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**Take One!**

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May 8, 2025

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Vol. 52, No. 42



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### Pen Argyl Wins With a 15 Point Lead Over Wilson For Girls Softball Senior Night



Pen Argyl took on Wilson High School for their Senior Night Softball game on April 18th. Pen Argyl won, 16 to 1. Senior Night photos can be found on page 4. Photo by Dale Young/ The Free Weekly Press

### North Warren Takes on High Point In Boys Lacrosse Senior Night



North Warren took on High Point during their Senior Night Boys Lacrosse game on April 29th. North Warren was defeated, 12 to 2. Senior Night Photos can be found on page 3. Photo by Dale Young/ The Free Weekly Press

### Breast Cancer Survivors Invited to Unique Celebration of Life

Breast cancer survivors are invited to a unique celebration of life at Project Self-Sufficiency on Saturday, June 7th, from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. The Survivor Celebration will feature a keynote presentation by author, life strategist, and motivational speaker Diana Perez, along with break-out sessions, lunch, music by pianist Anita

Raisch, and interactive exhibits. Martin Kessler, Sussex County Community College Culinary Institute, will give a cooking demonstration. A Question-and-Answer session will be facilitated by medical oncologist Dr. May Abdo-Matkiwsky, and a panel of medical experts. Numerous vendors will be available to offer tips on

health, wellness, fashion, and exercise. Emotional assistance dogs will be in attendance under the watchful eye of handler Jackie Wagner. Raffles and other prizes will be awarded throughout the event. The free celebration is open to breast cancer survivors. Interested participants must call Project Self-  
*LIFE cont'd on pg 2*

### Pen Argyl Wins Over Moravian Academy in Baseball



Pen Argyl took on Moravian Academy in Baseball on April 30th. Pen Argyl won 9 to 3. Photo by Dale Young/ The Free Weekly Press

### Slate Belt Heritage Center Proudly Announces 2025 Award Winners



The Slate Belt Heritage Center Proudly announces the winners for this year's 2025 Annual Preservation Awards.

The Initiative Award goes to an individual who has shown exemplary actions in promoting and preserving the heritage of the Slate Belt through In-Kind Actions. The award is to acknowledge individuals who have performed acts that promote and preserve the culture and heritage of the Slate Belt. This year's award goes to Todd & Heather Rehrig for the renovation and restoration of their house located next to the Belvidere Highway Bridge in Martin's Creek that is also partially used as a Bed & Breakfast and known as the 'River Affair Estate'.

moté programs and the history of the Slate Belt.

The Architectural Award goes to an individual(s) who is saving or conserving a historic building, place or artifact where restoration is authentic to preservation. The award is to acknowledge individuals who have performed acts that promote and preserve the heritage of the Slate Belt. This year's award goes to Todd & Heather Rehrig for the renovation and restoration of their house located next to the Belvidere Highway Bridge in Martin's Creek that is also partially used as a Bed & Breakfast and known as the 'River Affair Estate'.

The Special Focus  
*AWARDS cont'd on pg 3*



### New in the Bangor Public Library:

**Adult Fiction:** Gifted & Talented by Olivie Blake; Great Big Beautiful Life by Emily Henry; King of Envy by Ana Huang; 25 Alive by James Patterson; The Amalfi Curse by Sarah Penner; How to Seal Your Own Fate: A Novel by Kristen Perrin; A Mind of Her Own by Danielle Steel; Into the Gray Zone: A Pike Logan Novel by Brad Taylor; The Mysterious Bakery on Rue de Paris by Evie Woods

**Adult Non Fiction:** The Golden Road: How Ancient India Transformed the World by William Dalrymple; Matriarch: A Memoir by Tina Knowles-Lawson

**Large Print Adult Fiction:** Strangers in Time by David Baldacci; 25 Alive by James Patterson; Far From Home: A Novel by Danielle Steel

**Easy Fiction:** How the Finch Got His Colors by Annemarie Riley Guertin; I Don't Draw, I Color! By Adam Lehrhaupt; How to Catch An Invisible Bad Guy by Alice Walstead

**Easy Non Fiction:** Butt or Face?: Revenge of the Butts by Kari Lavelle; Butt or Face?: Can You Tell Which End You're Looking At? By Kari Lavelle

**Easy Reader Fiction:** The Beach Day: Three-and-a-Half Stories by Ame Dyckman

**Junior Fiction:** Warriors 2: The Prophecies Begin: Graphic Novel by Erin Hunter; Dreamslinger by Graci Kim; Olivetti by Allie Millington; The Battle of the Labyrinth: The Graphic Novel by Robert Venditti; Outsider Kids by Betty C. Tang

**Young Adult Fiction:** The Floating World by Axie Oh; Fearless by Lauren Roberts

### Free Tick Testing Available for Pennsylvania Residents

By PA Senator Rosemary Brown

As we welcome the warmer months and more time outdoors, I want to remind everyone that May is Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Awareness Month—a timely opportunity to focus on prevention and early detection. Above, I am pictured with Dr. Nicole Chinnici, Director of the Pennsylvania Tick Lab.

Pennsylvania unfortunately leads the nation in reported Lyme disease cases, which is why I fought to secure funding to offer free tick testing through East Stroudsburg University's Tick Research Lab. This service is available to all residents across the Commonwealth, and I encourage you to take advantage of it.

Awareness and early detection are key. By submitting a tick for testing, you can receive results that may help your healthcare provider quickly diagnose and treat any tick-borne illness. The lab tests for multiple diseases, and the process is simple and accessible.

Spring and summer are wonderful seasons to enjoy all that our beautiful region has to offer—but they also bring a higher risk of tick exposure. Please remember to use repellent, check yourself and your loved ones after being outdoors, and send in any ticks you find.

You can learn more or submit a tick for testing by visiting Tick-Lab.org.



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## LIFE

Continued from page 1

Sufficiency at 973-940-3500 to register.

"We are delighted to gather to applaud the lives of these remarkable breast cancer survivors," noted Project Self-Sufficiency Executive Director Deborah Berry-Toon. "This celebration teaches women how to maintain their well-being, gives them the opportunity to



get the latest facts about breast cancer, and most importantly, invites them to relax and have some fun. We are grateful to all the individuals and organizations who have agreed to join in this special celebration of life."

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NORTH WARREN (2) VS HIGH POINT (12) SENIOR NIGHT BOYS LACROSSE



Gavin Bassett with his dad, Timothy



Kyle Ammermann with his Parents, Tanya and Greg and his siblings, Nick and Brooke



Carter Smith with his parents, Theresa and Josh, and his sister Julia



Photos by Dale Young/  
The Free Weekly Press



AWARDS

Continued from page 1

Award goes to an individual who is saving or conserving tradition or a body of knowledge and may be contribu-

ting to educational information via exhibits, documentation, internet, archival, etc. This years' award goes to Robert Uliana for his time and dedication over the past 15+ years maintaining the Upper

Edelman Schoolhouse located along Route 191 in Plainsfield Township. A public ceremony for these awards will be held on Thursday, June 19th at 7:00 PM at the Heritage Center.

The Center is located at 30 North 1st Street, Bangor, PA. For additional information please contact either Jason Huggan at 484-574-2480 or Karen Brewer at 484-894-5661.

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PEN ARGYL (16) VS WILSON (1) SENIOR NIGHT SOFTBALL



Hannah Fitch with her mother, Lori



Jillian Bradley with her parents, Ian and Janelle



Madacyn Rivera with her parents, Cortnei and Bobby



Shea Black with her parents, Kevin and Lori



Grace Weaver with her parents, Ann and Todd



Rylee Wentz with her grandparents, Cathy and Mark



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PEN ARGYL VS MORAVIAN ACADEMY BASEBALL





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# BANGOR (15) VS LEHIGHTON (4) SENIOR DAY SOFTBALL



Adelise Defranco with her parents, Stephanie and Brian



Brook Hermanski with her parents, Gene and Traci



Marissa Siu with her parents, Max and Kim

## Investing in Child Care Means Investing in Pennsylvania's Future

By PA Senator Rosemary Brown

This week, I joined the Governor's Advisory Commission on Women, parents, educators, and local leaders, at Tiny Steps Child Care Center in Honesdale to highlight the need for continued investment in Pennsylvania's child care system.

Access to affordable, high-quality child care is not a partisan issue—it's a workforce issue, an economic issue, and a family issue. These services are essential to the stability of our families and communities.

In Harrisburg, I've been proud to support bipartisan efforts that make child care more affordable—like ex-

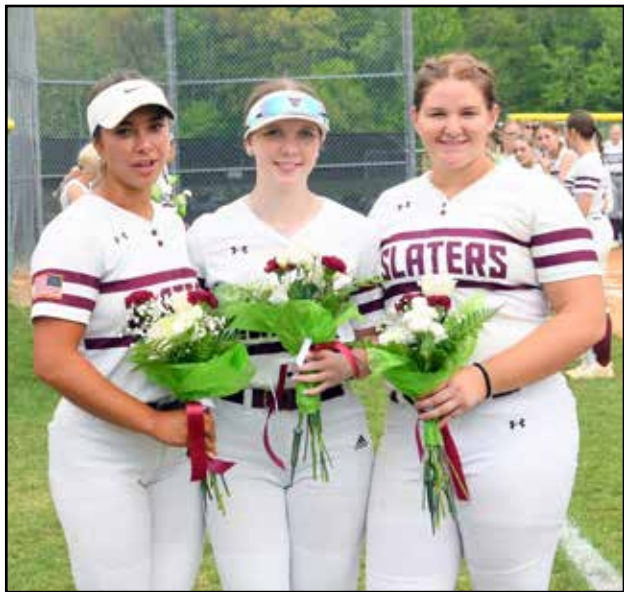


panding tax credits for families—and creating incentives for employers to offer child care options. We're also focused on strengthening the early childhood workforce so providers can

recruit and retain qualified educators. When we support those who care for our children, we build a stronger foundation for the future.

Thank you to Tiny Steps Child Care Cen-

ter for hosting this important conversation. I'll continue working to ensure Pennsylvania's children, families, and workforce have the support they need to succeed.



Photos by Dale Young/  
The Free Weekly Press





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*(Please note due to certain holidays, supplies will be offered on the 3rd Saturday of the Month)*

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July 26, 2025 | August 23, 2025 | September 27, 2025  
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Connor Bartholomew with his parents, AJ and Kelly



Cameron Conrad with his parents, Shawn and Jamie



Lucas Lerch with his parents, Joe and Angela

WMA of the Month – Point Pleasant Fishing Access

The Point Pleasant Fishing Access Wildlife Management Area in Point Pleasant Borough, Ocean County, is a small 7-acre property purchased with funding from hunting and fishing license sales. This WMA offers anglers a great spot to try their luck in the man-made Point Pleasant Canal.

Visit for: Boat Launch - Recent improvements include new fencing along the canal, a concrete boat ramp with parking for both trailers and anglers accessing the fishing area, an extended fishing dock, and a dock for launching boats.

Fishing - The current moves quickly through the Point Pleasant Canal, so anglers do best at periods of slack tide and can expect to catch striped bass, tautog, bluefish, blowfish, hickory shad, and juvenile sea bass. The bottom is rocky, providing structure and baitfish. Anglers can snag a line very easily.

Birding - A variety of offshore birds and sea-going



ducks utilize the small pond to rest.

Access - There are two designated areas on either side of the launch ramp allowing anglers to park safely and fish. Take the Garden State Parkway to exit 98. Continue on Route 34 South. At the traffic circle, take the third exit to conti-

nue onto Route 35 South over the Manasquan River. Use the right two lanes to turn onto Richmond Avenue. Turn left onto Bay Avenue. Turn right onto Bridge Avenue over the Point Pleasant Canal, then turn left on Rue Lido. Make a left onto Beach Boulevard, then left on

Barnegat Boulevard, and the first parking area is at the end.

Continue just a few hundred yards to the second parking area by proceeding past Barnegat Boulevard and making a left onto Rue Lafayette.

Owned by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Fish & Wildlife, the Wildlife Management Area System is comprised of more than 360,000 acres in 122 areas throughout the state, which is more than 44% of New Jersey's state-owned public open space. WMAs are maintained and supported with funding from hunting and fishing license sales, the Federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program and the Wildlife Habitat Supporter Program.

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Jacob Martini with his mother, Jen



Colin McMahon with his parents, Brendan and Allison



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# Washington New Jersey's Steampunk Fair Was A Rockin' Good Time



Downtown Washington became the center of the steampunk universe on April 26 when visitors from throughout the region - and the Northeast descended upon Warren County for the annual Washington Business Improvement District's Rock 'N Roll Steampunk Fair. The day included live music, unique vendors and shopping, exhibits, and mind-boggling demonstrations. And plenty of folks dressed in "steampunk regalia." Winners of the costume contest were Trey Banks and Bobbi Stacy Starr, left, Lyndis Finnegan, center, and Corinne Ferrarin and Bill Van Patten. Photos courtesy Dan Hirshberg


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## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY



SLUHN Hospitals Again Earn Straight A Grades for Safety

Matthew Xiao Named 2025 HOBY Award Winner

The Leapfrog Group, a national nonprofit health care ratings organization, today released new Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades, again awarding A's to every eligible St. Luke's acute care hospital.

The 11 campuses – Bethlehem, Allentown, Anderson, Carbon, Easton, Monroe, Miners, Sacred Heart, Upper Bucks and Warren, as well as Geisinger St. Luke's Hospital – were among a select group of hospitals across the nation awarded an A for their commitment to keeping patients safe and meeting the highest safety standards in the nation. All 11 also earned A's last fall.

"St. Luke's consistent, across-the-board excellence reflects the commitment of our doctors, nurses and other staff to extending the very best care to each and every patient at all of our locations," said Donna Sabol, St. Luke's Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer.

The Safety Grade assigns letter grades of A, B, C, D and F twice annually – in the spring and fall – to hospitals nationwide based on their performance in preventing medical errors, infections and other harms.

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only rating solely focused on a hospital's ability to protect patients from preventable errors, accidents, injuries and infections. Developed under the guidance of a panel of national experts, the program, which is peer-reviewed, fully transparent and

free to the public, uses 30 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to nearly 3,000 U.S. hospitals.

"Achieving an 'A' Hospital Safety Grade reflects enormous dedication to patient safety," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "I extend my congratulations to St. Luke's, its leadership, clinicians, staff and volunteers for creating a culture where patients come first."

St. Luke's high marks from Leapfrog echo those of the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS). In its most recent annual quality and safety hospital review, CMS awarded 10 St. Luke's hospitals the highest possible quality rating of five stars. St. Luke's was the only health network in the Lehigh Valley to receive five-star ratings.

"Straight A's and five stars – St. Luke's is the only health network in Lehigh Valley to ever receive such high marks from both CMS and Leapfrog," noted Sabol, who on Wednesday spoke at the Greater Philadelphia Business Coalition on Health conference on the subject of St. Luke's remarkable Leapfrog grades and other quality and safety achievements.

Founded in 1872, St. Luke's University Health Network (SLUHN) is a fully integrated, regional, non-profit network of more than 21,000 employees providing services at 15 campuses and 350+ outpatient sites. With annual net revenue of \$4



billion, 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 hospitals operate the largest network of trauma centers in Pennsylvania, with the Bethlehem Campus being home to St. Luke's Children's Hospital.

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 campus. It also operates the nation's oldest School of Nursing, established in 1884, and 52 fully accredited graduate medical educational programs with more than 500 residents and fellows. In 2022, St. Luke's, a member of the Children's Hospital Association, established the Lehigh Valley's first and only free-standing facility dedicated entirely to kids.

SLUHN is the only Lehigh Valley-based health care system to earn Medicare's five-star ratings (the highest) for quality, efficiency, and

patient satisfaction. St. Luke's is a Leapfrog Group and Healthgrades Top Hospital and a Newsweek World's Best Hospital. The Network's flagship University Hospital earned the 100 Top Major Teaching Hospital designation from Fortune/PINC AI 10 years in a row, including in 2021 when it was identified as THE #1 TEACHING HOSPITAL IN THE COUNTRY. In 2021, St. Luke's was also identified as one of the 15 Top Health Systems nationally. 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.



The Bangor Women's Club is happy to announce this years HOBY Award Winner, Matthew Xiao. Matthew is a Bangor Area High School Student who is involved in Ecology Club, Envirothon, National Honor Society, Homecoming Committee, and Sophomore Class President. He also is in the Marching band, concert band and pep band. Matthew plans on attending college and majoring in engineering, and persuing a career as an Aerospace engineer. His hobbies include karate and video game. Congratulations Matthew

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Hello, fellow readers,  
I adore clients sending

plant photos from their gardens. Tara from Sparta, NJ, sent one of her Lady’s Mantle with the headline ‘Morning Diamonds.’

“So lovely! I adore the lotus effect. Thank you for sharing,” my note back.

Indeed, there’s more to gardens than the textures of leaves and colors of blooms. There’s the attraction of bark and stems and how some flowers and plants are beautiful when dry or dormant. Another delight is how some capture the morning dew with droplets that glisten in the morning sun, like Lady’s Mantle, one of my favorites.

My Lady’s Mantle (*Alchemilla vulgaris*) came from a dear friend. They’ve self-seeded in the nooks and crannies of the natural stone walkway—staying miniature in size and softening the path. The leaves are fan-shaped with tiny teeth at the tips. Though admired mostly for the foliage, chartreuse petal-less clusters of flowers adorn her from spring into summer.

It makes a magnificent groundcover plant in sun or shade and thrives in acidic, clay, loamy, and sandy soil in zones 3 to 9. Bambi is not fond of its fuzziness and bitterness and tends to stay clear.

Lady’s Mantle leaves have tiny soft hairs that resist water, causing droplets to form. The lotus effect is also known as Super-



hydrophobicity. (What a mouthful!) Like lotus leaves, Lady’s Mantle doesn’t absorb wetness easily and holds water droplets that clean dirt from leaves. And the reverse is true: the leaves don’t dehydrate readily making them highly drought tolerant.

The perfect spherical droplets left after a rain or morning dew are eye-catching and oh-so-charming in the garden.

Nasturtium, Prickly

Pear, and the wings of insects such as butterflies also sport the lotus effect. Dragonfly wings do, too—those fascinating creatures that help control pests.

Speaking of nasturtium, I think of it as a must-have in the vegetable garden. Nasturtium attracts pests like aphids, keeping them from attacking the veggies. They also deter squash bugs and attract pollinators, including butterflies, bees, and hum-

mingbirds. Plus, the flowers, seed pods, and leaves are edible—delightful in salads with their peppery mustard-like taste that deer generally don’t like. They’re easy to grow with bold yellow and orange blooms and saucer-shaped foliage, adding color and texture to your vegetable garden.

A brilliant idea just came to me as I continue to struggle with the aphids attacking the leatherleaf viburnum. Darn things! Now, they have moved to other varieties of viburnum nearby. I’ll plant nasturtium below them.

I spoke about the dilemma way back in 2016 when desperate measures called for rejuvenation pruning, cutting down the stems at random heights almost to the ground. And here we are 9 years later, and I’m still battling the suckers, literally sucking the life out of the leaves, making them an unsightly curled mess.

So, back to Tara’s Morning Diamonds—Lady’s Mantle is rich with folklore due to the fascination of its lotus effect. Some believe

the dew droplets do turn into diamonds. Or the dew can turn metals into gold. Others believe sticking their little toe in the dew during a full moon in May will help you look young and beautiful forever. Legend has it you must be naked when dipping your toe, so surrounding screen trees may be in order. Smile.

But rather than that, let us let go of our judgments of beauty or attachments to what society defines as such. There’s beauty in the aging of plants and people and the cycle of comings and goings. Just as water is continually and repeatedly on the move, eventually returning to the ocean, everything returns to its source.

Perhaps I’m talking myself into a new view of the aphids wreaking havoc. They are a food source for beneficial insects and birds, and their honeydew attracts ants that help aerate the soil, break down organic material, and pollinate plants—a beautiful thing.

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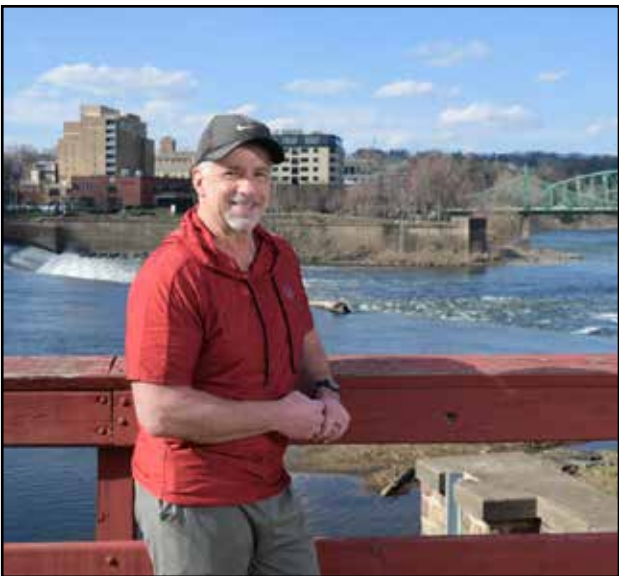
# Cardiac Patient Avoids Surgery with the Help St. Luke’s Expert Heart Care

Mike Pittaro, Ph.D., 58, has a stressful job. He’s the director of corrections for Northampton County, and he teaches and writes books on the side. So, when he felt lousy for a few weeks, with some mild chest pain, he chalked it up to work, maybe too much caffeine or spicy food.

But just before Thanksgiving in 2024, Pittaro was reading e-mails when he felt dizzy and sick to his stomach. Then his vision blurred. He asked a coworker to call a nurse from the medical department. Someone called an ambulance, and he was taken to St. Luke’s Anderson Campus. Certain he was having a heart attack, he prepared for the worst.

Pittaro did not experience the worst, however. Thanks to St. Luke’s expert heart care, he has managed to regain his vigor and get his life back on track – all without surgery.

St. Luke’s Heart & Vascular is an eight-time nationally ranked 50 Top Heart Hospital dedicated to delivering unmatched, patient-centered care. From the most complex cases to routine procedures, St. Luke’s embraces innovative technologies to deliver the highest quality outcomes for all heart and vascular conditions. Leading the region in heart and vascular care, St. Luke’s performed open heart surgery in 1983 and continues to be the first in the region to pioneer new and



advanced procedures to this day.

Initially, it seemed Pittaro could be suffering from ventricular fibrillation—a condition that causes the heart to quiver instead of pump blood normally—which would be less serious than a heart attack but would still require surgery and an implant. But then Electrophysiologist Steve Stevens, M.D., determined that his patient actually had ventricular tachycardia, a type of abnormal heartbeat, which was an even better diagnosis.

“There’s a really big difference between [ventricular fibrillation and ventricular tachycardia], and Dr. Stevens was really cool about it,” Pittaro says. “He showed us graphs and gave us detailed explanations and said he didn’t think we needed to do surgery. Immediately, I had a sigh of relief.”

Stevens and the St. Lu-

ke’s University Health Network care team prides itself on its “cut last” philosophy—saving surgery as a last resort. So, Stevens sent Pittaro home with a heart rate monitor to keep track of his heart rate for 30 days and a list of small lifestyle changes that would mitigate the condition.

“I went from ‘I should be almost dead to not dead but need surgery to making sure I’m not dead with some lifestyle changes,’” Pittaro says.

Over the last several months, Pittaro has focused less on strength training and more on cardiovascular exercise, ramped up his fruit and vegetable intake, and cut out caffeine. He’s limited certain carbohydrates and started practicing mindfulness to help manage his stress—which Pittaro calls his “arch enemy.”

At every turn of Pittaro’s St. Luke’s experience, he says he was blown away by not only the thoroughness and the care, but by the courtesy of everyone on staff, which helped make a terrifying ordeal less so. And when Pittaro’s mother suffered a heart attack in January of this year and had to go through similar testing, Pittaro was happy she went to St. Luke’s, knowing she was in the best hands.

“She saw the same team I saw,” he says. “My mom and dad have nothing but praise. They took good care of her.”

Founded in 1872, St. Luke’s University Health Network (SLUHN) is a fully integrated, regional, non-profit network of more than 21,000 employees providing services at 15 campuses and 350+ outpatient sites.

SLUHN is the only Lehigh Valley-based health care system to earn Medicare’s five-star ratings (the highest) for quality, efficiency, and patient satisfaction. St. Luke’s is a Leapfrog Group and Healthgrades Top Hospital and a Newsweek World’s Best Hospital. The Network’s flagship University Hospital earned the 100 Top Major Teaching Hospital designation from Fortune/PINC AI 10 years in a row, including in 2021 when it was identified as THE #1 TEACHING HOSPITAL IN THE

COUNTRY. In 2021, St. Luke’s was also identified as one of the 15 Top Health Systems nationally. 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.

## Senator Boscola Announces \$1,860,161 in Funding for Dual Credit Programs at Lehigh Valley Community Colleges

State Senator Lisa M. Boscola announced today that Northampton Community College and Lehigh Carbon Community College were awarded a total of \$1,860,161 in grant funding for their dual credit programs, which allow high school students to take college courses and earn both college and high school credit.

“Dual credit programs have been very successful in increasing college readiness, college attendance, and college attainment,” Boscola stated. “This funding to our region’s community colleges, therefore,

is a prudent investment to improve educational opportunities and achievement that allows students to better prepare for successful careers.”

Lehigh Carbon Community College was awarded \$1 million and Northampton Community College was awarded \$860,161 for their dual credit programs. Statewide, the Pennsylvania Department of Education awarded \$14 million in grant funding to 15 public institutions of higher education through the Commonwealth’s Dual Credit Innovation Grant Program.

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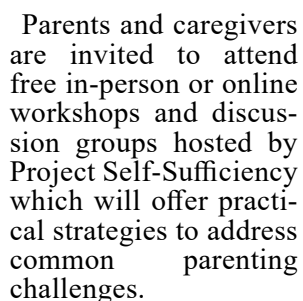
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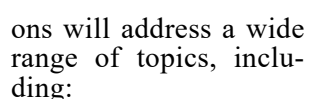
## Workshops & Discussion Groups Teach Helpful Parenting Strategies - Offered Online and at Project Self-Sufficiency



To learn more about the Shell Recycling Program and the shell drop-off locations, visit <https://dep.nj.gov/njfw/fishing/marine/shell-recycling-program/>.

The in-person workshops and discussion groups will help participants identify their parenting goals, address behavioral problems, and promote healthy child development by using the Triple P Positive Parenting Program, a comprehensive education initiative targeted to parents, healthcare professionals, educators, and caregivers of infants, toddlers, and school-aged children. In-person sessions will be held at 5:00 p.m. at Project Self-Sufficiency; pizza and childcare will be available to attendees at all in-person sessions.

The in-person sessi-



-The Power of Positive Parenting, May 13th.

-Raising Resilient Children, May 20th.

-Raising Confident,  
Competent Children.

May 27th.

-Developing Good Bedtime Routines, June 17th.

-Hassle-Free Meal-times with Children, June 24th.

Parents who want to learn positive parenting strategies are encouraged to attend an in-person, group course on Wednesdays, June 4th – 24th, 5:00 p.m. For those who need personalized assistance, one-on-one coaching with experienced parenting skills educators is also available by appointment.

An additional workshop series, featuring the "Raising Safe Kids" curriculum deve-

loped by the American Psychological Association, will be offered via Zoom on Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., beginning May 13th. This course is designed to teach effective parenting skills and prevent behavioral issues and violence. A certificate of completion is available.

“These programs will give parents, caregivers, and educators simple and practical strategies to help build strong, healthy relationships, confidently manage children’s behavior, manage their own anger, and reduce stress,” explains Project Self-Sufficiency Executive Director Deborah Berry-Toon.

Those who attend all the Triple P Positive Parenting workshops, or 7 out of 8 of the ACT "Raising Safe Kids" classes, will be eligible to receive a gift card. Interested participants

are invited to call Project Self-Sufficiency, 973-940-3500, or register online, <https://www.projectsselfsufficiency.org/parenting-classes>.

Project Self-Sufficiency has assisted low-income 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.projectselfsufficiency.org](http://www.projectselfsufficiency.org) or call 973-940-3500.

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## PFBC Announces Awards For Outstanding Achievements In Law Enforcement & Water Rescue

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is pleased to announce several awards presented to staff during the PFBC Board of Commissioners quarterly business meeting on April 28, 2025, in Harrisburg.

**Excellence in Law Enforcement:**  
The Northeast Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Association Officer of the Year Award was presented to WCO Chad Lauer, whose district includes Tioga County in the Northcentral Region. In 2024, WCO Lauer's exemplary law enforcement efforts included 46 days of onboard boat patrols, 600 boardings, the investigation of 12 environmental incidents, and the investigation of timber theft from PFBC property resulting in charges being filed. Additionally, WCO Lauer participated in multiple public educational events in his district. Lauer is a 2016 graduate of the PFBC's H.R. Stackhouse School of Fishery Conservation and Watercraft Safety.

The Gerald L. Greiner Environmental Protection Award was presented to WCO Hunter Shoemaker, whose district included Lycoming County in the Northcentral Region. This award is presented annually to the WCO who best exemplifies the ideals of 'Resource First' – the protection, conservation, and enhancement of the Commonwealth's aquatic resources. In 2024, Shoemaker investigated 16 environmental incidents within his region, including an incident which involved a significant pollution event in the headwaters of a Class A wild trout stream. Shoemaker is a 2022 graduate of the PFBC's H.R. Stackhouse School of Fishery Conservation and Watercraft Safety.

The Top Gun Award was presented to WCO Kyle Robinson, whose district includes Mifflin and northern Huntingdon counties in the Southcentral Region. This award is presented annually to a WCO who displays outstanding effort in the detection and apprehension of impaired boaters. In 2024, WCO Robinson's exemplary law enforcement efforts included 40 days of onboard boat patrols, 850 boardings, and eight arrests for Boating Under the Influence. Robinson is a 2020 graduate of the PFBC's H.R. Stackhouse School of Fishery Conservation and Watercraft Safety. This is the third consecutive year Robinson has received this award.

**Achievement in Water Rescue:**  
A Heroes of Water Rescue Award was presented to John Soderberg, a PFBC Water Rescue Instructor Trainer. This award recognizes the contributions of individuals who make a significant, lasting, and continuous impact in the field of water rescue as a result of the guidelines established by the PFBC's Water Rescue Program. During his career spanning several decades, Soderberg served honorably with Pittsburgh River Rescue, the Pennsylvania Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team, and was instrumental in implementing water rescue training for all Fire, EMS, and Law Enforcement personnel within the City of Pittsburgh.

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Performance-Based Funding Council Adopts Report, Makes Recommendations

Parents Needed to Serve on Advisory Board

Pennsylvania House Republican Leader Jesse Topper (R-Bedford/Fulton) Monday announced the Performance-Based Funding Council unanimously adopted a report and recommendations on creating a performance-based funding model for new funding for Penn State University, the University of Pittsburgh and Temple University. Topper chaired the council, which was established by Act 90 of 2024 and began meeting in January 2025. Hearings were held in Harrisburg and at each of the

subject schools. “I want to thank the members of the Performance-Based Funding Council, as well as those who provided input into the process of developing this report and associated recommendations,” Topper said. “This report and recommendations provide a path toward additional accountability for three of the largest schools receiving state support while ensuring a sustainable way of measuring performance and related funding going into the future.” According to the report adopted Monday,

the council made the following recommendations:

- Make the council permanent to oversee the performance-based funding model.
- Apply the performance-based model for new funds beginning in fiscal year 2026-27, use existing funds as a base allocation and provide institutional advancement funding in fiscal year 2025-26.
- Determine a performance allocation for each university based upon a fixed amount and each university’s share of the total weigh-

ted student count. The weighted student count for each university includes undergraduate enrollments, progression at 60 credits, Pell-eligible students, students from low-matriculating high schools, community college transfers, and high-priority occupation degrees awarded.

Determine each university’s performance-based allocation by evaluating performance based upon four-year graduation rates, six-year graduation rates, six-year Pell-eligible graduation rates, and high-priority occupation degrees, and incentivizing college affordability and rewarding improvement.

With the report’s adoption, the council will begin drafting legislation based upon the recommendations for the General Assembly to consider in the near future.

You can read the final report in full at [performancebasedfunding-council.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/PBFC\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://performancebasedfunding-council.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/PBFC_Report_Final.pdf)

Local parents are invited to attend an information session about the Journey Family Success Center Parent Advisory Board at Project Self-Sufficiency, Tuesday, May 13th, 5:00 p.m. Organizers are seeking input from families regarding area services, parenting challenges and concerns, and ideas for upcoming events. Family Success Center staff will highlight ways the agency can address issues facing local parents and incorporate feedback into future programs. Dinner and childcare will be provided for those in attendance. The gathering will also be available on Zoom; interested participants are invited to call 973-940-3500 to obtain log-in details. Advance registration for the in-person session is required.

“Input from parents is crucial to the success of the Family Success Center and we are excited about offering residents the opportunity to meet area providers,

express their concerns about gaps in services, and identify strategies for moving forward,” remarked Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director of Project Self-Sufficiency. “The Family Success Center has supported Sussex County parents and children for many years. Expanding the Parent Advisory Board will allow us to further respond to the needs of area families and incorporate their suggestions into existing and new programs for the community.”

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

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