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September 26, 2024

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Vol. 52, No. 10



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## Bangor Shuts Out Stroudsburg During Senior Night Girls Soccer Game



Bangor took on Stroudsburg in their Senior Night Girls Soccer game on September 16th. Bangor won, with 4 to 0, shutout. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

## DEP Reminds Public to Secure Trash and Other Potential Food Sources as Bears Become More Active Ahead of Denning Season



New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Fish & Wildlife reminds the public to reduce the potential for encounters with black bears this fall by taking steps to properly manage trash and reduce other potential food sources around their properties or while outdoors. "Black bears are preparing to enter the winter denning season and need to consume large

amounts of food," said NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Assistant Commissioner David Golden. "This heightened activity can bring bears closer to homes and into backyards and campgrounds in search of an easy meal. People can help prevent encounters with bears by removing or properly securing any potential food sources and never feeding black bears."

BEAR cont'd on page 10

## Redball Military Vehicle Transport Club Hosts Fall Show



The Redball Military Vehicle Transport Club hosted their fall show on September 20th & 21st at the West End Fairgrounds in Gilbert, PA. Military Vehicles were on display, as well as vendors & more. Photo by Melissa Lameo/The Free Weekly Press

## Blairstown Hose Company Welcomes New Local Graduates of Warren County Fire Academy



Firefighter Roger Downey and firefighter Logan Downey of the Blairstown Hose Company are the newest local graduates of the Warren County Fire Academy. Photos by Bob Halberstadt/The Free Weekly Press

## Pen Argyl Wins Over Northern Lehigh In Youth Day Field Hockey Game



Pen Argyl took on Northern Lehigh in their Youth Day Field Hockey Game on September 21st. Pen Argyl won, 5 to 0. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

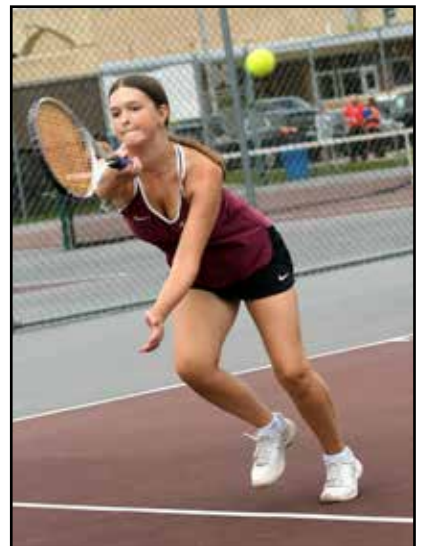


### Pocono Garden Club to Hear 'A History of Monroe County Resources'



"A History of Monroe County Resources" over 13,000 years will be presented when the Pocono Garden Club meets at 1 p.m. Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at the Monroe County Conservation District, 8050 Running Valley Road, Bartonsville. MCCD Environmental Education Coordinator Roger Spotts will trace resources, wildlife and people, and how the county has changed in the past 13,000 years. The October meeting's design entry is called "Witches and Warlocks." it should be a stretch design. The horticulture entry should be a collection of five colored foliage leaves, identified, and displayed under glass on a flat base. The houseplant entry should be your favorite! Light refreshments are welcome. For more information on the meeting or the garden club, contact club President Neil Cadue at poconogardenclub@gmail.com. Visit the Pocono Garden Club on Facebook.

### BANGOR (0) VS NOTRE DAME GREEN POND (5) GIRLS TENNIS



Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press



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# BANGOR (4) VS STROUDSBURG (0) GIRLS SOCCER SENIOR NIGHT



Ava Ferro with her mother, Lisa



Athena Frangos with her parents, Peter and Kathryn



## Slate Belt Rising Launches Community Pride Shirts - Show Your Support for the Slate Belt Region with Stylish, Mural-Inspired Apparel!

Slate Belt Rising is excited to announce the launch of a new collection of community pride shirts, now available on Bonfire.com. These shirts are not only a way to showcase your love for the Slate Belt region but also a way to support the ongoing revitalization efforts led by Slate Belt Rising.

Each shirt in the collection is inspired by the beautiful mural projects completed in the Boroughs of Bangor, Pen Argyl, Portland, and Wind Gap. These murals were created by talented local artists Terri Palmer and Sarah Lanier.

Terri painted the murals in Bangor and Pen Argyl, while Sarah brought her artistic vision to life in the mural in Portland. Designed to capture the essence of these communities, the shirts are available in multiple styles, including t-shirts, hoodies, and crew neck sweatshirts, and come in a variety of colors.

The collection includes five unique designs:

·Bangor Borough Shirt: Celebrating the rich history and vibrant culture of Bangor.



·Pen Argyl Borough Shirt: Featuring elements inspired by Pen Argyl's scenic beauty and heritage.

·Portland Borough Shirt: Highlighting the charm and community spirit of Portland.

·Wind Gap Borough Shirt: Emphasizing the natural beauty and close-knit community of Wind Gap.

·Slate Belt Rising Shirt: Representing the collective pride and unity of the entire Slate Belt region.

With each purchase, a portion of the sale price is donated to Slate Belt Rising, directly supporting our mission to invest in the Slate Belt region and improve the quality of life for all residents.

By wearing these shirts, you are expressing your community pride and contributing to the continued growth and revitalization of our beloved area!

The shirts are available for purchase at Bonfire.com, and can also be accessed through a link on our website at SlateBeltRising.org. Whether you're a resident or a supporter from afar, these shirts offer a meaningful way to connect

with and support the Slate Belt community.

“We are thrilled to offer these unique designs that reflect the spirit of our mural projects and the pride we all share in our communities,” said Brian Fenstermaker, Director of Slate Belt Rising. “Every shirt purchased helps us continue our work to make the Slate Belt a vibrant and thriving place to live, work, and visit.”

Slate Belt Rising, a program of Community Action Lehigh Valley, is a neighborhood revitalization initiative focused on the Boroughs of Bangor, Pen Argyl, Wind Gap, and Portland in Pennsylvania's Slate Belt region. Our mission is to increase economic opportunity, reduce poverty, eliminate blight, and improve the overall quality of life for residents. Through various programs and projects, Slate Belt Rising aims to foster community pride and ensure a bright future for the Slate Belt region. For more information about Slate Belt Rising and our programs, please visit [www.slatebeltrising.org](http://www.slatebeltrising.org).



Avery Nelson with her parents, Denille and Aaron



Addison Prieststaff with her parents, Suzy and Chris

Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Today is a most unusual day, because we have never lived it before; we will never live it again; it is the only day we have. William Arthur Ward



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# NORTH WARREN (0) VS PHILLIPSBURG (1) BOYS SOCCER

Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press



## Project Self-Sufficiency Seeks New Jersey Parents to Serve on Advisory Board

Local parents are invited to attend an information session about the Journey Family Success Center Parent Advisory Board at Project Self-Sufficiency, Tuesday, September 24th, 5:00 p.m. Organizers are seeking input from families regarding area services, parenting challenges and concerns, and ideas for upcoming events. Family Success Center staff will highlight ways the agency can address issues facing local parents and incorporate feedback into future programs. Dinner and childcare will be provided for those in attendance. The gathering



will also be available on Zoom; interested participants are invited to call 973-940-3500 to obtain registration for the in-person session is required.

“Input from parents is crucial to the success of the Family Success Center and we are excited about offering residents the opportunity to meet area providers, express their concerns about gaps in services, and identify strategies for moving forward,” remarked Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director of Project Self-Sufficiency. “The Family Success Center has supported Sussex County parents and children for many years. Expanding the Parent Advisory Board will allow us to further respond to the needs of area families and

incorporate their suggestions into existing and new programs for the community.”

Those who attend their first meeting of the Journey Family Success Center Parent Advisory Board will be eligible to receive a gift card. Project Self-Sufficiency is located at 127 Mill Street in Newton. For information about the Parent Advisory Board, or to find out more about any of the programs sponsored by the Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency, call 973-940-3500 or visit [www.journeyfsc.org](http://www.journeyfsc.org). 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](http://www.projectsselfsufficiency.org) or call 973-940-3500.

The Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency is a program of support which includes parenting skills training, economic self-sufficiency services, family activities, legal education services, information about health and nutrition, referrals, advocacy, and other services. All activities are free and open to the public. Family Success Centers offer services to children, youth, families, individuals, and communities. Funding is provided by the New Jersey Department of Children & Families.

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# PEN ARGYL BOYS & GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY MEET: PEN ARGYL, BANGOR, CATASAUQUA, WILSON, NORTHWESTERN, SOUTHERN LEHIGH, SALISBURY, & NOTRE DAME EAST STROUDSBURG (SCORES TBA)



## Juvenile Justice Reform Bills Approved by the Pennsylvania Senate

The Senate passed two bills to reform the state's juvenile justice system by implementing Juvenile Justice Task Force Report recommendations to help streamline the expungement process, provide fair and impartial legal representation for juveniles and improve accountability and oversight in juvenile court proceedings. The

two bills now head to the House of Representatives for consideration. Senate Bill 169 would update the juvenile court system by requiring disposition review hearings every three months instead of nine. The hearings are designed to ensure juveniles receive necessary services and treatment, assess their threat to the



community and decide if they should remain in placement or be released under supervision.

The court would also set the date for the next review hearing. Senate Bill 170 would modify the expungement of juvenile records by reducing the waiting period for expungement from five years to two years for most misdemeanors, while maintaining the five-year period for felonies, misdemeanor firearm offenses and

indecent assault. The bill would also standardize the expungement process by requiring the chief juvenile probation officer to initiate expungements for eligible individuals, with the district attorney having the opportunity to object. Exceptions to expungement, such as for sex offenses and cases with subsequent convictions or pending proceedings, would remain unchanged.

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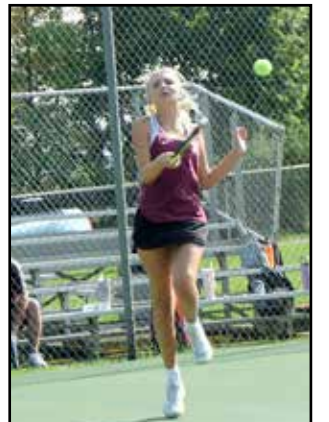
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# PEN ARGYL (0) VS BANGOR (5) GIRLS TENNIS



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# PEN ARGYL (5) VS NORTHERN LEHIGH (0) YOUTH DAY FIELD HOCKEY



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# BEAR

Continued from Page 1

Black bears are found predominantly in the northwestern portion of the state, particularly Morris, Sussex, Warren and northern Passaic counties, as well as portions of Hunterdon, Somerset, and Bergen counties. However, black bears have been reported in all 21 counties.

During the fall, black bears need to eat more than 20,000 calories worth of food a day to bolster their fat reserves for the winter denning season. They are omnivorous, opportunistic feeders and will consume whatever food is available.

A black bear's natural diet is comprised of plants, berries, fruit, nuts, insects, bird eggs, small mammals, and carrion. They have a keen sense of smell and will investigate all potential food sources – natural or unnatural, including garbage. Property owners, hikers and campers can therefore reduce the likelihood of attracting bears by bear-proofing residences and camps by removing or properly securing any potential food sources.

In order to spur public use of certified bear-resistant trash receptacles, in

the spring the DEP distributed some 3,000 of these containers in communities with elevated bear incidents. The program was made possible by a \$500,000 appropriation by the Murphy Administration as part of the state's comprehensive efforts to maintain a healthy bear population while enhancing public safety.

In addition, NJDEP Fish & Wildlife continues to implement a multimedia Know the Bear Facts black bear safety outreach campaign that includes messages in English and Spanish. The campaign provides bear safety tips and public service announcements on social media, TV streaming services, radio broadcasts, the program's bear safety webpages and email blasts. The DEP is in the process of circulating surveys to residents that received a bear-resistant receptacle to evaluate the program.

**Bear Safety Tips** It is critically important for people to never feed black bears. Bears attracted to neighborhoods may learn to associate people with food. These animals may then become nuisance bears that cause property damage, seek handouts from people or become dangerous. Intentionally feeding bears is illegal in



New Jersey and carries a fine of up to \$1,000.

To minimize potential conflicts, the DEP recommends the following precautionary measures:

- Secure trash and eliminate obvious sources of food such as pet food bowls, easy-to-reach bird feeders, or food residue left on barbecue grills. Use certified bear-resistant garbage containers if possible. Otherwise, store all garbage in containers with tight-fitting lids and place them along the inside walls of your garage, or in the basement, a sturdy shed or other secure area.
- Wash garbage containers frequently with a disinfectant solution to remove odors. Put out garbage on collection day, not the night before.
- Avoid feeding birds when bears are active. If you choose to feed birds, do so during daylight hours only and

bring feeders indoors at night. Suspend birdfeeders from a free-hanging wire, making sure they are at least 10 feet off the ground. Clean up spilled seeds and shells daily.

- Immediately remove all uneaten food and food bowls used by pets fed outdoors.

- Clean outdoor grills and utensils to remove food and grease residue. Store grills securely.

- Do not place meat, dairy or any sweet foods in compost piles.

- Remove fruit or nuts that fall from trees in your yard.

- Properly install electric fencing as an effective way to protect crops, beehives and livestock.

- Motorists are reminded to drive with caution and watch out for bears that may be near or on roadways.

If you encounter a black bear in your neighborhood or outdoors while

hiking or camping, follow these safety tips:

Remain calm. Never run from a bear, as this may trigger its predatory instinct. Instead, slowly back away. Avoid direct eye contact, which may be perceived by a bear as a challenge. Make sure the bear has an escape route.

To scare the bear away, make loud noises by yelling, using a whistle, banging pots and pans, or blowing an air horn. Make yourself look as big as possible by waving your arms. If you are with someone else, stand close together with your arms raised above your head.

Make bears aware of your presence by speaking in an assertive voice, singing, clapping your hands, or making other noises. If hiking through bear country, always make your presence known through loud talking or clapping of hands.

If a bear utters a series of huffs, makes popping jaw sounds by snapping its jaws or swats the ground, these are warning signs that you are too close. Slowly back away and avoid direct eye contact. Do not run.

If a bear stands on its hind legs or moves closer, it may be trying to get a better view or detect scents in the air. This is usually a non-threat-

ening behavior.

Black bears will sometimes "bluff charge" when cornered, threatened, or attempting to steal food. Stand your ground, avoid direct eye contact, slowly back away and do not run.

If the bear does not leave, move to a secure area, such as a vehicle or a building.

Families who live in areas frequented by black bears should have a "Bear Plan" in place for children, with an escape route and planned use of whistles and air horns.

Black bear attacks are extremely rare. If a black bear does attack, fight back.

Report black bear damage or aggressive bears to your local police department or to Fish & Wildlife by calling 1-877-WARNDEP (1-877-927-6337).

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife offers bear safety brochures and other information about living with black bears to the public. Black bear education seminars are also available free of charge by Fish & Wildlife's Bear Outreach Specialist to schools and civic groups statewide.

For more information about black bears in New Jersey and to obtain bear safety publications or schedule a free bear education seminar, visit [dep.nj.gov/njfw/bears/](http://dep.nj.gov/njfw/bears/).

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## Grove: Shapiro Must Follow Supreme Court Ruling by Stopping “Automatic Voter Registration” on Vehicle Registrations



Sixty-three members of the House Republican Caucus, including State Rep. Seth Grove (R – York), sent a letter to Gov. Josh Shapiro alerting him to a recent Supreme Court decision which questioned the legality of PennDOT’s “automatic voter registration” program for vehicle registration.

“Since Gov. Shapiro announced all PennDOT interactions – not just legally authorized driver license renewals – will include automatic voter registration, Republicans have been deeply concerned with its administration and legal rationale,” Grove emphasized. “The majority of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court agrees with some of our concerns and shared this in a recent ruling. The Governor must act swiftly to halt this program and contact all voters whose voting address may have been updated by PennDOT.” The majority opinion of the case IN RE: CANVASS OF PRO-

VIS. BALLOTS; APPEAL OF WALSH - NO. 55 MAP 2024 said in part:

Any administrative decision by PennDOT or the Pennsylvania Department of State to transfer an election’s voter registration without that person’s affirmative consent in conjunction with a PennDOT application to change a vehicle registration, as opposed to a driver’s license, is therefore of questionable validity, particularly where, as here, no party has identified a valid administrative regulation authorizing such action.

Justice Wecht, a Democrat, in a concurring opinion, went on to say:

The Pennsylvania Voter Registration Act provides several methods of voter registration, none of which is tied to the application or renewal of a vehicle registration. To the extent PennDOT has taken it upon itself to transform a vehicle registration renewal into a change in vo-

ter registration, it appears to have done so in the absence of any legislative directive. Although PennDOT’s rogue transfer of voter registration in this case ultimately did not deprive O’Donnell of the right to vote, it would be troubling if PennDOT has a practice of making such a transfer without statutory authorization, or even the voter’s consent.

“Our letter sent to Gov. Shapiro provides suggestions on how he can remedy his mistake and stand up for enfranchisement over disenfranchisement of Pennsylvania voters,” Grove added. “Failure to address this will likely lead to misinformation and disinformation surrounding our elections; we’re calling on the Governor to step up and do the right thing.”

A copy of the letter can be viewed at: [www.repgrove.com/Display/SiteFiles/418/OtherDocuments/2024/ShapiroAVRJointLetter9.20.24v2.pdf](http://www.repgrove.com/Display/SiteFiles/418/OtherDocuments/2024/ShapiroAVRJointLetter9.20.24v2.pdf)

## Project Self-Sufficiency Program Supports Trauma Survivors, Promotes Prevention

Project Self-Sufficiency will continue the workshop and discussion series, “Connections Matter”, designed to facilitate the conversation about issues surrounding adverse childhood experiences, with virtual sessions offered over Zoom in English, Tuesday, October 8th, 2:00 p.m., and in Spanish, Wednesday, October 9th, 2:00 p.m. Sessions are free and open to the public; interested participants are invited to call 973-940-3500 to receive log-in details.

Participants will explore the Connections Matter curriculum, a program funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families and led by Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey designed to invite providers, parents, and community members to build caring connections to improve resiliency. Discussion will focus on understanding adverse childhood experiences and demonstrate 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.

Speakers will address the impact of adverse childhood experiences on social, emotional, and cognitive development, and offer tips and strategies for building resiliency. 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 approxima-

tely 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.

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# A Sunday Sermon, "Good Times & Bad," - Yellow Frame Church, September 22nd

The Hebrew word translated in Psalm 1 as "prosper" is the word, saleah. It appears in the Hebrew scriptures 65 times, all having to do with financial, material, or military success or physical well-being. Let us listen for the Word of God.

Psalm 1 The Way of the Righteous Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked or take the path that sinners tread or sit in the seat of scoffers, but their delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. The wicked are not so but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous, for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but

the way of the wicked will perish.

"Prosperity: Interpreting the Bible and Our Lives" The lectionary reading today from Psalm 1 was one of my favorites as a child and teenager, and it, along with Psalm 91, were among the many portions of the Bible my Sunday School teacher, Miss Ruby Cleveland, encouraged me to memorize. Psalm 91 is similar to Psalm 1.

Psalm 91 confidently declares that faithful people of God will be protected, they will be spared bad times, indeed, God shall give his angels charge over God's faithful and the angels shall bear God's faithful up in their hands so that they will experience hardship. And here in Psalm 1, I draw your attention to the phrase, "In all that they do, they prosper." The Hebrew word translated as "prosper" means exactly what you would think it means: it means to succeed

economically, to do well physically, and to achieve one's goals, to have life go the way would we dream of life going. Psalm 1 confidently declares that God's faithful, those who delight in the law of the LORD and meditate on it day and night will prosper in all that they do.

It was true when Psalm 1 and Psalm 91 was written that if things were not going well for someone, say someone like Job, then the friends of that someone who was not prospering should had a religious obligation to go to that person and say, "Things really are not going your way. Clearly you have sinned against God and you need to repent, so that God will once again allow you to prosper." This is exactly what happens in the story of Job when amid Job's grief and desolation, his friends drop by with a casserole and some unsolicited advice.

This view of God is, in some form, the most of-

ten repeated reason for why people do not attend church, why they are atheist or agnostic, people who say that cannot believe in such a God.

In her book, Ordinary Time, Sarah Wells, writes about the numerous miscarriages she and her husband Brandon experienced, including this brief passage about the car ride home from the hospital: "The first baby we conceived was a partial mole pregnancy. To make sure the cancerous cells of the embryo were discharged fully from my system and not developing further in my lungs, I went weekly for blood tests, then monthly, the doctor monitoring hCG levels until the hormone disappeared. I stared out the passenger side window. Why did this happen? What did I do to deserve this loss? What penance am I paying? What if we never have a baby? Tree after tree after tree, light pole after light pole after light pole, mail box, mailbox. 'You

know, this is hard for me too,' Brandon said, voice like lighthouse through the fog. I turned to look at the man who kept driving me forward, along the slow road."

On Saturday September 14th, C.C. was born at Morristown hospital, born over two months pre-mature as a result of a disease called epidermolysis bullosa, or EB, a horrible, non-curable disease affecting the skin with blisters and lesions making the skin unable to adhere to the body. If such a child survives, the child will require a lifetime of specialized treatments.

The day following her birth, C.C. was airlifted to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia where her parents, Penelope and Mike, and her maternal grandparents, Scott and Debra Ream, have been with her ever since, and where C.C. is undergoing genetic testing to determine which of the many forms of EB she has and, based on the re-

sults of those tests, what her prognosis will be. Debra, the grandmother, has been in treatment for stage four cancer for almost two years now, and even before C.C.'s premature birth, every day for Debra was, and is now more so, a challenge.

"In all they do, they will prosper," economically, in terms of health, and everything else. "In all they do, they will prosper." "God will give his angels charge over you" so no bad things will befall you. Is it true that people like the Reams have not meditated on God's law day and night, have not delighted in God, and therefore they, in order for things to improve, should repent? Some religious people would say, yes. Immediately after the terrorism of 9/11/01, there were enormously popular—and with that popularity, enormously wealthy—televangelists like Pat Robertson and  
*Sermon Cont'd on Page 13*

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### Sunday Sermon Continued...

Jerry Falwell who, in the confidence of Psalm 1 and Psalm 91, unequivocally declared the misfortune was the result of our collective failure to delight in God and thus a divine punishment for our sins. The names have changed in 2024 but the same message is still being proclaimed by enormously wealthy preachers.

For over thirty years, and without getting wealthy, I have shared a different message. This different message is sometimes heard as, "Michael doesn't believe in the Bible." That is not the message. I cannot control what people hear: I can only control what I say, and I can.

anly try to find new ways to say what I have been saying in order to make it more understandable. So, let me try again, and I appreciate your patience. Jesus said to the religious people of his

time: "You have heard that it has been said," and then he quotes their Bible to them, and then said, "But I say unto you." Jesus is taking the Bible seriously but reinterpreting it in a radical, new way. Jesus is audaciously claiming that he is bigger than the Bible: "You have heard that it has been said...but I say unto you." Jesus, in the words of Josh McDowell, is either a lunatic or he really is the LORD, the LORD who determines how we interpret the Bible and interpret our lives.

Example: "In all that they do, they prosper." Look at Jesus. If Jesus is LORD, look at Jesus. Did Jesus prosper? We might equivocate a bit and say, "Well, Jesus had some great moments, he healed some people, and he won several arguments. Such equivocations, I suggest, fall flat. At the



center of the story of Jesus' earthly life is the cross, the brutal, agonizing, gut-wrenching, ghastly, deadly cross. If we take Psalm 1 and Psalm 91, and so much of the Hebrew Bible se-

riously, and I think Jesus did and we should also, if we take it seriously, then we must come to one of two conclusions: either Jesus did not prosper and he suffered terribly be-

cause he did not delight in God and therefore was punished; or, Jesus, as LORD, as God in human form, was radically redefining what it means to prosper: "You have heard that it has been said...but I say unto you." We read Psalm 1 in light of Jesus is what I have been saying for over thirty years, and what Karl Barth said before me, and what John Calvin said before him, and, I suggest, what Jesus said in the Gospels.

Therefore, I do not have to be a friend to the Reams in the way that Job's friends were to him. Suffering and a lack of prospering is not a result of sin, not a result of God's punishment. I do not have to go the hospital and say, if you repent things will get better, nor do I go with a glib, toothy grin, saying, "I'm going to pray and things will get better," or, "If you have enough faith, God will make it all go away. I

can go and say something along the lines of, "The Way is not always easy, but God knows the Way having suffered even unto death, and the God who was abandoned on the cross has promised never to abandon us, so you will not travel this very difficult way alone, nor should you travel this difficult way thinking you must have done something wrong. Was Jesus protected from the cross? Did the angels spare Jesus from the cross? No, and part of the reason he did not prosper in the ordinary sense of the word is because he also said things like, "Take up your cross," and "the greatest shall be the servant of all." We take the Bible seriously, but we interpret the Bible and our lives through the lens of Jesus, and Jesus alone. God help us, in good times and bad, in crosses and, hallelujah, in resurrections yet to come. Amen.

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## Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary!



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Hello, fellow readers, Admiration filled my heart for the children's courage who attended a Comfort Zone Camp in partnership with A Little Hope Foundation to support those who lost a loved one to suicide. In the cen-

ter of the camp is a butterfly garden of growth. My role was camp photographer, recording special moments on the challenge course where campers worked together to solve problems that helped build confidence. I took photos during ice-breakers, crafts, and participants' free time having fun and making connections—learning they are not alone.

Amongst the beauty of the Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center (NJ) is a butterfly garden—an eight-foot fenced alcove adorned with clematis and a dramatic flame-orange honeysuckle vine reaching for the sky.

Two large gates with narrow wooden posts tied to strings allow visitors to jockey a few aside to



slip into the sanctuary. To sit for a bit and marvel at the magical dance of butterflies in the comfort of Adirondack chairs atop a rustic stone patio.

Unlike hummingbirds that can hover, butterflies must cling to blossoms to feed. They prefer daisy-type flowers, clusters, or spikes of small flowers. There's Purple coneflower (Echinacea purpurea), a favored medicinal plant with large purple flowers with drooping petals. Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia fulgida) is a glorious golden North American native. Both bloom from mid-to-late summer to frost.

Plus, the Shasta daisy (Leucanthemum maximum), the classic white petaled beauty with yellow centers butterflies love. While native to France and Spain, it is found in the wild elsewhere, having escaped from gardens. Which, in

this case, may not be a bad thing. I've read they provide nectar for Eastern Tiger Swallowtail and Painted Lady butterflies, amongst other butterflies and moths, and serve as host plants.

Many know about the Butterfly Bush (Buddleia davidii) – a fast-growing deciduous shrub that reaches six to eight feet in height with arching purple, pink or white flowers. Contrary to popular belief based on the dance of butterflies and bees we see on the blooms, Butterfly Bush is an invasive species native to Asia that readily self-seeds. However, there are sterile varieties now on the market. While native butterflies feed on the nectar, it does not provide a food source for their larvae (caterpillars), so they say it interrupts the lifecycle and, therefore, lessens the population of our beloved butterflies. Monarch butterflies

love our native Common Milkweed (Asclepias syriaca) and Butterfly Weed (A. tuberosa). As the common name brags, native Bee Balm (Monarda didyma) attracts bees. Its tufts of red, pink, or purple flowers atop tall stems are also butterfly magnets.

Annuals to add for an all-season feast of flowers include Ageratum, Marigold, Verbena, and Zinnia, to name a few.

When planting a butterfly garden, it's kind to provide host plants with egg-laying stations and food for the larva. Plants in the carrot family, such as parsley, fennel, dill, and carrots themselves, are excellent choices. Plus, their feathery foliage looks lovely mixed with perennials and annuals.

A client who has become a friend, Nancy from Fredon, NJ, sent a photo of a mystery plant. The foliage looks like a goldenrod (solidago). Goldenrod

is one of my favs to add to the garden for the late summer to fall show that butterflies love. Despite the rumors, it does not cause allergies; ragweed gives us the sniffles.

"I don't remember planting that," Nancy writes. A few days later, she found a link to what could be her mystery volunteer. Hummingbirds and butterflies love our native Hairy Beardtongue (Penstemon hirsutus). Nancy wondered how three landed in her garden perfectly spaced.

"That's the beauty of native plants," I wrote back, "they magically plant themselves."

Posted on the Johnsonburg Camp's butterfly garden is a sign – "Planting in Progress. Walk Gently." In other words, Recovery & Growth in Progress. Be kind.

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- 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**

**We fill propane tanks of all sizes**

**25lb black oil sunflower seeds - \$15.95**

**50lb bags of shell corn - \$11**

**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!**

**\$360/Ton**

**We Sell Hay & Straw!  
Rye & Wheat**

**We Now Have Mums, Pumpkins, and Local Apple Cider!**

