

Killingly honors Mary Dixon Kies with memorial bench

Woodstock hosts annual Shop Hop



BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

KILLINGLY — The Town of Killingly has dedicated a special memorial bench in honor of Mary Dixon Kies, a figure with special local and national

significance as the first recorded woman to receive a U.S. patent in her own name. The bench was placed in Lions Park in the Dayville district of Killingly before a special ribbon cutting on Sept. 27. The ceremony explored Kies’ his-

tory and honored her place in the long battle for equality for women in the United States. Speeches from local officials and historians acknowledged Kies as not only an iconic part of Killingly’s past, but a landmark individual in national history at a

time when women were nothing more than an extension of their husbands. Kies’ historical accomplishment occurred in 1809 when she became the first woman to receive a U.S. patent in her own name. Her method for weaving

straw with silk became a popular practice for making bonnets in an era where the United States depended heavily on locally produced materials rather than imports. The patent was signed by President

Turn To **BENCH** page **A11**

Outdoor adventures & community spirit in Northeast CT

POMFRET — On Sunday, Sept. 21, Quiet Corner NEMBA hosted its Fifth Annual Walktober Fun Ride on the multi-use trail system at Pomfret Forest.

More than 150 mountain bikers of all ages and abilities enjoyed perfect fall weather riding bikes together in the woods. Cyclists from three states gathered at Pomfret’s Recreation Fields to explore three self-guided loops that traversed the forest and hills of the Town’s beautiful property. Pomfret Recreation Department sold lunch to hungry riders and made a \$200 profit for their general fund. This event was part of The Last Green Valley’s “Walktober” series, which aims to showcase the region’s abundant natural resources through outdoor adventures for both locals and visitors. This Fun Ride is one



of many activities QC NEMBA has hosted or supported that promotes community spirit, healthy activities and fun in the great outdoors.

Quiet Corner NEMBA is a small but active chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA). This 10,000-member non-profit

helps protect open space and build and maintain trails for passive recreation throughout New England. The QC NEMBA chapter has volunteered nearly 6,000 hours of work plus financial support of a \$10,000 NEMBA Trail Grant since April 2021 to build over 13 miles of multi-use trail at Pomfret Forest to be enjoyed by all in the community and the region.

Pomfret Forest is open to hikers, trail runners, dog walkers (on leash), mountain bikers and equestrians (on designated trails for safety). The 150-acre parcel of land on Wolf Den Road near Gwyn Careg Inn was acquired by the Town of Pomfret in 2019. The Town partnered with QC NEMBA, whose volunteers have built and maintain

Turn To **NEMBA** page **A11**

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

WOODSTOCK — The Town of Woodstock held its annual Shop Hop on Sept. 27 and 28, putting a spotlight on local businesses to showcase the local merchants and hidden gems of the town. Organized by the Woodstock Business Association, the 2025 Shop Hop included 14 local farms, shops, and eateries challenging visitors to fill out stamp cards for a chance at winning prizes for completing the trek. The day was designed to bring attention to local businesses and encourage everyone to shop locally, maybe even introducing many to shops they had never visited before. The day was also part of the Woodstock Business Association’s mission to get people to “explore Woodstock.”

For business owners, the day holds significance by creating increased exposure and even helping increase profits during a slow year. That was the case for the Shops at Walnut Farms where owner Cindy Sherman said the Shop Hop helped create a much-needed boost in sales numbers for the weekend.

“We’ve been very busy, so that’s good for business. It’s been a slow year so it’s nice to see people coming in,” Sherman said. “It’s very important to us to have these couple of days. These are big days for small business owners.”

Just down the road on Route 169 is The Rusty Relic, which also saw a significant boost in visitors thanks to the Shop Hop. Owner Jason Beausoleil said the weekend helps increase awareness of the shop’s location and brings in people who may have never visited them before.

“We’ve had foot traffic

Turn To **SHOP HOP** page **A11**

Thompson unveils additions to Train Wreck Park

BY JASON BLEAU
VILLAGER CORRESPONDENT

THOMPSON — The Town of Thompson debuted a new look for the Train Wreck Park on Sept. 27 with a special ribbon cutting recognizing years of efforts to make the area more user friendly and recapture the significance of the area as the site of a historic train crash in the 1890s.

The Train Wreck Park has been in the works since 2018, and while this isn’t the first ribbon cutting, the newest unveiling debuted an expanded parking lot and additions that further document its history as an important site in railway history. These include more signage documenting the buildings that used to sit on the site including the turntable that once served the railway system and a replica of the East Thompson sign. The site stands as not only an important designation of a historical landmark, but a memorial for those lost during a destructive crash in that very spot. The property was the

site of the 1891 Great East Thompson Train Wreck, considered one of the most extensive accidents of its kind in American history. The wreck was the first in the nation to involve four different trains and claimed the lives of three people in the process. Thompson Historical Society President Joe Iamartino made sure to remind visitors of not only the historical importance, but also the emotional significance of remembering the events that took place that day.

“This site, as much as we love to remember it for the positive that it is right now, today, as a park for exercise and fresh air, if you put yourself back to Dec. 4, 1891, this was a very cold and foggy day. A very rare event occurred. Four trains collided on this site. Three people perished as a result. The reason why this is a memorial park is also to remember the three who passed. We want the happy, we want to celebrate but also remember those who are not here anymore as a result of this accident,” Iamartino



Jason Bleau

The ribbon is cut for the upgraded Train Wreck park along the Airline Park Rail Trail in Thompson.

said. Work on the park goes back to 2019, when the Thompson Trails Committee received a non-monetary grant from the National Park Service for technical assistance. At the end of 2021 they produced a final action plan and received a grant from CT Humanities for interpretive signs that were unveiled during the first ribbon cutting several years ago and still today allow visitors to see

the site as it was both before and after the train wreck. This newest phase was funded through a Connecticut DEEP Recreational Trails Grant and ARPA funding. The park also helps support a larger initiative by multiple towns to enhance the Air Line Park Rail Trail that extends along the old railway itself.

However, this is not the end for the project. Tyra Penn-Gesek, Thompson’s Director of Planning &

Development, said they still have bigger plans for the area extending beyond the site of the train wreck.

“What we are hoping to achieve in future years, perhaps through another round of the grant process through the state, is a welcome kiosk with enclosed sanitary facilities and a pavilion with seating further down on the trail – Perhaps more robust signage, and the trails go in the other

direction and there are things we would like to see preserved there,” Penn-Gesek revealed.

Since COVID-19, the Rail Trail has become a popular attraction for those looking for outdoor recreation. Post-pandemic estimates have the annual visitor numbers in Thompson ranging from 18,000 to 20,000, an increase from the estimate peak numbers of

Turn To **PARK** page **A11**

Aspinock Historical Society releases “Voices of the Flood” Video Series

PUTNAM — The Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam is proud to announce the release of its new video series, “Voices of the Flood.” Produced by local historians Jeanne Benoit and Mike Bogdanski, this series is a powerful living history that chronicles the devastating and life-altering 1955 flood through the firsthand accounts of those who lived through it.

The video series features emotional and descriptive stories from residents who witnessed the once-in-a-century flood that reshaped the town of Putnam forever. Their testimonials offer a raw and intimate perspective on the event, capturing the fear, resilience, and community spirit that emerged in its wake.

“We felt it was crucial to capture these stories before they were lost to time,” said historian Jeanne Benoit. “The 1955 flood wasn’t just a natural disaster; it was a pivotal moment that changed the physical and social landscape of our town. The voices in this series bring that history to life in a way that no textbook ever could.”

Historian Mike Bogdanski added, “These are more than just memories; they are a tribute to the strength of the Putnam community. The stories shared in ‘Voices of the Flood’ serve as a powerful



Courtesy

Mike Bogdanski, Ed Perron, and Jeanne Benoit.

reminder of our history and the incredible resilience of its people.”

The “Voices of the Flood” video series is available for viewing on the Aspinock Historical Society’s website at putnamaspinockhistsoc.com/ or search Aspinock historical on YouTube.

The Aspinock Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and sharing the rich history of Putnam, Connecticut. Through its archives, exhibits, and educational programs, the

society works to foster a deeper appreciation for the town’s heritage and its enduring legacy. The museum is located in the Putnam municipal complex is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Jean C. Lafontaine named Thompson’s Veteran of the Month

THOMPSON — Jean (John) C. Lafontaine of Valley Road has been selected by the nominating committee to be recognized and honored as the October 2025 Town of Thompson Veteran of the Month.

Vietnam War veteran, Sgt. E-5 Jean C. Lafontaine was drafted into the United States Army in October 1969, and served his country honorably until his discharge in 1971. He was initially assigned to Fort Dix in New Jersey for his mandatory basic training, and subsequently transferred to Fort Sill, Oklahoma where he completed his on the job advanced training as a heavy vehicle mechanic in the maintenance squadron Division. Jean was then deployed to South Vietnam in May of 1970 and assigned to the 11th Armored Calvary Regiment. During his time in the Vietnam theatre, he was involved directly in Operation Pile-On in Cambodia and was based at Camp Dian in South Vietnam as a records clerk working under the direction of Col. George S. Patton, the son of the infamous World War II veteran General George S. Patton. While stationed there, Sgt. Lafontaine was involved in many classified and dangerous daily war plans, and involved with the very critical and important decision-making process in regards to which direction this tragic conflict was to proceed moving forward. Complicated and intricate decisions that had enduring consequences long after the war was to end. Upon completion of his tour of duty in South Vietnam, Lafontaine was returned safely to the United States and separated from his oversees duties and his Military obligation from the U.S. Army Personnel Center in Oakland, Calif. in May 1971.

For his service to his Country, Lafontaine was presented with the National Service Defense Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Army Commendation Medal (1st OLC), and the Good Conduct Medal (1st AWD).

Lafontaine was born in Webster, Mass. on September 18, 1949 to parents Wilbrod C. Lafontaine, a World War II Purple Heart Army veteran and also a 63-year member of the American Legion Post 67, and his mother, Stella (Fournier) Lafontaine. Jean has an older brother, Normand, also a Vietnam

War era veteran, who was a Captain in the United States Air Force, and is also a long-time member of the American Legion Post 100 where he resides, in Pelham, New Hampshire.

Jean attended the St. Joseph Grammar School and St. Joseph High School in North Grosvenordale and graduated in the very next to last graduating class in June 1967. The St. Joseph High School closed its doors the following year in June 1968. He then attended the H.H. Ellis Technical School for two years in Danielson and graduated as an Automotive Technician in 1969. After returning from Vietnam, Jean then became employed, and began what turned out to be a 38-year career at The Millbury Ford-Mercury automotive dealership in Auburn, Mass., primarily as a Senior Service Technician retiring in 2010.

At an early age, Jean became involved in his Community when he joined as a member of the North Grosvenordale Boy Scout of America Troop 29. There he rapidly rose through its ranks, eventually becoming an assistant Junior Scout Leader. He later joined the Community Fire Company as a Junior Fireman at the age of 16, and eventually attained Firefighter status, and became an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), and subsequently has served as a Fire Policeman for the Community Fire Company for the past 54 years.

As a young adult, Jean joined the Knights of Columbus and eventually achieved third- and fourth-degree status. He is also a long- time member of the Valley Springs Sportsman Club and has served as its recording Secretary for 3 years and then served as its President from 1984 to 1986. Jean is also a long- time member of the Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) Post 10088 in Quinebaug.

Jean’s long, stellar History with the American Legion is extremely impressive. Jean became initially involved with the American Legion Program when he was chosen in 1966 as a Junior at St. Joseph High School to be the School’s representative that year to the highly prestigious American Legion Boy’s State Program. Having had such a great experience attending Boy’s State, Jean went on to become a Boy’s State Counselor for 22 years assisting and guiding other young High School Juniors.

Jean has always been very involved and a committed member of the American Legion Program Post 67 in Grosvenordale for 52 years. During his tenure he has served on numerous Committees including the annual Award’s Committee, the Golf Committee, the Americanism Committee, Boy’s State Commission, and the National Economics and Education Committee. His involvement includes being Commander of the Post for over a dozen years. In 1996, Jean became Jr. Vice Commander and in 1997 was elected as 4th District Commander. He further assented onto State involvement as assistant Sargent-at-arms, and in 1999 was elevated to State Sargent-at-arms. In 2002 and 2003, he was the State Department Historian. In 2004 Jean became the State of Connecticut Vice Commander and then in 2005 became the State Department Commander. For all of his diligent work and efforts on behalf of the State American Legion Program over his lifetime, Jean was inducted into the State of Connecticut American Legion Hall of Fame in 2019. A very deserving and rewarding accomplishment for a local dedicated servant making his Family and his Community very proud.

In June 1973, Jean joined his wife, Doris Vaillant, in the blessed sacrament of matrimony. They were blessed with two daughters, Kathy Lynn Seney and Beth Ann Lafontaine. Together, they have five wonderful grandchildren (Eva Jean Lafontaine, Chace Seney, Alex Tavernier, Lindsey Seney and Brandon Seney). A life well lived.

Jean will be recognized by the Thompson Board of Selectman and Thompson Veteran Officer at the Board of Selectman Meeting on Oct. 21, where he will be presented a plaque for his service to his country.



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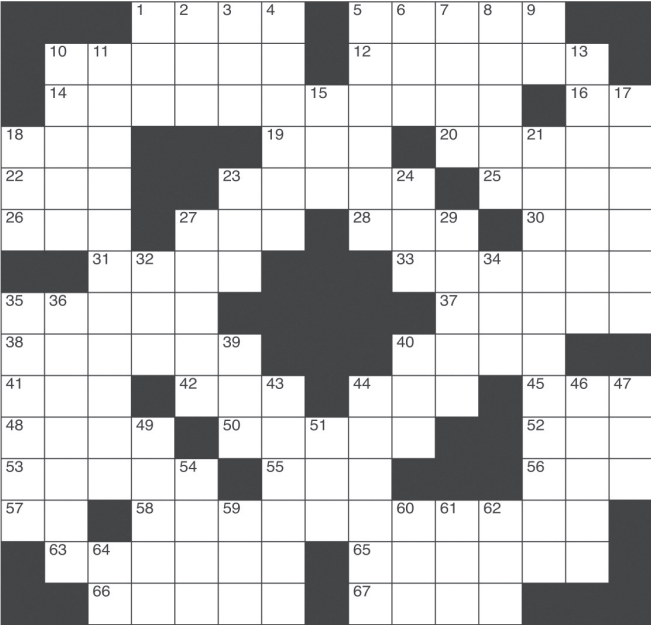
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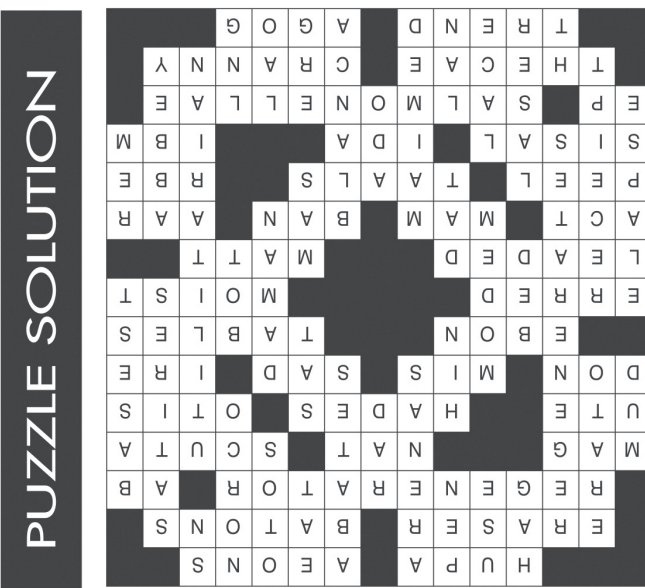


CLUES ACROSS

1. Native American people of CA
5. Long periods of time (Brit.)
10. Classroom tool
12. Rods
14. One who renews
16. They start the alphabet
18. Periodical (slang)
19. Smooth singer Cole
20. Dorsal sclerites in insects
22. One from Utah
23. The world of the dead
25. Singer Redding
26. Mafia head
27. Wrongly
28. Unhappy
30. Anger
31. Dark olive black
33. Places to sit and eat
35. Made a mistake
37. Damp
38. Banned fuel type
40. Actor Damon
41. What thespians do
42. A polite address for a woman
44. Disallow
45. Swiss river
48. A banana has one
50. Afrikaans
52. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
53. Agave
55. Journalist Tarbell
56. One-time tech leader
57. Incidentally (abbr.)
58. Intestinal bacterium
63. Loose sheats around the spinal cord
65. Accompanies nook
66. Vogue
67. Highly excited

CLUES DOWN

1. Witch
2. Utilize
3. Writing utensil
4. Where rockers work
5. Becomes less intense
6. Consume
7. Type of catfish
8. “Horsetown, U.S.A.”
9. Atomic #50
10. The Muse of lyric poetry
11. Brings back to life
13. Humorous critiques
15. Cool!
17. Worst
18. Wet dirt
21. Useful
23. Hebrew unit of liquid capacity
24. High schoolers’ test
27. Internet device
29. City in India
32. A place to rest
34. Chat responder
35. A way to move on
36. What consumers are given
39. Digital audiotape
40. More (Spanish)
43. Disfigured
44. White (Spanish)
46. Church building
47. Georgia rockers
49. Surgeon’s tool
51. “Much ___ about nothing”
54. Make by braiding
59. Local area network
60. Unit of work
61. Indigenous person of Thailand
62. Liquefied natural gas
64. Distance to top



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National Baseball Poetry Contest announces fourth season



WOODSTOCK — The National Baseball Poetry Contest and Festival is readying for its 4th season. The Festival includes two poetry contests, the first for grades 4-12, and the second for adults 18 and older. The adult contest deadline is March 27, and the youth contest deadline is April 17. Entries may be sent in any time before those deadlines. The Festival culminates April 30th through May 3 in Worcester, Mass. with a welcome reception, a youth poetry event, an open mic night, two Triple-A baseball games, a fireworks display, and other activities. Prizes will be awarded to 80 poets, 20 in each of the following

categories: elementary school, middle school, high school, and adult. In 2024, a poem written by Karen Warinsky, Woodstock poet and a festival ambassador, was one of 20 from throughout the nation chosen for recognition. Warinsky is again helping promote the festival which is the only one of its kind in the nation. The aim of this contest is to get students and adults writing poetry on a fun subject that so many love. We are already receiving contest entries from around the country and even from India. We also would like to see an increase in entries from Spanish speakers this year.

WOODSTOCK POET SERVES AS FESTIVAL AMBASSADOR

“I would encourage student and adult poets to submit a poem, and hopefully join us at Polar Park in Worcester next spring,” Warinsky said.

According to Festival founder Steven Biondolillo, the National Baseball Poetry Festival is the first-ever festival to unite sports and the fine arts.

“For the youth who make submissions and/or attend the event, the Festival fosters the appreciation of poetry and the fine arts through the lens of baseball,” Biondolillo said.

Teachers interested in involving their students can visit www.BaseballPoetryFest.org, where a complete lesson plan and contest form can be found.

Are you crafty, a talented creator or artisan? If so, the Daughters of Isabella seek vendors for their Yuletide Festival

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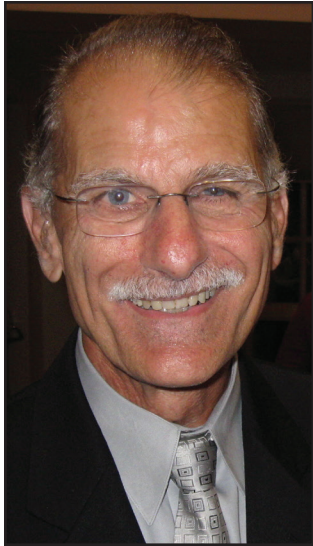
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Audubon hosting author talk on “Hiking Ruins of Southern New England”



Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni

POMFRET — Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni, emeritus state archaeologist with the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, will discuss his new book, “Hiking Ruins of Southern New

England,” on Sunday, Oct. 5, at 2 p.m. at The Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS) Center at Pomfret, 218 Day Rd. Admission is \$5 for CAS members, \$10 for non-members.

The guide takes you to 40 stone ruin sites in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Twenty-nine of the mapped and cued hikes are in Connecticut. The book is richly illustrated with color photographs taken at each location. Published by Falcon, it is a guide of the highest quality.

The book offers “an insider’s look at places archaeologists have investigated as part of the region’s cultural development.” You will learn about not only the origins and purposes of

the features but also their builders. Visiting the ruins offers an opportunity to gain knowledge firsthand of the region’s history. Autumn, after the leaves have fallen, is the best time of the year to visit.

Dr. Bellantoni is both a knowledgeable and entertaining speaker. He will have copies of his guide available for purchase with cash or a check. Registration is recommended, online at ctaudo-bon.org/pomfret-home or by calling the Center (open Tuesday through Sunday, noon to four p.m.) at 860-928-4948.

The Connecticut Audubon Society protects Connecticut’s birds, other wildlife, and their habitats through conservation, education, and advocacy.

Voters can “grill” candidates at Woodstock Dems’ Political Cookout

WOODSTOCK — Woodstock voters: your best chance to “grill” political candidates with questions on matters “dogging” town residents is coming — it’s the annual Candidate Cookout on Sunday, Oct. 5, at Roseland Park. Free hot dogs (meat and vegan) plus soft drinks and chips will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Hosted by the Woodstock Democratic Town Committee, the Candidate Cookout has become a highlight of recent election campaigns in Woodstock.

Meet the Democratic slate of candidates for Woodstock town offices, including the boards of Selectmen, Finance, and Education; plus the Planning and Zoning Commission.

“Candidates will respond to questions and concerns raised by voters,” said Suzanne Woodward, one of the event coordinators for WDTC. “Come early! The grills will be smokin’ until the voters have spoken!”

The WDTC invites all voters—Democrats, Republicans, and unaffiliated voters—to join us for hot dogs at Roseland Park on Oct. 5 and meet our slate of Democratic candidates.

POMFRET


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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

Mind the map, close the gaps

If there is one piece of infrastructure that now threads through every corner of daily life in Northeast Connecticut, it is the connection we cannot see. Reliable Internet and cell service determine whether a home business can process orders, whether a student can submit homework, and whether a neighbor can reach help when seconds matter. In much of the Quiet Corner, coverage remains uneven. The good news is that towns and residents have real tools, right now, to help fix it.

Connecticut is in the middle of a once-in-a-generation broadband build-out through the federal BEAD program, which is being managed by the state's Office of Telecommunications and Broadband at DEEP. The state's BEAD portal outlines the goal plainly: fund service to unserved and underserved locations first, then strengthen community anchors and related projects. DEEP advanced its BEAD planning this month and continues moving toward subgrantee selection, which will decide where miles of new fiber actually go.

Local voices matter in that selection. Providers and the state rely heavily on the FCC's National Broadband Map to determine which addresses count as served. If the map says your location has fast service but your reality says otherwise, you can file a challenge. The FCC provides step-by-step instructions for both location and availability challenges, including a short video. These submissions are tedious but consequential; when enough residents correct the record, dollars tend to follow the data.

Regional coordination helps. Our towns work together through the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments. NECCOG's economic strategy identifies broadband as a foundational need across its 16 member communities, which include many of those we cover in these very pages. That regional frame is the right one for a project of this scale. It allows small towns to pool leverage, compare gaps, and speak with one voice as funds are awarded.

This is also a public safety issue. Connecticut's Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications coordinates 911 for residents and public safety agencies. When networks hiccup, calls route less cleanly and response can slow. The 9-1-1 system is funded by a statewide surcharge on phone lines, including mobile and VoIP, and the rate for FY 2025–26 is posted publicly. Connectivity is not a luxury when someone dials for help.

So, what should we do next here at home?

First, pressure-test the map. Go to the FCC broadband map, search your address, and file a challenge if the listed service or speeds do not match what you can actually buy. Keep screenshots and bills. If you operate a farm, shop, or nonprofit, do the same for that location. Accuracy today shapes construction tomorrow.

Second, organize speed tests. Neighborhood-level campaigns that capture repeated tests at different times of day help demonstrate chronic underperformance. Share results with your select board, school district, and NECCOG so that when providers and grant reviewers ask for proof, it is ready.

Third, speak up during state and regional proceedings. DEEP publishes BEAD updates and opportunities for public input. Even when formal comment windows close, submitting letters to the state and to your legislators keeps pressure on accurate build priorities in the Quiet Corner.

Fourth, remember preparedness. Every household should keep an old-fashioned contact list and an emergency communications plan in case networks are down. Readygov maintains a simple, printable card that families can fill out and keep in wallets, school backpacks, and glove compartments.

We do not need to wait for someone else to redraw the map. The tools already exist, and the money is finally in motion. If we want farm roads, village centers, and hilltop homes to be fully connected, then residents, boards, and businesses have to prove need address by address and keep at it until the trenchers arrive. In the end, this is about more than bandwidth. It is about keeping opportunity and safety within reach for everyone who calls Northeast Connecticut home.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We need to work together for the good of Killingly

To the Editor:

I am running as the only unaffiliated Killingly Town Council At-Large candidate. I was a registered Republican from the age of 18 to recently. I stepped away from my party affiliation, as I feel Killingly needs a town councilor whose sole focus and loyalty is to the Town of Killingly and its residents. Personal and party agendas/platforms have no place in the local level. We have many issues to deal with, and limited time and resources to solve these problems. We need to learn to work together for the good of the town.

I am still a fiscal conservative. We need to be careful in the next years as we have continued to use reserve accounts in the last few years to pay for town obligations. Our reserve accounts for emergencies are one of the reasons the town's bond rating is so good and helps to keep our bonding costs down. We need to make sure those accounts are funded well. We need to continue to fill our empty commercial spaces to help to stabilize our tax base to continue needed services and keep Killingly affordable. We need to address the waste water treatment needs to allow for new businesses and for property owners to use their land as is allowed by zoning.

I am a lifelong resident of Killingly. I love our town. It is a town full of beautiful parks and green spaces. I have worked for many years to keep our town moving forward. I am currently serving as the District 1 councilor and have served on the Town Council for the past 12 years and as the vice chair for the last two years. I am currently involved with Quiet Corner Veterans Support

Coalition, and I am the Location Coordinator at High Street Cemetery for Wreaths Across America. Since 2005, I have served on the Historic District Commission, Tercentennial Committee, Board of Recreation, and Public Safety Commission. I also served as Killingly's representative on the Board of Directors at NDDH and was

Chair of that board for a number of years. For over 20 years, I was involved with Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts.

Public safety is a big concern as our town grows. I am a BLS instructor and teach town employees CPR and the Camp Wallaby staff first aid/CPR. I am proud of my work to secure funding for the Quiet Corner Peer Support Group. Supporting our First Responders is critical to keeping all of us safe. We need to address the need for fire and emergency coverage for day time coverage as this is very important to protecting lives and property. Relying completely on volunteer coverage for these services has to be corrected. I served as Chair for the Law Enforcement Strategies Commission that brought on the Killingly Police. As we have almost reached the first threshold of 10 officers, the town needs to address how we maintain or expand these services.

I humbly ask for your vote on Nov. 4. As a write-in candidate, I need you to take the extra seconds to not only fill in the oval by the write-in candidate line, but write my name on the line. Thank you for your time and consideration.

TAMMY WAKEFIELD
KILLINGLY

Earth — The last three seconds

To the Editor:

If the Earth's 4.5-billion-year history were compressed into a single day, we (Homo sapiens) would have appeared in only the last three seconds. Modern humans are Earth's newcomers. For most of our existence, we focused only on survival — where the next meal would come from. As a result, we evolved into short-term thinkers. This is why we killed off the Woolly Mammoths and other species highly beneficial to us — never stopping to think what we'd do once they were gone.

Unless you're an astronomer, a geologist, or a paleoclimatologist (a scientist who studies Earth's past climate), you may not fully grasp what it took for a bunch of stardust to evolve into a living planet capable of supporting modern humans. Thanks to those scientists, we can now appreciate the remarkable processes that made our planet unique in the galaxy — full of complex life. For most of Earth's history, though, life was very simple: first bacteria, then algae, and eventually prehistoric plants. Conditions were not suitable for humans, or even crocodiles.

It took three billion years for primitive organisms, simply by breathing, to pull vast amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) out of the atmosphere and make the planet habitable for the complex life that followed. The carbon was used to build their bodies, which eventually settled on the ocean floor, becoming fossils. Scientists refer to these deposits as geologically sequestered carbon — locked away in Earth's bedrock.

Once atmosphere's CO₂ levels sufficiently dropped, the Earth cooled, making it possible for the first warm-blooded animals to emerge on land 233 million years ago. 4.27 billion years — that's how long it took before Earth could produce anything resembling the life we see today; first in the form of proto-type-mammals, followed by the dinosaurs, and eventually mammals. But humans were still far in the future.

Sixty-six million years ago, a six-mile-wide meteor struck the Earth in the Yucatán Peninsula wiping out 75% of all Earth's life, including the T-Rex and most other dinosaurs. Survivors seized the opening, and new species evolved — mammals, but we humans were not yet one of them. Then, about 34 million years ago, Earth was struck again — this time by two smaller meteors, one in Siberia and one in Chesapeake Bay. This event did not cause a mass extinction, but it darkened the skies long enough to turn Antarctica's beech forests into icy tundra. As Alan Weisman notes in his remarkable book *Hope Dies Last*: “As reflective snows begat more cooling, a glacial cap formed. And as more of Earth's moisture was locked in polar ice, the seas

lowered.” With so much water frozen, sea levels dropped hundreds of feet, exposing the early form of today's continents — including Florida, which had been completely underwater.

In the millions of years that followed, it was Earth's polar ice caps that created conditions leading to today's climate. Modern humans would only appear during these conditions, in the last 300,000 years — the final three seconds of Earth's day. Of course, even with big brains, it still took us 290,000 years to figure out how to grow our own food — too late for the Woolly Mammoths. With a more reliable food supply we gained the ability to begin the scientific revolution 500 years ago. Only in the last 200 years did we begin reversing the very process that made Earth habitable, by burning fossil fuels and releasing their sequestered carbon back into the atmosphere. But we are doing this very, very fast, and the ice caps are now melting. Across the globe, nearly three billion humans now inhabit coastal areas vulnerable to rising seas.

Most of us haven't had careers in science. But climate scientists like NASA's James Hansen, environmental thinkers like Bill McKibben, and ordinary people like me see this story clearly and try to help others see it too. Because once you do, you understand: this is the most important story of humanity — whether our species, formed under very specific conditions on Earth, will continue much longer. Thanks to generations of scientists, we now know with unambiguous clarity what is happening — and, vitally, what we must change if we want to give our children and grandchildren a chance.

In the final words of Carl Sagan's landmark book *Cosmos*, he writes: “We speak for Earth. Our obligation to survive is owed not just to ourselves but also to that Cosmos, ancient and vast, from which we spring.” Indeed, the choices we make today should not be driven by politics of the moment, but with our obligation to future generations — to reach beyond this moment and deep into the future — that we may endure to discover all that is. After all, isn't that the reason we're here on this mound of living stardust we call Earth?

For more information, please see my Web site, earth21stcentury.com.

KEN WOLSLEGEL
WOODSTOCK

Diane Summa is the right choice for Killingly

To the Editor:

As a Killingly resident, I am writing this letter on behalf of Dr. Diane Summa, who is running for the Board of Education. She is well qualified for this position, having served previously on the Killingly Board of Education. She brings 40 years of experience to the table in this field, both in the classroom and on all levels as a teacher and college adjunct.

Additionally, on the administrative level in working with teachers in developing the most effective curriculum for teachers and students. Also, in the financial end seeing that the taxpayers money is spent in a cost effective manner, not effecting the quality of education. From a taxpayer viewpoint, Diane is the perfect fit to be elected to the Killingly Board of Education.

The taxpayers of Killingly could not make a better choice in Diane.

JOHN DAHL
KILLINGLY

Psychic driving!

In the late 1950s, patients walked into Montreal's Allan Memorial Institute expecting treatment for anxiety, depression, or everyday struggles of the mind. What many of them encountered instead was the work of Dr. Ewen Cameron, a psychiatrist with an outsized reputation and a dangerous obsession with “reprogramming” the human brain. Cameron believed he could break down a person's mind and rebuild it from scratch. His methods were as crude as they were cruel.

He called it “Psychic Driving.” Patients were put under heavy sedation, often for weeks at a time, and then forced to listen to negative phrases looped again and again through speakers or headphones. Sometimes the messages ran for 16 hours a day.

The results were devastating. Patients developed crippling fear, confusion, and dependency. Families reported that their loved ones came home like strangers—haunted not by their original illnesses, but by the relentless flood of negative suggestions that had hollowed them out.

One former patient described her experience years later. She recalled being placed in a hospital room, sedated, and wired to a tape recorder that played commands, accusations, or statements of worthlessness, repeated until they carved themselves into her mind like grooves in a record. “You are weak. You will never get better. You're worthless!” Hour after hour, day after day, the messages ran until they became the background noise of her mind.

While most of us were never subjected to cruel experiments, many of us know what it's like to live with words that cut deep. Some of those words didn't come from strangers in a lab coat, but from the people closest to us.

The child who was told “you'll never amount to anything” grows into an adult who whispers the same phrase to themselves before every job interview.

The athlete who was told, “you always choke under pressure,” starts to believe it, replaying the line before every big game until it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The student who constantly hears “you're not smart enough” can carry that soundtrack into adulthood, replaying it in moments of stress until it feels like the truth.

I recall a history teacher in high school who would stand in front of the class and call us “a bunch of losers.” He didn't just say it once—he said it often, as if repeating it might make it accurate. Thankfully, I'd been raised to believe otherwise.

For years, psychologists have documented what happens when people are repeatedly exposed to harsh or abusive words. Over time, those external voices get internalized, turning into the person's own inner critic.

Researchers at UCLA found that repeated negative self-talk actually reshapes the brain. The brain begins to treat your own words like weapons. A single negative phrase repeated often enough rewires your entire system of motivation, and the only way to cope is to shut down and detach.

But here's the good news—those stories aren't permanent. Psychic driving can work both ways. As hard as it feels at the moment, you can interrupt them.

The next time you catch yourself repeating the same old phrases, flip the script. Tell yourself: “I'm a winner. I'm strong. I'm healthy. I am loved. I'm rising higher. I have what it takes.”

You won't believe it at first; it will feel fake, as if you're

Turn To **POSITIVELY** page **A5**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trump is right about one thing

To the Editor:

How incredibly stupid are Hegseth and Donnie Tyrant to call for an in-person meeting of the top 800 generals and admirals from around the world to Virginia this week. When no announced agenda or reason was made, what could justify this risk and its outrageous cost? With all the communications available today, in-person meetings are usually not justified.

Such meetings have been called before, but when we were in shooting wars and communications were limited. We are not at war unless you buy into the domestic war Donnie Tyrant illegally says we're in. Will he be using this to justify nation-wide martial law? Possibly.

And how stupid would anyone be to put together such an inviting target? One that would tempt some idiot like Putin to do a cost/benefit analysis and decide it would be worth it. All Russia

needs to do is sneak a bunch of submarines in close and launch a cloud of cruise missiles. One would be bound to get through and wipe out the entire command system. This brilliant thinking is proving that people with negative IQ's are leading us.

Donnie Tyrant has said things that no other President even dared to think about. For instance, "I can do whatever I want to. I am the President of the United States." That is clearly not in the Constitution, an illegal usurping of power and a not-so-veiled call for overthrowing the Government.

I hate to say this, but Donnie Tyrant has said one thing many of us can agree with. Wait, wait don't be so quick to start booing. He said, "Smart people don't like me." If that is the case, and it is, then I am a Stephen Hawking-level genius.

STEPHEN ETZEL
PUTNAM

A government shutdown isn't just politics, it's personal for millions of Americans!

To the Editor:

At the time of this writing, a government shutdown looks likely. If it happens, expect the blame game. But remember: Republicans control both the White House and Congress. Hard to pin this one elsewhere.

The longest shutdown since the 1970s was 35 days, from December 2018 to January 2019 over funding for Trump's border wall. Fast forward to 2025, this shutdown standoff is about health care. Democrats want Republicans to extend the Affordable Care Act tax credits set to expire at year's end for millions of Americans, and block President Trump from clawing back funds Congress already approved. Trump's budget director, Russ Vought, has thrilled conservatives by rescinding or withholding appropriated money, a non-starter this time for bipartisan negotiations. There is a saying worth noting, "Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me!"

A shutdown would hit Connecticut hard. About 7,300 civilian federal workers here would face unpaid furloughs, alongside thousands of military employees, including those at the Groton naval base. U.S. Senator Chris Murphy put it bluntly: "Federal government officials, including our troops, don't get paid, and so that ultimately puts a lot of families in Connecticut in crisis and can have a broader impact on the economy."

"There will be fewer people to call if you don't get your Social Security check," U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal said. "Social Security checks should go out, but if they or VA benefits are not forthcoming, there will be fewer means of accessing remedies."

Other ripple effects:

- IRS unable to verify Social Security numbers, delaying mortgages and loans.
- Food inspections disrupted.
- National parks understaffed or closed.
- Food assistance programs could run out of funds if the shutdown drags on.
- Airports strained as TSA agents and air traffic controllers work without pay, raising the risk of delays and safety

concerns.

During the 2018-19 shutdown, which lasted more than a month, TSA reported an increase in employee absences, particularly as workers began to miss paychecks, while a shortage of air traffic controllers temporarily halted travel to LaGuardia Airport in New York. (CT Insider)

U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro, warned of this previously. Airport employees have said, "You're not paying me, I'm not working." "So then you have significant delays and longer wait times across the country," according to DeLauro.

Who can blame these workers? The United States is one of the richest countries in the world, yet 67% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck (Newsweek) and struggle every day to deal with economic security, stagnant wages and increased health care costs while Congress gives billionaires permanent tax breaks!

If the shutdown began Wednesday, then today we're living it. Families across Connecticut are worried of the strain that will come. This is the time to pick up the phone, call your representatives, and demand protections for health care, demand that Congress hold the line against any President trying to rip away funds it has already approved, and demand that your government do its most basic job: serve the people not billionaires! And while you're on the phone, demand the release of the Epstein files. Thousands of victims deserve justice.

If a shutdown was averted, Congress swerved at the last minute and kept the lights on. But this brinkmanship isn't harmless. Millions of families across the country and in Connecticut were left wondering if paychecks, health care, or basic services would vanish overnight. That's a stress our representatives in Congress should not be imposing on Americans. Call your reps and tell them the power of the purse belongs with Congress not the President, make health care secure, end the tax breaks for billionaires, and do its most basic job: serve the people not billionaires. And while you're on the phone, demand the release of the Epstein files. Thousands of victims deserve justice.

LISA ARENDS
BROOKLYN

POSITIVELY
continued from page A4

lying to yourself. But keep saying it—because the more you speak life over yourself, the more your mind and spirit will begin to believe it. You'll feel empowered; you'll see opportunities where you once only saw dead ends.

Repetition works both ways. If negative words can burrow deep and take root, then positive ones can heal, strengthen, and grow.

While we can't all be star athletes or famous actors, every one of us carries strengths that no one else can duplicate. It may be your creativity, kindness, or ability to solve problems in ways others can't.

When you begin to recognize and honor those gifts, you stop measuring yourself against someone else's spotlight and start shining on your own. That's when success becomes inevitable—not because

you copied anyone else's path, but because you walked on your own with confidence. I believe in you. Now it's your turn to think the same.

Toby Moore is a columnist, the star of Emmy - Nominated A Separate Peace, and the CEO of Cubestream Inc.

Bogdanski is all for Putnam

To the Editor:

I've known Mike Bogdanski for almost 40 years, dating back to my college years, when I worked out at his facility in downtown Putnam. Even then, I could tell he was "all for Putnam," and I've looked up to him ever since.

Whether it's the fundraising he's done

for the D.A.R.E. program that raised \$50,000 or his many years of community service, he's clearly shown that he loves Putnam and wants what's best for it. He is a fine candidate for Selectman of the Town of Putnam.

DOUGLAS CUTTER, JR.
KILLINGLY

Kelly Martin is a trusted advocate and voice for Killingly

To the Editor:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to recommend the re-election of Kelly Martin to the Killingly Board of Education. Kelly has proven herself to be a dedicated leader who always puts the needs of our students, families, and community first.

During her time on the board, Kelly has worked tirelessly to strengthen our schools and create an environment where both students and educators can thrive. She has played a vital role in key decisions that have improved the quality of education in our district, always approaching her work with integrity, thoughtfulness, and a genuine desire to see every child succeed. Kelly has been instrumental in supporting initiatives that ensure student safety, elevate academic standards, and provide resources

for teachers to deliver their very best.

Kelly is not only knowledgeable and hardworking, but she also truly listens to the voices of parents, educators, and community members. She understands the importance of balancing fiscal responsibility with the need to provide top-tier opportunities for our students. Her leadership has already led to meaningful progress, and her vision for the future promises continued growth and success for Killingly schools.

Re-electing Kelly Martin means choosing a proven advocate for education, a compassionate leader, and a trusted voice for our community. I strongly encourage you to support her in the upcoming election.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH COZZA
KILLINGLY

I'm proud to cast my vote for Michelle Murphy

To the Editor:

I have had the pleasure of Michelle Murphy's friendship since the fall of 2018. We met while we were both campaigning together for Town Council. Ms. Murphy is a genuine conservative who is extremely dedicated to her Counselor responsibilities and to her constituents. Her votes on issues are not based on emotions, but are well thought out and deliberate, based on facts gathered from canvassing the community.

Michelle has traversed many of the streets of Killingly, oftentimes by foot, to gather the thoughts of the citizens and let them know about many of the issues that could affect our Town. She is not shy about bringing issues directly to the Killingly residents who will be affected by the results of the Killingly Town Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Conservation Commission. Michelle has been very supportive of issues that promote con-

servation, patriotism, and freedom. She was directly involved with pressing for limited increases in population density, cutting our taxes, and advocating for the prosperity of property owners. I have been proud to sign all of her petitions to keep our local government in check.

This amazing woman has a diverse and long work history. She worked on her family farm, was a Local 7 iron-worker, and has 18 years of experience running various wastewater treatment facilities.

I am very proud to cast my vote for Michelle Murphy, guaranteeing limited taxation and the preservation of our rural community, as we are threatened by the directives of the Hartford legislation.

Sincerely,

LISA DANBURG
DAYVILLE

A disheartening and divisive experience

To the Editor:

Recently, I attended a fundraiser for the Jolly John's Keep You Truckin' fund. Over the past 13 years, this organization has provided over \$800,000 in financial support to families struggling with cancer.

During the event's live auction, everyone was laughing and having a great time; interacting with the auctioneer and each other. Then one of the last items was presented for bid: artwork depicting the assassination attempt of Donald Trump, described in the program as an "iconic" picture.

Immediately, the room quieted, and people began shifting in their seats, glancing around from table to table.

The auctioneer tried to make jokes, but nobody was laughing. A few people bid and the item was sold.

It was distressing to see a room full of people, previously united for a very good cause, instantly divide into two uncomfortable camps of mistrust. The jovial mood evaporated, and it didn't return.

It grieves me that an ordinary human being is so divisive that even his mere picture wrenches apart the harmony of a unified assembly.

It's incredibly disheartening — but entirely predictable and preventable.

REBECCA ADAMS
PUTNAM



Additional Letters
to the Editor,
see page A-8

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Job change?

Whether retiring or changing jobs, you'll want to know your retirement account options.

There are four potential options for your 401(k) when leaving an employer:

- Leave it in your former employer's 401(k) plan, if allowed by the plan.
- Move it to your new employer's 401(k) plan, if you've changed employers and your new employer plan allows for it.
- Roll the account over to an individual retirement account (IRA).
- Cash it out, which is subject to potential tax consequences.

We can talk through your financial goals and find the option that works best for you.

Dennis Antonopoulos
Financial Advisor

5 Albert St
Auburn, MA 01501
508-832-5385

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²Plan 6148. Subject to credit approval. Loan term is 48 months at fixed rate of 0.00% APR. For example, assuming the full credit limit is used on loan approval date, for every \$1,000 financed at 0% APR, 48 monthly payments of \$20.84. This example is an estimate only. Actual payment amounts based on amount and timing of purchases. Call 866-936-0602 for financing costs and terms. Loans for the GreenSky® consumer loan program are provided by Synovus Bank, Member FDIC, NMLS #408043, without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or familial status. GreenSky Servicing, LLC services the loans on behalf of your lender, NMLS #1416362. www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org. GreenSky® is a registered trademark of GreenSky, LLC and is licensed to banks and other financial institutions for their use in connection with that consumer loan program. GreenSky Servicing, LLC is a financial technology company that manages the GreenSky® consumer loan program by providing origination and servicing support to banks and other financial institutions that make or hold program loans. GreenSky, LLC and GreenSky Servicing, LLC are not lenders. All credit decisions and loan terms are determined by program lenders.

Danielson Martial Arts students promoted in rank



Mountain Laurel Floral Designs announces seasonal October workshops



DANIELSON — Celebrate fall with Mountain Laurel Floral Designs, a locally owned flower and gift shop in the heart of Danielson. Visit the shop for a vibrant lineup of autumn-inspired events, from hands-on floral workshops to cozy, family-friendly gatherings – each one crafted to spark creativity, foster community, and honor the beauty of fall.

“Gabby and I love fall and we’re excited to be offering workshops centered around preserving the natural beauty of the season. We’ve been drying flowers from our farms for the past couple of months to use in these workshops and we can’t wait to see the art created with them,” said co-owner Pam Blinten.

If you would like to participate in one of these workshops, visit mountainlaurelfloralct.com to learn more and register.

October Workshops

Dried Flower Pumpkin Decorating
Oct. 5 | 2 – 3 p.m.
\$45 - Get crafty at the shop as you turn mini pumpkins into fall masterpieces! Includes three mini pumpkins, dried/pressed flowers and supplies.

Seed Saving 101
Oct. 9 | 5 – 6 p.m.
\$10 - From zinnias to dahlias to celosia, we’ll explore how to collect, clean, and store seeds, and you’ll even get to take seeds home from plants we grew on our farms!

Free Story Hour with Andrea K. Smith
Oct. 14 | 9 – 10 a.m.
Free - Join local author Andrea K. Smith for a special reading of “The Honey Maker,” followed by a beekeeping gear show-and-tell with shop co-owner Pam!

Dried Flower Terrariums
Oct. 17 | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

\$30 - Design a charming terrarium using dried flowers and moss! Perfect for gifts or just to preserve a little bit of nature on your shelf. Includes a small, medium and large terrarium.

Seasonal Cards: Kids Edition
Oct. 22 | 4 - 5 p.m.
\$10 - Join local card maker Lee Barber for a cozy fall craft day where kids can piece together a fun and spooky Halloween house.FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Mountain Laurel Floral Designs Pam Blinten & Gabby Benson mountainlaurelfloraldesign@gmail.com
mountainlaurelfloralct.com
Facebook/Instagram

Dahlia Tuber Digging, Dividing and Storing
Oct. 28 | 5 - 6 p.m.
\$15 - Learn techniques from flower farmers for digging, dividing, and properly storing dahlia tubers to ensure healthy blooms year after year. This workshop is perfect for gardeners looking to preserve and multiply their favorite dahlia varieties. Plus, you’ll even get a tuber to plant next year! Event will take place at co-owner Pam’s farm in Killingly, provided weather is clear.

About Mountain Laurel Floral Designs
Mountain Laurel Floral Designs is more than a flower shop—it’s a space where community, sustainability, and artistry flourish. Owned by local flower farmers Gabby and Pam, the shop is located at 98 Main St. in Danielson, and specializes in fresh, seasonal blooms grown in southeastern New England.

The business began with a shared love of the land and a commitment to sustainable flower farming. Today, Gabby and Pam create floral arrangements that honor the rhythms of the seasons and host a variety of hands-on workshops that celebrate creativity and connection.

DANIELSON — Five time Martial Arts Hall of Fame inductee and current USA Karate Team Member, 7th Dan Master Daryl Laperle announces promotion of 40 students in Danielson Martial Arts Academy’s most recent grading.

Nelson Rojas - Apprentice
Orion Huling - Apprentice
Olivia Mello - Apprentice
Liam Stebbins - 2 Gup Red
Elizabeth Carlson - 3 Gup Red
Leslie LaPorte - 3 Gup Red
Lila Turner - 3.5 Gup Green
Juniper Flynn - 3.5 Gup Green
Rebeca Castro-Sandoval - 4.5 Gup Green
Chloe Wishart - 5 Gup Purple
Waylon Hayden - 5 Gup Purple
Kile Gagnon - 5 Gup Purple
Liberty Harty - 5 Gup Purple
Emily Castro - 5.5 Gup Purple
Chloe Markley - 5.5 Gup Purple

Elacy Brown - 6 Gup Purple
Marge Azu - 6 Gup Purple
Alex Pettus - 6.5 Gup Blue
Otto Griffiths - 7 Gup Blue
Camilo Jaimes - 7 Gup Blue
Bennett Drew - 7 Gup Blue
Annabelle Mello - 7 Gup Blue
Oliver Santiago - 8 Gup Blue
Noah Banda - 8 Gup Blue
Lillian Spaulding - 8 Gup Blue
Antonio Ramirez - 8 Gup Blue
Jackson Lawton - 8 Gup Blue
Levi Brannon - 9 Gup Orange
Cora Quinn - 9 Gup Orange
Dexter Gagner - 9 Gup Orange
Mackenzie Gagner - 9 Gup Orange
Mackenzie Wildowski - 9 Gup Orange
Hunter Dumas - 9 Gup Orange
Jacob Banda - 9 Gup Orange

For more information regarding classes, please call 860-779-0699, or visit the Web site at DanielsonMartialArts.com.

Improve your garden soil with fall leaves and landscape trimmings



Melinda Myers

Hugelkultur gardening, or mound gardens, takes the lasagna gardening method one step further with a bottom layer of logs, branches and fall leaves that decompose, adding organic matter and nutrients to the soil.

Fall is a great time to improve your soil for next year’s garden. Many of the resources needed are readily available and many are free at this time of the year.

Start by putting fall leaves to work in the garden. Use your mower with the bag attached to shred and collect fall leaves. Work them into the top eight to 12 inches of soil. They break down over winter, adding organic matter and nutrients to the soil before you begin planting in the spring.

Fall leaves are also a great resource for those of you minimizing soil disruption with no till, also known as no dig, soil care. Spread several inches of the leaves over the soil surface. The leaf mulch protects the soil in new and vacant gardens from erosion and compaction over the winter. They keep the soil a bit cooler in the spring so you may need to adjust your planting times.

Cover bare soil in perennial gardens and mixed borders with fall leaves. They are a great mulch, suppressing weeds, conserving moisture and improving the soil as they decompose. A layer of leaves insulates the soil, helping insects and other wildlife that overwinter underground. Plus, they are free.

Incorporating two to four inches of compost or other organic matter into the top eight to 12 inches of soil is another option.



GARDEN MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA MYERS

Organic matter adds nutrients but also improves drainage and aeration in heavy soil and increases water- and nutrient-holding capacity in fast draining soils.

Adding compost also builds the soil ecosystem. It increases the number and activity of beneficial soil organisms such as good bacteria, fungi, microorganisms and insects. Healthy soil grows healthier plants more resistant to pests and environmental stresses.

Another no till method uses a five-inch layer of compost on top of non-shiny cardboard, covering the soil surface. The cardboard helps suppress the weeds and the compost provides the growing medium for seeds and transplants. The compost is replenished yearly, and the cardboard eventually breaks down, adding organic matter to the soil.

Convert landscape and garden trimmings, fall leaves and compost into a rich planting medium with lasagna gardening. This system employs composting methodology to build soil in free-standing or contained raised beds.

Start your lasagna gar-

den by measuring and marking the layout of your garden bed. Cut any grass and weeds in this area very short and cover with moist newspaper or cardboard. This smothers any existing grass and weeds.

Next, add a two- to three-inch layer of peat moss or compost. Top this with four to eight inches of plant debris such as leaves, plant-based kitchen scraps, herbicide-free grass clippings, straw or similar materials. Sprinkle a bit of low nitrogen fertilizer over this layer. Cover with an inch of compost. Repeat the layers, just like making lasagna, until your garden is 18 to 24 inches high.

Hugelkultur, or mound gardens take this one step further. The bottom layer is made of logs, branches and fall leaves. Do not include black walnut tree trimmings that are toxic to many plants or those of cedar and black locust that are very slow to decompose. The rotting logs and branches absorb water, making it available to the plants in the garden. As the tree trimmings decompose, they add organic matter and nutrients to the soil. Then top this with a lasagna garden.

The lasagna and Hugelkultur beds gradually settle but the benefits remain. Continue to build additional lasagna layers every few years on top of established beds as needed.

Select a method that best fits your gardening style. Investing time in building healthy soil reaps years of benefits.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the Midwest Gardener’s Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses “How to Grow Anything” streaming courses and the nationally syndicated Melinda’s Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Eight ways to reduce your 2025 tax bill before year’s end

As we move into the last quarter of 2025, it’s important to think about strategies to reduce your tax burden before the year ends. With significant changes to tax law on the horizon and current opportunities available, proactive tax planning can help you keep more of your hard-earned money in your pocket. Don’t wait until December or worse yet, get caught frantically searching for deductions when you’re preparing your return in the new year. Here’s what to know and do right now instead...

1. Understand your 2025

tax landscape and where your liability currently stands. The first step is, of course, to know where you stand. Understanding which tax bracket you’re in—and more importantly, how to potentially stay in a lower one—is crucial for effective tax planning. A key income threshold to watch for high-income filers is \$197,300 for single filers and \$394,600 for married couples filing jointly. These are the thresholds for moving from the 24 to the 32 percent tax bracket, making income timing strategies particularly valuable for

those approaching these levels. 2. Maximize your retirement contributions. One of the most effective ways to reduce your current tax bill is by maximizing contributions to tax-deferred retirement accounts. Every dollar you contribute to a traditional IRA or 401(k) reduces your taxable income dollar-for-dollar, providing immediate tax relief. So, review your current contribution levels and increase them if possible. If you’re over 50, don’t for-

get about catch-up contributions that allow you to save even more.

If you have a 401(k), 403(b), or a governmental 457 plan or Thrift Savings Plan, your maximum contribution increases to \$23,500 for 2025. If you have an IRA, you can contribute up to \$7,000 for tax year 2025, the same as for tax year 2024. And if you’re over 50, you can contribute an additional \$1,000 per individual.

3. Leverage Health Savings Accounts (HSAs). HSAs offer a rare triple tax advantage: contributions are tax-deductible, growth is tax-free, and withdrawals for qualified medical expenses are also tax-free. If you are eligible to contribute to an HSA, contribution limits are \$4,300 for self-only coverage and \$8,550 for family coverage for 2025. There are no carryover limits, so if you haven’t yet hit the maximum contribution for this year and you want to reduce your tax liability, making an additional contribution to your HSA is a great way to do so.

4. Take advantage of Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs). If you have an FSA, be sure to use all the funds by year’s end, as funds cannot be carried over to next year. For 2026, the IRS increases the maximum you can contribute tax-free to a dependent care account to \$7,500 per household (or \$3,750 if married filing separately), potentially providing significant savings for families with child-care expenses. So plan accordingly by contributing more funds to this account next year.

5. Implement tax-loss harvesting If you have investment accounts outside of retirement plans, tax-loss harvesting can be a valuable strategy. If you sold other investments at a loss, you can use those losses to offset your gains. This tactic, called tax-loss harvesting, helps lower your overall tax bill. You can even deduct up to \$3,000 of net capital losses against your regular income each year if your losses exceed your gains. Review your investment portfolio with your financial advisor to

identify opportunities for tax-loss harvesting before year-end.

6. Consider charitable giving strategies A donor-advised fund is a charitable fund you can set up that allows you to decide how and when to allocate funds to individual charities. You can make contributions this year and take the full tax deductions on your tax return, thus reducing your tax bill. This strategy is particularly effective if you expect to be in a higher tax bracket this year or if you’ve had an unusually high-income year due to bonuses, stock options, or other windfalls.

7. Plan for education expenses

If you have children, grandchildren, or are considering further education for yourself, consider contributing to a 529 college savings account, where earnings and withdrawals are federal income tax-free when used for qualified education expenses.

While 529 contributions aren’t deductible on your federal return, many states offer tax deductions or credits for contributions to their state’s plan, providing immediate tax benefits while saving for education expenses.

8. Review your withholdings and estimated payments

As we progress through 2025, it’s important to review whether you’re having enough tax withheld from your paychecks or if you need to adjust your estimated quarterly payments. The goal is to avoid both overpaying (which gives the government an interest-free loan of your money) and underpaying (which can result in penalties).

Now and all year long, remember that timing is everything when it comes to taxes.

Many of these strategies require action well before December 31st. For instance, if you want to maximize your 401(k) contributions, you need to adjust your payroll deductions now to ensure you hit the annual limit. Similarly, tax-loss harvesting should be considered throughout the year, not just at year-end.

The expiration of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) at the end of 2025 may catch some

high-income individuals off-guard. While recent legislation has extended many TCJA provisions, it’s still important to plan for potential changes and consider strategies that might be more valuable this year than next.

Effective tax planning isn’t about finding loopholes or taking excessive risks—it’s about using legitimate strategies to legally minimize your tax burden while supporting your long-term financial goals. The strategies outlined above work best when implemented as part of a comprehensive financial plan.

Remember, tax laws are complex and constantly changing. What works for one person may not be appropriate for another, depending on their income level, family situation, and financial goals.

At WHZ Strategic Wealth Advisors, our “Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™” process includes comprehensive tax planning strategies tailored to your unique situation. We’re committed to being your partner every step of the way—that’s how we work to deliver on our promise to help provide you with “Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life.”

Schedule your complimentary consultation today by visiting whzwealth.com or calling (860) 928-2341. Let’s work together to ensure you’re satisfied come tax season.

Authored by Vice President Holly C. Wanegar, CFP®. 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. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Advisor 697 Pomfret St., Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Rd., Tolland, CT 06084. 860-928-2341.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Who’s really the worst?

To the Editor:

And while you’re writing your reps, tell them they’re doing a great job (if only) because they’re anti-Trump. Also, send them some money to help them get re-elected because - and not like we haven’t heard this line before - they’re going to need another term to do what they haven’t done yet. But whatever you do, don’t ever mention their two most dreaded words: “term limits.” There are term limits for the President, so why not for our members of Congress?

In any vote, if a Republican doesn’t go along with their party, they’re called a RINO, and if a Democrat breaks ranks, they’re ridiculed as well, and then we wonder why there is no mutual cooperation in solving problems. But we keep voting for them, and like them, we continue pointing fingers. So, who’s the worst? But then our politicians would rather have us at each other’s throats instead of us being at theirs. Seemingly, the only way that these aged, formaldehyde-faced career politicians will ever be exiting politics, will come from a visit by the grim reaper; and that’s probably the only form of term limits we’ll ever see.

We’ll all know what democracy means when we’ve lost it

To the Editor:

I read the other day on Facebook that according to MAGA, we liberals don’t know what democracy means. It seems that we keep ranting about how democracy is disappearing without really knowing what it is.

I agree with Lincoln’s concept “of the people, by the people and for the people.” I think I’m safe in saying that means all the people not just some of us. But it means so much more. Democracy to me represents all the freedoms we have taken for granted for the last 250 years. The freedom to speak or write our thoughts whether popular or not without fear of reprisal. The freedom to walk the streets of our country without fear that the government will make us disappear. The freedom to read printed word without censorship and to allow our children to be taught the truth about our history as human beings, both the good and the bad. Freedom to work to attain the American Dream that seems to be vanishing before our eyes. The right to know that the people we elect will work for all of us and the departments and organizations that keep us safe and informed will be represented by people who are capable and serious in their work. The freedom to fight to keep this planet safe and livable for us and future generations.

The regime in place now is working hard to destroy all of those freedoms.

Freedom of speech is being suppressed on every front. Reporters are being banned from white house press conferences because of their affiliations. Newspapers being sued for printing facts. Talk shows being cancelled because our president has nothing better to do than protect his fragile ego. Where in the constitution does it say

I find it funny that Donald Trump, who’s never been a politician before becoming President, is being blamed for the country’s on-going problems by those politicians who’ve been in office for decades. And for an example, when Obama and Bill Clinton basically said that if you’re in this country illegally we’re coming after you, and when they did, the puppet democrats were silent about this issue, but now that Trump is doing the same, it’s become something unforgivable. Obama deported approximately three million undocumented immigrants, and his administration prioritized deporting individuals with criminal records. Bill Clinton deported approximately 1.8 million undocumented immigrants, and his focus was on criminal aliens and those who violated immigration laws. Uphold our laws and punish criminals, what a concept, huh? But for today’s criminal loving Democrats, it seems like the same stinking problem now has a more tolerable smell.

ED DeLUCA
NORTH GROSVENORDALE

“freedom of speech but only if you agree with me?”

Sending out ICE to pluck people off the streets based on nothing more than their looks is a direct affront to our freedom. Trying to stem drugs and violent crime is one thing but innocent people are suffering, some of them may never see their families again. This tragic state of affairs is of little interest to the powers that be. I believe they shrug it off as collateral damage.

Our institutes of learning, from Kindergarten to the universities, are being turned into propaganda machines. Banning books in elementary school because slavery is a distasteful subject? Strong-arming universities into changing their policies because the government disagrees with them? All the while demanding that we honor the memory of Charlie Kirk. Why? Because he was a “nice” racist? Maybe we should check with a few black people about that before he’s awarded a posthumous medal for educating the masses.

While most established nations are moving toward solar and wind power to clean up our planet, our president is trying to keep us mired in the tar pits of fossil fuel. How short-sighted is that? While many of us believe that if there is to be a future for our descendants, we must clean up our act. The right to breath clean air and have access to clean water is not just a freedom, it’s a necessity but this administration is not concerned with preserving those rights.

Maybe there are many definitions of democracy, and who’s to say which one is right? One thing I can guarantee: You’ll know what it means when it’s no longer there.

JEAN McNALLY
WOODSTOCK

Welcome to politician form letter season

To the Editor:

As this year’s campaigns get underway, I’d like to remind voters in this area that our parties sadly still employ guerilla techniques like “letters to the editor” that read like corporate press releases about certain candidates, but with just barely enough personal touch for them to have plausible deniability and say, “But no! That came from a constituent!”

Even before AI, it was quite possible to simply e-mail a template and have a party member change a few words and send it as their own. In college, they called this plagiarism, and it could get you expelled. In politics, it’s something voters should have healthy skepticism for.

This is the part where people call me Mister Negative, but I’m from the

generation that saw the rise of internet astroturfing, social media influencers, and fake reviews on Amazon. Even when I was formally studying business in college I was taught that people were growing wary of traditional advertising and advertisers were trying to find new ways to have people actually take their messages seriously. We’ve seen decades of those “new ways” since.

How interesting then that I see this same tacky cheesy nonsense flooding the editorials sections all these years later?

Who I vote for will be based on issues I know about and what I want, not someone else’s syrupy cheeseball attempts to play ChatGPT.

JAY GERHART
PUTNAM

FINANCIAL FOCUS

HOLLY C. WANEGAR
INVESTMENT ADVISER



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

MIKE BOGDANSKI

With school back in session for a month now, we must again address new or repeated instances of bullying going on. When teaching self-defense against bullies, I always start with the A-B-C’s. “A” stands for awareness and being vigilant in areas where bullying is likely to occur.

Bullying at school often occurs in specific locations, known as “hot spots,” where there is less adult supervision. These areas can vary by school, but common hot spots include:

- * Hallways and Stairwells: These are high-traffic, transitional areas where supervision is often limited, making them prime locations for bullying.

- * Bathrooms and Locker Rooms: Due to a lack of adult presence, bullies frequently use these spaces as target-rich opportunity areas where bad situations can happen out of the view of teachers.

- * Playgrounds and Athletic Fields: While often supervised, these areas can be large, allowing for incidents to occur out of a teacher’s line of sight. What seems like casual interaction, or “play,” can become a problem area.

- * Lunchrooms/Cafeterias: The noise and large crowds can make it difficult for staff to notice and intervene in bully-

ing incidents. It becomes much harder to identify in the middle of a large group of children interacting.

- * Classrooms (when the teacher is distracted): Bullying can also happen during moments of transition or when the teacher has left the room.

These physical locations are often where direct, in-person bullying, such as bodily harm, name-calling, or social exclusion, takes place.

Here is my recommendation. Using a buddy system can be a critical fix in many bullying situations. Bullies often look for kids who are isolated or alone. With a (confident) buddy, your child is less likely to be picked on, and both buddies can stand up for each other. If your child has the opportunity to use a friend to stand up for them actively, this will reduce the incidents of bullying. Now this is the time to address the “B and C” of self-defense. First, take a deep (B) breath and (C) communicate with confidence. I suggest role-playing assertive responses, such as “back away”. This method is a simple, confident, and rehearsed script, accompanied by a confident stance and eye contact. To excel at this, you and your child will need plenty of practice. Repetition creates success.

Cyberbullying (the silent method of bullying)

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that occurs through digital devices, such as cell phones, computers, and tablets. It can happen on social media platforms, through text messages, or in online gaming environments. Many schools are banning cellphone use or planning to ban use. Several studies I have read see this as a win-win opportunity for teachers and students. Don’t worry, in these cases, phones may be brought to school and just “parked” in the classroom.

Cyberbullying is particularly harmful because it can be:

- * Persistent: Digital devices provide a constant channel for communication, making it difficult for a victim to find relief.

- * Permanent: Most information shared online can be permanent and public, making it hard to erase and potentially impacting a person’s reputation in the long term.

- * Anonymous: The anonymity of the internet can embolden bullies and make it difficult for victims to identify their tormentors.

- * 24-7: Kids used to be able to go home and escape their bullies. Due to the digital world we live in, it’s challenging to avoid being constantly bombarded with this style of harassment.

Statistics and Prevention

The tale of Captain Copp

Author Talk and Book Signing sponsored by Putnam Public Library and Aspinock Historical Society. Saturday, Oct. 4, 1-2:30 p.m. Before Salem-Witch Hunting in the Connecticut River Valley 1647-1663 by Richard S. Ross III. 200 School Street Putnam. All are welcome.

Abolition and Underground Railroad in Northeastern Connecticut. Saturday, Oct. 11, 1-2:30 p.m. Putnam Public Library. Margaret Weaver, Killingly Municipal Historian and author of Perspectives of Putnam will do a PowerPoint presentation that covers people and sites from Canterbury to Woodstock. Special focus on Putnam's Asa Cutler and Killingly's Henry Hammond. There will be time for discussion. This is Walktober event #129. Following the above

presentation, on Saturday, Oct. 11 at about 2:45 p.m., Putnam's Municipal Historian Bill Pearsall will do a companion walk pointing out several houses and sites which were used by the underground railroad in Putnam. This is Walktober walk #134.

The Killingly Conservation Commission will sponsor a walk at Cat Hollow Park, 25 Cat Hollow Rd., Killingly (enter off Dog Hill Road) on Sunday, October 12 from 1-3 p.m. View the 35 ft. high waterfall and bubbling Whetstone Brook. Learn about mill history and unique plantings in the park. Easy, handicapped accessible, about 1 mi. Those who wish a longer hike can cross



KILLINGLY
AT 300
.....
MARGARET
WEAVER

the bridge to moderately rough woodland. This is Walktober walk #138.

Dennis Landis will present a walk/talk entitled Social Ferment and the Old Meeting House at the 1771 Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse, 7 Canterbury Rd., Brooklyn from 3-4:30 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 12. Learn about religious crises and impassioned social movements. Subjects include Israel Putnam, Josiah Whitney, Rev. Samuel J. May, Bronson Alcott, and Celia Burleigh. Find the Unitarian Universalist Society on Facebook. This is Walktober walk #140

DAR Book Discussion. You do not have to belong to the DAR to participate. Killingly Public Library. Friday, Oct. 17, 1-2 p.m. "Rosa Parks, My Story" will be discussed. Stop at the library desk for a copy of the book.

Putnam Library has received a grant for programming from PBS/WETA Studios in conjunction with the release of "The Revolution" by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein and David Schmidt. There will be a showing of an exclusive preview of the documentaries on Oct. 25 at 12:30 p.m. at Putnam Library.

Thank you to everyone who came to the Mary Kies' bench dedication, and thank you to everyone who helped make the event possible. As I was researching materials on Mary Kies and her family, I came across a most unexpected entry for a John Kies (Kees) of Killingly in the Seamen's Protection

Certificates from Mystic Seaport (Ancestry.com). On top of all her daily concerns, did Mary have to worry about her son John, Jr. going to sea? About him possibly being kidnapped? During the period of the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) the British were impressing, that is kidnapping, American sailors and were saying they were really British. Thus, the United States began issuing Seamen's Protection Certificates which described the sailor and identified him as a United States resident. The intriguing entry reads, "Kees, M ? John?", age 26, Killingly, Connecticut", May 9, 1806, light complexion, height: 5'7", certificate out of New London. Although the name has the ?, the man definitely was from Killingly. Only a little additional information has been located about John Kies, Jr. Probate records indicate that he was dead by May 22, 1812 when Samuel Kies was granted guardianship of John's two young children: Gordis, alias John, and Abigail. (Plainfield Probate Vo. 13, p. 54). He was possibly the John Keyes between 26 and 44 years of age who was living in the Westfield section of Killingly when the 1810 U.S. Census was taken.

The list also gave the following other Killingly individuals: Russell B. Whiteman, 34; Henry Warren, 19; Luther Warren, 21; William Short, 30; Smith Mitchel, 25; Obadiah Hulet, 21 (listed twice); Edwin P. Graves, 25; James S. Copp, 21; George W. Chamberlin, 19; William H. Chamberlin, 27. Dates for the certificates vary but can be found at the following site if you are interested. (https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/protection/).*

A second name in the

above list caught my eye--that of James S. Copp. Now, you've read about the Cady-Copp Cottage in this column a number of times. James S. was born there on Jan. 27, 1809, the son of Simon and Mary Copp. Copp's Seamen's Protection Certificate was out of Salem, Mass. and was dated Mar. 9, 1830. I found the following article about James S. Copp after his death in 1881.) Montpelier, Vt., Dec. 17, 1881 article in the Vermont Chronicle. "Effort to Enter Japan. "The narrative below, relating to Captain James S. Copp, deceased in September last, many will read with deep interest. It was sent to us by Rev. Dr. Wickham of Manchester, Vt., who knew Captain Copp very well. He authorizes us to say of this gallant Captain who binds the past to the present, and us to Japan in so instructive a way, that he was a man whose sturdy integrity and frank manhood were matters of inheritance as well as education. Born in Connecticut, he took pleasure in tracing his lineage to the old Puritan stock of the Bay State. The narrative first appeared in the Dedham Transcript of Sept. 17 (1881) as follows. 'With a good education in both public and private schools, he came, a youth to Salem, then a much more commercial place than now, and entered a dry goods store; but health failing, he turned a longing eye upon the large ships then so numerous there, and together with another young friend, applied to the captain of one of them, to be taken before the mast. He was tall and slender, with some indications of lung trouble, and the captain, looking hard at him said, 'Do you think you can stand it to live on salt junk and hard tack, young man?' To which he replied, with the resolution that ever after characterized him

until his brain was affected by disease, 'I can stand it, sir, if others can.' The captain again looked hard at him a moment, and then said, 'I'll take you,' and ever after he 'stood whater others did.' After a few severe voyages to Havana for sugar, and then to the north of Europe, Hamburg and St. Petersburg, in a trade now become obsolete through the production of beet sugar in Europe, he became mate, and subsequently embarked in East India voyages from New York. He was mate of the ship Morrison of New York, belonging to Messrs. Talbot, Olyphant & Co." (The article is lengthy and contains much too much for this column). He later lived in Massachusetts where he passed away. James Copp died August 28, 1881 and was buried in the Putnam Heights Cemetery. His first wife, Abigail Dresser, was buried at sea; however, the coordinates of her interment are on James' tombstone. His second wife, Mary Henrietta, is buried beside James in the Putnam Heights Cemetery.

*The Killingly Historical Center owns a copy of the Register of Seamen's Protection Certificates from the Providence, Rhode Island Custom District 1796-1870. There are a number of individuals from Killingly and Northeastern Connecticut in that. Do stop in and take a look.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, September 2025. 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.

From haunted tales to Irish tunes: Discover the magic of October in Killingly

BY CLAUDETTE STOCKWELL
DIRECTOR
KILLINGLY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Autumn has arrived, bringing with it the thrill of spooky season! Have you ever felt frightened by the sounds

that go bump in the night, or are you the one seeking to give others a fright? We invite you to share your tale! From Oct. 1 to Oct. 31, we'll be accepting entries for our Spooky Killingly Writing Contest.

Submissions can range from two sentences to ten pages, must be rated PG-13, original, and created without

the assistance of ChatGPT, set anywhere in Connecticut (past, present, or future). After reviewing all

submitted stories, winners will be selected in the kid, teen, and adult categories. Winning entries will be published in the Best of Spooky CT volume. Please send your stories to media@killinglypl.org.

Visit our website to explore all the thrilling events we have lined up, including paranormal speakers, the Radikals, a Zombie Prom for teens, crafts, storytelling, and more. Not a fan of the eerie? That's perfectly fine!

We're also celebrating culture and connection with a special program on Ireland's rich musical heritage. Join

us for an engaging discussion featuring Chris Cunningham and the hauntingly beautiful sounds of the Irish

uilleann bagpipes. Plus, we'll be distributing books to help you build your child's own home library during Killingly's Spooktacular event at the end of the month.

Come celebrate creativity, culture, and community with us!

Connect with us at 25 Westcott Rd., Killingly, online at killinglypl.org, or call us at 860-779-5383.

TIPS

continued from page A8

Cyberbullying rates have increased significantly, particularly since the rise of social media and increased time spent online. Studies show that a substantial percentage of students have experienced cyberbullying, with girls often being more likely than boys to be victims.

Some common types of cyberbullying include:

- * Mean or hurtful comments: Posting negative remarks about someone online.

- * Spreading rumors: Sharing false or embarrassing information.

- * Exclusion: Intentionally leaving someone out of a group chat or online activity.

- * Sharing private information/Outing: Leaking personal photos or information without consent. Telling about a person's private sexual orientation and "outing" a person.

Prevention strategies for cyberbullying focus on a combination of awareness, education, and intervention:

- * Educate kids: Teach them about responsible online behavior, the permanence of digital content, and the importance of thinking before they post.

- * Encourage reporting: Let kids know they should

tell a trusted adult, like a parent or teacher, if they are being cyberbullied or see someone being bullied. Let's teach kids that it's right to report bullying, as it's a violation of school policy and is not considered tattling.

- * Block and report: Advise victims to block the bully's account and report the incident to the platform or app administrators. Tell your teachers and principal. Even though this may occur outside of school, the administration may have a school policy in place to address this issue.

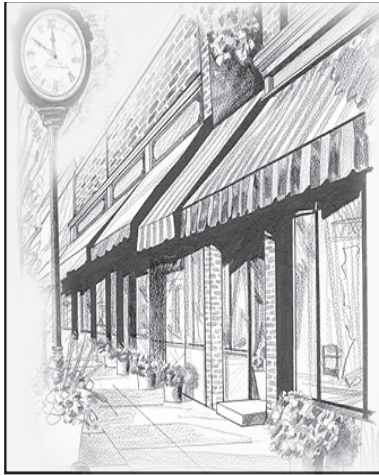
- * Open communication: Maintain open conversations with children about their online activities and

friendships to build trust and ensure they feel comfortable coming to you if a problem arises.

Bullying is going on in schools every day. It is wrong and not a rite of passage. Let's arm our kids with knowledge.

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

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OBITUARIES

Agnes Ida Cote
February 21, 1934 - September 20, 2025



Danielson - Agnes (Touchette) Cote, 91, of Walnut Street, Danielson, died Saturday, September 20, 2025, in the comfort of her home surrounded by family. Born in Dayville, CT, she was the daughter of the late Joseph and Ida (Charon) Touchette.

Agnes worked as a Machine Operator in the textile mills for many years. In her free time, she loved playing bingo, testing her luck with scratch offs and making trips to the casino. She had a love of camping with her life partner Matt Crumm and spending winters in Florida.

Agnes is survived by two daughters,

Renee Racine of Dayville, CT, Debra Estabrook of Danielson, CT; grandchildren, Dawn, Michael, John Anthony, Seth, and Kara; great-grandchildren, Paul, Trystin, Kaedynce, Arya, Brennen, Damien, Brody, and Hadley; great-great-grandson, Paul; good friend, Rhea; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her siblings, Joseph Touchette, Alfred Touchette, Leon Touchette, Donald Columbia, Edmond Touchette, and Rita Dragon.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend a graveside service for Agnes on Saturday, October 4, 2025, at 11am at St. Joseph Cemetery in Dayville, CT. Memorial donations may be made to National Breast Cancer Foundation. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Cynthia A. Molnar, 73

Cynthia A. Molnar, 73, died 9/8/2025 in Bangor, ME. Born in Putnam, CT and raised in Ashford, the daughter of Raymond and Lois B. (Paine) Molnar was a 1971 graduate of E.O. Smith High School. Cindy worked as a Contract Administrator for the Department of Defense at Pratt & Whitney for 30+ years and proudly served as Vice President of her union. She volunteered for Meals on Wheels and provided meals at the soup kitchen in Willimantic prior to her move to ME.

She is survived by her daughters Jaime L. Tracy (Douglas) of ME and Jennifer L. Goodwin of SC., 4 grand-

children, 4 great grandchildren and 4 beloved cats. Cindy was predeceased by her father, but is survived by her mother and her siblings Darlene L. Otto, Valerie L. Molnar and Raymond Molnar, Jr. all of CT and Kathy S. Castillo de la Luz of CA. She is also survived by 10 nieces and nephews, 13 great nieces and nephews and 8 great-great nieces and nephews.

A small gathering to spread her ashes will be at the family farm on 10/11/25 at 10:30 followed by a celebration of life at noon at the Midway Restaurant in Ashford.

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

SHOP HOP

continued from page A1

in here that's not usual. Even if they don't buy today, they still come back. They see the store. It's a no-brainer. It's good for the town. Any exposure you can get is good and we have other stores



Jason Bleau

Customers complete their shopping at the Shops at Walnut Farms during Woodstock's Shop Hop weekend.

NEMBA

continued from page A1

trails on both sides of the Air Line Trail State Park. Trail users can access Pomfret Forest from parking lots on Wolf Den Road and Pomfret Recreation Park and navigate using the TrailForks.com or CTTrailFinder.com or just wander and explore the scenic property.

"The town's acquisition of Pomfret Forest offered a unique opportunity to develop trails for all types of recreational users. On its own, the town would not have had the resources or manpower to open the land or create these trails, as the forest was heavily overgrown with a dense understory, thick canopy, and many hazardous trees. Thanks to the countless hours of work and dedication by NEMBA, mountain bike and multi-use trails have become a popular addition, putting Pomfret on the map as a recreation destination. The growing use of these trails by the Recreation Department and Pomfret Community School further reinforces the value of this trail system," said First Selectman Maureen Nicholson.

"Trail users also support local businesses such as Watercure Distillery and

several area restaurants, creating local economic benefits through sustainable tourism," Nicholson added.

In addition to free weekly guided group rides for all ability levels at Pomfret Forest, West Thompson Lake, Mansfield Hollow State Park and Goodwin State Forest, QC NEMBA has also hosted free mountain bike skills clinics at Pomfret Forest for adults and children. They partnered twice with local non-profit Northeast Opportunities for Wellness (NOW), hosting 30 children ages seven to 13 to offer beginner trail riding skills, including how to ride safely and respectfully in the woods. They partnered with local Eagle Scouts to build the "Spread Your Wings" trail and the informational kiosk in the parking lot on Wolf Den Road. They also worked several times with Pomfret School student volunteers who learned sustainable trail building techniques. Another community service is QC NEMBA's "Gear Closet." Adults who want to learn to mountain bike before they invest can borrow a bike (donated and maintained by QC NEMBA members) to try during a guided ride or event.

The chapter also supports other community sporting events, such as Tackle

BENCH

continued from page A1

James Madison in an era where women were prohibited from owning property and their income was considered part of their husband's estates. The document may not have broken the country away from those practices, but it paved the way for women of the future by at least giving Kies sole credit for her patent. This accomplishment helped her earn a spot in the National Inventor's Hall of Fame in 2006.

Margaret Weaver, Killingly's Town Historian, recounted Kies' family history and her path towards her historic patent calling Kies a rebel in her time who worked to claim the credit she deserved for her

method of production.

"I think she was a feisty one. I don't think she was a shrinking violet at all. I think she insisted her name be on the patent so she at least be given credit by her name, not her husband's name," said Weaver. "She broke barriers. She laid a foundation so other females could follow in her footsteps. She obtained a U.S. patent in her own right, in her own name."

Other state and local leaders also praised Kies' place in history. Sen. Mae Flexer said it was a delight to learn more about Kies and her accomplishment after seeing her name reflected for so long in Killingly's history.

"Mary's name is a name I've known for a long time - It's been great to learn more about her, and I'm thrilled she is being hon-

ored in this very appropriate way," said Flexer. "Her leadership and inventiveness paved the way for other women to be able to stake their own path in the years that followed."

Town Council Vice Chair Tammy Wakefield agreed that Kies is an important figure in both the local and national history of women's rights.

"There's a whole lot of strong women that have led this town for a great number of years. I really think that Mary Kais has led the way for that," she said.

The bench is now the newest part of Lions Park and will serve as a resting spot for parents and visitors while local children continue to enjoy the playground which has been a neighborhood staple for decades.

Forest.

For more info about QC NEMBA, visit <https://www.nemba.org/chapters/quiet-corner-nemba> or find them on Facebook @QuietCornerNEMBA and Instagram @QCNEMBA.

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Richard J Tangari (25-00262)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated September 23, 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 Flaherty,
10311 Mount Oxford Ave.,
Las Vegas, NV 89166
October 3, 2025

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF
Frank M Murray (25-00371)

The Hon. Gabrielle Labonte, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Northeast Probate Court, by decree dated September 23, 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:
Helen Richardson
c/o EDWIN C HIGGINS, BACHAND,
LONGO & HIGGINS, 168 MAIN
STREET, P.O. BOX 528,
PUTNAM, CT 06260
October 3, 2025

PARK

continued from page A1



Part of the newly unveiled upgrades at the Train Wreck Park includes a throwback to the runtable and East Thompson sign when the area served local trains.

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KILLINGLY HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS WRAP-UP



Football

The Killingly Trailblazers improved to 3-0 with a 49-21 victory over Jonathan Law (2-1) Friday, Sept. 26 in Milford. This was Killingly's 100 victory in 114 games since 2015, including going 67-6 in the ECC.

Killingly jumped out early with a pick-six by Hayden Allard, who returned an interception 82 yards for a touchdown. Allard continued his rampage with two more long touchdown runs of 70 and 61 yards, finishing the night with 292 rushing yards and four rushing touchdowns. Quarterback Quinn Sumner added a 28-yard touchdown pass to Joseph Mackie, who also contributed a 44-yard rushing score. Mackie finished with 139 yards on 11 carries.

Law responded with big plays of their own, including a 69-yard touchdown pass followed by a successful two-point conversion, and a 47-yard touchdown strike to close the gap to 28-21 before

halftime.

Girls Soccer

In a hard-fought battle on the road, the Killingly girls' soccer team secured a clutch 1-0 victory over a tough Windham squad Wednesday, Sept. 24.

The deadlock was finally broken halfway through the second half when Kezlee Morrarty found the back of the net with a well-placed shot, giving Killingly the decisive goal. The defense held strong for the remainder of the game, preserving the shutout and the win.

With this impressive victory, the Killingly improves their record to 5-2-1 on the season.

The girls next battled hard in a 1-1 tie against Plainfield! Olivia Cabral scored the lone goal for Killingly, and the entire team showed incredible heart and hustle from start to finish. Every player stepped up, fought for every ball, and played with grit and determination until the final whistle.

Second-Half Shutdown

Killingly's defense tightened up in the second half, allowing no points while the offense tacked on two more touchdowns—another Allard run and a short scoring drive capped by a Cooper Logee extra point. The defense was led by Walter Okoney's 8 tackles and 2 sacks, Hunter Allard had 9 tackles, Joseph Mackie had 9 tackles including 4 tackles for a loss, while Kaiden Guertin had 9 tackles with 3 for a loss.

Killingly's balanced attack and defensive resilience proved too much for Law, as the Trailblazers controlled the tempo and closed out the game. Killingly returns to action at New London next Friday night, game time is 5:00 pm.

Volleyball

The Killingly Volleyball team hosted Waterford High School on Tuesday, Sept. 23.

The New Player record



rose to 2-3, defeating Waterford 2 sets to 1, 25-9, 19-25, 25-13

The JV record rose to 8-1, defeating Waterford 2 sets to 1, 25-9, 13-25, 25-23.

Killingly 0, Waterford 3
Killingly 6-3
Waterford 5-3
22-25, 13-25, 16-25

The Varsity record fell to 6-3, losing to Waterford 0 sets to 3, 23-21, 22-25, 13-25, 16-25.

The team traveled to Montville High School on Wednesday, Sept. 24.

The JV record fell to 8-2, losing to Montville 0 sets to 2, 15-25, 23-25. Lillian McDonald had 3 assists; Hailee James had 4 assists; Anna Kelly had 4 axes; Loretta Lannon had 2 aces, 2 kills; Ellsie Antobenedetto had 3 kills and Ella Adams had 2 kills to lead Killingly.

Killingly 3, Montville 2
Killingly 7-3
Montville 5-5
18-25, 14-25, 25-22, 25-19, 15-13

The Varsity record rose to 7-3, defeating Montville 3 sets to 2, 18-25, 14-25, 25-22, 25-19, 15-13. Danielle Veillette had 8 digs, 5 aces; Kalynn Dombkowski had 6 assists; Kayla Drinkwater had 6 kills; Teagan Klewin had 4 blocks; Kendall Rosen had 5 kills; Jaliyah Blair had 3 blocks, 3 kills; Shyah Baker had 4 digs, 3 blocks, 3 kills, 5 assists; and Jayden Durand had 3 digs, 4 kills to lead Killingly.

On Friday, Sept. 26, the team hosted Putnam High School.

The JV record rose to 9-2, defeating Putnam 2 sets to 0, 25-9, 25-17. Lyla Rondeau had 4 aces; Arya Davis had 3 assists; Anna Kelly had 2 aces; Loretta Lannon had 2 blocks; Ellsie Antobenedetto had 3 aces; and Ella Adams had 2 blocks, 4 kills; Kairah Guertin had 8 aces; Shea Stephenson had 2 aces, 2 kills and Natalya Benoit had 2 aces to lead Killingly.

Killingly 3, Putnam 0
Killingly 8-3
Putnam 3-8
25-18, 25-9, 25-18

The Varsity record rose to 8-3, defeating Putnam 3 sets to 0, 25-18, 25-9, 25-18. Danielle Veillette had 9 digs, 5 kills; Kalynn Dombkowski had 9 assists; Kayla Drinkwater had 8 kills; Teagan Klewin had 2 blocks, 2nkills; Kendall Rosen had 3 kills; Jaliyah Blair had 2blocks, 3 kills; Shyah Baker had 10 aces, 4 kills, 5 assists; Loretta Lannon had 3 aces; and Jayden Durand had 8 kills to lead Killingly.

The team closed out the week by hosting Windham High School on Monday, Sept. 29.

The New Player record rose to 4-3, defeating Windham High School 2 sets to 1, 20-25, 25-3, 25-20.

The JV record rose to 11-2, defeating Windham 2 sets to 0, 25-20, 25-18. Lillian McDonald had 5 assists; Violet Schafer had 4 aces, 4 kills; Lyla Rondeau had 5 digs, 2 aces; Hailee James had 5 assists; Anna Kelly had 3 aces, 2 kills; Loretta Lannon had 2 blocks, 4 aces, 4 kills; Ellsie Antobenedetto had 2 aces, 2 kills; and Ella Adams had 2 aces, 2 kills to lead Killingly.

Killingly 3, Windham 0
Killingly 9-3
Windham
25-18, 25-19, 27-25

The Varsity record rose to 9-3, defeating Windham 3 sets to 0, 25-18, 25-19, 27-25. Kalynn Dombkowski had 3 digs, 11 assists; Kayla Drinkwater had 2 aces, 4 kills; Teagan Klewin had 3 blocks, 2 kills; Kendall Rosen had 4 aces, 8 kills; Jaliyah Blair had 2 kills; Shyah Baker had 12 blocks, 8 aces, 4 kills, 11 assists; and Jayden Durand had 5digs, 4 aces, 8 kills to lead Killingly.

THE WEEK IN SPORTS AT WOODSTOCK ACADEMY

Boys Soccer

Woodstock Academy 2
Windham 0

The reserves and the defense stepped up to carry the Centaurs to an Eastern Connecticut Conference Division I win on Tuesday at the Bentley Athletic Complex.

Trevor Gold came off the bench and found a fellow reserve, Phillip Feaney Aleman open on the other side of the net. Gold got the cross to Aleman and his fellow senior put it in the back of the net to give the Centaurs the first half lead.

A sparkling defensive play by senior Nate Faucher kept the one-goal lead intact for Woodstock

Academy (3-1-3, 2-0-2 ECC Division I).

Windham's Kevin Mejias Guarcas sent a free kick into the six-yard box and no one could get to it until Faucher was able to get a foot on it, sent it straight up in the air and it hit the crossbar, bounding harmlessly back toward the field.

Matt Johndrow rewarded that defensive save when he scored his fifth goal of the season to give the Centaurs a little insurance.

Girls Soccer

Woodstock Academy 2
Waterford 0

The Centaurs picked up their first win of the season as they pitched a

shutout at the Lancers.

Avery Danis scored off a Kaitlyn Teal assist 18 minutes, 4 seconds into the match.

That goal held up until just 27:56 was left in regulation when Teal found another teammate, Campbell Favreau, who put in her first goal for the season for a little insurance for Woodstock Academy (1-5-3, 1-1-3 Eastern Connecticut Conference Division I).

The Lancers slipped to 2-4-4 overall and 2-4-2 in the Division I.

NFA 2
Woodstock Academy 1
WOODSTOCK - The Wildcats (2-6-1,2-5-1 Eastern Connecticut

Conference Division I) got a late second half goal to help them break a three-match losing streak. Gia Baldyga scored off an assist from Lily Mioduszewski to give the Centaurs (1-6-3, 1-2-3) the early lead but NFA tied the match on a penalty kick before getting the game winner.

Girls Volleyball

Woodstock Academy 3
Waterford 0

The Centaurs qualified for the Class L state tournament with the 25-23, 25-18, 25-10 win over the Lancers at the Woodstock Academy South Gym.

A strong team effort carried Woodstock

Academy (8-3, 4-1 Eastern Connecticut Conference Division I) to the win.

Kaylee Bundy had six kills while both Vivian Bibeau (eight service points) and Kennedy McCooey added five.

Lily Morgis led the team with nine service points including four aces and had 14 assists while Gianna Musumeci led the defensive effort with 22 digs.

Glastonbury 3
Woodstock Academy 0
GLASTONBURY -

The sets were close but all belonged to the hosts as the Guardians posted consecutive wins of 25-19, 25-20, 25-10 for the sweep.

Kennedy McCooey had 10 kills and Kaylee Bundy added eight for Woodstock Academy

(8-4).

Gianna Musumeci had 14 digs.

Woodstock Academy 3
Rockville 1

It was a battle royal between the Centaurs and Rams with Woodstock Academy able to breathe a sigh of relief at the end.

The Centaurs took the first two sets 25-23 and 27-25 only to see Rockville respond with a 26-24 win in the third. The Centaurs closed it out with a 25-23 victory in the decisive fourth set.

Kaylee Bundy had a career high 23 kills for Woodstock Academy (9-4) while Lily Morgis added 38 assists and Gianna Musumeci had 21 digs.

Caroline Burg had 28 kills for the Rams (9-2).

Adama Tamedou commits to Maryland



PUTNAM — At this time next fall, Adama Tamedou will be playing Big Ten basketball. The four-star forward committed to the University of Maryland, joining first year head coach Buzz Williams in College Park. The six-foot, seven-inch, 230 pound forward chose the Terrapins over Iowa State and a host of other Division I schools.

Coach Williams and members of his staff flew to Connecticut to see Tamedou for a short visit last week. That visit ultimately made a huge impact when deciding where to play. “

Not all coaches can do that sacrifice for you. If they want you that much, why not go play for them,” said Tamedou. Adama chose the Terrapins for many reasons. One of them was how much the program buys into the defensive side of the floor. Access to the gym and weight room facilities was another plus for Tamedou. It is where he can be the best version of himself.

“They’re going to help you get better and better. With that program I can be the better version of myself,” he said.

Tamedou has cherished his time at Putnam Science Academy. Not only because he was an instrumental part of last year's national championship team. He has grown exponentially since coming to the school. On and off the court. He credits the PSA coaching staff for the evolution of his game and helping him become a better teammate. Adama Tamedou plans to do at Maryland what he has done at Putnam Science Academy, win.

PSA football falls to WNEC, 45-28

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — The Putnam Science Academy football team traveled to Western New England College Sunday afternoon to take on the Golden Bears. Unfortunately, the Mustangs could not come away with the victory, falling 45-28 to fall 0-3 on the season.

Quarterback Demarcus Williams threw for three touchdowns, throwing one to Camari Smith for a 25-yard touchdown. Wide receiver Gerald McCloud had five catches for 55 yards as well as a touchdown catch. McCloud's receiver mate, Ron Florian-Moreta had eight catches for 165 receiving yards. Running back Jordan Dukes had four catches for 80 yards along with a touchdown.

Running mate DJ Williams found the end zone on a 15 yard run. Malachi Hymes got it done through the air and on the ground. Hymes caught five catches for 75 yards, while having three carries for 35 yards on the ground. The Mustangs defense had some great play in defensive back Donovan Darden, three tackles as well as an interception. Linebacker Rayvon Hines was the next Mustang to pick off the opposing quarterback, he also had five tackles. Kel'Javious “JJ” Moore had a strong performance from the linebacker position as he had two sacks, 11 tackles and a fumble recovery. Putnam Science has a bye week coming up, then they will be back on the road to face The Hun School on Saturday, Oct. 11.