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April 16, 2026

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Vol. 53, No. 36

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Bangor Celebrates A Shut-Out Over Jim Thorpe High School



Bangor took on Jim Thorpe on April 9th for their Senior Night Softball Game. Bangor won with a 10 to 0 shut-out. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

North Warren Takes On Pompton Lakes in Boys Lacrosse



North Warren took on Pompton Lakes in Boys Lacrosse on April 7th, North Warren was defeated, 10 to 1. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Working Pennsylvanians Reminded to Check If The Qualify For Tax Credit

As many of you finish filing your taxes, remember about the Working Pennsylvanians Tax Credit. This was a bipartisan effort the legislature worked to expand to provide real relief to working families. Nearly 1 million Pennsylvanians are eligible to receive money back, but

with just a couple weeks left before the filing deadline, only about half have claimed it. If you qualify, this credit could put hundreds of dollars back in your pocket. This is money that can help with everyday expenses like groceries, housing, and childcare. If you are eligi-

ble for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, you automatically qualify for this program.

Visit: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/revenue/resources/tax-types-and-information/personal-income-tax/working-pennsylvanians-tax-credit>.

Slate Belt Regional Police Department Reminds Community About School Safety Day and Road Closures for April 20th



ATTENTION PEN ARGYL RESIDENTS: Pen Argyl Area High School Safety Day will be held on April 20, 2026, from 7:00-9:30 AM. Traffic to the High School should approach via Robinson and Harding Avenues and depart southbound via Lobb and Heller Avenues. Heller Avenue will be closed to northbound traffic. (Courtesy Slate Belt Regional Police Department)

BANGOR (10) VS JIM THORPE (0) SENIOR NIGHT SOFTBALL



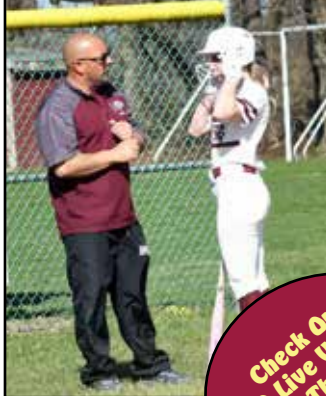
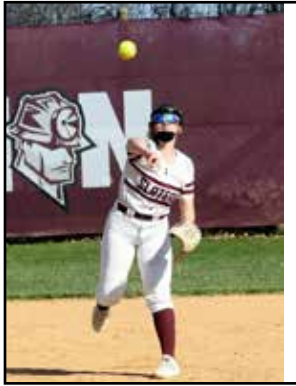
Cameron Howarth with her parents, Pat & Julie Howarth



Kelli Snow with her parents, Josh & Lisa Snow



Kaylynn Figurski with her parents, Rob & Stacy Figurski



Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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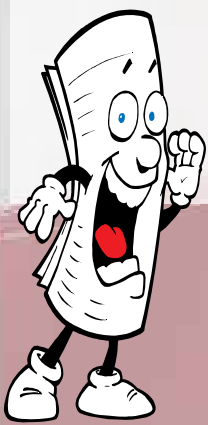
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PEN ARGYL (8) VS SALISBURY (11) SOFTBALL



Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

New to the Bangor Public Library

Adult Fiction:

Game On by Navessa Allen; *This Kingdom Will Not Kill Me* by Ilona Andrews; *Starside: A Novel* by Alex Aster; *As Far As She Knew* by Diana Awad; *Upward Bound: A Novel* by Woody Brown; *Between Two Fires: An Epic Tale of Medieval Horror* by Christopher Buehlman; *The Faraway Inn* by Sarah Beth Durst; *The Keeper* by Tana French; *Blood & Roses* by Callie Hart; *The Sisters of Book Row* by Shelley Noble

Adult Non Fiction:

You With The Sad Eyes: A Memoir by Christina Applegate; *How to Be Okay When Nothing is Okay: Tips and Tricks that kept Me Alive, Happy, and Creative in Spite of Myself* by Jenny Lawson

Large Print Adult Fiction:

Daughter of Egypt by Marie Benedict; *Bloodlust* by Sandra Brown; *The Beginner's Quilt* by Wanda E. Bunstetter; *It Girl: A Novel* by Allison Pataki; *Felicia's Favorites: A Novel* by Danielle Steel

Easy Fiction:

Grumpy Monkey: Father's Day Fuss by Suzanne Lang

Easy Reader Fiction:

Fox Catches a Wave by Corey R. Tabor

Easy Reader Non Fiction:

One Vote, Two Votes, I Vote, You Vote by Bonnie Worth

Junior Fiction:

Chester and Gus by Cammie McGovern; *Professor Dumbledore: Little Guides to the The Harry Potter Books* by J. K. Rowling

Young Adult Non Fiction:

Understanding Deepfakes by Jennifer Sanderson; *Zero to 60: A Teen's Guide to Manage Frustration, Anger, and Everyday Irritations* by Michael A. Tompkins; *How to Win True Friends and influence People for Teen Boys* by Maribel Harrison; *Managing Social Media* by Jennifer Sanderson; *Dealing With Cyberbullying* by Jennifer Sanderson; *Civic Minded: What Everyone should Know About the US Government* by Jeff Fleischer; *Weed: Cannabis Culture in the Americas*; *Spotting a Scam* by Jennifer Sanderson; *The Science Book* by Adam Hart-Davis; *The Astronomy Book*; *A Deathly Compendium of Poisonous Plants: Wicked Weeds and Sinister Seeds* by Rebecca E. Hirsch; *Having Body Dysmorphia: Stories from Survivors* by Sarah Eason; *Having Anxiety: Stories from Survivors* by Sarah Eason; *More than Stress: Understanding Anxiety Disorders* by Cherry Pedrick; *Not Just a Bad Day: Understanding Depression* by Wendy Moragne; *Beyonce: Renaissance Woman* by Lisa M. Bolt Simons; *Taylor Swift*; *Queen of Reinvention* by Carla Mooney

DVDs:

Is This Thing On?

New to the Blue Mountain Community Library

Blue Mountain Community Library News for Early April:
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.

The BMCL has been selected to participate in the final round of "Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities," an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that provides community engagement and accessibility resources to small and rural libraries to help them better serve people with disabilities. The competitive award comes with a \$10,000 grant that will help the library install a stairlift. "We are thrilled to be chosen for this grant, which will allow us to greatly expand community access to the library's 2nd-floor resources: the juvenile and young adult circulating and reference collections and our 'Book Nook' in which books and other materials are always for sale and, as such, is a critical ongoing fundraiser," said Library Manager Jill Silvius. As part of the grant, the library will host an open conversation with residents about its proposed use of the grant funds; the date of the conversation will be announced soon. "Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities" is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) in collaboration with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL).

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month. A huge thank you to the library's dedicated volunteers. The library is in need of more adult volunteers for all shifts. This is a great opportunity to serve the community and meet like-minded individuals! Commitment involves just 4.5 hours each month. No special skills are required. All training is provided. Pick up an application at the circulation desk.

Stop in today to see our new mascot: a beautiful little blue fish! Thank you to Waters Edge Aquarium for donating him and to an anonymous donor for donating his bowl, food, and supplies. Through April 30, everyone can vote for his name.

Try the new scavenger hunt for children, with lots of new prizes in the prize basket - plus a scavenger hunt for adults and young adults! Deadline is April 30, with a prize drawn from all correct entries.

A silent auction will be held through May 6. We have many great Mother's Day gifts. Library membership is not required to bid.

New to the circulating collection:

Adult fiction:
A Far-Flung Life (M.L. Stedman); *Daughter of Egypt* (Marie Benedict); *Prognosis Critical* (Gary Birken); *The Portrait* (Danielle Steel); *What We Can Know* (Ian McEwan)

Adult nonfiction:
- *How to Be a Rich Old Lady* (Amanda Holden); *Art but Make It Sports* (L.J. Rader); *The Quiet Zone* (Stephen Kurczyk); *The Oracle's Daughter* (Harrison Hill); *Kutchinsky's Egg* (Serena Kutchinsky); *True Color* (Kory Stamper)

Large print fiction:
Judge Stone (Viola Davis and James Patterson); *Kin* (Tayari Jones); *The Last Night in London* (Karen White); *Looking Back at Lavender Bay* (Michele Brouder); *The Inheritance* (Trisha Sakhlecha)

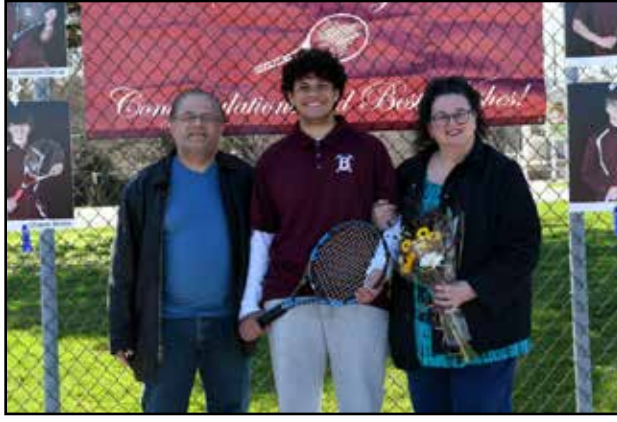
Juvenile fiction:
Enola's Best Friend (Katie Kordesh); *Ninja Mission* (Lego); *Cuddle Up, Goodnight* (Katie Cleminson); *Midnight on the Moon* (Mary Pope Osborne); *The Spring Break from the Black Lagoon* (Mike Thaler); *The Missing Mitt* (Franklin Dixon)

Juvenile nonfiction:
Mystery in the Arctic (Wendy Blaxland); *I Like Making Things* (Robin Pridy); *I Like Machines* (Robin Pridy)

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



Jason Cruciani Marcantonis with his mother



Alexander Hobson-Garcia with his parents



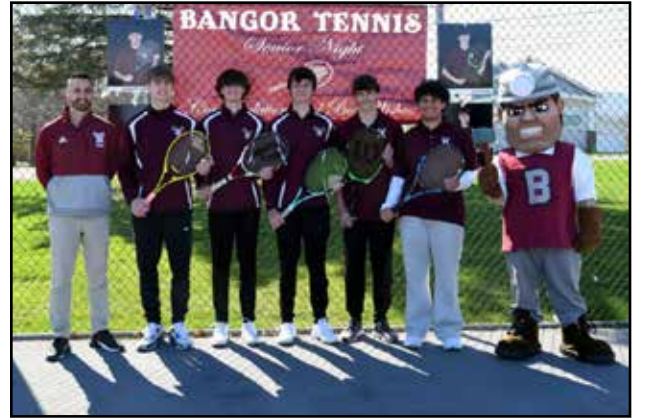
Liam Hayes with his parents



Chayse Strohe with his parents



Jacob Smith with his parents



Senior with their coach and Bangor Mascot.

Project Self-Sufficiency Hosts Event for Expectant and New Parents To Learn About Infant First Aid

Healthcare expert Lorrie Koonz will discuss infant first aid and safety during a special Baby Beginnings Fair hosted by Project Self-Sufficiency, Wednesday, April 22nd, 1:00 p.m. Pregnant women and parents of newborns are invited to access the resources they need to be

successful, including free and reduced cost activities for families, information about early childhood health and development, positive parenting techniques, and other topics. Lunch will be provided along with free baby items, prizes and unique giveaways. The Baby Beginnings

event is part of a Family Connects NJ program which supplements Project Self-Sufficiency's robust programs for pregnant women and parents of young children, including home visitation programs, monthly Mommy Parties, and Parent Cafes. Pregnant women and



hood parenting needs, or to find out more about other programs and services available at Project Self-Sufficiency, call 973-940-3500.

me individuals and families in northwestern New Jersey since 1986. Services offered at Project Self-Sufficiency include high school equivalency education, computer courses, employment skills training, job placement services, support groups, parenting classes, childcare and preschool, legal assistance and education, counseling and advocacy, referrals, and help with emergency basic needs, like food and clothing. For more information about the programs and services offered by Project Self-Sufficiency, visit www.projectsselfsufficiency.org or call 973-940-3500.

Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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parents of young children are invited to call 973-940-3500 to register.

"We are excited to be offering these innovative and fun gatherings to the community," explains Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director of Project Self-Sufficiency. "Pregnant women and parents of young children have

a great need for accurate information about a host of topics, and the Family Connects NJ Baby Beginnings Fairs will allow them to receive up-to-date health and wellness advice, as well as free items for baby and family."

To register for the Family Connects NJ Baby Beginnings Fair, to discuss your early child-

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



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Photos by Dale Young/
The Free Weekly Press



Space Signs Onto Measure To Shield Highlands Schools From Harmful State Aid Cuts

Senator Parker Space (R-Sussex, Morris, Warren) announced he is signing onto legislation as part of a collaborative effort among state legislators, school officials and parent activists to secure financial relief to school districts in

the Highlands and Pine-lands preservation areas. Senators Anthony M. Bucco (R-Morris, Pas-saic) and Latham Tiver (R-Atlantic, Burlington) announced this week that they are introducing the "Fairness for School Dis-

tricts in Development Re-stricted Areas Act," which would provide additional State aid to districts that cannot close funding gaps through increased ratables due to State-imposed de-velopment restrictions under the Highlands Wa-

ter Protection Act and the Pinelands Protection Act. "Families in the High-lands region are being squeezed by a system that ignores the realities of living in development-re-stricted communities," said Senator Space. "When

State-imposed restrictions limit a town's ability to expand and develop, the school aid formula should account for that so schools don't get shortchanged in State funding. Our schools, students and taxpayers have been suffering for too

long. I'm proud to add my name to this bill which will restore fairness and ensure these school districts finally receive the funding they deserve." To speak with Sen. Space, contact Kyle Fischer, SRO director of communica-tions, at kfischer@njleg.org.

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NORTH WARREN (1) VS POMPTON LAKES (10) BOYS LACROSSE



Photos by Dale Young/
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New Jersey Anglers To Enjoy Simplified Regulations, Additional Fishing Opportunities As Trout Season Begins

Anglers will get to enjoy 19 extra days of fishing, more than 20 additional ponds into which to drop their lines, and simplified regulations to follow when the much-anticipated trout season opens at 8 a.m. Saturday, April 11 in waterways across New Jersey. This year's spring season will be highlighted by the stocking of more than 180,000 rainbow trout and larger broodstock, as well as 20,000 brown trout provided by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission. Fisherman holding a rainbow trout

"The additional fish, expanded season, and various regulation enhancements will make the eagerly anticipated spring trout season even more exciting for both novice and experienced anglers," said Department of Environmental Protection Acting Commissioner Ed Potosnak. "The changes being implemented for spring trout season will improve the overall trout fishing experience while supporting the Sherrill Administration's mission to deliver simplified and responsive services to the people of New Jersey."

"Trout season in New Jersey provides an excellent opportunity to spend quality time out-

doors and enjoy some of the best recreational fishing in the country," said NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Assistant Commissioner Dave Golden. "The thrill of the first catch cannot be understated. We are pleased that the brown trout provided by Pennsylvania will only add to the excitement for all who are looking forward to the spring trout fishing season."

"We are very proud of the regulatory changes we've made and can't wait to hear the response from our anglers, especially the families that get to enjoy 19 more days of angling on our lakes and ponds," said NJDEP Fish & Wildlife Freshwater Fisheries Bureau Chief Shawn Crouse. "To make these improvements, we have invested more than two years in stakeholder meetings, online surveys, and dialogue with the Fish & Game Council. This was a real group effort – and New Jersey anglers will reap the rewards."

By the Numbers
By the end of the spring stocking season, more than 570,000 rainbow trout will be stocked in waterbodies across the state, with most trout averaging 10½ inches in length and weighing about a half pound each.

In addition, between 6,000 and 7,000 broodstock — large, mature trout ranging in size from 14 inches to 26 inches and weighing up to seven pounds — will be stocked this spring. These trophy-size fish will be stocked in waters across the state suitable for fish their size.

NJDEP Fish & Wildlife also stocks higher numbers of broodstock in select trout-stocked ponds and small lakes through its Bonus Broodstock program. This year, nine trout-stocked lakes and ponds throughout the state will receive between 30 and 50 broodstock.

From Saturday, April 11 to Sunday, May 31, the minimum legal size required for taking trout is nine inches, with a daily limit of six trout in most trout waters. The new daily limit will be reduced to two trout beginning Sunday, June 1 and continuing through next winter. The reduction will mean more trout will be available to anglers over a longer timeframe, especially the 14-inch to 16-inch trout that will be stocked in the fall.

Marking an exciting addition to this year's program, multiple New Jersey waterways have been stocked with 20,000 brown trout

since March 20, thanks to a partnership with the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission. New Jersey has not been able to stock brown trout for more than a decade due to the occurrence of the bacterial disease furunculosis at New Jersey's Pequest Trout Hatchery. Although this disease occurs naturally, it causes severe illness in brook trout and brown trout and can spread rapidly in hatcheries. The outbreak prompted enhanced biosecurity measures and modifications in the trout stocking program to protect rainbow trout. Pennsylvania has provided documentation to NJDEP Fish & Wildlife certifying that the brown trout provided to New Jersey are disease-free.

This year's reintroduction of brown trout is part of a broader plan to reincorporate this species of trout into New Jersey's stocking program. Over the next several years, NJDEP Fish & Wildlife will evaluate the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery and make improvements to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and biosecurity. Once improvements are completed, New Jersey hopes to safely and effectively raise brown trout again.



Simplified Trout Fishing Regulations
In addition to the bonus of brown trout and additional broodstock, anglers this spring will find changes to the fishing experience that expand the season, lift fishing-hour restrictions, increase the number of trout-stocked waterways and offer opportunities to hook bigger fish.

The pre-season trout stocking closures for lakes and ponds have been lifted, and stocked lakes and ponds will remain open year-round. This means anglers can enjoy an additional 19 days of fishing on nearly 100 bodies of water statewide. This does not impact the state's

14 major trout streams. They will be stocked weekly and are closed to fishing from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. on stocking day to allow trout to disperse and acclimate.

The trout stocking program has also been expanded with 23 small ponds added to the stocking schedule. Beginning this year, trout raised for winter stocking will be stocked as part of the fall stocking program in October to capitalize on favorable weather conditions. As a bonus, an additional 4,000 trout and at least 10 new waterbodies will be added to this new combined program.

For the full article visit: <https://dep.nj.gov/newsrel/26-0013/>



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PEN ARGYL (3) VS NOTRE DAME EAST STROUDSBURG (2) SENIOR NIGHT BOYS TENNIS



Kelton Giamoni with his parents, Kelly and Anthony



Evan Johnson with his parents, Tiffany and Brian



Cole Lobb With his parents, Megan and Scott



Manager, Addison Manning with her parents, Kristina and Ryan



Fletcher Marsh with his parents, Shaun and Stephanie



Manager, Gracie Smith with her parents, Regina and Brad



Mason Soos with his parents, Amy and Steve



Photos by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

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PEN ARGYL (3) VS NOTRE DAME EAST STROUDSBURG (2) SENIOR NIGHT BOYS TENNIS



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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary?



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Hello fellow readers,

Last week, we explored the world beneath our feet—leaf mold, wood chips, and the idea that, over time, our gardens can become their own “living mulch,” especially when layered thoughtfully. That idea stayed with me as I walked with Jolee the other morning, thinking about this seasonal ritual of mulching.

While I mulch new

garden installations with aged hemlock mulch, which breaks down to nourish the earth while suppressing weeds until new plantings grow in, after a few years, the need to mulch fades when you create a layered garden—a design technique that uses an assortment of plants of varying heights, shapes, and textures that overlap.

No more mulching—though some may prefer refreshing the garden edge and a light touch of mulch along the borders.

I came across a column I wrote years ago, inspired by a client whose wood mulch had become home to carpenter ants. It felt timely to revisit it—but also to update it. Like many of you, my understanding has grown, especially my appreciation for native plants and the life they support.

The best solution is to clothe the soil rather than cover it. And ground-



covers don't have to be ground-huggers alone. Whether true creepers, perennials, sedges, or even low shrubs, groundcovers knit the garden together, suppress weeds, moderate soil temperature, and native plants invite pollinators and wildlife into the garden.

For sunny to partly sunny spots, consider Creeping Phlox (*Phlox stolonifera/subulata*), which forms a soft, colorful carpet in spring. Or Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*), whose small white flowers and edible fruits delight both people and pollinators.

Bearberry (*Arcto-*

staphylos uva-ursi), a low evergreen shrub, is another favorite for dry, sandy soils, offering structure, flowers, and berries through the seasons. And Green-and-Gold (*Chrysogonum virginianum*) creates a cheerful, semi-evergreen mat that thrives in a range of conditions.

In those in-between spaces—where sun filters gently through—Golden Ragwort (*Packera aurea*) is a favorite. It forms dense colonies and sends up bright yellow blooms in spring. Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*) and Woodland Phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) add a softer,



more delicate layer, while Woodland Stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*) fills in with surprising resilience.

And then there are the shady places—the woodland edges and spaces beneath trees—where the garden takes on a subtler tone. Here, Pennsylvania Sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*) creates a soft, meadow-like carpet that can even stand in for a traditional lawn. Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadense*) offers glossy, heart-shaped leaves that hug the ground, while Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) and Wood Anemone (*Anemone quinquefolia*) appear in spring like small woodland miracles before gently fading back. Plus, I adore the nearly evergreen Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), growing about a foot tall.

What I've come to appreciate most is that these plantings ask for patience. Living groundcovers take time to settle in and find their rhythm. I love the saying, “plants sleep, creep, and then leap.” In the first year, plants invest energy in establishing strong root systems. In the second

year, they begin to grow. It isn't until the third year that they truly begin to fill in and produce bountiful flowers and foliage.

But in that waiting, something deeper happens. The garden begins to take care of itself.

Just as we spoke about last week, when leaves break down and return to the soil, nourishing what lies beneath, these living layers do something similar—they hold moisture, feed the soil, and support life above and below ground.

And perhaps there's wisdom in that for us, too.

We can spend our energy covering things up—tidying, controlling, maintaining the surface. Or we can tend more thoughtfully, layering in what nourishes, allowing time for things to grow into place. Over time, the need for constant tending lessens.

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County Executive's Proposal to Add One-Day Pop-Up Voter Services Events Approved by Elections Commission



On Tuesday, March 31, the Northampton County Elections Commission approved a request from the Elections Office to schedule up to six pop-up voter services events ahead of Pennsylvania's May 19 primary election.

The initiative is intended to expand access for voters facing transportation or scheduling barriers, increase community engagement, and also to reduce congestion at the Elections Office and permanent drop box locations. The events function as a temporary extension of the Elections Office, allowing voters to:

- Register to vote (deadline May 4)
 - Apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot
 - Receive and complete a ballot on demand
 - Return their ballot securely on site or via the existing dropboxes
- All ballots issued and returned through these events will be handled in the same manner as standard absentee and mail-in ballots and will not be opened or counted until Election Day, consistent

with Pennsylvania law. Events at each location will be held for one day for a limited period of time and staffed by the trained Elections Division personnel from the Elections Office. All ballot handling will follow existing chain-of-custody procedures, with a secure, locked, and continuously monitored mobile drop box, and with ballot collection coordinated with the Sheriff's Department (consistent with County drop box operations).

"The events are designed to build on the existing election processes, not replace them, by bringing services directly into the communities we serve," said Chris Commini, Northampton County Elections Registrar.

The first two locations confirmed for Voter Services events are Northampton Community College in Bethlehem Township and Lafayette College Student Center in Easton. The Elections Office is looking for additional locations in other areas of Northampton County.

Department of Environmental Protection Launches 2026 Black Fly Suppression Program Across 1,800 Miles of Pennsylvania Waterways

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has begun its annual Black Fly Suppression Program, treating 48 rivers and streams across more than 1,800 miles of waterways to reduce black fly populations ahead of peak outdoor recreation season.

"As the weather turns warmer, Pennsylvanians will be spending more time outdoors, and black flies can make that difficult," said DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley. "This program helps reduce those nuisance populations so families can fully enjoy Pennsylvanian's rivers, streams, and outdoor spaces."

Now in its 41st year, the program uses targeted applications of *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), a naturally occurring soil bacterium that specifically controls black fly larvae in flowing water. The treatment is applied by helicopter and ground crews in river and stream sections where black fly larvae are present.

Bti breaks down quickly in the environment and is not harmful to fish, birds, people, or other insects. Treatments focus exclusively on the larval stage of the black fly life cycle and are not conducted on land. DEP conducts

aerial and ground-based applications throughout the spring and early summer, with timing and frequency dependent on weather and stream conditions.

Prior to any treatment, DEP notifies county and local emergency management officials. Residents may see helicopters flying low over

waterways or crews applying treatments from bridges or in streams. Spray notifications can also be found on DEP's Vector Management Program website. The published schedule is subject to change depending on weather and water conditions.

Visit the DEP website for more information

about the DEP Black Fly Suppression program. Residents with concerns about black fly activity can report them directly to DEP through the Black Fly Suppression Website at: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/programs-and-services/bureau-of-labs/vector-management/black-fly>



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Jake Schurmann Named New Jersey Circle K District Governor

At the annual New Jersey Circle K District Convention, held at the Sheraton Hotel, Raritan Center, Jake Schurmann was selected to serve as the organization's 2026–2027 District Governor.

A Freehold resident and current student at Rutgers University studying Psychology and Statistics, Jake brings a strong commitment to service, leadership, and growth within Circle K International (CKI). Over the past year, he has served as Lieutenant Governor of the Seabreeze Division, where he dedicated countless hours visiting clubs, mentoring executive boards, and supporting overall divisional growth.

As Governor, Jake plans to focus on expanding membership across the district, strengthening club engagement, and enhancing collaboration between clubs to increase

overall impact. His leadership platform centers around three key pillars—Support, Structure, and Sustain.

Through “Support,” Jake aims to establish a confidential District Support Liaison and implement leadership training tracks to better guide members and club officers. Under “Structure,” he plans to improve communication across the district by ensuring consistent monthly updates and refining award processes to make them more accessible and transparent. Through “Sustain,” Jake is focused on strengthening the First-Year Ambassador program and building stronger partnerships with sponsoring Kiwanis clubs to enhance fundraising opportunities and reduce event costs.

Jake is also committed to elevating service initiatives by encouraging



New Jersey District Circle K Governor Jake Schurmann, New Jersey District Kiwanis International Governor Frank Cahill, and Circle K Immediate Past Governor Dylan Caraballo.

innovative projects that address community needs while aligning with Circle

K's core values. In addition, he aims to provide meaningful leadership

development opportunities for members, ensuring they gain the skills and confidence to lead both within the organization and beyond.

With over 300 service hours contributed during the current service year and experience facilitating leadership workshops and district initiatives, Jake brings both passion and proven leadership to the role.

“Jake represents the very best of what Circle K stands for—service, leadership, and heart,” said New Jersey District Governor Frank Cahill. “His energy, vision, and commitment to growing our organization will inspire members across the state. I am confident he will lead CKI to an outstanding year.”

Also selected to serve as the 2026–2027 New Jersey District Circle K International Executive

Board are:

•Nithila Samuel, Rutgers University — Secretary

•Anugrah Pande, Rutgers University — Treasurer


•Aeryn Morrow, Montclair State University — Editor

•Anyllah Zackery, Montclair State University — Metro Lieutenant Governor

•Yash Singh, Brookdale Community College — Seabreeze Lieutenant Governor

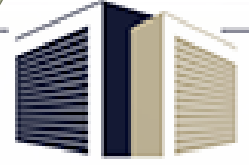
•Reanna Marie Lawan, Stockton University — Garden Lieutenant Governor

Together, this leadership team is poised to guide the New Jersey District Circle K International into a year of growth, innovation, and meaningful service, continuing Circle K International's mission of developing college students into a global network of responsible citizens and leaders.




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Mental Health Matters: Peer Support Programs Started For Pennsylvania



As Co-Chair of the Senate Mental Health Caucus, I know how important strong community partnerships are to supporting mental health and recovery across Pennsylvania.

This month's Mental Health Matters highlights the Pennsylvania Peer Support Coalition (PaPSC), a statewide

network of individuals who use their lived experience to support others on their recovery journeys. Through advocacy, training, and education, PaPSC empowers peer professionals and strengthens recovery services throughout the Commonwealth.

Organizations like PaPSC play a critical role

in ensuring that recovery voices are heard and that individuals have access to the support they need to live healthy, fulfilling lives. The dedicated peer professionals and volunteers who make up the PaPSC continue to play a vital role in strengthening recovery-focused services throughout Pennsylvania.



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Slate Belt Heritage Center Announces Monthly Historic Presentation On Thursday, May 14th



The Slate Belt Heritage Center will hold their monthly historic presentation on Thursday, May 14th at 7pm. Featured speaker will be Mr. Walter Cole who will present; "The Moravians: Their Unique Lifestyle, Challenges and Contributions during the Revolutionary War" The local Moravians were very content being a part of the British Empire with the Revolutionary War on the horizon. However, their pacifist beliefs and unwillingness to sign the oath of allegiance to this new country, would be challenged and soon the war would create upheaval and chaos to their peaceful community. This program is one of many that will be celebrated, this year, in honor of our country's 250th Anniversary at the Heritage Center & Museum. Mr. Cole is a retired history teacher from Pen Argyl High School and a graduate of Bangor High School. The event is free and open to the public. The Center is located at 30 North 1st Street, Bangor, PA. For additional information please contact: Karen Brewer at 484-894-5661.

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St. Luke's University Health Network Inspires Future Medical Professionals at Pleasant Valley High School Cadaver Lab

St. Luke's University Health Network partnered with Pleasant Valley High School on Thursday, March 25 to deliver a unique, hands-on medical education experience for students interested in pursuing careers in medicine.

The Cadaver Lab event brought St. Luke's physicians, athletic trainers and clinical partners directly into the classroom for an interactive morning of exploration and discovery.

Sixty-eight students participated, rotating through four specialized stations designed to highlight different aspects of clinical practice, anatomy, sports medicine and surgical technology.

"This event was an incredible success and provided a truly unique and meaningful educational experience for the students, one that they will not soon forget," said Jorge Perez, St. Luke's Director of Sports Medicine Relationships.

At the Knee Cadaver Dissection Station, orthopedic surgeon William Tenpenny, DO, and physician assistant Amanda Shiffka guided students through a detailed examination of knee anatomy, including ligaments, car-

tilage and structures frequently injured in sports. Students had the rare opportunity to observe and handle anatomical specimens under expert supervision.

During the Sports Medicine Lecture, St. Luke's primary care sports medicine physician Decosy Hercules, DO, and athletic trainer Deryck Snyder discussed common injuries such as ACL tears, tendon strains, and sprains – conditions frequently seen in young athletes. The team also reviewed prevention strategies and rehabilitation approaches, connecting medical knowledge to students' real-life sports experiences.

"This program gives students a level of exposure most don't see until college or even medical school," said Jonathan Ayre, Ed.D, Pleasant Valley School District's Curriculum Supervisor. "We hope this experience inspires these young learners to continue exploring the incredible world of medicine."

Pleasant Valley High School educators expressed gratitude for St. Luke's continued commitment to nurturing student interest in health care



careers, a growing need across the region and nation.

St. Luke's remains dedicated to supporting educational outreach programs that build the next generation of health care professionals through real-world, hands-on learning.

About St. Luke's: Founded in 1872, St. Luke's University Health Network (SLUHN) is a fully integrated, regional, non-profit network with annual net revenue of more than \$4.5 billion. With 23,000+ employees at 16 hospital campuses and 350+ outpatient sites, it is the Lehigh Valley's biggest employer.

The Network's service area includes 11 counties in two states: Lehigh, Northampton,

Berks, Bucks, Carbon, Montgomery, Monroe, Schuylkill and Luzerne counties in Pennsylvania and Warren and Hunterdon counties in New Jersey. St. Luke's Children's Hospital is based at the Bethlehem Campus.

Dedicated to advancing medical education, St. Luke's is the preeminent teaching hospital in central-eastern Pennsylvania. In partnership with Temple University, the Network established the Lehigh Valley's first and only four-year medical school. It also operates the nation's oldest continuously operated School of Nursing, established in 1884, and 60+ fully accredited graduate medical educational programs with 550+ residents and fellows.

In 2025, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ranked St. Luke's #1 – ahead of Houston Methodist and Mayo Clinic, two of the nation's most prestigious institutions – as the nation's top health system for quality, safety and patient experience. This objective recognition, based on public data reported to the government, reaffirms St. Luke's preeminent position as THE BEST OF THE BEST among the most respected health care systems in the United States.

St. Luke's has been named a Leapfrog Group and Healthgrades Top Hospital and a Newsweek World's Best Hospital. It is the only Lehigh Valley-based health care system to earn Medicare's

five-star ratings (the highest) for quality, efficiency and patient satisfaction. In 2025, the Network earned straight A's from Leapfrog across all of its acute care hospitals. It has earned 100 Top Hospital designations from Premier 11 years in a row, including in 2021 when its flagship University Hospital was identified as THE #1 TEACHING HOSPITAL IN THE COUNTRY. Utilizing the Epic electronic medical record (EMR) system for both inpatient and outpatient services, the Network is a multi-year recipient of the Most Wired award recognizing the breadth of SLUHN's information technology applications such as telehealth, online scheduling and online pricing information.

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