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Bangor Wins With a 5-0 Shut Out Over Pleasant Valley In Girls Tennis



Bangor took on Pleasant Valley High School in Girls Tennis on September 3rd, winning the match 5 to 0. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Pen Argyl Wins Over Palmerton High School In Boys Soccer



Pen Argyl went head to head against Palmerton High School in Boys Soccer on September 6th. The Green Knights beat the Blue Bombers, 4 to 2. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press



North Warren Goes Head To Head Against Wallkill Valley High School in Football

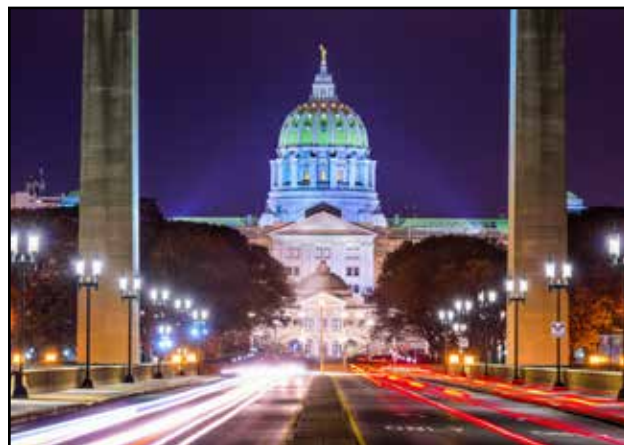


North Warren took on Wallkill Valley High School in their Youth Night Football game on September 5th, but North Warren was defeated, 6 to 29. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

State Budget Stalemate For Pennsylvania - Senator Urges "We Must Act Responsibly"

The delayed passage of Pennsylvania's full state budget is already creating real-world consequences for our communities. Service providers, local governments, and school districts are facing disruptions because they don't have access to the funding they rely on to serve our residents.

That's why the Senate recently passed a short-term budget identical to last year's, allowing funding to begin flowing immediately while broader negotiations continue. I strongly supported this action. Critical services should not suffer because of grid-



lock in Harrisburg. Unfortunately, the House Democrat Leadership and members would not support this temporary solution. Why are we at a stand-

still? Passing the full budget requires agreement between the House, Senate, and the Governor—and one of the biggest sticking points

BUDGET cont'd on pg 2

New in the Bangor Public Library

Adult Fiction:

The color of death: a novel by Trey Gowdy 1964; Kakigori summer by Emily Itami; Love’s a witch by Tricia O’Malley; The last letter of Rachel Ellsworth: a novel by Barbara O’Neal 1959; Pro bono by Thomas Perry 1947; Forget me not: a novel by Stacy Willingham

Easy Non Fiction:

Sign language & food by Bela Davis; Sign language & numbers by Bela Davis; Sign language & farm animals by Bela Davis; Mercury by Emma Bassier; Venus by Emma Bassier; Mars by Emma Bassier; Jupiter by Emma Bassier; Saturn by Emma Bassier; Uranus by Emma Bassier; Neptune by Emma Bassier; Earth by Emma Bassier; Fruits by Grace Hansen; Wolf spiders by Claire Archer; Black widow spiders by Claire Archer; Praying mantis by Grace Hansen; Giraffe weevil by Grace Hansen; Atlas moth by Grace Hansen; Asian giant hornet by Grace Hansen; Super simple no-bake cookies: easy cookie recipes for kids! by Alex Kuskowski; Super simple classic cookies: easy cook respites for kids! by Alex Kuskowski; Super simple holiday cookies: easy respites for kids! by Alex Kuskowski; England by Grace Hansen; Germany by Julie Murray 1969; France by Julie Murray 1969; Italy by Julie Murray 1969; China by Julie Murray 1969-; Canada by Julie Murray 1969-; Mexico by Julie Murray 1969-

Junior Non Fiction:

How airplanes fly by Tammy Gagne; How rockets reach space by Arnold Ringstad; Trains by Priyanka Lamichhane; Planes by Priyanka Lamichhane; Cars by Corey Anderson; Trucks by Mari Bolte; Tractors by Brenda Scott Royce; Motorcycles by Deborah A. Rogus

BUDGET

Continued from page 1

is the overall spending number. Let’s break down the numbers: Pennsylvania’s projected revenue is approximately \$47 billion. Roughly \$2 billion goes to refunds and tax credits. That leaves \$45 billion available to appropriate. The Governor has proposed \$51.5 billion in spending. The House is proposing \$50.5 billion. Both proposals significantly exceed our available revenue and would require dipping into our reserves. That may work in the short term, but it sets Pennsylvanians up for future tax increases or cuts to essential programs. Relying on one-time funding for ongoing expenses is like buying a house with only enough money to cover the first year’s mortgage. Just like any household budget, you can’t sustainably spend more than you bring in. Fiscal responsibility now helps protect families and taxpayers. I encourage all residents to contact their House member and the Governor’s office. Ask

them: What taxes are you willing to raise on your constituents to cover this level of spending? One thing I know for sure – taxpayers in our community are tapped out! I am not willing to set you up for a tax increase.

Bangor Elks Lodge #1106 Makes \$4,500 Donation



The Bangor Elks Lodge #1106 is proud to donate \$4500 to the Pennsylvania Elks Home Service program. Since 1963, the PA Elks Home Service program has been helping to improve the quality of life for thousands of children and adults throughout Pennsylvania. An individual of any age who has a developmental disability, a child or adult with physical or mental delays, services can be provided. To learn more about this service project go to www.elks.org.

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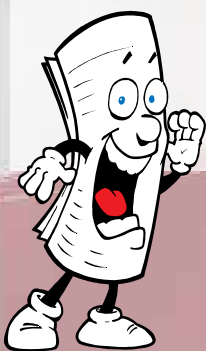
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BANGOR (5) VS PLEASANT VALLEY GIRLS TENNIS (0)

Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press



Free Job Training Program for Women in NJ Starts in February

Project Self-Sufficiency announces that the next session of its popular employment skills training program, Higher Opportunities for Women (HOW), will launch September 23rd. The 16-week HOW Program combines intensive computer skills training with classroom instruction and on-the-job experience. Curriculum prepares women who have been out of the work force or underemployed to seek entry-level office administrative positions. Classes will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the agency’s campus, located at 127 Mill Street in Newton. Open Houses about the Higher Opportunities for Women program will be held at 10:00 a.m., September 11th, and 4:00 p.m., September 10th and 17th. Interested participants are invited to call 973-940-3500 or visit www.projectsselfsufficiency.org/higher-opportunities-for-women to enroll.



Women who take part in the agency’s HOW program can expect 80 hours of computer skills training, including instruction in Microsoft Word, Excel, and other applications. The HOW program also includes 40 hours of classroom instruction and 120 hours of an unpaid externship at a community employment site, which further prepares participants to successfully venture into the job market. Additional coursework focuses on workplace navigation, life skills training, resume preparation, and inter-

viewing strategies. Since the HOW program’s inception, more than 1,000 women have gained self-confidence and learned marketable skills which placed them on the path to economic self-sufficiency. Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director of Project Self-Sufficiency explains that the HOW program is more than just a job-skills program. “The job market is constantly evolving, and the Higher Opportunities for Women program gives participants the skills and confidence they need for success.”

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Summer Is Not Over Until Washington, NJ, Rocks Out With The Festival in the Borough

Washington Borough will end summer with a rockin’ great time when it hosts the 21st Annual Festival in the Borough on Saturday Sept. 20.

This year’s event, presented by the Washington Business Improvement District, the region’s largest street and music festival, features an array of local, regional and national acts with three stages of music, line dancing, dozens of vendors, children’s activities, a rock climbing wall, kids karaoke contest, lots of food, and many other family friend things to do. The free event takes place from 10 a.m to 10 p.m. throughout the downtown.

The Festival in the Borough Weekend kicks off on Friday night with a pre-party in Veteran’s Park with music by Mike Frank & Friends from 6-9 p.m. Saturday morning the action then steps into high gear.

On the national musical front, on the Main Stage, Rubix Kube, a hugely popular 80s band will put on a show not seen before at the festival. A truly extravanza of an experience. Additionally, nationally recognized and award winning recording artist Sarah Borges



brings her blues-rock band to town. Adding to the excitement on the Main Stage is Jimmy & The Parrots. The Parrots have graced the Washington stage several times in the past, but it’s been a while and the anticipation for their return is great.

Meanwhile, on the Scotty’s Stage, the JerZgirls, who have appeared at nearly every Festival in the Borough since its inception in 2004, are returning once again. They will be joined on that stage by another local favorite, C3 Soul Revue,

with a flurry of powerful tunes. The Festival is also proud to have two acts making some real waves to Scotty’s: The Cellar Dwellars and Water Street. New to the Scotty’s Stage this year is Gryt starting things off followed by Antar Goodwin &The Faithful Sinners Trio. Music at the Scotty’s Stage starts at 12 noon with Gryt.

DJ Dave Rupe brings line dancing to the Main Stage from 12 noon to 2 p.m., followed by country band Tennessee Honey Band. Beginning the



Main Stage schedule will be a special performance by the Cressman Dance Studio, from 10-11 am.

The Acoustic Stage by Gaia’s Gifts, which runs from 11 a.m. to 5, features Randi O’Neil, Stephanie Joyner, Diana Dove, Jon Zayle,

and Max Lauton. The New Jersey Belly Dancers will perform here at 12 noon, as well as at the Main Stage at 2 p.m.

DJ Mitch Hess will be hosting a special kids singing contest with prizes in Veterans Park at 11 a.m. and again at 3:30 p.m.

The Washington Borough Volunteer Fire Department will have a Beer Garden by the Main Stage.

While there is some seating available, the WBID invites attendees to bring lawn chairs, and to enjoy a fun day outdoors with music in the air.

The festival, a rain or shine event, is supported by a host of local and regional businesses and organizations. They include PNC Bank, Builders General Supply/Direct Millwork, Casella Disposal, Get A Grip & More, Explore Warren, Buddy’s Auto Repair, Good Impressions Print Communications, Warren County Community College, Arctic Foods/The Meat Shoppe, Rossi Auto Group, WRNJ Radio, Visions Federal Credit Union, Scotty’s Stadium Club, Swift Print Solutions, NJ Highlands Council, and the Warren County Cultural and Heritage Division of Land Preservation, a partner of the New Jersey State Council of the Arts.

For the full schedule and details go to <https://www.washingtonbid.org/festival-in-the-borough>. The Festival in the Borough is also on Facebook.

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Hello fellow readers,

About a month ago, at late dusk, I took Jolee over the footbridge across the pond to her potty spot. On the way back, I noticed an oddly flattened snake, but there was no blood, and the head was intact. How strange, given there's no vehicular traffic other than the mower from time to time to cut down the stilt grass to keep it from going to seed. The seeds of the mini-bamboo-looking trespasser stay viable for five or more years, so it's best to cut to the chase where you can.

The snake was about two feet long in an S-shape. As I reached for my phone for a photo, it puffed up and slithered off into the ferns. So mystified and intrigued by the oddity, I didn't make the connection that it was a copperhead, having come across several of them while hiking.

A baby copperhead lunged to attack Miss Ellie while walking down Camp Road at Camp Mohican. Years before that, a copperhead swam ashore alongside Sara, my golden before Ellie. Canine and snake landed about eight feet apart, Sara oblivious – she ran back in the water, waiting for another round of stick toss.

Eastern copperheads are sometimes confused with the more common and non-venomous northern water snake and eastern milk snake. But there's no mistaking the coppery-brownish body with hourglass-shaped bands on copperheads. Baby copperheads are typically tan or gray rather than coppery.

A scientist from Rutgers University happened to be visiting Camp Mohican the

day Sara swam ashore and confirmed it was a copperhead. They are good swimmers and can open their mouths without getting water in their lungs, allowing them to feed on reptiles, mammals, and amphibians that live in and near water.

A few years ago, the large sticky traps poised in the basement to capture cave crickets trapped a baby copperhead. Talk about being close to home! To discourage snakes from hunkering down, they suggest filling in gaps in the foundation. But how can you fill in gaps when you have boulder retaining walls and a pond surrounded by rocky terrain?

Jolee, intent on returning inside for her post-dinner greenie, didn't notice the snake, but the copperhead noticed her. When a copperhead senses a predator, such as a coyote or opossum, their first line of defense is to remain still; their colors help them blend into the natural elements, especially leaf litter. If further triggered, they flatten their bodies by expanding their ribs to appear larger and more threatening to a predator; sometimes they hiss and vibrate their tail as a warning to mimic a rattlesnake. American crows, great horned owls, and hawks also feed on copperheads. And bullfrogs can feed



on the babies.

There are benefits to copperheads. Baby copperheads feed on insects, whereas adults feed on mice and rats (carriers of ticks, which is a good thing), but also on birds, frogs, and such. They say they aren't fond of strong smells, and so planting herbs, onions, garlic, lemongrass, and marigolds may help keep them out of the garden.

I am relieved to know that while they are venomous, they are not as deadly as rumor has it, although to small animals, they can be. Nobody's ever endured a snake bite while they were leaving it alone. But of course, there is the element of surprise. If bitten, you should seek medical treatment.

There's a poem titled May by Mary Oliver, in which she comes upon



a copperhead. Curious, she knelt to gaze, noticing he wasn't shy, unlike other snakes. She moved a bit, and it "clamped its eyes on mine; then it jerked towards me." She jumped back and watched the snake slither away; her heart pounding. I adore how the poem ends, when she lingers listening to the woodland sounds and staring at the stars.

"After excitement, we are so restful. When the thumb of fear lifts, we are so alive."

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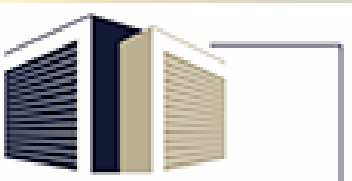
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Shapiro Administration Awards Over \$5.2 Million to Clean Up Abandoned Mine Lands, Keep Pennsylvanians Safe While Supporting Local Jobs

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has awarded \$5,222,250 for the environmental restoration of seven abandoned mine lands (AML) projects as part of the Abandoned Mine Lands and Acid Mine Drainage Grant Program.

Pennsylvania has the largest inventory of abandoned coal mines in the nation, with a roughly \$5 billion need for reclamation and stream restoration. To date, Pennsylvania has rehabilitated approximately 159,000 acres of abandoned mine land across the Commonwealth, and with this federal funding, will be able to continue this vital work that protects the health and safety of our communities.

“Abandoned mine lands leave scars across Pennsylvania. Reclaiming these areas is an important part of the work DEP does to restore the environment and protect the communities in the Commonwealth, all while simultaneously creating jobs and bolstering the economy,” said DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley. “These grant recipients are taking on projects to pave the way for meaningful efforts in improving water quality, fostering ecosystem recovery, and revitalizing communities for a greater quality of life for Pennsylvanians.”

The funding was awarded through the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act

(IIJA), which has invested more than \$700 million into reclaiming Pennsylvania’s abandoned mine lands since 2022. In addition to planned projects, this funding also pays for emergency situations like subsidence and sinkholes that can endanger people and damage or destroy homes and property. Funding for the program was frozen by the Trump Administration in early 2025, but thanks to the efforts of Governor Josh Shapiro(opens in a new tab), grant funding has continued uninterrupted.

These projects focus on reclaiming AML, decreasing abandoned mine drainage (AMD) and treating AMD through the construction, operation, and/or maintenance of treatment facilities

DEP prioritizes grant funding to address serious human health and safety problems resulting from abandoned coal mines, as well as treating AMD to continue watershed restoration efforts under the AMD Set-Aside Program and prevent the loss of restored streams.

Grant recipients will be reimbursed on project costs up to the limit specified below. The following projects will be awarded:

-Elk County: Elk County Conservation District – \$437,761 Winslow Hill IV (Lime Silos O&M) – Continued operation and maintenance of two lime silos located



in Winslow Hill, Saint Mary’s City.

-Fayette County: Indian Creek Valley Water Authority – \$733,200 Melcroft (Pine Slopes WLEXT) – Due to well water degradation

as a result of past coal mining practices and to provide a reliable source of quality drinking water to 17 residents in the Pine Slopes Road area, a water line extension project will be completed.

-Indiana County: Natural Streams Foundation, Inc. – \$501,615 Commodore – Engineering design work for an abandoned mine land site located in Green Township along the North Branch Two Lick Creek.

-Northumberland County: Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance – \$689,229 Excelsior (AMD Discharges) – Project development work to study the effect of AMD impacts of Shamokin Creek, Coal Township.

-Schuylkill County: Woodlands for Wildlife – \$550,361 Branchdale East – Engineering design

work for an AML site in Branch Township to improve West Creek and the Schuylkill River Watershed.

-Washington County: Natural Streams Foundation, Inc. – \$203,426 Marianna – Project engineering and permitting work to reclaim an AML site in Marianna Borough.

-Westmoreland County: Murrysburg Area Watershed Association – \$2,106,658 White Valley Active Treatment Plant – Project development and design engineering to reduce the effects of AMD in the Upper Turtle Creek Watershed, Murrysburg Borough.



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Highlights From The Recent Pennsylvania Game Commissioners Meeting

he Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners met recently at the Game Commission's Harrisburg headquarters to hear public comment and conduct official business. The highlights from today's meeting follow.

MENTORED HUNTERS UNDER 7 COULD RECEIVE TAGS: All mentored hunters – including those under 7 years old – would get big-game harvest tags with their permits if a proposal before the Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners is given final approval.

The Board voted today to preliminarily approve the measure, which is meant to improve access to the mentored hunting program and expand hunting opportunities within it.

The mentored hunting program allows young and inexperienced hunters to hunt under the guidance and supervision of a mentor if they obtain a permit and follow all program requirements.

Under the present system, most mentored hunters receive antlered deer, fall turkey and spring turkey harvest tags with their permits, but mentored hunters who are younger than 7 when they obtain their permits do not. If a mentored hunter under 7 harvests an antlered deer or turkey, they must receive the appropriate big-game harvest tag from their mentor, meaning the mentor needs a valid tag to take them hunting.

This creates challenges for mentors who accompany more than one child throughout the big-game hunting seasons. Furthermore, mentors who transfer their harvest tags to a successful mentored youth sacrifice their own ability to lawfully hunt for and harvest the species for which the tag was issued. Some believe this is unfair to mentors, who play a vital role in recruiting new hunters to carry on the hunting tradition and continue the important work of managing wildlife populations.

Providing all mentored hunters with antlered deer and turkey tags would align the program across all age groups.

Commissioner Bob Schwalm, a dedicated advocate for youth hunters, and a mentor himself, pointed out the benefits of providing young hunters with opportunities.

“By introducing a youngster to hunting and conservation – before the distractions of school, organized sports and video games – I believe we can recruit lifelong hunters,” said Schwalm, of Bethlehem. “As a lifelong mentor, I can assure you it requires a great deal of time and effort to prepare a young hunter before heading out on a mentored hunt. We need to thank those mentors by allowing them to keep and use their own tags, not penalize them for their continued dedication and support of conservation in Pennsylvania.”

The measure, which passed by a 6-3 vote, will be brought back to the January meeting for a final vote.

If adopted, mentored hunters under 7 would be able to be able to obtain their own bear licenses, antlerless deer licenses, Deer Management Assistance Program permits and special spring turkey licenses.

MORE AG TAGS COULD BE HELD AT A TIME: Hunters participating in the Agricultural Deer Control Program, or Ag Tag program, can receive as many permits as they obtain coupons for.

But presently, Ag Tag hunters can hold no more than four permits at a time.

That would change based on a measure the Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners preliminarily approved today. The proposal would remove the limit on the number of Ag Tags a hunter can hold at a time. It will be brought back to the January meeting for a final vote.

MORE THAN 500 ACRES TO BE ADDED TO GAME LANDS

The Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners today approved five land acquisitions – a donation, a new purchase, and three land exchanges – that would add 572 surface acres to state game lands, as well as 1,340 acres of subsurface oil, gas, and mineral rights.

The donation of about 390 acres in Penn Lake Park Borough, Luzerne County, adjacent to State Game Lands 119, was offered by The Nature Conservancy. This property would provide critical access to the existing state game lands and open 2,400 acres of previously inaccessible land. The donation is subject to approval by the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources due to applicable grant funding requirements.

The Board approved the purchase of roughly 1,340 acres of subsurface oil, gas and mineral rights located in and under State Game Lands 143. This game lands contains quality habitat for ruffed grouse as well as Blue Eye Run, a stocked trout stream. By acquiring the subsurface rights for this property, the Game Commission will have greater control over future development efforts that could impact the unique habitat on this game lands.

The three land exchanges are:

In Howard Township, Centre County, the Game Commission would receive roughly 6 acres adjoining State Game Lands 92 in exchange for roughly 2 acres of the game lands. This exchange would improve the integrity and manageability of State Game Lands 92 and the Game Commission will retain an administrative right-of-way across the property.

In Washington, Penn and Union townships, Snyder County, the Game Commission would receive roughly 140 acres of Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission land adjoining State Game Lands 212 in exchange for roughly 16 acres in Brush Creek and Belfast townships, Fulton County, adjoining State Game Lands 65, which would go to Flickerville Cross of Fulton County Foundation. The exchange does not cover the entire purchase price, therefore the Game Commission would pay the remaining balance – \$243,800 – for the 140 acres. Access would be from Hidden Valley Road. The Fish and Boat Commission has already approved the purchase at its July Board of Commissioners meeting.

In Hanover Township, Luzerne County, the Game Commission would receive roughly 36 acres adjoining State Game Lands 207 in exchange for a roughly 2.88-acre, non-exclusive right-of-way on State Game Lands 207 for PPL to better access their electric infrastructure. This exchange would improve property integrity and manageability of State Game Lands 207 by resolving numerous boundary line issues.

Hunters and other users of the game lands system should be aware that none of these additions are yet final. Some are contingent upon third parties receiving funding through grants or other means. What's more, the Board of Commissioners' approval of the agreements is but one step in the land transfer process.

When that process is completed, and the properties are officially game lands, the Game Commission will post signs to that effect, stating that they're now available for public use.

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Unforgettable Moments Begin at Brook Hollow Winery and Event Facility

Tucked in the scenic Delaware Water Gap region of Northeast New Jersey, Brook Hollow Winery and Event Facility offers couples a breathtaking setting where love and nature intertwine. Surrounded by rolling vineyards and sweeping views, it's a venue where memories are made, cherished, and celebrated for a lifetime.

From your first glance at the grounds, you'll understand why so many couples choose Brook Hollow as the backdrop to their special day. The experience begins with an outdoor ceremony on a private lawn, steps away from the reception space. Imagine exchanging vows beneath a stately 20' x 20' cedar gazebo, framed by more than 7,000 flourishing grapevines. For an authentic winery touch, rustic wooden wine barrels can be used as a podium or décor,



lending a warm, timeless charm to the ceremony.

Following the "I do's," guests are invited to mingle on the covered porch, savoring cocktails and hors d'oeuvres as they take in

the vineyard views. The spacious lawn offers room for lawn games, casual conversation, and photo opportunities that highlight the natural beauty of the surroundings. Every moment feels both intimate and expansive, with the winery's landscape serving as the perfect canvas.

As the evening unfolds, the celebration transitions into Brook Hollow's rustic-style barn, a 40' x 100' reception space that combines country charm with elegant design. Guests are welcomed through sliding barn doors and directed to their seats at custom-built, 8-foot wooden tables. The

space is designed to balance intimacy with grandeur, making it ideal for gatherings of all sizes.

The newlyweds are introduced with a grand entrance that sets the stage for the evening's first dance. From there, the night flows effortlessly with music, laughter, and heartfelt toasts. Guests can enjoy a full-service bar throughout the evening, while moments like cake cutting, bouquet tosses, and a cozy s'mores station ensure the celebration is as sweet as it is memorable.

Whether you're planning a large gathering or a

smaller, more personal event, Brook Hollow Winery's team is committed to guiding couples every step of the way. As a family-built and family-run business, we take pride in treating every couple like part of our own. Our goal is simple: to help you create a day filled with love, joy, and unforgettable moments that friends and family will treasure for years to come.

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Tiny Plastics in Our Brain May Be Awakening Alzheimer’s Across the Body



A new preclinical study has uncovered disturbing evidence that environmental exposure to nanoplastics—microscopic plastic particles invisible to the naked eye—may trigger the rapid progression of Alzheimer’s disease and drive its damaging effects beyond the brain to critical organs like the liver, heart, and gut.

The research, titled “Cerebral to Systemic Representations of Alzheimer’s Pathogenesis Stimulated by Polystyrene Nanoplastics,” has been published in the peer-reviewed journal *Environment & Health*. The study, coled by researchers from Monash University and South China University of Technology, offers the strongest evidence yet that nanoplastics can act as a catalyst in the spread of neurodegenerative disease throughout the body.

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In an age where plastics are ubiquitous in our food, water, air, and even bloodstreams, these findings paint a chilling

picture: plastic pollution may be silently rewiring our biology in ways we never anticipated.

A Silent Intruder in the Brain: Nanoplastics are defined as plastic fragments smaller than 1 micrometer (one-thousandth of a millimeter). They originate from the breakdown of larger plastics or are engineered at nano-scale for use in consumer products like cosmetics, food packaging, and even some medications.

Until recently, concerns over plastic pollution were primarily focused on environmental damage. But growing research has begun to reveal that plastic particles—some hundreds of times smaller than the width of a human hair—are entering our bodies and infiltrating our most vital systems.

This latest study took that concern a step further, demonstrating in animal models how these tiny invaders not only accumulate in the brain but appear to accelerate Alzheimer’s-related pathology and spark a domino effect of damage across

the body.

In the experiment, mice were chronically exposed to polystyrene nanoplastics—a common variant found in food packaging and consumer goods. The results were stark: the mice exhibited classic symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease, such as memory loss, neuroinflammation, and the build-up of toxic proteins in the brain. But what shocked researchers was what happened next.

The damage didn’t stay in the brain.

From Brain to Body: A Dangerous Chain Reaction

The study showed that the impact of nanoplastics extended beyond the brain, disrupting the delicate biological communication network known as the gut-liver-brain axis. This intricate system helps regulate immune function, metabolism, and the microbiome—the community of bacteria in our digestive systems that plays a crucial role in health and disease.

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In the nanoplastic-exposed mice, immune

cells in the brain known as microglia were highly activated—an early hallmark of Alzheimer’s pathology. This immune overactivation triggered inflammation that spread downstream. The liver developed signs of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, and the gut microbiota—the bacterial ecosystem essential for digestion and immunity—became imbalanced, a condition known as dysbiosis.

“The cascade of damage was alarming,” said lead author Professor Pu Chun Ke, an adjunct professor at the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences. “Nanoplastics don’t just stay in the brain. They appear to initiate a full-body response—one that mirrors the way Alzheimer’s can spread through interconnected organ systems.”

While Alzheimer’s has long been considered a disease of the aging brain, recent research has increasingly highlighted its links to broader systemic dysfunction, particularly inflammation and metabolic disturbances. This study is the first to suggest that exposure to environmental-level nanoplastics could be one of the triggers accelerating that dysfunction.

Plastic in Our Brains—A Shocking Reality: Though still in early stages and limited to animal models, the study adds to a rapidly growing body of evidence that humans are already exposed to nanoplastics at concerning levels.

Plastic particles have been detected in human lungs, placenta, bloodstreams, and, most recently, in postmortem samples of human brain tissue. This suggests that nanoplastics are not just passing through our systems but are crossing biological barriers once thought to be impermeable—such as the blood-brain barrier, which normally protects the brain from toxins.

How these particles breach such defenses remains an area of active investigation. Some studies

suggest that due to their small size and chemical properties, nanoplastics can mimic or disrupt natural molecules, allowing them to slip past cellular gatekeepers.

What is now clear is that these particles can enter our bodies through numerous routes: breathing polluted air, eating contaminated seafood or food packaged in plastic, drinking bottled water, or even absorbing them through the skin.

“We are involuntarily exposed to nanoplastics every day,” said Professor Ke. “The question now is not if, but how they are affecting our health.”

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A Wake-Up Call for Public Health and Policy

The implications of this research are profound and urgent. If environmental nanoplastics are indeed capable of triggering or worsening neurodegenerative diseases, the public health consequences could be staggering.

Alzheimer’s disease already affects over 55 million people globally, and its numbers are expected to skyrocket in coming decades. With no known cure and only modest treatments available, prevention and risk reduction have become central to global health strategies.

Environmental toxins like air pollution and heavy metals are already established risk factors. Now, nanoplastics may be joining their ranks.

“This study is a wake-up call,” said Professor Ke. “We’ve long considered plastics an environmental problem. Now we must see them as a biological one, too.”

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The findings underscore the need for more stringent environmental regulations on plastic production and disposal. Micro- and nanoplastic contamination is now found from the deepest ocean trenches to the tops of remote mountains—and now, possibly, in the core of our brains.

There is also an urgent call for further research.

While this study focused on polystyrene, there are many other types of plastics—polyethylene, polypropylene, PET—and their health effects may vary. Future studies will need to explore these differences, assess cumulative exposures, and investigate whether certain groups—such as children, the elderly, or those with pre-existing conditions—are more vulnerable.

A Researcher’s Mission: Two Decades of Uncovering the Hidden Dangers of Plastics

Professor Ke is not new to the dangers of nanoplastics. His research journey began in 2010, when his team became one of the first to show that nanoplastics impair algal photosynthesis—threatening the base of the aquatic food web. Since then, he has published extensively on how nanoplastics can promote the onset and progression of diseases such as Parkinson’s, cardiovascular damage, and now Alzheimer’s.

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“I never imagined back then that this would lead to the brain,” he said. “But the evidence has taken us here.”

His persistence has helped bring the shadowy world of invisible plastics into the light. Yet he remains cautious, emphasizing that while these results are alarming, they are part of a much larger, complex puzzle.

“We are only scratching the surface of how plastics interact with biology,” he added. “But every new piece of evidence makes the picture clearer. And what we’re seeing is that plastics may be a hidden, underappreciated factor in many chronic diseases.”

What Comes Next: Protecting Ourselves in a Plastic World

While regulators and scientists work to understand and mitigate this risk, what can individuals do now to protect themselves? Science-inspired fashion

Experts advise minimizing the use of plastic food packaging, avoiding

Article continued on pg 13



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Tiny Plastics in Our Brain May Be Awakening Alzheimer’s Across the Body - CONTINUED

heating food in plastic containers, using glass or stainless steel alternatives, and choosing personal care products that are microplastic-free. Being mindful about plastic waste and supporting efforts to reduce plastic pollution also contribute to long-term change.

But ultimately, the solution lies beyond individual action.

“We need systemic reform,” Professor Ke concluded. “That means international cooperation, corporate responsibility, and scientific funding to tackle this invisible crisis at its root.

Just as we fought lead in gasoline or mercury in fish, we must now confront the age of plastic—with science as our guide.”

A Plastic Legacy—And a Path Forward

The world is waking up to the reality that plastic is not just an ecological hazard—it’s a medical one. This new study marks a turning point in our understanding of how deep the plastic problem runs—into our oceans, our ecosystems, our bodies, and perhaps even our minds.

As Alzheimer’s continues its devastating

march across the globe, this research offers a new perspective on where the threat may be coming from. It’s not only in our genes or our age—but in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the invisible particles now embedded in the very fabric of modern life.

The future of medicine may depend not only on drugs and diagnostics but on how well we clean up the world we live in.

Because if plastic can cross into our brains, the question is no longer “Can we ignore it?”—but “How soon can we stop it?”

Flash Forward: From Ink to Impact - The Poconos’ Boldest Fundraiser Returns October 11, 2025

NorthBound & Co., the region’s peer-led Recovery Community Organization, is proud to announce the return of its 3rd Annual Flash Forward: From Ink to Impact Tattoo Fundraiser on Saturday, October 11, 2025, at the Pocono Municipal Building, Tannersville, PA.

This year’s event promises to be the biggest yet, with an expected crowd of 500+ community members coming together for a one-of-a-kind day blending art, music, food, and recovery support.

Highlights include:

- Live Tattoo Artists offering flash designs throughout the day
- Local Food Trucks & Mocktail Bar serving up eats and drinks
- Live Music Performances by regional favorites
- Community Resource Expo featuring nonprofits, businesses, and recovery services
- Speakers & Storytelling bringing voices of resilience and hope

Everything NorthBound offers the community is completely free of charge—from Certified Recovery Specialist (CRS) and Certified Family Recovery Specialist (CFRS) peer services, to support groups for those facing substance use and/or mental health challenges and their families, to community outreach and education.

Flash Forward is the event that makes all of this possible. Funds raised at this annual tattoo fundraiser directly fuel NorthBound’s mission to keep recovery support accessible to anyone who needs it, without cost or barrier.

As the DDAP Region 9 Recovery Hub, NorthBound is also charged with identifying gaps in recovery services across the region and creating innovative, community-driven solutions to close them. Flash Forward ensures this critical work continues.

Opportunities remain for sponsors, vendors, food trucks, and nonprofits to secure space at the event. Interested participants can visit www.northboundandco.org or contact NorthBound & Co. at 570-800-2466 | info@northboundandco.org

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Local Stylists Donate Free Haircuts to Children in Need



Stylists from the Mancuso Salon & Spa and Essence Hair Studio recently donated free haircuts to 57 local children to help prepare them for the new school year. The free service, which also included a wash and style, was part of Project Self-Sufficiency's initiative to help prepare low-income families during the back-to-school season. The free haircuts served as the culmination of the agency's Back-to-School effort, which also featured an interactive fair hosted by the Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency, at an earlier date.

"Offering free haircuts to children has been a staple of Project Self-Sufficiency's Back-to-School initiative for many years," commented Project Self-Sufficiency Executive Director Deborah Berry-Toon. "We are overwhelmed by the generosity

of these stylists who volunteered to work on their day off to assist so many students in need. The children were delighted with their experience, and they all look fantastic!"

"Our staff volunteers, along with Jessica from Essence Hair Studio, were so grateful to be able to host and participate in this event for our second year! What a privilege to see so many transformations and smiling faces in one day," noted Jacqueline Cox, co-owner of Mancuso Salon & Spa. "We received, from the children and their parents, more than we could ever hope to give! Thank you, Project Self-Sufficiency, for the opportunity you have extended to us to be a part of your altruistic community! We are already looking forward to next year and hope to encourage other licensed stylists from the area to join us!"

Creating Responsibility and Transparency for Data Center Development

Local governments are on the front lines of decision-making that directly impacts data center development. They determine zoning, land use, and ultimately where large facilities like data centers can be located. Because of this responsibility, it is critical that they have the tools and information necessary to make sound, informed decisions on behalf of their residents.

That's why Senator David G. Argall and I circulated a co-sponsorship memo regarding legislation that would require a pre-application meeting between developers and local officials before data center projects are formally submitted for municipal review. The proposal would protect local infrastructure and ensure transparency in development planning while offering stronger factual education to local elected officials.



Data centers represent potential economic opportunity for Pennsylvania. However, they are also incredibly resource-intensive facilities. This bill ensures municipalities have the information they need early in the process to assess whether local infrastructure can realistically support these projects and residents have factual information

Under the proposed legislation, any entity seeking to develop a data center in Pennsylvania must:

- Request a pre-application meeting with the host municipality at least 30 days before submitting a formal development application.
- Include zoning, planning, elected officials and any third-party engineers and solicitors, if necessary, in the meeting.

Provide "will-serve" letters from water, sewer, electric, and fiber infrastructure providers confirming that existing systems can support the project at full build-out, not just in phases.

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307 Oak St., Roseto Pa 4 Bedrooms 2 Full Baths New Hi-Efficient Gas Fired Boiler New Gas Water Heater. New Washer & Dryer On First Floor. CALL Agent: Mckayla O'Connell 484-264-5534

Designer Handbag Bingo & Tricky Tray
Sunday, October 19th
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***
ONLY 130 TICKETS AVAILABLE!
Pull Tabs/Snap Tickets | 50/50s

NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR BEVERAGES

Any Questions, Or To Purchase Tickets Contact:
Holly Burch at 570-656-7523

NO ONE UNDER 18 PERMITTED

L# 2216

Classified Ad Order Form

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

Ads with Photos! \$20

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
CLASSIFIED ADS CAN BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL TO: THEPRESSADS@GMAIL.COM OR BY MAIL TO: THE FREE WEEKLY PRESS, PO BOX 606, BANGOR, PA 18013
Help Wanted ads are free for current advertisers. Classifieds are NOT accepted by phone
Make Checks Payable to: The Free Weekly Press, LLC

TIRES AGAINST TUMORS 2025



Registration 8:30-10am KSU 10:30am
Sunday Sept 28th, 2025
DJ, Tricky Tray, Food for Sale, Prizes!
Brown & Lynch American Legion Post 9 2260
Corriere Rd, Palmer (Easton) Pa 18045
Proceeds Benefit Brain Tumor Organizations ~Especially for Children

Register: EndPediatricTumors.Org
\$25 Driver - \$10 Passenger

Collage of photos showing participants, motorcycles, and event details.

Volunteer

Logos for Tires Against Tumors and related organizations.



**FAMILY-OWNED
BREWERY & RESTAURANT**

570-897-5900 Mount Bethel PA
AlleghenyCreekBC.com

**THURSDAY-SATURDAY 12-9
SUNDAY BRUNCH 11-5**

16 CRAFT BEERS
ON TAP

FRIED CHICKEN
THURSDAYS
STARTING AT 4PM





**A PROFESSIONAL
WRESTLING SHOWDOWN
LIKE NO OTHER!**

SCAN FOR TICKETS

**UPCOMING
EVENT**

**SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 20**



**DOORS OPEN AT 3
SHOW STARTS AT 4
AFTER-PARTY 6-8**

BACK TO SCHOOL AD SALE!

School Is Back In Session!

**Let Us Teach You New Ways
To Promote & Grow Your Business**

Buy 2 Full Page Ads GET ONE HALF PRICE!

Buy 3 Half Page Ads GET ONE FREE!

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Email Melissa at thepressads@gmail.com