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# PRESS



December 19, 2024

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Vol. 52, No. 22



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## The Slate Belt Senior Center Hosts Christmas Party



The Slate Belt Senior Center held their Christmas Party on December 13th. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

## Bangor Goes Head To Head Against Palmerton in Girls Basketball



Bangor went head to head against Palmerton High School in girls basketball on December 12th. Bangor was defeated, 45 to 35. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

## Naughty or Nice? Friday the 13th in December Brings An Interesting Twist to The Holiday Season



Friday the 13th is a local "Favorite Holiday" for the residents of Blairstown, NJ, and this December 13th was no different, with the exception of a holiday twist. Photo by Bob Halberstadt/The Free Weekly Press

## Pen Argyl Wins Over Lehighnton in Girls Basketball



Pen Argyl beat Lehighnton, 48 to 31, in their girls basketball on December 11th. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

## Senate Republicans Demand Immediate Federal Action On Drone Sightings In New Jersey

With unexplained drone sightings escalating across New Jersey and dominating national headlines, Assembly Republican Leader John DiMaio and Assembly Republican Conference Leader Christopher DePhillips are demanding

an emergency conference with legislative leadership, Gov. Phil Murphy, and top state security officials. "The time for action is now. New Jersey residents deserve answers and assurance that their safety is being pro-

ritized," said DiMaio (R-Warren). "The White House may downplay the situation, but we can't afford complacency while uncertainty and speculation grow. This is a national security issue requiring immediate attention." **DRONES cont'd on pg 2**

# Jingle on Main - Blairstown, NJ



## DRONES

Continued from page 1

DiMaio and DePhillips are calling for direct engagement with the heads of the New Jersey State Police and the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness to assess the scope of the threat and coordinate a comprehensive response. "Our national security and the safety of New Jersey residents are at stake," DePhillips emphasized. "We need transparency, real-time intelligence sharing and

a clear action plan within the next 48 hours. Delays are unacceptable." The leaders urged swift cooperation among state and federal agencies to provide a full briefing and develop an action strategy that includes public communication and enhanced surveillance. "We owe it to the people of New Jersey to take this seriously," DiMaio concluded. "Wednesday's briefing for lawmakers was woefully insufficient. Leadership from all branches of government must come together to tackle this issue."



Photo by Bob Halberstadt/  
The Free Weekly Press



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# BANGOR (46) VS NOTRE DAME GREEN POND (62) BOYS BASKETBALL



Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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# BANGOR (35) VS PALMERTON (45) GIRLS BASKETBALL



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# Slate Belt Senior Center Christmas Party



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# PEN ARGYL (48) VS LEHIGHTON (31) GIRLS BASKETBALL

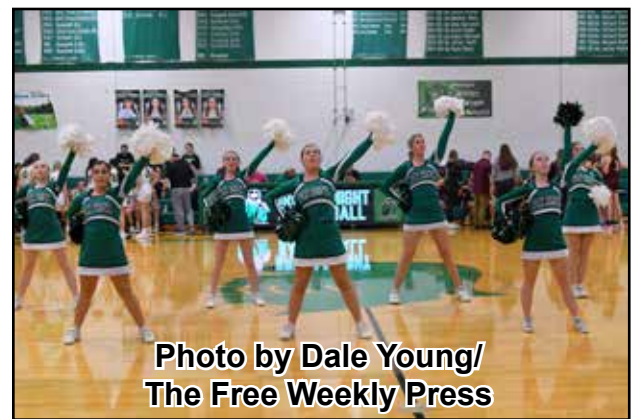


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### WMA of the Month – Beaver Brook ( Knowlton and White Townships, Warren County, NJ)



Located in Knowlton and White Townships, Warren County, Beaver Brook Wildlife Management Area comprises 681 acres nestled in the Highlands, with the Pequest River to the south and the Delaware River to the west. The WMA offers outdoor recreation, hiking, wildlife-watching, and spectacular views of the nearby Jenny Jump Mountain.

Visit For:

- Hiking: There are several unpaved parking areas with access to wide trails into the woods. You will find nearly 1.9 miles of abandoned rail-

road bed, running from North Bridgeville Road to the Manunka Chunk Tunnel. Jenny Jump State Forest cuts through the middle of the WMA where the north and south end of the tunnel are located. The rail bed approaches the Manunka Chunk Tunnel through the south side of the property. Multiple paths cross agricultural fields throughout the WMA. It is possible to walk several field borders throughout the hillside. Along Upper Sarepta Road at a 90-degree bend, near the intersection with Mutton Hill Road, there is a fantastic view of the sur-

rounding countryside. A short walk from Ledger Road, where limited parking is available will lead into an abandoned quarry from which the road takes its name. Intrepid off-trail hikers may also follow another section of public property along the scenic Beaver Brook to the south. None of the trails mentioned are blazed.

- Fishing: The namesake Beaver Brook runs through a small portion of the WMA and is stocked with trout off Route 519 four times per year. Redfin pickerel, chub and sunfish are present, and a quick ride will

get you into angling action on the Delaware or many other nearby stocked waters.

- Hunting: The rolling fields planted with native grasses and woodlands make it an ideal spot to hunt deer in DMZ 5 and turkey in THA 4. As always, hunters should be mindful of the planted agricultural fields.

Access: Drive west on US 80 to Exit 12 and then turn left onto Route 521 (in Hope, the route changes to Route 519). Continue to drive 6.3 miles south and turn right onto Sarepta Road for 0.6 miles before turning right onto

Mutton Hill Road. Then, drive 0.3 miles and turn left onto Upper Sarepta Road. Proceed .02 of a mile to a right turn into a parking area. There are four marked unpaved parking areas with access to wide trails into the woods.

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 Wildlife Management Areas by becoming a Wildlife Habitat Supporter! Donate now and get your Second Edition sticker at: [https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/conservation/wildlife-habitat-supporter-program/?utm\\_medium=website&utm\\_source=newspage&utm\\_campaign=WMA\\_promo&utm\\_id=beaverbrook](https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/conservation/wildlife-habitat-supporter-program/?utm_medium=website&utm_source=newspage&utm_campaign=WMA_promo&utm_id=beaverbrook)

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## Washington, NJ, Spreads Holiday Cheer With Their Annual Hometown Holiday Celebration



Santa and Mrs. Clause made their way to Washington for the WBID's annual Hometown Holiday celebration in early December, thrilling the hundreds of visitors in town. The evening featured the downtown tree lighting, carriage rides, children's activities, live music, a Menorah Lighting, Dickens and other festive holiday characters, and of course, Santa and Mrs. Clause, who met with the children at The Fieldhouse for photos and a chance for them to tell the big guy what they want for Christmas. Photo Courtesy Dan Hirshberg

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22 10am-3pm	23 9am-6pm	24 9am-4pm	25 <b>CLOSED</b>	26 <b>CLOSED</b>	27 9am-5pm	28 9am-4pm
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# Friday the 13th in Blairstown, NJ



Photo by Bob Halberstadt/The Free Weekly Press




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## When It Comes To Energy Policy, Pennsylvania Needs a Reset

By Senator Lisa Boscola – 18th Senatorial District

PJM is America's largest transmission organization that coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity across 13 states, of which Pennsylvania is one. At its most recent wholesale capacity auction the cost of electricity went up 700%. Prices jumped from \$29 to \$270 per megawatt-day across the region. The size of the increase sent shockwaves across the market and should concern us all because the bottom line is we will all pay more.

The increase is due to basic economics, a supply-and-demand problem. To its credit, PJM has been warning elected officials and regulators in the states it covers about an impending crisis of capacity and reliability regarding the needed electricity to meet the grid's demands. The auction results show that PJM was not wrong.

Our electricity demands will only escalate with the growth of data centers, artificial intelligence, and electric vehicles to name a few; therefore, the capacity crunch will only get worse. The need for data centers to support the artificial intelligence market is a major reason why the demand for electricity is outpacing capacity. The electricity demands from

a single data center are so great that Three Mile Island nuclear power plant is being re-opened to supply one.

Increasing electricity output is not just good for the grid, it is good for Pennsylvania's economy. Today, the energy sector employs over 273,000 workers statewide. The sector represents nearly 5% of our total state employment. Not all states are equal when it comes to the potential to generate the needed reliable, affordable, and cleaner electricity to power the grid. Pennsylvania is an energy juggernaut. We are a net power exporter, which means we already produce more than we need. We are a leading producer of natural gas and rank second only to Illinois in nuclear power production. Although shrinking, we still have coal-burning power plants.

Pennsylvania is uniquely positioned to be a leader in producing the needed electricity to meet the increasing demands of the PJM grid without breaking everyone's bank. However, to do this effectively we need to change our approach to setting energy policy. We need a sound energy policy set around a vision to develop and grow Pennsylvania's power generation. Our energy policy is currently implemented across

at least three different departments (Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Protection, and Department of Community and Economic Development), two agencies (Public Utilities Commission and Game Commission), and the Governor's office. The stakes are too high for our grid to continue this fragmented approach. We cannot operate as we always have and expect better results.

Merging energy issues into a single department will make our policy more cohesive. By establishing a department dedicated solely to energy, led by an appointed secretary, we would be sending a clear message about the importance of energy policy in Pennsylvania. Energy decisions must be at the forefront of our policymaking. By appointing someone visible and accountable to the Legislature and the Governor we will elevate the importance of energy policy.

Solar, wind, natural gas, coal, and nuclear each deliver unique benefits to help us meet future power demands. Energy projects like mines, pipelines, drilling operations, new power plants, and renewable projects need to be viewed together with newer technologies under a comprehensive vision that is good for

## Better Health, Naturally



(NAPSI)—If you're like most Americans, you take a dietary supplement every day, according to a report from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Yet, adds the Cleveland Clinic, approximately 35 percent of adults in the United States have vitamin D deficiency.

This can be a problem because, doctors at Yale point out, possible symptoms of vitamin D deficiency include:

- Muscle pain
  - Bone pain
  - Increased sensitivity to pain
  - A tingly, "pins-and-needles" sensation in the hands or feet
  - Muscle weakness in body parts near the trunk of the body, such as the upper arms or thighs
  - Waddling while walking, due to muscle weakness in the hips or legs
  - A history of broken bones
  - Muscle twitches or tremors
  - Muscle spasms
  - Bowed legs
- (when the deficiency

is severe) Why Doctors Are Also Keen on K

As the NIH also explains, vitamins D and K together "play a central role in calcium metabolism. Vitamin D promotes the production of vitamin K-dependent proteins, which require vitamin K to function properly. Evidence supports the notion that supplementation [with both] vitamins D and K might be more effective than the consumption of either alone for bone and cardiovascular health."

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the environment and the pocketbook.

A sensible energy policy is essential to securing a more prosperous future for everyone. Pennsylvania has the energy assets to be a major force on this critical issue. We need to shift from politicizing energy policy to prioritizing it. It starts with appointing a Secretary of Energy nominated by a Democratic Governor, confirmed by a Republican Senate, overseeing a new department established by a divided legislature. The time is now for Pennsylvania to step forward and elevate the conversation around energy at home and across the country.

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*(Please note due to certain holidays, supplies will be offered on the 3rd Saturday of the Month)*

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Knowlton Township Fire and Rescue wanted to say Thank You for such a great turnout for the Santa Run on December 8th. They Received a message from Santa, after he arrived safely back at the North Pole, saying that Knowlton Township was one of the safest areas of New Jersey that he has seen so far on his tour! FROM SANTA, TO: My friends in Knowlton Township - Children, you were all so friendly and nice to me today! Continue to be good boys & girls, listen to your parents, and keep your homes fire safe! I will be around in just a few weeks to visit your homes again. Thank you to all the members at KTRF for taking time to drive me around to see everyone. LOVE TO ALL and a MERRY CHRISTMAS !! SANTA OH and thank you to KTRF member Christina for the delicious warm chocolate chip cookies.

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### Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary!



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Hello, fellow readers, It's starting already—gardening withdrawals. Margaret of Washington, NJ, asked how to force Paperwhite bulbs, reminding me of a simple winter withdrawal remedy that makes a wonderful Christmas gift. It's as easy as putting the Narcissus papyraceus bulbs in water with gravel. In a few weeks, you'll have fragrant white flowers. Instant delight!

But not so fast, as I was researching the folklore behind Paperwhites, I came upon a story written by Vicki Johnson, a dear friend, and columnist for the NJ Herald, titled Paperwhites can smell sweet – or stink. I had no idea! But first, the folklore. I'm a sucker for good stories.

The cliff-notes version of the Greek myth is about a handsome, vain young man named Narcissus who loved only himself, mistreating others, including Echo, who fell in love with him. But Narcissus only fell in love with his reflection and

wasted away, dying at the water's edge, and was replaced by Narcissus flowers.

The moral of the story is to have humility rather than arrogance. The myth was portrayed in works of art and music in the 20th century, leading to the term Narcissism Personality Disorder, a mental health condition of people with an inflated sense of self-importance and lack of compassion. Sounds like an ex-husband I once knew.

A happier connotation of Paperwhite is, in floriography (the symbolism of flowers), when receiving Narcissus bouquets, it means you are the only one.

So, onto the stinky versus sweet-smelling Paperwhites. Thanks to Vicki, I learned that the heirloom varieties such as 'Chinese Sacred Lily' or a yellow petaled 'Grand Soleil d'Or' are the fragrant ones we remember as kids. And these need to be grown in soil not the nifty water method described below.

In the 1970s, hybrids cropped up in Israel, offering more floriferous multiple flowers per stem. And they have taken over the market. 'Ziva' is the most popular with a musky smell. But American Meadows, who sells 'Ziva,' describes them as sweet-smelling. A reviewer wrote, "My only disappointment was that the wonderful paperwhite narcissus scent was very weak." At least they didn't



smell like cat urine or dirty socks as others report.

To force Paperwhites in water, choose a wide-mouthed container about 4 inches deep with no drainage holes. Spread an inch or two of marbles or stones. Position your Paperwhite bulbs side by side, pointy end up, on top of the stone layer. The tight fit will help keep them from toppling over, and a grouping is more appealing. Add another layer of stones to fill in gaps, covering the bulbs just above the widest part, keeping their pointy tips above the stones.

Add water up to the bottom of the bulbs as if they're sitting on the water, and maintain that level throughout. Too much water will cause the bulbs to rot. They prefer to be cool, say 65 degrees, and don't need sunlight until they develop roots. Once they do, move them to a sunny but cool window. Too much warmth will cause them to grow leggy and flop over. Once in flower, move them out of direct sunlight so the blooms will last longer.

It turns out Paper-

whites enjoy a cocktail party. No kidding! A continuous drink of alcohol keeps them from toppling over, which is the opposite effect it has on me.

Once the green shoots grow about 2 inches, pour off the water and replace it with a solution of 4 to 6 percent alcohol mixed with water and use the same solution for watering. You can use any hard liquor (vodka, tequila, whiskey) or rubbing alcohol. Skip the wine or beer, though, as they're too high in sugar. More is not merrier either, as too much alcohol will overdose the plant, causing severe problems. Plants and People, same-same.

You can start a new pot every couple of weeks for a continuous bloom to help you through the winter blues. Maybe it's best to allow your Paper-

whites to drink alone, though. People may begin to talk.

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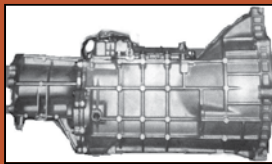
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# Shapiro Administration Awards \$2.55 Million to Help Local Communities Build Cleaner Fuel Transportation Infrastructure and Purchase New Clean Vehicles

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has awarded more than \$2.55 million to improve air quality in communities through cleaner fuel transportation infrastructure. The 2024 Alternative Fuel Incentive Grant (AFIG) funding to municipalities and businesses will fund clean school buses, electric vehicle chargers, and other projects to lower air emissions from transportation.

“Communities are investing in zero- and low-emission transportation because they recognize this is a pathway

to cleaner air and better health,” said DEP Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley. “This round of awarded projects will help with the robust deployment of electric delivery trucks, passenger vehicles, semi-trailer trucks, and more across Pennsylvania — along with the installation of three new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. By providing opportunities to deploy cleaner transportation alternatives, DEP is affirming the Shapiro Administration’s commitment to ensuring Pennsylvanians have clean air to breathe and healthier communi-

ties as a result.” In Pennsylvania, 47 percent of nitrogen oxide emissions come from gasoline and diesel vehicles, and transportation contributes up to 22 percent of Pennsylvania’s overall greenhouse gas emissions. The AFIG program provides funding to help school districts, municipalities, businesses, and nonprofit organizations in Pennsylvania replace these older gasoline- or diesel-fueled vehicles with electric, renewable natural gas (RNG), compressed natural gas (CNG), ethanol, biodiesel, or propane gas fueled ve-

hicles. It also funds installation of fueling equipment for these vehicles. The funding program engages a diverse range of stakeholders in advancing sustainable transportation. This includes Environmental Justice Areas (EJ Areas), which DEP defines as a geographic area characterized by increased pollution burden, and sensitive or vulnerable populations based on demographic and environmental data.

The grant program awarded funding to 14 recipients for 16 projects. Thirteen vehicle projects will provide 26 electric, 15 RNG, 48 propane, and 11 CNG vehicles, while three infrastructure projects will enable EV chargers at five locations. These projects are estimated to save 575,241 gasoline gallon equivalents (GGE) per year. Nine projects are located in or serve EJ Areas.

The funded projects are as follows:

Allegheny County: Plum Borough School District: \$300,000 for the purchase of three EV school buses.; Fishers of Men Community Deve-

lopment Corp.: \$101,722 for the installation of two DC Fast chargers for use by the Fishers of Men fleet and the general public and \$17,500 for the purchase of one Class 1 passenger EV and one Class 3 medium duty EV transit van.

Bucks County: Waste Management of Pennsylvania, Inc.: \$300,000 for the purchase of 15 RNG waste vehicles.

Lackawanna County: L.T. Verrastro, Inc.: \$200,000 for the purchase of seven Class 8 CNG trucks.

Lehigh County: City of Allentown: \$60,000 for the purchase of eight Class 1 passenger EVs, Lineage Logistics Services, LLC.: \$150,000 for the purchase of two Class 8 EV terminal tractors.; Carpenter Co.: \$75,000 for the purchase of one Class 8 EV terminal tractor.

Montgomery County: Norristown Area School District: \$10,000 for the purchase of two propane school buses.

Township of Abington: \$75,000 to install five dual-plug Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations at three locations for use by the

Township’s fleet and the general public and \$15,000 for the purchase of two Class 1 passenger EVs.

Philadelphia County: AAA Club Alliance Inc.: \$117,885 for the purchase of one EV passenger truck, two medium-duty propane trucks, and four medium-duty CNG trucks.

Tioga County: Endless Mountains Transportation Authority: \$300,000 for the purchase of 10 propane transit vehicles.

Washington County: Star Lake Ford LLC.: \$300,000 for the installation of 1 DC Fast charger and 2 Level 2 chargers for use by the applicant’s courtesy fleet and the general public.

Westmoreland County: DMJ Transportation: \$248,030 for the purchase of 34 propane school buses.

York County: CT TAAS 1 LLC.: \$280,000 for the purchase of seven Class 7 EV delivery vehicles.

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



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