

February 5, 2026

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Vol. 53, No. 26

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Bangor Takes On Pleasant Valley in Boys Basketball



Bangor took on Pleasant Valley in boys basketball on January 31st. The Slaters were defeated by the Bears, 49 to 45. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Pen Argyl Girls Basketball Seniors Honor Their Favorite Teacher During Game Against Wilson High School



Pen Argyl took on Wilson High School for their Girls Basketball Teacher Appreciation Night Game on January 28th. Pen Argyl was defeated, 36 to 31. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Senator Rosemary Brown Pushes To Keep Construction Jobs Local for Pennsylvania

Legislation to boost the hiring of local workers for public works projects was the topic of a hearing held by the Senate Labor and Industry Committee.

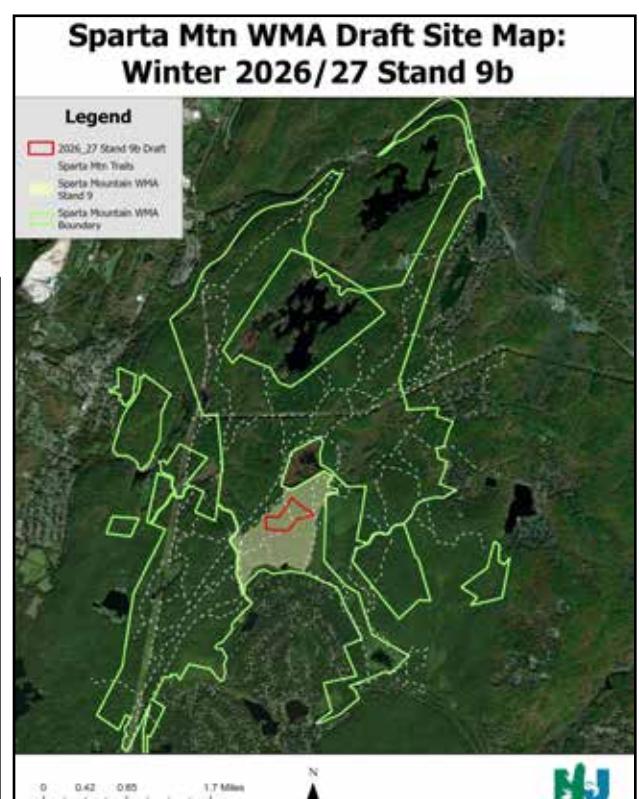
Senate Bill 1076 is modeled after existing local hire programs in West Virginia, Montana and Illinois, and specifies at least half of workers on state and local projects exceeding \$500,000 must be residents of Pennsylvania or a neighboring county. Contractors can seek a waiver if they're unable to secure local workers even after utilizing a lo-



cal PA CareerLink® office for recruitment. Testifiers included representatives of local building trades, contractor associations and others. They discussed how a local hire requirement could help address the skilled trade shortage, save taxpayer dollars, promote accountability within the construction industry and more. To find video of the hearing visit: laborindustry.pasenategop.com/labor-012226.

Comment Period Open for Forest Management Activities on Sparta Mountain WMA (Sparta, NJ) In Stand 9, Comments Due March 31, 2026

In accordance with the 2021 Addendum, forest management activities planned for next year (2026/27) is now open for comment. Please email comments about this specific activity to



sharon.petzinger@dep.nj.gov by March 31, 2026.

As outlined in the 2017 Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Plan, forest management activities in the form of a shelterwood prescription will be implemented on 10 acres within Stand 9 next fall/winter (November 2026 – March 2027). This prescription will likely retain around 40 sq. ft. of basal area per acre across the 10-acre site to promote the growth of young oak trees and native shade intolerant and mid-tolerant understory vegetation, resulting in SPARTA cont'd on pg 9

In Loving Memory of Sherwin H. Williams



Sherwin H. "Shirt the Barber" Williams, 93 of Bangor, passed away peacefully at home.

Sherwin was born in Bangor, PA, a son of the late Elias and Matilda (Johns) Williams. He and his beloved wife, former Jane Parsons, were married 72 Years last July 25th.

He graduated from Bangor High School in 1950 and joined the US Navy, where he received his Barber training. He served on the USS Mississippi during the Korean War and had cut the former President James Carter's hair. He owned and operated Shirt's Barber Shop in Ackermanville and Bangor for a total of 70 years. He was a generous person who would help any of his friends.

Sherwin was a member of the Ackermanville United Methodist Church, the Bangor Elks 1106, the Roseto American Legion Post 750, and the Portland Masonic Lodge for 60 years, the Cushman Scooter Club, Life Member of the Kunkletown Rod & Gun Club, and Proud Member of the Bangor Welsh Society. He also enjoyed hunting and Shad Fishing.

In addition to his wife Jane, he is survived by a daughter, Marsha Sandt, and her husband, Ronnie of Saylorsburg, two grandsons, Chad and his wife Michelle of Saylorsburg, Jason and his wife Shannon of Saylorsburg, two great-grandsons Eli and Owen. He is also survived by his nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a brother, Richard E. Williams, and a sister, Marion Perinotto.

His Services were held on January 13, 2026 at Fiore Funeral Home, 230 Market Street, Bangor. Burial with Military honors were held at Ackermanville Cemetery, Ackermanville, PA.

Memorial Donations may be given to either the American Heart Association, 968 Postal Road, Suite 110, Bethlehem, PA 18018, or the American Kidney Fund 112921 Rockville Pike, Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20852. Online Condolences may be offered at www.fiorefuneeralhome.com

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New to the Blue Mountain Community Library

Located at 216 S. Robinson Ave. in Pen Argyl, open Mon.-Sat. 10am-12pm and Mon. and Thurs. 6pm-8pm. A library card is free for residents of Pen Argyl, Plainfield Township, and Wind Gap. Call 610-863-3029 with any questions.

New for February:

Magazine swap: Take a magazine, leave a magazine! (Recent magazines, please). No checkout required. **Craft supply swap:** Started a craft and have leftovers? Bring in your extra or unwanted craft supplies, and take whatever you can use. **Children's room scavenger hunt:** Children are invited to look for pictures hidden throughout the children's room and then turn in their paper for a small prize from the prize basket! (Donations of stickers, wrapped non-peanut candy, and small toys for the basket are gladly accepted).

The book discussion group will discuss *The Note* by Alafair Burke on Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 6:30pm. Email info@bmcl.org to reserve a spot. Adults are invited to a "Love Libraries" trivia challenge on Thursday, Feb. 12 at 6:30pm, to test their knowledge of libraries in general and the BMCL in particular! A small prize will be awarded to the winner. Space is limited; registration is required. Email info@bmcl.org to register.

New to the circulating collection:

Adult fiction: *The Black Wolf* (Louise Penny), *Coyote Hills* (Jonathan and Jesse Kellerman), *The Hypocrite* (Jo Hamya), *The Unworthy* (Agustina Bazterrica), *Skylark* (Paula McLain), *The Storm* (Rachel Hawkins), *The First Time I Saw Him* (Laura Dave), *The Murder at World's End* (Ross Montgomery), *Theo of Golden* (Allen Levi), *Remote: The Six* (Eric Rickstad), *Detour* (Jeff Rake), *A Refiner's Fire* (Donna Leon) **Adult large print fiction:** *The King's Ransom* (Janet Evanovich), *Nash Falls* (David Baldacci)

Adult nonfiction: *Book of Lives* (Margaret Atwood), *The Essential Recipes* (Ree Drummond), *99 Ways to Die* (Ashely Alker)

Young adult fiction: *The Girl Who Fell to Earth* (Patricia Forde), *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* (Suzanne Collins), *Sunrise on the Reaping* (Suzanne Collins)

Juvenile fiction: *Holy Moly Roly Poly!* (Deb Mills), *I'm Sorry You Got Mad* (Kyle Lukoff), *The Day the Crayons Made Friends* (Drew Daywalt), *My Life as a Potato* (Ariane Costner), *The Tip-Off* (PragerU), *The Academy* (T.Z. Layton), *It Happened to Anna* (Tehlor Kay Mejia), *Big Jim Begins* (Dav Pilkey), *The Scarlet Shedder* (Dav Pilkey), *Art Club* (Rashad Doucet)

New to the Bangor Public Library

Adult Fiction:

Catch Her If You Can: A Novel by Tessa Bailey; *Lost Lambs: A Novel* by Madeline Cash; *My Husband's Wife: A Novel* by Alice Feeney; *Graceless Heart* by Isabel Ibanez; *The Wayfinder: A Novel* by Adam Johnson; *The Friend of the Family* by Dean R. Koontz; *Half His Age: A Novel* by Jennette McCurdy; *Code Blue* by Fern Michaels; *This is Where the Serpent Lives* by Daniyal Mueenuddin

Adult Non Fiction:

The Typewriter and the Guillotine: An American Journalist, a German Serial Killer, and Paris on the Eve of WWII by Mark Braude; *Being Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History* by Andrew Burstein; *It's Not You: Identifying and Healing from Narcissistic People* by Ramani Durvasula; *Enough: Your Health, Your Weight, and What It's Like to Be Free* by Ania M. Jastreboff; *The Windsor Legacy: A Royal Dynasty of Secrets, Scandal, and Survival* by Robert Johnson; *The Doctors' Riot of 1788: Body Snatching, Bloodletting, and Anatomy in America* by Andy McPhee

Large Print Adult Fiction:
Skylark: A Novel by Paula McLain

Easy Fiction:

Bluey: I Love My Family by Bluey and Bingo; *Happy Valentine's Day, Mouse!* By Laura Joffe Numeroff

Easy Non Fiction:

Frog: A Story of Life on Earth by Isabel Thomas

Junior Fiction:

The Land of Stories: The Wishing Spell 1 by Chris Colfer; *Xolo: How One Good Dog Saved Humankind* by Donna Barba Higuera; *The Deep End* by Jeff Kinney

Young Adult Fiction:

Beth is Dead by Katie Bernet; *The Swan's Daughter: A Possibly Doomed Love Story* by Roshani Chokshi

DVDs:

One Battle After Another; *Roofman*; *Wicked: For Good*

Kean Introduces Legislation To Establish Housing Affordability Tax Credit - Bill Would Provide Up To \$10,000 Tax Credit To Help Americans Purchase Homes

Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. announced the introduction of the Make American Housing Affordable (MAHA) Act, legislation that makes the dream of homeownership more attainable by creating a new tax credit for Americans purchasing their primary home.

The bill, co-led by Congressman Ryan Mackenzie (PA-07), establishes a new tax credit of \$5,000 for individual filers earning under \$250,000 when purchasing their primary residence. Joint filers earning under \$500,000 would receive up to \$10,000. The tax credit phases out proportionally for incomes exceeding the thresholds, with eligibility ending at \$300,000 for individual filers and \$600,000 for joint filers. A homeowner may claim this credit once every five years.

"The goal of homeownership is part of the American Dream

which has become increasingly difficult for middle-class families to reach," said Congressman Kean. "Today's buyers are facing skyrocketing prices, steep down payments, and a shortage of inventory. In New Jersey, where we have some of the nation's highest housing prices and property taxes, working families are being locked out of the market. I believe this new tax credit will lower the barrier to entry, restore opportunity, and strengthen the path to homeownership for American families."

"Housing affordability is one of the top concerns of families across the Lehigh Valley and the Poconos. After enduring years of skyrocketing housing costs, first-time homebuyers deserve relief. That's why this legislation provides targeted tax relief to help make homeownership a reality for hard-working families," said Congressman Mack-

enzie. "I'm grateful to Rep. Kean for leading this commonsense approach to decrease the cost of buying a home."

The legislation comes as housing affordability reaches a crisis point. According to the National Association of Realtors, the median age of first-time home buyers hit an all-time high of 40 years old in 2025—with their share of the market at a record low of 21%. For all buyers, the median age has also climbed to 59 years old.

Congressman Kean has led efforts to address housing affordability in the U.S. House of Representatives, including the successful fight to restore the full State and Local (SALT) Deduction for middle-class families in New Jersey. In the 2025 Reconciliation package, Congressman Kean fought to quadruple the SALT deduction to \$40,000—a major victory for New Jersey homeowners.



Ah, love and chocolate are in the air! For Chocolates on Broadway, these boxes are more than just packaging. They represent the stories and the love our community has shared through the years. They have been a small part of Valentine's traditions for a long time now, and seeing the shop finally ready for the season of love is one of our favorite milestones in the community. Stop in at 60 Broadway, Bangor, PA, to share a little bit of sweetness with the people who matter most.

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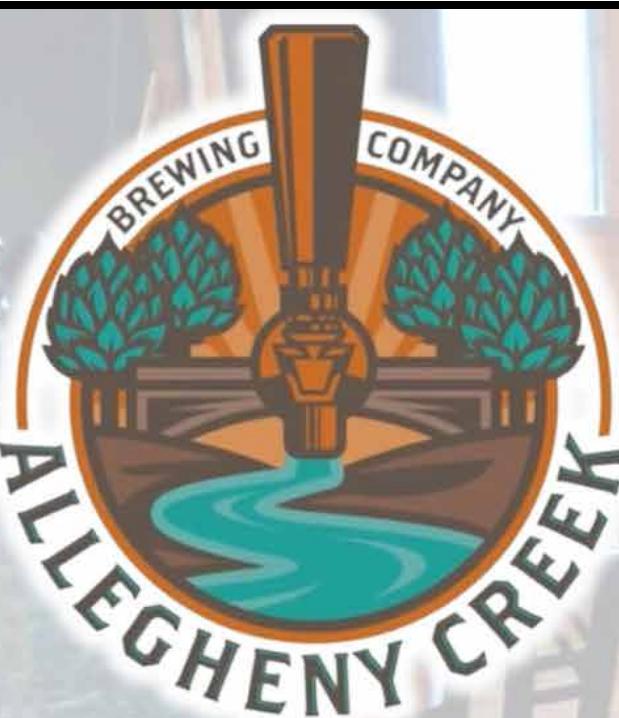
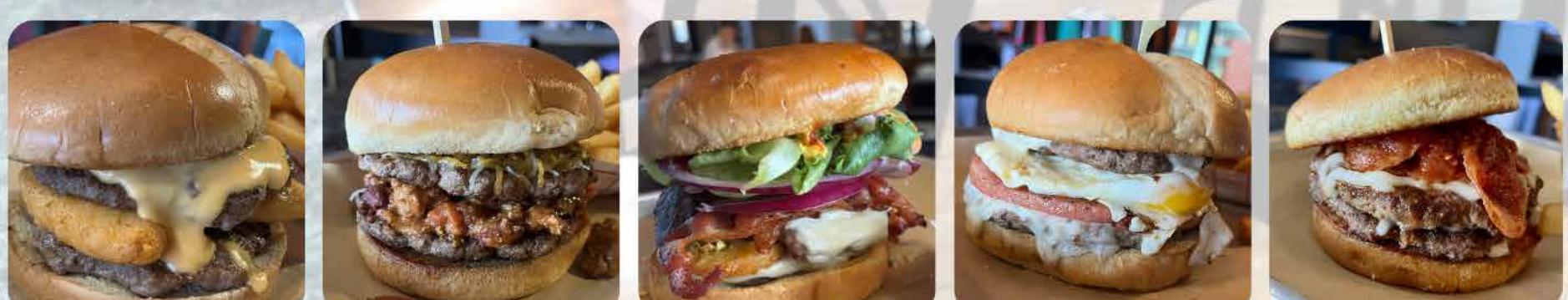
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NJ Congressman Tom Kean Jr. Delivers \$1.2 Million to Byram Township for Critical Police Department Headquarters

Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. (NJ-07) presented \$1,237,500 to Byram Township for a critically needed police headquarters renovation, funding he secured through the FY2026 Community Project Funding process to directly support local law enforcement.

For decades, Byram Township's police officers have served their community out of mobile construction trailers dating back to the 1970s. This federal investment will transform an existing 4,500 square foot office building into a modern, fully equipped police

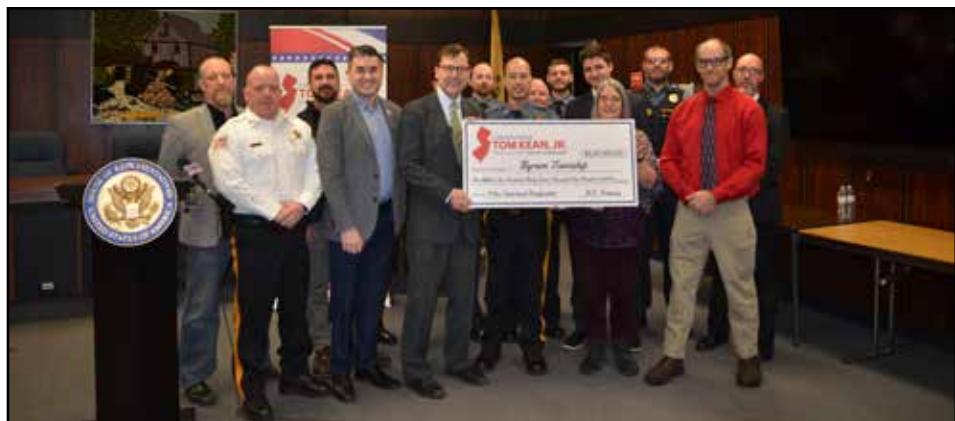
headquarters.

"I am honored to deliver this \$1.2 million grant that will finally give Byram's police the proper headquarters they deserve," said Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. "I have consistently made supporting our law enforcement a top priority. This funding will equip them with the facilities they need to effectively protect and serve every family in the Byram area."

"On behalf of Byram Township, we are very grateful for Congressman Kean's support and engagement throughout this process," said Byram Mayor Alex Rubenstein.

"This grant will help advance public safety priorities for our community, and we appreciate the partnership with his office in helping secure this funding."

"This federal grant is not only an investment in public safety, but also a fiscally responsible decision for the taxpayers of Byram," said Chief Thomas Dellerker, Byram Township Police Department. "By leveraging federal resources, we can provide our officers with the modern, safe, and functional facilities they deserve and help minimize additional financial strain on our



residents. We are grateful to Congressman Kean for championing this effort, and to Mayor Rubenstein for proactively requesting this critical funding on behalf of our community."

"Our local law enforcement throughout Sussex County are on the front lines protecting our communities each and every day," said Sussex County Sheriff Mike Strada. "Ensuring that Byram Township's finest have an upgraded home base will support their mission to protect and serve the public. I thank Congressman Kean for this critical funding for the Byram Township Police Department, which further demonstrates his strong backing of our law enforcement here in Northwest New

Jersey."

"For far too long, the Byram Police Department has needed and deserved a proper headquarters building. I'm thankful that Congressman Kean's advocacy is finally going to make this happen," said New Jersey Assemblyman Michael Inganamort. "This is the difference a responsive Congressman makes, and I'm happiest for the people of Byram who will see a real public safety benefit."

"I am very grateful to Congressman Kean for all the hard work he did to get us this funding," said Byram Councilwoman Cris Franco. "I have been working on this project since 2018 when I was on the building subcommittee, so we have been push-

ing hard for this for a long time. We are so happy."

Since taking office, Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. has secured over \$12 million for police departments across New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District through the Community Project Funding process, demonstrating a consistent, tangible commitment to backing the blue with real resources. Kean remains steadfast in ensuring local law enforcement officers receive the support and equipment necessary to keep our communities safe.

All 15 projects that Congressman Kean was allotted for the FY2026 Community Project Funding process have now passed the U.S. House of Representatives.

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BANGOR (45) VS PLEASANT VALLEY (49) BOYS BASKETBALL



Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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BANGOR (40) VS MORAVIAN ACADEMY (11) SENIOR NIGHT GIRLS BASKETBALL & CHEERING



Hailey Howell with her parents, Julie and Chris



Bri Morris with her parents



Jocelyn Werner with her mother, Jennifer and step-father, Jake



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Hannah Hartzell with her parents, Andrew and Tanya



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BANGOR (40) VS MORAVIAN ACADEMY (11) SENIOR NIGHT GIRLS BASKETBALL & CHEERING



Kaylynn Figurski with her parents, Rob and Stacy



Grace Hartzell with her parents, Andrew and Tanya



Deleah Klinge with her parents, David and Rachel



Jackie Miller with her parents, Jimmy and Christina



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PEN ARGYL (31) VS WILSON (36) GIRLS BASKETBALL TEACHER APPRECIATION NIGHT



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Clean Team Workforce Proudly Announces Their January Employee of the Month

The Clean Team Workforce congratulates its Employee of the Month for January, Michael P.

Michael rented a room in a recovery house and supported himself by working at a local grocery store. He turned his life of addiction around, but a serious illness caused him to be evicted from his room. The medication Michael was taking for his condition drained his body of vital vitamins and made him feel sicker than the illness itself. After months of living in pain and a weakened condition, he fell into a state of depression and ended up having to quit his job and live on his savings. With rest, Michael slowly began to feel better, but he was unable to catch up on back rent payments.

Immediately after being evicted, Michael contacted a trusted friend to take care of his cat. Then he went to the Allentown Rescue Mission for help. Michael had never been homeless before and didn't want to remain homeless. He



knew he needed more help than just food and shelter, so he joined the Mission's eight-week Transformation Program to explore Christianity and participate in life skills classes. Still depressed and heartbroken from being separated from his pet, Michael remained quiet and somewhat withdrawn in class. Soon, however, he began to feel better about himself and his future. He made new friends and received the support he needed from Mission staff members. Over the course of the eight weeks, Michael regained hope in his life and his depression lift-

ed.

Michael graduated from the Transformation Program in September 2025 and has been working for the Clean Team Workforce since. He is a hard worker, easy to get along with, and a role model for other men working for the Clean Team Workforce. He enjoys performing a variety of jobs and especially enjoys a challenge. "I like the feeling of accomplishment after getting a tough job finished," Michael stated.

Today, Michael is mentally and physically healthy and plans to find a permanent job in the community and a place of

his own to live. He can't wait to live independently and be reunited with his beloved cat, Jellybean.

The Allentown Rescue Mission, a 501c3, 145 bed non-profit homeless shelter has been providing shelter to men in crisis since 1900. In addition to emergency shelter services (365 days a year), the Allentown Rescue Mission offers a faith-based 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 nearly 1,000 men and serves more than 60,000 meals 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

SPARTA

Continued from page 1

an open-canopy oak forest that will provide habitat for many wildlife species.

Oak and hickory trees in the co-dominant or dominant size classes that are of good vigor will be retained as well as some trees that have high wildlife value (i.e. stems with advanced decay, cavities or exfoliating bark). Desirable trees that are underrepresented in the area (e.g. white oak and black cherry) may also be retained. Additionally, white ash stems that do not already exhibit characteristics of Emerald Ash Borer infestation may be preserved to retain genetic diversity in the event those individuals are resistant to the insect.

Maps of the draft location can be viewed and downloaded on our Sparta Mountain Updates Webpage.

Please note the draft location depicted in the maps is larger than 10

acres in size and in compliance with the site-selection criteria (outside the buffers) outlined in the July 2021 Addendum to the approved 2017 Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Plan. Management activities this winter, however, will occur only on 10 acres within the designated area. The boundaries of the 10-acre boundary where management activities will occur will be finalized after March 31, 2026. Due to contract procedures and costs, and as identified in the 2021 Addendum, once the location is field marked no further comments or changes can be entertained.

Work will begin on or after November 16, 2026, and all tree felling will be completed by or before March 31, 2027. Any tree stands, blinds, or other items remaining in this area when work begins will be removed. For safety reasons, this area will be temporarily closed to unauthorized personnel while work is being conducted.



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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary?



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Hello, fellow readers,

Last week's yellowing fiddle-leaf fig and mealybug dilemmas led me to yet another houseplant in distress. Blaine Rothauser, a remarkable photographer and naturalist whose artful images have graced many of our column chats, reached out about his money tree, which had declined markedly. He sent a snapshot of his leafless plant, but the stems were still green—offering hope that it could recover. My quick response to Blaine was that his plant needs a new pair of jeans.

Blaine had stored his money tree in his garage over winter, which usually stays around 50 degrees—risky for tropical plants. Ideally, money trees prefer temperatures between 65 and 80 degrees and should be kept away from drafts and heating vents. Temperatures below 50 degrees can damage the plant. Nor do they like cold feet. There's a money tree at my hair salon that

Perhaps it's no coincidence that Money Trees, also called Money Plants (Pachira aquatica),

are long associated with abundance and renewal. Other common names include Water Chestnut, Guiana Chestnut, and Malabar Chestnut.

Legend has it that a poor Taiwanese farmer first discovered the unusual yet attractive Money Tree growing in his field. Taking it as a sign, he dug it up and brought it home, where he found it required very little care. He began propagating and selling the trees at the market. They were an enormous success and brought him the affluence he longed for—hence the Money Tree's association with wealth and prosperity. Still, life is about far more than money. True abundance comes from serving others.

To restore Blaine's money tree, which had become too tight in its pot, meaning root-bound, it needs to be repotted in a slightly larger container using fresh, well-drained soil. By the way, this is a universal technique for most plants.

First, choose a pot that's one to two inches wider than the old one. Bigger is not better. Money trees prefer properly fitted shoes; too much surplus soil can hold excess moisture and cause root rot. Water the plant in a sink with room-temperature water—or better

yet, rainwater or snowmelt—until water runs through the drainage holes. Let it rest for a day, then run a knife around the pot to loosen the roots clinging to the sides. Carefully pull the plant out from the lowest point near the soil.

Once removed, the roots will likely be tightly tangled. Use your fingers to tickle them loose gently. If needed, make quarter-inch vertical cuts with a utility knife and remove damaged roots. Sterilize the blade with rubbing alcohol first.

Add one to two inches of cactus or succulent soil to the bottom of the new pot. A 50-50 blend of regular potting soil with perlite or orchid

bark also drains well. Place the plant so the root ball sits about an inch below the rim, then gently add moist soil without over-compacting.

After repotting, water again until it drains freely. Be sure the pot has drainage holes—this is a must. Once drained, return the plant to its saucer so it doesn't sit in water. Place your money tree in bright, indirect light and resume regular watering.

For most plants, allow the top three-quarters of the soil to dry before watering. Inexpensive moisture meters help remove the guesswork. Typically, watering every two weeks is sufficient, though dry

winter air may require adjustments.

Hopefully, your money tree will rebound, Blaine. And for those of you with plants—or lives—that feel a bit too tight in their jeans, the same principles apply. Loosen what's tight, refresh the soil, give light to where it's needed, and trust that growth knows how to return slowly, quietly, faithfully.

When life feels uncertain, tending a struggling plant reminds us that recovery is possible—that something seemingly hopeless can leaf out again.

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Parents Invited to Give Input on Needs and Services

Local parents are invited to offer input about their families' needs, challenges, and concerns, as well as suggestions for upcoming events, at a meeting of the Journey Family Success Center Parent Advisory Board at Project Self-Sufficiency, Tuesday, February 10th, 5:00 p.m. Family Success Center staff will highlight ways the agency can address issues facing local parents and incorporate feedback into future programs. Dinner and childcare will be provided for those in attendance. The gathering will also be available on Zoom; interested participants are invited to call 973-940-3500 to obtain log-in details. Advance registration for the in-person session is required.

"Input from parents is crucial to the success of the Family Success Center and we are excited about offering residents the opportunity to meet area providers, express their concerns about gaps in services, and identify strategies for moving forward," remarked Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director of Project Self-Sufficiency. "The Family Success Center has supported Sussex County parents and chil-

dren for many years, and we are looking forward to responding to the needs of area families and incorporating their suggestions into existing and new programs for the community."

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

Project Self-Sufficiency is a non-profit organization located in semi-rural northwestern New Jersey which has assisted low-income families along the path to economic self-sufficiency since 1986. The agency is dedicated to empowering individuals and families to achieve economic independence and self-reliance, providing a safe and inclusive environment that fosters growth, learning, and opportunity. Services include career guidance and assessment, comput-



Input from local parents is needed at a meeting of the Journey Family Success Center Parent Advisory Board at Project Self-Sufficiency.

er classes, high school diploma instruction, parenting workshops, childcare, legal assistance and education, help with emergency basic needs such as clothing and food, health education, support groups, life skills classes, family activities, home visitation, and more. For more information, visit www.projectselfsufficiency.org or call 973-940-3500.

The Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency is a program of support which includes parenting skills training, economic self-sufficiency services, family activities, legal education services, information about health and nutrition, referrals,

advocacy, and other services. All activities are free and open to the public. Family Success Centers offer services to children, youth, families, individuals, and communities. Funding is provided by the New Jersey Department of Children & Families.

Living History: Preserving Your Personal Museum

With Melissa Hough and Rachael Winston



WHEN: Sunday, February 8th at 2:00pm
WHERE: Slate Belt Heritage Center
Located at 30 N. 1st Street in Bangor

Living History is an interactive public program that demystifies the world of artifact conservation. While most people don't own 2,000-year-old pottery, nearly everyone has a "shoebox of history" fragile family photos, a grandmother's wedding veil, or a collection of vintage ticket stubs. This session translates professional museum protocols into practical, low-cost strategies for the everyday person. By the end of the program, attendees will walk away with the confidence to handle their most meaningful possessions like a pro, ensuring their personal legacy remains intact for years to come.

This educational program is open to the public and admission is free. We hope you will join us!



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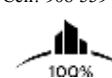
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Shapiro Administration Fights Hunger in Pennsylvania, Invests \$4.1 Million in Food Recovery Infrastructure to Commonwealth Nonprofits

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is investing \$4,125,923 in Commonwealth nonprofits, such as food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens, through the Food Recovery Infrastructure Grant (FRIG) Program to help reduce wasted food and fight hunger in Pennsylvania.

"This program is all about getting good, fresh food to the Pennsylvanians who need it most instead of going to waste in landfills," said DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley. "Nonprofit organizations such as food banks and soup kitchens play a

vital role in providing sustenance to Commonwealth communities, so it's important that the food they provide is transported and stored properly."

Food Recovery Infrastructure Grants are awarded to reimburse the cost of equipment like refrigerators, freezers, refrigerated and non-refrigerated vehicles, stoves, and microwaves to store, transport, or prepare the recovered safe, fresh, wholesome foods to ensure that the food can be redistributed to the public. Grants up to \$50,000 were available per applicant. Special consideration was given to applicants with

projects that serve Environmental Justice areas.

In addition to releasing greenhouse gases when it decomposes, food waste represents a significant portion of landfill waste. Food waste was estimated to be the largest single component of the PA waste stream, (opens in a new tab) at nearly 1.6 million tons disposed. In 2018, EPA estimated that in the United States more food was sent to landfills than any other single material in our everyday trash.

Grants were awarded locally to the following recipients:

Berks County: Berks

Latino Workforce Development Corp - \$39,728; Helping Harvest Fresh Food Bank - \$39,750; Opportunity House - \$49,924; Rehoboth Seventh-day Adventist Church - \$41,047; St Marks Evangelical Lutheran Church - \$14,070

Bradford County: Child Hunger Outreach Partners - \$50,000

Bucks County: Bucks County Opportunity Council Inc - \$46,974; Still Rise Foundation Inc - \$7,700; Renew Bible Ministries of Perkasie INC DBA Revivals - \$50,000; Rolling Harvest Food Rescue - \$9,258

Carbon County: Common Ground Ministries -



\$50,000

Lehigh County: Parkland CARES Food Pantry Inc - \$50,000; Syrian Arab American Charity Assn - \$50,000; The Salvation Army Hospitality House - \$38,068

Luzerne County: Catholic Social Services of The Diocese of Scranton Inc - \$8,029; The Food Dignity Project Inc - \$50,000

Northampton County: Easton Area Neighbor-

hood Center Inc - \$9,336; New Bethany Inc DBA New Bethany Ministries DBA Episcopal Ministries - \$50,000; Community Action Committee of Lehigh Valley - \$49,932

For a full list of Grants visit: www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/newsroom/shapiro-administration-fights-hunger-in-pa-invests-4-1-million-in-food-recovery-infrastructure

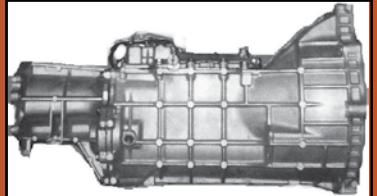
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