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Bangor High School Slater Chorale Host Disney Night



Bangor High School Slater Chorale hosted a Disney night on November 25th featuring a bunch of Disney Sing-a-long favorites. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Startling Study Links Cannabis Use to Genetic Damage and Cancer



New findings indicate cannabis contributes to severe cellular and genetic damage, raising cancer risks and potentially affecting future generations.

Cannabis use has been linked to cellular damage that significantly increases the risk of developing highly cancerous tumors, according to a new study in the scientific journal *Addiction Biology*.

The study identifies cannabis as a “genotoxic” substance, meaning it harms the genetic

material within cells. This damage can result in DNA mutations, accelerated aging, and cancer.

Alarmingly, the study suggests that this genetic damage could be passed on to future generations through egg and sperm, making the effects of cannabis use potentially trans-generational.

Linking Cannabis to Cellular and Genetic Damage

Researchers from The University of Western Australia highlighted **CANNABIS cont'd on pg 3**

Out of Our Shells 4H Announce Installation of “Free Little Pantry” at First Presbyterian Church



Left to right: Out of Our Shells 4-H Marilyn Shanley “Leader,” James Shanley “President,” Mathew Craig “Vice President,” and Ty LeGates “Treasurer”

In the heart of Blairstown, NJ, you will find the “First Presbyterian Church Outreach Center,” which has been the home of the “Out of Our Shells” 4H group for the past ten years. During this time, the Out of Our Shells 4H group has been actively involved in numerous community service projects, and they are excited to intro-

duce this new community-building experience to everyone.

Out of Our Shells 4H is excited to announce the installation of a “Free Little Pantry” at the front of the First Presbyterian Church Outreach Center! You might be wondering, “What’s a Free Little Pantry?” Well, we are glad you asked!

“Our pantry is open

to everyone in the community! Whether you need an item or want to donate one, our pantry is here for you. It is for the hungry kid walking home from school or the home cook who forgot to buy a box of pasta. We are thrilled to bring this to Blairstown!”

Our pantry is different from other food pantries **PANTRY cont'd on pg 2**

Annual Roseto Christmas Tree Lighting



The Annual Roseto Christmas Tree lighting was held on December 1st. The community gathered together to spread holiday cheer. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Regular Firearms Deer Season Began November 30th, Use Caution and Wear Orange



Regular firearms season runs from Nov. 30 to Dec. 14 in most areas of the state. Certain wildlife management units (WMUs) offer additional hunting opportunities. WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D have an extended season from Dec. 26 to Jan. 25, 2025. WMUs 4A, 4D and 5A have an extended season from Jan. 2-20, 2025.

have shared their deer harvest since 1991, helping Hunters Sharing the Harvest (HSH) distribute 2.5 million pounds of venison. Hunters can drop off a whole field-dressed deer at a participating processor. There is no fee to donate a deer. In an average hunting season, HSH hopes to provide the state's food banks with 100,000

pounds of processed venison. The food banks then re-distribute the meat to more than 5,000 local provider charities such as food pantries, missions, homeless shelters, Salvation Army facilities and churches. Hunters' donations help combat food insecurity, which more than 1.6 million Pennsylvanians currently experience.



Every Donation Makes A Difference

PANTRY Continued from pg 1

in a few key ways:

- It is small, so the quantity and variety of items are limited, but everything is stocked with love from our club and community.
- Our pantry is local and easily accessible.
- Our pantry is open 24/7

Our pantry is stocked organically. If you would like to contribute, you can drop off food items at the side entrance door of the Outreach building from Tuesday to Thursday from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm. The address is 35 Main Street in Blairstown, NJ. We appreciate donations of canned vegetables, canned fruits, crackers, cereals, diapers, baby formula, and other needed items. Personal care items and paper goods are also welcome.

Please remember the following guidelines for our pantry:

- We cannot accept

sharps (such as razors), chemicals, previously worn clothing (which adds bulk), or anything illegal.

- Any open items will be disposed of.
- Expired food will not be accepted.
- Our club members will take turns checking the pantry daily on a rotational basis.

It's clear that our "Free Little Pantry" holds tremendous potential and can bring our community together for a wonderful and meaningful experience. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Pastor Harvey and Jennifer Plutt for their incredible generosity. Mrs. Erika Wulster, Outreach Pantry Coordinator, we are truly grateful for the invaluable work you do at the Outreach Food Pantry.

A special thank you to Dave Prezioso of Prezioso Electric, LLC for dedicating your time and effort to installing our pantry. This project would not have been possible without your support.

To all our esteemed Blairstown Business Sponsors: Your generous business donations have made it possible for Out of Our

Shells 4H to bring this wonderful pantry to our community. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your support and for embracing our club's vision of a thriving community.

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If you would like to donate to Out of Our Shells 4H "Free Little Pantry" you can do so by sending your donation to the Free Little Pantry Gofundme Page at gofund.me/23f5c2c5

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Boscola Announces Over \$300,000 in Targeted School Safety and Security Grants for Nonpublic Schools

Senator Lisa Boscola (D-Lehigh/Northampton) announced today that \$306,570 in funding has been awarded to seven nonpublic schools in Northampton County through the FY 2024-25 Targeted School Safety and Security Grants for Nonpublic Schools by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). "It's critical to ensure that our schools are safe places for children to learn and develop and this state funding will allow these seven educational institutions to enhance their efforts," Boscola stated. "This fun-

ding of close to \$20 million statewide is further proof that assisting our schools to better provide a safe learning environment for our children and our educators is a priority." The following grants awards were approved in Northampton County: - Bethlehem Catholic High School \$37,500 - Centennial School of Lehigh University \$69,850 - Holy Family School \$37,645 - Moravian Academy Historic Downtown Campus \$75,000 - Notre Dame High

School \$24,075 - Our Lady of Perpetual Help School \$37,500 - St. John Chrysostom Academy \$25,000 Section 923.3-A. of the Public School (Act 14 of 1949) provides for School Safety and Security Enhancements for nonpublic schools. That section declares that "(t)he welfare of this Commonwealth requires that all school children should be afforded the opportunity to attend a school that is safe and secure. It is the intent of the General Assembly to ensure that all of this Commonwealth's nonpublic schools

are afforded opportunities to provide safety and security enhancements for their students similar to the opportunities provided to the public schools." A total of \$19,665,000 in state school safety and security funds was available in this round of funding to support this initiative. Per Section 1306.1-B of the PA Public School Code, nonpublic schools are eligible for no less than \$14,551,000 in total awards. Applicants could request up to \$75,000 for a project period up-to-18 months.

CANNABIS

Continued from pg 1

this connection in their recent publication. They linked existing evidence that cannabis use disrupts cellular energy production by impairing mitochondria to new findings published in Science.[1,2]

These findings reveal that mitochondrial dysfunction can drive chromosomal damage, leading to higher rates of cancer, premature aging, and birth defects. Together, this research underscores the far-reaching consequences of cannabis-induced genetic harm.

Broad Implications of Cannabis-Induced Damage

The Science studies were not conducted in the context of cannabis use; however, they provide mechanistic insights into some observations about cannabis use that were not previously well

understood, such as that cannabis causes both mitochondrial and genetic damage. Taken together, the article in Addiction Biology put older historical research about cannabis into context and suggests that cannabis-related genotoxic damage may be all around us — even if we largely don't see it.

Intergenerational Consequences of Cannabis

Co-author Dr. Stuart Reece comments: "The link we've described between cannabis use and genotoxicity has far-reaching consequences. This new research shows how genetic damage from cannabis use can be passed down the generations. This should reframe the discussion surrounding cannabis legalization from a personal choice to one that potentially involves multiple subsequent generations."

Cited Notes: "Micronuclear collapse from oxidative damage" by Melody Di Bona, Yanyang Chen, Albert S. Agustinus, Alice Mazzagatti, Mercedes A. Duran, Matthew Deyell, Daniel Bronder, James Hickling, Christy Hong, Lorenzo Scipioni, Giulia Tedeschi, Sara Martin, Jun Li, Aušrinė Ruzgaitė, Nadeem Riaz, Parin Shah, Edridge K. D'Souza, D. Zack Brodtkman, Simone Sidoli, Bill Diplas, Manisha Jalan, Nancy Y. Lee, Alban Ordureau, Benjamin Izar, Ashley M. Laughney, Simon Powell, Enrico Gratton, Stefano Santaguida, John Maciejowski, Peter Ly, Thomas M. Jeitner and Samuel F. Bakhoun, 30 August 2024, Science. DOI: 10.1126/science.adj8691

"A p62-dependent rheostat dictates micronuclei catastrophe and chromosome rearrangements" by Sara Martin, Simone Scorzoni, Sara Cordone, Alice Mazzagatti, Galina V. Beznousenko, Amanda L. Gunn, Melody Di Bona, Yonatan Eliezer, Gil Leor, Tal Ben-Yishay, Alessia Loffreda, Valeria Cancila, Maria Chiara Rainone, Marica Rosaria Ippolito, Valentino Martis, Fabio Bedin, Massimiliano Garrè, Laura Pontano Vaites, Paolo Vasapoli, Simona Polo, Dario Parazzoli, Claudio Tripodo, Alexander A. Mironov, Alessandro Cuomo, Uri Ben-David, Samuel F. Bakhoun, Emily M. Hatch, Peter Ly and Stefano Santaguida, 30 August 2024, Science. DOI: 10.1126/science.adj7446

Reference: "Key insights into cannabis-cancer pathobiology and genotoxicity" by Albert Stuart Reece and Gary Kenneth Hulse, 13 November 2024, Addiction Biology. DOI: 10.1111/adb.70003

Article from scitech-daily.com



Vivian Dawe and Jane Ruggiero from the Pen Argyl Women's Club taking some time out after a busy day of dressing up some planters around Pen Argyl with Christmas greens and decorations. Great job ladies! Photo Courtesy Diane Cascioli

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Murphy Administration Partners With USDA To Launch Buyouts Of Flood-Prone Properties In Cranford

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Blue Acres program, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), has launched a \$3.5 million project to buy out flood-prone residential properties in Cranford Township, Union County, marking the beginning of a partnership that is expected to expand the availability of additional USDA buyout funds in flood-prone communities across the state.

The Cranford project specifically targets homes that were flooded along Orchard Brook. The buyouts are funded entirely by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection program, established for emergency recovery work including the purchase of floodplain property buyouts.

This project, and similar DEP-USDA partnership projects expected to be launched in other communities, expands the reach of the state's post-Ida disaster recovery projects, which to date have been primarily funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s Community Development Block Grant programs.

"We are extremely pleased to partner with USDA and announce this additional source of funding that will provide more fuel for the state's buyout program and support New Jersey residents seeking to

move out of areas plagued by repeated flooding," said Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette. "Cranford's leadership sets a great example for other communities to follow by making sure its residents are informed about their options for escaping the threat of flooding and supporting decisions to relocate. There's no doubt these buyouts will provide much needed relief to property owners in Cranford and in other communities going forward."

"Through these voluntary buyouts, the NRCS is committed to working with NJ DEP's Blue Acres program to acquire at-risk properties and restore the land to a natural state. This approach helps protect the surrounding community by increasing flood storage capacity and preventing future development in high-risk zones," said Julie Hawkins, New Jersey-NRCS State Conservationist. "The program is especially valuable where structural solutions like levees or flood walls are ineffective or financially unsustainable. Once a property is purchased, it is restricted to open space use, ensuring that flood-prone areas are preserved for conservation and community safety."

"Cranford continues to advance our 'All of the Above' flood mitigation strategy to support our residents and prepare for the next storm. This dynamic new home buy-out program is an incredible example of cooperation across federal, state, and local government to help residents in highly flood-prone areas," said Cran-

ford Township Mayor Brian Andrews. "We greatly appreciate the Biden Administration and Murphy Administration for their partnership pushing this forward and hope it can be a model for projects in other towns."

"The Murphy Administration has been working hard to implement a statewide climate resilience strategy to better protect lives and property," said DEP Chief Resilience Officer Nick Angarone. "However, in many cases, buyouts are the only way to ensure that safety and well-being of property owners by moving them out of harm's way."

An Innovative Funding Partnership Opportunity

Properties acquired through the buyout project will be restored to open space that will mitigate flooding, create recreational opportunities and provide ecological benefits for the community. The DEP-USDA partnership provides crucial funding that supports ongoing efforts to meet the statewide demand for flood buyouts. Through continued funding requests, the DEP Blue Acres program will seek to expand its ability to offer buyouts in more communities across the state.

State-led buyouts are a powerful tool communities can employ in conjunction with other flood mitigation measures to reduce flood risk and prevent the loss of homes in areas prone to repeated flooding and erosion. Cranford, which has a long history of working with homeowners to mitigate their flood vulnerability through home

elevations, initially proposed a plan for buyouts following Tropical Storm Ida in September 2021.

In August, DEP and Cranford Township officials met with homeowners participating in the project to discuss the buyout process. Another meeting is planned for January for homeowners located near the buyout cluster, but who are not participating, to share information about the buyout project goals and benefits. Additionally, DEP's Blue Acres program plans to seek community input on the restored open space that will be created.

DEP's Blue Acres Buyout Program helps New Jersey communities identify and avoid risks of flooding through strategic climate resilience planning and the state-led acquisition of flood-prone property. Since Tropical Storm Ida impacted the state in 2021, New Jersey has committed \$100 million in federal funds for buyouts across storm-affected areas. The state has also leveraged funding from the Garden State Preservation Trust to supplement Blue Acres work, including providing local matches for federally funded buyouts.

The homeowners of the properties targeted for acquisition are willing sellers who have experienced repeated flooding and streambank erosion jeopardizing their homes. The DEP Blue Acres program is committed to making the buyout process as seamless as possible and will assign a case worker to guide each homeowner through the process.

Since its inception in 1995, Blue Acres has

acquired nearly 1,200 flood-prone properties, successfully moving families out of harm's way, deed-restricting the land in perpetuity for uses compatible with natural flood-

plain functions and enhancing community climate resilience.

For more information on the Blue Acres program, visit: <https://dep.nj.gov/blueacres/>

Christ Church Presents Nine Lessons & Carols



Christ Episcopal Church in Newton will present the Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols, on Sunday, December 22nd, at 7:00 p.m. The worship service includes nine Bible stories interspersed with Christmas carols which depict the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah and the birth of Jesus. The renowned Christ Church Senior Choir and Junior Choir will perform accompanied by organ, piano, and a string quartet under the direction of Choirmaster, Joseph Mello, and Junior Choir Director, Deborah Mello. Works by Cherwien, Forrest, Goemanne, Ord, Rutter, Willan, and Wilkcocks will be presented along with settings of traditional carols and anthems. There will be several opportunities for the public to sing carols. The format for the service was based on an Order drawn up by Edward White Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, for Christmas Eve, 1880 in Truro, Cornwall. It has since been adapted and used by other churches all over the world. The Reverend Chris Streeter will preside. Piano and organ accompaniment will be provided by Diana Greene. The event is free and open to the public, although a free will offering will be taken. Christ Church is located at 62 Main Street in Newton. For more information about the Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols, call Christ Episcopal Church at 973-383-2245 or visit www.christchurchnewton.org.

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Celebrating Our History, Shaping the Future: Lehigh Valley 250



By State Rep. Ann Flood (R-Northampton)

Last week, I had the opportunity to join the House Tourism and Economic and Recreational Development Committee as they toured Bethlehem, Easton, and Allentown to discuss strategies for boosting tourism, recreation, and economic growth in our region, with a special focus on the upcoming Lehigh Valley 250 celebration, part of the nationwide America 250 commemoration.

The Lehigh Valley is Pennsylvania's third largest and fastest-growing metropolitan area, known for its vibrant community, rich history, and strategic location near major cities like Philadelphia and New York. This makes our region a vital part of America 250 and an ideal location to showcase the legacy and promise of our nation. On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This milestone gives us a moment to pause, reflect on our nation's past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and envision the future we want to create for the next generation and beyond. The Lehigh Valley has played a pivotal role in this journey. From the steps of the courthouse in Easton on July 8, 1776, when Robert Levers' voice rang out proclaiming the Declaration of Independence, our region was among the first to hear the words that would shape the foundation of our nation. The Lehigh Valley 250 celebration will highlight our region's important role in this history, bringing together local businesses, leaders, and organizations to celebrate our shared past and look toward the future. On Wednesday's segment of the tour, I participated in a panel discussion at the Hotel Bethlehem, where we heard from leaders in tourism, hospitality, arts, and culture, as well as Lehigh Valley 250 partners. Later, at a reception at Lafayette College, we explored how institutions like Lafayette College and long-standing employers like Crayola play a

vital role in the region's growth through their strong partnership with the community. These organizations help preserve our shared history while fostering community connections and supporting the region's continued development.

The following day, I joined the committee at Coca-Cola Park in Allentown for a roundtable discussion with regional business leaders. We explored ways to collaborate across Eastern Pennsylvania to ensure the success of the Lehigh Valley 250 celebration. While touring the ballpark, I had the opportunity to preview Illuminations, an extravagant light show that will be held at the park this winter for spectators to enjoy.

As we approach this historic milestone in 2026, the Lehigh Valley 250 celebration will not only honor our region's contributions to America's history but also serve as an opportunity to boost tourism, enhance recreational offerings, and further strengthen our economy. Together, we will celebrate our past, embrace our future, and work to make the Lehigh Valley a destination for generations to come.

PennDOT Invites Public to Virtual Meeting on State Rail Plan Updates



The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is inviting the public to participate in a virtual public meeting to discuss updates to the Pennsylvania State Rail Plan. The meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 10, from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM.

PennDOT is working alongside the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to develop the 2025 Pennsylvania State Rail Plan, which will guide rail investments for the next 20 years. This update, last revised in 2020, evaluates the current state of passenger and freight rail while

addressing future safety, funding, environmental, and economic development needs.

The meeting will include an introduction to the plan update process, background on Pennsylvania's rail systems, and an interactive Q&A session. The public is encouraged to share input on rail priorities, opportunities, and investment needs.

To participate, visit the State Rail Plan website at advancingparail.com to access the Zoom meeting link and survey. Materials from the meeting will be available online through December 19.

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Annual Roseto, PA, Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration

Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press



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Reminders For Statewide Firearms Deer Season In PA



Shoppers have Black Friday. But for Pennsylvania hunters, the real action starts one day later, on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, when the statewide firearms deer season begins.

No other single point of the hunting calendar draws as much participation.

Opening day, which falls on Nov. 30 this year, will put more than half a million hunters in the woods, all looking to bring home healthy venison to fill their freezers. It's about more than just that, though. For many families – those who hunt from camps and those who hunt closer to home – the deer opener is an event, a chance to bring together family and friends and make memories centered on the outdoors that will be retold for generations. "Growing up, I looked forward to the first day

of deer season all year," said Game Commission Executive Director Steve Smith. "I'm hardly alone that way. For many of us, hunting, and deer hunting in particular, isn't just a hobby. It's a part of the fabric of our lives.

"Our hunting culture, and our commitment to wildlife and conservation, is so strong, so deeply rooted, so passionate, that it's impossible to separate it from who and what we are."

This year's deer season starts on Saturday, Nov. 30, continues on Sunday, Dec. 1, then runs from Dec. 2-14, excluding only Sunday, Dec. 8. Hunters are allowed one antlered deer per year, plus one antlerless deer for every Wildlife Management Unit (WMU)-specific antlerless license or Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) permit.

Last year, across all of the 2023-24 deer seasons, hunters harvested an estimated 430,010 white-tailed deer. The statewide buck harvest was estimated at 171,600, while the antlerless harvest was estimated at 258,410.

As in years past, the regular firearms deer season accounted for the largest part of the take. Firearms hunters took an estimated 254,710 deer, with 86,260 of those bucks and the remaining 168,450 being antlerless.

Expect similar numbers this year, if history is any guide.

According to the National Deer Association, an advocacy group working to ensure the future of wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting, Pennsylvania annually ranks in the top five, if not the top three, among states in terms of antlered buck harvest; antlered buck

harvest per square mile; antlerless deer harvest; antlerless deer harvest per square mile; and antlerless deer per antlered buck harvest.

That's been true for at least a decade.

Pennsylvania these days grows bucks with impressive antlers, too. The implementation of antler-point restrictions in 2002 – which limit hunters to harvesting bucks with three or four points on one side, depending on which area of the state – has changed the buck harvest.

At one time yearling bucks, those about 18 months old with their first set of antlers, dominated the harvest. Now, two of every three bucks is at least 2.5 years old. That translates to older, bigger deer with more impressive headgear.

Connecting with one of them, or any deer, is a matter of hunting in good habitat, where deer find the food and cover they need. But it's also a matter of patience, said David Stainbrook, the Game Commission's Deer and Elk Section Supervisor.

"Success in harvesting deer starts with scouting and knowing the land," Stainbrook said. "But putting in time is important, too, so hunters should hit the woods every chance they get. Even one additional day hunting can make the difference between filling a

tag or not."

License requirements: Hunters are permitted to harvest one antlered deer with a valid general hunting license, which costs \$20.97 for adult residents and \$101.97 for adult nonresidents.

To take an antlerless deer, a hunter must possess either a valid antlerless deer license or valid Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) permit. A mentored hunter under the age of 7 cannot apply for their own antlerless license or DMAP permit, but can harvest an antlerless deer if an antlerless license or DMAP permit is transferred to them by a mentor at the time of harvest.

Antlerless deer licenses can be used anywhere within the Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) for which they're issued. One WMU – 4A, in southcentral Pennsylvania, taking in parts of Bedford, Blair, Franklin, Fulton and Huntingdon counties – still had antlerless licenses available at the time of this release.

Hunters can check up-to-the-minute availability at <https://huntfish.pa.gov/pa/antlerlesswmu/remainingquotas>, then buy licenses directly from any license issuing agent or online at www.huntfish.pa.gov.

Be aware that licenses purchased online must be mailed, to provide hunters with an actual harvest tag. So hunters buying their license close to opening day may want

to do so in person at a vendor, so as to get their harvest tag immediately and be able to lawfully hunt.

A DMAP permit, meanwhile, can be used only on the specific property for which it is issued. Some DMAP permits might remain available on private and public properties throughout the state. Visit the DMAP Participating Properties locator on the Game Commission's website to learn more about where they are available.

As for mentored hunting permits, they're available to hunters of all ages. Mentored hunters ages 7 and older receive an antlered deer harvest tag with their permit and can apply for their own antlerless deer license. Those under 7 must receive deer harvest tags from their mentors. A mentor can transfer an antlered deer harvest tag and an antlerless license and/or DMAP permit to a mentored hunter under 7.

Mentored hunting permit fees are \$2.97 for residents and nonresidents under 12; \$6.97 for residents 12 to 16; \$41.97 for nonresidents 12 to 16; \$20.97 for residents 17 and older; and \$101.97 for nonresidents 17 and older.

Hunters 12 or older who are certified through the Game Commission's Hunter-Trapper Education program qualify to purchase general hunting tags. **Article Continued On Next Page**

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Reminders For Statewide Firearms Deer Season In PA...CONTINUED

licenses, which provide more privileges. Certified hunters 12 to 16 can obtain junior licenses, the least expensive of which cost \$6.97 for residents and \$41.97 for nonresidents.

Those holding senior or lifetime licenses are reminded they must obtain a new antlered deer harvest tag each year, free of charge, to participate in the season.

Hunters are reminded the field possession of expired licenses or tags, or another hunter's licenses or tags, is unlawful.

Deer season regulations: Antler point restrictions vary by WMU. In most WMUs, a buck with three points to a side, counting the brow tine, is legal to harvest. But in WMUs 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B and 2D, a buck must have three points not counting the brow tine.

Junior license holders, mentored youth, disabled hunters with a permit to use a vehicle, and resident active-duty U.S. Armed Services

personnel, can harvest antlered deer with two or more points on one antler, or a spike 3 or more inches in length.

For a complete breakdown of antler restrictions, WMU boundaries and other regulations, consult the 2024-25 Pennsylvania Hunting & Trapping Digest, which is provided to hunters and available online at the Game Commission's website, www.pgc.pa.gov.

Deer hunters everywhere statewide must wear at all times a minimum of 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on their head, chest and back combined, visible from 360 degrees, during the firearms deer season. An orange hat and vest will satisfy the requirement.

Nonhunters who might be afield during deer season and other hunting seasons should consider wearing orange, as well. And on state game lands between Nov. 15 and Dec. 15, nonhunters are required

to meet the 250-square-inch fluorescent orange requirement.

Hunters who harvest a deer are required to affix a valid tag to the ear – not an antler – before the deer is moved. Hunters can use a large safety pin to attach the tag, as it won't damage the ear. The tag must be filled out with ballpoint pen.

Hunters must then report their harvests to the Game Commission within 10 days. Harvests can be reported online at www.huntfish.pa.gov, by calling 1-800-838-4431 or by mailing in the postage-paid cards that are provided in the digest.

Mentored youth hunters are required to report deer harvests within five days. Hunters with DMAP permits must report on their hunting success within 10 days of the last possible date of harvest, regardless of whether they harvest deer.

Chronic Wasting Disease: Controlling Chronic Wasting Di-

sease (CWD), an always-fatal disease affecting deer and other members of the deer family, is critical to the future of deer and deer hunting. So preventing the human-assisted spread of the disease is important.

With that in mind, hunters need to know that if they harvest a deer within a Disease Management Area (DMA) or the Established Area (EA), they can take it directly to any Game Commission-approved processor or taxidermist anywhere in the state. The processor or taxidermist will dispose of high-risk parts properly. The list of cooperators is available on the agency website, www.pgc.pa.gov.

Proper disposal helps prevent CWD's spread to new areas and enhances CWD surveillance, as cooperators must allow Game Commission staff to do biological sampling, such as CWD sample collection and deer aging.

Hunters cannot take a

deer from a DMA or the EA and process it themselves outside the DMA or EA. Nor can hunters place any high-risk cervid parts from deer harvested within a DMA or EA on the landscape away from the harvest site.

Just remember one thing: there are, across Pennsylvania, fewer butchers handling deer than in years past. Some get all that they can handle quickly, too, especially around opening day.

So it's a good idea for all hunters – and especially those removing a deer from a DMA or the EA – to call ahead and make sure your processor of choice is open and accepting white-tails.

And once again, hunters who harvest a deer in a DMA or the EA can get it tested for CWD for free by placing the animal's head in one of many collection bins, the locations of which are identified on the Game Commission website.

Test results can then be checked at the Game Commission's CWD dashboard, <https://pgc-datacollection.pa.gov/CWDResultsLookup>.

Extended bear season: Hunters can harvest a black bear in some WMUs within deer season.

The extended bear season opens Nov. 30, and continues on Sunday, Dec. 1, then Dec. 2-7 in WMUs 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C, 4E and 5A. The season also is held in WMUs 2B, 5B, 5C and 5D, where it opens Nov. 30, continues on Sunday, Dec. 1, then Dec. 2-14, excluding Sunday, Dec. 8.

Hunters are allowed one bear per year.

To participate in the extended bear season, a hunter needs a general hunting license, as well as a bear license. Properly licensed hunters may also harvest deer.

Fluorescent orange requirements for the extended bear season and firearms deer season are identical.



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Governor Shapiro Signs Proclamation Of Disaster Emergency, Mobilizes State Resources To Aid In Lake-Effect Snow Response Efforts In Northwest Pennsylvania



Governor Josh Shapiro signed a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency (opens in a new tab) to make additional resources, including the PA National Guard (PANG), available to support response efforts after a significant weather system triggered several feet of lake-effect snow in northwestern Pennsylvania.

“Our teams at PEMA, the Pennsylvania State Police, and PennDOT have been on the ground overnight to help their fellow Pennsylvanians as the impacts of heavy lake-effect snow hit Erie County. At the county’s request, I’ve called in the Pennsylvania National Guard – who are now on the ground – to help any stranded drivers and make sure emergency responders can get to folks who need them,” said Governor Shapiro. “As we continue working with local leaders in Erie County to get

trucks and cars moved off roads, I’ve also signed a disaster declaration for Erie County to send all necessary resources to the area. Stay off the roads if you can, be safe, and follow instructions from PEMA and your local authorities.”

The Governor’s disaster declaration will allow the Commonwealth to quickly draw down funding and provide state agencies with the resources needed to assist counties and municipalities as they continue with ongoing response efforts.

“This storm doesn’t limit its impact only to Pennsylvania and we’re working with partners in New York to coordinate our response and our plans to reopen highways as soon as we can,” said Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) Director Randy Padfield. “We have deployed personnel

from PEMA and multiple Commonwealth agencies to work with Erie County Emergency Management to ensure that we have a thorough understanding of the situation and their needs during this storm.”

More than a dozen PANG members have been placed on state active duty to assist with needs related to the snow. They are working directly with the Erie County Emergency Operations Center to deploy high clearance vehicles to assist with rescuing stranded motorists and moving vehicles.

The Pennsylvania State Police responded to nearly 200 incidents during the 24-hour period from 6 a.m. on Nov. 29 to 6 a.m. today.

After a break in the snow today, more lake-effect snow is expected Sunday into Monday night. Everyone who is able to stay off

the roads should do so. With additional snowfall accumulation expected, motorists should expect to encounter difficult travel conditions and should prepare accordingly before heading out:

- Assume it will take longer to arrive at your destination and plan extra travel time;
- Have multiple ways to get weather alerts;
- Pay attention for rapidly changing conditions;

- Leave extra space between you and other vehicles; and

- Have food, water, warm clothing or blankets and any specialized items you may need such as medications or baby and pet supplies.

While PennDOT recommends not traveling during winter storms, motorists can check conditions on more than 40,000 roadway miles, including color-coded winter conditions on

2,900 miles, by visiting www.511PA.com (opens in a new tab). 511PA, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information and access to more than 1,000 traffic cameras. 511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by following regional X alerts at [511pa.com/twitter](https://twitter.com/511pa)

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ICYMI: DEP Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley Touts Shapiro Administration's Commitment to Permit Modernization and Environmental Protection in New Op-Ed

Recently in PennLive, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley praised Governor Josh Shapiro's commitment to ensuring Pennsylvania operates at the speed of 21st century business by modernizing the state's permitting process while remaining steadfast in his belief in the DEP's responsibility to protect public health and safety. Programs like the new Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED) Program, P-Back, and the new PA Permit Fast Track program are keeping Penn-

sylvania moving at the speed of business.

Read Secretary Shirley's full opinion in PennLive here; excerpts below:

Protecting public health means enforcing environmental regulations while helping businesses thrive.

By DEP Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley, 11/20/24

Business moves fast in the 21st century. As Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), I know that our permits can make or break a project or a business seeking to operate in Pennsylvania. Like-

wise, the people of Pennsylvania rely on DEP to protect public health and safety by enforcing our environmental laws and regulations.

Balancing these important roles of protecting the public while enabling businesses to expand and thrive is our constant mission, and while DEP has faced challenges at times – often due to a lack of resources and staff – I'm proud to report that the Shapiro Administration is making real progress at improving our permitting processes. DEP, alongside the Governor's Office of Transformation and Opportunity, is ma-

king enormous strides in reviewing more than 45,000 permits every single year, all while maintaining the levels of environmental and public health protection that Pennsylvanians expect and deserve.

Under the leadership of Gov. Josh Shapiro, we are looking at ways to improve our processes. We've heard from applicants who want to know more about the review of their application, and what to expect. And we've also heard from residents who want to know more about proposed development located near where they live, work, and go to school.

DEP is also working to reduce the permit application backlog and modernize our permitting processes. Since hiring additional staff members and cataloging and reviewing DEP's nearly 800 available types of permits, DEP has reduced the backlog by nearly 1,750 permits – that's a 75 percent reduction – as of November 15, 2024.

DEP will continue to get stuff done for Pennsylvanians. That means getting permits done for businesses while ensuring that development meets or exceeds environmental safeguards. It also means keeping residents and communi-

ties engaged, ensuring that regulatory red tape isn't getting in the way of economic development. We are committed to going further, faster, so Pennsylvanians can expect permits and protection, and receive both promptly.

For the department's 2,800 environmental professionals, DEP will Deliver on Every Promise when it comes to permits and protection.

For more information, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's website, or follow DEP on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, or LinkedIn.

Topper: Statewide Assessment Scores Show Need for Transformational Change in Education

Incoming Pennsylvania House Republican Leader Jesse Topper (R-Bedford/Fulton) said Wednesday the recent statewide assessment results from the Pennsylvania Department of Education show transformational change is

needed in Pennsylvania's system of education to achieve meaningful improvement.

"While the statewide assessment scores released by the Pennsylvania Department of Education show some areas of improvement, it is

clear we are still lagging behind our pre-COVID achievement scores and Pennsylvania students are continuing to learn at a deficit compared to their predecessors," Topper said.

According to the just-released statewi-

de assessment scores, Pennsylvania students incrementally improved in math and science proficiency, while continuing to fall behind in English language arts.

"If we are to expect tangible change in outcomes, we must have

transformational change in our system of education. It is clear unfocused budgetary and legislative education priorities in state government are not benefitting Pennsylvania's children in the classroom," Topper continued.

"I look forward

to continuing to work across the aisle and with the Shapiro administration to find common ground on shared goals that can advance the kind of transformative change in our education system our students so desperately need."



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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary!



Mary E. Stone
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Hello, fellow readers,
We stumbled upon a stack of plastic tubing while walking the Paulinskill Rail Trail over the weekend. I was delighted to see the tubes as the trees they were protecting looked like they had outgrown them, inspiring a revisit of a story years ago, in January of 2016, to be precise.

A friend stumped me when he asked what the plastic "thingies" were along routes 80 and 94. They looked like tree tubes, but you couldn't see any signs of trees. I thought they may be part of a Superfund cleanup to vent toxic gas. In years past, industry waste was routinely dumped along rivers or open spaces. Congress initiated the Superfund program in 1980, and tons of cleanup is ongoing.

I reached out to my go-to mystery solver of all things in nature, Dennis Briede, Stewardship Manager of the Land Conservancy in New Jersey, who confirmed they were tree tubes. The Nature Conservancy planted trees and shrubs along the

Paulinskill River. "There are very small trees inside the tubes to protect them from rodents," Dennis said. Mice and moles feed on the bark, especially in winter, and can kill a tree. And, of course, deer browse and deer rub can, too.

I asked if he knew what species they planted along the low-lying areas that often flood. Mr. Speedy contacted The Nature Conservancy and learned they received a large grant from the Dodge Foundation "to help restore the open bottomlands next to the Paulinskill River."

Yellow Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) is in the lineup – a native species with bright gold fall color. While rarely seen at nurseries, it's worth scouting for the beautiful tree with yellow-brown or red-brown bark. Wintergreen oil is distilled from Yellow Birch, which is likely why deer favor it.

They also planted River Birch (*Betula nigra*), which I often recommend for its magnificent salmon-colored peeling bark, glorious yellow fall color, and deer resistance.

There's Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*), one of the fastest-growing oaks, and Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*), which tolerates wet soil and occasional flooding, as does Ironwood also known as American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*). There's Black Willow (*Salix nigra*) that deer stay clear of. And Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) sporting brilliant red foliage come



fall.

American Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), with glossy star-shaped leaves, has a glorious mix of fall colors. Of course, American Sycamore also known as Planetree (*Platanus occidentalis*), is in the lineup known for handling wet feet and striking camouflage mottled trunks.

Nature Conservancy's website reports planting more than 37,500 trees to date, many dug in by volunteers, to reforest ten miles of the floodplains to help filter water, absorb floodwater, lessen sediment runoff, and shade the riverbank to cool the water for fish.

Along with other activities such as removing dams—more than 2,000 of them—disrupt fish migration and water flow, altering the health of entire river systems," the conservancy is working with the New

Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority - Wallkill River Watershed Management Group, along with local organizations and private and public supporters, to revitalize the more than 40-miles of the Paulinskill.

They are measuring populations of dragonflies and their shorter, thinner look-alikes damselflies, and freshwater mussels to serve as a baseline to monitor outcomes and perhaps modify restoration projects over time. I adore their philosophy that "together, we can secure clean water for all people without sacrificing the environment."

And now, the baby trees are outgrowing their tubes—a beautiful thing.

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This Family's Pediatric Experience Went "Above and Beyond" the Textbook

It's the trip no parent wants to make: A frantic car ride to the hospital with an inconsolable child who clearly has broken something.

That was Warren Shotto and his 4-year-old daughter, Charlie, this past summer, and he thought if he could just get her to the emergency room, everything would soon be better – but that's not exactly how it worked out.

After a sliding accident this past summer, Shotto, of Dunmore, Pa., rushed his young

daughter to the ER at an area hospital where they experienced one disappointment and frustration after another. Shotto said the team of providers at the ER barely communicated with him and failed to directly address his distressed daughter. After trying and failing to force feed her liquid ibuprofen, they told him to go home and get powdered Tylenol. They let hours pass before stabilizing Charlie's multiple fractures.

And then, when Char-



lie was finally discharged some nine hours later, they waited for a follow-up call from an orthopedist that never came. In the end, Charlie, who had two fractures in her lower

leg, would have to wait a week in a temporary splint before seeing a specialist.

That's when Shotto decided to seek care elsewhere. He turned to St. Luke's University

Health Network, and suddenly everything got way better. He requested an appointment with pediatric orthopedist Nicolas Grimm, D.O., and he met with him the very next morning in Bethlehem, about an hour away.

"The difference was palpable," Shotto said, from the moment he and Charlie drove into the parking lot. "The valet greeted us and escorted us in. The volunteer smiled, said hello and asked if we needed help. Down the hall, the telephone operator greeted us. Every person we encountered on our way to the doctor's office was incredible."

When patients experience that kind of can-do and can-help attitude with every person they encounter, it "speaks volumes about the culture of St. Luke's," Shotto said.

It was 59 minutes from the time Shotto parked to the time Charlie was on her way out in a cast. And she didn't fuss at all.

Dr. Grimm, who also practices in Stroudsburg, offered to follow up with Charlie at that

office, 30 minutes closer to the Shottos.

Shotto has little doubt that the initial experience at the first hospital will hold a negative space in Charlie's memory—days after the accident she refused to let her dentist touch her. But the experience she had with Dr. Grimm and the St. Luke's care team will also have a lasting impact, a positive one.

He credits the exceptional care of St. Luke's Children's Hospital, which offers a wide variety of pediatric specialists such as Dr. Grimm.

"The contrast between the two experiences was... One was completely textbook of what not to do, and the other was above and beyond the textbook of how to make patients happy," he said.

Over the course of Charlie's 10-week treatment with Grimm, she became more and more comfortable and happy with the care team. After Charlie was healed up and all done with her treatment at St. Luke's Children's Hospital, Shotto said, she "was sad to know she wasn't going back!"



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Fully Licensed & Insured

SEPTIC SERVICE

YESKA
SEPTIC SERVICE

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Call Henry Today!

Septic Tank
Pumping & Repairs

TILE WORK

Vicario's
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Ceramic · Marble · Laminate
Wood Floors · VCT Tile
Countertops · Floors · Walls

Bathroom & Kitchen Remodeling

INSURED FREE ESTIMATES

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610-588-1620

TREE SERVICE

Hawk Mountain
Tree Service

570-807-7746

Serving the State Belt, Blairstown,
Sussex & Warren Counties

Tree Trimming/Removal
Stump Grinding · Firewood
60' Bucket Truck · Lot Clearing
Brush Chipping

Fully Insured Free Estimates

Classifieds

Help Wanted

Tree Company Seeks, FT, Worker. Must Have Valid DL. jensentreeexperts@gmail.com or call 908-459-4005 Warren & Morris Co., NJ TS

Siding, Roofer, and Window Installer. Experienced only. Must have drivers license. Work available immediately. Call Comunale Construction at 610-588-6715 TS

Caregivers Needed. Weekends & Nights Some Lifting Required Call 610-588-6000 TS

Help Wanted Must Have Taken CDL Endorsment Class A or B Benefits Offered & Vacation Time Apply by Calling 610-759-3290

CDL & LABORERS WANTED

Henry Yeska & Son Septic Service Hiring CDL Drivers Class A & B and Laborers. Full time & part time available. Experience preferred but not required. Will train on the job. Please call the office at 610-759-3290. TS

Saturday & Day Shift Servers Wanted At Hunter's Lodge in New Jersey Please Call 610-888-6613

NOW HIRING FOR 2024 SEASON! Ground Men, Climbers & CDL Drivers Needed Call Us at 570-807-7746

Part Time Tree Helper

Wanted! Must Have Valid DL. Call 610-588-1034 TS

Looking for an Experienced Sewing Person Needed for Creative Private Label. High Fashion, Custom Clothing Studio. Part Time in Blairstown, NJ. Call Julia at 610-573-8313 or email: julia.robin.rutherford@gmail.com

NOW HIRING Bartender/ Server at The Fountain House in Fredon, NJ, Immediate Hire. Call Today: 484-988-0969

Firewood

Firewood for Sale. \$120 pick up truck load. Call Craig Wickett at 610-599-6882. Pick Up Only No Delivery!

FIREWOOD Cut-Split-Delivered \$210 a Cord 570-202-6902

Firewood for Sale. Mixed Seasoned Hardwoods. \$450 per dump truck load. approx. 1 3/4 cord. Free delivery within 10mi radius. Call Craig Wickett at 610-599-6882 or 610-442-2996.

Seasoned Firewood \$190/cord \$95/half cord 570-202-6902

Firewood for sale \$200 a cord All different sizes 14, 16 or 18 inches long. Call 610-588-7513

Rentals

Office/Retail Space for Rent Heat, AC, Water, Sewer, & Garbage Included. \$550/mo. William St., Pen Argyl. Call 484-330-0093

10 x 20 Garage for Rent! Electric Overhead Door w/ Concrete Floor. \$125/mo. William St., Pen Argyl. Call 484-330-0093

Buying

I BUY JEWELRY & STERLING FLATWARE!
JEWELRY: GOLD, SILVER, COSTUME & VINTAGE
THE BEST PRICES PAID IN CASH!
I can come to you, or we can meet
Call Kolleen: 973-459-0725
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Offering, But Not Limited To:

- Bluestone & Paver Walkways & Patios •
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- Water Gardens •
- Landscape Design & Installation •
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Your Eco-Friendly Landscaper

Classified Ad Order Form

Non-commercial classified ads (Misc., Vehicles, Recreation, Wanted, Pets, Yard Sales) are \$5 per week, per inch (1.8" W x 1" H). There is no charge for Free items. Services, Rentals, Real Estate, Homes For Sale and Help Wanted ads are \$15 per week, per inch. Please specify the category in which your ad should appear, the size your ad should be (boxes on right), and how many weeks your ad will run. Please PRINT ad information.

Ads with Photos! \$18

NAME: _____
PHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CATEGORY: _____

One inch (actual size shown here)

WEEKS RUNNING: _____ AMOUNT PAID: _____
Please PRINT Your Ad Information Below

Two inches (actual size shown here)

CLASSIFIEDS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN NOON ON FRIDAY IN ORDER TO BE PRINTED IN THE UPCOMING EDITION.
All classified ads must be paid in full, in advance. Credit cards are NOT accepted for charges less than \$25. Classifieds may be submitted by mail PO BOX 606, Bangor, PA 18013 email: thepressads@gmail.com or fax: 610-599-1185. Classifieds are NOT accepted by phone. Help Wanted ads are free for current advertisers.
Make Checks Payable to: The Free Weekly Press, LLC

Eat In or Take Out

Emiliano's Pizzeria

610-588-3299

New Hours - Open 7 Days A Week - 11am to 10pm!

Monday & Wednesday Specials

2 Large Cheese Pizzas \$23.99+ tax	3 Steak Sandwiches for \$26.99 (add Cheese for 50 cents)	3 Italia Hoagies for \$26.99	1 Lg. Cheese Pizza, 12 wings & a 2 Liter of Soda for \$29.99
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We Deliver on Door Dash & Slice
Gift Certificates Available
VISA MasterCard Find Us on Facebook
1436 Bangor Rd., Pen Argyl (RT. 191)



WINTER HOURS: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, Sat 9am-4pm, Sun 9am-3pm

Proudly Stocking



We Carry All Horse, Chicken, Sheep, Rabbit, Pig, & Goat Feed From: Albright's Mill, Buckeye Nutrition, Kalmbach, And Purina

- Kleins Raw Milk And Cheeses
- Heinsohn Honey - 1lb, 2lb, 5lb Jars
- Hop A Long Farms Grass Fed Beef
- Italian Pastas
- We Also Carry Chicken, Turkey & Pork
- Watergap Coffee - All The Specialty Flavors
Whole Bean • Decaf • Regular Ground

**ALL OF THIS PLUS:
Eggs & Produce!
Stop By For Your
One Stop Shop!**



**STOP IN FOR FRESH
BAKED GOODS**



Wines From Tolino Vineyards

**Now Taking Pie Orders for Thanksgiving
Pies **MUST** be ordered by **November 20th!****

- 50lb Bags of Shell Corn - \$11**
- 25lb Black Oil Sunflower Seeds - \$15.95**
- We Sell Hay & Straw! Rye & Wheat**



Why Did The Chicken Cross The Road?
To Try Our Very Own CHICKEN FEED!
Made From Our Own Corn With Black Oil Sunflower Seeds Added
\$16.95

Stock Up on Barefoot Woodpellets By The Bag or By the Ton!

\$370/Ton

FREE Grinch Photos!

November 30th: 11am- 2pm
December 7th: 11am- 2pm
December 14th: 11am- 2pm
December 21st: 11am- 2pm

Pets are welcome on a leash!

Toy Donations will be accepted for the Slater Family Network Foundation

Cindy Lou Who will also be on site!

96 Mt Bethel Hwy Bangor, PA 18013