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Bangor Slaters Win 107th Slate Belt Rivalry Game Over Pen Argyl Green Knights



The 107th Slate Belt Rivalry Football Game Against Bangor and Pen Argyl took place on October 31st. This year Bangor was victorious winning the game, 34 to 7. This year's Charles R. Sampson award winner was Bangor's Daniel Zheng. Bangor's MVP was Lucas Hurd. Pen Argyl's MVP was Alex Harper, and the recipients of the Slate Belt Award were: Lincoln Rehrig, Brodie Kruger, Lucas Hurd, and Hunter Hopstetter. Photos from the game can be found on pages 4 and 5. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

North Warren Wins 1 to 0 Over Hackettstown During Senior Night Boys Soccer Game



North Warren took on Hackettstown during their Senior Night Boys Soccer game on October 26th. North Warren won, 1 to 0. Senior Night photos can be found on pages 6 and 7. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Pennsylvania Schools Will Be Cellphone-Free



Pennsylvania teachers will no longer have to compete with smartphones for their students' attention – and kids will be able to get through the school day without the constant pressure of social media and notifications – with bipartisan passage of a new law requiring schools to adopt policies prohibiting student cellphone use during the school day.

Act 117 of 2026 includes limited exceptions, such as students with individualized education plans and special occasions such as field days. It establishes a clear statewide standard, while allowing school districts, which have direct contact with parents, to decide what works best for their communities.

The law will take effect with the 2027-28 school year. Pennsylvania joins 40 states in restricting these devices – 19 of which have school-day bans. Read more about the effect of cellphones in schools at: senatorrobinson.com/cellphones_in_school

Kean Introduces Bill to Create New Grants for Emergency Medical Services



Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. (NJ-07) introduced the EMS SUPPORT Act of 2026 to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make grants for facility upgrades, equipment, training, or services for EMS personnel.

"During a medical emergency, you deserve the highest level of care from the most qualified first responders with the best possible resources," said Congressman Kean. "That is why I introduced the EMS SUPPORT Act to create a grant program and ensure that EMTs have the training and tools that they need to help individuals when they need it most."

"As both a Town of Clinton Councilman and Trustee of South Branch Emergency Services, I have seen firsthand the growing challenges facing emergency medical services across New Jersey and throughout our country," said Clinton Councilman Ross Traphagan. "Our EMS agencies are being asked to respond to more emergencies than ever before, while struggling with rising operational costs, staffing shortages, and the financial burden of maintaining lifesaving equipment and ambulances. I strongly support Congressman Tom Kean Jr.'s EMS SUPPORT Act because it recognizes that reliable emergency medical services are not a luxury - they are an essential public service. By creating new federal funding opportunities for staffing, training, equipment, and infrastructure,

EMS cont'd on pg 2

EMS

Continued from page 1

this legislation would provide meaningful support to the men and women who answer the call when our communities need them most, while helping ease the financial pressure on local taxpayers. Every resident deserves to know that when they dial 911, a trained EMS crew will be there. This legislation is an important step toward ensuring that our EMS organizations have the resources they need to continue saving lives for generations to come."

"As a councilman and volunteer EMT of nearly 40 years, I understand personally how our nation's EMS system needs support," said Bridgewater Councilman Tim Ring. "This legislation that creates a grant program specifically for them is an important step forward in ensuring they have the funding they need to take care of our communities. I am deeply appreciative of Congressman Kean for always listening to his constituents, advocating on our behalf, and working to support emergency medical services and first responders across the country."

In 2024, Congressman Kean's bill, the Fire Grants and Safety Act, was signed into law. The Fire Grants and Safety Act provided a five-year reauthorization for the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), the Assistance to Firefighter Grants (AFG) Program, and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER) Program.

Congressman Kean has secured nearly $22 million for first responders in New Jersey Seventh Congressional District through the Community Project Funding process.

Congressman Kean Secures Funding for Law Enforcement Training Facility



On Thursday, October 29, Warren County officials welcomed Congressman Tom Kean Jr. and members of the public safety community to the future site of the Warren County Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Training Center. Located in the heart of the County Educational and Public Safety Complex on the border of Washington Township and Franklin Township, the Training Center will be situated behind the existing Warren County 9/11 Memorial along the road between the Warren County Community College and Warren County Technical School.

Through the U.S. House Appropriations Committee's Community Project Funding, a federal mechanism allowing members of Congress to request targeted investments for local projects, Congressman Tom Kean Jr. secured $750,000 in federal funding for Warren County to go toward the construction of a new Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Training Center to meet the ever-increasing training demands placed on Police, Fire and EMS service providers in Warren County.

The lack of a suitable and centralized location for hosting the necessary classes places a hardship on planners, instructors, and attendees alike. Ultimately, this impacts the services provided to the more than 110,000 Warren County residents. The County's Public Safety Campus in Franklin Township is already an extremely active hub of training activities at its Fire Academy structures, Law Enforcement K-9 Training Facility, and specialized sites for controlled combustion activities. The County seeks to expand its training offerings to include training resources specialized to the needs of law enforcement and emergency management personnel. This new facility will include both classroom space and training areas for multiple modes of training and hands-on activity and will integrate the Office of the Fire Marshal into a modern space designed to optimize their function.

"This began with a simple conceptual idea amongst the county government and the public safety community," Warren County Administrator Alex Lazorisak said, adding, "Congressman Tom Kean Jr.'s efforts in securing this investment will help make the project a reality. I look forward to the continued collaboration with the Warren County Board of County Commissioners and local first responders to see this project to completion."

"Part of being able to respond properly to emergencies is making sure our police, fire, and EMS receive the best training they can," said Washington Township Police Chief and Warren County Police Chiefs Association President Christopher Jones. "I'm looking forward to the increased coordination in training efforts for agencies across the county," Jones continued, "This center will help ensure the safety of residents through all our communities and the grant money received from the federal government will bring this project one step closer to becoming a reality."

The Warren County Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Training Center site was one of four Warren County stops on Congressman Kean's schedule. He also visited Greenwich Elementary School to present a ceremonial check of $97,607 for a Greenwich School resource officer vehicle and equipment, the Warren County Community College to present a ceremonial check of $978,625 for the Warren County Community College Agricultural Education and Training Center, and Hope Township Volunteer Fire Department which is receiving $656,406 for a new fire truck.

"It is a great day for Warren County," Commissioner Director Lori Ciesla said, adding, "Thanks to his hard work and dedication, Congressman Tom Kean Jr. was able to secure nearly $2,500,000 for projects across Warren County. I want to thank the Congressman, who has been so successful in bringing federal tax dollars back to Warren County. Our priorities have become his priorities and he has delivered a tremendous amount for our county and our local communities. These projects will provide crucial services, and could not have happened without his leadership."

Commissioner James R. Kern III stated, "I want to thank Congressman Tom Kean Jr. for the work he does every day to make sure Warren County's needs are heard and our communities have a strong advocate in Washington. Securing federal support takes persistence, careful preparation, and close work with local partners. This investment will strengthen public safety here in Warren County."

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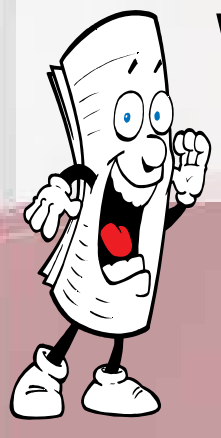
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Letter to the Editor: October 26, 2026 - Knowlton Township Commitee Meeting

Changes to the Environmental Commission Ordinance - Last April, the Township Committee passed an ordinance that re-established the Knowlton Environmental Commission (EC). At Monday's meeting, the Committee introduced revisions to that ordinance, and Committeewoman Starrs explained why they're needed.

The April ordinance reduced the EC from seven members, which was the case when the original EC was first established many years ago, to five. The EC draws a big group, and with fewerseats, some residents who now attend regularly can't vote. The April ordinance also permitted only one Township Committee liaison, which conflicts with the Mayor's subcommittee appointments of two. It also limited the liaison to a non-voting role, mainly relaying information back to the Committee. The new ordinance mandates that the two members of the EC who would have voting roles will be determined by the mayor.

Committeewoman Starrs said she would like the EC to be as inclusive as possible. The revisions would return to the broader framework of the original Environmental Commission. That means seven members, the maximum allowed under New Jersey law, and full participation by Township Committee members who attend EC meetings. The EC could still adopt bylaws, which would need to be approved only by the EC. Further, Knowlton's "Green Team" designation, which is needed to apply for grants through Sustainable Jersey, would be passed by resolution and remain unchanged.

The Committee also discussed how the EC will choose its leader. The original Knowlton ordinance tasked the Mayor with appointing the leader, while the April ordinance had the EC elect its own. The Committee agreed to a compromise suggested by a member of the public: Each year, the EC will select its own leader and put the name forward for Township Committee approval. The ordinance will have its second reading in November.

Public Comments: Several residents spoke during public comment. One said she had heard that a senior seeking to join the Knowlton seniors organization recently was unable to do so. A member of the club explained that tickets to events are usually purchased in advance and additional tickets to activities are not always available for those who want to join late in the year. Residents who inquire late in the year are therefore encouraged to join in January. Mayor Shipps expressed her hope that a way could be found to include every Knowlton senior who wants to join, at any time, especially as the holidays approach.

Discussion then turned to the Township's contribution to the seniors club, which had been reduced by $1,000 earlier this year (though Committeeman James Mazza personally donated $500 of his own funds to help). At that time, the Township auditor said that funding could be restored through a budget transfer later in the year. Mayor Shipps said sharply rising expenses, including the cost of salt and diesel, would make a transfer impossible this year.

Committeewoman Starrs noted that she had found a grant from the Wallerstein Foundation earmarked for senior activities, but noted that it requires applicants to have 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. She explained that applying for 501(c)(3) status is difficult and costs a few hundred dollars. Members of the VFW and Friends of Ramsaysburg (a nonprofit that supports the work at the Ramsaysburg Historic Homestead) said their organizations already have that status and suggested exploring a partnership to apply for grants on the Knowlton seniors club's behalf.

Dog Licensing Ordinance: Increasing the annual fee for dog licensing was agreed to at a previous meeting, and at this one, the ordinance was introduced, setting the fees at $15 for spayed or neutered dogs and $20 for unaltered dogs.

Department Reports: Knowlton's resident NJDOT I-80 liaison Tara Mezzanotte announced that a briefing for local officials on the Route 80 Rockwall Project through the Delaware Water Gap will be held on either November 9 or 16. After more than a year with little movement or new information, NJDOT's Office of Government and Community Relations will provide an update on the project. A resident also reported that the Community Day fun run/walk raised nearly $400 for Knowlton Fire & Rescue.

The Historic Commission reported receiving a new 20-year draft lease for the Ramsaysburg Historic Homestead, which the New Jersey State House Commission has already approved. Members of the commission discussed the lease with the Township Committee and Township attorney. Work on the Homestead has been delayed for more than a year while the state transferred responsibility for the lease from NJDEP's Division of Fish & Wildlife to its State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites program.

Electricity Prices Will Be Going Up: Committeewoman Starrs shared the new short-term energy outlook from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, which forecast in October that wholesale electricity prices in the Pennsylvania Jersey Maryland (PJM) Interconnection region will rise 41 percent from last year.

This is the largest increase in the country; nationally, prices are expected to increase to $52 per megawatt-hour. PJM runs the electric grid for 13 states and Washington, D.C., including New Jersey, and serves 67 million people, making it the largest grid operator in the United States. The report stated that the jump is driven by steady growth in electricity demand and noted that regional utilities have little room to add capacity. The report did not provide a cause for the increased electricity demand.

Mayor Shipps also shared that the State Health Benefits Program, which provides health insurance for all Township employees, has released its new rates, and they are 30 percent higher than last year. (Editorial note: Costs vary depending on the plan each employee chooses, but at the new rates, the Township will pay about $59,000 a year for each employee on a family plan.)

Community Day: Mayor Shipps noted that Community Day this year was a huge success, noting that both the weather and turnout were fantastic. She thanked all of the day's volunteers and sponsors, especially Gary Gray Trucking and Humpty Junior's, noting the day would not be such a huge success without them.

Tree Lighting: The Knowlton tree-lighting ceremony is scheduled for December 6 at Tunnel Field, following Santa's run through Knowlton on the Fire & Rescue truck. The ceremony is tentatively set to begin at 5 p.m., with hot dogs and hot beverages available.

--Adele Starrs, Rene Mathez

Please note the summaries are intended only to inform residents of issues that might be of interest to them. The summaries are not the official minutes and have not been approved by the Township Commitee. They reflect the views of the authors only.

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Adult Non Fiction:
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Large Print Adult Fiction:
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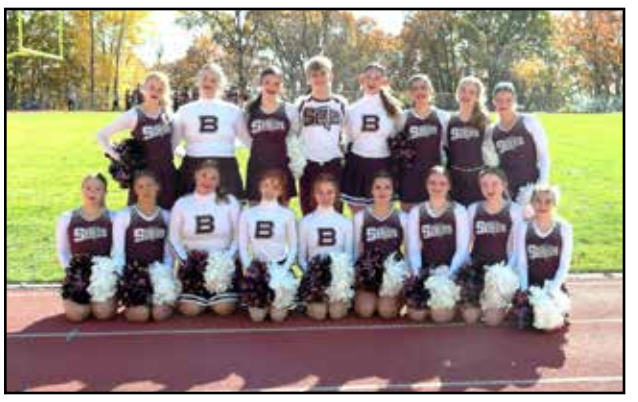
Young Adult Fiction:
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Bangor (34) Vs Pen Argyl (7) 107th Slate Belt Rivalry Football Game

















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UPCOMING EVENTS:

MUSIC BINGO
NOVEMBER 6

TIM BURTON TRIVIA
NOVEMBER 12

Bangor (34) Vs Pen Argyl (7) 107th Slate Belt Rivalry Game Continued



























Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Henry Yeska & Son Inc.

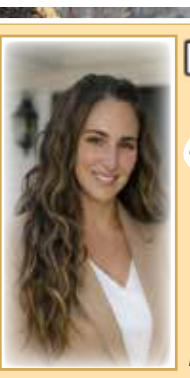
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North Warren (1) Vs Hackettstown (0) Senior Night Boys Soccer



Frank Jarski with his parents, Sylwia (Sylvia) and Rafal



Gavin Hawkswell with his parents, Brent and Kate and his siblings



Daniel Merrero with his parents, Anne and Ralph and his sister



Matthew Candidol with his parents, Michelle and John, step-parents, Gary and Ashley, his brothers, his grandparents, and his girlfriend, Olivia



John Wurtemberg with his parents, John and Marianne, and his sister, Meghan



Arian Naklicki with his parents, Andrzej and Sintialey, his brother Amadeusz, his uncle Samuel, and his grandmother, Marie



Anwar Noureldin with his parents, Nasr and Boriana and his sister, Sofia



Oliver Tillinghast with his parents, Anna and Ralph, brothers, Elliot and Felix, and his sister, Clover



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North Warren Vs Hackettstown Senior Night Boys Soccer Continued



Kevin Sempruch with his parents, Monica and Sylvester, and brother, Nick



Jesse Oliveria with his parents, Jenny and Joe and his brother, Jake



Darian Martewicz with his parents, Edyta and Waclaw, and Coach Austin

Pregnant Women and New Mothers Invited to Monthly Gatherings

Pregnant women and those with young children are invited to monthly educational gatherings hosted by Project Self-Sufficiency in Sussex and Warren Counties. Along with information sessions about a variety of topics related to early childhood development and maternal-child health, the Mommy Parties feature food and interactive activities for mothers and children. The events are free and open to the public; the Sussex County Mommy Party will be held at Project Self-Sufficiency on Wednesday, November 11th, noon, while the Warren County event will take place on Tuesday, November 17th, 11:00 a.m., at the Trinity United Methodist Church in Hackettstown. The Warren County events are designed to coincide with the arrival of the agency's mobile services vehicle, Journey, which visits the Warren County location twice monthly.

The Mommy Parties are an important component of Project Self-Sufficiency's outreach to pregnant women and parents of young children; other services include home visitation programs, monthly Baby Beginnings Fairs, semi-annual Pregnancy & Infancy Summits, and Parent Cafes.

"These monthly gatherings invite women in Sussex and Warren Counties to forge relationships with others in similar circumstances while learning crucial parenting skills and connecting with resources for additional support," commented Project Self-Sufficiency Chief Executive Office Deborah Berry-Toon. "We are grateful to be able to offer an opportunity for these families to gain the information and resources they need to become successful parents."

To register for the Mommy Parties, to discuss your parenting needs, or to find out more about other programs and services available at Project Self-Sufficiency, call 973-940-3500, or visit www.projectselfsufficiency.org/pregnancy-help-sussex-warren-nj.



Jace Bach with his mother, Cheryl



Cesar Manzo Garrido with his mother, Jesse

Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press







Newbaker Funeral Home Hosts 5th Annual Trunk or Treat Event















Erik Schneider, owner of Newbaker Funeral Home on Rt. 94 in Blairstown, NJ, proudly hosted their 5th Annual Trunk or Treat event on October 25th. The parking lot was crawling with the cutest creatures, and some spooky ones too! Hearses and other vehicles were decorated and were handing out treats safely to the local children. Local fire and EMS were also on scene. Thank You Erik, and your team for making a fun and safe Halloween Tradition! Photos by Bob Halberstadt/The Free Weekly Press

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New Jersey's CMOs - Celebrating 25 Years of New Jersey's Children's System of Care: A Legacy of Impact

More than 500 people gathered at Mill Hill Park in Trenton in mid-October for a celebration of the New Jersey Care Management Organizations' 25th anniversary. NJCMO, a collective of 15 care management organizations, provides services statewide for children facing mental health challenges, substance use, behavioral health, and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In 2001, New Jersey families came together with a powerful vision: children with behavioral health challenges deserved coordinated, community-based services that would help them thrive at home, in school, and in their communities. What began then as a parent-led movement has grown into one of the nation's most comprehensive Children's Systems of Care (CSOC).

New Jersey's CMOs serve more than 30,000 youth annually. The broader CSOC network reaches even more families through mobile response and stabilization services, family support organizations, treatment providers, and community partners.



"We were thrilled so many people turned out to celebrate our work and highlight the simple principle that children do best when families are supported and services are coordinated within their own communities," said James Parauda, NJCMO Association President, also the CEO of the Tri County CMO that covers Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren counties. "Rather than requiring families to navigate disconnected systems on their own, the system of care brings providers and partners together around the individual needs and strengths of each child and family."

Beyond the numbers, CSOC has transformed how New Jersey supports children with complex needs. The family-driven approach emphasizes keeping youth safely at home while connecting them to treatment, education, peer support, and lasting community resources. Approximately 95% of children involved with CMOs now remain living at home.

The anniversary milestone and event celebrated more than the growth of a statewide network. It honored the parents whose advocacy sparked a transformation, the professionals and community partners who sustain it, and the countless families whose lives have been touched.

And the foundation established 25 years ago remains remarkably relevant. Collaboration, family voice, community connection, and individualized care continue to guide the system forward.

For more information about TCCMO which covers Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren counties, visit: www.tricountycmo.org, call 908-526-3900 or email info@tricountycmo.org.



Tri County Care Management Organization (TCCMO) understands that the family matters. TCCMO is a 501(c)(3) agency contracted with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (NJ DCF) to serve youth ages 5 to 21. TCCMO is grounded in keeping youth safe, healthy and connected and keeping families strong. TCCMO takes a family-focused and community-based leadership role in supporting the needs of youth who are experiencing complex challenges, ensuring the services are responsibly authorized, delivered, monitored, with a documented positive outcome.







Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary?



Mary E. Stone
Stone Associates
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Hello fellow readers, I never imagined being accused of murder on a Sunday afternoon, much less discovering I was guilty! Fortunately, the crime was fictional, the laughter genuine, and the cause behind the festivities profoundly important.

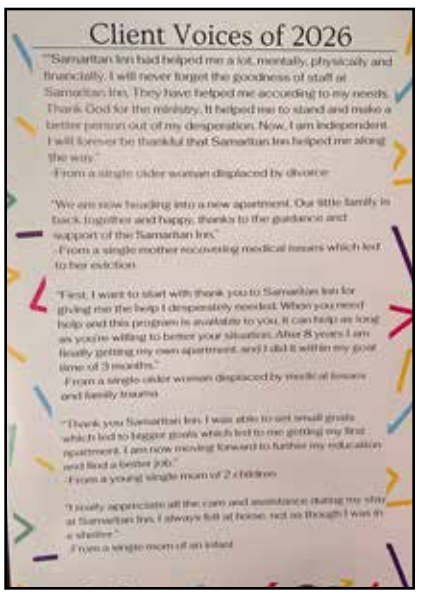
My singing partner, Ken Roberts, invited me to Samaritan Inn's 22nd Annual Grape Expectations fundraiser, featuring an "I Love the '80s" murder mystery at Lake Mohawk Country Club. Ken's late wife, Genie, supported Samaritan Inn by donating clothing, and he continues to contribute financially, making the afternoon especially meaningful.

I resurrected my electric hot rollers for iconic big hair and donned a gold-sequined jacket with shoulder pads, unearthed from my after-five wardrobe. The jacket dated back to the late '80s, and the foam securing its shoulder pads to the hanger disintegrated when I removed it, proving its age! Paired with a black velvet fitted skirt, cowboy boots, and a glitzy belt, it was perfect. Ken sported aviator sunglasses and an '80s-inspired ensemble. We were ready for nostalgia and intrigue.

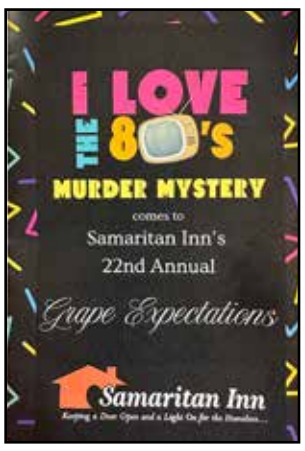
Then came an unforeseen twist. One of the actors handed me a purple hat, glasses, and a binder of clues. Suddenly, I was Professor Vic Violet, one of several suspects in a murder investigation involving musicians battling to become headliners.

The plot included a stabbing, a missing guitarist, squandered investments, and even cyanide poisoning involving New Coke. Between acts, guests interrogated suspects, exchanged play money for clues, and tried to solve the mystery.









That is, until they began suspecting me! As it turned out, they were right. Professor Vic Violet was the murderer! Who knew I had such a sinister side? The verdict came at the end of the event with no opportunity to defend myself.

But the afternoon's most memorable moments had nothing to do with solving crimes.

Before the meal, a father stood before the gathering to thank Samaritan Inn for helping his family rebuild their lives. He had hoped his wife and young son would join him at the podium, but the little boy was too shy. Later, his wife stepped forward to express her gratitude.

Their words were heartfelt. By embracing the organization's guidance, structure, and support, they had regained their independence. Now they live in their own place, building a future for their son. What a gift.

Founded in 1977, Samaritan Inn provides emergency shelter, food assistance, counseling, and practical life-skills training for Sussex County families facing homelessness.

In 2025, its family shelter program provided 10,948 nights of shelter to 38 families, including 52 children. Eighty-five percent of participating families successfully transitioned into permanent housing.

Those numbers represent far more than statistics. They represent children sleeping in safe surroundings, parents regaining confidence, and families discovering that difficult circumstances need not define their futures.

The organization also honored Shawn Stinnett of iHeartMedia as Samaritan of the Year for her longstanding commitment to helping local nonprofits and businesses.

As Thanksgiving approaches, many of us look forward to gathering around familiar tables with family and friends. Yet not everyone has a home to return to, and even those with roofs overhead may face loneliness, uncertainty, or struggles invisible to others.

As a landscape designer, I've learned that establishing a garden requires more than placing plants in the ground. Healthy roots need the right conditions, nurturing, and time. Some plants recover from difficult circumstances when given the opportunity to flourish. People deserve that opportunity, too.

Giving back doesn't have to involve organizing a fundraiser or attending one. Donating clothing, sharing a meal, offering encouragement, or helping someone navigate a difficult season can make a difference.

I left the murder mystery smiling at my unexpected acting debut, but even more grateful for the compassionate people helping neighbors find their footing. After all, the greatest headliners aren't necessarily those standing beneath the brightest lights. They're the people opening their hearts and opening doors for others.

Garden Dilemmas? AskMaryStone.com or tune in on your favorite Podcast App.





Recall Effort Against Frelinghuysen Mayor Kirk J. Perez Ends in Failure

Mayor Perez thanks supporters and reaffirms his commitment to accountability, responsible government, and protecting Frelinghuysen Township's future.

Letter To The Editor, Reader Submitted:

The recall effort against Frelinghuysen Township Mayor Kirk J. Perez has failed, bringing an end to an attempt to remove a township official who was elected by the residents of Frelinghuysen Township.

The recall effort was initiated by Robert Stock, Martin Connor, and Daniel Kohuth. For Mayor Perez, the outcome represents a victory for the democratic process and for the residents who stood behind their choice at the ballot box.

"This was never just about me. It was about the right of the people of Frelinghuysen to choose their own leadership and decide the direction of their town," said Mayor Perez.

"The recall effort has failed, and I am grateful to everyone who stood with me, supported my family, and believed in what we are working to accomplish."

Mayor Perez also expressed concern about how the recall process was used.

"The recall process exists to give residents a voice when they believe their elected leadership should be removed. However, that process should never be used simply as a political tool to undermine an elected official or disrupt the work of local government. I believe this effort was an abuse of the intent behind that process, and its failure is a reminder that the decision to lead a community ultimately belongs to its residents. I was elected to do a job, and I intend to continue doing it."

Perez also addressed the claims made throughout the recall effort.

"This recall effort was fueled by claims that I believe were misleading and not supported by the facts. No elected official should have to spend time defending against misleading claims when that time should be spent serving the residents who elected them. The people of Frelinghuysen deserve honesty and accountability, and I intend to remain focused on the work they elected me to do."

The recall effort brought personal challenges for the Mayor and his family. Throughout the process, Perez remained committed to his responsibilities and his goal of restoring integrity, accountability, and public trust in township government.

Since taking office, Mayor Perez has focused on strengthening financial oversight, improving accountability, protecting Frelinghuysen's rural character, addressing emergency preparedness, and advancing initiatives intended to serve residents responsibly while keeping taxes in check.

The Mayor emphasized that the end of the recall is not a reason to dwell on the past, but an opportunity to continue the work residents elected him to do.

"I want to thank everyone who reached out, showed their support, and stood beside my family during a difficult time. I will never forget that support. You gave me another reason to keep fighting for the people of this township."

Mayor Perez concluded, "The recall is over. The people have made their voices heard, and now it's time to move forward. I will continue doing the job I was elected to do, standing up for Frelinghuysen and working to make our township a community we can all be proud of."

Project Self-Sufficiency Program to Educate Public, Support Trauma Survivors, Promote Prevention

To facilitate the conversation about issues surrounding childhood trauma, Project Self-Sufficiency will offer the "Connections Matter" workshop in English, Tuesday, November 17th, 2:00 p.m., and in Spanish, Wednesday, November 18th, 2:00 p.m. Tips for protection, prevention, and promoting resilience within the community will be discussed. The workshops are free, hosted on Zoom, and open to the public; interested participants are invited to call 973-940-3500 to receive log-in details.

Speakers will address the impact of adverse childhood experiences on social, emotional, and cognitive development, and offer tips and strategies for building resilience. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are widely recognized as falling into three distinct categories, abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. Examples of negative behavior said to result from ACEs include smoking, alcoholism, drug use, absenteeism, and lack of physical activity. These behaviors can cause a cascade of physical and mental health problems, from diabetes to cancer to suicidal thoughts. It is estimated that approximately 67% of the population has experienced at least one adverse childhood experience.

The Connections Matter curriculum invites providers, parents, and community members to build caring connections to improve resiliency. Discussion during the workshops will focus on understanding adverse childhood experiences and demonstrating how caring connections can serve as a primary buffer in the negative effects of trauma. The training is appropriate for parents and providers raising and teaching school aged children. The workshops are funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families and led by Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey.

Project Self-Sufficiency is bringing together professionals, providers, and parents who are committed to increasing awareness of the impact of childhood trauma on juvenile development, future violence victimization and perpetration, and lifelong health and opportunity. "Our goal is to help make our community a place in which every child can thrive by providing education and training on adverse childhood experiences and assuring safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments," explains Project Self-Sufficiency Chief Executive Officer Deborah Berry-Toon. "Protection, prevention, and resilience promotion can profoundly improve health according to recent discoveries in neuroscience, epigenetics, and epidemiology. The tools identified in these workshops can positively impact public health, safety, and productivity, and reduce public and private costs now and for future generations."



Blairstown, NJ, Celebrates Halloween















Join Us at Mt. Bethel Diner, Thanksgiving Day:
Thursday, November 26th, from 6am-8pm
Happy Thanksgiving
Specials Include:
Roast Turkey.....$20
Baked Ham w/ Pineapple....$20
Prime Rib.....$25.99
Above Entrees Include a choice of 2 vegetables, soup or salad, and cake
Serving Breakfast Lunch & Dinner
Regular Menu Available
2600 N. Delaware Dr., Mt. Bethel
570-897-6409
Hours: M, W-Sun: 6am-9pm; Tuesday: 6am-2pm
Dine in or Take Out

Local Trick or Treaters Enjoying Halloween!

















BENEFIT BINGO
BINGO!
Sat., November 7th, 2026
Door Open 11:30am | Bingo Begins at 12:30pm
PRIZES INCLUDE: DESIGNER PURSES, GIFT CARDS, MENS TOOLS, & BASKETS!
Sponsored By Trinity UCC Church
632 S. Delaware Dr., Mt. Bethel, PA
FMI or Tickets Call: Trinity UCC at 610-588-1989
Tickets Cost: $20 in Advance, $25 at the Door
(Buys 20 Games of Bingo)
175 Tickets Available; First Come - First Serve
(NO Refunds After Purchase!)
Additional Cards $5/Packet
GRAND & SPECIAL PRIZES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT AN ADDITIONAL COST
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(No Outside Food Permitted)
ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT TO PLAY!
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The Trinity General Fund

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Clean Team Workforce Celebrates October's Employee of the Month

– The Clean Team Workforce congratulates its Employee of the Month for October, Jared P.

Jared, a lifelong resident of New Jersey, grew up living with his parents and spending significant time with his grandmother. However, Jared faced a silent battle with depression from a young age. In junior high school, he began using drugs to cope with his depression. For many years, Jared performed as a high-functioning addict. He graduated from high school in 2014 and held various jobs until, in 2022, he suffered a near-fatal drug overdose.

Following his overdose, Jared stayed clean for three years. However, while at a party that was busted for noise disturbance, he was arrested for an outstanding warrant related to his overdose three years prior. Jared spent a month in jail. During this time, he lost his job, car, and place to live. With nowhere to go after he was released, Jared turned to the Allentown Rescue Mission for help.

At the Mission, Jared completed the eight-week Transformation Program designed to help men develop life skills and be exposed to the Gospel message. "It gave me the opportunity to rebuild my life, strengthen my faith, and connect with others who wanted to make positive changes in their lives.

Overall, it gave me a foundation for a better future to be able to start from somewhere instead of the streets," Jared proclaimed.

After graduating from the Transformation Program, Jared immediately joined the Clean Team Workforce, where he quickly stood out for his strong work ethic and ability to complete unsupervised jobs. His dedication earned him a promotion to crew leader. Jared has led the grass-cutting crew for the entire season from May through October. He has also excelled at other assignments, including landscaping and junk removal jobs. Jared enjoys staying busy. He is detail-oriented and takes pride in his work. He views every task as a direct reflection of himself.

Jared is thankful for the opportunity he received at the Allentown Rescue Mission. He has been able to save money and is actively searching for an apartment in Allentown. Jared is a quiet man who enjoys solitude. He looks forward to relaxing in his own home.

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



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