for 18 years. While suffering from his own service connected PTSD and mental health issues, he attempted suicide in September 2025. He worked as a certified Pharmacy Technician for 15 years, and was also a mail carrier for the United States Post Office for seven years. In his youth, he played Pop Warner Football and Youth Soccer.

Chin is very proud that in spite of his physical limitations, He ran the 26.2-mile Boston Marathon in 2014 in full military gear the year following the Marathon massacre in support of the Boston Marathon victims. He is a lifetime member of the North Andover Veterans of Foreign Wars. Chin has three children (oldest Son Bryant, middle Son Cadan and daughter Harper).

On April 30, 2025, Chin was diagnosed with Colon Cancer. On May 14, 2025, two weeks after his diagnosis, he had surgery to remove four inches of his colon wall, two inches of his colon and 7 inches if his large intestine, and at that point he was cancer free. In February 2026, less than four months ago, he was again diagnosed with Stage 4 Intestinal Cancer. Jason is currently undergoing alternating chemo therapy and injection therapy to attempt to fight off his latest medical setback. It is very apparent that Jason Chin has been a warrior throughout his entire life, and he will overcome yet another challenge.

We pray for Jason Chin, and for all veterans.

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**FRANK G. CHILINSKI**

PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

**BRENDAN BERUBE**

EDITOR

# Before they walk across the stage

As graduation season arrives across Northeastern Connecticut, much of the attention naturally falls on diplomas, scholarships, and commencement speeches. Those accomplishments deserve celebration. Yet some of the most important achievements taking place in our schools are not always measured by grades alone.

The recent Career Pathway Celebration at Killingly High School offered an excellent reminder that education comes in many forms and that preparing students for successful futures requires more than a traditional classroom experience. At this year's event, 91 seniors were recognized for completing 127 career pathways across six different career clusters, ranging from agriculture and business to education, communications, and industrial design.

What makes these accomplishments especially meaningful is that they connect learning directly to the real world.

Every student who completed a pathway pathway participated in job-shadowing experiences with local employers and organizations. Those experiences give students opportunities to explore careers, develop professional skills, and better understand the expectations they will face after high school. Whether a student plans to attend a four-year university, enroll in community college, enter a trade, or begin working immediately, that exposure is invaluable.

For years, society has sometimes fallen into the trap of treating college preparation as the only measure of educational success. The reality is far more complex. Communities need nurses, teachers, welders, architects, entrepreneurs, mechanics, accountants, farmers, construction managers, and countless other skilled professionals. Strong schools recognize that students have different talents, interests, and goals.

Programs like Killingly's Career Pathways initiative acknowledge that reality.

They also demonstrate the importance of partnerships between schools and local businesses. The willingness of employers throughout Northeastern Connecticut to host job shadows and provide students with practical experiences helps strengthen the entire region. Businesses gain an opportunity to help develop the next generation of workers. Students gain firsthand knowledge that no textbook can fully provide.

Perhaps the most inspiring part of this year's celebration was the induction of Killingly graduate Emma Guillot into the Career Pathway Hall of Fame. Her journey from a high school architecture pathway student to a construction management professional and college instructor illustrates exactly what these programs are designed to accomplish. She found an interest, pursued it through higher education, built a successful career, and now helps teach the next generation.

Stories like hers matter because they show current students what is possible.

The keynote message delivered by Michael Herklots carried a similar theme. Life does not always follow the path we originally imagine. Dreams evolve. Careers change. Opportunities emerge in unexpected places. What matters is developing the skills, adaptability, and perspective necessary to recognize those opportunities when they appear.

That lesson extends well beyond the graduates seated in the audience.

As a community, we share a responsibility to create opportunities for young people to discover their strengths and pursue their ambitions. Schools cannot do that work alone. Businesses, civic organizations, parents, and community leaders all play a role in helping students connect classroom learning with future possibilities.

The seniors recognized at this year's Career Pathway Celebration have already taken important steps toward that future. Some will continue their education. Some will enter the workforce. Some will change directions several times before finding their ultimate destination.

What matters is that they leave high school with experiences, skills, and confidence that will serve them well.

Before they walk across the graduation stage, that achievement deserves recognition. It is an investment not only in individual students, but in the future strength of Northeastern Connecticut itself.

# OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### One citizen, one vote

To the Editor:

The insane epidemic of redistricting is destroying our democratic processes. Now that the feeding frenzy has been started, the only way to save us is to finally abolish the Electoral College. Its time has come. For a shortcut, and the latest information on the movement, go to [https://thehill.com/homenews/nexstar\\_media\\_wire/5831164-](https://thehill.com/homenews/nexstar_media_wire/5831164-)

us-inches-closer-to-change-in-how-presidential-elections-are-counted/

Time to take up the cry, "One Citizen, One Vote." It has never made more sense.

KAREN RYKER  
WOODSTOCK

### Are we witnessing the end of America?

To the Editor:

Are we now looking at, and living in, the fall of the United States of America? Our history books are filled with accounts of great civilizations that rose to world-dominating power, and then at a certain point of catastrophic decisions and actions—fell into failure.

Unfortunately, we see daily indications of the very flawed decision-making that leads to such failure right here in our beloved country: draining of the public coffers that provide life-affirming resources like affordable health care and cancer research; food that is safe to eat; water that is safe to drink and bathe in; safe housing for those who sometimes work two or three jobs for not enough income; remediation of hazardous working conditions; protection of our country's natural resources and national parks; and steps to transition from fossil fuel power sources to desperately needed renewable energy sources: solar, wind, hydro and geothermal.

At the same time, unparalleled billions for weapons, luxury jets for weekly transport to various golf courses or sports events, a White House ballroom, attempts—often successful—to silence critics and media outlets for speaking truth to power, imposition of unconstitutional orders like tariffs, full-out bombing of a nation that has never attacked our soil, and a president who likens himself to Jesus Christ after praising Allah in a previous social media post.

Now is the time — past time, really — for Congress to take the steps provided in our U.S. Constitution to impeach and remove this misfit from the Oval Office. This man is in the wrong

job, and that is a much kinder assessment than he has spewed about state and federal officials of both major political parties who have displeased or angered him when they were just doing their jobs.

What more do senators and congressmen and women need to see? One can only conclude that those who do nothing or who go along with this president have chosen allegiance to a man—Donald J. Trump — rather than choosing to honor the oath they swore to protect and defend the Constitution. This is not about republican or democrat; this is about whether or not we bow to and obey a self-appointed monarch. I say self-appointed because I do not believe that those who voted for Donald Trump cast their ballots to return to a monarchy or for higher costs of all necessary life expenses.

Indeed, Mr. Trump campaigned on exactly the opposite of what his administration has perpetrated. Well, except for his promise to pardon over 1,500 convicted felons who attacked our U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. He kept that promise. Is your life better because of that executive action? And are you in agreement that our hard-earned tax dollars be disbursed to these felons, as proposed by MAGA?

People, this makes no sense, and what we are seeing and living now cannot continue without the end of what we have cherished as the United States of America. We can save this country if reason — and our humanity — prevail.

Respectfully,

CLAUDIA TERWILLIGER ALLEN  
THOMPSON

### Thompson school spending and priorities

To the Editor:

The Thompson Public Schools are facing a familiar challenge shared by many small districts: declining enrollment paired with rising per-pupil costs. I do not oppose paying local taxes—especially since they are spent directly in our community and are small compared to federal taxes. I also had a positive experience in the Thompson Public School system and, like many residents, attended at no cost.

At the same time, I understand why many people are concerned about the proposed 8.74 percent increase in the school budget. School budgets are often difficult for the public to interpret, and there is also a practice commonly referred to as "spend-down," where remaining year-end funds are used for non-budgeted items. The rationale is that unspent funds may lead to lower allocations in future budgets.

Ultimately, the best way to evaluate a school system is by comparing it to similar districts. Thompson has approximately 826 students. With a proposed \$23.68 million budget, the cost per pupil is about \$28,671. By comparison, Putnam spends approximately \$20,906 per pupil; Woodstock about \$19,706, and the Connecticut state average is roughly \$22,721. This raises questions about the disparity.

A common explanation is that special education costs drive higher spending. According to EdSight, the percentage of students receiving special education services is about 20% in Thompson, compared to 20.4 percent in Putnam, 14.1 percent in Woodstock, and 19% statewide. These figures do not appear significantly different enough to explain the gap.

Another factor is class size. Tourtellotte Memorial High School averages approximately

a 10:1 student-to-teacher ratio, compared to about 12:1 in Putnam, 15:1 at Woodstock Academy, and 12:1 statewide. This raises the question of whether some classes are extremely small and whether consolidating class sizes could result in meaningful salary savings.

Despite these smaller class sizes and higher spending, academic outcomes do not appear proportionally stronger. Pre-K was added nearly 30 years ago with the goal of improving long-term academic readiness. However, current proficiency levels at Tourtellotte are approximately 46–49 percent in reading and range from roughly 12–42 percent in math depending on the year and assessment category.

As the public debate continues, a common question is, "What would you cut?" I would instead ask why certain programs were added and at what cost. In recent years, Tourtellotte added programs such as Culinary Arts and Welding. Currently, 42 Thompson students currently attend Ellis Tech, which already offers these same programs at no tuition cost to the town, as the State of Connecticut covers tuition. Thompson is responsible only for transportation.

When these programs were being considered, was there sufficient discussion at the Board of Education level about whether they were necessary, given that similar opportunities already exist at Ellis Tech and are funded by the state?

Has anyone on the Board of Education or the Business Manager done a line by line analysis of the Thompson School budget compared to other area towns? Often contracts are automatically renewed. You can't find savings if you don't look.

TIM PIETTE  
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

### Make recycling great again

To the Editor:

Nice to see Paws was able to bring in multiple truckloads of cans and bottles at their latest drive, just showcasing that people really love not fighting with a scummy machine that constantly rejects containers for no reason.

One of the things I haven't emphasized enough with this whole bottle deposits thing is how beverages are singled out. We know metal recycling is the clear winner over everything else, but imagine if people could mix aluminum beverage containers with regular cans and nonprofits could make bulk recycling runs because we stopped being fussy with beverages and only beverages. That gives them more metal to turn in, and possibly

saves processing resources since hauler companies these days use single stream recycling and have big machines sorting things after the fact.

Recycling was pitched as an environmental thing. Unfortunately, the process involves more fossil fuel usage most of the time. I like the idea of reclaiming materials more than anything else.

Ultimately, my whole point about all of this was that our state government's barking up the wrong tree. Let's stop wasting taxpayer resources on artificial bureaucracy and move forward 30 years. The 2020s are certainly different from the 1990s.

JAY GERHART  
PUTNAM

### 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.

## Connecticut's Revolutionary War battlefields

The Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar is open for the season, and will be open Saturdays and Sundays



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Celebrate America 250/Brooklyn. The Brooklyn Historical Society Museum & Daniel Tyler Law Office will be open every Wednesday and Sunday, from 1-5 p.m. through Oct. 11, and by appointment throughout Walktober. Handicapped-accessible.

ATHA Quiet Corner Hook-In. Saturday, June 13, Woodstock Fairgrounds, Route 169 & 171 Woodstock. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Stop by and learn the basics of rug hooking, punch needle, rug braiding, spinning, basket and broom making, wool applique, hand embroidery and knitting. \$5 entrance fee for demonstration participation. Questions: [whisperhill@earthlink.net](mailto:whisperhill@earthlink.net).

Support a Killingly Historic Property. Killingly Grange #112, 801 Hartford Turnpike (Route 101), will hold a Chicken BBQ Saturday, June 13 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Rain or shine. ½ chicken, corn on the cob, potato salad, roll, watermelon. \$16. Dine in or take out. Limited number of meals. To reserve a meal call or text 860-884-1813. The Grange is collecting non-perishable food for the local food pantries. At the door pay by cash, check, or credit card.

On May 30, I had the pleasure of watching a presentation by Connecticut's retired State Archaeologist, Nick Bellantoni. In celebration of America's 250th anniversary, he spoke on Connecticut's Revolutionary War battlefields and related archaeological finds. As background he noted that Connecticut was in a strategic location during the Revolution. The British wanted to separate the colonies at the Hudson River in New York so they would be severely weakened. Food and the ability to transport it was a major need on both sides, and even during the early stages of the conflict there was a lot of raiding to capture horses, oxen and the fruits of the harvests.

Nick presented Revolutionary sites pretty much in chronological order. The first area was Ridgefield in western Connecticut. On April 26 and 27, 1777, British Major General William Tyron ravaged the area first destroying the arsenal in Danbury, and 16 houses in that town. Then he marched to Ridgefield where the militia had established barricades. The British quickly destroyed them and overwhelmed the Patriots. The Americans lost General David Wooster who was mortally wounded. At least 8 Patriots and 16 British died and were buried, however the exact site has not been located. Where possible, archaeological work has been done in the area. An intriguing discovery was made some years ago when a family was preparing to convert a dirt-floor basement into a family room—a skeleton was found. Nick was called in and several additional bodies were discovered. Clothing, boots, etc. had been stripped from them. Were these from the Battle of Ridgefield? Stripping of clothing was a common battlefield activity as everything of value was often taken from the dead.

Nick spoke about this area's General Israel Putnam's encampment in Redding during the winter of 1778-1779 which is now a Connecticut State Park. It has been called the "Valley Forge of the North." The soldiers had a very difficult time with little food and frigid weather. Conditions were extremely harsh. (The country was still in the throes of the Little Ice Age which lasted until about 1850). Archaeological work has uncovered sites of a number of the wooden huts which the soldiers constructed. Putnam State Park, at the junction of CT Routes 58 and 107 in Redding has been included in the book *Nick did with Barbara Ann Kipfer, Hiking Ruins of Southern New England* (a Falcon Guide). "There are eight archaeological sites along the trail and the ruins are visible to

Turn To **KILLINGLY** page **A7**

## When a truck is bearing down on you, you get out of the road

To the Editor:

A month ago, apropos of absolutely nothing, Michael Douglas wrote here that the fact that the Maldives, buttressed by new seawalls and pumped-in sand, had not yet sunk beneath the waves is evidence that global warming (or the “climate crisis”) is just “propaganda built on inversion and fear.” Two weeks later, also in this space, Dave Clark, a long-time high school science teacher, did a nice job of debunking, point-by-point, virtually all of Mr. Douglas’ arguments. Mr. Douglas then responded to Mr. Clark last week by pretty much changing the nature of the discussion, saying that the Maldives not going under (thanks to the new seawalls, etc.) is actually evidence of “human adaptability and resilience,” and that “this is not evidence of inevitable climate catastrophe.” He then went on to say that “what concerns many Americans, myself included, is not honest scientific inquiry, but the increasing politicization of climate science.” He added, “We are constantly told the world is nearing irreversible catastrophe unless governments dramatically expand regulation, taxation, and centralized control over energy, transportation, agriculture, and daily life.” I guess I see things as follows: In the 1800s, a number of scientists discovered the greenhouse effect (that CO2 in the atmosphere traps heat), and then, in the early and mid-1900s, scientists showed that the planet had been warming over the previous 50 years, that the warming was picking up speed, and was occurring simultaneously with an increase in the concentration of atmospheric CO2. Finally, in 1988, the NASA scientist James Hansen testified before Congress that “with 99 percent confidence” global warming was being caused by humans. Since then, the argument has been largely what, exactly, to do about it. It sounds as if Mr. Douglas is saying we should do absolutely nothing, that to take

any sort of collective action is running the risk of interfering with people’s “personal freedom” to live life the way they want to — that any sort of action would require “central control over energy, transportation, agriculture, and daily life.” In other words, this is a “me first, the rest be damned” sort of philosophy. Mr. Douglas decries what he terms the “politicization” of climate change but keeps getting all tangled up in whether or not climate change exists at all. So. It’s best to keep things simple. Is there climate change? How fast is it occurring? I think we have a pretty good idea at this point. Next, what should we do about it? The current Administration in Washington has been engaged in an all-out war on climate science. It has withdrawn the U.S. from climate treaties and bodies, orchestrated a disinformation campaign against established climate science, and initiated any number of coercive measures to push pro-fossil fuel policies while simultaneously doing everything possible to squelch clean energy projects. I would think anyone who abhors “the politicization of climate science” would want that sort of thing to stop pronto. It’s actually a really difficult problem. How do you get a bunch of people to do something which will ultimately benefit them and the world, when their autonomy, possibly their incomes, but mainly their ability to “do what they want to do when they want to do it” might be curtailed to some degree? If Mr. Douglas continues to doubt whether the world is at risk of severe and dramatic change due to global warming, he would do well to study how the insurance industry is addressing it. It’s not politics with them. It’s money. And that industry views global warming as an immediate and severe financial threat. I guess the image that comes to me most frequently is standing in the middle of a road with a semi-truck bearing down on me. I’d be best advised to get out of that road.

JOHN A. DAY, JR.  
WOODSTOCK VALLEY

## States are fixing what the Supreme Court Broke — Connecticut, your turn

To the Editor:

Most people, no matter where they fall politically, agree on one thing: regular people have less and less say in who runs our government. If you’ve ever wondered why, a good place to start is Jan. 21, 2010, the day the Supreme Court decided *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.

That one decision threw out more than a century of campaign finance law and told corporations they had the same free speech rights as you and me when it comes to spending money in elections. The result super PACs spent \$62.6 million in 2010. By 2020, outside spending in federal elections had climbed to \$3.3 billion, and it came close to \$4.5 billion in 2024. (OpenSecrets & Center for American Progress) Much of that money flows in the dark and is untraceable. In 2024, voters had no idea who spent millions trying to influence their vote, and the true sources of that money will most likely never be known. (OpenSecrets)

Should corporations, which exist because states grant them legal status and privileges, be permitted to spend unlimited sums influencing elections? Corporations are created by states. Each state decides whether a corporation gets to exist, what it’s allowed to do, and what protections it gets, like limited liability. And what a state gives, a state can define. As legal scholars have pointed out, no corporate charter in U.S. history ever granted the authority to spend money in elections. When states stop giving corporations that power, the First Amendment has nothing to attach to. No power means no right. (Center for American Progress)

States have started to figure this out and are doing something about it.

California AB 1984 (2025–2026). AB 1984 would revoke all previously granted corporate powers not spelled out in state law and explicitly exclude election activity and ballot-issue activity from the powers a corporation is allowed to have. Step over that line, and you risk losing your charter privileges. The bill is structured to be replicated, its language and enforcement concept are appearing in state legislatures nationwide, and that is not an accident. (LegiScanCA).

Hawaii SB 2471 (2026), now Act 11. Governor Josh Green signed SB 2471 into law on May 14, restricting political spending by corporations and other “artificial persons” by redefining and limiting the powers the state grants to those entities. Starting July 1, 2027, any corporation that engages in election or ballot-issue activity in Hawaii faces penalties, including the loss of state charter privileges. (State of Hawaii)

Montana Initiative 194 (I-194 “The Montana Plan”) Montana’s Transparent Election Initiative has been cleared to gather signatures to put I-194 on the November ballot, a measure that would prohibit corporations from spending money on political candidates or ballot issues. A poll by Issue One found 74 percent of Montana voters support the initiative, including majorities of Republicans and Independents. That’s not a partisan issue. That’s just people who want their votes to mean something. (Daily

Other states are joining the movement. Arizona Senate Concurrent Resolution 1053 (SCR 1053) would prohibit corporations and other entities from political

Turn To **LETTER** page **A10**

## How did holding officials accountable work in Massachusetts?

To the Editor:

I’d like to make a few comments on two of last week’s letters. First is where it was mentioned that “it is up to us to hold those we elect accountable.” And though I totally agree, I’d like to note that while 72 percent of Massachusetts voters supported and voted for an audit of the state legislature, their governor and AG blocked it. Through legality, they found a way to avoid the will of the voters. I hope the voters try again. Then there’s the issue of all this fraud going on in Minnesota and elsewhere. When an investigative reporter visited the addresses of Somali Day Care Centers and found them to be in abandoned warehouses, who will be held accountable for that? Maybe a better question is who is going to do it and when? Do you still think that whatever fraud that’s happening in this country is still rare and in such a small amount that it’s nothing to be concerned about?

It’s been reported that our sue crazy AG has secured court victories in “at least six” prominent multi-state lawsuits against Trump administration policies, he’s joined in over 50, all of them at the taxpayers’ expense. (At least we know where some of our money is going.) Six out of 50? Would you hire an attorney with that record? The ways to hold these people accountable are either to vote them out, force a term limit vote, or to do like they did in the old days - drag them out into the streets and tar and feather them. Seeing the voting options are highly unlikely, I’ll take the stickier one.

When I asked that great lord of all knowledge (the Internet) how the American people feel about having “term limits,” its (AI Overview) response was that “between 80 and 87 percent of Americans support congressional term limits.” Also that “this widespread backing transcends partisan lines and has remained consistent across multiple polls and surveys.” Seems like it’s the will of the voters to me. So maybe in her next letter, Lisa Arends can give us yet another reason to contact our representatives? She will have my backing. I’m sure that these stage-seeking, and wannabe career politicians like Chris Murphy wouldn’t approve, but then I’d be more than happy to supply the tar and feathers.

The last paragraph of Mr. Etzel’s latest grumbling where he commented on President Trump’s visit to Arlington

National Cemetery on Memorial Day, struck me personally. First because my father is buried there, and he also fought in the Battle of the Bulge. During it, he was captured by the Germans and he spent the rest of the war as their prisoner. The memory affected him. My uncle fought there, as well and he returned home with shrapnel still in his body. He would later go on to become Johnny Carson’s head tailor and he’s buried in the same plot as my mother. My Godfather also served in that war. Another reason why they fought was to help preserve Mr. Etzel’s right to be able to continually voice his opinions here. And by the way, Stephen, one of my favorite war movies in “Bataan.”

Secondly is because those attending protestors didn’t have the common decency to even give it a rest on that sacred Holiday, which I consider to be insulting to my father, my mentioned relatives, and to all those who have served to help protect the USA. I only hope that the ghosts of the fallen are now haunting those uncaring protestors. Another insult came from a member of our United States Congress who read World War II (the Roman Numeral) as World War “eleven.”

I recently had a pleasant conversation with a member of the Killingly Democratic Society, who jovially remembered me as a contributor here. (He may have noticed my restraint here.) I ran into another positive remembering person while at my eye doctor appointment. And until I decide to again either enlighten or anger you readers, I’ll leave you with this thought - who is responsible for this “AI Overview” that gives us answers to our questions? Are they like these (so-called) “independent” fact checkers that Facebook used to have? Does AI fact check AI? Imagine that — we’re now getting answers from an artificial intelligence source. When you look up the word “artificial” in the dictionary, among its definitions are “made by human work,” and “not genuine.” I’m confused. Does anybody remember that “Twilight Zone” episode “The Man in the Cave,” where the townspeople got their answers from a computer? (In that episode the computer was right.) Mr. Serling predicted the future. But then, we can always get “genuine” information from our politicians, right?

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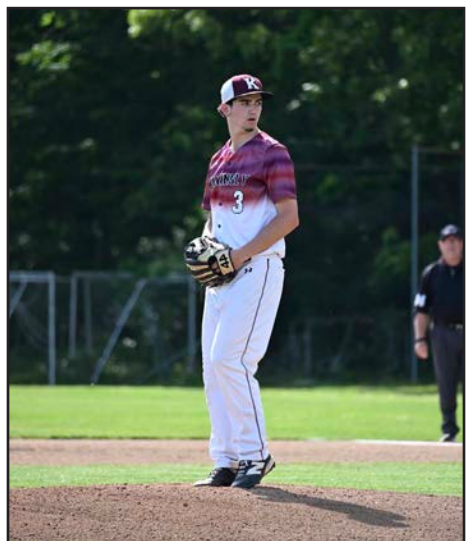
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# Killingly High School Weekly Sports Wrap-Up



**Baseball**  
Killingly Baseball (12-9) took the win over Fitch (7-14) on May 26 behind the arm of Gaighe DeBella who went the distance with a complete game performance, allowing only 3 hits, 1 run, and striking out 6 batters!

Final Score: 10 - 1!  
Killingly struck first in the first inning after Jake Voyer led off the game with a double to right center! Despite an unfortunate liner into a double play, Voyer was able to score on a wild pitch with 2 outs to give Killingly a 1-0 lead! Killingly extended that lead with some good situational hitting by Voyer and Michael DeAngelis in the second, pushing the lead to 3-0!

In the 4th inning, an RBI single by Michael DeAngelis scored Brady Girardin, to give Killingly a 4-0 lead! Fitch responded however in the bottom half, getting some traffic against DeBella and scoring their 1st run on an RBI single to make it 4-1.

In the 5th, Killingly broke the game open! Three straight hits by Jake Beaudreault, DeBella (3 hits on the day), and Jacob Long (2 hits) scored Beaudreault to make it 5-1! DeAngelis (2 hits, 3 RBI's) singled to right to score DeBella, before Murdock unloaded a 2-run double to the gap in left center to make it 9-1! Killingly scored one more run in the 6th, and allowed DeBella comfort on the mound all day.

DeBella set down 7 of the last 8 hitters he faced in route to securing the win for Killingly!

The boys (now 12-10) fell to East Lyme (18-3) on May 28 in 10 innings by a final score of 2-1 in the ECC D1 Quarterfinals.

Michael Fabiano, Jr. led Killingly on the mound, going 7.2 innings allowing only 3 hits and 1 earned run while striking out 9 batters! Fabiano Jr also added a double at the plate.

Killingly tied the score with an RBI single in the 6th inning by Alex Murdock who drove in Michael DeAngelis, but could not muster any more offense and was stymied by East Lyme pitching.

Jake Beaudreault held the East Lyme offense at bay for 1.2 innings of relief, escaping a jam in the 8th and going 1-2-3 in the 9th but East Lyme scored the walk off single in the 10th inning.

Beaudreault, Jake Voyer, and Brady Girardin each added hits for Killingly.

On June 1, the boys (12-11) fell on the road to St. Joe's (14-9) in the 1st round of the CIAC Class M State tournament.

Gaighe DeBella pitched masterfully for the first 5 innings, taking a 1-0 shutout lead into the bottom of the 5th. St. Joe's broke through and scored 4 in the 5th to take the lead.

DeBella finished with 5 innings, allowing 7 hits, 4 runs, and striking out 4.

Killingly scored their lone run in the 3rd inning on an RBI ground out by Alex Murdock, scoring Brady Girardin from third. Murdock, Jake Beaudreault, and Gaighe DeBella each registered hits for Killingly.

**Track & Field**

On June 1, Killingly battled in New Britain for the Class M Division! This meet had 49 teams from around the State that each individual had to qualify to compete... this competition was the best of the best from around the state! Killingly sent 4 hard working, deserving, Scholar Athletes to compete!

Three awesome Seniors took to the field for one last time to battle... very bitter-



sweet!  
Ezekiel Benoit absolutely hoisted his Discuss for 107 feet 10 inches!

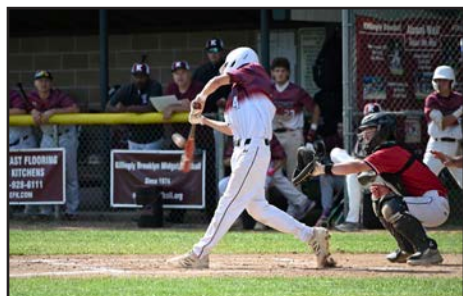
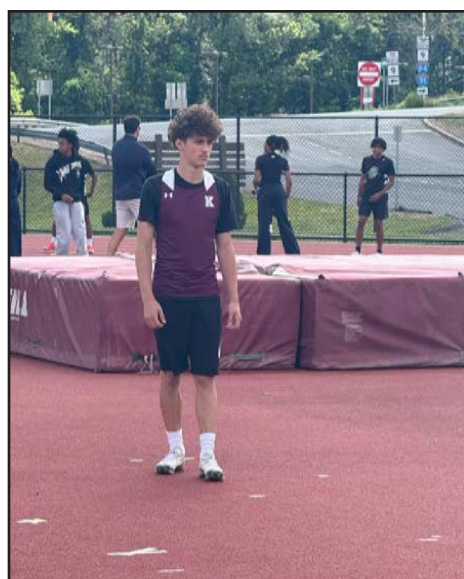
Cooper Logee flew through the air in both High Jump and Long Jump! He sprang for 6 feet in High Jump tying for 7th and vaulted in Long Jump for 18 feet 11 inches!

Jeremiah Smith catapulted in both High Jump and Long Jump! He leapt in High Jump for 6 feet tying for 7th and blasted off in Long Jump for 21 feet 3 inches finishing 3rd! He also competed in the 110m hurdles, finishing 1st in his heat and 2nd in the finals with a Personal Record of 14.62 seconds!

Seniors, thank you for everything you have done for the team, you will be missed! You brought an awesome energy to every meet!

Annnd Freshman Braydee Testa battled in his first States Championship competing in High Jump as well! He also rocketed in the High Jump for a height of 5 feet 9 inches, finishing 15th!

Gentlemen, all season you have represented yourselves and Killingly incredibly proud on and off the field! Thank you for an absolutely awesome season, days after school are going to feel a bit more boring



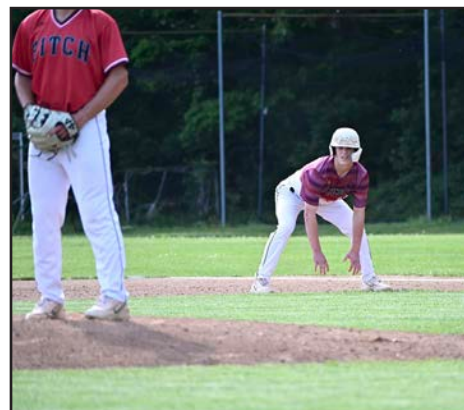
now! Also, special shout out to all the parents and friends that showed up to support, we could hear you and the team appreciates all of you! Jeremiah Smith, the season battles onto State Opens Saturday at Veterans Field in New Britain!

**Girls Golf**

On Tuesday, May 26, the Killingly High School Girl's Golf team traveled to Stonington and earned a victory. Killingly posted a score of 215 with Stonington posting a score of 218. Killingly was led by Mackenzie Pothier, Kate Crowley, and Jaynie MacQuarrie who all scored a 53. With the win Killingly improved their overall record to 11-2 on the year.

On Wednesday, May 27, the team hosted Stonington and earned a victory. Killingly posted a score of 198 with Stonington posting a score of 220. Killingly was led by Mackenzie Pothier who earned medalist honors by posting a score of 44. Kate Crowley also contributed to the victory with a score of 47. With the win Killingly improved their overall record to 12-2 on the year.

On Monday, June 1, the girls team travelled to Quinnatisset Country Club and fell short of a victory against Woodstock Academy. Killingly posted a score of 207 with Woodstock posting a score of 196. Killingly was led by Mackenzie Pothier



and Gracie Pekarovic-West, each posting a 49. With the loss Killingly's overall record falls to 12-3 on the year.

**Girls Tennis**

**ECC Tournament**  
Talia Santese (K) loss vs Jessica Feng (EL) 3-8 Pro Set  
Nina Purcell (K) loss vs Valentina Schiano (EL) 2-8 Pro Set  
Kayce Edwards & McKenna Mulvey (K) loss vs Isabella Brassaw & Rebecca Bartnik (St. B) 6-8 Pro Set  
Samantha Smyth & Corinne Daniels (K) loss vs Caralyn Staskowski & Pei Ni Lin (EL) 2-8 Pro Set

**State Tournament**  
May 29, 2026 match K-Trailblazers verse Woodland HS

KHS girls tennis defeated Woodland 4-3  
**Singles:**  
# 1 S: Talia Santese (K) defeated Olivia McDonald (W) 6-0, 6-3  
# 2 S: Nina Purcell (K) defeated Morgan Sweet (W) 0-6, 6-2, 6-3  
# 3 S: Abbey Danielson (K) defeated Madison Angal (W) 6-1, 6-3  
# 4 S: Mariette Vien (K) defeated Annie Viveiros (W) 6-4, 6-3

**Doubles:**  
#1 Doub: Kayce Edwards & McKenna Mulvey (K) loss vs Hanna Molleus & Caroline Foley (W) 2-6, 1-6  
#2 Doub: Samantha Smith & Corinne Daniels (K) loss vs Emma Henriques & Aaliyah Hodges (W) 2-6, 0-6  
# 3 Doub: Ri'nyah Couillard & Lucy Gavis loss vs Lilly Degennaro & Leila Sheetz (W) 0-6, 0-6

**State Tournament**  
May 31 match K-Trailblazers verse Rocky Hill HS

KHS girls tennis loss vs Rocky Hill 3-4  
**Singles:**  
# 1 S: Talia Santese (K) defeated Liya Joseph (RH) 6-2, 4-6, 6-3  
# 2 S: Nina Purcell (K) loss vs Mackenzie Holzmler (RH) 2-6, 1-6  
# 3 S: Abbey Danielson (K) loss Olivia Roderick (RH) 2-6, 1-6  
# 4 S: Mariette Vien (K) defeated Alyssa Rubalsky (RH) 7-5, 2-6, 6-3

**Doubles:**  
#1 Doub: Kayce Edwards & McKenna Mulvey (K) loss vs Julia Baclawski & Ashika Sharma (RH) 3-6, 2-6  
#2 Doub: Samantha Smith & Corinne Daniels (K) defeated Tanvee Powar & Alina Jose (RH) 6-4, (6-6) 7-5 TB  
# 3 Doub: Lucy Gavis & Ri'nyah Couillard (K) loss vs Deeksha Saravanan Kanimozhi & Sharona Sivashankar (RH) 1-6, 2-6



## Putnam Science Academy heading to Overtime Elite

PUTNAM — Some exciting news has arrived at 18 Maple St. in Putnam.

Putnam Science Academy's men's basketball program is taking another major step onto the national stage. After capturing five national prep championships since 2018, the Mustangs are now headed to Overtime Elite (OTE), one of the premier high school basketball leagues in the country.

Led by longtime head coach and athletic director Thomas Espinosa since 2002, Putnam Science Academy has built one of the top prep basketball programs in America.

The recent success of the Mustangs has gained national attention, and now the program will join Overtime Elite beginning next season.

Putnam Science will continue to compete in the New England prep school circuit while also playing a weekly OTE schedule. The league will feature nine teams from across the country, including programs from Florida, California, Texas, North Carolina, and Georgia. Putnam Science Academy will be the only New England team in the league.

OTE is widely considered the "NBA of high

school basketball," featuring many of the best players in the nation. The exposure the league provides is unmatched and will elevate the profile of Putnam Science Academy even further. With the move, the Mustangs are expected to become one of the most recognized prep basketball teams in the country.

The transition will also bring increased travel and national attention, but excitement around the program is at an all-time high. Putnam Science is expected to host an OTE showcase event later this year, likely in November or December, featuring several other OTE

teams. Many former OTE players have already gone on to the NBA, and numerous Top 50 recruits from each graduating class choose the league to compete against elite talent.

Espinosa reflected on the journey that brought the program to this moment.

"It's been a long road — a lot of ups and downs, a lot of challenges, a lot of obstacles — but this is pretty special," Espinosa said. "I can't really put into words what this means for our program. People wouldn't believe how far we've come, where we started from, and now to be

playing in OTE next year is something I can't describe. I want to thank all my former and current coaches for helping us get to this point, and all my former players who really bought into what we do here and committed to us. They helped us get to this point, and I can't thank them enough."

Espinosa also made sure to recognize longtime assistant coach Josh Scraba for his role in the program's rise.

"I can't thank my longtime assistant Josh Scraba enough as well," Espinosa said. "That guy has been by my side for most of this crazy ride. I trust him and

love him like a brother. I wouldn't have wanted to be on this ride with anyone else."

Putnam Science Academy has won five national championships in program history, capturing titles in 2018, 2020, 2022, 2023, and 2025. The program has also sent more than 150 players to Division I basketball programs, including several who have gone on to play in the NBA.

If you plan on catching a game this winter, make sure to arrive early. The small gymnasium at 18 Maple Street is expected to be packed, loud, and rocking all season long.

# Day Kimball Health names Bradley Pike April Employee of the Month

PUTNAM — Day Kimball Health (DKH) has named Bradley Pike, a physical therapist assistant in its inpatient physical medicine and rehabilitation department, Employee of the Month for April.

Pike joined DKH in September 2023, bringing nearly 13 years of experience in physical therapy. In his role, he works closely with patients to improve mobility, strength, balance and coordination through

individualized therapeutic interventions. He also collaborates with interdisciplinary care teams to help ensure safe patient discharges and support each patient's return to the highest possible level of function.

"Bradley's clinical expertise, collaborative spirit, and commitment to patient-centered care make him an invaluable member of our rehabilitation team," said Kyle Kramer, CEO of Day Kimball Health. "He con-

sistently goes above and beyond to educate patients and colleagues alike, helping to create a safer environment while improving outcomes for those we serve. We are proud to recognize him as our April Employee of the Month for his dedication to patient care and his commitment to supporting safe, successful recoveries for patients across the health system."

Before joining DKH, Pike built extensive experience

treating patients in inpatient, outpatient and home care settings throughout northeastern Connecticut. In addition to his day-to-day responsibilities at DKH, he serves as an educator for monthly body mechanics training classes for staff and speaks during Joint Academy classes, helping prepare joint replacement patients for surgery and recovery.

Pike said he feels honored and humbled to be rec-



Bradley Pike

ognized by his colleagues. While he does not seek the spotlight, he said the recognition is especially meaningful because it comes from the people he works alongside every day. He said what he enjoys most about his role is the opportunity to learn from colleagues across departments and from the patients themselves, adding that he values being part of an organization with the resources to address patients' needs collectively through care of mind, body and soul.

A native of Mobile, Alabama, Pike moved to Connecticut as a young child and was raised in Pomfret. He now lives in Eastford with his wife and two children.

Pike holds a Bachelor of Science in exercise science/sports and leisure management, with a minor in health education, from Eastern Connecticut State University as well as an associate's degree in physical therapy assistant technology from New England Institute of Technology.

Among his professional accomplishments, Pike is a certified clinical instructor and has received the New England PTA Consortium Clinical Faculty Award. He was also named Employee of the Month in 2017 by his previous employer.

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 website is [daykimball.org](http://daykimball.org).

## Pomfret Historical Society to host program about Revolutionary War artist John Trumbull



POMFRET — On Saturday, June 6 at 3 p.m., the Pomfret Historical Society will host "Painting the Revolution: John Trumbull's Revolutionary Art" at the Old Town House, 11 Town House Dr.

Historian Bev York will take the audience on a journey through the Revolutionary War from the perspective of the artist John Trumbull. The accomplished 18th century artist from Lebanon, painted scenes of the War for Independence including some of America's most iconic works- "Declaration of Independence," and "The

Death of General Warren at Breed's Hill," which features Pomfret's Lt. Thomas Grosvenor. York will discuss the challenges and successes of the youngest son of the patriotic family of Governor Jonathan Trumbull. Following the illustrated talk on the life and works of the artist, York will give a 10-15-minute hands-on class on portraiture for anyone who chooses to stay. The program is appropriate for children of all ages.

"Painting the Revolution" is the fourth America 250 educational program to be held at the Old Town House since April 2026. The series

of illustrated lectures and demonstrations is generously funded by The Last Green Valley through their America 250 grants in collaboration with Pomfret Historical Society which owns the 1841 meeting house, and the Pomfret 250 Commission. For a complete list of programs, concerts, and reenactments visit the Pomfret 250 Commission Web site.

Bev York is an eastern CT historian and an adjunct history and humanities instructor at CT State at Quinebaug Community College. She has served as the director and educator of the Mill

Museum in Willimantic, site administrator of the Nathan Hale Homestead in Coventry and curator of The America Museum project. York is passionate about teaching American History by sharing primary sourced local and relevant stories. She utilizes role playing and interactive illustrated presentations to engage, educate and entertain her audience.

York has prepared several programs for America's 250th Semi-quincentennial celebration: The Declaration of Independence; Connecticut Signatories; John Trumbull, painter; Jonathan (UConn mascot) and Governor Jonathan Trumbull; Outhouses, Saltpeter, Gunpowder; Revolutionary War Prisons and Prison ships and Foodways of Continental Soldiers. (titles and descriptions available). For information about Bev York's programs contact: [bevishistory@yahoo.com](mailto:bevishistory@yahoo.com) or email [bevishistory@yahoo.com](mailto:bevishistory@yahoo.com); cell: 860-208-0790.

Arrive early for parking and refreshments. For more information contact Donna Dufresne, Program Director, Pomfret Historical Society: [windsong@snet.net](mailto:windsong@snet.net); 860-465-7228.

## 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.

## KILLINGLY

continued from page A4

the hiker" (p. 10-14). Perhaps you'd like to visit it or have already been there.

Several Continental Army sites have been found in West Hartford. Another site, Black Rock Battery, at the mouth of the Black Rock River in Bridgeport, was attacked July 5, 1779. In Eastern Connecticut the Battle of Fort Griswold and the burning of New London on September 6, 1781 have long been remembered, especially since Norwich's Benedict Arnold had by then switched to the British side and had orchestrated part of the devastation. (You can learn more about the Battle of New London at a presentation by Matthew Reardon on Thursday, June 18 at 6:00

p.m. at Putnam Library). Nick Bellantoni has always been an excellent speaker and this time was no exception.

Are you interested in the history of our forefathers and mothers? I am always intrigued by the demonstrations when I go to Old Sturbridge Village. If you read the history announcements at the beginning of the column, you know you can see a few crafts much closer to home on June 13 at the Woodstock Fairgrounds. One of the crafts will be that of rug hooking. I learned how to do that over 50 years ago but never really learned any of the history of the craft. I thought I'd check the internet for some background. "Examples of pulling a loop of yarn through a woven textile dates back to 4th century Egypt where tufts of wool were pulled through a linen base... These rugs served

a dual purpose. They were used on floors in the summer and on the bed in the winter to provide extra warmth. When they were used on the floors, they were put loop side down for the day to day wear and flipped over to dress the house up a bit when company came over which kept the rug cleaner." (<https://www.friendsofthedecollinshouse.org/single-post/2018/10/11/primitive-rug-hooking-has-a-remarkable-history-part-1>).

"Rug hooking, as it is known today, is believed to have originated in Yorkshire, England in the early 1800s. According to folklore, English millworkers were allowed to collect yarn scraps shorter than nine inches from the floors of textile mills. Called 'thrums,' these scraps were too short to be used in the mills; therefore, millworkers were allowed to

keep them. These short strands of yarn were looped through a backing fabric, generally bur-lap which was readily available, (later rug warp was used) to make small household rugs. These early hooked rugs did not feature the elaborate floral motifs common in later rugs; instead, they featured simple designs or no design at all. Rug hooking soon traveled throughout Western Europe and to North America, becoming particularly popular in New England and Eastern Canada. At this time, the price of commercially produced rugs far outweighed the cost of hand-making one's own. Handmade rugs were often considered a trademark of the working class as wealthier families could afford machine-made rugs. In North America, strips of scrap fabric (often wool) were used more commonly

than yarn. The United States had fewer mills than England resulting in fewer scrap yarns available. In the latter half of the 19th century, rug hooking patterns began to be produced, particularly in New England where Philena Moxley (1844 - 1937) was among the first to sell patterns. An enterprising woman, Moxley opened a store in 1865 in Lowell, Massachusetts, a town known for its textile mills. She created over 2,000 designs of stamping blocks for printing embroidery patterns along with larger patterns for rug hooking. These stamps were created using thin strips of metal embedded in wooden blocks. The stamps were then used to mass produce patterns. Floral motifs are among the most common but animals, landscape scenes, and geometric patterns were also produced. Other

businesses soon sprang up to produce their own patterns for rug making kits." (<https://www.livingheritagemuseum.org/2025/09/11/21749/a-brief-history-of-hooked-rugs>). Do consider visiting the Woodstock Fairgrounds on June 13 to see the wonderful variety of crafts.

Margaret M. Weaver  
Killingly Municipal Historian,  
June 2026. Special thanks to  
Donna Swanson for information on the Rug Hooking Event. 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/killingly-historicalsociety](http://www.facebook.com/killingly-historicalsociety).

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# Rotary Club honors veterans

PUTNAM — The Putnam Rotary Club, fulfilling the last piece of its “Boots on the Ground” project this year, filled about 100 special patriotic bags with gifts and tokens of appreciation for the local veterans.

The bags were passed out to veterans at the Danielson Veterans Coffeehouse May 19.

Kathy Kirk, president of the Rotary Club, said the bags were filled with 250th Anniversary memorabilia, key chains, stickers, flag, a gift card to the Baker’s Dozen, signed cards of appreciation and cookies, and a nice 250th anniversary pin.

“We chose these items thinking that the 250 Anniversary items would

be something that they would use and cherish and be a reminder that because of their hard-earned sacrifice; our country is still free - and for 250 years! We also wanted them to be able to enjoy themselves with the cards from Bakers Dozen and the cookies and use that as a fellowship tool with their fellow veterans,” Kirk said.

Rotarians filled the bags at one of their recent meetings. They manned tables were stacked with different goodies for the bags and filled the bags — with military precision. The organized club members made short work of the project.

Asked why veterans, Kirk said, “We chose veterans because every freedom

we enjoy in our daily lives exists because generations of brave men and women were willing to sacrifice for it. The ability to wake up each day in a free country, speak freely, gather with our families, pursue our dreams, and live our everyday lives safely is something many of us take for granted. For 250 years, those freedoms have been protected by people who had the courage to put service before themselves. Freedom comes at a price and they paid the highest price for you and I to enjoy the freedoms that we have today. This was our small way of saying thank you and reminding them that their sacrifices are never, ever forgotten.”

President Kirk’s “Boots on the Ground” effort for

Rotary this year involved four projects. The same idea that was the hallmark of the veterans’ gift bags “guided all of our projects this year. Whether it was helping seniors, supporting the homeless, or reaching out to those struggling with mental illness, our goal was simple: to wrap our arms around them through these venues to let people know they matter, they are valued, they are not forgotten, and their community cares about them.”



Courtesy Rotary President Kathy Kirk at the Danielson Veterans Coffeehouse.

# Spectrum awards \$1,000 to Muddy Brook Fire Department

WOODSTOCK — Spectrum announced a donation of \$1,000 to the Muddy Brook Fire Department through the company’s national community philanthropic program, Spectrum Employee Community Grants.

The funding will help the

department purchase helmet-mounted lights, larger hand lights and support upgrades to its emergency notification paging system, making it easier and safer for responders to operate in low-visibility conditions.

“Support from local partners like Spectrum

makes a real difference for our department,” said Thomas Gugliotti, Fire Chief of Muddy Brook Fire Department. “We appreciate this grant, which will help us keep our responders safer and enhance emergency communications for our community.”

“Through Spectrum Employee Community Grants, we’re proud to provide support to vital community organizations with which our local employees are already volunteering their time and talent,” said Michael Liccione, Field Operations for Charter Communications. “Together, we’re build-

ing stronger communities where our customers and employees live and work across America.”

Spectrum Employee Community Grants has provided funding to more than nearly 650 local nonprofits in 35 states throughout the company’s service area since its inception in July 2019.

Recipients deliver criti-



Courtesy

Pictured left to right: Peter Engh, Past Chief; Pat Boyd, State Representative; Tom Gugliotti, Fire Chief; Kaylyn Converse, Cadette; Tom Converse, Deputy Chief; and Steve Costen, Director Field Engineering, Spectrum, gathered at the Muddy Brook Fire Department following Spectrum’s \$1,000 grant supporting new safety equipment and communications upgrades.



Courtesy

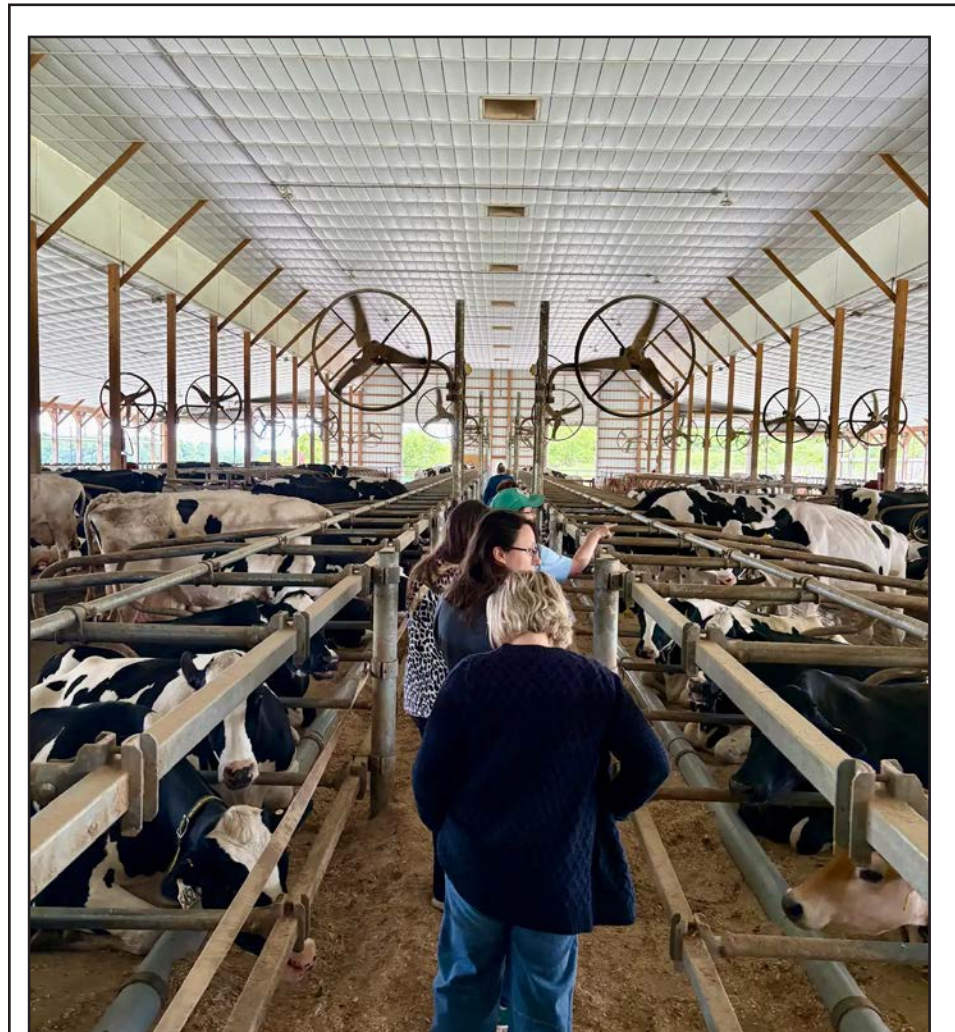
Cub Scout Pack 21 of Putnam is less than two weeks away from going on their first overnight camping trip of 2026. On Friday, June 5, Putnam’s Cub Scouts will be going out for the weekend to Camp Waldron in North Grosvenordale with Cub Scout Pack 93 of Hampton. At their regular pack meeting on Wednesday, May 27, at the Albert J. Breault VFW Post in Putnam, the Cubs put together camping equipment and played outdoor games. Overnight camping is just one of the many fun and challenging activities Cub Scout Pack 21 does throughout the year, overseen by trained and experienced adults. Pack 21 welcomes boys and girls ages five through ten. To join, call John Ryan, at (860) 928-5873.

# Ava Hovestadt of Woodstock receives Professor Keith Corkum Endowed Scholarship in Economics from Nichols College

DUDLEY, Mass. — Ava Hovestadt of Woodstock received a Professor Keith Corkum Endowed Scholarship in Economics at the Nichols College annual Academic Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, April 21. This award is given to a student who demonstrates excellence in the study of economics at Nichols and service to the Nichols community.

About Nichols College

Nichols College has earned business accreditation from the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), the longest serving global accrediting body for business schools and the largest business education network connecting learners, educators, and businesses worldwide. Founded in 1815, Nichols transforms today’s students into tomorrow’s leaders through a dynamic, career-focused business and professional education. Nichols offers real-world learning focused on professional depth - combined with vibrant living, competitive athletics, and an unmatched alumni advantage - equipping students to exceed their own expectations. www.nichols.edu



Courtesy

The Crowded Table, LLC, a female led woman’s leadership group was recently welcomed to a fabulous tour of Fort Hill Farms, in Thompson.

# Business owner's mid-year financial gut check for 2026

A mid-year financial review is always useful. In a volatile economy, it becomes essential. Business owners operate in real time, and it is easy to stay focused on what is urgent: sales, staffing, customer needs, costs, and daily decisions. But when conditions shift quickly, a structured pause can be one of the most valuable decisions an owner makes.

The current environment gives business owners plenty to review. The National Federation of Independent Business reported that its Small Business Optimism Index fell 3.0 points in March 2026 to 95.8, below its 52-year average of 98.0. The NFIB Uncertainty Index rose to 92, well above its historical average of 68. At the same time, only 16 percent of small business owners planned capital outlays in the next six months, the lowest reading since November 2009.

Those numbers do not mean every business should pull back. They do mean owners should make decisions with discipline. A mid-year gut check is not about reacting to bad news. It is about testing whether your current strategy still fits the environment you are



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JIM ZAHANSKY  
INVESTMENT ADVISER

actually operating in.

Start with the fundamentals: Cash flow, liquidity, and capital

Start with cash flow. Is revenue tracking the way you expected? Are margins holding? Have input costs changed? Have customers become more price sensitive? Small shifts in these areas can compound over the remainder of the year if they are not addressed early.

Next, review liquidity and debt. In uncertain environments, flexibility is a strategic asset. Adequate cash reserves and manageable debt levels can help a business navigate slower collections, higher costs, or unexpected disruptions without undermining longer-term plans.

Then look at capital allocation. Earlier in the year, an investment may have looked compelling. Six months later, the assumptions may have changed.

That does not automatically mean the decision was wrong, but it does mean the decision deserves review. The key question is whether each major use of capital still supports the long-term strategy.

Connect business performance to your personal financial plan

This is also the right time to reconnect the business plan with the owner's personal financial plan. For many owners, the two are deeply linked. Business performance affects household income, savings, tax planning, retirement contributions, charitable giving, and estate planning. When one changes, the other may need to adjust.

WHZ has long emphasized regular financial checkups because plans are not meant to sit untouched. In our existing midyear financial checkup guidance, we note that rebalancing, optimizing asset allocation, and adjusting goals based on current circumstances can help investors enter the second half of the year with greater confidence. The same principle applies to business owners, only with added complexity.

Identify risks early before they become larger prob-

lems

A mid-year review should also include risk exposure. Has customer concentration changed? Are you overly dependent on one supplier, one employee, one lender, or one product line? These risks are easier to address before they become urgent.

Tax planning is another important checkpoint. Waiting until year-end can limit options. Mid-year is often the better time to assess income, deductions, retirement plan contributions, and potential liquidity needs so decisions can be made deliberately rather than rushed.

The purpose of this review is not to predict the next six months with precision. No one can do that consistently. The purpose is to build a plan that can absorb uncertainty and keep decisions grounded in strategy rather than emotion.

The review should also look beyond the current year. If the business is expected to fund retirement, an eventual sale, a family transition, or a charitable legacy, the midpoint of the year is a good time to evaluate whether progress toward those longer-term goals is still on track. Short-term performance and long-term planning should not

be treated as separate conversations.

Owners should also use the review to identify decision triggers. For example, if margins fall below a certain level, what expenses should be reevaluated? If cash reserves rise above a target, how much should be reinvested or distributed? If revenue exceeds expectations, how should excess cash be allocated? Defining these triggers in advance reduces reactive decision-making.

Use mid-year as a strategic reset, not a reaction point

Finally, a mid-year gut check creates accountability. It gives owners, advisors, accountants, and other professionals a shared view of what has changed and what still needs attention. That coordination is especially important when the economy is volatile, because fragmented decisions can create unnecessary risk.

At WHZ, we believe disciplined reviews help business owners separate signal from noise. Volatility will always create headlines. A well-structured mid-year gut check brings the conversation back to fundamentals: cash flow, liquidity, risk, tax strategy, and long-term goals. That is

how owners stay focused, adaptable, and prepared to move forward with confidence. If you are ready to move forward with clarity and discipline, schedule a discovery session at [whzwealth.com](http://whzwealth.com) or call 860-928-2341.

Authored by WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors Senior Managing Partner & Chief Strategist James Zahansky, AWMA®. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. 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>. These materials are general in nature and do not address your specific situation. For your specific investment needs, please discuss your individual circumstances with your financial advisor. WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice, and nothing in the accompanying pages should be construed as specific tax or legal advice.

## Town of Thompson to host public workshop on Neighborhood Limited Enterprise (NLE) regulations

THOMPSON — The Town of Thompson is seeking input from residents on Neighborhood Limited Enterprise (NLE) regulations during a workshop Wednesday, July 1, from 6-8 p.m. at the Thompson Public Library/Community Center - Meeting Room 3, 934 Riverside Dr., North Grosvenordale.

What is a Neighborhood Limited Enterprise? A "Neighborhood Limited Enterprise" (NLE) is a new category of small business in Thompson that was introduced in the 2020 overhaul of the Zoning Regulations. Thompson is home to over 400 small businesses, the vast majority of which are entrepreneurial "kitchen table" operations run out of the owners' homes. As is common in many communities, Thompson's Zoning Regulations have always had standards allowing for these Home Occupations; but those rules only accommodate for the very smallest businesses. The NLE created a slightly more expansive category to meet the needs of businesses ready to grow, while remaining compatible with operating in residential neighborhoods.

Why are we doing this? Since the introduction of the NLE concept to the Zoning Regulations, there have been very few test cases to show whether those new regulations were "right-sized" to meet their intent. In 2025 & 2026, certain businesses did try to apply under these regulations. Although the businesses were viewed very positively by the Planning and Zoning Commission and several members of the public, after consideration it was determined that they did not meet the standards for this new home business category. This workshop is an opportunity for members of the public to learn more about the NLE concept and then discuss their preferences and priorities for businesses which may take root in Thompson's residential and agricultural districts. Click here to view the current NLE regulations.

Why do we need NLEs? Thompson has structural challenges to attracting small businesses. The physical inventory of storefront properties that existed during the mill era have largely been lost. While efforts are underway to rebuild the historic

downtown, that process will take several years to fully play out. In the meantime, roughly 85% of Thompson is zoned "Rural Residential Agricultural," but, as noted above, we are still home to many small entrepreneurs. Additionally, some business types may be particularly suited to rural areas but currently lack a legal framework

to locate here. The NLE is intended to bridge those gaps.

Who will participate? All members of the public are welcome to attend and participate but due to space limitations, attendance is capped at 42. Please use the Eventbrite registration link to sign up.

How will this

work? Following a brief presentation about NLEs and the questions residents may wish to consider, participants will break out into smaller discussion groups. Guidance materials to facilitate meaningful discussion will be provided. At the conclusion, each discussion group will share their observations and preferences.

Results of the workshop will be summarized and given to the Planning & Zoning Commission, to inform their annual regulations review process.

Please register to attend by Monday, June 29.

Questions? Please contact Tyra Penn-Gesek — planner@thompsonct.org or 860-923-9475.

## Schroth appointed to Killingly Board of Ed

BY JASON BLEAU  
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — The Killingly Board of Education is at full strength once more following the resignation of Republican member Kelly Martin and the recent appointment of her successor, Steve Schroth.

Schroth was recommended by the Republican Town Committee and appointed unanimously by the Board of Education in mid-May. He brings a unique perspective to the Board of Education having attended school in town but found it an unrewarding experience leading him to become a self-taught professional in naval engineering and chemical systems after graduation. He is also an advocate for girls' sports, specifically gymnastics including opening his own gym with a business partner to help promote the sport.

While he is simply filling in the rest of Martin's term, Schroth said he takes his responsibility on the Board of Education seriously and hopes to be a contributor to bettering the town and local education.

"I want to try to give back to the community. I've been here for so long. I

grew up in Dayville. I know Dayville has changed in so many ways — Killingly has changed in so many ways. I know this is just a temporary filling of a position, but I am open-minded as to what goes on with the Board of Education," he said.

Schroth believes his biggest contribution to the board will be his focus on the details. Whether it's larger system discussions or the budget, he takes everything line by line and wants to understand what makes up the process and the result.

When asked about his priorities, Schroth drew from his own experience as a student explaining how they need to make education more rewarding and engaging and help better inspire students for their futures.

"It's important to me as I didn't have it when I was going through school, especially high school," he said. "I had no direction. I had teachers that worked with me but didn't push me or give me the motivation to go any further. That's why I'm concerned about cur-

riculum, what's going on, and other programs that are alternatives. When I was in school, it was you're either in a college course, you're in business, or you're in general. General is broad."

Schroth is the third appointee to the Board of Education in the last two years. In 2025, Nelson King was appointed following the passing of Danny Rovero. Diane Summa was appointed at the end of 2025 following the resignation of Laura Lawrence.

## Neighbors Against Cancer to hold second annual Paddle For Hope Sunday

BROOKLYN — Neighbors Against Cancer is holding its second annual Paddle For Hope Sunday June 7.

This event will be held at Riverside Park, 26 Greenway Dr., Brooklyn. There is no registration fee, but we ask that those attending, please make a donation. The rules are simple:

PFH is required for all participants.

This is an event for all types of non-motorized watercraft.

This isn't a contest.

The length of the paddle is up to participants. Paddle one mile or eight miles, then enjoy a hot dog or hamburger, provided by Neighbors Against Cancer. Registration opens at 8 a.m. The Paddle launch is at 10 a.m.

This is a great way to help your neighbors diagnosed with cancer. Neighbors Against Cancer assists individuals and families with expenses many take for granted: mortgage, rent, food, insurance, gas to get to treatments and more. Those wanting Paddle For Hope information should call Bev at 860-974-1202. For information about Neighbors Against Cancer and other ways to help, call President Patty Erskine at 860-933-2935 or Vice President Gail Erskine at 860-933-2936. We are Neighbors Helping Neighbors and we have a NAC for helping people. Neighbors Against Cancer is a 501(c)3 non-profit.

## Poets at Large presents DiCaronimo & Wheeler June 20

POMFRET — Poets at Large will host poets from Fitchburg, Mass. on Saturday night, June 20, at 7 p.m. at The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Rd. in Pomfret. The featured readers that night will be Laura DiCaronimo and Sarah Beth Wheeler. Admission is free and donations are welcome.

DiCaronimo is an optician, poet and wife who holds certification in nonprofit management. She hosts and organizes The Openest Mic series and is a board member of Worcester County Poetry Association. She was the inaugural Dan Lewis recipient and was one of the nominees for the 2025 Spoken Word Artist of the Year through the Boston Music Awards. DiCaronimo has performed internationally, and her first chapbook, "Winner for Trying" (Metaphysical Fox Press), was published in 2025. Her email is [listenstotheradio@gmail.com](mailto:listenstotheradio@gmail.com).

Wheeler is a lifelong poet, and has performed from Boston to San Francisco placing second in the Dancing Poetry Festival. She recently served as a judge for the Second Annual Massachusetts Poetry Olympics. Wheeler has been published in multiple chapbooks and she is co-creator of the album, "The Unforgivable Ghetto," where her poetry is powerfully accompanied with a musical underscore. This event begins at 7 p.m. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to be in the open mic. Age 16 and up.

Poets at Large has brought more than 120 published and awarded poets to the area since 2020 and dozens of people have participated in the open mic portions during that time. Poets at Large is a project of Windham Arts. All events are ADA compliant and are recommended for ages 16 and up. Readings for the rest of the season are sponsored in part by donations from bankHometown, Charter Oak FCU, WHZ Financial and The Putnam Area Foundation. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to sign up for the open mic; five-minute max as time allows.



Putnam Mayor Barney Seney and Selectman Mike Bogdanski with the 250th Engineers at the Memorial Day parade.

Courtesy

**CELEBRATION**

continued from page A1

go as expected,” Herklots said, using himself as an example — upon graduating from Killingly High School, he planned on following his dream of becoming a professional drummer and fully committed to Berklee School of Music and after graduation moved to New York City.

Ultimately, even though he didn’t become a famous drummer, he found fulfillment as a business owner of Ferio Tego, father of two beautiful daughters, and uses creativity in his daily life. Herklots message that “it is the responsibility of a community to ensure that

the experiences and opportunities for those who follow us exceed those that were afforded to us. As evidenced by the successes of this year’s completers, this community is living up to that responsibility.”

In 2005, along with long-time Career Center Director Bob Brennan, they created the Killingly High School Learning for Life Fund. This fund, generated through annual birthday fundraisers and gifts from generous friends and colleagues, has raised nearly half a million dollars to support Career Education at Killingly High School. Herklots also presented six \$300.00 scholarships to students attending CT State Community College, Quinebaug Valley.

The Adriaan R.J. Herklots Scholarship recipients were Jace Basinet, Emma Belliveau, Abby Danielson, Dakota Loring, Lily Peckham, and Brian Smith.

Emma Guillot, a proud 2014 graduate of Killingly High School and Architecture Career Pathway Completer, was inducted into the Career Pathway Hall of Fame. Besides participation in academics for this career pathway, Emma was heavily involved in the Technology Student Association (TSA). Engagement within TSA was instrumental to her high school experience and further confirmed her desire to pursue a higher education degree in the field of architecture.

Guillot graduated from Roger Williams University in 2018 with a degree in Architecture, and obtained minors in both Construction Management and Sustainability Studies, with a concentration in Art & Architectural History. After graduation from Roger Williams University, Emma joined Shawmut Design and Construction in its Providence, Rhode Island office through the Construction Management Skills Training Program. The CMST program allows individuals out of college to gain full-time industry experience through a rotational program with the company. While moving through various roles over the past 9 years with

Shawmut, Emma is currently a Project Cost Manager and feels as though she has found her place in a more metrically geared financial role, overseeing their New England business relative to bidding new work, profitability studies, and project staffing needs.

During her time at Shawmut, Guillot went back to college at New England Institute of Technology (NEIT) online to obtain her Master of Science degree in Construction Management, graduating in 2022. Not only did she pursue this degree to further expose herself to academics in the construction industry, but Emma knew that one day she wanted to be an adjunct professor. Teaching certain-

ly runs in her family, and based on her experiences at RWU, Emma knew that she wanted to be able to share her passion for architecture and construction from an industry-working professional to help students find their own passions. Emma is an adjunct teacher in the CM program at RWU.

Overall, it is with the enriching academic experiences Guillot gained from her time at Killingly High, RWU, and NEIT that have shaped her profession to this day.

Killingly Public Schools and the Career Center are proud to recognize these great achievements of our students and alumni.

**GRANT**

continued from page A1

grant-funded work to reconstruct Main Street, improve Oscar Swanson Memorial Park, complete the renovation of the 65 Main building and open up a portion of the west bank of the French River as an extension of Riverside Park; and private redevelopments of several landmark properties in the neighborhood.”

The Long Island Sound Ecosystems Grant Program is a new offering providing funds to communities and organizations to enhance water quality, ecosystems, and fish passage. Thompson was one of 18 municipalities or non-profits to receive the inaugural round of grant funding which combined totaled \$7.8 million in awards.

**MARIANAPOLIS**

continued from page A1

through challenges.

“My advice for future students would be to not let setbacks define you,” Basha said. “Everyone experiences challenges, failures, and moments where things do not go as planned, but those moments do not determine who you are. What matters most is how you respond to them and whether you continue working towards your goals. I’ve learned that setbacks are often some of the greatest opportunities for growth. Success rarely follows a straight path, so make the best out of the moment and keep moving forward.”

Basha also expressed appre-

ciation for his teachers and coaches.

“They have consistently pushed me to be my best while also offering unwavering support,” he said. “Their encouragement and belief in me has directly contributed to my personal growth and is something that I will remember forever.”

O’Brien, the son of James and Jessica O’Brien, resides in Dayville, and will attend Clarkson University in the fall, where he plans to major in electrical engineering and compete on the cross country team.

During his time at Marianapolis, O’Brien participated in cross country, swimming, indoor track and field, outdoor track and

field, and orchestra, where he played trumpet.

Reflecting on his experience, he said, “The most important thing that I learned from my high school experience was how to plan and execute larger projects over longer timeframes, such as with my engineering Capstone project.”

DiCicco commended O’Brien for his consistency, discipline, and impact on the school community.

“Charles has quietly built an impressive academic story of excellence and rigor,” DiCicco said. “He has pushed himself, his teachers, and by extension all of us, to gain as much from each moment of learning possible. His leadership

benefited the community in and out of the classroom.”

O’Brien credited his parents for their role in his success.

“I owe my success to my parents, who have always supported and encouraged me academically and as a person,” he said.

When asked for advice to future Marianapolis students, O’Brien encouraged them to embrace opportunities and challenge themselves.

“We often think that we do not have enough time to take up more activities, sports, or classes that we are actually interested in,” he said. “However, the pressure of doing so makes it easier to manage time

rather than wasting it.”

He also reflected on the support he received from faculty and coaches.

“My teachers and coaches at Marianapolis, while always pushing me to do better, are also very understanding,” O’Brien said. “When I have schedule conflicts between school, sports, and life, they are always willing to work with me to resolve the issues.”

As he prepares for the next chapter at Clarkson University, O’Brien said he will carry forward the lessons, relationships, and experiences that shaped his growth at Marianapolis.

**FOREST**

continued from page A1

“We applied for an Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA) grant from CT DEEP that helped to close the transaction,” continued Rzeznikiewicz, “but the process took a couple of years to complete. Fortunately for us, the family was willing to wait for us to secure the funding. The acquisition was also funded by member donations as well as grants from the Bafflin and Summerhill Foundations.”

Claudia Abbott feels that the act of protecting the land is honoring the memory of her grandfather and father—Augustus and Lloyd Saunders.

“When I drive to the property, I have tears of joy knowing that this beautiful area will remain in its natural state,” said Abbott. “It’s such a relief.”

The Wyndham Land Trust was formed in 1975 and now protects over 7,600 acres in Northeastern Connecticut. The work of the land trust is possible through the generosity and dedication of its members, and donors. To learn more about the Wyndham Land Trust visit wyndhamlandtrust.org. You can also follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

**LETTER**

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spending. Minnesota has seen testimony in support of HF 3419, which similarly denies corporate entities the power of campaign and ballot-issue spending based on the state’s authority to charter artificial persons. The corporate power reset model is on the move in multiple states, built to spread nationwide.

Will Connecticut be next to join the movement?

The Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution says the powers not given to the federal government are reserved to the states, or to the people. Connecticut has every legal right to define what a corporation created under its laws is and isn’t allowed to do. We don’t need to wait for the Supreme Court to reverse itself (who knows if it will). We don’t need an act of Congress. We just need our state legislators to act.

For a century, state legislatures drew corporate charters tightly and courts read them strictly. No one suggested corporations had political powers. We can return to that founding principle. Our legislators have both the authority and the obligation to define corporations in Connecticut so that corporate spending, outside spending, and super PAC money are stripped from our elections. (Center for American Progress)

If you believe your voice should count more than a corporation’s checkbook, make that known. Call your state legislators. Write to them. Show up. The Tenth Amendment reserves power to the people, but only if the people choose to use it.

LISA ARENDS  
BROOKLYN

**Got Space?  
we do.**

Contact Mikaela Today,  
860-928-1818

**Hilb Group building transforms in downtown Putnam**

Collin Hamilton — Courtesy

The Woodstock Building Associates Team in front of the newly renovated and expanded Hilb Group building in Downtown Putnam.



PUTNAM — On May 21, Hilb Group (formerly Gerardi Insurance Services) celebrated the renovation and expansion of their downtown Putnam office with a well-attended ribbon cutting and open house, welcoming family, staff and area business leaders to experience the striking new space. Woodstock Building Associates was the design/build team that partnered with Hilb Group to make this noteworthy project happen. In addition to renovating the existing building at the corner of Pomfret and Canal Streets, WBA built a nearly 6,000-square-foot addition that can house up to 25 additional employees.

The completed renovation and expansion project modernized the familiar brick Gerardi building on the corner with significant interior and exterior improvements. Renovations included adding a new café, updating office configurations, and converting existing conference and breakroom areas into additional office space plus new flooring and refreshed finishes.

The expansion on the south side of the building replaced the old American Legion building on Canal Street with an addition that includes two new conference rooms, three executive offices, and three staff offices. New ADA-compliant restrooms, parking, and improved ramp access offer enhanced accessibility and convenience. The new main entry features soaring cathedral ceilings and a glass façade that adds a modern, sophisticated look to downtown Putnam.

“WBA’s professionalism and attention to detail was amazing,” said Managing Director and Regional Growth Leader Matt Desaulnier. “They kept us on time, on schedule, and were a pleasure to work with from start to finish.”

“This project represents Hilb Group’s growth, commitment, and continued investment in the vibrant community of Putnam,” said WBA Team Member Steven Keene. “We were thrilled to partner with the Hilb/Gerardi team to bring this vision to life.”

Keene commended the clear vision of Desaulnier, Director of Commercial Insurance Jay Long, and Operations Manager Beth Frost for understanding what the space needed to be for their employees and clients, which made WBA’s job so rewarding.

**LEGALS**

**Town of Woodstock PZC**

On May 21, 2026, the Town of Woodstock Planning & Zoning Decision made the following decision:

Approved, Application: #675-04-01-(5167/10/30) - 1281 Rt 169- Daniel Flynn-Subdivision (additional lot)

Details of this approval may be obtained by contacting the Woodstock Land Use Department at [landuse@woodstockct.gov](mailto:landuse@woodstockct.gov) June 5, 2026

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF**

**Mary L Wehrle (26-00146)**

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated May 13, 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:

Edmund F Wehrle,  
340 Coolidge Ave.,  
Charleston, IL 61920  
June 5, 2026

**TOWN OF KILLINGLY SEWER ASSESSMENT LEGAL NOTICE**

Payments will be received in the Revenue Office, 172 Main Street Killingly CT 06239, as follows: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:00-4:30pm, Tuesday 8:00-5:30pm, and Friday 8-11:30am. Also by mail, online, or in our drop box. Sewer assessment bills are due June 1, 2026 and becomes delinquent on July 1, 2026 and subject to interest from the due date. Interest will be charged at the rate of 1.5% per month with a minimum interest charge of \$5.00.

Please visit our website for full details and online payments [www.killinglyct.gov](http://www.killinglyct.gov).  
April Lamothe, CCMC  
Revenue Collector  
Town of Killingly

May 22, 2026  
June 6, 2026  
June 26, 2026

**Auction**

The equipment was owned and abandoned by John Carpenter of Carpenter Molds, located at 316 County Home Road, Thompson CT 06277.

The items listed are HURCO CNC MILL

The auction will be held at 342 Compass Circle, Unit B4 North Kingston, RI 02852  
June 12, 2026 at 9am

May 21, 2026  
May 22, 2026  
May 28, 2025  
June 4, 2026

Woodstock Hist Dist Comm public hearing June 9, 6:30 pm, for Woodstock Academy, Old Bracken Library, 47 Old Cemetery Rd, Woodstock for roof replacement.

G. White, Chair.  
June 5, 2026

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF**

**Thomas Kuchenski (26-00181)**

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated May 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.

Elyssa A. Foley, Clerk

The fiduciary is:  
Matthew Coolbeth  
c/o EVELINA MONIKA  
RUSZKOWSKI, THE PRUE LAW  
GROUP, P.C.,  
720 MAIN ST 4TH FL,  
WILLIMANTIC, CT 06226  
June 5, 2026

# OBITUARIES

## Jean Gardner Cole November 8, 2025



Jean Gardner Cole, age 97, of Thompson, CT, devoted wife of Floyd C. Cole, passed away peacefully in her sleep at home November 8, 2025.

Jean was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on April 25, 1928, the daughter of Robert and Jean (Cooper) Gardner. She was the beloved mother of David Cole, Ross Cole, Blair Cole, Craig Cole, and Judith Cole (Rondeau). She cherished her grandchildren, Alison, Jennifer, Matthew, Kathryn, Sean, Meaghan, and Alexander, and her great-grandchild, Jason. Jean was predeceased by her beloved husband Floyd Cole, her twin sister Irene Gardner Keeney of Northport, Florida, her brother Dr. Robert Gardner of Ontario, Canada, and her sons Ross Robert Cole of Thompson, CT, and David Myron Cole of Katy, Texas.

Jean graduated from Fitchburg State College with a degree in Special Education before earning her MS Degree from Wheelock College in Infant Development, where she also shared her passion as an instructor. Throughout her distinguished career, she dedicated her expertise to the Brazelton Institute at Children's Hospital Boston as a Master Trainer Emeritus and guided future specialists as Director Emeritus and Adjunct Instructor

of NIDCAP Training at Boston Medical Center. Celebrated globally as an inspiring and respected Infant Development Specialist and Instructor, Jean championed the care of vulnerable newborns through her many lectures and published articles on the assessment and intervention of high-risk infants.

Jean's brother Robert once wrote "The image of an aged individual in failing health is no more representative of a total life than the image of an infant. You should never define a life by its ending. It is the totality of experience that should be considered." Jean experienced all that life had to offer with courage, joy, strength and confidence. She devoted much of her life advocating for the development of programs to support and care for children, and families of children born with Down Syndrome. Her quiet elegance touched all whom she met. Her life will forever inspire family, friends and colleagues.

A Memorial Service will be held at the 1st Congregational Church of Woodstock, 543 Route 169, Woodstock, CT 06281 on June 20, 2026, at 11:00AM. Jean will be interred at West Thompson Cemetery next to her beloved husband of 65 years, Floyd C. Cole, and her sons David and Ross. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Rebuilding Fund of Thompson Congregational Church, 347 Thompson Rd, P.O. Box 308, Thompson, CT 06277.

## Joan LeClair 1949 - 2026



Joan LeClair, 77, of Putnam, died peacefully Saturday, May 23, 2026, surrounded by her family.

Born in Putnam, she was the daughter of the late Paul and Nancy (Smith) Dufault.

Joan was the beloved wife of Peter LeClair who predeceased her in 2022. She was also predeceased by her three brothers, James, John, and Thomas Dufault.

Joan is survived by her two sisters,

Virginia Barbee and Nancy Chambers and her husband Larry; sister-in-laws, Paula Dorn, Pam Girard and her husband Gilbert, Pat Sullivan and her husband Greg, and many nieces and nephews.

In keeping with Joan's wishes there are no services.

Memorial donations in Joan's memory may be made to Windham-Tolland 4H Camp, 326 Taft Pond Rd., Pomfret Center, CT 06259.

Arrangements have been entrusted to the Gilman Funeral Home & Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT 06260. For memorial guestbook please visit [www.GilmanAndValade.com](http://www.GilmanAndValade.com).

## Mark Desrosiers

### August 11, 1968 - May 17, 2026

Plainfield - Mark Desrosiers, 57, of Lori Drive, passed away on May 17, 2026. He was the loving husband of Maria (Skowron) Desrosiers. Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, he was the son of Donald and Denise (Trainor) Desrosiers.

Mark worked as a director of distribution for many years. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and fantasy baseball.

Mark is survived by son, Daniel Desrosiers of Plainfield, CT; brother,

Brad Desrosiers, and his significant other Kindee Seale and her son Cosmo Sapaugh of Charlton, MA; as well as his best friend, Matt Traina.

Services for Mark have been entrusted to Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory. Memorial donations may be made to the World Wildlife Fund, P.O. Box 97180 Washington, DC 20090-7180. For memorial guestbook visit [www.GilmanAndValade.com](http://www.GilmanAndValade.com).

## Nicholas "Nick" Peter Leary 1969 - 2026



Pomfret Center - Nicholas "Nick" Peter Leary, 56, of Pomfret, Connecticut, passed away on May 24, 2026, at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts after a long and courageous

battle with multiple myeloma. He fought like a warrior until the very end and during his final days he was surrounded by family, friends, and countless members of the Connecticut State Police.

Nick was born in Fall River, Massachusetts, on June 9, 1969, to his late parents, Daniel Peter Leary and Dinah (Nobrega) Leary.

Nick lived a life defined by courage, loyalty, humility, valor, and service. Whether serving his country, protecting his community, coaching young athletes, or spending time with the people he loved most, Nick approached every part of life with strength, heart, and unwavering dedication.

A proud veteran, Nick served in the United States Army and Massachusetts National Guard from 1992 to 1998, attaining the rank of Sergeant (E5) with Charlie Company, 181st Infantry. During basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia, he served as platoon leader for 50 trainees and earned the distinction of Distinguished Honor Graduate. He later attended the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, and was honored as the 1994 Soldier of the Year for the 1st Battalion, 181st Infantry.

On February 14, 1997, Nick began his distinguished career with the Connecticut State Police as a member of the 106th Training Troop. Upon graduating from the Connecticut State Police Academy, he was assigned to Troop D in Danielson, where he proudly served his entire 20-year career, retiring as a Trooper First Class on September 30, 2017.

Throughout his career, Nick earned the respect and admiration of fellow troopers and the communities he served. He was a member of the Connecticut State Police Search and Rescue Unit and was a K-9 handler to three remarkable partners: K-9 Joel, K-9 Max, and K-9 Elvis. His work with his K-9s became legendary throughout the law enforcement community and he is often regarded as the best K-9 handler to ever have served the Connecticut State Police.

Nick's service earned him four Life Saving Medals, a Bravery Medal, four Unit Citations, a Meritorious Service Medal, and two Outstanding Police Service Medals.

In 2008, Trooper Leary received the prestigious Andrew Carnegie Hero Fund Medal for rescuing a woman from a burning second-floor apartment in Danielson on August 9, 2007. Though not specifically trained or equipped for such a rescue, Nick crawled through flames into the woman's bedroom, dragged her to safety, and carried her outside as the apartment became engulfed in fire. In true Nick fashion, he donated the monetary award accompanying the honor to The Jimmy Fund at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Nick's commitment to K-9 work and public safety was extraordinary. In 2005, K-9 Joel received the First Company Governor's Foot Guard "Stubby" Award for canine heroism after locating an unconscious injured person more than two miles from a serious motor vehicle accident, ultimately saving the individual's life. In 2014, Nick and K-9 Elvis became the first Connecticut State Police team to win Connecticut's K-9 Olympics — a distinction that remains unmatched in the event's 33-year history. On September 13, 2009, Trooper Leary and K-9 Max played a pivotal role in the investigation into the murder of Yale graduate student Annie Le when K-9 Max located her body concealed behind a basement wall, helping bring answers in a case that captured national attention.

Following his retirement from the Connecticut State Police, Nick continued

his life of service with the Mohegan Tribal Police Department, where he served as a Sergeant and K-9 handler alongside his beloved bomb detection dog, K-9 Dixie.



Outside of law enforcement, Nick was fiercely devoted to his family. He loved traveling to Disney with his wife and sons, attending his boys' sporting events, attending concerts, working out, BBQ, and spending time with friends. A lifelong Raiders and Boston Red Sox fan, Nick brought the same passion and loyalty to his favorite teams that he brought to every aspect of his life. He was also regarded as one of the nation's foremost historians of police memorabilia, badges, and antique police cars, traveling the country to attend events and connect with fellow collectors and law enforcement friends where he earned numerous awards and national recognition.

Nick also possessed a remarkable artistic talent for creating and meticulously painting law enforcement figures, which he quietly and generously gifted to members of the law enforcement community. These handcrafted pieces became treasured keepsakes and reflected the pride, respect, and brotherhood he carried throughout his life and career.

Nick was a graduate of Springfield College, where he was a four-year member of the wrestling team, and Providence Country Day School, where he participated in football, wrestling, and lacrosse. Following college, he coached wrestling at American International College and later served as an assistant wrestling coach at both the Rectory School and Pomfret School, proudly coaching alongside and supporting his son Will.

Above all, Nick will be remembered as a devoted husband, proud father, loyal friend, mentor, protector, and brother in blue. He possessed a larger-than-life presence, an unmatched work ethic, and a deep love for the people around him. His courage inspired many, his kindness touched countless lives, and his legacy of service will live on forever.

Nick is survived by his loving wife, Susan Hatfield; his sons, William Leary, Daniel Leary, his loyal K-9 partner, Dixie; his father-in-law Thomas W. Hatfield, his brother-in-law Thomas A. Hatfield (Dawn), his sisters-in-law Kathryn Mann (Steve) and Anne P. Hatfield, and thousands of brothers and sisters within the Connecticut State Police and the greater law enforcement community. In addition to his parents, and mother-in-law Phyllis A. Hatfield, he was predeceased by many cherished family members, friends, fellow officers, and beloved K-9 partners.

The family extends a special and heartfelt thank you to Dr. Paul G. Richardson of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute for his exceptional care, compassion, friendship, and dedicated support throughout Nick's long and courageous battle with multiple myeloma.

Services celebrating Nick's life are open to all and will be held on July 11, 2026, from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. with a 12:00 p.m. memorial service at the Connecticut State Police Museum located at 294 Colony Street, Meriden, CT. Light refreshments and fellowship will follow as family, friends, and his law enforcement family gather to honor and celebrate him.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in memory of Nicholas P. Leary, which will be directed to Dr. Richardson's Multiple Myeloma Research Fund at: [dana-farber.org/gift](http://dana-farber.org/gift) or Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, P.O. Box 849168, Boston, MA 02284.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Gilman Funeral Home & Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT 06260. For memorial guestbook please visit [www.GilmanAndValade.com](http://www.GilmanAndValade.com).

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