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Pen Argyl Takes On Slate Belt Rivals, Bangor, In Their Girls Tennis Senior Night



Pen Argyl took on their Slate Belt Rivals, Bangor High School, in their Senior Night Girls Tennis Match on September 21st. Pen Argyl won, 3 to 2. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Pen Argyl Wins Over Whitehall in Girls Field Hockey



Pen Argyl took on Whitehall on September 21st in Field Hockey. The Lday Green Knights won, 3 to 1. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Bangor Wins Over Salisbury High School During Senior Night Soccer Game



Bangor went head to head with Salisbury High School during their Senior Night Girls Soccer Game on September 24th. Bangor won, 5 to 1. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Peterson and DiMaio Resolution Establishing 'John Basilone Day' in Honor of N.J.-Born WWII Hero Passes Assembly

One of the most heroic U.S. Marines of World War II and Raritan Borough native John Basilone may soon be honored with his own day in New Jersey. The Assembly on Thursday passed a resolution sponsored by Assemblymen Erik Peterson and John DiMaio, who represent Raritan in the Legislature, to create a statewide celebration on September 22 in honor of the American hero. "The Borough of Raritan has done an excellent job honoring our hometown hero John Basilone with a statue, a park, annual parades, and more. It is time for New Jersey to do the same so more people can come to learn about this courageous man and his patriotism," Peterson (R-Hunterdon) said. "He is someone we can all be proud of."

Gunnery Sergeant Basilone earned the military's highest award for valor,



the Medal of Honor, for his actions during the Battle for Henderson Field in the Guadalcanal campaign. Despite being offered an officer's commission stateside, Basilone insisted on returning to war and died fighting at Iwo Jima in 1945. He received the Navy Cross posthumously for extraordinary heroism during the Battle of Iwo Jima. Basilone is the only enlisted Marine to receive both decorations during World War II. His heroic acts were a central theme in HBO's "The Pacific."

"John Basilone can easily be considered one of the greatest American war heroes of the Greatest Generation. Under enemy fire on the first day of the invasion of Iwo Jima, he pushed forward to help his fellow Marines break down the Japanese defenses and voluntarily paid the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom. He more than earned a day in his honor in his home state of New Jersey. His sense of duty and extraordinary bravery are worth celebrating," DiMaio (R-Warren) said.

PEN ARGYL (3) VS BANGOR (2) SENIOR NIGHT GIRLS TENNIS



Valery Cardenas with her parents, Daniel and Pamela Goodenough



Angela DiPaolo with her parents, Gregory and Demetra Hedge



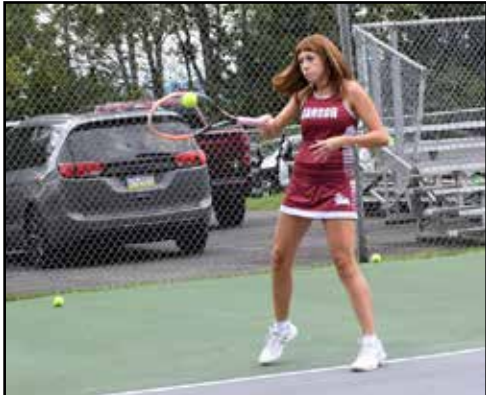
Kayla Gloth with her parents, Tessie and Jeremy Gloth



Andria Herrera-Carmona with her parents, Gemary Carmona and Ernesto Herrera



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Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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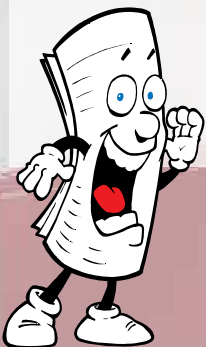
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MRA Delaware Bay Trawl Survey Monitors Crucial Finfish Populations

It's National Estuaries Week, and we're highlighting an important estuary system in New Jersey: the Delaware Bay. Estuaries are bodies of water where rivers meet the ocean. The Delaware Bay is one of the state's major estuaries and is home to many important finfish species. The Marine Resources Administration has conducted a juvenile finfish trawl survey in the bay since 1991, designed to study residential and transient



Photo courtesy of Gianna Schiattarella, NJDEP juvenile finfish species. Eleven sampling stations are set up in the "shallow" nearshore waters on

the New Jersey side of the bay. Data collected from this survey allows biologists to estimate relative abundance and forecast population changes of important finfish species. The survey takes place from April through October. This September, catch primarily consisted of bay anchovy, weakfish, blue crab, spot and other common species. Some more unique catch included harvest

fish, naked goby, American eel, and Atlantic thread herring. To learn more about MRA's Delaware Bay Juvenile Finfish Trawl Survey, check out our survey video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbZ-JQF-LaKg.

Shapiro Administration Holds A&M Composting Accountable for Waste and Water Violations Related to Recent Fires

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has entered into a Consent Order and Agreement (COA) (opens in a new tab) with A&M Composting, Inc. to resolve violations of Pennsylvania's Solid Waste Management Act and Clean Streams Law, that occurred during two fire events in November 2023 and December 2025 at the company's facility located in Penn Township, Lancaster County. When operating, the facility processes sludge biosolids from municipal wastewater treatment plants for use in landscaping and soil enhancement products. A&M is not allowed to accept waste for processing until DEP has inspected and approved the facility to begin operation under the relevant air, water, and waste permits. A&M agreed to pay a civil penalty totaling \$702,261 (\$625,737 to the Solid Waste Abatement Fund, and \$76,524 to the Clean Water Fund).

"Protecting Pennsylvanians' air, land, and water is DEP's top priority. It is imperative that we do our part to ensure a safe environment for our citizens," said DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley. "This agreement holds A&M Composting accountable for violations related to the fires at its Lancaster County facility and requires significant corrective actions intended to prevent a future occurrence." In addition to the civil penalty, A&M Composting has agreed to make significant operational changes at the facility. Those changes include: Restoring the building, biofilters, and equipment to the operating standards of its Solid Waste Permit, most recently modified on September 30, 2024. Developing and submitting to DEP for review, the facility's firefighting standard operating procedures (SOPs) for proper management of storm and fire water run-off from

any future firefighting activities at the site. The firefighting SOPs shall include stormwater BMPs to be implemented during any future firefighting activities onsite. Updating its Preparedness, Prevention and Contingency (PPC) plan specifying a procedure for monitoring, identifying, and extinguishing fires within the facility. Pennsylvania's Environmental Rights Amendment guarantees Pennsylvanians the right to clean air and pure water. Under Governor Josh Shapiro's leadership, his Administration will continue to enforce the Commonwealth's environmental laws and regulations and hold companies accountable when they violate those requirements. Visit www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/dep-regions/south-central-regional-office/a-and-m-composting-fire for additional information regarding the A&M Composting COA.

New to the Blue Mountain Community Library

Blue Mountain Community Library News:

The library is located at 216 S. Robinson Ave. in Pen Argyl. Open hours are Monday-Saturday 10am-12pm and Monday and Thursday 6-8pm. Questions? Call 610-863-3029 or email info@bmcl.org.

Fall Preschool Storytime will meet the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 10:30am: Oct. 7 and 21, Nov. 4 and 18, and Dec. 2 and 16. Participants are required to register for each storytime they plan to attend; send child's name, birthdate, parent/guardian's name, and phone number to info@bmcl.org, or provide this info at the library or via 610-863-3029. Deadline is Monday two days prior to each storytime. Spots are limited.

Participate in our fall silent auction Oct. 12-Nov. 7. We will have many fabulous items on which to bid!

The adult book discussion group next meets on Tues., Oct. 13 at 6:30pm to discuss "The Secret Book Society" by Madeline Martin. Email info@bmcl.org to RSVP.

Grades 4-6, mark your calendars now for a winter program with 4-H: Wed., Nov. 18 at 5:30pm - DiNovember! Registration open mid-Oct.; spots are limited.

Dine at The Slate Pub on Tues., Oct. 27, and a portion of your bill will go to the library.

Order shirts and sweatshirts with the BMCL logo and get them in time for Christmas! Sizes adult S-XXXL are available in light gray or medium blue, with the BMCL logo in dark blue on the left chest. Order forms are available at the library now through Nov. 20 at noon. Samples will be available soon.

New to the circulating collection:

Adult fiction:

This Changes Everything (Lisa Scottoline); Agrippa (Robert Harris); The Great Wherever (Shannon Sanders); The Most Dangerous Games (MrBeast and James Patterson); The Birthing Tree (Amanda Peters); Exit Party (Emily St. John Mandel); The Pirate Queen (Ariel Lawhon); Close Knit (Jenny Colgan)

Adult nonfiction:

Are They Dead Yet? (Sam Roberts); Never Say Die (Ke Huy Quan); Famesick (Lena Dunham); Confronting America (Bill O'Reilly)

Large print:

Murder at the Grand Alpine Hotel (Lucy Foley)

Juvenile fiction:

- Captain Underpants and the Wrath of the Wicked Wedgie Woman (Dav Pilkey); The Pug Who Wanted to Be a Pumpkin (Bella Swift); A Monster of a Mystery (Franklin W. Dixon); Miss Banks Pulls Lots of Pranks! (Dan Gutman); The Scarecrow (Edgar J. Hyde); I Survived Hurricane Katrina, 2005 (Lauren Tarshis); The Last Kids on Earth (Max Brallier); Good Morning, Crayons (Drew Daywalt); No One Likes a Fart (Zoe Foster Blake); This Book Is Boring! (Ron Keres); Creepy Pair of Underwear! (Aaron Reynolds)

Juvenile nonfiction:

- Who Was Sally Ride? (Megan Stine); Who Was Amelia Earhart? (Kate Boehm Jerome); Who Was Jane Goodall? (Roberta Edwards); Adorable Animals (Mary Quattlebaum); Bats (Elizabeth Carney); There's No Place Like Space! (Tish Rabe); The Presidents Visual Encyclopedia; America's National Parks (Alexa Ward); Lizzie Demands a Seat! (Beth Anderson); The Story of Buildings (Patrick Dillon); Bet You Didn't Know! 2 (National Geographic); 5,000 Awesome Facts (National Geographic)

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BANGOR (5) VS SALISBURY (1) SENIOR NIGHT GIRLS SOCCER



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Angela DiPaolo with her parents, Gregory and Demetra Hedge



Kayla Gloth with her parents, Tessie and Jeremy Gloth



Valery Cardenas with her parents, Daniel and Pamela Goodenough



Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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Take DRBC’s Water Resource Plan Survey



The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) is developing a Water Resources Resilience Plan to better understand and prepare for hazards such as flooding and drought that could impact water resources throughout the Delaware River Basin. Residents are invited to take a brief three-minute survey about their awareness and concerns regarding potential threats to our region’s water resources. To take the survey visit: form.jotform.com/261115637853055

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PUBLIC DEDICATION CEREMONY

HONORING THE LIFE AND SACRIFICE OF
SGT. CORNELIUS A. "DICK" O'DONNELL #367

Sgt. O'Donnell, Station Commander of Troop "B" Washington Station, gave his life in the line of duty, murdered on July 16, 1945.

This memorial plaque has been created to honor his service.

This year, July 16th marked the 81st Anniversary of Sergeant O'Donnell's ultimate sacrifice.

DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:
Friday, October 9 th , 2026	2:00 PM	Harmony Twp. Recreation Pavilion 3003 Belvidere Road (Route 519) Phillipsburg, NJ 08865

FEATURING NJSP ACTING SUPERINTENDENT JEANNE HENGEMUHLE, with State, County & Municipal Dignitaries, and descendant relatives of SGT. O'DONNELL.

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND THIS HONORABLE EVENT.

NJSP - TROOP B WASHINGTON STATION

Kean, Gillen, Van Drew Introduce Legislation to Reduce Commuting Expenses

Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. (NJ-07), Congresswoman Laura Gillen (NY-04), and Congressman Jefferson Van Drew (NJ-02) introduced the Lowering Commuting Costs Act that would help hardworking families save money on their daily commutes to work. "Commuting costs strain hardworking New Jerseyans' bottom lines," said Congressman Kean. "The Lowering Commuting Costs Act would create a new deduction for taxpayers to save thousands of dollars of costs incurred when commuting, whether on train fare, on congestion pricing tolls, and more. I am proud to co-lead this bill to help families keep more of their hard-earned money and reduce the monetary strain

of daily commutes." "Hardworking Long Islanders are forced to pay skyrocketing costs just to get to work, making the cost of living crisis even worse," said Rep. Gillen. "With the rising price of gas, LIRR fares and the NYC congestion tax, working families are left with no affordable way to get to their jobs. This bipartisan bill will help families save money as they commute to work and contribute to the economy by creating the first-ever tax credit for personal commuting expenses." "For millions of Americans, just getting to work every day is expensive," said Rep. Van Drew. "Gas is expensive, tolls are expensive, and for a lot of families, those costs add up to thousands of dollars a

year. If businesses can deduct the cost of doing business, working people should be able to deduct what it takes to get to and from their jobs. I am proud to join Congresswoman Gillen on this bill and give some of that money back to the people who earn it." The Lowering Commuting Costs Act would establish a federal income tax deduction of \$340 a month for individuals or \$680 for joint filers, for personal commuting expenses, including the cost of gas, public transit, and tolls such as New York City's congestion pricing. Congressman Kean has championed efforts to provide tax relief and lower costs for New Jersey families in the U.S. House of Representatives. Congressman

Kean also led the fight to restore the full State and Local Tax (SALT) Deduction for middle-class families. In the 2025 Reconciliation law, Congressman Kean successfully fought to quadruple the SALT deduction to \$40,000, delivering a major victory for New Jersey homeowners. In March 2026, he introduced the Tax Relief for Renters Act that would put more money back into the pockets of Americans by allowing renters to claim a deduction of one month's rent on their personal taxes each year. In January 2026, he introduced the Make American Housing Affordable Act, legislation that would establish a new tax credit for Americans purchasing their primary home.

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Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey Awarded \$425,000 Affordable Housing Program Grant to Preserve 25 Homes.

Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey has been awarded a \$425,000 Affordable Housing Program grant through the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York and Valley National Bank to support its Critical Home Repair in Northwest NJ initiative.

The grant will help Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey complete critical repairs for 25 income-eligible, owner-occupied households across Warren and Sussex counties. The preservation-focused program helps homeowners address urgent health, safety and accessibility needs so they can remain safely and affordably in their homes.

Funding will support high-impact rehabilitation work including roofing, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, structural repairs, weatherization and accessibility modifications.

“This award will allow us to help more neighbors remain safe, warm and dry in the homes they already own,” said Ben Eskow, Chief Executive Officer of Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey. “Critical repairs can prevent displacement, protect affordable housing and preserve the dignity and stability of families who have deep roots in our local communities. We’re so blessed to be partners in these efforts and can’t wait to help make a difference.”

The Critical Home Repair initiative focuses on “warm, safe and dry” repairs that address documented health and safety concerns while reducing the risk of displacement. By improving existing homes rather than building new ones, the program helps stabilize neighborhoods, protect local affordable housing stock and support homeowners, including seniors and residents with disabilities, who may otherwise struggle to afford major repairs.

Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey will identify and screen eligible homeowners, conduct home assessments, manage contractor proposals, oversee repair work and mobilize volunteers where appropriate. For nonemergency projects, the affiliate generally obtains at least two cost proposals and selects the lower reasonable proposal; urgent repairs may be approved on an expedited basis when immediate action is needed.

“Habitat for Humanity of NWNJ is committed to the letter and spirit of the U.S. Fair Housing Act and other civil rights laws. We do not discriminate in the provision of home repair services or financial assistance on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin. Our program is dedicated to furthering fair housing by ensuring all community members have equal access to safe and sustainable housing opportunities.”

Community members, partners and supporters can contact Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey to learn more about the Home Repair Program and ways to help preserve affordable homeownership across Warren and Sussex counties. More information can be found at habitatnwnj.org or by calling the Washington, NJ office at 908-835-1300.

About Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey

Habitat for Humanity Northwest New Jersey partners with families, volunteers, donors and community organizations to build, repair and preserve safe, decent and affordable homes. Through its Home Repair Program, the affiliate helps low- to moderate-income homeowners address critical repair needs, improve accessibility and remain stable in the communities they call home.



The East Bangor UMC Church welcomes you to a FREE "Ham & Noodle Bake" Dinner on Sunday, October 4th, from 4:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. This is TAKE-OUT only at 136 W. Central Ave. (Rt. 512), East Bangor, PA (www.ebumc.org)

The Holiday Season Is Approaching - Give Your Guests The Gift of Clean Air

(NAPSI)—This holiday season, when family and friends gather at your house, you can all breathe easier if you’ve done one unexpected thing: Have your air ducts cleaned.

The Problem:

Even the most spotless home made spic and span for celebrating can have dirty ducts that can’t be seen but can contribute to poor indoor air quality and



exacerbate health issues—especially for those with allergies, asthma, respiratory conditions, or autoimmune disorders. That’s no way to greet your guests—and Santa gets enough air pollution in

those chimneys.

What To Do:

Fortunately, there is a solution. Air duct cleaning, when done properly, is a great way to help you, your family and visitors breathe clean, healthy air. It can also improve your home’s energy efficiency, and that leaves you more money for purchasing presents.

Who Can Help:

The National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA) is dedicated to helping homeowners with the air duct cleaning process. These professionals have technicians on staff with advanced training and certification in HVAC system cleaning, and they’re required to follow higher standards.

To find qualified and certified air duct cleaning professionals, visit www.breathingclean.com.

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PEN ARGYL (3) VS WHITEHALL (1) FIELD HOCKEY



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PFBC Offers Grants Up To 25k To Inspire Interest In Fishing And Boating

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is once again seeking applicants for grants to support education programs that promote new and renewed interest in fishing and boating in Pennsylvania through the recruitment of new participants, retention of existing participants, and reactivation of former participants – collectively known as "R3."

The grant application period is opened on September 16, 2026, through December 1, 2026. The application and additional information can be found on the PFBC website (Fishandboat.com).

"R3 Grants are an outstanding opportunity for organizations to partner in our mission to get everyone to enjoy Pennsylvania's waterways," said Walt Dietz, PFBC



Aquatic Resources Education Manager. "We value the innovation and inspiration that our applicants bring to reach new audiences for angling and boating."

Accessible and inclusive learning opportunities increase fishing and boating knowledge, build confidence in skills, facilitate social support, and empower participants to enjoy the waters in their communities.

During the most recent round of grants awarded

in 2026, the PFBC provided \$197,446 in R3 Grant funding to support 16 education projects in 13 counties and one statewide effort. Recipients of the grant successfully demonstrated ways in which their new or expanded projects progress R3 initiatives and connect Pennsylvanians with state waterways.

The R3 Grant will reimburse qualifying organizations up to \$25,000 for eligible expenses for projects conducted from approximately July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2028. The grant requires a minimum 25% match of total project costs. At this time, applications for multi-year grants are not being accepted.

Designer Handbag Bingo & Tricky Tray
Sunday, October 18th
Doors open at 12pm | Games Begin 1:00PM
Proceeds support our local Veterans, VA Hospital & VALOR

Location: American Legion Auxiliary Unit 346
126 East 5th Street, East Stroudsburg, PA
Lunch, Beverages & Snacks Available for Purchase

"Early Bird Tickets" \$30, must be purchased by September 30th, \$35 After the 30th or at the Door.
Includes 15 Regular Games and 1 Jackpot Game *Super Jackpot is Extra*
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LUMBERJACK NIGHT

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Kiwanis Club of Jefferson Township, NJ, Ranked Number One In The Entire United States.



New Jersey District Kiwanis International Governor Frank Cahill presents Yvonne Ioffredo, Treasurer of the Kiwanis Club of Jefferson Township, with a plaque congratulating the club on achieving the highest number of member registrations at its organizational meeting in January.

Of all the clubs chartered during the service year, the Kiwanis Club of Jefferson Township ranked number one in the entire United States. Cahill's theme for his year was "Double Down with Frank," and Jefferson far exceeded the membership required to charter a new Kiwanis club. The presentation was made during the New Jersey District Kiwanis Convention, held September 17-20 at the Tropicana in Atlantic City. Kiwanis International's mission is to empower communities to improve the world by making lasting differences in the lives of children. For information, email fcahill@njkiwanis.org or call (973) 559-6000.

New to the Bangor Public Library

39 S Main St, Bangor, PA 18013
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Adult Fiction

Our Noble Selves: A Novel by Kate Atkinson; *Dead Beat* by Leigh Bardugo; *I'll Be Watching You* by Allison Brennan; *The Barman of the Ritz: A Novel* by Philippe Collin; *Murder at the Grand Alpine Hotel* by Lucy Foley; *Hollywood Ending* by John Green; *The Dark Lord's Guide to Honeymooning (and Other Acts of Tyranny)* by Tiffany Hunt; *We Chase Shadows* by Richard Osman; *The Girl with Seven Lives* by Vikas Swarup

Adult Non Fiction:

Story Telling: A Writing Life by Isabel Allende; *84, Charing Cross Road* by Helene Hanff; *The Butterfly Season: What Sixty-four Butterflies Taught Me About Nature's Great Mysteries and the Meaning of Life* by Lea Korsgaard; *Redwood: The Untold Story of the Cold War's Most Extraordinary Spy* by Ben Macintyre; *Her America: Eight Women Who Transformed the Nation* by Heather B. Moore; *Confronting America: What Has to Change* by Bill O'Reilly; *This is Me: A Reckoning* by Hayden Panettiere; *Never Say Die: A Memoir* by Ke Huy Quan; *Swan Song: Diana, My Sister* by Charles Spencer; *Queens and Kings: An Unusually Personal History* by Lucy Worsley

Large Print Adult Fiction:
Fury in Death by J. D. Robb

Easy Fiction:

Vampurr by Justin Colon; *Here a Creak, There A Shriek!* By Kelly Conroy; *Autumn's Abundance: An Indigenous Celebration of Nature* by Kaitlin B. Curtice; *Gruffalo Granny* by Julia Donaldson; *Millie Fleur's Pumpkin Problem* by Christy Mandin; *How' for Halloween* by Nate Lovett; *Richard Scarry's Cars and Trucks and Things That Go* by Richard Scarry; *Richard Scarry's Best World Book Ever* by Richard Scarry; *The Eyebrows of Doom* by Steve Smallman; *Ten Little Jack-O-Lanterns: A Counting Storybook* by Robert Dunn; *The Underwearwolf* by Gideon Sterer; *Griselda Snook's Spectacular Books* by Barry Timms

Junior Fiction:

I Survived the Night of the Lions, 2025 by Lauren Tarshis

Junior Non Fiction:

A World Full of Spooky Stories: 50 Tales to Make Your Spine Tingle by Angela McAllister

Young Adult Fiction:

The Mirror of Infinite Endings: A Once Upon a Broken Heart Companion by Stephanie Garber; *And Then There Were None: Vol. 1* by Aya Nikaido

DVDs:

Outlanders Season Eight; *Toy Story 5*

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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary?



Mary E. Stone
Stone Associates
Landscape Design
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Hello fellow readers,
As you may recall from a spring chat, I am now in charge of maintaining the lawn and think back on the nervousness I felt, having never operated a beefy riding mower. Years ago, I opted to push-mow the steep slope covering most of the front lawn leading toward Jacksonburg Creek.
The good news is my early apprenticeship with the John Deere unfolded gratefully slowly, as our unusually dry spring kept the lawn slow to grow. Alongside that benefit, however, the clover and grass seed I spread to repair areas disturbed by last fall’s boulder wall construction didn’t grow very well. So, a second round of seeding this fall is in store.

Almost three weeks before the official start of fall, while mowing the lawn, I noticed many leaves had already fallen from my adored sugar maple near the screened porch, gracing the back lawn toward the footbridge. Oddly, most hadn’t displayed their usual autumn brilliance. There were some yellows, but most browned and dropped.
I adore how the bark is alive with a tapestry of powdery blue lichen interwoven with moss. Rest assured, their presence does not indicate the tree’s demise.
Unlike opportunistic plants such as wisteria, poison ivy, mile-a-minute weed, and kudzu that can smother trees, moss and lichen cause no harm. They’re merely seeking a structure to call home—trunks, branches, rocks, even furniture.
Lichen is especially fascinating—a partnership primarily between fungus and algae or cyanobacteria. The photosynthetic partner makes food, supporting the fungus and creating a remarkably self-sufficient combination that takes no nutrients from the tree. Think of lichen as an air plant of sorts (*Tillandsia* spp.), those trendy alien-looking



houseplants that don’t require soil.
Lichens can also reveal air quality; pollution-sensitive species decline when air quality deteriorates. My maple’s lichen seems to be breathing well and happily thriving.
Back to the plentiful early fallen leaves. Initially, I mowed over them a few times, mulching them into the lawn where they’ll decompose and return nutrients to the soil. Two weeks later, the leaf drop was far too much to mow.
So, the day before the official start of fall, Jollee and I raked leaves onto a tarp and dragged them to the compost



pile to create leaf mold. Decomposed leaves feed earthworms and beneficial microbes, help lighten clay soil, retain moisture, and suppress weeds. A far more beneficial mulch, in my book.



While raking, shocked at the size of the pile, I looked up and realized nearly half the maple’s canopy was already bare.
Premature leaf drop without the usual fall color can signal stress, and I suspect our roller coaster of weather contributed—an unusually dry spring followed by a remarkably wet summer. Sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*) are sensitive to drought. When water becomes scarce, trees can slow photosynthesis and ultimately shed leaves, reducing water loss.
Indeed, letting go can be a means of survival. Sound familiar?
Speaking of resilience, last November, when the new boulder wall was built, I transplanted a five-foot-tall, skinny-trunked volunteer tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) that was in the way. All season I watched for signs of life. No leaves formed, though the wood remained flexible.
I held hope—until recently, when the upper branches became brittle. With a volunteer sycamore gifted by a dear friend in hand, I decided to replace the baby tuliptree. As I weeded around its base, I discovered adorable tiny green leaves.
The little tree wasn’t dead after all. It was regrouping. While everything aboveground appeared lifeless, the roots had been busy preparing to push out new growth.
The resilience of trees. One letting go of leaves early, conserving resources after a stressful season. Another preparing to begin again. And the lichen thriving, asking only for a place to call home.
What looks like decline isn’t always demise. Letting go can be part of surviving. And sometimes, when nothing seems to be happening, growth is underway beneath the surface.
The same is true in our own Garden of Life.
Garden Dilemmas? AskMaryStone.com or tune in on your favorite podcast app.



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Senator Rosemary Brown’s Work with the Governor’s Advisory Commission on Women



As a member of the Governor’s Advisory Commission on Women, and through my legislative initiatives, I have worked to advance important policy that support women, mothers and families across Pennsylvania.

This year, my Midwifery Modernization legislation, Senate Bill 507, was signed into law following five years of collaboration with healthcare professionals, licensing boards and maternal health advocates. The law modernizes Pennsylvania’s licensure requirements for certified midwives, improves collaboration between midwives and physicians, and updates prescription authority, including for the treatment of substance use disorders. These changes will help expand the number of qualified maternal healthcare professionals available to women, particularly in rural and underserved communities, while improving access to care throughout pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum recovery.

I have also worked to address the financial pressures facing working parents. I advocated for the expansion of Pennsylvania’s Child and Dependent Care Enhancement Tax Credit, which helps families offset the cost of child-care and dependent care.

The expansion increased the maximum benefit from \$630 to \$2,100 per family and, in 2024 alone, delivered \$136.5 million in tax relief to nearly 219,000 working families across Pennsylvania.

Above, you can see a video further detailing the work we do on the Governor’s Advisory Commission on Women.

6th Annual “Kindness Goes Full Circle” Thanksgiving Food Sponsorship Drive

Full Circle Removal is proud to announce the return of its 6th Annual Kindness Goes Full Circle Thanksgiving Food Sponsorship Drive, continuing a community tradition dedicated to helping local families enjoy a warm and complete Thanksgiving meal.

Over the past five years, the Kindness Goes Full Circle initiative has raised more than \$50,000 and helped provide Thanksgiving meals to more than 10,000 people throughout the local community. Now entering its sixth year, Full Circle Removal is once again calling on local residents, businesses, organizations, and community partners to help make an even greater impact.

Through the program, a \$30 sponsorship provides a complete Thanksgiving meal for a family of four, including turkey breast, traditional sides, and dessert. Donations of any amount are welcomed, with funds going directly toward the purchase of food from ShopRite in Brodheadsville, Pennsylvania.

“Kindness Goes Full Circle has grown into something truly special because of the generosity of our community,” said Brian Davis of Full Circle Removal. “Every year, local businesses, families, volunteers, and friends come together to make sure our neighbors can enjoy a Thanksgiving meal. Whether someone sponsors one family or simply gives what they can, every contribution makes a difference.”

Full Circle Removal extends its gratitude to the many sponsors and volunteers who have supported the initiative over the past five years and helped it grow into an annual community tradition.

The company is currently seeking individual sponsors, business sponsors, community partners, and volunteers to support this year’s drive. Those interested in donating, sponsoring meals, volunteering, or learning more about the 6th Annual Kindness Goes Full Circle Food Sponsorship Drive can contact Brian Davis directly at 610-550-6270.

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Pennsylvania Celebrated National Hunting and Fishing Day on September 26th

Pennsylvania will celebrate National Hunting and Fishing Day on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026, to recognize the significant contributions of hunters and anglers to wildlife conservation efforts across the Commonwealth. Pennsylvania is proud to have more than 1.1 million licensed anglers and 850,000 licensed hunters.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) annually observe Hunting and Fishing Day to recognize the generations of hunters and anglers who have contributed to the state's rich conservation legacy. These efforts have played a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing the work being done in both agencies on behalf of a diverse array of wildlife and their habitats.

Governor Josh Shapiro signed a proclamation recognizing Hunting and Fishing Day in Pennsylvania to highlight the important role of sportsmen and sportswomen in conserving wildlife and natural resources. The Governor currently serves as the Democratic Co-Chair of the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC) – one of three caucus programs under the Congressional Sportsmen's Foun-

ation (CSF).

The Governor's proclamation notes that more than two million hunters and anglers have generated more than \$125 million for conservation efforts in our state. It also acknowledges hunters and anglers as being among the first conservationists and applauds their efforts in providing healthy and sustainable natural resources through the purchase of their hunting and fishing licenses.

"Pennsylvania's hunters and anglers have long understood that our outdoor traditions come with a responsibility to give back," said Derek Eberly, Director of the Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation. "Through their stewardship, contributions to conservation, support for sound wildlife management, and commitment to public access, they help care for the Commonwealth's woods, waters, fish, and wildlife. National Hunting and Fishing Day celebrates that legacy, welcomes new participants, and inspires the next generation to carry it forward."

Currently, the PGC manages more than 300 state game lands, which span more than 1.5 million acres in 66 counties. The agency manages 480 species

of wild birds and mammals, as well as their habitats, while promoting hunting and trapping to current and future generations.

Last year, Governor Shapiro signed historic bipartisan legislation, Act No. 36, into law, repealing Pennsylvania's ban on Sunday hunting — expanding opportunities and strengthening wildlife conservation efforts while growing rural economies across the Commonwealth.

"Pennsylvania's hunting heritage remains as strong as ever, thanks to our hunters and conservationists who are in our woods and fields every year," said Steve Smith, PGC Executive Director. "We have a lot to celebrate because Pennsylvania is a top hunting state in the nation. Our total license numbers continue to rank second, only behind Texas. We ranked first in deer harvest density in 2024, and second in overall harvest, again only behind Texas. Our agency places high value on the many contributions of our hunters. We are looking forward to the hunting seasons ahead, which include even more Sunday hunting opportunities. We wish all hunters a safe, fun, and successful license year ahead."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in 2022, estimated ap-



proximately 6.4 million hunting trips are taken each year in Pennsylvania. Of those, 2.1 million are estimated to take place on public land, with a third of them (700,000, or possibly more) occurring on State Game Lands.

According to the American Sportfishing Association, recreational fishing provides a \$5.7 billion total economic impact, as well as 32,280 jobs related to fishing, and contributes \$304 million to state and local taxes.

"Pennsylvania's year-round fishing opportunities and the variety of ways to enjoy the outdoors are second to none," said Tim Schaeffer, PFBC Executive

Hunting & Fishing Day in PA to celebrate hunters and anglers and recognize them for their support of responsible management of wildlife and natural resources.

The public is invited to attend the Game Commission's Hunting and Fishing Day event on Sunday, Sept. 27, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, located at 100 Museum Road, Stevens, PA. Attendees can participate in a number of activities, including pellet gun shooting, archery instruction, on-site fishing, Touch a Truck, as well as hunting dog and deer processing demonstrations. The event is free and open to the public. Visit pa.gov/pgc or call 717-733-1512 for more information about the event.

National Hunting and Fishing Day, established in 1972, celebrates and recognizes the nation's outdoor heritage and the critical role hunters, anglers, and recreational shooters play in conservation. Federal excise tax dollars on hunting, fishing, and shooting equipment are allocated as grants to state fish and wildlife agencies to benefit wildlife, their habitats, and outdoor opportunities. Each purchase of this gear contributes directly to conservation efforts.

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ANNOUNCEMENT:

Attorney Ronold J. Karasek has been in practice for over fifty (50) years. He has worked (and continues to work) at the Bangor office for his entire legal career.

*You may have noticed the sign in front of 641 Market Street, Bangor, Pennsylvania has recently changed from **KARASEK LAW OFFICES, LLC** to **FLORIO, PERRUCCI, STEINHARDT, CAPPELLI, TIPTON & TAYLOR, LLC**.*

This change has occurred as Attorney Karasek will be joining the law firm of Florio, Perrucci. This is an excellent and well-respected law firm founded in 1996 by the late former New Jersey Governor, James Florio.

Retired Judge Leonard N. Zito and Attorney William E. Hutcheson, III will also continue to work from the Bangor office as members of this firm.

So please know that Attorney Karasek is still in practice, is still taking clients and is available to handle your legal needs. Feel free to stop in or call 610-588-0224 with your legal questions or concerns. We look forward to continuing to work with you to address all your legal matters.



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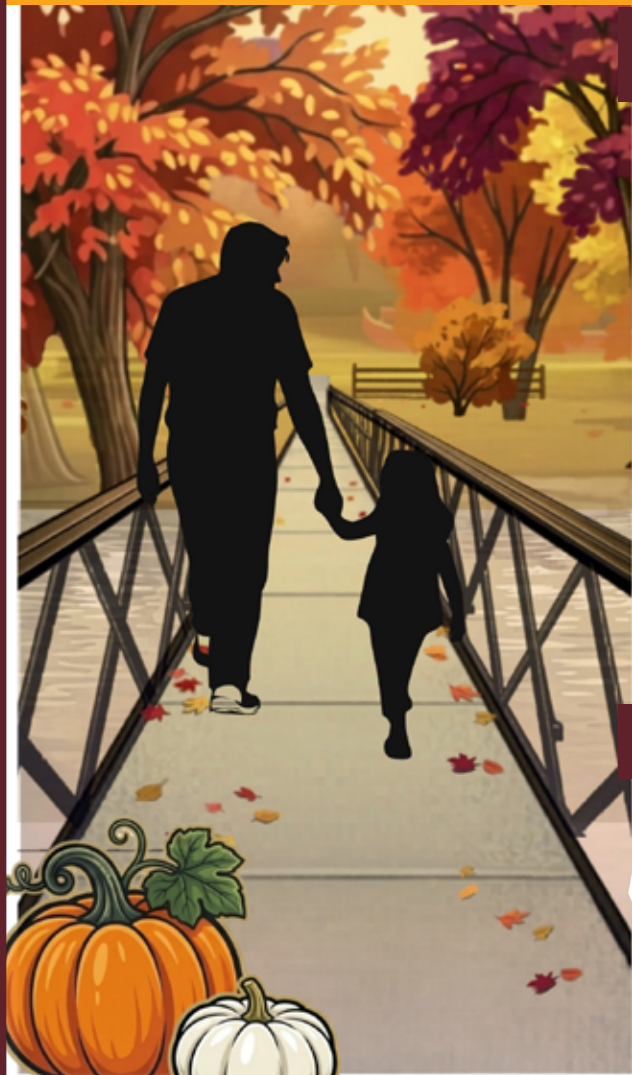
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