



THOMPSON VILLAGER

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Friday, January 16, 2026

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Members of Thompson’s America’s 250th Committee have been meeting since 2024 to bring events and celebrations to you in 2026! Look for upcoming information in weeks to come.

Thompson proceeds with interior renovations at 65 Main

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

THOMPSON — The Town of Thompson has chosen a familiar company to partner with for the continued renovation of 65 Main St., which is slated to become a small business center and public food forest.

While 2024 saw the project in the news on a near monthly basis, 2025 was a quieter year for 65 Main, although it ended with an important update regarding the internal renovation of the building. The Board of Selectmen officially accepted the bid from Silver Petrucelli & Associates during a meeting on Dec. 16, which will now see the company perform the renovations on the second and third floors of the facility.

The 65 Main St. building has a long history in Thompson, previously serving as home to the local Superintendent of Schools before becoming the home of local non-profit TEEG until they relocated to their current campus in 2012. Since then, the building has been vacant, unused, and worn down but efforts over the past few years to revitalize and reuse the building spawned a plan to create a small business center to help focus on Thompson’s economic growth. The most recent step of this process involved going out to bid for the second and third floor renovations.

Thompson’s Director of Planning and Development Tyra Penn-Gesek sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen which First Selectman Nicholas Donohue read allowed for the record. The document recommended the town continue its work with Silver Petrucelli & Associates, which already has a long history with the project.

“This company was the low bidder. The firm also is the incumbent on the project having completed the prior design for Hazmat abatement and the renovations of the exterior, basement level, and first floor. The work covered under this proposal is for the renovation and design of the second and third floors and the constructions administration of the subsequent renovation activities,” Penn-Gesek explained in her letter, as read by Donohue.

Silver Petrucelli & Associates was one of three companies that took a walkthrough of the property and one of two that bid on the project. The other bidder was Christopher Williams Architects LLC, which submitted a cost estimate of \$71,360. Silver Petrucelli & Associates offered a price of \$49,800 which included work that the town had decided not to pursue for the time being. This means the actual cost will only be \$46,000, which Penn-Gesek was sure to clarify in her letter will not impact the taxpayers of Thompson.

“The work to be performed under this contract is funded entirely by a grant awarded in round five of the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development Community Investment Fund Grant. No local taxpayer dollars are implicated in this project,” Penn-Gesek wrote.

Selectmen noted that the project timeline in the bid documents indicated the design process could commence as early as springtime with construction to follow soon after.

Killingly special education costs over-budget

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — Special Education costs continue to be a challenge for the Killingly School District while the new Killingly Therapeutic Academy has proven to be an early success.

In December, the Killingly Board of Education saw an update from the District’s Manager of Business Affairs Christine Clark ahead of the start of the new calendar year where she revealed that special education outplacement is over budget. These costs include expenses for any Killingly students that are placed into third-party programs due to a need that isn’t provided through the school district’s

available services.

“Those costs continue to exceed the budgeted appropriations after factoring the estimated excess cost reimbursement at 70 percent, resulting in an estimated shortfall of roughly 1.72 million in those budget lines,” said Clark.

The news sparked a discussion about the status and early success of the Killingly Therapeutic Academy which opened in 2025. The Academy, housed in the old high school on Westfield Avenue, is designed to help students who need extra assistance in their educational journeys and was founded, in part, with the goal of reducing the outplacement expenses by bringing some programs in-house.

However, the latest special education expense numbers led Superintendent Dr. Susan Nash-Ditzel to clarify that although the Academy has been successful, there are needs the program does not service.

“Our program only starts at grade five, so anyone who is out of district placed that’s lower than grade five we don’t support right now in our program and that could change. We could expand our program,” Nash-Ditzel said.

She also noted that the program doesn’t include services for students with autism of those with disabilities like deafness and blindness. Killingly still needs to embrace outplacement for

Turn To KILLINGLY page A12

Putnam Area Foundation awards \$30,000 in grants

PUTNAM — The Putnam Area Foundation, Inc. (PAF) announced today that it has approved \$30,000 in community grants supporting organizations that serve families and residents across Northeastern Connecticut—strengthening youth opportunities, improving community access to local history, supporting volunteer service, and providing practical public-safety and veteran resources.

This year’s grant recipients include:

The Hale YMCA Youth & Family Center, to enhance programming for the Cutler Summer Day Camp, supporting a stronger summer experience for local children and families.

The Putnam Aspinock Historical Society, to add additional walkways at the Gertrude Chandler

Turn To GRANTS page A12

Rotary scholarship winners prove the future is in good hands

PUTNAM — It seems impossible but the caliber of the Putnam Rotary Club’s scholarship winners seems to rise each year.

At the Dec. 30 Rotary Scholarship Celebration Rachael Johnston, chair of the scholarship Committee, said she and members of the committee were “blown away by the athleticism, social, community service, and “oh yes, and they fit some academics in there, too” of the scholarship winners.

Each winner filled their high school careers and now in college, with community service, academics and leadership roles. Many are in accelerated programs. In the students’ speeches they listed off dizzying number of academics, clubs, volunteer work and more.

This year, the club and its foundation awarded \$37,000 in scholarships to seven students and a second scholarship to one of last year’s winners, Eric Levesque.

Serena Smith, who is attending the University of Rhode Island, received a John O’Brien



From left: Kaelyn Tremblay, Serena Smith, June Ferraro, Pavanny Phav, Lucy St. Germain, Abigail Converse, Sofia Thurber and Eric Levesque.

Scholarship. Susan Phaneuf, who spoke for the O’Brien family, said John O’Brien graduated from Tourtellotte Memorial High School but “needless to say, in the 1920s scholarships were not plentiful.” Scholarships, she added, are all about opportunity.

Sofia Thurber, who is attending Emmanuel College, was awarded an A. Leon Archambault Scholarship.

Denise Archambault said, “Our family is extremely proud to be able to carry on Leon’s name and to go ahead and foster your education. So good job!”

Pavanny Phav, who is attending the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences,

Turn To WINNERS page A12

Pomfret Historical Society returns to Vanilla Bean Café with Fireside Chats

POMFRET — The popular winter Fireside Chats with Pomfret Historical Society’s historians, Donna Dufresne and Walter Hinchman will return on the third Fridays of January, February, and March 2026. This year’s topics will include “Written in Stone - A Virtual Tour of Pomfret’s Sixteen Historic Burial Grounds”; “The amazing Mrs. Whistler in Pomfret 1849 – 1852”; and “Pomfret’s Gilded Age and The Railroad that Built a Summer Haven for the Rich.”

Audiences have enjoyed learning about local history over food and drinks in the cozy atmosphere at the Vanilla Bean Café while experiencing authentic pictures, documents, and stories from Pomfret’s past. This year’s series will help

to raise funds for the educational programs promoted by Pomfret Historical Society and the Pomfret America 250 Commission as we celebrate the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. All programs begin at 7 p.m. and a \$10 donation is much appreciated. Dates and descriptions below:

Jan. 16: Written in Stone: A Tour of Pomfret’s Sixteen Historic Burial Grounds

You have driven past them on your way to do errands or stumbled upon them deep in the woods. Walter will take the audience on a virtual tour of Pomfret’s burial grounds and their locations while Donna highlights the graves and stories of some of Pomfret’s early settlers and Revolutionary War sol-

diers.

Feb. 20: The Amazing Mrs. Whistler in Pomfret 1849 – 1852

Anna Matilda McNeill Whistler was oh-so-much more than the famous artist’s mother. She was the CEO wife and mother of the Whistler family while her railroad architect husband George Washington Whistler rose to fame. Tragically, George died of Cholera in April 1849 in St. Petersburg, Russia while building a railroad for Tsar Nicholas I. Anna returned with her two sons, James and William to Connecticut, and by November 1849 arrived in Pomfret where she registered the boys in Roswell Park’s Christ

Church Hall Academy. She rented the house next to the Vanilla Bean and built a vibrant social and religious life while managing her sons’ education. Although a grieving widow, Anna Whistler was not one to pine away. She cared for the sick patients of Dr. Williams, organized the Christ Church fair, cared for her aged mother, and tried to keep her budding artist son, Jamie, out of trouble.

March 20: Pomfret’s Gilded Age and the Railroad that Built a Summer Haven for the Rich.

Pomfret Station (now Putnam) connected Anna Whistler to her family and friends in Stonington, and New York in the 1850’s.

By the 1870’s an even better railway came to Pomfret which ushered through the Gilded Age and a new era in Pomfret’s history. Wealthy families from New York and Newport built large estates, gentleman farms, and summer cottages to get away from the heat and bustle of the city. The farms produced fresh eggs, vegetables, meat, cheese, and milk for the summer guests and were shipped to their town houses in the winter months by rail. The convenience of the railroad brought vacationers to the newly built boarding houses and country inns which took in the emerging middle class. Up until the 1920’s Pomfret was known as “Little Newport” with

tennis courts, golf courses, a racetrack and casino on Pomfret Street, and countryside drives and walks organized by the Inns. Walter Hinchman will take us on a virtual tour of some of the grand estates and summer homes from that era and Stewart Chute will share some railroad history. Costumes from the gilded Age encouraged!

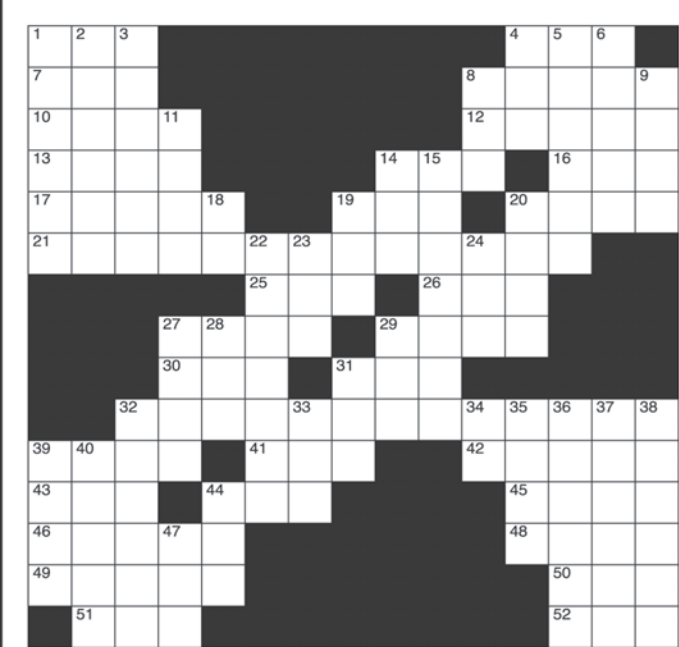
The Vanilla Bean Café serves high quality homemade food in a comfortable atmosphere, including a coffee bar, desserts, beer & wine. 490 Deerfield Rd., Pomfret. For more information, contact Donna Dufresne (860-465-7228) or windsong@snet.net.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Former CIA

4. Language

7. Constrictor snake

8. Demand

10. Rich man

12. Short-tailed marten

13. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire

14. Superconducting super collider

16. International group of countries within the Americas

17. Sacred state for Muslims

19. Shock therapy

20. Engrave

21. Localities

25. Paddle

26. Periodical

27. Dishonestly gained money

29. Gain possession of
30. Actor DiCaprio

31. High schoolers' test

32. Mr. October

39. Sign of healing

41. One's grandmother

42. Entrap

43. One who simultaneously buys and sells

44. _ Francisco

45. Web-based data provider of marine life

46. Type of snake

48. Dark mark or stain

49. Member of the Salii

50. Former measure of length

51. CNN's founder

52. Witness

CLUES DOWN

1. Acquire

2. Console

3. Hunting expedition

4. Pie _ _ mode

5. Simple shoes for peasants

6. Eurasian shrub

8. Reciprocal of a sine

9. Work together in harmony

11. Grenade

14. File extension

15. Minute pores in a plant

18. Medal of Honor

19. Make a mistake

20. Advance slowly, as if by inches

22. Sandwich meat

23. An awkward stupid person
24. Strong tree

27. Commoner

28. Electroencephalograph

29. _ Mahal

31. Congressman

32. Disorderly crowd

33. 007's creator Fleming

34. Atomic #55

35. Part of a door

36. Short-tail martens

37. Baltimore ballplayer

38. Cuddle

39. Gang in "The Outsiders"

40. Of Croatia

44. Body cavity

47. Get free of

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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A touch of snow doesn’t dampen Interact accomplishments



PUTNAM — Jan. 5, the Putnam Rotary Club and its Interact Club celebrated another successful Salvation Army kettle bell-ringing fund-raiser with prizes and pizza.

The annual fund-raiser began Nov. 28 and 29 and ran every Saturday and Sunday until Christmas. Bell-ringers collected \$10,926 in the kettles and then the Newell D. Hale Foundation donated \$2,000 for a total of \$12,926, according to Rotarian Roberta Rocchetti, Interact advisor. In its long history the Interactors have raised close to a quarter of a million dollars.

Rocchetti spoke for Kathi Peterson, director of the Putnam Salvation Army office, noting the club’s efforts “supported her work in helping the needy with rent and heat assistance, shelter and so much more.” Ninety percent of the money raised stays in the northeastern corner.

There’s just a “bit” of competition in the fund-raiser each year.

This year the third-place winner for the most bell ringing hours was Kaylee Bundy a senior from Woodstock Academy with 10 hours; second went to Calleigh Levesque, a junior from Tourtellotte Memorial High School with 15 hours; and the first-place winners Paige Perry and Gabriell Cerasiello, seniors from Putnam High each with a record-breaking 40 hours.

Putnam High senior Leah Benzie will deliver the certificate to the school for the most bell ringing hours, 124. Woodstock Academy was second with 88 hours; Tourtellotte had 69 hours; Marianapolis, 18 hours and UConn had 15 hours.

Rotary Club President Kathy Kirk gave the blessing and the pizza was from Henry’s Diner.

Rocchetti thanked everyone and invited students to attend the next Interact meeting at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 13 at the Putnam Public Library. The club will be discussing the theme for its ice sculpture at Fire and Ice. For more information about the Interact Club contact Roberta Rocchetti at 860-933-8603 or robertarocchetti4@gmail.com.

Poets At Large embarks on seventh year

POMFRET — Poets at Large will present spoken word/poetry events at The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Rd., in Pomfret as it begins a seventh year.

PAL Coordinator Karen Warinsky said, “Due to the generosity of our sponsors this year, we will be able to present these readings free of charge. We pay featured readers a small stipend for their time and travel. Our featured poets bring their books to sell, so we are hoping patrons will be generous in supporting the poets by buying their books. Donations are also welcome. Besides these events at The Vanilla Bean, we also plan to hold some events at a few other venues in Connecticut and Massachusetts in 2026, and will announce those later.”

Vanilla Bean events are on Saturday nights and begin at 7 p.m.

Reading at The Vanilla Bean for the winter/spring season will be Denise Abercrombie and Sean F. Forbes (Feb. 21), Christopher Reilley and Carla Schwartz (3/21), Joshua M. Stewart and Doug Anderson (April 18), Jim Finnegan and Irena Kaci (5/16) and Sarah Gagne Wheeler and Laura DiCaronimo (June 20).

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. These readings are sponsored in part by Linemaster Switch, WHZ Financial Advisors, bank-Hometown, The Putnam Area Foundation and Charter Oak FCU. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to sign up for the open mic. Five-minute max as time allows.

Putnam Commission on Aging announces senior dance

PUTNAM — The Putnam Commission on Aging has scheduled a pop-up “Love is In the Air” Senior Dance Wednesday, Feb. 4 from 6-8 p.m. at the Putnam Elks lodge, 68 Edmund St.

This event is lovingly sponsored by Christopher Heights Assisted Living in Webster, Matulatis Nursing Care and Rehabilitation Center, the Putnam Lions Club, and the Putnam Lodge of Elks #574.

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Sara Maturi earns Westview’s October Employee of the Month Award



Sara Maturi

DAYVILLE — Sara Maturi received recognition as Westview’s Employee of the Month in October 2025. Maturi assists in daily care as a nursing aide at Westview Health Care Center—but moreover—she lifts spirits as much as she lifts anything else. Her bright, buoyant personality is an accessory she wears throughout the facility as a Certified Nursing Assistant, and Sara is celebrated by residents, patients, families, and colleagues alike.

Maturi joined the Westview Health Care Center team on Oct. 31, 2023. She has always approached her work with a deeply rooted sense of purpose. Caring for what she fondly calls the “sweet folks” at Westview aligns with the central core of the organization’s mission. According to her, that care extends beyond task-based responsibilities. She values the human connections formed through caregiving, and

invests in relationships that help her thoughtfully and respectfully accomplish what is needed—whether moments are gentle or challenging. Never shying away from the needs of her team or those entrusted to her care, she maintains a reputation for reliability; often working weekends and answering the call whenever she is available. Her commitment to service is both personal and cultural, informed by values that empha-

size responsibility, diligence, and care for others.

Maturi resides in Putnam with her husband, David Maturi. Sara is the proud mother of four children—Karen, Jeannie, Giancarlo, and Mary—and family remains a central pillar of her life. Two of her daughters, Jeannie and Mary, have followed paths into the nursing field. Sara hopes to one day work alongside her daughters, united in a shared vocation of care.

Sara’s recognition as Employee of the Month reflects the appreciation of those who experience her presence daily, albeit arriving as a heartwarming surprise to her.

“I was shocked—in a good way—to learn that I was selected for this award! Truly, I come here every day to do my best. Thank you for the honor,” Sara exclaimed.

Through her dedication, reliability, and heartfelt enthusiasm for caregiving, she embodies the spirit of compassion and profession-

alism that defines Westview Health Care Center.

David T. Panteleakos, Administrator of Westview Health Care Center, acknowledged Sara’s many contributions to Westview care, coworkers, and the overall community throughout the halls of the Dayville skilled nursing facility: “Members of our care team like Sara help to sustain the spirit of care that defines Westview. The nursing care she provides is tender while thorough—and she encourages the spirits of patients, residents, and colleagues with her joyous approach. Sara’s bright presence is a boost to all of us, and she stimulates smiles across the whole facility. Congratulations to Sara!”

Westview Health Care Center is a 103-bed inpatient skilled nursing facility, which includes a distinct and self-contained 28-bed sub-acute short term rehabilitation unit and outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapies including: Sports Medicine, Adolescent/Pediatric, Adult, and Aquatic Outpatient Centers, all dedicated to providing outstanding quality health care services. The Dayville, Connecticut facility is consistently ranked among the top nursing facilities in the nation, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as well as U.S. News and World Report, consecutively for the past 18 years.

Small Canvases free community paint event returns to Block 134



PUTNAM — Following a successful first Small Canvases Community Paint, Silver Circle Gallery and Block 134 Arts & Wellness Collective in downtown Putnam are pleased to announce the return of this collaborative art experience on Sunday, Jan. 18, from 1–3 p.m., led by Artist in Residence Roland Comtois. Due to limited space, registration is required for this free event (email block134community@gmail.com).

The initial community paint brought together artists and neighbors for an afternoon of shared creativity, resulting in a vibrant collection of small works now displayed throughout Block 134. Due to the strong response and meaningful participation, the project returns—inviting both new and returning participants to contribute to this growing, living installation.

This free, interactive event offers a welcoming space to paint, express, and connect. No prior art experience is required, and all materials and canvases are provided. Once completed, each canvas from the January event will join the existing collection at Block 134—further reflecting the creative energy and shared presence of the

community. “The first Small Canvases gathering was incredibly moving,” says Carly Sage, Founder and Curator of Silver Circle Gallery. “People showed up with openness and curiosity, and the result was something deeply connective. This next gathering continues that spirit and expands the story already unfolding on our walls.”

Event Details
Small Canvases Community Paint Event
Date: Sunday, Jan. 18
Time: 1–3 p.m.
Location: Silver Circle Gallery at Block 134
134 Main St., Putnam
Cost: Free and open to the public; to register—required—email block134community@gmail.com.

Learn more about visionary artist Roland Comtois at paintingsbyroland.com.



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PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

When winter tests a community

January has a way of clarifying what matters most.

The holidays are packed away, the calendar turns quiet, and the reality of winter settles in across Northeast Connecticut. Roads narrow under snowbanks, heating bills climb, and the pace of life slows whether we want it to or not. This is the stretch of the year when community is no longer an abstract idea, but something we actively rely on.

Winter has always tested small towns. It tests municipal budgets stretched by plowing and road repairs. It tests families balancing work, school schedules, and weather-related disruptions. It tests older residents and those living alone, for whom a storm can quickly become an isolating experience.

And yet, this is also when the strength of our towns shows itself most clearly.

In recent weeks, neighbors have checked on neighbors after snowstorms. Local highway crews have worked long hours to keep roads passable. Libraries, senior centers, and town halls have quietly continued to serve as warm, dependable gathering places. None of this makes headlines, but it is the backbone of civic life in Killingly, Putnam, Woodstock, and surrounding communities.

Winter also asks something of all of us personally. It asks for patience when plans change. It asks for attentiveness to those who may need a hand. It asks us to slow down just enough to notice who might be struggling and who might be able to help.

There is a temptation in January to retreat, to hunker down and wait for spring. But the health of a community depends on people staying engaged even when it would be easier not to. Attending a board meeting. Supporting a local business. Checking in on an elderly neighbor. Showing up, quietly and consistently, matters more this time of year than at any other.

Winter does not last forever. It never has. But how we treat one another while it is here says a great deal about who we are.

If this season tests us, it also reminds us that resilience is not something imported from elsewhere. It already lives here, in our towns, in ordinary acts of responsibility and care that rarely draw attention, but make all the difference.

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted. It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Defending the indefensible

To the Editor:

Where have all the Trump defenders gone, long time ago? (Apologies to the late Pete Seeger.) While reading the Villager each week, it's been impossible not to note the lack of letters defending Donald Trump's actions one year into his second term. Even though I predicted that his arrogance, narcissism, cruelty, and criminal mind would result in overreach despite his having won less than fifty percent of the popular vote, I am pleasantly surprised that he has lost the support of most independents and Democrats and large numbers of MAGA Republicans.

After Trump's first election, the MAGA crowd repeated ridiculed voters like me for not being smart enough to tell the difference between Trump's lies and promises. Now it's apparent that Trump conned voters who believed his guarantee to lower prices "on day one." Or his promise to target violent criminal immigrants for deportation. Or his pledge to end foreign adventurism and concentrate on "America First." It was all a lie.

Where are the writers cheering the lowering of prices and making life more affordable for ordinary Americans? Perhaps they could make us feel better by touting Trump's accomplishments in planning a \$300 million ballroom, gilding the White House with gold, putting his name on the Kennedy Center, or enriching himself, his family, and his friends by billions of dollars.

Why is no one writing to celebrate the

tens of thousands of deaths and illnesses that have, and will, result from Trump's stopping food and medicine aid around the world? Such extreme cruelty might be justified by the minuscule savings to the government and the enormous tax cuts afforded to billionaires like Trump and Musk.

I must have missed the letters gleefully defending the loss of medical insurance for millions of Americans due to Trump's "big beautiful bill." Perhaps a case can be made that the disease and deaths that will result are a good trade off so the ultra rich can accumulate more wealth and some crumbs can trickle down to the unwashed masses.

Why isn't anyone writing to defend Trump's betrayal of Ukraine or his support of the Gaza genocide? Aren't they proud of the billions spent sending arms to Israel to completely destroy the infrastructure in Gaza and kill tens of thousands of children and civilians?

And why aren't the Trump sycophants explaining why Trump is trying so hard to cover up the Epstein files after he ran on completely revealing them? I think most people know the reason.

Maybe it's encouraging that no one wrote to defend Trump's deranged response to the murders of Rob Reiner and his wife. It would be more encouraging if some of those who used to strenuously defend everything Trump would write and criticize him even just a little.

BILLY G. TAYLOR
KILLINGLY

Can we find our way back to our roots?

To the Editor:

As we usher in the 250th anniversary of our country, I'm sure many people are taking stock of where we are and where we're heading. It seems improbable that in only a year so, many devastating events have occurred: Appointing a Cabinet full of people who are woefully inadequate thus leaving the American public totally unprotected from our enemies (internal or otherwise), disease, climate change and a multitude of other threats. Cabinet heads who lie so frequently that the media must fact-check every sentence. Attempts to control the media, entertainment industry, universities and any organization that tries to shed light on what's really going on. The destruction of governmental departments without any rhyme or reason and the subsequent havoc that many families endured as a result. The removal of funds from underprivileged countries which culminated in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. The realization that the most powerful person in the country uses the judicial system and any means at his disposal to punish his perceived enemies. Creating an organization (ICE) for the sole purpose of weeding out people of color under the guise of removing criminal elements from our midst. Placing the National Guard in strategic cities (mostly blue) with the excuse that these cities are out of control. Most of us wake up every morning wondering what fresh hell we'll be exposed to today.

From a proud nation that welcomed immigrants, stood by our allies and supported those in need, we have now become a warmongering,

greedy, vengeful and often, incompetent power. Until recently, our allies respected and trusted us, countries in need revered us and even our enemies knew that we would act with integrity and reason. All the respect and reverence is gone and it only took one year of a train-wreck of a presidency to do it.

Extreme behavior such as the bombing of countries illegally, and ludicrous behavior such as remodeling the Whitehouse, tacking his name on any well-known institution he can find as well as prosecuting the opposition with made-up "facts" takes precedence over fighting inflation, creating jobs and reducing global warming. The Republican Congresspeople (who should be controlling this chaos) have given over representing their constituents in favor of covering their own butts.

The first 250 years of this nation are marked with events from civil war, dissention, civil unrest, a crashing economy, unnecessary wars and more but I never thought we would find ourselves on a path of willful self-destruction. If I have one wish for 2026, it would be that we can find our way back to a peaceful, productive nation, willing to help our allies and those less fortunate, setting an example for the rest of the world as we did for so long, stop the turmoil engendered by this administration and return the nation to sanity and reason. I'd like to believe there's still hope.

JEAN McNALLY
WOODSTOCK

Undeserved criticism

To the Editor:

Sadly, one of the Warners has again taken to the media (social through their non-transparent transparency page — or, in this case, an unnecessary letter to the Editor).

I sided with the Warners in opposing the status change of Lowell Davis Road to a scenic road. However, that has absolutely nothing to do with power outages. Protected trees are those on private property; the town cannot touch those. The town, and Eversource where applicable, can do something about trees that pose a public safety hazard.

If the Warners were more aware, that is exactly what they've been doing. As far back as while Amy was still in office as First Selectman, a couple of residents privately expressed concerns about dying trees posing dangers to public safety. The town responded, first by hiring a private contractor to handle trees their equipment didn't reach, then by planning to work around weather and transfer station hours to continue the job.

Today (Tuesday, Jan. 6), the entire (it seems) DPW is in place cleaning up the trees cut down by the private contractor and going down the street trimming branches hanging over the road. It doesn't take continual public complaints, all it takes is polite conversation. Some of us on Lowell Davis Road knew this was happening,

and knew the continuing plans. We are also aware that our outage was not caused by a tree fall but by a branch that came in contact with a wire and tripped a breaker. The extended outage was simply a matter of Eversource needing to deal with downed trees and blocked roads before they could free up a team to reset the breaker.

We live in a rural area. We enjoy our trees. Trees bring risk.

I want to congratulate and appreciate the Thompson Department of Public Works. Over the past year, they have committed resources above and beyond to this road. They finished the Wilsonville intersection, they addressed stormwater issues created by raising the road four inches or so due to the paving of 2024, they continue to grade the dirt road section (something that would be unnecessary if the scenic designation had failed and the road could have been paved), they clean the culvert at the Thompson Road side, they even maintain the Jacobs Cemetery (usually, I do this, but they beat me to it a couple times for mowing and for leaf removal this year), and for two to three months, they have been addressing the tree issue. Thank you to Joe and the team, Amy StOnge and Nick Donohue. None of you deserve public criticism for the work you do under annual budget constraints.

BRIAN LOFFREDO
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

What's in the bag?

The weekend Wall Street Journal keeps us informed on both the important and the trivial. I read the serious stuff, marvel at Peggy Noonan's interesting approach to current events and



NANCY WEISS

diving into the fun articles about food, wine, fashion trends, and cars. A piece on Trader Joe's tote bags hit the spot.

A confession: I often forget to bring my own bags into grocery stores, Target, Staples, and other businesses. The back of my car is a jumble of red quasi-cloth bags, paper bags with nice handles, an insulated zip-up from Wegman's and sturdy double bags from Whole Foods. When I check out and have to buy more paper bags, I feel ashamed, but apparently not enough to remember to bring bags the next time I shop.

Carting our own receptacles for what we buy is the norm Europe and pretty much the rest of the world, where bags are not generally provided. There it is common practice to bring a pretty cloth bag when shopping for a few pieces of fancy cheese, a good bottle of wine and a warm baguette, but that's not what I pick up at the Price Chopper. A giant assortment of sale price paper towels bumps up against an oozing package of organic chicken breasts in my shopping cart with a wonky front wheel. How could I stuff all that in a Provencal print tote?

I spent many years as a development officer, a fancy word for fund-raiser. It was a job that I relished as it was full of surprises. One person who never disappointed was Stew Leonard, Sr., the founder of the eponymous chain of stores, which at that time were exclusively in Fairfield County. Stew was a marketer extraordinaire and an utter enthusiast, which is a requirement for success in any business. He made grocery shopping fun. He either gave or sold Stew Leonard bags and posted, pre-internet, photos his customers took all over the world holding the bags. He was ahead of his time.

LL Bean tote bags are easily recognizable and like much of their merchandise worth the price. I have a few with my initials on the side that are ancient but serviceable if I cover up the suspicious stains on the bottom. I can carry a small child or as is the case now, a small dog, in the bag, without fear of it ripping. To me the canvas bags represent utility and good value. I never saw them as fashionable but a relative has an upscale version of the tote that is a handbag. It is not made by the Maine company, but is patterned after the high-fashion Birkin bag and called a Boatkin. I assume it is cool because it essentially makes fun of two iconic brands while also carrying the cellphone.

A bag is often the symbol of one's career. Think of the bags doctors once carried, back when they made house calls, and the handsome briefcases that were the signature gift to law school graduates. In the Louis Vuitton shop in Paris once a guard pointed to the seats my daughter and I were allowed to occupy until a clerk deigned to let us approach the counter. Years later I was delighted to spot a large LVT bag hanging casually over a chair at a local business. Fashion without the snobbery.

From a paper bag at the market to a canvas tote with a logo, to a designer handbag, how we carry our burdens big or small, matters, especially if they go up in value like a tote from Trader Joe's.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Miller

To the Editor:

Isaac Asimov, the prolific science fiction author, said “Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent.” Nothing could be more apt for Donnie Tyrant and his menagerie of rabid miscreants. Not only are they incompetent but incredibly lazy. It takes a lot of effort to get along with and come to agreement with others. Discussion and compromise are hard work. The lazy don’t have this kind of skill. So when they don’t get their way right off, they take an easy way out, i.e., violence. Violence is not just a physical thing but can also be intimidation, invasion, theft, military strikes, withholding funds, ICE or wholesale firing of staff. Stephen Miller just said the US has the right to take over any country for its resources. The last vestiges of any effort of Donnie Dictator and his cabal of irrational

idiots to act as a sane and civilized country are gone. Well, it’s 1935 Germany all over again. “Lebensraum,” literally “living space,” is a German concept of expansionism, the philosophy and policies of which were common to German politics from the 1890s to the 1940s. Hitler fed on this paranoid and egocentric philosophy to rise to power. Lebensraum became an ideological principle of Nazism and provided justification for the German territorial expansion into Central and Eastern Europe. Of course, there is no moral or legal justification for Nazism or Donnie-ism. Just a paranoid ranting that everyone else is a threat to the US.

STEPHEN ETZEL
PUTNAM

Death in Minneapolis

To the Editor:

On the morning of Jan. 7, Renee Nicole Good, a 37-year-old mother, had just taken her son to school when she was shot and killed by ICE agents in Minneapolis, Minn. On these facts, we all seem to agree, but that is where our agreement appears to end. As I watched the video of the shooting, it was quite clear that the ICE agent had pulled his gun then stepped very slightly to the side of Renee’s car and fired the shot, killing her, just as her car started to move. This is clearly seen if you pause the video at the moment of the shooting and look carefully at where the shooting officer’s feet are placed next to the moving car. In the video, the officer firing the shot is mostly obscured by an officer next to Renee’s door, but the feet of the officer firing the shot are clearly seen next to the car, not in front of it, as he leans in to fire the first shot. Reading Kristi Noem’s statement, or the President’s, I went back and looked at the video again, although again, I had to look carefully. I couldn’t help but think we must be seeing different videos. But all of this is beside the point: what had Renne Good done to deserve being killed? (And why did they prevent a physician from attending to her? What kind of a person refuses to allow aid to a dying woman: that heartless act alone should require consequences). Looking at the facts — Renee’s car may have been partially blocking the roadway, and she failed to get

out of her car when ordered to do so. Do either of these facts require execution? The officers knew who she was; they could have gone to her house later and arrested her and let her face a judge. But nothing here was decided by a judge in a court of law, instead the ICE officer decided the penalty: Death. The Vice President’s statement that she was a domestic terrorist, is outrageous and points out that he will attempt to cover-up any crime the Government commits (Yes even killing two men clinging to the side of a boat charged with no crime). I thought to myself is this what we have become as a nation? Protest and vocally disagreeing with our government has been our Constitutional right, but apparently may no longer be true. By writing this, those who still trust the Government’s revision of history, will see me simply as a left leaning liberal. But for those who stop to question whether the violence created by the officers supposedly arresting illegal immigrants has gotten out of hand, their voices need to be heard. Immigration is a problem that requires answers that both sides agree needs to be fixed, but shooting and killing a 37 year old mother doesn’t seem to be a good answer. If this becomes an accepted norm than our country is indeed under threat, but not from the immigrants.

ELIZABETH CANNING
POMFRET

Where is the outrage?

To the Editor:

We have entered a lawless period in America, different from earlier periods when lawlessness referred to those times when the authorities and those governing found it difficult to maintain order and restrain those elements of society perpetuating misdeeds. Notable examples include the Old Wild West, the south following the Civil War and crime organizations during prohibition. Led by men of honor and integrity, laws were effectively executed and applied over time restoring the social order. In stark contrast to those earlier periods, we are currently witnessing a far more dangerous state of affairs, a period defined by the wanton abuse of the rule-of-law by the federal government. The problem begins with a President who is essentially a moral vacuum, devoid of integrity, indifferent to questions of right and wrong who is bent on the acquisition and execution of unbridled power designed

to serve his own contemptible needs. Aided and abetted by a coterie of simpering acolytes in government and in Congress who always place their careers first, there is not a person among them with the fortitude to do anything if it is felt that it may displease the president. Trump’s strength is ultimately derived from the weakness of character of those in office supporting him. When those in power charged with the maintenance of law-and-order abuse that responsibility for misguided and dishonest principles, what recourse is left to the people? As the abuses mount, we may be about to find out. However, the leading Democrats on whom America will rely to restore it to its rightful position as the moral leader of the free world seem weak and lacking the outrage that current conditions should inspire.

WILLIAM ZAMAGNI, JR.
PUTNAM

Additional Letters to the Editor,
See Page A8

The ballot box is our best remedy

To the Editor:

So, do you feel safer now that ICE agents are marching through our streets, capturing “dangerous” illegal immigrants. Did you really feel scared in the first place? JD Vance stated that 2.8 million illegal immigrants have left the country this year, 400,000 by force. Experts have questioned this number, and I would ask just how the government could keep track of the ones leaving voluntarily. It’s not like there is a TSA box to check announcing that they were in the country illegitimately and if they truly committed crimes they should have been arrested and tried in our courts of law. More likely, the majority were maids and nannies, factory, farm and construction workers, students and teachers and a handful of military veterans and local government officials. The vast majority never committed a violent crime, if any. Some were here for decades. Many were simply transferred to a third world country’s prison without due process. The Trump administration has claimed that by reducing the number of these immigrants, prices will come down, and job openings will soar. So far this has proven to be untrue as the cost of living remains high and job growth, as last week’s government statistics indicate, has stalled. Perhaps the most egregious aspect of all this is the ICE treatment of American citizens. The Supreme Court made it clear that being a person of color is enough to get stopped by authorities. And being a white protestor seems fair game. What is happening? Civil disobedience has been one of the foundations of our democratic society. Many recall the protests in the 1960s opposing the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights ones championed by MLK. We also recall the deaths of college students at Kent State. The lesson of that tragedy seems forgotten by last week’s shooting of a concerned and caring wife and mother and the Trump administration’s gutless reaction. The victim was accused of “domestic terrorism,” that she was “driving the car very disorderly, and then violently, willfully, a viciously ran over the ICE Officer.” She has been described as “brainwashed,” “a victim of left-wing ideology” and “crazed.” Even media reporting has been labeled “an absolute disgrace.” But there are videos for all to view. Some still see a vehicle “weaponized.” To me

she seemed quite pleasant and in control of her senses and was trying to move her car. The assertion that the agent was in fear of his life is ludicrous. He was filming her with his cell phone and had plenty of time to step out of the way. The car was inching past him. He never fell. But most damning is the fact that he fired three times. The first shot was at the windshield and photos show that it was off to the side and would have missed the driver. He then, while clear of the car, fired the next two shots through an open driver’s side window. This means that the kill shot was inflicted when the car was driving past him, not at him. No one was in imminent danger! Now the government proposes door to door searches. Not even domestic law enforcement can do this without a warrant. The Fourth Amendment states, “The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated.” Police and FBI are also obligated to show ID. Not so of ICE. This of course raises the scenario where anyone can dress in a faux ICE uniform, face covered and enter your home to do as they please. The government has crossed an ominous red line. In justifying unlawful force, murder, and proposing unwarranted search and seizure they are stepping into the world of a repressive authoritarian government. Mr. Trump also seems to be defining what constitutes domestic terrorism and apparently it is anyone opposing him. He after all considered the Jan. 6 insurrectionists heroes and pardoned them, overriding the American legal system. They were also assaulting federal officers. Again, the videos are available. Where are the videos of ICE protests showing similar violence? Our founding fathers cautioned against the genesis of a monarchy. They recognized the danger of a despot taking power. Indeed, this is probably the main reason for the Second Amendment allowing citizen resistance should the government become oppressive. Not that it will come to that, nor should it. As MLK showed, peaceful civil disobedience is a much more potent means of change. It is the responsibility of each and every citizen to see that the freedoms of our Republic are maintained. And the ballot box remains our greatest option.

LEE WESLER
WOODSTOCK

If you put yourself in harm’s way, harm may just come your way

To the Editor:

The same people that laughed and rejoiced over Charlie Kirk’s death are now complaining about the shooting death of a manipulated little pawn agitator. My advice to the dullards attempting to interfere with the duties of any law enforcement agency is, “if you put yourself in harm’s way, harm may just come your way.” Actions have consequences. If you still want to push it, your “FAFO” menu options are: get pepper sprayed, get tear-gassed, have your head smashed to the pavement, get arrested, get shot by either rubber bullets or live ammunition, and lastly the number of the city morgue. And if this stark reality offends you - I could care less! People blame Trump for the actions of ICE, but then don’t blame Biden and Harris for flooding the country with illegals. Then there’s this crying about Trump going after his political opponents, but where have you one-sided idiots been for the last 10-plus years? Another moan is that this one, that one, is doing it for votes. Well, duh, they can’t get re-elected and become career politicians without getting votes, right? But of course, their personal gain has nothing to do with it, they’re more concerned about the little people, right? Then there’s the lure of vote for me and I’ll

give you free. If somebody buys me a beer at the bar, yes it was free for me, but somebody else did have to pay for it. Murphy once said that Maduro has to go, but since President Trump’s done just that, Murphy’s joined the rest of his flock crying foul. And what about Walz, that corrupt and now disgraced clown you voted for? Why is the State of Connecticut being sued for not turning over its voter registration database? Do they have something to hide, and how does that sue-happy Tong feel about getting a taste of his own medicine? Murphy and Tong are TDS-infected miserable human beings. Another is Joy-less Reid who’s claimed that “Jingle Bells” is a racist song. Get a life you irrelevant, has-been! Enough with the point/counterpoint stuff. I could mention illegals in the news and how democrats love their criminals on a weekly basis, but I choose not to. I’ll leave the misery to those weekly moaners. I have better things to do. I’m now in the process of writing a book. I’m also waiting for yet another piece of my historical research to be published. Anyhow, it’s time to crack open another beer and get on with it. Be less miserable my friends. ED DELUCA NORTH GROSVENORDALE



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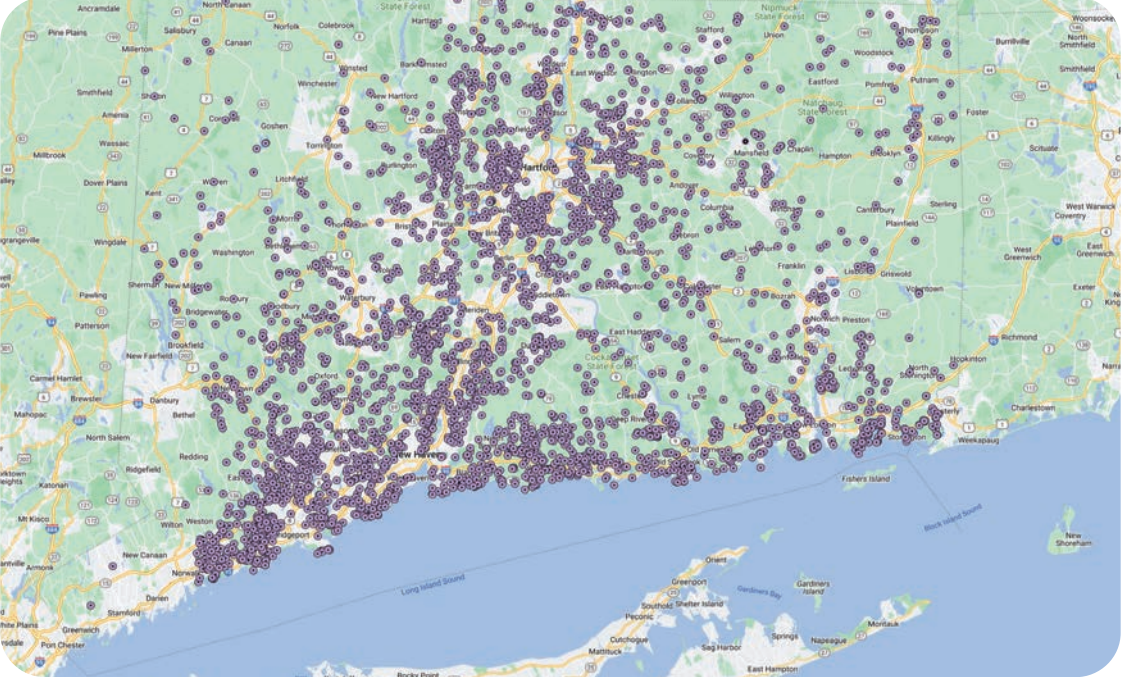
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The Week in Sports at Woodstock Academy

Girls Basketball
Woodstock Academy 56
Stonington 53
Isabel D’Alleva-Bochain broke a 53-53 tie and followed with a key steal to lead the Centaurs (4-3) to the victory in their first home game in about a month on Jan. 6.

D’Alleva-Bochain, who finished with 21 points, went into the lane and took a pass from Anna Hernandez. The senior rolled to her left and put the ball in the basket with just 3 seconds left on the shot clock and 33 seconds left in the game. After a timeout, D’Alleva-Bochain stole the inbounds pass and forced Stonington to foul. The Centaurs made only one of their last four free throws but it was enough to put away the win.

Kaylee Saucier added 16 points for the Centaurs, most of those came on five

3-pointers.

Sophia Hoinsky tied for game-high honors as the forward poured in 21 points for the Bears (4-2).

Woodstock Academy 63
Waterford 55
The way to beat a zone – shoot over the top of it.

The Centaurs proved that to be a very effective strategy against the Lancers on Jan. 9, as they made 11 3-pointers, eight in the second half and ran away with the win.

The Centaurs led by only five at the half but hit four 3-pointers in the first two minutes of the second half to extend that lead to 14 and Woodstock Academy (5-3) was never threatened again by Waterford (4-3).

Vivian Bibeau led the Centaurs with 18 while Kaylee Saucier added 17 and both Elise Coyle and Isabel D’Alleva-Bochain

added 14 to account for all of the Woodstock Academy scoring.

Lucy Walker had a game-high 21-point effort for the Lancers while Shae Tiven added 19.

Gymnastics
Ledyard sweeps in Stonington

For the second time in five days, Woodstock Academy and the Ledyard Co-Op came together for a meet, this time on a neutral floor in Stonington Jan. 6.

The change in venue did not change the results as the Colonels swept past the Centaurs 145.2-127.6 and also defeated Stonington (114.3) and Killingly (95.25) in the process to improve to 9-0 overall and 7-0 in the Eastern Connecticut Conference.

Alyssa McLeod took first in all four events to easily

finish best all-around with a 38.1 total. Her teammate, Capri Sferrazza, was second in the all-around with a 36.4.

Rhea Desota had a 32.65 all-around total while Emma Long finished with a 32.55 for the Centaurs (4-2, 4-2).

Jessie Williams carded a 34.95 total for Killingly in the all-around.

Girls Hockey
Woodstock Academy co-op 10
Fairfield 2

The Centaurs ended both their winless and scoreless slump at home at the Jahn Ice Rink at Pomfret School with a dominant offensive performance on Jan. 7.

Woodstock Academy (2-5) had come into the contest winless in their first four games on their home ice and they had failed to score a goal in those contests.

That ended 8 minutes, 33

seconds into the first period when Woodstock Academy senior Ellary Sampson tied the game at 1 and then East Lyme’s Avery Cairns put the Centaurs ahead to stay with another goal just a little over two minutes later.

Zi Qing Biondo of Stonington got a ceremonial puck after the game as she recorded her first career hat trick for the co-op while Sampson added a pair of goals and Waterford sophomore Summer Discordia had a goal and four assists. East Lyme’s Sophia Bonner (1st career goal); Stonington’s Bea Manfredi (1st career high school point) Woodstock Academy’s Madison Salisbury (1st career point) and Killingly’s Chloe Cesolini (1st career point) also received pucks.

Suffield 5
Woodstock Academy

co-op 0

The Centaurs had hoped their scoreless ways were behind them on Jan. 9, after erupting for 10 goals in a win on Wednesday over Fairfield.

Suffield, however, scored four times in the second period and pitched the shutout against Woodstock Academy (2-5).

Josie Hatch made 22 saves in net for the Centaurs.

Wrestling
Woodstock Academy 59
Putnam 18

Max Kopp had a pin and Aidan Soukaloun won by technical fall and the Centaurs (1-5, 1-1 ECC Division II) added eight other victories by forfeit on Jan. 7.

All of the wins for the Clippers (0-2, 0-1) were also by forfeit.

Killingly High School Weekly Sports Wrap-Up

Boys Basketball
New London took the win over Killingly at home on Jan. 6, with a final score of 67-54. Amir Hall had 20 points and JJ Robinson added 15 points for New London.

Quin Crowley had 29 points and 7 rebounds, while Quinn Sumner added 10 points and 8 rebounds for Killingly.

On Jan. 10, the boys survived at home in a victory by 1 point over Kolbe Cathedral (4-3)!

Final Score: 59-58!

Quinn Sumner had 21 points and 6 rebounds for Killingly, while Quin Crowley added 16 points! Greyson Marquez added 10 points and 4 assists for Killingly, while Peter Kazantzis added 5 points and 5 assists as well!

Jayden Desir led Kolbe Cathedral with 25 points.

Girls Basketball
Killingly Girls Basketball (2-4) was led in a loss against Fitch (3-3) on Jan. 6 behind 20 points and 20 rebounds from Amaya Spadolawhile Ella Adams added 10 points, 3 blocks and 3 assists, and Gianna Peters added 10 points and 12 rebounds!

Final Score: Fitch 66 - Killingly 47

Synna Waters had 34 points and Leilani McCoy had 15 points for Fitch.

The girls (3-4) were led in a win against Bacon Academy (1-6) on Jan. 9, behind 14 points from Gianna Peters while Amaya Spadola added 10 points!

Final Score: Killingly 42 - Bacon Academy 33

Delaney Walsh had 12 points for Bacon Academy.

Deyanira Dones named to SNHU Dean’s List

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — Deyanira Dones of Putnam has been named to Southern New Hampshire University’s Fall 2025 Dean’s List. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean’s List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 93-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, New Hampshire. Recognized as one of the “Most Innovative” regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

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.

The future in high gear

Technical mastery and character building at Little T Quarter Midget Club



THOMPSON — In the landscape of youth development, few arenas offer the unique intersection of high-stakes discipline, mechanical engineering, and family-centered competition quite like the Little T Quarter Midget Club. As a NASCAR Youth Series sanctioned organization, Little T is more than a racing circuit; it is a premier developmental platform designed to cultivate the technical leaders and professional athletes of tomorrow.

A foundational proving ground for excellence

In motorsports, a “proving ground” is a rigorous environment where engineering and talent are tested to ensure they can withstand the highest levels of pressure. Little T serves as this essential foundation. By providing a structured, professional environment, the club allows young drivers—some starting as early as age five—to prove their resilience and aptitude.

This sanctioned pathway connects local talent to the broader NASCAR ecosystem, offering a clear trajectory for those with professional aspirations while

providing all members with a sophisticated understanding of physics, strategy, and sportsmanship.

The racing season: From training to track

Success at Little T is built on a structured seasonal calendar that prioritizes preparation, safety, and consistent skill development:

March | Rookie Training: The journey begins in March with intensive Rookie Training sessions for new members. This period is vital for new drivers to master vehicle control, track safety, and flag recognition in a non-competitive, educational environment.

April – October | Sanctioned Race Season: Competitive events officially launch in April and run through October. This six-month season allows drivers to accumulate points, refine their technical skills, and experience a full range of track conditions.

Sunday Race Days: During the season, a typical race day is a full-immersion experience. Events begin in the late morning with competitive heats for all classes, followed by the high-stakes

main events.

Precision engineering: The Quarter Midget platform

A quarter midget is a masterclass in scaled engineering. Unlike recreational go-karts, these are purpose-built racing machines featuring:

Chromoly Steel Roll Cages: Engineered for maximum structural integrity.

Independent Suspension Systems: Allowing for precision tuning of “stagger” and weight distribution.

Specialized Powertrains: Regulated engines that require meticulous maintenance and mechanical sympathy.

Under the guidance of a dedicated Board of Directors, the club emphasizes mechanical appreciation. Drivers and their families are encouraged to delve into the “why” behind the machine, fostering a level of technical literacy and confidence that is highly valued in modern STEM careers.

The ROI of Racing: A Value Proposition for Families and Sponsors

For parents and prospective sponsors, Little T

Quarter Midget Club represents a high-value investment in community and character.

For Families: It is a rare “team” sport where the family serves as the pit crew. The bond formed over a shared mechanical challenge is unbreakable, creating a welcoming atmosphere that is safe, inclusive, and deeply rewarding.

For Sponsors: Aligning with a NASCAR Youth sanctioned club offers high-visibility access to a dedicated and tech-savvy demographic. Sponsors are fueling a program that builds discipline, grit, and engineering prowess in the next generation.

Experience the action

The public is encouraged to bring their families to the track, located in Thompson during our season to witness this unique community firsthand. The atmosphere is safe, welcoming, and provides a perfect day of family-oriented excitement.

For those looking to move from the grandstands to the cockpit, the club hosts “Arrive and Drive” events. These sessions allow prospective members to “try out” a real race car in a controlled, supervised environment—providing an accessible entry point into this prestigious sport.

Connect with Little T

We are proud to share our mission and grow our participation. To learn more about becoming a member, exploring sponsorship opportunities, or finding our next Arrive and Drive date, please contact us:

Official Website: www.littletspeedway.com

Membership & Sponsorship Inquiries: secretary@littletspeedway.com

Visit Us: Check our online schedule and join us at the track on a Sunday during our April–October season!

Upcoming programs at the Killingly Public Library

KILLINGLY — The Killingly Public Library invites the community a pair of upcoming programs.

Take Your Child to the Library Day All Ages

Saturday, Feb. 7, 10 a.m. - noon

Top of Form

Register online at killinglypl.org or call 860-779-5383.

Bottom of Form

Celebrate Take Your Child to the Library Day! Get transported to Poppi’s Planet! An interactive performance lesson with

music, dance and puppetry! Get ready to celebrate what it means to be our unique selves! A social-emotional performance art adventure! Big feelings, emotions and lessons to be resilient! Leaving with new tools of mindfulness, and joy in our hearts!

Backstage at the Ballet (Ages 4-12)

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Top of Form

Register online at killinglypl.org or call 860-779-5383.

Bottom of Form

Connecticut Ballet presents ‘Backstage at the Ballet,’ a 50-minute introduction to classroom technique and pointe work, partnering between male and female dancers, and classical and jazz excerpts. Meet a professional ballerina and her partner! Learn what it takes to become a professional dancer and perform many different ballets. Artistic Director, Brett Raphael, will narrate. This program is made possible with help from the CT Humanities Council and The Friends of the Killingly Library.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What would you do if ICE knocked on your door?

To the Editor:

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operate in every state. Agents are showing up at workplaces, court houses and schools. This week JD Vance warned that ICE will be going “door to door” to American homes. It’s been reported that over 10,000 new ICE agents will be hitting the streets, armed with our personal data harvested by private contractors.

What would you do if masked ICE agents knocked on your door and demanded identification? Consider everyday situations - a minor car accident, a noise complaint, or a morning commute – what happens when a status check of your citizenship becomes the norm? Would you instinctively reach for your “papers” to prove you belong here in the U.S.? Are you OK with that?

U.S. citizens are not legally required to carry proof of citizenship in daily life. Yet as enforcement expands, should we carry documents such as a passport or a certified birth certificate, or digital copies. What happens if we don’t have those documents with us? If we cannot prove we are a U.S. citizen and are detained without due process, then what? What happens if we have no way to let our family know where we are? Do we just disappear? History gives us reason to take these questions seriously. Societies rarely recognize the moment when basic assumptions about freedom quietly change. Germany, 1933, did not begin with camps. It began with “temporary measures.” registration, and enforcement justified as necessary.

So far, more than 170 U.S. citizens have been detained by ICE. For Americans wrongfully detained, it can be nearly impossible to escape. Once inside the detention system, proving citizenship can be surprisingly difficult. So, is it time to start carrying those government issued documents on us?

White House officials claim 2.5 million people living illegally in the U.S. have already been deported or left under pressure. The Trump/Vance deportation goals are unprecedented. The Administration’s goal is the removal of 15 - 20 million people, a number that exceeds the highest credible estimate of the undocumented population. The Pew Research Center estimated the undocumented population at 14 million as of 2023. How many more U.S. Citizens will get caught in ICE’s cross hairs to reach the removal goal of 20 million people?

The economic consequences of the deportations are already visible. Agricultural regions, particularly in California, Texas, and Pennsylvania, report labor shortages so severe that crops are rotting in the fields. California alone produces roughly 40 percent of the nation’s fruits, nuts, and vegetables. When immigrant workers disappear, food prices rise and availability drops. When there are “No farms there is No food.”

As removals increased, 2025 became ICE’s deadliest year in two decades. Inside detention

facilities, conditions are worsening. Human rights advocates, immigration attorneys, and lawmakers have documented overcrowding, unsanitary facilities, inadequate nutrition, and insufficient medical care. Families report loved ones missing with no information about where they are being held.

With detention centers at capacity, Immigration officials are exploring the purchase and conversion of massive warehouse facilities into detention “megacenters.” Buying the warehouses of the type often used by Amazon and other online retailers could allow federal officials to exempt themselves from many local zoning restrictions and oversight rules governing private or state-run prisons and jails.

While Trump promised to go after immigrants without legal status who are “the worst of the worst,” ICE data shows that nearly 75 percent of the people in immigration detention had no criminal convictions. Those detained or deported include farmworkers, hospital staff, college students, green card holders, naturalized citizens, asylum seekers, and lawful permanent residents. Many paid taxes for years, including Social Security and Medicare despite being ineligible to ever receive those benefits.

The U.S. does need immigration reform. It needs clear laws, fair enforcement, functional courts, and due process. But it does not need an agency whose culture has drifted toward cruelty, militarization, and secrecy. It does not need masked agents operating with minimal transparency. It does not need lethal force normalized under the banner of enforcement.

The recent tragic death of Renee Nicole Good, a 37-year-old U.S. citizen and mother of three in Minneapolis, should alarm every American. She was not the first person killed during an ICE operation, and without change, she will not be the last.

Protests are near constant since this Administration took office. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the right to peacefully protest by guaranteeing freedoms of speech, assembly, and the right to petition the government for redress of grievances. History shows that no government can withstand sustained, peaceful resistance from even a small portion of the population. Research suggests that when roughly 3.5 percent of people mobilize nonviolently, meaningful change becomes inevitable. In the U.S., that would mean about 12 million people.

For those concerned about the direction of immigration enforcement, engagement remains a constitutional option: voting, organizing, peaceful protest, and contacting elected representatives.

Silence has never protected anyone.

The question is no longer whether this could happen. It’s whether we recognize it while there is still time to stop it.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

The Trump Administration’s fatal order of operations

To the Editor:

The shooting of Renee Nicole Good by ICE officer Jonathan Ross offers yet another tragic example of the appalling order of operations that the Trump administration invokes at all levels of governance, to the detriment of the American people. It goes something like this:

Act with little forethought aside from political gain or the satisfaction of personal grievance.

When things go wrong, rationalize. Shift the narrative. Deflect. Dehumanize. Demonize. Lie. And lie some more.

State “facts” that match the desired narrative. Truth does not matter.

When faced with facts that contradict the desired narrative, ignore them. If that is not possible, declare them “fake news” or a “hoax” or “leftist propaganda.” Then, lie some more.

Never admit fault. Fire those within government agencies who have the temerity to do so and replace them with loyalists.

Within hours of Renee Nicole Good’s death, DHS Secretary Kristi Noem stated, “This was an act of domestic terrorism.”

Within hours of Renee Nicole Good’s death, Vice President J.D. Vance declared her a “deranged leftist.” Her death, according to him, was “a tragedy of her own making.”

Within hours of Renee Nicole Good’s death, President Donald Trump stated that she had “violently, willfully, and viciously ran over the ICE Officer, who seems to have shot her in self-defense.” Of the officer, Jonathan Ross, Trump added, “it is hard to believe he is alive, but is now recovering in the hospital.”

When subsequent videos of the fatal encounter unraveled their preemptive narrative, the Trump administration conducted business as usual. When Secretary Kristi Noem’s statements were challenged by the press, DHS Press Secretary Tricia McLaughlin stated, “The officer was in fear of his own life, the lives of his fellow officers, and acted in self-defense. The American people can watch this video with their own eyes and ears and judge for themselves.”

Yes, we can.

When Vice President Vance was subsequently challenged on his initial characterizations of the fatal encounter, he said of the video, “What you see is what you get.”

This is what I see:

I see Renee Nicole Good making an ill-thought-out attempt to protest the Gestapo culture that the Trump administration has fos-

tered through its ICE operations. What other law enforcement agency in the United States works entirely masked?

I see ICE officer Jonathan Ross, contrary to his training, walk around and in front of a running vehicle—placing himself in danger—to film Renee Nicole Good with an iPhone.

I see other officers charging towards the car, screaming obscenities, with ICE vehicles behind them blaring sirens.

I see Renee Nicole Good turn the wheels of her vehicle away from the approaching ICE officers, including Ross. I see a human being who must have felt profound terror in that moment. I see a protester, not a domestic terrorist.

I see neither Jonathan Ross nor any other ICE officer in the path of the vehicle as it begins to move.

I see and hear Jonathan Ross fire three shots into the vehicle, two through the driver’s side window as it moves away from him.

I see the senseless, avoidable killing of a mother who has just dropped her six-year-old off at school.

I see law enforcement run amok.

The Secretary of DHS, the Vice President, and the President appointed themselves judge and jury in the hours after Renee Nicole Good was shot dead. We deserve better. We deserve leadership that can acknowledge that the death of an American citizen engaged in protest is a tragedy. We deserve leadership that withholds judgment until all facts are gathered and commits itself to finding the truth. We deserve leadership that holds itself accountable when needed. As a nation, we are at present utterly devoid of such leadership. That itself is a tragedy.

Already, federal authorities have stymied the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in the investigation of Renee Nicole Good’s death, allowing the agency no access to evidence or case materials. Instead, if the Trump administration has its way, the investigation will fall solely under the purview of Trump loyalists Noem and Kash Patel of the FBI. This must not be allowed to happen. The American people deserve better. Renee Nicole Good’s six-year-old child and widow deserve better. In the last, awful moments of her life, Renee Nicole Good deserved better.

RICHARD TELFORD
POMFRET

Eight things to do retirement planning checklist: Everything to do before spring

BY JONATHAN MATHEWS

FINANCIAL FOCUS

BY JONATHAN MATHEWS
ASSOCIATE
VP, CLIENT
EXPERIENCE &
RELATIONSHIPS

The new year is, of course, a popular time to plan for the future. While this usually is focused on the year ahead, I’d encourage you to think bigger. The first quarter of the year is actually the perfect time to refocus on your retirement goals and update your long-term financial plan. Whether you’re already retired or preparing to make the transition, the first quarter of 2026 offers key opportunities to optimize your strategy, minimize taxes, and strengthen your financial confidence.

Here’s your step-by-step checklist to ensure you’re on track.

Max out 2025 retirement contributions

You have until April 15 to make 2025 contributions to IRAs and HSAs. This is a valuable opportunity to lower your taxable income and grow tax-advantaged savings. Contribution limits for 2025 are as follows: traditional IRA limit: \$7,000 (plus \$1,000 catch-up if 50+); Roth IRA limit is the same as Traditional (eligibility based on income); and the HSA limit is \$3,850 for individuals and \$7,750 for a family (+\$1,000 catch-up if 55+). If you’re still working, review your 401(k) deferrals and consider maximizing 2026 contributions early in the year.

Review your income plan and RMD strategy

If you’re age 73 or older, Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from traditional IRAs and 401(k)s must begin. Q1 is the time to confirm your RMD amount for 2026, strategize the best timing and source of withdrawals, and consider Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) if you’re charitably inclined

Rebalance your portfolio

The beginning of the year is ideal for assessing asset allocation and making adjustments. Consider the following questions: Has market performance shifted your allocation? Do your investments align with your risk tolerance and time horizon? Should you adjust income-producing assets based on current rates?

Evaluate your tax plan early

Don’t wait until April to think about taxes. Planning ahead now can help you to identify Roth conversion opportunities, realize capital gains or losses strategically, and coordinate deductions or charitable giving for optimal impact. 2026 is a critical year to start planning ahead of the 2025 tax law sunset. Strategic moves now can pay off in future flexibility.

Revisit your spending and withdrawal plan

For those in retirement, revisiting your spending projections at the start of each year is essential. Are you drawing

down from accounts in the most tax-efficient order? Has inflation or lifestyle shifted your needs? Are you maintaining a sustainable withdrawal rate?

Review insurance, Medicare, and health expenses

Health care is a major expense in retirement. Use Q1 to review Medicare coverage (especially if you made changes during AEP), revisit long-term care coverage or health-related spending accounts, and update healthcare proxies or plan for future care costs.

Reassess estate plan and beneficiaries

Life changes, laws evolve, and goals shift. The beginning of the year is the perfect time to confirm your will, trusts, and POAs reflect your current wishes; check beneficiary designations on retirement accounts and insurance; and discuss legacy goals with your family and advisor team.

Leverage the knowledge and experience of a professional – better yet, a whole team

A seasoned financial advisor can provide critical insights and advice to help keep you on track toward the retirement you want. Even better is an advisory or wealth management firm that takes a team approach, because it applies the knowledge and experience of a variety of professionals at to your plan. At WHZ, we surround our clients with a dedicated group of professionals – a Client-Centered Team – to proactively guide every stage of each client’s financial life.

Closing thought

A confident retirement doesn’t happen by accident; it happens through proactive planning. As 2026 gets underway, let our team help you check off these priorities and move forward with “Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.” Contact us for a complimentary consultation at whzwealth.com or call (860) 928-2341.

Authored by WHZ Associate Vice President, Wealth Advisor Jonathan Mathews. AI may have been used in the research and initial drafting of this piece. Rebalancing does not assure a profit or protect against loss in declining markets and cannot guarantee that any objective or goal will be achieved. Investments are subject to risk, including the loss of principal. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret St., Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Rd., Tolland, CT 06084, 860-928-2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com>. 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.

The value of ordinary days

January does not offer much in the way of spectacle.

There are no parades. No big milestones. No built-in celebrations to mark the weeks as they pass. The calendar settles into a stretch of ordinary days, and winter seems content to let them blend together.

For a long time, I thought that was something to endure.

These days, I’m not so sure.

Ordinary days have a quiet value that is easy to miss. They are the days when routines hold. When nothing dramatic happens, and that, in itself, becomes something to appreciate. The furnace kicks on the way it should. The car starts. The coffee tastes the same as it did yesterday. In January, reliability feels like a small victory.

Life in Northeastern Connecticut is built mostly out of these days. They do not make headlines, but they make up the bulk of our lives. The trip to the grocery store. The familiar exchange at the counter. The drive home on roads you know well enough to navigate even when the snowbanks are high.

Winter has a way of stripping things down to the basics, and in doing so, it highlights what actually matters. Warmth. Safety. A sense of rhythm to

the day. People you can count on.

I’ve noticed that conversations change this time of year. They slow down. There’s less small talk and more sincerity. Folks ask how you’re really doing, not because it’s polite, but because winter reminds us that answers can matter.

There is also a humility to ordinary days. They don’t demand attention. They don’t pretend to be special. They simply ask us to show up and do what needs doing, even when motivation is low and daylight is short.

That kind of steadiness counts for more than we often realize.

Spring will bring energy and motion. Summer will bring noise and activity. Those seasons get their share of admiration. But January, with its plainness and quiet insistence, deserves some credit too.

It teaches us patience. It teaches us gratitude for things working as they should. And it reminds us that a good life is not built only on memorable moments, but on long stretches of ordinary days that hold together.

In the middle of winter, that feels like wisdom worth keeping.

CORNER

OF

KINDNESS

By CHIP

The founding of Danielson’s Police Department

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



KILLINGLY
AT
300
MARGARET
WEAVER

The Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar is open by appointment. For additional information, please call (860) 207-6044 and leave a message. The Killingly Historical Society is pleased to announce that they have acquired copies of several interesting Connecticut books which are now available for \$20 each at the Killingly Historical Center 196 Main Street Danielson during regular business hours. The books are as follows: Connecticut Pirates and Privateers by Wick Griswold, Connecticut Witch Trials by Cynthia W. Boynton, Spies of Revolutionary Connecticut from Benedict Arnold to

Nathan Hale, Revolutionary War Ghosts of Connecticut by Courtney McIvale, and Hidden History of Connecticut’s Union Soldiers by John Banks. Pomfret Historical Society resumes Fireside Chats: “On Friday, Jan. 16, Pomfret Historical Society will begin its local history series FIRESIDE CHATS scheduled for the third Fridays of January, February, and March. Back by popular demand, the series features highlights from Pomfret’s history with opportunities for the audience to share their knowledge of the topics with anecdotes, photographs, memorabilia, and primary sources. January’s topic is WRITTEN IN STONE: THE 16 BURIAL GROUNDS IN POMFRET. Historians Donna Dufresne and Walter Hinchman will lead the audience on a virtual tour of the burial grounds beginning with the two individual small-

pox graves and proceeding to the 12 Colonial and Revolutionary era burial grounds and the two active cemeteries, featuring some stories of Pomfret’s first settlers and Revolutionary War soldiers. The Program begins at 7 PM. Come early to find a seat and order food and drinks. A donation of \$10 greatly appreciated to support our America 250 programs in 2026. OTHER CHATS: FEBRUARY - WHEN THE AMAZING ANNA WHISTLER BLEW INTO TOWN: MARCH - POMFRET’S GILDED AGE. For More Information contact Donna Dufresne windsong@snet.net” Monday, Jan. 19 is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. How many of you are old enough to remember when King was assassinated on April 4, 1968? I will never forget the date since it happened while my late husband Charles and I were on our first date. Imagine turning on the car radio after seeing a movie only to hear that earth-shattering news! Here is a partial biographical summary of King from Wikipedia: “Martin Luther King Jr. (born Michael King Jr.; January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was an American civil rights activist and Baptist minister who was a leader of the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. He advanced civil rights for people of color in the United States through the use of nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience against Jim Crow laws and other forms of legalized discrimination, which most commonly affected African Americans. A Black church leader, King participated in and led marches for the right to vote, desegregation, labor rights, and other civil rights. He oversaw the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott and was the first president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), leading the unsuccessful Albany Movement in Albany, Georgia, and helping organize nonviolent 1963

protests in Birmingham, Alabama. King was one of the leaders of the 1963 March on Washington, where he delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech, and helped organize two of the three Selma to Montgomery marches during the 1965 Selma voting rights movement.” The struggle for respect for all individuals still continues today. Do your part. I was once told, “When in doubt, it is best to err on the side of charity.” If you can’t do anything on the national level, work to make our corner of the world a kinder place! Together, we can make a difference. I had a request about when the Danielson Police Department was founded. With the help of Killingly Historical Society archivist Lynn LaBerge, we learned that the Danielson Borough Charter of 1854 provided for a bailiff. Nelson Titus became the first one on July 8, 1854. Changes to the Charter were made by the Connecticut General Assembly in January, 1941 concerning a police department (Notes from Gertrude Pradel and the Danielson Centennial Transcript special edition of May 27, 1954). I decided to check the January 1941 Transcripts to see if I could locate an article. By now, you know how my mind roves---I think of it as the Domino effect. Of course, I couldn’t resist looking at a few headlines from those papers. The Jan. 2, 1941 Transcript provided mention of an unexpected sport which we don’t hear much about today---badminton. “State Matches Here Saturday. Connecticut, Massachusetts Badminton Teams to Meet on Town Hall Courts. Danielson will be the scene of the first interstate badminton team match ever held in New England on Saturday night, when eight women and eight men from Massachusetts will play a similar group representing Connecticut in the Town Hall. Play is scheduled for 2:30 and 8 p.m. Some of the best players in this section of the country will be seen in action, the

teams being selected by the ranking committees of the states. There will be men’s doubles, women’s doubles and mixed doubles. The winning players are to be entertained by members of the Danielson Badminton Club.” Notice they were to play in Town Hall. If you remember other sporting events being held in the Killingly Town Hall, please email me with your memories. The Post Office was the official government agency in charge of registering non-citizens in 1941. Another front-page article in the Jan. 2, 1941 paper read, “P.O. Checks 2,155 Aliens. Arduous Registration Task is Completed on Thursday by Danielson Staff. Members of the Danielson Post Office staff thankfully completed the job of registering and fingerprinting aliens last Thursday night, having listed 2,155 non-citizens, considerably in excess of the number which had been anticipated...In many instances, where aliens were unable to leave their homes because of infirmities, members of the force went out to secure the information required.” Articles in early 1941 about the Borough police seemed elusive. However, I did come across a “1940 in Review” section in the Jan. 2, 1941 WCT that mentioned that in December 1940 the State Police had occupied their “new” barracks on Westcott Road in Danielson. (p.4). My late maternal grandmother, Margaret Lyter, always said, “Patience and Perseverance,” so I decided to broaden my search about the Borough police. An article, “Present Almost Same Budget for Borough,” in the March 27, 1941 Transcript did contain a brief mention of the General Assembly change and a little about the Borough police. The Borough allocated \$5,000 for the police for the forthcoming year. “Upon advice of attorneys, the court of burgesses confirmed the appointments of Chief George L. Gardner

and Policeman Laird E. Winchell, who were indefinitely continued in office by the police department civil service act recently passed by the General Assembly as an amendment to the borough charter. All special officers were appointed temporarily, pending examination which must be conducted under the new merit system.” (p.1). That makes it sound as though there were police prior to 1941. I guess I will need to continue my research. In March, 1941, although the United States has not yet entered World War II, its impact was being felt. Killingly, Brooklyn, and other Northeastern Connecticut towns still operated a number of factories. Whereas now many individuals commute miles to work, such was not the case in 1941. The local mills employed several thousand individuals. The March 27, 1941 Transcript reported, “Mills Announce Wage Increases Follow’g Trend. Powdrell & Alexander, Acme, Danielson Manufacturing, Wauregan-Quinebaug are among Plants boosting Pay. Over 2,500 Workers will be affected in Vicinity. The article noted that Powdrell & Alexander employed over 1,500 individuals at its six plants, which manufactured curtains, and the Wauregan-Quinebaug Company employed 800. The Danielson Manufacturing Company was producing mill supplies in the Elmville section of Killingly (Elmville was near the Dayville Post Office). Danielson was still considered “Curtaintown U.S.A.” Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, January 2026. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main St., Danielson, Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety.

SNHU announces Fall Dean’s List

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Fall 2025 Dean’s List. The fall terms run from September to December. Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean’s List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer. Leah Costa of Woodstock Heather Reilly of Woodstock Makenzie Raduege of North Grosvenordale Dean Lawrence of Eastford Alexis LeBlanc of Danielson Adam Van der Swaagh of Danielson Jay Patel of Dayville Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 93-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, New Hampshire. Recognized as one of the “Most Innovative” regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

SNHU announces Fall President’s List

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Fall 2025 President’s List. The fall terms run from September to December. Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President’s List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer. Ryan King of Putnam Makayla Evans of Putnam Kirsten Deorsey of Thompson Justin Bressette of Woodstock Clara Costabile of Pomfret Center Kirsten Deorsey of Thompson Paul Julien Jr of Danielson Colby Valliere of Killingly Brady O’Donnell of Danielson Jennifer Smyth of Dayville Jessica Lang of Dayville Danielle Marvel of Dayville Scar Jones of Dayville Brandon Tucciarone of Killingly Amy Tucciarone of Dayville Nicole Simons of Dayville Colby Valliere of Killingly James Soler of Brooklyn Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 93-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as one of the «Most Innovative» regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

Woodstock DTC expands to record size

WOODSTOCK — The ‘new-look’ Woodstock Democratic Town Committee continued its growth to its largest size ever by electing six new voting members and re-electing 28 current voting members at its annual Membership Caucus on Jan. 7. Three alternate members were also re-elected. New members welcomed are Matt Anderson, Kevin Bernier, Bob Freudenberger, Aino Kardestuncer, Mike Shepherd, and Dominick Tocci. “Our growth reflects a community increasingly drawn to Democratic values,” WDTC Chair Ivar McDonald said. “Many of our neighbors are concerned about the current national landscape and recognize that the most effective way to protect our values and make a meaningful difference is through local action. “By focusing on a clear vision for Woodstock

and nominating candidates committed to public service, we are providing a channel for that energy,” he said. “We are committed to listening to our neighbors and presenting solutions that make a tangible difference for Woodstock,”

McDonald added. The 2026-27 DTC team will be seated at the DTC meeting on Wednesday, March 4, at 6:30 p.m. at Woodstock Town Hall. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

New Al-Anon meeting in Pomfret

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

Local students named to Dean’s List at Lasell University

NEWTON, Mass. — The fall 2026 Dean’s List at Lasell University includes students who have completed at least 12 credits as a full-time student in that semester, and have achieves a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher. Among the area residents named to the fall Dean’s List were Addison Tyimok from Pomfret Center and Olivia Mcosker of Brooklyn.

Clippers fall at home, 51-46

PUTNAM — The Putnam High Clippers lost a tough one at home 51-46 Tuesday night. Freshman TJ Espinosa led the Clippers with 21 points and 6 rebounds. Sophomore Camden Kell battled an ankle injury in the second half but finished with 11 points, 3 rebounds and 3 assists. Senior Nick Devlin added 7 points, 3 rebounds and 3 assists and Sophomore Sam Jackel chipped in 6 points, 4 rebounds and 3 blocks. Putnam falls to 3-4 on the season.

SUDOKU

1	8							3
		3	6		7			8
	5					7		
7		1			2	3		
			1		9		2	
			4		3		9	
	3				8		6	
5		4	9					

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	7	2	5	4	3	8	1	6	8
1	3	8	9	2	6	7	4	5	7
5	6	4	8	1	7	2	3	9	6
2	6	5	4	8	3	1	9	7	9
3	4	8	1	7	9	5	2	6	3
7	9	1	5	6	2	3	8	4	4
6	5	9	8	3	1	7	4	2	2
4	2	3	6	5	7	9	1	8	8
1	8	7	2	9	4	6	5	3	3

ANSWER:

Pomfret resident named to UW-Madison Fall Dean's List

MADISON, Wisc. — The University of Wisconsin-Madison has recognized students named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of the 2025-2026 academic year, including Tatum Fisher of Pomfret.

Students who achieve at a high level academically are recognized by the dean at the close of each semester. To be eligible for the Dean's List, students must complete a minimum of 12 graded degree credits in that semester. Each university school or college sets its own GPA requirements for students to be eligible to receive the distinction.

To view an online listing, visit <https://registrar.wisc.edu/deanslist/>.

RESOLUTIONS WORD SEARCH

H	A	B	I	T	J	T	L	A	B	E	P	B	C	T	L	P	A	R	J
M	H	J	P	E	S	R	M	B	C	L	Y	H	S	A	S	B	U	G	V
I	E	C	Y	R	P	A	N	O	A	H	A	F	C	T	C	O	U	E	E
U	B	W	C	R	R	N	D	N	T	N	I	F	O	G	H	A	S	D	G
N	I	O	H	O	T	S	F	Y	G	I	M	E	O	I	E	C	W	C	C
O	M	B	F	M	T	F	D	E	P	P	V	I	V	C	N	A	I	R	D
I	P	J	N	T	E	O	T	A	E	W	P	A	N	E	U	I	U	I	C
T	R	E	P	G	N	R	N	C	N	P	E	R	T	D	M	S	I	R	N
N	O	C	J	N	O	M	E	C	I	L	R	F	O	I	S	E	P	O	O
E	V	T	M	S	T	A	M	O	T	A	S	S	L	G	O	E	N	B	I
T	E	I	V	N	S	T	T	U	U	W	I	A	V	A	R	N	T	T	T
N	M	V	I	O	E	I	I	N	O	E	S	C	M	G	O	E	I	T	A
I	E	E	S	I	L	O	M	T	R	N	T	I	T	E	A	G	S	A	N
C	N	H	I	T	I	N	M	A	Y	E	E	W	C	C	V	B	S	S	I
A	T	O	O	A	M	V	O	B	V	R	N	P	R	O	M	I	S	E	M
G	C	C	N	R	C	S	C	I	S	T	C	E	T	G	R	U	R	L	R
G	Y	A	U	I	I	U	Y	L	Y	Y	E	D	C	M	B	T	V	P	E
I	J	P	C	P	W	H	D	I	S	C	I	P	L	I	N	E	B	N	T
U	U	J	O	S	G	W	G	T	Y	N	E	Y	E	D	I	E	J	O	E
H	R	G	L	A	A	M	U	Y	M	H	J	E	F	P	T	O	R	C	D

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

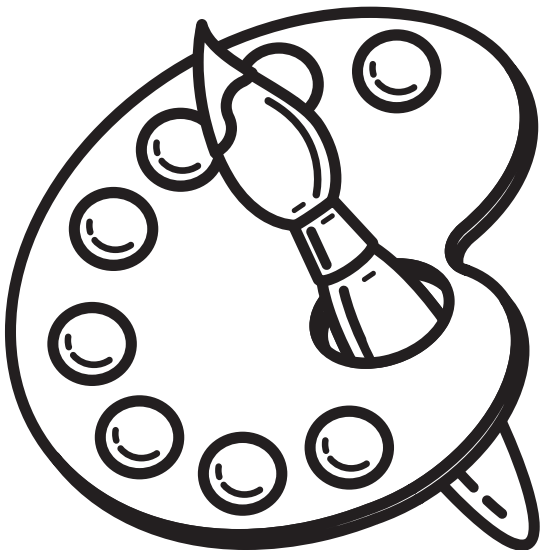
WORDS

- ACCOUNTABILITY
- ACHIEVEMENT
- ASPIRATION
- CHANGE
- COMMITMENT
- DETERMINATION
- DISCIPLINE
- FOCUS
- GOAL
- HABIT
- IMPROVEMENT
- INTENTION
- MILESTONE
- MINDSET
- MOTIVATION
- OBJECTIVE
- PERSISTENCE
- PLAN
- PROGRESS
- PROMISE
- RENEWAL
- ROUTINE
- TRANSFORMATION
- VISION



Creative Coloring

Color in this picture to create your own masterpiece.



Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the individual words to reveal letters for the phrase.

FCART

6	2	1	7	3

TIGNTINK

5		3	3				

ISTRAT

1	2		4	3	

NTIPA

				3

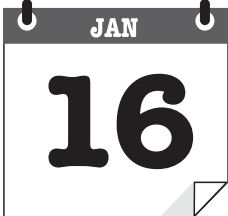
1	2	3	4

		D	
1	5		

6	2	1	7	3	4		

Answer: Arts and crafts

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1909: Ernest Shackleton and his expedition find the magnetic South Pole.

1920: The League of Nations holds its first council meeting in Paris, France.

1969: Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 4 and Soyuz 5 perform the first-ever docking of crewed spacecraft in orbit.

NEW WORD

NICHE

a specialized segment of the market

Art FACT:

Various artistic activities can be considered hobbies, including this pastime that involves clay.

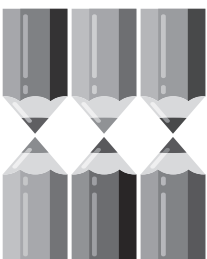
Answer: Pottery

How they say that in...

- English:** Hobby
- Spanish:** Pasatiempo
- Italian:** Passatempo
- French:** Passe-temps
- German:** Zeitvertreib

Did You Know?

Hobbies have many benefits, including reducing stress, improving mood, fostering social connections, and encouraging community involvement.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Sewing machine

OBITUARIES

Heidi Ann Gregory 1953 - 2025



Putnam – Heidi Ann (Gorey) Gregory, 72, of Breault St., died Monday morning, December 22, 2025, at Day Kimball Hospital. She was the loving wife of the late Henry “Hank” Gregory who died on April 22, 2017. Born in Putnam, she was the daughter of the late Thomas F Gorey and Charlotte (King) Trahan. Mrs. Gregory worked as a licensed practical nurse at many of the local area nursing

homes. Heidi enjoyed crafting. She is survived by her three sisters, Peggy Purdon, Judith White, and Jo-Anne Joslin and her husband Alan all of Putnam and several nieces and nephews. A memorial service for Heidi was held on Tuesdays, December 30, 2025, at 11:00AM in the Gilman Funeral Home and Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT 06260. Burial will be private at a later date. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

JoAnn V. Gorham 1951-2025



Putnam – JoAnn V. (Lippiello) Gorham, 74, of Emond St., passed away in the presence of family on January 4, 2026, after a long illness. She was the loving wife of the late Thomas J. Gorham for 46 years. Mrs. Gorham was born on January 28, 1951, in Putnam and was the daughter of the late Victor and Josephine (Barille) Lippiello. Mrs. Gorham was a retired nurse who had worked in doctors’ offices throughout her career, most recently at Putnam Medical Associates. She graduated from the former Putnam Catholic Academy and earned an associate’s degree from Manchester Community College. For many years she was an active congregant at Most Holy Trinity Church in Pomfret and volunteered for many activities at the former St. Mary’s School in Putnam. She was a devout Catholic who attended St. Mary’s Church in Putnam. In her retirement, she enjoyed casino trips with her husband, father, and friends, viewing plays at the Bradley Playhouse, and dining locally. She loved to travel, especially to Disney World and the beach with Vicki and Josie. Most recently she traveled with

her family to Aruba and to Sorrento, Italy. She also enjoyed women’s basketball, holding season tickets to the Connecticut Sun for many years, and was a fan of the New York Jets. Mrs. Gorham is predeceased by her husband, Thomas, and her parents, Victor and Josephine Lipiello. She is survived by her daughter, Victoria E. Ywarsky and her husband John of Brooklyn, CT; her beloved granddaughter Josephine Ywarsky; and many cousins in northeastern Connecticut and Buffalo, NY. Vicki, John, and Josie are especially thankful of JoAnn’s cousins, Joseph and Linda Surozinski of Woodstock Valley, for their care, companionship, and compassion for JoAnn in her hospice. Relatives and friends were respectfully invited to visit with JoAnn’s family from 9:00AM-10:30 AM on Saturday, January 10th in the Gilman Funeral Home & Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 AM in St. Mary Church of the Visitation, 218 Providence St., Putnam. Burial will take place in the spring. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Eastern Connecticut Hematology and Oncology (ECHO) Cancer Foundation, 330 Washington Street #220, Norwich, CT 06360. For memorial guestbook please visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Joan Ethel Haffey, 78

Joan Ethel Haffey, 78, of Danielson passed away on December 7, 2025, at Day Kimball Hospital in Putnam after a brief illness. She was born in New Britain on August 7, 1947, daughter of the late Wilton S. Haffey, Sr. and Helen (Potts) Haffey. Joan attended New Britain High School, Oberlin College and the University of Hartford, graduating with a degree in music education. She went on to receive her masters from the Hartt School of Music. She was a recognized in Who’s Who Among Students of American Colleges and Universities in 1971. Joan taught instrumental music for many years at the Killingly Junior High School and is fondly remembered by her former students. She had a lasting impact on thousands of Killingly children teaching instrumental music and many will remember how proud she was that her “Killingly Blue Jeans Marching Band” could always be counted on to march and play for Little League and Memorial Day parades regardless of the weather when other local high school bands chose to opt out. Joan was an accomplished French Horn musician and played in various bands and orchestras, including being selected to play with the World Youth Symphony in 1967 in Berlin, Germany at the time the Berlin Wall was erected. Joan was the registrar for many years, Assistant Camp Director and Camp Director of Laurel Music Camp, a week-long overnight music camp located in the hills of northwest Connecticut for high school musicians. Joan was a 47-year member of the Theta

Chapter of Connecticut State Organization of The Delta Kappa Gamma International, an invitation only society dedicated to promoting professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education. Joan served as assistant state treasurer and local chapter treasurer and was the 1999 State Achievement Award Recipient. The Theta Chapter established the Joan Haffey Achievement Award to honor her legacy, presented annually to members who mirror her service. In addition to her music and education interests, Joan enjoyed needlepoint and ceramics, and loved women’s basketball, having played on teams at the University of Hartford and was an avid fan of the UConn women’s basketball team. Joan is survived by her two sisters Ellen S. Nicholson of Northport FL, and Marion J. Haffey of Treasure Island FL, and a brother Wilton S. Haffey, Jr of Utica NY, as well as several nieces and nephews. A Memorial Service will be held in the Westfield Congregational Church 210 Main Street Danielson, CT on Saturday January 24, 2025, at 10am. A Graveside Service will follow at 12:30pm at Rose Hill Memorial Park, Rocky Hill, CT. In lieu of flowers, a tax-deductible donation can be made in Joan’s name to benefit Laurel Music Camp (checks made out to LMC) or a non-tax-deductible donation to benefit the Elizabeth Sonier Grant (checks made out to DKG-CTSO) and mailed to Attorney Christian Sarantopoulos, 143 School Street, Danielson, CT 06239. tillinghastfh.com

Karen Ann Jackson,74,



Karen Ann Jackson,74, of Killingly, passed away peacefully on January 6, 2026 after a lifetime as a dedicated teacher, daughter, sister, and friend. Born at Day Kimball Hospital July 27, 1951, Karen grew up in Rogers, attended Goodyear Grammar School and graduated Killingly High School in 1969. She received a Bachelor of Education from Southern Connecticut State University and Master of Education from Eastern Connecticut State University. Karen taught in the Killingly School system for more than thirty-five years, primarily at the elementary school level. She had a special place in her heart for all “her kids”. She spoke with them naturally and honestly, without judgment, and her personal contact was returned with smiles and admiration for “Miss Jackson”. Throughout her career she worked to protect teachers’ rights and advocate for high quality public education. Karen served in several leadership positions in both the Killingly Education Association and the Connecticut Education Association, including as President and Chief Contract Negotiator of the KEA for many years. She also represented Windham County for several years on the CEA Board of Directors. In 1988 Karen was named

Killingly Teacher of the Year. With her humor, generosity, care and warmth Karen developed many lifetime friendships from childhood through college and her career. With friends she enjoyed international travel, attending theater and concerts, exploring local restaurants and delis, and the best bakeries of the region. Her friends sustained her and she, them. Her dogs were always constant companions and an important part of her life. She was predeceased by her parents, Joseph and Josephine (Gawlik) Jackson, and her beloved niece and goddaughter Kathleen (Katie) Elizabeth Jackson. She is survived by her brothers and their spouses Joseph Jackson and Margaret Martin of Woodstock, Daniel and Sandra Jackson of Rogers, and by her best friend of almost 70 years, Jan Blanchette. Friends and colleagues are invited to visit with Karen’s family at Gagnon and Costello Funeral Home in Danielson on Saturday January 17 from 10:00 am with a prayer service at 11:00 am. Following the service, Karen will be buried next to Katie at St. Joseph’s Cemetery Dayville, weather permitting. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Karen Jackson Memorial Scholarship Fund at the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut (cfect.org), to Friends of Assisi Food Pantry Danielson, or to the charity of the donor’s choice. Share a memory at Gagnonandcostellofh.com

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

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF Joseph H Iadevaia (25-00474)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated December 26, 2025, 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:
Jason Iadevaia,
479 Round Top Road, Harrisville, RI 02830
January 16, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF Barbara H. Page (25-00466)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated December 30, 2025, 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:
Katherine Morgan Page, 33 Vezina Drive, Danielson, CT 06239
January 16, 2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF Karoly G St. King (25-00483)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated January 2, 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:
Christine M Quintal
c/o CURRAN R MEAD, LAW OFFICE OF BRIAN S. MEAD,
148 OLD TURNPIKE RD.,
P.O. BOX 508,
QUINEBAUG, CT 06262
January 16, 2026

www.VillagerNewspapers.com

WINNERS

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received the Maurice Beaulac Scholarship. Family member Maureen Beaulac said, “My dad loved being a Rotarian, the camaraderie with many of you that are here. It was something that was so meaningful for him and he really prided himself on the service that the Rotary Club performed in the community to help students. They are so impressive; he would have been blown away by the community service, the clubs, the sports, the work and the academics that all of the scholarship recipients demonstrate year after year. He would have been very

proud and honored because he was the first one in his family to go to college. So to see it kind of being paid forward in his memory would be very meaningful.” Four students received a Raymond and Violet Brousseau Scholarship: Abigail Converse (Worcester Polytechnic Institute), Jane Ferraro (Connecticut State College Quinebaug Valley), Lucy St. Germain (Salve Regina University), and Kaelyn Tremblay (Wentworth Institute of Technology). In addition, Eric Levesque (UConn) received the second half of his two-year scholarship. He’s been busy — one accomplishment he’s made is to help start a Rotaract Club at UConn-

Storrs. Johnston described Ray Brousseau as a true American, a veteran of WWII. Ray was a member of the Rotary Club for more than 60 years. “He was loyal and dedicated to the motto of Rotary, ‘Service Above Self,’” Johnston said. “The Brousseaus did not have children and, according to Ronald P. Coderre, “They were such community servants that they wanted their name to continue.” When they passed they left sizeable donations to the Putnam Rotary Club for scholarships, to Day Kimball Health and to their church, the Congregational Church of Putnam.

GRANTS

continued from page A1

Warner Boxcar Children Museum site, improving accessibility and the visitor experience. The Putnam Police Department, to help fund the purchase of a FLIR Scout Pro thermal imaging monocular—a tool commonly used to support nighttime and low-visibility operations such as search-and-rescue and situational awareness. The Rectory School, to support its annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of

Service, helping students contribute meaningful volunteer hours and hands-on service in the region. The Danielson Veterans Coffeehouse, to support fellowship and ongoing community support for area veterans, including the purchase of a box truck from the Manchester Food Bank to aid in the distribution of food to the community. The Theatre of Northeastern Connecticut, to support 2026 programming at the Bradley Playhouse in Putnam, Connecticut. “Community foundations should be practical:

we listen locally, then fund what improves daily life,” said Thomas A. Borner, President of the Putnam Area Foundation. “This set of grants back programs that matter—summer opportunities for kids, better access to local history, support for veterans, and tools that can help keep residents safer when it counts.” The Putnam Area Foundation is a local charitable foundation that supports nonprofit organizations and community initiatives serving the Putnam area and Northeastern Connecticut.

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KILLINGLY

continued from page A1

many of these students even with the academy in place

and will need to consider the overage come budget time. Even with those limitations, the Academy has proven popular in its first

year. The Superintendent reported that 23 of the 25 slots have been filled, showing a definite need for the program and potential room for further growth.

Area residents named to UConn Dean’s List

STORRS — The University of Connecticut congratulates the following students on being named to the Dean’s List for the fall semester of 2025.

Brooklyn
Kaitlyn Dalbec, Christopher Dooley, Brady Ericson, Devin Exarhoulias, Caroline Frost, Jackson Gallagher, Avery Hardacker, Kayleigh Murray, Sai Patel, Phillip Purcell.

Danielson
Kalob Barclay, Emma Gilbert, Chloe Magao, Drew Noble, Brook Oliver, Usa Sacksith.

Dayville
Melody Kettle

Killingly
Samantha Goulston

Moosup
Emily Smith

North Grosvenordale
Zeynep Acun, Jackson Santos

Putnam
Brandon Lynch

Thompson
Avery Butler, Matthew Franchi, Eric

Levesque, Neil Wong.

Tolland
Jacob Bidorini, Jeremy Blanchard, Joshua Blanchard, Alyssa Boggis, Remi Boivin, Molly Busch, Anna Cadman, Aidan Cady, Maria Cayward, Fatmah Chaudhry, Kailey Chick, Sara Clokey, Shay Coleman, Kaida Cote, Elio Delgado, Remi Dupuis, Anna Hekkala, Jocelyn House, Tobin Johnson, Anna Klinowski, Aidan Kohl, Julia Kohl, Abhay Kohli, James Leahy, Elinor Levy, Danielle Lillis, Zoe Livingston, Elizabeth Ly, Erika Miller, Madelyn Milne, Calista Mrozinski, Laura Myshrall, Justin Pavlov, Elijah Polance, Julia Poulin, Jacob Ross, Sophia Rotondaro, Adam Schadt, Junaid Shah, Rehan Shah, Temoor Shah, Isabella Spaderna, Clarissa Surette, Hunter Tortorella, Abigail Winter, Kaitlyn Wood, M0ackenzie Wood, Ella Zmijewski.



Woodstock
Aaron Allard, Hannah Darigan, Skylar Dodge, Anya Farutin, Aiden Finch, Paige Owens, Evan Rhault, Todd Viano.

Woodstock Valley
Ava Golden, Gavin Grant, Olivia Grant, Magnolia Hart, Melinda Morin, Kadin Shepherd.


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