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July 9, 2026

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Vol. 53, No. 48



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Portland and Upper Mount Bethel Township Celebrate America With Their 9th Annual Fourth of July Parade



Portland and Upper Mount Bethel Held their 9th Annual 4th of July Parade on Saturday, July 4th. Despite the heat, everyone had a wonderful time. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Blairstown Holds Annual "Blairstown 4th" Fourth of July Celebration at Footbridge Park



The Blairstown Rotary Club held their Annual Duck Race at Footbridge Park during the Blairstown Fourth of July celebration! This year's winning number were: 1st Prize - \$2,000: Duck #0585; 2nd Prize - \$1,000: Duck #0282; 3rd Prize - \$500: Duck #1268; 4th Prize - \$350: Duck #0884; and 5th Prize - \$250: Duck #0847. If you have one of the winning tickets or have any questions, please email tickets@blairstownrotary.org. (Photo by Lisa Kleber-Amon, Blairstown Rotary Facebook Page)

Summer Happenings...It's EASIER than EVER to advertise them in our publication! See page 7 or 16 for details & discounts!

Bangor Celebrates America's 250th Birthday



Bangor held a "250th Independence Celebration" in honor of America on Sunday, July 5th. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Main Street Cruisers Take The Stage At Wind Gap Park



The Main Street Cruisers took the stage at Wind Gap Park on Sunday, July 5th as part of the Summer Sounds Concert Series. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

New to the Blue Mountain Community Library



Blue Mountain Community Library News:

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

From May to June: New memberships increased 161%; Items borrowed increased 67%; Patrons served increased 65%. Are YOU part of these exciting numbers? Stop in today to get your library card!

Our America on Wheels museum pass has arrived and is ready for checkout! Stop in today for this wonderful resource, courtesy of a sponsorship from Deerfoot Auto Parts. The pass is for FREE museum entrance for two adults and their children. For a family of five, that's a savings of \$76! The pass checks out for a three-day circulation period.

Check out our new link to FREE e-resources and e-books at www.bmcl.org/services!

Stop in for our hygiene bank. Give what you can and take what you need.

There's a new scavenger hunt for children (fun and games-themed) - and it stretches across THREE rooms this month (the children's room AND young adult fiction room AND Book Nook). Happy searching!

The library will discuss *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi on Tuesday, July 14 at 6:30pm. Email info@bmcl.org to RSVP.

You can still get involved in the BMCL Summer Fun with Reading Program (SFRP) 2026: Words and Wonders! ALL AGES are invited to stop in for reading challenges with exciting prizes, a readers' raffle, and programs!

Adults are invited to a "Love Libraries" trivia challenge! (and it's multiple choice!) on Thurs., July 16 at 6:30pm at the library. Earn a bonus Phase 2 reading challenge ticket just for participating! The winner will receive a special prize. Register by calling 610-863-3029 or emailing info@bmcl.org by Mon., July 13.

Children ages 3-6 are invited to "Two Stories and Craft" storytime on Thurs., July 16 at 10am at the library. Children ages 4-9 are invited to the next special outdoor program on Wed., July 22 at 10:30am at Wind Gap Park at 334 S. Lehigh Ave. Call 610-863-3029 or email info@bmcl.org with program date/s, child's name and birthdate, parent/guardian's name, and phone number to register. See www.bmcl.org/services for additional program listings.

Support BMCL while enjoying delicious ice cream sundaes and listening to TimeWhys at "Summer Sounds" at Weona Park on July 26 at 6pm. (And thank you to the pie bakers, volunteers, and customers for "Pies in the Park" on June 28).

Dine at Scorecard on Tues., July 28 and support the library by doing so!

New to the circulating collection:

Adult fiction:

- Whistler (Ann Patchett)
- Land (Maggie O'Farrell)
- Road Trip (Mary Kay Andrews)
- My Year in Paris with Gertrude Stein (Deborah Levy)
- A Bookseller in Madrid (Mario Escobar)

Adult nonfiction:

- Lightning beneath the Sea (James M. Tabor)

Large print fiction:

- Lady in the Lake (Laura Lippman)
- Margaritas at the Beach House Hotel (Judith Keim)
- The Beach House (Rachel Hanna)
- A Dealer Dead Ahead (Scarlett Moss)
- Amethyst's Choice (Grace Given)

YA fiction:

- The Scorpion and the Night Blossom (Amelie Wen Zhao)
- Gaslit (Megan Davidhizar)
- Adventure Is Out There! (Liz Braswell)
- Fustuk (Robert Mgrdich Apelian)

YA nonfiction:

- The Odyssey (Gareth Hinds)
- Oppenheimer and the Atomic Bomb (Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin)
- How to Survive the End of the World (Katy Doughty)

Juvenile fiction:

- America, I'm So Glad You Were Born (Ainsley Earhardt)

Working to Save You Money By Providing Meaningful Tax Relief

Pennsylvania families continue to feel the impact of rising costs, which is why I supported legislation to provide meaningful tax relief and make everyday expenses more affordable.

The bill would eliminate the gross receipts tax on electricity, saving consumers more than \$1.7 billion in the first year. It also creates a two-week sales tax holiday in August for back-to-school items like backpacks, notebooks, and school supplies.

The legislation also increases funding for the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC)



program, helping more families access scholarships for the schools that best meet their children's needs.

This bill is another step toward lowering costs and helping Pennsylva-

nia families keep more of their hard-earned money. It now heads to the House of Representatives for consideration. Call your state representatives and ask them to bring this legislation to a vote.

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AMERICA'S FREEDOM FIELD 250



250 American Flags standing at the Bangor Farm Show Complex Field in Honor of America's 250th Anniversary. Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Belvidere Street Festival Returns for Its Second Year for a 250th Anniversary Celebration

The Warren County Council, a proud partner of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Town of Belvidere, is excited to welcome residents and visitors to the Belvidere Street Festival: Celebrating the Spirit of America on Saturday, July 18, from 11:00am to 4:00pm in the heart of downtown Belvidere, NJ.



As communities across the nation commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States of America, Belvidere will host a vibrant celebration honoring America's history, heritage, and enduring spirit. The festival offers an opportunity for families, friends, and neighbors to come together and celebrate the values that unite us while enjoying a day filled with entertainment, local businesses, and community pride.

“56 men risked every- thing to set in motion the greatest adventure in human history”, said Joe Roth, Belvidere Town Council President. “Join us as Belvidere celebrates the Spirit of America.”

The celebration begins immediately following the Belvidere Food Pantry Race for Hunger 5K, keeping the excitement going throughout the day. Whether you're crossing the finish line, cheering on participants, or arriving for the festival festivities, there will be something for everyone

to enjoy. Mill Street, Front Street, Mansfield Street, and Riverside Park will be transformed into a lively festival destination featuring live music, delicious food trucks, unique craft and artisan vendors, a classic car show, and family-friendly activities, creating a full-day celebration of community spirit in the heart of Belvidere. The live music lineup will feature performances at Riverside Park, Belvidere Books, and Courthouse Square, showcasing an exciting

mix of local talent including Riverside Rhythm Orchestra from 11:00am to 1:00pm, Tweed & the Sugar Daddies from 11:00am to 3:00pm, and Out Past Curfew from 12:00pm to 4:00pm. Visitors can spend the day shopping local, enjoying great food, listening to live music, and connecting with neighbors while experiencing the charm and hospitality that make Belvidere such a special community, while also taking time to explore the classic car show featuring unique vehicles on display along with a judged car contest highlighting standout entries and crowd favorites.

The Belvidere Street Festival is more than just a community event, it is a celebration of the American spirit and a showcase of the people, businesses, and organizations that contribute to the vitality of Warren County.

New to the Bangor Public Library

39 S Main St, Bangor, PA 18013
Phone: (610) 588-4136

Adult Fiction:

Whisper Creek: A Thriller by Allison Brennan

Adult Non Fiction:

The Finest Hotel in Kabul: A People's History of Afghanistan by Lyse Doucet

Large Print Adult Fiction:

The Keeper by Tana French; *Whistler: A Novel* Ann Patchett

Easy Fiction:

Fourth of July Fun! By Deb Adamson; *The Berenstain Bears God Bless our Country* by Mike Berenstain; *Red, White and Blue, I love You* by Jeffrey Burton; *America, I'm So Glad you Were Born* by Ainsley Earhardt; *Piggy* by Ann Hood; *On the Fourth of July* by Maggie Rudd

Easy Non Fiction:

Memorial Day by Clara Cella; *The Fire of Stars: The Life and Brilliance of the Woman Who Discovered What Stars Are Made Of* by Kirsten W. Larson; *Independence Day* by Erika S. Manley




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Wind Gap Summer Sounds Presents: Main Street Cruisers



Photos by Dale Young/
The Free Weekly Press



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Board of Commissioners to Meet in Harrisburg



The Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners will meet on Friday, July 10 at the Game Commission's Harrisburg headquarters, 2001 Elmerton Ave. This meeting is one day only and will begin at 1 p.m. with public comments. Those wishing to speak may register beginning at 12:15 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Speakers will be called in the order in which they registered. Public comments offered at board meetings are limited to five minutes and are to be confined to agenda items. Power-Point presentations are not permitted. Following the conclusion of public comment,

the board will take up its regular agenda, including the finalization of updated elk management units and hunt zones. The agenda for the July meeting will be available on the PGC website. Under "About the PGC," click on "Public Meetings," then find the July 10 meeting info and click on the "Meeting Agenda" link. The agenda for the July 10 meeting will be available in the near future. Those unable to attend the meeting can watch it from home. The meeting will be livestreamed on the Game Commission's YouTube channel and can be viewed there afterward.

Boscola Announces Senate Passage of Bill to Modernize PA's Car Dealership Law

Senator Lisa M. Boscola (D-Lehigh/Northampton) applauded Senate passage of Senate Bill 1182, a bipartisan effort with Senator Gene Yaw (R-Lycoming) to update Pennsylvania's Board of Vehicles Act and modernize the rules governing vehicle manufacturers, distributors and local dealerships. The bill passed the Senate by a unanimous vote (50:0) and now heads to the House of Representatives for further consideration. "The way we buy, service and use vehicles has changed dramatically," Boscola said. "Today's

vehicles are tied to software, subscriptions, over-the-air updates, connected data systems and new service requirements. Pennsylvania law needs to keep pace with that marketplace." SB 1182 updates several provisions of the Board of Vehicles Act, including warranty reimbursement, dealer and consumer data protections, manufacturer-required loaner vehicles, vendor choice, software-based vehicle features and the relationship between manufacturers, distributors and local dealerships. Boscola said the legislation recognizes the



continuing role local dealerships play for Pennsylvania consumers. "Local dealerships are often the first place consumers turn when they buy a vehicle, need warranty work, need service, need a loaner or need help resolving an issue," Boscola said. "These

businesses employ people in our communities and remain the front line for consumers when something goes wrong." The Board of Vehicles Act was enacted in 1983 and last substantially updated in 2018. Senate Bill 1182 now moves to the House of Representatives.

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Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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Bangor Honors America With "250th Independence Celebration" Continued



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Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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PGC Applauds Legislative Efforts to Make Hunter-Trapper Education Accessible in Schools

In an effort to make Hunter-Trapper Education more accessible to students across the state, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives resoundingly approved House Bill 2460 (180-22), sponsored by House Game & Fisheries Committee Chair Rep. Anita Kulik (D-Allegheny), to provide opportunities for the course to be taught in schools.

The bill calls for the Pennsylvania Game Commission to develop an age-appropriate Hunter-Trapper Education (HTE) Program, including firearm safety instruction, for students in grades 6-12. Schools could opt to incorporate this as an extracurricular class, or as part of an existing course for the purpose of outdoor recreation activity. Responsibility for this task will reside solely with the Game Commission, as to not add any burden to the Department of Education.

"Students are our future, and they represent the next generation of Pennsylvania hunters," said Pennsylvania Game Commission Executive Director Steve Smith. "The reality is, kids have so many things competing for their time and attention. The Game Commission applauds Chairwoman Kulik, and this legislative effort to provide hunter education in schools because it's a great way to expose more students to the lessons of wildlife con-



servation and potentially pique their interest in wanting to participate in hunting themselves."

Under state law, all new hunters must successfully complete the Game Commission's basic HTE course before obtaining a hunting license. Students who would take the course in school would be eligible to purchase a license after they successfully complete the course in school.

"I believe that it is imperative that hunter and trapper education be provided in our schools, to help ensure that current and future generations have an opportunity to learn safe hunting and trapping practices," said Rep. Kulik. "This is especially important for our youth, who are interested, but may not otherwise have an opportunity."

Throughout the course, students are taught the ethics of responsible

hunting behavior, basic firearms safety, basic shooting skills, basic firearm and archery hunting techniques, wildlife management, outdoor preparedness, and the basics of fur-taking (trapping). Firearms and ammunition would not be brought into a school building as part of the instruction.

"The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) applauds Rep. Kulik, a member of the bipartisan Pennsylvania Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus for her work on this bill," said Kaleigh Leager, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation Mid-Atlantic States Manager. "Bringing hunter education courses to schools is one of CSF's top priorities, as it is key to the Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) of sportsmen and women, which in turn drives essential conservation funding. These pro-

grams will also improve the general conservation literacy of today's youth, including imparting upon them a greater understanding of hunting's role in conservation, regardless of whether they decide to become hunters themselves. CSF looks forward to continuing to support this critical effort alongside the Pennsylvania Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus throughout the remainder of the legislative session."

Pennsylvania isn't the only state looking to make Hunter-Trapper Education opportunities more accessible in our schools through legislation. According to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, Pennsylvania would be joining several other states including Colorado, Louisiana, Michigan, West Virginia, Illinois, Tennessee, New Mexico, and most recently Georgia, whose Governor signed similar legislation into law on May 5, 2026.

Visit www.legis.state.pa.us for updates on HB 2460 throughout the 2025-26 legislative session. Visit the PGC website to register for Hunter-Trapper Education or to learn more about hunting and wildlife in Pennsylvania.

St. Luke's Urges Parents To Be Vigilant Amid Increased Measles Risk



With an increase in measles cases recently reported in eastern Pennsylvania, St. Luke's pediatricians are encouraging parents to take steps to protect their children, including discussing an accelerated vaccination schedule with their child's healthcare provider.

"Measles is one of the most contagious infectious diseases, but vaccination is the safest and most effective way to protect your child and those around them," said Jennifer Janco, MD, Chair of St. Luke's Pediatrics.

Dr. Janco recommends that parents of children who live in or plan to travel to areas where measles cases have been reported consult their pediatrician about whether an earlier vac-

ination schedule may be appropriate:

- Infants ages 6-11 months may be eligible for an early dose of the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine.

- Children who have already received one MMR dose at one year of age may be eligible to receive their second dose earlier than the usual four-year-old dose

- An up-to-date list of Pennsylvania counties with confirmed measles cases is available at www.pa.gov/measles.

"We strongly encourage parents to contact their child's healthcare provider, especially before traveling, to ensure their child is up to date on recommended vaccinations and adequately protected against measles," Dr. Janco said.

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Contact Senator Brown's office at (570) 620-4326 to schedule an appointment.

Senator Rosemary M. Brown

Veterans do not need to be a member of the American Legion to receive these services.

Visit SenatorBrown40.com for additional information.

Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary?



Mary E. Stone
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Hello, fellow readers,

Many will cherish memories of how they celebrated the 250th birthday of the United States of America. Well, I have a special story to share.

I've had a new flag waiting in the house for a few years. Not because I didn't want to fly it. Quite the opposite. The problem was the flagpole. Or more specifically, the plan for the flagpole.

"We need to paint it first."

But it never got done.

We had passed along the faded, worn flag to our local Boy Scout group that conducts honorable flag retirement ceremonies. Since then, the empty pole has bothered me.

With no plans oth-

er than gardening, I figured the weathered white paint was fine. Why should a flag have to wait for perfection? So, on the Fourth of July, now just Jolee and me, I decided it was time to fly the flag.

Seems simple, right? But what should have taken fifteen minutes turned into a puzzle involving a mystery knot, an odd old clip I couldn't figure out, and weathered rope that reminded me of years ago when I was a floundering deckhand on a sailboat.

At one point, I found myself standing among the Joe-Pye Weed below Old Glory, already chest-high in the garden, studying the existing knot. I concluded it was likely a repair from years ago.

Somewhere between untangling the rope and repositioning the new clips that secured the flag, I started laughing. Then I began singing God Bless America. I mean, I belted it out like I once did at the Footbridge Park Fourth of July opening ceremony years ago.

There I was, alone in the yard—well, not alone. I had my faithful four paws by my side—singing to a flagpole while hoisting a flag.



The first try, it became pinned to the pole behind the rope. Maybe the clips were too close together, creating a gap. Maybe there wasn't enough wind. Down she came. I adjusted the clips and tried again.

Eventually, the flag flew. Not perfectly. Not

quite all the way to the top. The old knot stopped it a foot or two short.

I wanted to keep going. Surely there was a way to replace the rope, or rework the knot, and raise the flag those last few inches. Instead, I stepped back

and watched.

The flag, flying against a brilliant blue sky, began to wave in the gentle breeze. And I realized how often we postpone things while waiting for perfect conditions, when there are no more knots.

We do it in the garden. We wait for the perfect weather, the perfect plan, and the perfect timing before planting or pruning. Sometimes that's warranted. But perfection rarely comes.

We do it in life, too. We tell ourselves we'll start after one more thing or after situations improve. After we feel more confident.

Yet nature doesn't wait for perfect conditions.

Trees leafed out, and perennials emerged despite our oddly dry, chilly spring. My dear friend and design colleague, Marty Carson's Dove Tree, didn't stop being beautiful, though it didn't flower this year at her celebration of life.

Plants grow forward

anyway. That's why gardens and Mother Nature are such wonderful teachers.

The flag flew. Not all the way to the top. But it flew.

It comforted me.

It's not about perfection, but progress. Not waiting for everything to be just right, but moving forward anyway.

As we celebrate our nation's birthday, may we never take for granted the freedoms we enjoy, the beauty of our country, and the opportunities we have to shape its future.

While everything in our world is not perfect, it is up to each of us to keep moving forward—with kindness, appreciation for our differences, and recognition of what we share. We all want the same things: to love and be loved, to support those we care about, to find purpose, and to feel a sense of belonging and peace.

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Governor Sherrill Continues Comprehensive State Response to Severe Weather in New Jersey

Governor Mikie Sherrill released the following statement on the State's response to continued severe weather: "The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) continues to be activated and assisting communities across the state with severe weather conditions, including those impacted by today's substantial flooding. During the last few days, I have been in direct contact with mayors, as well as our utility companies, transit officials, and our emergency responders to ensure a closely coordinated response. I'm grateful to all of our public servants who have been working around the clock to keep people safe. Our communities have been hit hard, and we will continue to help them recover," said Governor

Mikie Sherrill. The State Emergency Operations Center, which was activated under the direction of Governor Sherrill and Acting New Jersey State Police Superintendent and Acting State Director of Emergency Management Jeanne Hengemuhle, remained fully operational throughout the response. Having the State Emergency Operations Center already activated allowed for a seamless transition into storm response while simultaneously supporting the extensive public safety, security, and coordination efforts associated with FIFA World Cup activities across New Jersey. NJOEM has maintained daily coordination with all 21 counties to support response and recovery operations. Due to the widespread damage, NJOEM has



opened its Damage Assessment Portal to facilitate documentation of storm-related impacts for potential federal resources. New Jersey Department of Transportation has opened its emergency operations center, and crews have been working across the State and are responding today to flooding,

downed trees, and other weather-related impacts on the state highways, working closely with emergency management partners. Motorists are encouraged to use caution, avoid flooded roads, and report conditions to their local police department. The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) continues to

work with utility companies to restore power lost during the storms, overseeing the restorations in the range of 500,000 outages, with about 50,000 outages still in progress. The Sherrill Administration facilitated mutual aid teams from Canada and other states into New Jersey to support restoration efforts.

The NJ TRANSIT rail system sustained significant damage to infrastructure across multiple rail lines after this past week's record-breaking temperatures and consecutive evenings of severe thunderstorms and heavy winds that toppled more than 50 trees on tracks and overhead wires. NJ TRANSIT crews have been working around-the-clock to restore service across the system as quickly as possible. Despite the significant damage, NJ TRANSIT had service restored on all rail lines for this morning's commute, except for the Gladstone Branch, a portion of the Morris & Essex Lines, and a few stations at the western-most end of the RVL where buses were provided. Later today, NJ TRANSIT will be sharing an update on service for Tuesday.

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Kean Demands Answers Regarding Prolonged Power Outages in New Jersey

Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. (NJ-07) sent a letter to the Presidents of PSE&G and JCP&L demanding answers regarding the prolonged power outages that occurred over the weekend across New Jersey.

In his letter, Congressman Kean called for the power companies to explain why the power restoration has taken so long, what preparations were made in advance of the heat wave and severe weather, and how they plan to mitigate the effects of these events in the future.

Due to severe thunderstorms over the weekend, trees and branches fell, flood warnings were issued, temperatures exceeded 100 degrees, and widespread power outages occurred, creating dangerous situations for many families and businesses. The consequences of the heat

wave and storms caused 29 fatalities.

Congressman Kean wrote, "New Jerseyans are shouldering an increasingly unsustainable financial burden from rising electric costs - facing a nearly 79% increase over the last 20 years with a 16.9% increase between 2024 and 2025 alone - yet New Jersey's power grid continues to fail miserably. The people of New Jersey deserve reliable power at affordable prices. On behalf of the thousands who endured lengthy outages, I ask that you immediately take action to remedy these failures."

As a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Congressman Kean has supported legislation like the GRID Power Act, which would help maintain grid reliability during capacity shortages and

expand availability of dependable, always-on power for New Jersey households. With eight NJ power plants closing over the past decade, Congressman Kean believes that it is critical to give greater flexibility to prioritize the most reliable energy projects so New Jersey businesses and households can access affordable, dependable, and resilient energy.

The Letter Stated: Dear PSE&G President Hanemann and JCP&L President Mokoid:

I am writing on behalf of the constituents of New Jersey's 7th Congressional District, and all New Jersey families and businesses harmed by the widespread and prolonged power outages, to demand answers.

During this period of extreme heat and severe thunderstorms, many of my constituents have been or are without power for extended durations, beginning as early as Thursday, July 2nd and continuing through Tuesday, July 7th. Public reporting indicates that power may not be restored until Wednesday, July 8th or Thursday, July 9th. Families - including seniors, the ill, and



those with small children - were without air conditioning for days in deadly heat, with temperatures reaching over 100 degrees. Food spoiled, medical equipment failed, and businesses were forced to close during the holiday weekend. These outages are wreaking havoc on public health and safety. Tragically, this crisis caused 29 fatalities across the state amid the heat wave and storms.

Since Thursday, I have received numerous calls from constituents in rural areas, where power outages instantly halted their water supply. Thousands have been unable to access drinking water from their faucets, cook, bathe, etc. in the scorching

heat, all while being unable to leave their houses due to the danger of flood warnings and falling trees. Additionally, for the majority of New Jerseyans without landlines, the inability to charge their devices or access the internet completely isolates them from communicating with the outside world or report their own outages. This was unacceptable in 2012 after Hurricane Sandy and is even more unacceptable now. In light of this, I request that you provide answers to the following questions:

In detail, please explain exactly what went wrong.

Why is restoration taking as long as it is in certain areas?

What, if any, warnings or preparations did your companies make in advance of the forecasted storms and heat?

What steps have JCP&L and PSE&G previously taken to strengthen the grid's resilience against extreme weather events, and what steps will they take moving forward to prevent similar outages?

What communication and cooperation did you receive from New Jersey government agencies and leadership to prepare for and respond to this crisis?

New Jerseyans are shouldering an increasingly unsustainable financial burden from rising electric costs - facing a nearly 79% increase over the last 20 years with a 16.9% increase between 2024 and 2025 alone - yet New Jersey's power grid continues to fail miserably. The people of New Jersey deserve reliable power at affordable prices. On behalf of the thousands who endured lengthy outages, I ask that you immediately take action to remedy these failures.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,
Thomas Kean, Jr.

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Updates From The Bangor Women's Club



The Bangor Women's Club Bake Sale at Capitol Ace Hardware on May 23rd was again a success thanks to the generosity of our neighbors. Money raised allowed us to again present a \$1000 scholarship to a deserving Bangor Area High School Senior. This year's recipient, Summer Jolly, will pursue a nursing degree, and we wish her all the very best. Our January Arts & Literature Contest first place winners were entered into the State level Literature Contest. In May we received the GFWCPA contest results...Category 4 (gr. 9-12) Short Story 1st place: Emma Confalone's "Clocks" (Bangor Area High School); Poetry 1st place: En-Ai John's "Proof" (Faith Christian); Category 3 (gr. 6-8); Short Story 2nd place: Brielle Cecchini's "Gingerbread Thief" (Faith Christian); Poetry 2nd place: Nadya Calder's "I Wanna Fit In" (Faith Christian); Category 2 (gr. 3-5); Short Story 3rd place: Matthew Aulio's "The Unbeatable Escape Room" (De Franco); Poetry 2nd place: Matthew Aulio's "Yellowstone" (De Franco). Congratulations to our talented youth! In support of our local library, our Bangor Women's Club's Yvonne Humphreys presented Director Kathleen Lynch with a \$1000 check. And at our June luncheon the new officers were installed: Dottie Sawyer President, Heidi Bates Vice President, Bonnie Due Secretary, and Cindy Strunk Treasurer. We invite folks to sign up for our Autumn Card/Game Party scheduled for Thursday, October 29th from 1-4PM at Stone Church's Trinity United Church of Christ. Call Heidi (610-599-8815) to reserve a table. Have a great summer! (Courtesy Heidi Bates)

Brown Pushes for Statewide Data Center Moratorium

Earlier this week during a Senate Local Government Committee meeting, I offered an amendment to establish a three-year statewide moratorium on data center development to give Pennsylvania the time needed to develop meaningful, enforceable protections for our communities. My amendment sought to replace Senate Bill 1345 with the language of Senate Bill 1359, which would establish this three-year statewide moratorium.



While I am disappointed my amendment was not adopted, I voted to support advancing Senate Bill 1345 and House Bill 2496 as they provide municipalities with additional tools to address data center proposals. However, I remain concerned that these measures simply do not go far enough.

Senatorial District – I will continue fighting for stronger statewide protections that put residents first, safeguard our communities, and ensure any growth occurs responsibly.

With more than 50 proposed data center projects across Pennsylvania – including more than a dozen in the 40th

Please take the time to read my full press release on this matter at: <https://senatorbrown40.com/2026/06/30/senate-committee-votes-on-brown-statewide-data-center-moratorium-amendment/>

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