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January 15, 2025

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Charles Muller Celebrates 101st Birthday



Charles Muller celebrated his 101st birthday on January 12th, with health and joy, surrounded by his family, including his wife, Frances (age 99).

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority Seeks Public Input on the Future of Transportation



How do you see yourself getting around in the future? Would you consider driving an electric vehicle or riding in a self-driving car or shuttle? Are there regional transportation projects that you want prioritized for funding?

These are some of the questions the public will be asked as Warren County works with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) on the region's next long range transportation plan, Connecting Communities. The plan will detail new programs and recommend policies and transportation investments for the next 25 years, including projects in Warren County.

The NJTPA region includes 13 counties in northern and central New Jersey and is home to 7 million people, with the population expected to hit 7.8 million in 2050. The NJTPA works with local partners and state agencies to provide more than \$3 billion in transportation investments annually. In order for the region to be eligible to receive federal transportation funds for programs and projects, the NJTPA must adopt a long-range transportation plan every four years. "This plan will set a vision for the future of transportation in North Jersey and help prioritize regionally significant projects," said Warren

County Commissioner Director Jason J. Sarnoski, who serves as Second Vice Chair of the NJTPA Board of Trustees. "I hope Warren County residents will complete the survey and participate in events and share their ideas about transportation with the NJTPA to ensure Connecting Communities meets the needs of our municipalities."

The NJTPA has approved funding for several projects in Warren County, including the Complete Streets Policy Implementation Plan, which is underway, and will develop strategies for rural and small-town roads that enable safe *NJSEEKS cont'd on pg 3*

New Bowfin Record Recorded For New Jersey



Frank Hubert caught the new New Jersey state record Bowfin in Mantua Creek on December 17, 2024. The fish weighed 12 pounds, 10-ounces, replacing Pierce Dopkin's 11-pound, 8.5-ounce record from 2017, which was caught in the same creek. Frank was casting from a kayak when the fish hit. He was using a Sixgill spinning rod with a Shimano spinning reel loaded with 30-pound test Snakehead Outlawz braided line when the fish hit. Frank was using a Snakehead Outlawz Dragon Destroyer as the lure for this new record bowfin.

Slate Belt Heritage Center Holds Monthly Historic Program on Flory's Dam



The Slate Belt Heritage Center will hold their monthly historic program on Sunday, February 9th at 2:00 PM. Speaker for the afternoon will be Mr. Larry Cory who will do a presentation on the former Flory's Dam. Once located on North Main Street, Flory's Dam was a popular place for winter spots like ice skating and hockey during the first half of the century. It was also the site of the first Bangor Park where football, baseball and softball were played in addition to swimming and fishing. Come and hear about the famous "Ice Bowl" played by Bangor & Pen Argyl and other interesting stories. Flory's Dam is named after Bangor industrialist Solomon Flory. The event is free and open to the public. The Center is located at 30 North 1st Street, Bangor, PA. For additional information please contact: Karen Brewer at 484-894-5661.

New in the Bangor Public Library

(January 3, 2025 to January 9, 2025)

Adult Fiction: All fours: a novel by Miranda July 1974; Where the creek bends: a novel by Linda Lael Miller; Blood over bright haven: a novel by M.L. Wang (Maya Lin).

Adult Non Fiction: Sisters in science: how four women physicists escaped Nazi Germany and made scientific history by Olivia Campbell; The cure for women: Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi and the challenge to Victorian medicine that changed women's lives forever by Lydia Reeder

Junior Fiction: The dragons of Blueland by Ruth Stiles Gannett; My father's dragon by Ruth Stiles Gannett

Junior Non Fiction: Voting: a kid's guide by Nel Yomtov; The science spell book: magical experiments for kids by Cara Florance; Rocks, minerals & gems by Sean Callery; Edible crafts kid's cookbook: ages 4-8: 25 fun projects to make and eat! by Charity Matthews; Upcycle it! Crafts for kids: fun and useful projects to recycle and reimagine by Jennifer Perkins; 52 DIY crafts for girls: pretty projects you were

made to create! By Whitney Wood (Craftsperson); Who is Julius Caesar? By Nico Medina 1982; Who is Charles Darwin? By Deborah Hopkinson; Who is Galileo? By Patricia Demuth; Who was Henry VIII? By Ellen Labrecque; Who is Milton Hershey? By James Buckley Jr 1963; Who is LeBron James? By Crystal Hubbard; Who is J.K. Rowling? By Pam Pollack; Who is R.L. Stine? By M.D. Payne (Matthew D.) 1978-; Who is Queen Victoria? By Jim Gigliotti; Where is the Great Wall? By Patricia Demuth; Where is the Colosseum? By Jim O'Connor; A visitor's guide to ancient Greece: based on the travels of Aristoboulos of Athens by Lesley Sims; Where is the Vatican? By Megan Stine; Where is the Kremlin? By Deborah Hopkinson; Where is the Taj Mahal? By Dorothy Hoobler; Where is Niagara Falls? By Megan Stine; Where is Mount Rushmore? By True Kelley; Where is Yellowstone? By Sarah Fabiny; Where is Machu Picchu? By Megan Stine

Young Adult Fiction: Our fault by Mercedes Ron 1993-

Project Self-Sufficiency Programs Educate Public, Support Trauma Survivors, Promote Prevention - Virtual Presentations Offered in English and Spanish

Project Self-Sufficiency will offer three workshops during January and February regarding adverse childhood experiences with the goal of educating the public, supporting trauma survivors, and offering tips for prevention and healing within the community. A virtual "Understanding ACEs: Building Self-Healing Communities" presentation on Wednesday, January 29th, 2:00 p.m., will address the neurological and biological effects of adversity on development and its corresponding impact on the health of the overall population. The workshop and discussion series, "Connections Matter", which facilitates the conversation about issues surrounding childhood trauma, will be offered virtually in English, Tuesday, February 11th, 2:00 p.m., and in Spanish, Wednesday, February 12th, 2:00 p.m. Tips for protection, prevention, and promoting resilience within the community will also be discussed. All workshops are free and open to the public; interested participants



are invited to call 973-940-3500 to receive log-in details.

During the Understanding ACEs workshop, parents, caregivers, and other community providers will learn how childhood trauma impacts physical and neurological development and discuss methods for improving health and well-being across the lifespan.

The Connections Matter curriculum invites providers, parents, and community members to build caring connections to improve resiliency. Discussion during the workshops will focus on understanding adverse childhood experiences and demonstrating how caring connections can serve as a primary buffer in the negative effects of trauma. The training is appropriate for parents and providers raising and teaching school aged children. All three workshops are funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families and led by Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey.

Speakers will address the impact of adverse childhood experiences on social, emotional, and cognitive development, and offer tips and strategies for building resilience. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are widely recognized as falling into three distinct categories, abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. Examples of negative behavior said to result from ACEs include smoking, alcoholism, drug use, absenteeism, and lack of physical activity. These behaviors can cause a cascade of physical and mental health problems, from diabetes to cancer to suicidal thoughts. It is estimated that approximately 67% of the population has experienced at least one adverse childhood experience.

Project Self-Sufficiency is bringing together

professionals, providers, and parents who are committed to increasing awareness of the impact of childhood trauma on juvenile development, future violence victimization and perpetration, and lifelong health and opportunity. "Our goal is to help make our community a place in which every child can thrive by providing education and training on adverse childhood experiences and assuring safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments," explains Project Self-Sufficiency Executive Director Deborah Berry-Toon. "Protection, prevention, and resilience promotion can profoundly improve health according to recent discoveries in neuroscience, epigenetics, and epidemiology. The tools identified in these workshops can positively impact public health, safety, and productivity, and reduce public and private costs now and for future generations."

Project Self-Sufficiency has assisted low-income individuals and families in northwestern New Jersey since 1986. Services offered at Project Self-Sufficiency include high school equivalency education, computer courses, employment skills training, job placement services, support groups, parenting classes, childcare and preschool, legal assistance and education, counseling and advocacy, referrals, and help with emergency basic needs, like food and clothing. For more information about the programs and services offered by Project Self-Sufficiency, visit www.projectsselfsufficiency.org or call 973-940-3500.

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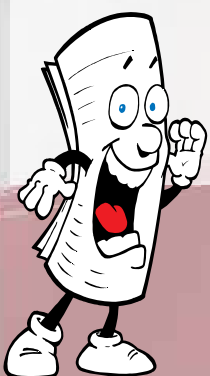
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NJ SEEKS

Continued from page 1

access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, trucks and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Warren County currently is working with the NJTPA to develop a Local Safety Action Plan, which will identify strategies for improving safety across the county. The NJTPA also funded the Warren County Transportation Plan, which was completed in 2021 and identifies transportation projects and phases to implement them. In November, the NJTPA Board approved \$1.5 million for a Morris Canal Greenway trail improvement project in the Lopatcong Creek Area in Greenwich Township. The Board also previously approved nearly \$1.4 million for the Phillipsburg Riverfront Heritage Trail project in 2023.

Public input plays a critical role in the plan. The feedback the NJTPA gathers through an online survey and events will be considered and incorporated into the plan, which the NJTPA Board of Trustees is expected to adopt in September. Everyone who lives in the NJTPA region is encouraged to participate.

The survey launched today and is available in six languages – English, Spanish, Portuguese, Hindi, Chinese and Korean. Virtual public outreach will begin later this month with a Let's Talk Transportation event on January 28 at 11:30 a.m. focused on creating a safe biking and walking

transportation network. The NJTPA will also be conducting pop-up outreach at events throughout the region this spring. To share your ideas, interests, and concerns about the future of transportation in northern and central New Jersey, please take the NJTPA's brief survey and sign up for virtual events at the Connecting Communities website: njtpa.org/connecting.

The NJTPA is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for 13 northern New Jersey counties. Under federal legislation, MPOs provide a forum where local officials, public transportation providers and state agency representatives can come together and cooperatively plan to meet the region's current and future transportation needs. It establishes the region's eligibility to receive federal tax dollars for transportation projects.

The NJTPA Board consists of one local elected official from each of the 13 counties in the region (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren), and the cities of Newark and Jersey City. The Board also includes a Governor's Representative, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the Executive Director of NJ Transit, the Deputy Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and a Citizen's Representative appointed by the Governor.

Murphy's Reduced Shooting Stats Miss The Mark: Armed, Law-Abiding New Jerseyans Are Changing The Game On Concealed Carry

Governor Murphy's recent announcement touting a reduction in shooting victims in New Jersey for 2024 conveniently ignored one critical factor: the landmark 2022 Bruen decision, which empowered law-abiding citizens to carry concealed firearms for self-defense.

Senator Parker Space and Assembly Members Dawn Fantasia and Michael Inganamort are calling out this glaring omission, crediting the decision for enabling New Jersey residents to take their safety into their own hands.

"For years, liberals warned us that allowing concealed carry in New Jersey would lead to chaos and violence—the so-called 'Wild West,'" said Senator Space (R-24), who has held concealed carry licenses in multiple states. "The reality is clear: giving law-abiding citizens the ability to defend themselves has not only failed to increase shootings but may actually be helping reduce them. The proof is staring us all in the face."

The 2022 Bruen decision by the U.S. Supreme Court recognized the constitutional right of law-abiding Americans to carry firearms outside their homes and imposed a higher standard for courts to evaluate firearm regulations. Since this decision, concealed carry permits in New

Jersey have surged, empowering responsible gun owners and sending a clear message to criminals.

"New Jersey residents have sent a loud and clear message to criminals: they will not be victims," said Assemblywoman Fantasia (R-24), a gun owner and staunch Second Amendment supporter. "These perpetrators are starting to think twice, knowing that their next carjacking attempt might be their last."

Since Bruen, multiple court challenges have been filed to dismantle New Jersey's restrictive firearms laws. Senator Space, Assemblywoman Fantasia, and Assemblyman Inganamort have worked closely with advocates and plaintiffs in these cases, offering assistance and standing firmly against further oppressive legislation.

"We are fighting to ensure New Jersey citizens can fully exercise their constitutional rights, just like most Americans across the country," said Assemblyman Inganamort (R-24), a longtime Second Amendment advocate and gun owner. "With the Constitution—and decisions like Heller, McDonald, and Bruen—on our side, it's only a matter of time before these oppressive laws are overturned. Until then, Parker, Dawn, and I remain vigilant in defending the rights of lawful gun owners and



opposing any further attempts to erode our freedoms."

The Bruen decision has been a pivotal moment in the fight for Second Amendment rights, forcing states like New Jersey to reconsider uncon-

stitutional restrictions on firearm ownership. Despite the administration's attempts to downplay its impact, the evidence suggests that empowering responsible gun owners has contributed to a safer New Jersey.

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Kirin May with her parents, Anjanette and Sean, and sister Shaelin



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Influenza Suspected In Snow Goose Mortalities In PA



Avian influenza (AI) is suspected to have caused the deaths of about 200 snow geese found Monday in the greater Allentown area. Dead birds were recovered from two sites, one in Lower Nazareth Township in Northampton County and another in Upper Macungie Township in Lehigh County. Preliminary

in-state testing indicated the presence of highly pathogenic AI (HPAI). While results are yet to be confirmed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) at their National Veterinary Services Laboratories, HPAI is presumed to be the cause of these mortality events. The situation is ongoing as sick wild birds were also observed

at both locations. Those encountering other sick or dead wild birds can report them to the Pennsylvania Game Commission by calling 1-833-PGC-WILD (1-833-742-9453), by emailing pgc-wildlifehealth@pa.gov or by using the online Wildlife Health Survey tool. Any sick or dead domestic birds should be reported to Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at 717-772-2852. If you have had contact with sick or dead birds and are not feeling well, contact your primary care physician or the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 877-724-3258. Since the beginning of the U.S. outbreak in January 2022, HPAI has impacted wild and domestic birds in every state. Wild waterfowl and shorebirds are considered natural reservoirs

for avian influenza viruses. While infected birds may shed the virus in their feces and saliva despite appearing healthy, HPAI can lead to sickness or death in raptors (hawks, eagles), avian scavengers (crows, gulls, ravens), other waterfowl species (ducks, geese), and wild poultry (turkey, grouse). Clinical signs of infection in wild birds are often non-specific but may include neurologic dysfunction such as circling, head tilting, and difficulty flying. HPAI is particularly contagious and lethal to domestic poultry. HPAI does not appear to significantly impacted wild bird populations; however, it does have the potential to significantly affect the commercial poultry industry and international trade. The Game Commission continues to work with the Pennsylvania De-

partment of Agriculture, the USDA, the Wildlife Futures Program at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, and the Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Laboratory System to monitor for HPAI in wild and domestic bird populations throughout the Commonwealth. Any additional HPAI detections will be reported by the USDA on its website. Because avian influenza viruses are naturally occurring and ever-present in wild birds, preventing or controlling HPAI in wild populations is not feasible. However, safeguards can be taken to protect domestic birds or wild birds held in captivity. Owners should always prevent contact between their birds and wild birds to prevent the spread of disease. Pennsylvanians who care for captive wild birds, domestic backyard poultry, or are involved in commercial poultry operations should review their biosecurity plans to protect their flocks. The USDA offers free biosecurity information on its website. While HPAI can potentially infect humans, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Preventi-

on has declared that the current HPAI outbreak is primarily an animal health issue that poses low risk to the health of the general public. Common sense practices will help reduce the risk that you or other humans/animals under your care get sick from wildlife. Always observe wildlife from a safe distance. Avoid contacting surfaces that may be contaminated with feces from wild or domestic birds. Do not handle wildlife unless you are hunting, trapping, or otherwise authorized to do so. Waterfowl hunters are encouraged to continue participating in the remaining season, but should take precautions while handling and dressing birds. These include wearing nitrile gloves, protective eye wear, and a mask. Following any hunt make a point to practice good hygiene, including washing hands and any clothing used in the process of dressing game that may contain blood or feces. Finally, never handle wildlife that is sick or displaying signs of sickness. Instead, report it to the Game Commission. More information about Avian Influenza is available through the Game Commission's website.

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Knowlton Township Fire and Rescue Holds Annual Installation Dinner



Knowlton Township Fire and Rescue held its annual Installation Dinner on January 11th, with many members, mutual aid companies, and guests in attendance. Chief Alex Weber was honored with an award for his three-year service as Chief. Firefighter Dominic Fiore received the Firefighter of the Year award, Firefighter Ed Sayre received a Life Service Award for 20 years of active membership, and Deputy Mayor James Mazza swore in the 2025 Line Officers. They are always looking for new members, stop by the Station any Monday night after 7:00 PM, send a message, call 908-475-4268, or visit knowltonfirerescue.com/join.

The Women's Club of Pen Argyl held their monthly meeting on January 7th. The project was making Valentine wreaths for the residents of Chandler. We welcome all women from the Pen Argyl/Wind Gap area to join us. Monthly meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month and are held at the Phoebe Home in Wind Gap.

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A Sunday Sermon From Yellow Frame Church, Newton, NJ

By Michael Nelms

Last Sunday I spoke about Sid Pinch. One of Sid's sons, Phillip, has a wife and two young children. They have a home on Roosevelt Avenue in Altadena, California. They are now living in temporary quarters having evacuated because of the fires. Last they knew, their house was still standing, but of the twenty-six families in their daughter's kindergarten class, twenty-one of those homes have been destroyed by fire. Phillip says his two young children are traumatized by what the flames they say and the smoke that inhaled as they evacuated their home, and that even if their home is still there, the damage done by such disasters is far more than material. Let us try imagining just how jarring and unsettling it would be as one of those now homeless families who, from whatever temporary living quarters they are in, get up this morning and make the effort to get to a church for some comfort and hope, and they arrive at the church to hear this assigned, fiery lectionary text read. Let us listen for the Word of God.

Scripture Reading: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

People's hopes began to rise, and they began to wonder whether John perhaps might be the Messiah. So John said to all of them, "I baptize you with water,

but someone is coming who is much greater than I am. I am not good enough even to untie his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. He has his winnowing shovel with him, to thresh out all the grain and gather the wheat into his barn; but he will burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out." After all the people had been baptized, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my own dear Son. I am pleased with you."

Edwin Childs, born in 1945, is a native of New Hampshire. He studied composition with Jack Goode at Wheaton College, IL (BM); and with Wayne Barlow, Warren Benson, and Samuel Adler at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester where he received his Ph.D. He has taught music theory and composition at Cairn University (PA), Biola University (CA), and is currently retired from teaching at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. His anthem the choir will sing is based on this poem by Emily Dickinson, one of only ten poems published in her brief lifetime of 56 years, this poem being published without her knowledge in 1858 when she was 28

years old. She would die in 1886, the year before the sanctuary in which you sit was built, and it was only after her death that the volume and brilliance of her writings were discovered, and she remains today among the greatest literary figures in American history.

Nobody knows this little Rose – It might a pilgrim be. Did I not take it from the ways and lift it up to thee. Only a Bee will miss it – Only a Butterfly, Hastening from far journey – On its breast to lie – Only a Bird will wonder – Only a Breeze will sigh – Ah Little Rose – how easy For such as thee to die!

"Poetry, Passion (from the Greek word, suffering), & Possibilities"

In Dickenson's poem, the narrator says no one is acquainted with her subject, a simple, small rose. She has plucked this little rose, which apparently was growing in the wild. The narrator ponders this little rose might be "a pilgrim" for it was growing away from other flower beds. She then rather casually asks someone, likely God, or Mother Nature, about her own act of plucking. Although formed as a question, the narrator reveals she plucked the little flower and then "offered it up to thee." It's sort of a confession, as the act of plucking the rose hastens the death of the rose.

She then imagines who

may have visited the rose. A solitary bee "will miss" the now plucked rose. But after saying "only" a bee will note the little rose is missing, she remembers that likely a "butterfly" will also note its absence. The butterfly will have traveled perhaps miles to rest upon the little rose's "breast." And the butterfly will have been hurrying to finish its "journey" that led it to the rose's abode. Now after it makes that hastened trip, it will be astonished, or perhaps frustrated, that the little flower has gone missing. She imagines others who will be missing the little rose, such as a bird may wonder what happened to the flower, and the last to notice the absence of the little rose is the "Breeze," which will "sigh" as it passes over the field that once held the sweet fragrance of the rose. Beyond these few characters in nature, no one will notice, no other human being in the world will notice.

In March 1999, after a lengthy illness and a couple of months of in-home hospice care, my father-in-law, Joseph Alvin Burd, died at age 67. His death occurred in the upstairs bedroom of the home they had owned on a residential street, Holly Street, in Cranford, New Jersey.

A residential street with one, lone place of business across the street from the house, a colonial brick building that was and is a

medical office building. After he breathed his last, I stepped away from the bed towards the bay window looking out towards Holly Street and towards the medical office building, and as I have described before, and I describe again now because so many of you can relate to the experience, I was utterly struck, in a disconcerting way, with how people continued going in and out of that medical building, how cars continued driving by on Holly Street, how the world continued to move on oblivious to what had just happened in the upstairs bedroom at 18 Holly Street. How is it possible that this death of such a beautiful, golden rose can be so utterly unnoticed by the world? You know

what I am describing, what Joan Didion brilliantly described in her 2005 National Book award winning and Pulitzer Prize finalist memoir, "The Year of Magical Thinking."

In Dickinson's poem, after such musings to herself and to the Creator to whom she has offered it, the narrator of the poem then addresses the rose, but all she can do is offer a simple, humble remark about how "easy" it is for a creature such as the "Little Rose" "to die!" "Ah Little Rose – how easy, For such as thee to die!" For me, the words of scripture through the prophet Isaiah in chapter 40:6-8 echo when we



hear: A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall...

Our Gospel reading begins with the words, "People's hopes began to rise," wondering if John might be the Messiah. Why look for a "Messiah" at all? Why believe in a "God," why offer a plucked rose to a "creator" or even a "mother nature?" Why is it not enough to simply look horizontally? Why do our human eyes seem easily averted upwards, beyond us, hoping, wishing, imagining, dreaming, fantasizing, magically thinking? For those whose hopes were rising in Luke chapter three it was because most things on the horizontal were difficult, depressing, harsh, and uncompromising. The one-percenters are not likely to look **CONT'D ON PAGE 9**

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Sunday Sermon Continued

upwards because they have everything they think they need right here in front of them. For those whose hopes began to rise, what they had in front of them was uncertainty, hardship, disasters, and grief. Surely there is something better, something more than the difficulties, worries, and the unnoticed deaths that come so easily and that surround us and envelope us. Those who are the most pressed by the unfairness and difficulty of life are the ones most prone to look beyond the ho-

horizontal. Those who have been plucked to death may only hope to be offered to something more. Edwin Child's took Dickens's rose and imaginatively turned that rose into the Christ child, musing how so few pilgrims noticed his beauty, missed his fragrance, mourned his absence. Edwin Child's continues a long history of other pilgrims from Mary and Joseph, from shepherds and magi, from clueless disciples and roman soldiers at the foot of the cross who saw and belie-

ved in something more than the horizontal, hopes rising vertically even if on a cross on Calvary's hill. Horizontally we can be overwhelmed by fires in Los Angeles, wars in Gaza and Ukraine, a cancer diagnosis, Alzheimer's and dementia, death of loved ones as well as our own often lonely, unnoticed by most of the world demise. Our hopes rise knowing we need more than water. We need a new and Holy Spirit and fire, but not a fire of destruction, rather a fire of refining so we may hear, with Jesus, the everlasting Word, that we are not pluc-

ked to obscurity and forgottenness but plucked to be offered and remembered and called, like Jesus, "God's beloved, in whom God is well pleased." We need more than mere water. We need more than mere bread to live. We need more than homes of concrete and wood and brick. We need more than political wins and losses. We need more than this horizontal world can ever give us. We need the everlasting Word of God. This is how the echoing words of Isaiah 40:6-8 end: A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, (yes) but the word of our God endures forever."

That enduring Word is the living Word in whom God is well-pleases and who speaks today to those whose way is a cross, "You are not a forgotten and insignificant rose, whether red, or yellow, or golden, or orange, rather, 'You are my beloved, in whom I am well pleased.'"

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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary!



Mary E. Stone
Stone Associates
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Hello, fellow readers,
The low humidity of the house has already caused stress on my indoor plants. The remedy of gathering rain from the gutters or using melted snow to give them a nitrogen boost when I water will help. The one African Violet I have remaining is the plant that sticks out in the worst shape. They say African Violets are easy to grow and bloom prolifically. How delighted I was when one of Mom's treasures first bloomed. Her dark green leaves have creamy white edges complimented by cream-colored flowers edged with pale green.

The variety is 'Frozen in Time,' which is fitting. While all flowers fade, our memories of our loved ones are forever frozen in time. Sadly, it seems I don't have a green thumb for the easy-to-grow. I clicked through the African Violet Society of America's website and learned you can ask an expert. And so, I wrote:
Hi there, African violet expert. I have only one violet left, a gift from a friend after my dear Mom passed. Emma Stone was a member of your society whose collection of African violets I adopted during her dementia journey. One by one, I lost them.
I'm giggling because a few of the fatalities involved my rescue, Jolee, now about four and a half. Soon after I adopted her, the only plants she messed with were leaf cuttings from Mom's 'Frozen in Time,' which I lovingly rooted in tiny clay pots Mom used to start new plants.
The first time I discovered Jolee's carnage of throwing the pots



to the floor, I thought my 5-month-old street dog from Biloxi was scouting for food, and Mom's cuttings were within reach. Thankfully, she didn't eat them, although, according to the ASPCA, they aren't toxic to dogs or cats. All the leaves and baby roots were intact, so I repotted the treasures.
Two days later, Jolee had her way again with the plants to no repair. I laughed until I cried, thinking Mom was part of the scene. I pictured her contagious chuckling augmenting to hilarious, happy te-

ars, too. It was a funny moment. Although I am sad, I lost the plants. Back to my last violet standing: Over time, I've removed the lower leaves as they declined, leaving me with a healthy top part of the plant (somewhat so anyway) but only a stalk for the lower part. I should mention that I am a garden designer and know a few things about plants, but I'm stumped.
I promptly heard back from Joyce Stork. "Dear Mary, your violet needs to be restarted. What I see in the photo

is typical of how African Violets occasionally age when a 'neck' develops. Surgery is necessary to rejuvenate the plant and bury the neck."
She shared a YouTube video - How to Repot a Long Neck and Cure Root Rot. I list the surgery steps at the end of the column post on AskMaryStone.com. But briefly, remove the leaves up to the top healthy center of the plant. Then, cut the stem to about an inch, trim the stem stubs, and plant it in fresh, damp African Violet potting mix.

Then, put the plant in a plastic bag, blow air into it, close it with a twist-tie, and place it near a window for one month. After which, open the bag for a day and then remove it, and your violet should be re-rooted and ready to grow.
"It looks terrifying to many growers. If it scares you, propagate several leaf cuttings out of reach of your beloved pup as insurance before you do the transplanting."
Joyce suggested using a smaller, four-inch shallow pot.
"Typically, African Violets bloom more freely in pots, about a third of the plant diameter. Happy growing!"
Thank you, Joyce. There is hope! And there are the cherished memories of my dear Mom and her love of African violets frozen in time.
Garden Dilemmas? AskMaryStone.com and your favorite Podcast App.
And I'll add Violet Dilemmas? Ask the African Violet Society of America.

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Project Self-Sufficiency will host a free, virtual Family Law seminar on Thursday, January 23rd, 7:00 p.m. featuring attorney Denise Wennogle. Participants will discuss child support, grounds for divorce, court procedures, alimony, parenting time, equitable distribution of assets, and other topics related to divorce. The presentation, which will be offered through Zoom, is free and open to the public; interested attendees should call Project Self-Sufficiency, 973-940-3500, for log-in details. The agency's legal seminar series is a program of the Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency and is funded by the New Jersey Department of Children & Families.

WBID's Operation Jersey Cares Drive Another Success Story For Our Troops

The 10th Annual Washington Business Improvement District's Operation Jersey Cares campaign, which began on Veteran's Day and continued into December, collected 95 boxes from area businesses that were filled-to-the-brim with items of need.

Throughout the years, the WBID drive has collected well over a thousand boxes of products from generous donations from businesses and the community at-large, not just in the Borough, but throughout the region.

"The Greater Community always rises to the occasion," said Melanie Thiel, Executive Director of the WBID. "Just amazing to see so many businesses and community members being a part of this effort on behalf of our troops."

For the second consecutive year Warren County Dental Center led the charge in the Operation Jersey Cares drive. When it comes to giving back to the community, Warren



County Dental Center is proving to be second to none and this year the group collected 16 boxes of items for our New Jersey men and women in uniform here and abroad.

Hairmazing right behind with 14 boxes. Gibsons Fitness Center, which has always been at the top or near the top every year since the inception of the drive, finished third this year with 10 boxes. Pasta Grill by Enzo filled nine boxes.

"It's a friendly competition but no matter who wins, or how many boxes an individual business

collects, the bottom line is that it is a team project with an important message for the people who keep us safe around the world," said Thiel.

The boxes were shipped to the Operation Jersey Cares headquarters in Flemington in early January with the help of Jeff Smith of Smith Tractor.

The list of items that were collected included toiletries including razors, toothbrushes, shampoo, shaving cream and female hygiene products, food such as snacks, peanut butter, canned meals

and soups, batteries, notebooks and pens and pencils.

The WBID's annual campaign is always among the state's top collectors for Operation Jersey Cares, which has recognized Washington numerous times.

For more information about other WBID initiatives and special events, visit www.washington-bid.org or call 908-689-4800. You can also check out the Washington BID Facebook page for a variety of Washington BID and Washington business news.

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Manahawkin Named NJ's WMA of the Month

The Manahawkin Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Stafford Township, Ocean County, is 1,790 acres of woodlands, fields and salt marsh. This WMA is one of the older Wildlife Management Areas, with acquisition beginning in 1933. Smooth and salt meadow cordgrasses dominate the salt marshes, while pitch-pine mixed with various deciduous tree species characterize the coastal forest.

Visit For:
Birding - Birds abound here with species of concern including pied-billed grebe, black skimmer, black rail, osprey, and black-crowned night heron. Manahawkin WMA is an important stopover for migrating land birds.

Fishing - The impounded area within the tract provides limited fishing for largemouth bass. Cedar Creek, accessible from Stafford Avenue, offers crabbing and fishing for white perch, snapper blues and eels. Car top launching is permitted.



Hunting - Manahawkin WMA is full of hunting opportunities for upland game, waterfowl, and deer. Cottontail rabbits, squirrels, and woodcock can be found here, and pheasants are stocked during the season. The WMA is within THA 14 for turkey hunters, and there's a growing deer herd in DMZ 51. Four ponds have been constructed on the tract which attract many species of waterfowl including black duck, mallard, widgeon, and teal. Some geese are also present early in the season.

Access: Hilliard Boulevard and Stafford Avenue provide access on either side of the WMA. Take exit 63 from the

Garden State Parkway, then take Route 72 east and turn right to merge onto U.S. 9 N/S Main Street toward Manahawkin/Business District. Make a right onto Beach Avenue and a right onto Hilliard Boulevard. The pheasant fields and parking are located past the Manahawkin Elks on the left side. The impoundments and creek are accessed by making a left onto Stafford Avenue and following that to the end.

Owned by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Fish & Wildlife, the Wildlife Management Area System is comprised of more than 360,000 acres in 122 areas throughout



the state, which is more than 44% of New Jersey's state-owned public open space. WMAs are maintained and supported with funding from hunting and fishing license sales, the Federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program and the Wildlife Habitat Supporter Program.

Support the maintenance of New Jersey's Wild-

life Management Areas by becoming a Wildlife Habitat Supporter! Donate now and get your Third Edition sticker.

WMAs are patrolled by NJ Fish & Wildlife Conservation Police Officers to ensure public safety. If you see violations while visiting a WMA, please call the 24-hour DEP hotline at 877-WARN-DEP (877-927-6337).



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NJDEP Fish & Wildlife to Spearhead Effort to Restore Eastern Brook Trout to Parts of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Fish & Wildlife will lead a multi-state partnership to help restore Eastern brook trout to waterways in parts of New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, by administering a \$3.5 million National Fish and Wildlife Foundation America the Beautiful Challenge grant. The grant is designed to enhance forested waterway habitats that support this hallmark fish species and others that depend on clear and cold streams and lakes.

Prized by anglers and New Jersey's only native trout species, the Eastern brook trout, also known as brookies, is the official state fish species for all three states and is considered an indicator of good water quality. It was named the official state fish of New Jersey in 1992.

Eastern brook trout, however, along with other fish species in these areas, are experiencing population declines due to degradation from habitat fragmentation, warming water temperatures, sedimentation and other threats. Eastern brook trout are now only found in a fraction of the waters of their native range.

The grant will fund cold-water conservation projects in priority watersheds over the next four years, including removing barriers such as dams and culverts, enhancing instream habitat, restoring floodplain habitat and mitigating upstream stressors that can lead to higher water temperature.

"New Jersey is proud

to be part of this effort," New Jersey Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette said. "This species holds a special place for anglers and anyone who cares about the health of our cold-water streams and lakes. We thank the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for this opportunity and look forward to working with our partner states in developing projects that will enhance habitat not only for Eastern brook trout, but for other cold-water fish species as well."

The America the Beautiful Challenge Grant Program

The grant announced by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is part of \$122.5 million in grants awarded through the America's Ecosystem Restoration Initiative: America the Beautiful Challenge.

Launched by President Biden in 2021, the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant program set the nation's first-ever goal to conserve at least 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030. The 10-year, locally led and nationally scaled initiative lifts up efforts to conserve, connect and restore lands, waters and wildlife. Over the past four years, the Biden-Harris Administration has conserved more than 45 million acres of America's lands and waters.

The grants support projects that conserve, restore and connect wildlife habitats and ecosystems while improving community resilience and access to



nature, which also advance President Biden's ambitious environmental justice goals. The competitive grant awards were made possible through President Biden's Investing in America agenda, with funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, other federal conservation programs and private sources. The Biden-Harris Administration launched the Challenge in 2022 as a partnership with the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture and Defense; Native Americans in Philanthropy; and NFWF.

A multi-state approach: The newly funded program administered by NJDEP Fish & Wildlife is a collaboration with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Trout Unlimited, the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Wildlife Management Institute, and the U.S. Fish and Wild-

life Service. It is focused on safeguarding the biodiversity of the Appalachian Corridor highlands and streams within the three states.

"We are excited to be part of this multi-state conservation effort that will enhance habitat for the region's only native trout species," said NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Assistant Commissioner Dave Golden. "This collaborative approach will help achieve conservation goals across state lines, which will benefit not only Eastern brook trout but also a diverse array of aquatic species."

"This initiative is fundamentally about aligning implementation resources with identified projects to help conserve a priority species for all three states and our partners," said Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Executive Director Tim Schaeffer. "In so doing, we are affirming a commitment to landscape-level conservation that capitalizes on unprecedented partnerships here in the Northeast."

"The work that will be accomplished under the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant marks a new phase for the already successful joint venture, as states will now use the knowledge compiled over the past 20 years to collectively improve upon the habitat brook trout depend upon in the Delaware

watershed," said Steve Hurst, Chief of Fisheries for the New York Department of Environmental Conservation.

For more information about the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant program, visit the NFWF webpage at National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Announces \$122.5 Million in Conservation Grants from the America the Beautiful Challenge | NFWF.

A complete list of the 2024 grants made through the America the Beautiful Challenge is available here.

To learn more about the freshwater fish of New Jersey, including Eastern brook trout, visit <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/freshwater/freshwater-fish-of-new-jersey/>.

For information about NJDEP Fish & Wildlife, visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/.

DEP News Release: https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/25_0003/

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Keep Your Home Safe from Fires and Other Emergencies This Winter

(NAPSI)—While the winter season brings many joyful moments, it can also bring increased safety risks—but you can protect yourself, your home and your family.

Who Can Help? Volunteer fire departments across the country are raising awareness of seasonal hazards to protect residents and keep families safe. “Firefighters are there to protect their neighbors when emergencies arise, but they also work hard to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place,” said Steve Hirsh, Chair of the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), the national association for the volunteer fire service.

Holidays, cold weather, and winter storms all bring their own fire hazards. In fact, the National Fire Protection Association reports more home fires occur in winter than any other season.

Fortunately, there are simple steps everyone can take to reduce the risks and keep their homes safe.

What You Can Do - The NVFC recommends the following 10



tips to minimize home fire and safety risks this winter.

- Stay alert when cooking. Do not leave the kitchen when frying, boiling, grilling, or broiling food, and keep kids at least 3 feet away from the stove.

- Consider using battery-operated flameless candles. If using real candles, do not leave them unattended, and keep them out of reach of children and pets.

- Place fire extinguishers in the kitchen, garage, and living room, and make sure all household members know how to use them.

- Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home. Test them monthly to ensure they work.

- Install carbon monoxide alarms and test them at least once a month.

- Develop a home fire escape plan and practice it with the entire family.

- Keep portable generators outside and away from the home.

- Practice fireplace safety. Have chimneys professionally inspected and cleaned every year, install a screen in front of each fireplace or wood stove, and store cooled ashes in a metal container outside the home.

- Do not leave space heaters on unattended and keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from it.

How to Help Others - In addition to keeping their own homes safe, residents can take an

active role in protecting their neighbors from fires, medical emergencies, natural disasters, and more. Many fire departments are looking for volunteers to step up and serve their communities.

“About two-thirds of our nations’ firefighters are volunteers, neighbors helping neighbors in their hour of need,” said Hirsch. “There are few volunteer opportunities that are as rewarding as the fire service. I encourage all those who want to make a true impact in their communities, learn life-saving skills, and join an incredible network of people to consider volunteering with their local fire department.”

The volunteer fire service offers roles for all ages, backgrounds, and interests, and training is provided by the department. Firefighters and emergency medical personnel provide life-saving services. Auxiliary or support members assist with the non-operational needs of the department, such as fire prevention and life safety education, disaster preparedness planning, fundraising, administration, and much more. Young

people can participate as junior firefighters, learning about the fire service while gaining important life skills such as teamwork, responsibility, and leadership.

“Whether you are interested in becoming an emergency responder,

support member, or junior firefighter, there is a place for you in the volunteer fire service,” Hirsch said.

For more about the volunteer fire service and to find an opportunity visit www.MakeMeAFirefighter.com.

Blairstown Swears in New Officers For 2025



On January 1st, at 10am, the Township of Blairstown held their annual reorganization meeting to swear in those whose new terms of service began. In addition to Mayor Rob Moorehead, Deputy Mayor Walter Orcott and newly elected Joanne Van Valkenburg, The Blairstown Hose Company # 1 introduced its new slate of officers for 2025. Mayor Rob Moorehead swore in: Chief Stuart Kise; Deputy Chief George Curreri; Captain Mike Pirello; Lieutenant Jeremy Stoddart. Photo by Bob Halberstadt/The Free Weekly Press

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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

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 Serving PA, NJ & NY

Moving Sale

Moving Sale Everything Must Go!

Household Furniture, Kitchen Stove, Bicycles, Kayaks, & Wood

CASH ONLY!!!

2508 West Bangor Road., Bangor, PA 18013

SALE ONE DAY ONLY!

Jan 18th, 2025

9am-4pm

570-972-4553

570-954-5320

Call with any questions

Rentals

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



In Case You Missed It... You Can Find Our Latest, and a Few of our Past Editions Online, Via Your Computer, Tablet, or Smartphone! Just Visit us on Facebook or our Website!

www.thepressnewsonline.com



Valentine's Day Is Less Than A Month Away! Start Planning Now!

Classified Ad Order Form

All Classified ads are \$15 per week, per inch, with the exception of Yard Sale ads, which are \$5. There is no charge for items being listed as FREE. Please specify the category in which you would like you ad to appear (ex: Help Wanted, Real Estate, Rentals, Vehicle...Etc.) Please specify which size ad, and how many weeks you wish to run.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CATEGORY: _____

WEEKS RUNNING: _____ AMOUNT PAID: _____

Please PRINT Your Ad Information Below

Ads with Photos! \$20

One inch (actual size shown here)

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

CLASSIFIED ADS CAN BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL TO: THEPRESSADS@GMAIL.COM OR BY

MAIL TO: THE FREE WEEKLY PRESS, PO BOX 606, BANGOR, PA 18013

Help Wanted ads are free for current advertisers.

Classifieds are NOT accepted by phone

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 <small>(add Cheese for 50 cents)</small>	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 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
- Raviolis & Pierogies
- 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**

**We fill
propane
tanks of
all sizes**



Wines From Tolino Vineyards



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

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

Barefoot or New England Pellets

\$380/Ton



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