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August 22, 2024

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Vol. 52, No. 05



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Murphy Administration's Work To Reduce Food Waste Honored By National Conference of State Legislatures

The Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Sustainable Waste Management has been honored by the National Conference of State Legislatures for spearheading a comprehensive and ongoing set of actions to reduce food waste in New Jersey through its Food Waste Reduction Plan, Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette announced recently.

In presenting the Notable Document Award to the DEP, the National Conference of State Legislatures commended the DEP's Food Waste Reduction Plan "as innovative in providing substantive information on contemporary issues of

interest to legislatures." The group's judging panel further noted the plan could serve as a model for other state legislatures seeking to reduce food waste.

Reduce Food Waste "I congratulate the Division of Sustainable Waste Management for its commitment to identifying and implementing solutions to address the problem of food waste, as acknowledged by this honor bestowed by the National Conference of State Legislatures," said Commissioner LaTourette. "Not only is food waste the single largest component of the municipal solid waste stream in New Jersey and a major contributor to

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Be On The Watch For Baby Copperhead Snakes



Keep an eye out for the Eastern copperhead, which are most active during warmer weather, especially in the late afternoons and evenings. Copperheads prefer to habitats with easily accessible hiding spots and good access to sources of food. They seek out wooded regions, rocky regions, grassy places, and piles of leaves, sawdust, and wood. Hiding areas also include spots in yards that are cluttered or shaded (such as garden hoses, shed roofs and outside tables), compost bins that are neglected, and abandoned buildings, so be cautious when moving things around the house. If you do come across a Copperhead, remember to stay calm and back away, trying not to frighten the snake. Baby copperheads are born August-Late September and can be distinguished by the yellow tip on their tails.

Fair Season Continues With The 78th Blue Valley Farm Show



The 78th Blue Valley Farm Show was held August 14th through 17th. Pictured above are this year's Farm Show Queen, Miss Hannah Kromer (right) and Queen Alternate, Miss Madison Pagats (left). Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Taking A Closer Look at Farmland Conservation Efforts



Farmers play a critical role in Pennsylvania – agriculture is our state's top industry. They also improve our food security by reducing our dependence on food supplied by other countries. This week, the Senate and House Agriculture and Rural Affairs committees led discussions about on-farm conservation efforts. Farmers across the state are focused on addressing food waste, pursuing manure management and, most importantly, ensuring the long-term sustainability of vital resources like our water and soil that will allow them to preserve our agricultural heritage. To support these important initiatives, we dedicated \$10 million in the state budget for conservation efforts among Pennsylvania farmers through the new Agriculture Innovation and Development Program. The program is focused on providing farmers and agribusinesses with the resources to adopt new technological practices.

78th Blue Valley Farm Show



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Pennsylvania Game Commission Welcomes New Deputy Executive Directors

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has two new Deputy Executive Directors.

David J. Gustafson, who had directed the agency's Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management, has taken over the Deputy Executive Director role vacated when Stephen Smith became Executive Director, and Kelly O'Donnell, who comes to the Game Commission from the state Department of Agriculture, has begun work in the Deputy Executive Director position that opened when Deana Vance retired.

Gustafson started in his new role July 22. O'Donnell worked her first day as Deputy Executive Director on Aug. 12.

Smith said both Gustafson and O'Donnell bring critical expertise and a variety of experience to their new roles, and will help to guide the Game Commission in its mission to manage and protect Pennsylvania's wildlife and habitats, while

promoting hunting and trapping, for current and future generations.

"The work that ensures we'll always have wildlife and hunting opportunities in the Commonwealth is carried out by dedicated Game Commission employees who genuinely care about conservation's present and future," Smith said. "Kelly and Dave are no exception. You'd be hard-pressed to find harder-working, more-talented individuals who bring different perspectives to the amazing team we have here at the Game Commission."

Gustafson has worked for the Game Commission since 2003, most recently overseeing and directing wildlife habitat management practices on the Game Commission's more than 1.5 million acres of state game lands, as well as gas, oil, coal and timber operations on game lands, in addition to other responsibilities.

Gustafson's background is in forestry, earning a

bachelor's degree in Forest Science from Penn State in 2000, then working as a forester in the private sector and for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources before joining the Game Commission in 2003 as a forester in the Northwest Region.

In 2005, Gustafson was promoted to forest program specialist and helped start the agency's Forest Inventory and Analysis Section. In 2007, he was promoted to Chief Forester, working in that capacity until he became bureau director, where he was instrumental in numerous large land acquisitions, adding over 20,000 acres to the game lands system in less than three years.

In his new role, Gustafson is responsible for overseeing the implementation of agency projects, ensuring the Game Commission is compliant with its strategic plan and assisting in the development of regulatory proposals.

Gustafson said it's work that means the world to him.

"Since I was a kid running around the forests of McKean County, all I've ever wanted to do was to work for the Game Commission," Gustafson said. "To be able to have a hand in making things better for wildlife and hunting has been a lifelong passion of mine."

"I'm humbled and honored to have this opportunity to be a part of the future direction of this great agency, to ensure we meet our mission ensuring the sound management of wildlife and their habitats for current and future generations, and to make sure our hunting heritage continues to be the best in the nation. We have such an amazing and passionate staff here in the PGC, and we need to make sure everyone sees just how hard they work to provide for the wildlife and the sportsmen and women of this state. We find ourselves in the best financial condition in the history of the agency, and it's a tremendous responsibility to manage the funds efficiently and effectively to the core mission of the agency, and to make sure those funds last as long as possible. I look forward to working further with Steve, the Board of Commissioners and the rest of the leadership team to promote accountability and transparency and make sure our stakeholders have confidence that we are meeting our mission," he said.

O'Donnell, who graduated from Penn State University in 2002 with a bachelor's degree in Political Science, worked in

several capacities for the state Department of Agriculture. Most recently, she was Director of the agency's Bureau of Administrative Services, where among other responsibilities, she directed the review and analysis of program budget proposals, the preparation and execution of the department's \$220 million budget, and the monitoring of federal and state grants.

O'Donnell had worked in the director's role since 2021. Prior to that, she was the Department of Agriculture's Agency Director of Transformation, reporting as well to the Governor's Office of Performance Through Excellence, and serving as the primary liaison between the two. She also served as Director of the Department of Agriculture's Policy Office, reporting also to the Governor's Office of Policy and Planning, serving as the primary liaison between the department and office, and monitoring agriculture-related policies across all levels of government. And prior to that, she directed the Department of Agriculture's Office of Legislative Affairs.

O'Donnell directed the state Department of Aging's Office of Legislative Affairs, as well, and also directed the Department of Aging's Operations and Management Office for five years between 2012 and 2017.

As the Game Commission's Deputy Executive Director of Administration, O'Donnell assists in the planning, directing, executing and coordinating of the Game Commission's programs to man-

age and protect wildlife, and directly supervises the Game Commission's bureau directors and other staff.

She said her interactions with staff have made it clear what the agency's mission means to them, and she's excited to move forward as part of the team.

"The energy and passion for our mission that is exuded by the team at the Pennsylvania Game Commission is contagious and I am excited to be joining the team at this time in the agency's history," O'Donnell said. "To be able to continue my career in public service with an organization that is so committed to conservation and to the preservation and enhancement of our vital natural resources is a dream come true."

O'Donnell is originally from Lewistown, Mifflin County. She currently resides in Harrisburg, Dauphin County and is the proud aunt of four nieces and one nephew.

Gustafson enlisted in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard in 1997. In 2006, he was appointed to the rank of Second Lieutenant by Direct Commission. He served as First Lieutenant and Company Executive Officer during Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq from September 2008 until October 2009 and was decorated with numerous military honors.

Gustafson is originally from Port Allegany in McKean County. He and his wife, Christine, currently reside in Loysville, Perry County, with daughters Rebekah and Caroline, and lab Ruby.

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Work to Begin on Route 611

From Senator Rosemary Brown: "I'm thrilled to announce that the National Park Service has approved the necessary permit for PennDOT to begin the work on Route 611. This agreement marks a crucial step toward reopening a roadway that has been closed since December 6, 2022, causing significant disruptions for residents, businesses, and commuters. The work includes installing a temporary rockfall barrier, which will allow traffic to flow through the affected three-mile section. With the permit from the National Park Service now officially approved, PennDOT estimates that the work will take approximately eight to ten weeks to complete. I will keep you updated on the progress of the temporary work and the development of plans for a permanent resolution."

Warren County (NJ) Commissioners Honor NJAC Scholarship Recipients from Warren Tech

Four recent graduates of Warren County Technical School were honored by the Warren County Board of County Commissioners for scholarships they received from a statewide organization associated with county government.

Every year, the NJAC Foundation, a non-profit organization affiliated with the New Jersey Association of Counties, helps raise funds from corporate sponsors to provide scholarships to county vocational-technical school graduates who plan on continuing their education at a county college or state college or university in New Jersey.

The county Commissioners recognized 2024 Warren Tech graduates David Boothe, Casey Beruta, Elizabeth May, and Ava Battle, highlighting their academic achievements and extra-curricular involvement. Boothe, Beruta and May were presented with their scholarships while Battle, who was unable to attend due to a previous commitment, received her scholarship award previously.

"Thank you to NJAC and these corporate sponsors for their continued support of the scholarship program," Commissioner Director James R. Kern III said. "These students exemplify what's great about Warren County. I look forward to their future success!" he added.

Commissioner Jason J. Sarnoski praised the recipients and thanked NJAC for conducting the scholarship program, which awarded more than \$90,000 to college-bound graduates this year. As a father who is sending his son to college this fall, Sarnoski noted that he knows how expensive college is and "every dollar helps"



Pictured L-R: during the scholarship presentation are Warren County Commissioners Jason J. Sarnoski and Lori Ciesla, NJAC Foundation Scholarship recipients Casey Beruta, Elizabeth May, and David Boothe, Commissioner Director James R. Kern III, and NJAC Executive Director John Donnadio.

when it comes to financing higher education.

Commissioner Lori Ciesla added her congratulations, saying she was proud of the student and their achievements.

"The caliber of the candidates gets better and better every year. The GPAs just floor me," said NJAC Executive Director John Donnadio, who attended the presentation. "Best of luck as you move forward in college," he told the recipients.

The scholarships were funded by four different corporations who contributed to the NJAC Foundation.

SHI International Corporation provided a grant of \$5,250 to the NJAC Foundation to fund a \$250 scholarship in every county for students planning on pursuing a degree in technology or cyber security. The SHI Scholarship for Warren County was awarded to David Boothe, a Stewartsville resident who had a GPA of 3.44 and was a past Student of the Month recipient. He was part of the Boys JV Basketball team and earned a certification for Excel.

Over the past two sum-

mers he was a technology intern at Warren Tech and Greenwich Elementary School. Boothe plans to attend Warren County Community College and major in Cybersecurity and Unmanned Systems.

AT&T doubled its award this year and granted \$21,000 to the NJAC Foundation to provide \$1,000 scholarships for students pursuing a certificate or degree in computer science, cyber security, information systems, data analytics and other related fields. This year's Warren County recipient was Phillipsburg resident Casey Beruta, who was ranked 22nd in this year's graduating class with a GPA of 3.76. Beruta was in theater club and yearbook club, and attended Skills USA, winning 1st place in TV and Video Production at the state level and 2nd Place in the national competition. Beruta plans to attend Montclair State University and study Animation/Visual Effects and Filmmaking.

South Jersey Industries, or SJI for short, also increased its award to the NJAC Foundation and

provided \$1,000 scholarships in 10 counties, including Warren. The SJI Scholarship was awarded to Elizabeth May of Hope, who had a GPA of 4.0, ranked 14th in her class, and was part of the National Society of High School Scholars. May's hobbies include writing novels, reading, and spending time outdoors doing things like kayaking and hiking, all while working in a dental office as a Sterilization tech. She will be majoring in writing at Centenary University, and hopes to be a published author.

The company Amazon provided a \$21,000 grant to the NJAC Foundation to fund scholarships in all 21 counties, and this year's Amazon Scholarship recipient from Warren County was Ava Battle of Alpha. Battle was ranked 16th in her class with a GPA of 3.93 and was involved in nearly every club including Key Club, Military Appreciation Club, National Honors Society, theater, and student government. She plans to attend Warren County Community College and major in primary and secondary education.



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Rep. Susan Wild Earns Endorsement of Alliance for Retired Americans on the 89th Anniversary of the Social Security Act

On the 89th anniversary of the Social Security Act being signed into law, the Alliance for Retired Americans announced their endorsement of Congresswoman Susan Wild's re-election campaign

in Pennsylvania's 7th Congressional District. The Alliance represents 350,000 retired people in Pennsylvania and 4.4 million members nationwide.

"It is an honor to receive the endorsement

of an organization whose values I keep at the forefront of my work," said Congresswoman Susan Wild. "In Congress, I've been able to protect and expand access to programs like Medicare and Social

Security for the seniors across my district who rely on those lifelines every day. If elected to another term, I'll continue to fight tooth and nail to make sure that no one threatens my constituents' hard earned

benefits."

"Seniors know that in Representative Wild, we have a friend we can count on to protect, strengthen, and increase our hard-earned Social Security and Medicare benefits," said Jody Weinreich, Vice President of the Pennsylvania Alliance. "Our members also support her candidacy because of her belief in affordable health care - including lower drug prices - pension security, and quality long-term care."

"The stakes couldn't be higher for retirees like me," Weinreich added. "We need Susan Wild in the House fighting

against any Republican plan to cut Social Security and Medicare. Re-electing Susan Wild is clearly the best choice for Lehigh Valley seniors."

Rep. Wild has made protecting Social Security and Medicare a critical component of her legislative agenda, and has consistently worked to lower health care costs for Pennsylvania's working families and seniors. Ryan Mackenzie, on the other hand, has supported efforts that would put funding for Social Security and Medicare on the chopping block every single year.

2024 Turkey Sighting Survey Reports Due For Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Game Commission's two-month survey on wild turkey sightings wraps up on Saturday, Aug. 31. Participants are encouraged to report their sightings from July and August through Wednesday, Sept. 6. To contribute, visit pgc-datacollection.pa.gov/TurkeyBroodSurvey through the Game Commission's website.

When reporting, include the number of wild turkeys seen, along with the location, date, and contact information in case agency biologists have follow-up questions. Note that your specific location is kept confidential and is used only to determine the general area of each sighting.

Game Commission Turkey Biologist Mary Jo Casalena said these data help assess turkey productivity across Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) and contribute to long-term tracking of turkey repro-



ductive success across the state, region and country. Factors such as spring weather, habitat conditions, and predation affect turkey productivity.

The 2023 statewide results showed a lower reproductive index for wild turkeys, 2.9 poults per hen, compared to 3.1 observed during the previous two years. Despite this drop, the 2023

index was consistent with the 4-year average. Notably, all WMUs except WMU 5D reported indices above the general threshold of 2 poults per hen, which is considered adequate for replacing adult mortality. The index varied across units, from a low of 1.4 poults per hen in WMU 5D to a high of 4.5 in WMU 2E.

In neighboring states,

the reproductive index averaged 2.5 poults per hen, with Virginia at the lower end with 1.9 and New York at the higher end with 3.3.

Pennsylvania's survey includes input from both Game Commission personnel and the public. Since public participation began in 2016, the number of reported turkey sightings has doubled, enhancing the survey's accuracy and coverage.

"Thanks to the large sample size from all corners of the Commonwealth, we have high confidence in the results," Casalena emphasized.

"Remember, every summer turkey-sighting reported to the Game Commission helps to improve wild turkey conservation in the Keystone State. Public participation enhances our agency's internal survey by increasing the sample size and providing broader coverage of turkey reproductive success across all WMUs."



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WASTE

Continued from pg 1

greenhouse gas emissions, it presents us with a multitude of societal challenges that must be addressed if we are to achieve our goals of a fairer and more sustainable Garden State.”

“Making smart food decisions is where reducing food waste begins,” New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Ed Wengryn said. “Our school nutrition programs right size meals for different age groups, reducing the amount of food used up front. Consumers can do the same by meal planning and selecting local Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables which will have a longer shelf life in the home.”

Uneaten food thrown out by businesses, schools, hospitals and residents results in wasted precious resources including water, land, energy, labor and capital. Not only are resources wasted, but so are opportunities to help those who face food insecurity.

To overcome these challenges and better protect the environment, New Jersey adopted the Food Waste Reduction Act in 2017, which outlines the state’s goal to cut annual generation of food waste in half by 2030. Following its adoption, the DEP in consultation with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture developed the Food Waste Reduction Plan to quantify the amount of food



waste generated in the state based on available data and propose short and long-term actions to achieve the state’s food waste reduction goal.

Several of the plan’s solutions for reducing wasted food are currently being implemented by DEP’s Division of Sustainable Waste Management. They include:

- Coordinating with organizations such as Sustainable Jersey and Association of NJ Recyclers to promote food waste reduction strategies at the local government level
- Supporting food donation outlets
- Providing guidance on date labelling
- Conducting statewide waste composition audits and improved monitoring
- Development of a food waste website identifying actions that stakeholders and residents can take to reduce food waste
- Raising awareness on social media

“I sponsored the Food Waste Reduction Act in 2017 and am glad to see

the National Conference of State Legislatures recognize the critical work being done by the Department through its implementation,” said Senator Bob Smith, Chair of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee and Food Waste Reduction Act sponsor. “Roughly 30 to 40 percent of our food here in the United States ends up in the trash, wasting hundreds of billions annually. Through the promotion of more responsible habits surrounding our food, the development of food waste recycling facilities, and better guidance on food labeling we can make New Jersey a leader in tackling food waste, as this recent honor shows.”

“I was proud to sponsor the Food Waste Reduction Act and am thrilled to see the progress that has been made since its enactment. Reducing annual generation of food waste in half by 2030 is an ambitious, yet achievable, goal that reflects our commitment to sustain-

ability,” said Assemblywoman and Food Waste Reduction Act sponsor Pamela Lampitt. “By addressing food waste, we are not only conserving valuable resources but also taking significant steps towards feeding the hungry and protecting our environment.”

“Congratulations to the DEP’s Division of Sustainable Waste Management for this prestigious honor. As chair of the Environment, Natural Resources, and Solid Waste Committee, I am deeply committed to initiatives that protect our environment, such as the Food Waste Reduction Plan,” said Assemblyman and Food Waste Reduction Act sponsor James Kennedy. “New Jersey has made significant strides in its efforts to preserve our natural world. By working together, we can continue to lead the way towards a future where we waste less, and use our resources more efficiently and responsibly.”

One of the most significant ways DEP has been striving to meet the goals of the plan is by funding various food waste reduction projects conducted by institutions of higher education in the state. Some of these projects include the development of a food waste toolkit for K-12 schools to reduce, recover and recycle food waste, an interactive map that aims to connect food waste generators with donation outlets by using spatial technology to identify food banks

and pantries within certain distances of waste generators (still under development), and municipal solid waste audits that measure the amount of food waste in overall trash generation.

In addition to the funding efforts, the DEP has promoted food waste reduction statewide through the following:

Publication of educational guidelines to assist K-12 schools in developing food waste management programs and educating students on the importance of reducing food waste at home to reduce the impacts of climate change

Development of a sector-by-sector food waste toolkit to assist various stakeholders in understanding food waste concerns and learning how businesses can reduce and recycle their food waste

Acquired grant funding as part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant Program that will allow for the creation of waste management guidance and a toolkit for local governments in New Jersey, and a food waste estimation tool to help commercial businesses and institutions determine how much pre-consumer versus post-consumer food waste they generate per year and whether they are required to comply with food waste recycling mandates in New Jersey

Food Waste Reduction Plan Background

The Food Waste Reduction Plan was developed through an extensive public engagement process which included meetings with various stakeholders including state and federal agencies and NGOs to understand food waste reduction issues, quantify food waste generation estimates and work toward meeting the 2030 goal. Public meetings were held in the fall of

2019 and a draft of the Food Waste Reduction Plan was released shortly thereafter. The plan was finalized and officially posted in October 2023.

Food Waste Recycling and Food Waste-to-Energy Production Law

Food waste recycling is a secondary component of food waste management. Generators of food waste should recycle food waste only after exhausting all efforts to prevent the generation of food waste in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Wasted Food Scale.

The Food Waste-to-Energy Production Law requires large food waste generators who generate an average projected volume of 52 tons of food waste or more per year to source separate and recycle their food waste. Large food waste generators must comply with the law if they are located within 25 road miles of an authorized food waste recycling facility. These recycling efforts repurpose food waste into agricultural compost and biogas, a renewable energy source.

Currently, New Jersey has two authorized food waste recycling facilities, and it is estimated at least three new food waste recycling facilities will be operational in the next few years. This will expand the requirement for large food waste generators to source-separate and recycle their pre-consumer food waste in more regions of the state.

Reduce Food Waste: New Jersey residents can do their part to help reach the food waste reduction goal by storing food properly to extend its shelf life, meal planning, avoiding bulk purchases, and understanding date labels. For more tips on how to reduce food waste, visit DEP’s food waste reduction website and food waste toolkit.

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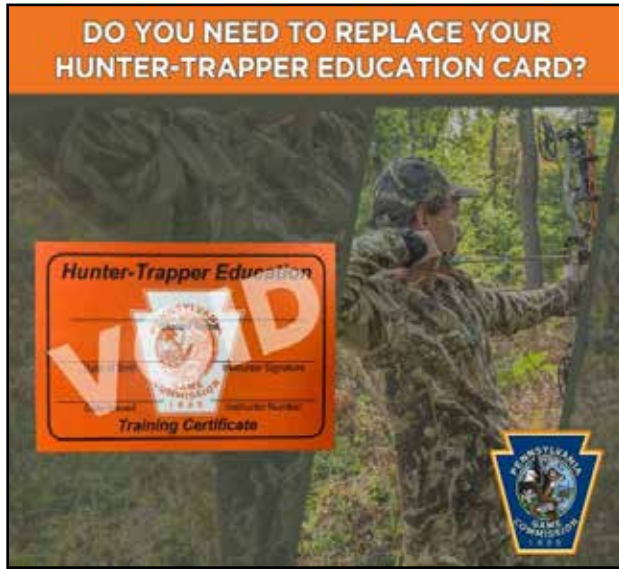
Project Self-Sufficiency Offers Free, Virtual Bankruptcy Seminar

Project Self-Sufficiency will host a free, virtual Bankruptcy seminar featuring attorney Steve McNally, Thursday, August 22nd, 6:00 p.m. Participants will discuss the process of filing for bankruptcy, as well as the options available to those facing overwhelming credit card debt, foreclosure, or asset repossession with an attorney. The free legal education seminar is a program of the Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency. The presentation is free and open to the public; interested participants must call Project Self-Sufficiency, 973-940-3500, to obtain log-in information. Project Self-Sufficiency is a premier, comprehensive social services organization offering a wide range of services including job training, counseling, case management, high school diploma and basic needs assistance, home visitation for new and expectant



Project Self-Sufficiency will host a free, virtual Bankruptcy seminar featuring attorney Steve McNally.

parents, in-person and virtual training and recreational programs for parents and children, and mobile services delivered via Journey and the Food Project van. For more information about services available to individuals and families at Project Self-Sufficiency, visit www.projectsselfsufficiency.org.



DO YOU NEED TO REPLACE YOUR HUNTER-TRAPPER EDUCATION CARD?

Are you planning on hunting in another state this fall? Many states require you to have a physical copy of your hunter-trapper education certification card to purchase a hunting license. If you lost your hunter-trapper education certification card, you could order a replacement online here: ilostmycard.com. Individuals who took hunter education prior to 1987, will need to complete an affidavit form here: <https://bit.ly/4bFnldJ>. Please plan ahead — it takes roughly 2-3 weeks for our vendor to replace and send you a hunter-trapper education certification card via mail. If you have any issues or concerns, give us a call at 717-787-7015. Also, if you plan on bowhunting in another state, please check if they require a special certification to purchase an archery license. Pennsylvania's successful bowhunter course meets this requirement for most states and can be taken online here: <https://bit.ly/4atr4zX>.

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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary!



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Hello, fellow readers,
In the spirit of a heart-felt anniversary, I'd like to revisit a story about flopping Limelight Hydrangeas and introduce you to a newer variety that solves the bowing blossoms of Limelights.

Lorraine from Sparta, NJ, wrote, "Hi, Mary! I have a Limelight Hydrangea garden dilemma. I prune it every spring to about three feet. It grows to about six or seven feet tall and wide by August with ginormous blooms. But with the heavy rains, the stems can't support the heavy blooms. They don't break; instead, they bend over gracefully, but the blooms are very low or near the ground."

Lorraine and I became friends when she organi-

zed the speakers for the Springfest Garden Show. It was sad when the show retired, but how blessed connections along the garden of life journey continue to grow.

As dear old Mom would say, all panicle hydrangeas (Hydrangea paniculata) are easy keepers, growing in most soils that drain well. If yours is clay soil, then amend it before planting. They tolerate drought once established. And, because they bloom on new wood, they can endure cold winters and still bloom.

"Can Limelight Hydrangea be pruned a second time in late spring or early summer to reduce the size of the blooms? I recently severely cut back a large viburnum that was crowding it but also supporting the plant."

Lorraine sent the photos of her voluptuous Limelight's bowing down. "You can see the Quick-Fire on the left is nice and upright. Most of the Limelight blooms are close to the ground."

Quick-Fire, like Limelight, grows about eight feet tall and can be pruned into a tree form. It's one of the first panicle hydrangeas to bloom in early July and can thrive in part sun. It starts white



before turning pink, then darkens to reddish pink towards fall.

Limelight's football-shaped light green flowers bloom in late summer and age to pinkish-red and maroon. They require at least eight hours of full sun to stand tall. I wonder if Lorraine's neighboring viburnum may have shadowed her Limelight, contributing to its floppiness, as not enough sun often causes weak branching and fewer blooms.

While you can't redu-

ce the size of blooms, the most popular protocol for pruning Limelight Hydrangeas is to cut them back by a third of their height (rather than half) in early spring. This safeguards the plant from flopping, as the new season's growth will come from the heavier, thicker buds lower on the plant.

Recently, 'Limelight Prime' was introduced, which grows four to six feet high with about a four-to-five-foot spread and thrives in part or full sun in Zones 3 to 8. It

also blooms earlier than Limelight, so if you're in a colder zone, you don't have to wait till late August to have flowers. The green flowers age to white with pink and reddish tones, and a drum roll, please, the stronger stems support the big blooms. Its popularity quickly took off, fixing the bowing blossoms of Limelights in the garden.

A side note: Lorraine's flopping Limelight dilemma came four years ago when I lost Miss Ellie Mae. The "coinciden-

ce" is that Jolee's rescue paperwork indicates she was born about the same time. There's something beautiful about that.

Lorraine checked in with me a few days after Ellie passed away, asking how I was doing.

"I'm doing fine. We're missing our dear girl, of course, but I've gotten pretty good at the grieving process. I am giggling as I write, as I'm unsure about that. As we get older and have more experiences, we may go through loss a bit easier, but not always. Grief has a life of its own.

While endings are part of life, love remains forever rooted in our hearts. Then come new beginnings, like our dear Jolee and new plant introductions, to bring joy to our Garden of Life.

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Rep. Susan Wild Announces Endorsements from Leading Women’s Rights and Reproductive Freedom Groups, Celebrating 104 Years of Female Suffrage

On 104th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment, Susan Wild’s campaign announced a new slate of endorsements from the most influential women’s rights and reproductive freedom groups across the country.

“On this historic day in 1920, a woman’s right to vote was officially ratified by enough states to be adopted into the U.S. Constitution,” said Congresswoman Wild. “104 years later, we continue the fight for equal pay, equal protection, and equal access to reproductive health care under the law. I’m honored to receive the support of these powerhouse organizations, each with their own membership and mission, who are mobilizing passionate activists across the country to push for change. I have no doubt that with their support, we will hold this seat and send a pro-choice majority to Congress.”

“Congresswoman Susan Wild has been a vocal champion for reproductive freedom throughout her career, and for that she has earned Planned Parenthood Action Fund unwavering endorsement,” said Alexis McGill Johnson, Planned Parenthood Action Fund

President and CEO. “From her fierce defense of Title X to her advocacy to codify abortion rights and access to IVF, Rep. Wild has proven time and time again that she will fight for our freedom to control our own bodies, lives, and futures. She has been a tremendous partner in protecting sexual and reproductive rights and Planned Parenthood Action Fund supports her as she defends this seat and delivers a pro-reproductive freedom majority in the House of Representatives.”

“At EMILYs List, we have been proud to support Rep. Susan Wild from her first campaign,” said Jessica Mackler, President of EMILYs List. “Since her first day in office, she has worked tirelessly to protect IVF, abortion access, and reproductive freedom. She has also served as a voice for women everywhere on issues like equal pay. This November, defeating anti-choice extremists like Ryan Mackenzie is critical. We know Rep. Wild has what it takes to win and continue fighting for our rights.”

“Rep. Susan Wild has been a staunch advocate for reproductive freedoms and pro-choice legislation from the mo-



ment she entered Congress,” said Congresswoman Lois Frankel, Chair of Elect Democratic Women. “From protecting the provisions in Title X from assault by the Trump Administration, to protecting IVF and access to abortion, Rep. Wild has been a representative Pennsylvanians and women across the country deserve. She has prioritized policies

that uplift women and their families and Elect Democratic Women is proud to have supported her and to endorse her re-election campaign.”

“Rep. Susan Wild has been a steadfast reproductive freedom champion for people in Pennsylvania and across the country since the first day of her time in Congress,” said Mini Timmaraju, Reproductive


Freedom for All President and CEO. From supporting legislation to lock the federal right to abortion into law to leading a bill to protect access to fertility treatments like IVF months in advance of the Alabama court decision jeopardizing it, Rep. Wild has been a fierce advocate for our fundamental rights. We know she will keep fighting to protect our rights and it’s why we need to re-elect her so she can continue to fight for Pennsylvanians.”

The endorsement of these groups cements what women across the Lehigh Valley already knew: when it comes to protecting our rights and freedoms, Susan Wild is the only choice this November. Not only has Rep. Wild been an exceptional advocate and leader in the sphere of reproductive freedom and women’s rights, but her opponent Ryan

Mackenzie is running under an extreme, anti-choice, anti-woman agenda. Defending her seat is imperative if we want to flip the House blue and deliver a pro-choice, pro-women victory this November.

The complete list of women’s rights and reproductive freedom organizations endorsing Congresswoman Susan Wild today include Planned Parenthood Action Fund, EMILYs List, Elect Democratic Women, Reproductive Freedom for All, Feminist Majority PAC, Moms Fed Up, National Women’s Political Caucus, Tri-State Maxed-Out Women, Monroe County Democratic Women, Democratic Women of Nazareth & Vicinity, Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women, Northampton County Council of Democratic Women, Greater Easton Area Democratic Women’s Club.

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The Northampton County Parks and Recreation Division will sponsor a stargazing program on Friday, August 30th, at Lake Minsi Park (West Shore Parking at 33 Blue Mountain Drive, Bangor, PA 18013). The event will take place from 8:30-9:30pm.

Join Dr. David Buckley, Professor of Physics and Resident Astronomer at East Stroudsburg University, for telescopic views of Saturn and its rings. Depending on the night's sky conditions, attendees may also view the great Hercules Star Cluster and the Ring Nebula. The group will also learn about the constellations Scorpius, Sagittarius, Cygnus the Swan, Lyra the Harp, the Big Dipper, the North Star, Cassiopeia, and Pegasus.

This program is recommended for adults and children six years and older. Dress to be outside at night and bring a lawn chair or blanket, binoculars, and a flashlight for use after the program when returning to your car. This program is free of charge; however, registration is required. To register, please visit: <https://norparks.recdesk.com/Community/Calendar>. Please note that this program depends on weather and sky conditions and will be canceled in inclement weather or overcast skies. Registered participants will be notified in the afternoon of August 30 only if the program is canceled.

Jose P.'s Artwork Chosen as The Winner of The Christmas in July Contest For The Allentown Rescue Mission

The Allentown Rescue Mission is thrilled to announce Jose P. as the winner of its Christmas in July holiday card contest. Jose's winter barn scene prevailed over five competing paintings, collecting 51 percent of the votes. All the paintings were created in the Mission's Therapeutic Art Class by men experiencing homelessness and residing at the Mission.

As the winner, Jose's painting will become the Allentown Rescue Mission's 2024 Christmas card. Jose

will be honored on the card and receive a gift card to a local eatery for his achievement.

"If it wasn't for the Allentown Rescue Mission and the therapeutic art class, I would never have known that I was an artist! Thank you to everyone who voted. Merry Christmas and God Bless," gushed Jose when he learned that his picture was chosen. Jose never imagined that he would end up in a homeless shelter. He worked hard before he came to the Mission but lost everything trying to help a family member save



their home. In the end, there were too many bills and the house he was trying to save was lost, along with his own home.

After graduating from the Allentown Rescue Mission's Transformation Program, Jose began working for the Clean Team Workforce. He continues to be a reliable, hard worker for the Clean Team Workforce and is excited to reunite with his family as soon as he has saved enough money for a place for them to live.

The Allentown Rescue Mission thanks all the men who participat-

ed in the contest. The contest and subsequent Christmas card would not have been possible without their willingness to take a risk and put their talents in the public eye.

The Allentown Rescue Mission, a 501c3, 123 bed non-profit homeless shelter has been providing shelter for homeless men since 1900. In addition to emergency shelter services (365 days a year), the Allentown Rescue Mission offers a residential life skills program, and transitional employment on the Clean Team Workforce

that's available for hire to the community. The Clean Team Workforce pays the men above PA state minimum wage—helping them save a nest egg to transition back into the community. In a typical year, the Allentown Rescue Mission provides shelter services for over 946 men per year, and serves over 42,000 meals a year to men in need. To refer someone to the Allentown Rescue Mission for services or to learn ways you can help make a difference please visit www.allentownrescuemission.org

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- Keep a safe distance between you and the bus. Also, remember that the bus driver can see you best when you are back away from the bus.
- When being dropped off, exit the bus and walk ten giant steps away from the bus.
- Stay away from the bus until the driver gives his/her signal that it's ok to approach.
- Have a safe place to wait for your bus, away from traffic and the street.
- Use the handrail to enter and exit the bus.
- Be aware of the street traffic around you. Drivers are required to follow certain rules of the road concerning school buses, however, not all do.
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Congratulations to the 2024 Blue Valley Farm Show Baby Photo Contest First place winner, Reese Smith of Roseto, PA. Photo Courtesy: Andy Bisher, Bangor Exchange Club

Northampton County Presents Check for New Bloodmobile



County Executive Lamont G. McClure and the Northampton County Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) are set to announce a contribution to bolster blood donation efforts in our region at a press conference on Monday, August 26th, in the Northampton County Government Center Rotunda at 2:00 p.m.

Plans were unveiled at the Northampton

County Economic Development Committee meeting on Thursday, June 6, 2024, for a new bloodmobile to be operated by Miller-Keystone Blood Center (MKBC). County Council approved a \$250,000 grant to fund a bloodmobile that will be converted from a new school-bus-style vehicle and will feature four inside donor chairs.

This new partnership is designed to address

the ongoing blood shortage by bringing donation opportunities directly to donors with a reliable, strong fleet. Blood drives play a crucial role in extending the reach of MKBC to individuals who wish to donate. The new bloodmobile supports MKBC's efforts to upgrade its fleet by sunseting

several current bloodmobile vehicles that have exceeded their life expectancy and replacing them with modern, more efficient options.

Members of the media are encouraged to attend the event to learn more about how this initiative will benefit the residents of Northampton County and beyond.

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HERES TO A GREAT 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR!

Project Self-Sufficiency Hosts Free Back-to-School Fair for Local Families

Hundreds of parents and children recently turned out for a Back-to-School Fair hosted by the Journey Family Success Center and Project Sussex Kids, the Sussex County Council for Young Children, at Project Self-Sufficiency. Designed to prepare the entire family for a successful academic year, the event featured numerous parenting skills workshops, children's activities, information from local social service agencies and healthcare organizations, ambulance tours, and on-site therapy dogs. Children and families received new backpacks filled with school supplies and were invited to enjoy free pizza and snacks while being serenaded by local musicians, in-

cluding the Exit 12 duo and singer/guitarist Mia Bonaldi. Transportation for patrons was provided by the Stocker Bus Company.

"We are pleased to be able to help both parents and children to prepare for a successful school year at the annual Back-to-School Fair," commented Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director at Project Self-Sufficiency. "We commend all of the social service agencies, healthcare organizations, businesses, and volunteers who have taken the time to lend a helping hand to local families in need."

In addition to dinner and activities for children, the Back-to-School Fair featured informative, break-out sessions for parents



Volunteer Gwen Yaskovic distributes new backpacks filled with school supplies to a local family.

about common parenting challenges, including managing bedtime routines, shopping, mealtimes, and disobedience. Presentations spotlighted the positive parenting techniques recommended by the Triple P program, which

is a cornerstone of Project Self-Sufficiency's offerings for parents throughout the year.

In addition to Project Self-Sufficiency, informational exhibits and interactive activities for children were provided by Atlantic Health

System, Newton Medical Center and the Pediatric Psychiatry Collaborative; Care Plus New Jersey Kinship Navigator; Caring Partners of Morris & Sussex Counties; Center for Family Services; Center for Prevention & Counseling; DASI; New Jersey Division of Child Protection & Permanency; Family Partners of Morris & Sussex Counties; Family Promise of Sussex County; Ginnie's House Children's Advocacy Center; Girl Scouts of Northern New Jersey Literacy Project; Morristown Medical Center, Safe Kids Safe Communities; New Jersey Statewide Student Support Services (NJ4S), Intensive Family Support Services; Newton Beha-

vioral Health; Newton Volunteer First Aid & Rescue Squad; NORWESCAP; South Jersey Industries, Energy Assistance for Elizabethtown Gas; Sussex County Community & Youth Services; Sussex County Division of Health, Office of Public Health Nursing; Sussex County Division of Social Services; Sussex County Library; Sussex County Special Child Health Services, NJ CEED Program; and Zufall Health Clinic.

Project Self-Sufficiency is a premier, comprehensive social services organization offering a wide range of services including job training, counseling, case management, high school diploma and basic needs assistance, home visitation for new and expectant parents, in-person and virtual training and recreational programs for parents and children, and mobile services delivered via Journey and the Food Project van. For more information about services available to individuals and families at Project Self-Sufficiency, visit www.projectsufficiency.org.

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Call Today: 610-588-1034

Safety Positions Needed

- Construction Safety Manager
- Forklift Instructor
- Crane & Rigging Instructor

Part Time Local Travel Ideal for retired professionals! Reply to: billie0215@gmail.com

Oil Burner Service Tech. Immediate opening! Full time w/ benefits **MUST BE experienced.** Call Us: 908-447-0709.

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

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

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

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

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

Vehicles

2015 F150 SuperCrew. ONLY 51,800 miles. Looks Brand New! Garage Kept V6 Eco Boost 4WD XLT Black. \$28,000 732-546-7755

Public Notice

Abandoned Boat
1987 O'Day 28 ft. Left at 1151 Turkey Ridge Rd, Mt Bethel, PA, 18343. Left around 10/2022. Registration No. 6558FP. Hull Identification XDYZ0015A989.

If the boat is not claimed & removed within 30 days after publication in this newspaper, the registration will be applied in Carol Freemyer's name.

Notice Paid for by Carol Freemyer, Running 3 Consecutive Weeks In The Free Weekly Press (8/22, 29, & 9/5/24)

Rentals

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

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

Classified Ad Order Form

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

Ads with Photos! \$18

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

One inch (actual size shown here)

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

Two inches (actual size shown here)

CLASSIFIEDS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN NOON ON FRIDAY IN ORDER TO BE PRINTED IN THE UPCOMING EDITION.

All classified ads must be paid in full, in advance. Credit cards are NOT accepted for charges less than \$25 Classifieds may be submitted by mail **PO BOX 606, Bangor, PA 18013** email: thepressads@gmail.com or fax: 610-599-1185. Classifieds are NOT accepted by phone Help Wanted ads are free for current advertisers.

Make Checks Payable to: The Free Weekly Press, LLC

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