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May 14, 2026

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Vol. 53, No. 40

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Pen Argyl Head Coach, Bill Schankel, Retires After 37 Years



Pen Argyl took on Bangor in softball on May 5th. This was Pen Argyl's Head Coach, Bill Schankel's last game, as he has officially retired after an excellent 37 years. Pen Argyl won 6 to 1. Congratulations on your retirement! Photo By Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

Bangor Native, Lexi Bussenger, Helps Lead Team to Second-Straight United East Title



Lexi Bussenger, pictured above, recently celebrated 200th career hit against Washington College! Photo courtesy www.psubrandywineathletics.com

(Article by: PSU Brandywine Heights Athletics) Kaylee Mushinski (Allentown, N.J./Allentown) delivered a two-out, walk-off single during the final at-bat of her standout, four-year career, lifting No. 1 Penn State Brandywine to its second-straight United East Conference softball championship with a 3-2 victory over No. 3 Penn College on Saturday af-

ternoon. Mushinski, who capped her freshman year with a walk-off base hit to win the Small College World Series, lined a base hit into the left-center field gap, scoring Valentina Capra (Kenilworth, N.J./David Brearley) with the game-winning run, collecting her team-record 226th and final RBI of her career.

Capra got the seventh-inning rally started by working a nine-pitch walk. She moved to second via Naya Rivera's (Mays Landing, N.J./Oakerest) sacrifice bunt and advanced to third thanks to Lexi Bussenger's (Bangor, Pa./Bangor) infield single. Two batters later, Mushinski gave Brandywine its second United East title in as many years and 11th-straight conference crown overall.

Bussenger singled, stole second and scored on Mushinski's base hit to give Brandywine a 1-0 lead in the first inning.

PSU cont'd on page 3

North Warren Shuts Out Dover High School in Baseball



North Warren took on Dover High School in baseball on May 7th. North Warren won with a 10 to 0 shutout. Photo By Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

North Warren Girls Go Head To Head Against Belvidere High School in Softball



North Warren took on Belvidere High School on May 9th in softball. North Warren won, 14 to 4. Photo By Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press

PA Senator Rosemary Brown's Lifesaving AED Legislation Heads to Governor's Desk

Sen. Brown is proud to announce the final passage of Senate Bill 375, Greg Moyer's Law, which now heads to the Governor's desk. This comes after over a decade of advocacy alongside the Moyer family, who tragically lost their 15-year-old son, Greg, to sudden cardiac arrest during a high school basketball game. This legislation requires AEDs to be present



at all PIAA-sanctioned athletic events and practices and ensures schools have emergency action plans in place for sudden cardiac arrest situations.

She is incredibly grateful to Greg's parents, Rachel and John Moyer, and his sisters, Abbie and Katie Moyer, whose advocacy, strength, and dedication were the driving force behind this legislation, and also thanks her colleagues in both the Senate and House, along with the many stakeholders who supported and advocated for this important initiative.

Northampton County Council Approved the Creation of New Department, Continuum of Care at Gracedale

With a vote of 5-to-4, Northampton County Council tonight approved the creation of a new County Department, Continuum of Care at Gracedale, to serve as the County's integrated care and planning hub for the future of Gracedale. This department will be focused exclusively on Gracedale and, once filled, will remove oversight of Gracedale from the County's Human Services Department.

This new structure includes a Director of Human Services Continuum of Care who will provide senior executive leadership at Gracedale Nursing Home focused on strategy, external partnerships, funding alignment, and long-range system design. The new structure also includes a Deputy Director of Human Services Continuum of Care, who

would handle implementation, cross-department coordination, reporting, compliance, and the operational details that turn policy into results, as well as offering fiscal oversight.

"This proposal is about building the leadership structure required to manage one of the County's most important assets and responsibilities: caring for our aging residents and vulnerable populations with dignity, coordination, and long-term financial responsibility," said County Executive Tara Zrinski.

The Continuum of Care Department at Gracedale will coordinate the full continuum: nursing care, supportive living, and future campus-based development reflecting the needs of the continuum of care across the 364 acres upon which Gracedale occupies. That approach reflects the di-

rection already being discussed through the Gracedale Continuum of Care items on the Council agenda.

"The Continuum of Care Department gives Northampton County the framework to modernize service delivery, support Gracedale's future, and align public resources with a more integrated model of care," Zrinski said.

She also noted that the County is responsible for 1,318 employees across Human Services and Gracedale—a footprint that represents more than 60% of the County's annual operating budget and spans two physical locations. A Continuum of Care department will give Council and the Administration a single point of accountability for strategy, service alignment, and long-range planning across the care spectrum.

Parents Invited to Give Input on Needs and Services

Local parents are invited to offer input about their families' needs, challenges, and concerns, as well as suggestions for upcoming events, at a meeting of the Journey Family Success Center Parent Advisory Board at Project Self-Sufficiency, Tuesday, May 12th, 5:00 p.m. Family Success Center staff will highlight ways the agency can address issues facing local parents and incorporate feedback into future programs. Dinner and childcare will be provided for those in attendance. The gathering will also be available on Zoom; interested participants are invited to call 973-940-3500 to obtain log-in details. Those who attend their first meeting of the Journey Family Success Center Parent Advisory Board will be eligible to receive a gift card. 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, Chief Executive Officer of Project Self-Sufficiency. "The Family Success Center has supported Sussex County parents and children for many years, and we are looking forward to responding to the needs of area families and incorporating their suggestions into existing and new programs for



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

the community."

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.

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

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

About the Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency: The Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency is a program of support which includes parenting skills training, economic self-sufficiency services, family activities, legal education services, information about health and nutrition, referrals, advocacy, and other services. All activities are free and open to the public. Family Success Centers offer services to children, youth, families, individuals, and communities. Funding is provided by the New Jersey Department of Children & Families.

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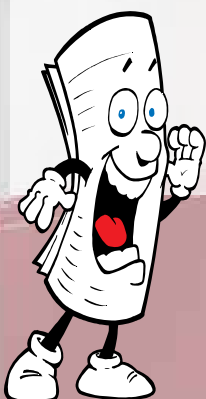
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Photo Courtesy: www.psubrandywineathletics.com/sports/sball/2025-26/releases/20260509q912cj

PSU

Continued from page 1

The Wildcats put six hits on the board during the second and third innings, scoring a single run during each frame to take the lead; however, April Lewandowski (Atco, N.J./Hammonton) set down 12 of the final 15 batters she faced, keeping Penn College off the scoreboard for the final four frames.

Lewandowski won her 16th-straight start, upping her record on the season to 17-2. Lewandowski, who scattered eight hits and yielded two runs en route to her 16th complete game of the spring, closed out her four-year career with a record of 62-9, a team record for victories.

The Lions trailed until the fifth inning when Brandywine struck for a two-out run to tie the score. Bussenger got the two-out rally started with

a base hit and moved to second base via Penn College error. Emma McElroy (Mountainside, N.J./Governor Livingston) followed with a single, scoring Bussenger to make the count 2-2.

Brandywine collected 10 hits off of Penn College hurler Mackenzi Tice, who threw more than 400 pitches in four complete-game efforts during the two-day tournament.

Bussenger collected the

final three hits of her career, upping her total to 243 knocks, a program record. Mushinski added two knocks to her career total, completing her 164-game career with 226 hits. Ava Rodgers (Gloucester City, N.J./Gloucester City) produced a pair of singles, while Bussenger stole two bases.

The game marked the end of four Brandywine

seniors' careers: Bussenger, Lewandowski, Mushinski and Rivera. The seniors won the final game of every season during the last four years, capturing four conference titles and two Small College National Championships. Brandywine posted a record of 144-32 during the last four seasons.

The Lions finished the season with a record of

34-7, their fifth-straight season with at least 34 victories. After beginning the 2026 season with six losses during its first 10 games, Brandywine won 30 of its final 31 contests, including 27-straight, a program record, to end the season.

Full Article can be found online at: www.psubrandywineathletics.com/sports/sball/2025-26/releases/20260509q912cj

New to the Blue Mountain Community Library

Blue Mountain Community Library News for Early May: The library is located at 216 S. Robinson Ave. in Pen Argyl. Open hours are Monday-Saturday 10am-12pm and Monday & Thursday 6-8pm.

Questions? Call 610-863-3029 or email info@bmcl.org.

We have been chosen as a recipient of a 2026 United for Libraries & Penguin Random House Grant for Small & Rural Libraries! This means that we will receive an in-kind book donation grant of \$500 to purchase Penguin Random House titles! We will also receive complimentary eLearning from United for Libraries.

By popular vote, our new mascot's name is Bubbles! Thank you to everyone who suggested a name and who voted.

The library is starting a small "hygiene bank" (sample size tissues, toothpaste, soap, etc.) Give what you can and take what you need.

Congratulations to Mikayla Ferrara-Garval, winner of the April scavenger hunt for adults and young adults! Mikayla won fuzzy slippers, a reading journal, bookmarks, and snacks. Great job to all who entered.

Have you tried the new May scavenger hunt for children, with lots of new prizes in the prize basket? The theme is "sea creatures," and they are hidden throughout two rooms this month.

The library will discuss A Marriage at Sea by Sophie Elmhirst on Tuesday, June 9 at 6:30pm. Email info@bmcl.org to RSVP.

It's almost time for the BMCL Summer Fun with Reading Program (SFRP) 2026: Words and Wonders!

- Win big with reading challenges for all ages! Throughout June, July, and August, ALL ages can win amazing prizes (like passes to the North Summit Climbing Gym and Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm, PA Shakespeare Festival tickets, and gift cards to Sparkle Car Wash and the Gap Diner - plus MANY more) by keeping a reading log.

- ALL ages can enter our "Reader's Raffle" to win gift certificates for large pizzas from area restaurants just by using their library card!

- Children ages 3-6 can register for "Two Stories and a Craft" storytime.

- Children ages 3-6 are invited to wear their coziest pajamas and come to "Books and Bedtime" storytime; no registration required.

- In addition, children ages 4-9 can register for a series of six special Wednesday morning educational programs at the municipal parks.

Specific dates and times to be announced very soon!

This year's SFRP is sponsored by CJ's Heating & Cooling, Sabatino Insurance Agency, and State Farm (Debbie Pettinari). Additional sponsors for 2026 include CJ's Heating & Cooling (for Sundaes in the Park), Deer Foot Auto Parts (for an America on Wheels pass, which is coming soon!), and Sabatino Insurance Agency (for our author luncheon and Sundaes in the Park). Please utilize the services of these generous community partners!

New to the circulating collection:

Adult fiction:

Girl in the Creek (Wendy Wagner); Proof (Jon Cowan); Executive Power (Brian Andrews); Quantum Tempest (Mike Maden); The Devil's Daughter (Danielle Steel); For Richer for Poorer (Danielle Steel); Beautiful Villain (Rebecca Kenney); All Our Beautiful Goodbyes (Julianne MacLean); This Promised Land (Cathy Gohlke)

Large print fiction:

The Housemaid (Freida McFadden); The Stolen Queen (Fiona Davis); The Frozen River (Ariel Lawhon); The Sicilian Inheritance (Jo Piazza)

Large print nonfiction:

Be Ready When the Luck Happens (Ina Garten)

Juvenile fiction:

What about Worms!?! (Ryan Higgins); Arlo Needs Glasses (Barney Saltzberg); The Book with No Pictures (B.J. Novak); The Pinkamazing Storybook Collection (Victoria Kann); Giraffe Problems (Jory John); The Curious Case of the Missing Mammoth (Ellie Hattie)

Juvenile nonfiction:

The Worm (Elise Gravel); What's the Point of Math? (Ben Ffrancon Davies); Wonders of Our World (Carron Brown)

New to the Bangor Public Library

Adult Fiction:

The Fine Art of Lying by Alexandra Andrews; My Dreadful Darling by H.D. Carlton; The Ending Writes Itself: A Novel by Evelyn Clarke; Murder Me Tomorrow by Russell Cooper; Homebound: A Novel by Portia Elan; Our Perfect Storm by Carley Fortune; Last Night in Brooklyn: A Novel by Xochitl Gonzalez; King of Gluttony by Ana Huang; Sisters in Yellow: A Novel by Mieko Kawakami; The Caretaker: A Novel by Marcus Kliever; We Burned So Bright by TJ Klune; Caller Unknown: A Novel by Gillian McAllister; 26 Beauties by James Patterson; Purple State: A Novel by Dana Perino; Rules for the Summer by Meghan Quinn; The Calamity Club by Kathryn Stockett; The Things We Never Say: A Novel by Elizabeth Strout; John of John: A Novel by Douglas Stuart

Adult Non Fiction:

Making Believe: On Telling Stories to Children by Mac Barnett; Spanish Short Stories for Beginners by Adrian Torres; The Fullness of Time: Marking the Day by Birdsong, Blooms, Shadows, and Stars by Cathy Haynes; The Tree Collectors: Tales of Arboreal Obsession by Amy Stewart; Dogs, Boys, and Other Things I've Cried About: A Memoir by Isabel Klee; Sweet and Savory Keto Chaffles: 75 Delicious Treats for Your Low-Carb Diet by Martina Slajerova; Little Edna's War: A True Story of Resistance and Hope: A Gripping WWII Page-Turner by Janet Bond Brill; I Choose Me: Chasing Joy, Finding Purpose & Embracing Reinvention by Jennie Garth; Intimate Audrey: An Authorized Biography by Sean Hepburn Ferrer

Large Print Fiction:

Hope Rises by David Baldacci; The Mother-Daughter Book Club: A Novel by Susan Patterson;

Easy Fiction:

ABC Color; Goodnight Bunny by Carmen Cabot; Over in the Hollow by Rebecca Dickinson; Hello Baby Mirror Book; The Sun Thief by Alice Hemming; Trick or Treat in Pennsylvania: A Halloween Adventure in the Keystone State by Eric James; Mei Mei the Bunny by Laufey; A Story for Small Bear by Alice B. McGinty; Sinclair, The Velociraptor Who Thought He Was a Chicken by Douglas Rees; Construction Site: Firefight! By Sherri Duskey Rinker; The Tree That's Meant to Be by Yuval Zommer

Easy Non Fiction:

Sound by Grace Hansen; Trapped in the Tar Pit: How Paleontologists Unearthed a City's Prehistoric Past by Jessica Stremmer; When Sue Found Sue: Sue Hendrickson Discovers her T. Rex by Toni Buzzeo; The Bone Wars: The True Story of an Epic Battle to Find Dinosaur Fossils by Jane Kurt; Digging Up Dinosaurs by Alike; Making Music by Cameron Macintosh; Little Poems for Tiny Ears by Lin Oliver

Easy Reader Fiction:

Let's Go Fishing by Virginia Ponds

Junior Fiction:

The Last Comics on Earth: Across the Doodleverse by Max Brallier; First Crush by Cassandra Calin; The Season of the Flames by Anna James; Truly Tyler by Terri Libenson; Positively Izzy by Terri Libenson; Becoming Brianna by Terri Libenson; Just Jaime by Terri Libenson; Baby-Sitters Little Sister (12): Karen's Surprise by Shauna J. Grant

Junior Non Fiction:

A Ticket Around the World by Natalia Diaz; Chickens and Other Dinosaurs: How Dinosaurs Became the Birds We Know Today by Ben Lerwill; Maps, What You Need to Know by Linda Crotta Brennan; Who Was Selena by Kate Bisantz

Young Adult Fiction:

Excalibur: The Legend of King Arthur: A Graphic Novel by Tony Lee

Young Adult Non Fiction:

Surviving Social Media: Shut Down the Haters by Eric Braun; How to Deal With Gun Violence by Nick Hunter; Having Depression: Stories from Survivors by Sarah Eason; Reel History: A Teens Crash Course in Film and Movie History; The Geography Book

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NORTH WARREN (14) VS BELVIDERE (4) SOFTBALL



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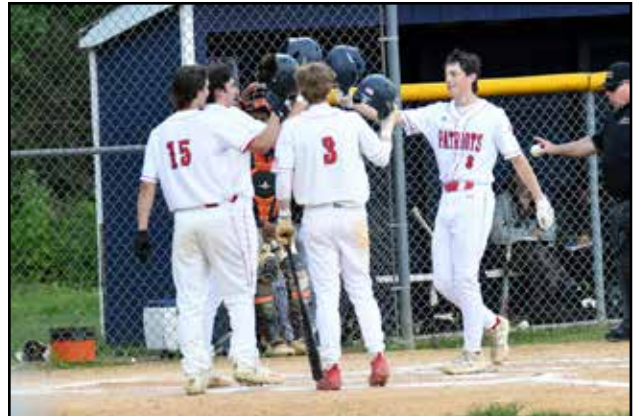
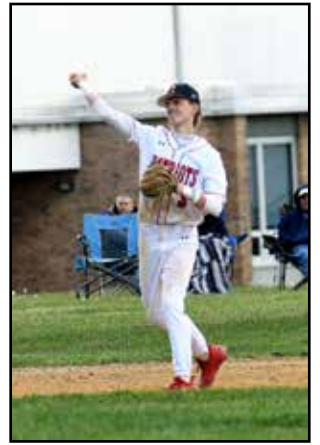
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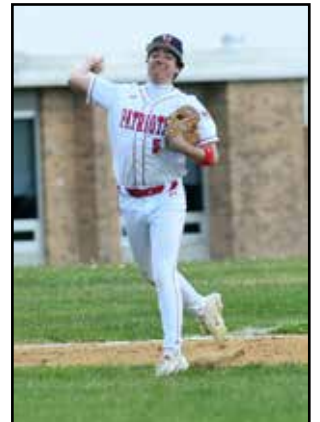
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NORTH WARREN (10) VS DOVER (0) BASEBALL



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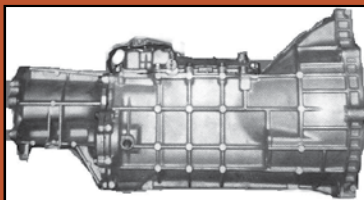
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Northampton County Bridge #15 Reopens in Lower Saucon Township, PA

Northampton County Executive Tara Zrinski joined Northampton County Public Works officials and community members on Friday morning to celebrate the reopening of County Bridge #15 on Meadows Road in Lower Saucon Township following the completion of a major bridge replacement project.

The bridge officially reopened to traffic on May 8, 2026, following a final inspection earlier in the day.

County Bridge #15 was abruptly closed in 2018 after the structure's condition rapidly deteriorated, creating a long-term detour for residents and motorists traveling through the area. Following years of coordination, planning, and funding efforts through PennDOT, construction on the replacement bridge began in late 2024.

"This project represents years of work and coordination to restore an important transportation



Executive Tara Zrinski. "Reopening the Meadows Road Bridge improves travel throughout Lower Saucon Township while demonstrating Northampton County's continued commitment to investing in critical infrastructure." The approximately \$3.1 million bridge replacement project was funded through a reimbursement agreement with PennDOT, which covered 80 percent of the total project cost, with Northampton County funding the remaining 20 percent.

Northampton County Director of Public Works Michael Emili noted that the project required extensive coordination between the County, PennDOT, engineers, and contractors to move from emergency closure to final completion.

Kinsley Construction served as the project contractor. Benesch provided engineering services, and Traffic, Planning, and Design (TPD) provided construction inspection services. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Friday morning at the bridge site following the final inspection.

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Fantasia Bill Establishing Medicaid Reimbursement Parity for Brain Injury Services Advances

Assemblywoman Dawn Fantasia's bill ensuring Medicaid reimbursement rates are the same for providers delivering equal brain injury-related services passed the Assembly Aging and Human Services Committee on Thursday.

Advocates, including the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey, have been sounding the alarm on how brain injury programs run by the state's Department of Human Services reimburse providers differently for the same services.

"Survivors of brain injuries, who are also Medicaid recipients, are among our state's

most vulnerable patients because they rely on state-managed programs to live full and independent lives. Unfortunately, the vital continuity of care these patients deserve is jeopardized by disparities in provider reimbursement rates. It is harder to retain the high-quality providers when the rates differ so widely," Fantasia explained (R-Sussex, Morris, Warren).

Currently, Medicaid providers working in the long-term services and supports program, which helps brain injury patients develop daily living skills to stay in their homes, are

reimbursed at a lower rate than those in other programs offered by the Division of Disability Services.

Fantasia's bill (A4485) increases the Medicaid rate for long-term brain injury services to \$9.89 from \$3.65 for every 15 minutes of care. The higher rate corresponds with the reimbursement rate for day habilitation services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

"Even with the increase, it is more affordable for the state to provide services in the home and in the community, as opposed to a nursing facility," Fantasia said. "Not



only would many patients prefer be at home, but it also makes economic sense to preserve

those services." Approximately 10% of the nearly 2 million New Jersey residents on Medicaid

have disabilities, including those whose disability is a result of a brain injury.

"Residents with brain injuries have varying needs depending on the severity of their injury and other factors like age, but they shouldn't have to worry that their access to necessary physical and cognitive services is going to be limited by the type of program they are placed in," Fantasia added.

"This measure gives patients and families navigating life with brain injuries the reassurance that New Jersey offers high-quality services to all survivors equally."

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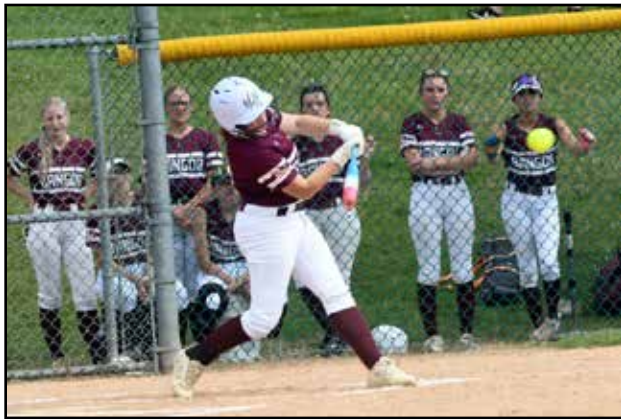
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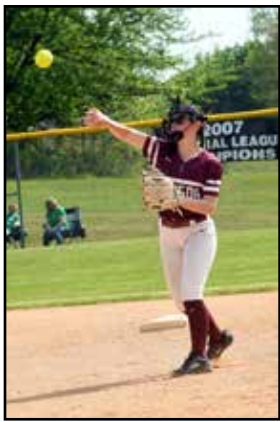
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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary?



Mary E. Stone
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Hello fellow readers,
Last week, we spoke about rhubarb—its bold leaves, edible stems, ornamental cousins, and how a delightful brunch conversation with friends who will care for Jolee while I attend Comfort Zone Camp somehow circled back to trust, friendship, and the ways we support one another.

You may recall my mention that rhubarb contains oxalic acid (the

leaves, that is), which is toxic to both deer and humans. Skunk cabbage shares rhubarb's common thread of toxic leaves—along with other fascinating spring woodland traits.

Legend has it that black bears emerge from hibernation when skunk cabbage begins to sprout. I assumed the correlation was that bears eat skunk cabbage. It turns out they do, but only in early spring before there are better things to nosh on. Black bears eat just about anything when rousing from hibernation and will look beyond the burning sensation caused by the oxalic acid in skunk cabbage.

Long before most perennials dare poke through the cold soil, skunk cabbage emerges with mottled, hood-like flowers that resemble something between a woodland seashell and a strange creature from



another era. And then there's the scent. Bruise a leaf or lean in close, and the plant releases the unmistakable odor that gave it its memorable common name.

But I'm not the only one who admires how skunk cabbage carpets streambanks and low-lying woodland floors before the surrounding tree leaves emerge. Brian of Washington Township, NJ, asked if he could use it in the garden. I've often thought it would make an excellent option

in place of hosta—deer candy, as most of you know. Unlike hosta, however, skunk cabbage grows in swampy, often stagnant water, so the cultural environments are quite different. Still, in a boggy garden, skunk cabbage certainly has appeal.

It would be tough to dig and move skunk cabbage, as the roots grow deeper with age, making older plants practically impossible to transplant. I've never seen it sold in a nursery, either. Inevita-



bly, as the common name denotes, its smell can be offensive, especially if cut by a weed whacker or stepped on. Yet walking by a field of skunk cabbage carries only a slight musty smell beyond the flower itself.

It's fascinating how early pollinators find the flower appealing, even though it smells much like a dead animal. So, like most things, it's all a matter of taste.

Year after year, I find myself delighted to see skunk cabbage return.

Perhaps because it asks us to reconsider what we define as beautiful—or valuable.

Skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) is native to wetlands throughout the Northeast and is one of the earliest signs that winter is loosening its grip. Even more fascinating, the plant actually generates heat. Through a remarkable process called thermogenesis, it can warm itself enough to melt surrounding snow and frozen ground,

allowing it to emerge when little else can.

Imagine that for a moment.

A plant so determined to fulfill its purpose that it creates its own warmth against the cold.

Over the years, I've come to appreciate that gardens are not merely collections of pretty plants. They are living communities where each plant has a role to play—even the awkward, misunderstood, or less desirable ones.

Skunk cabbage helps stabilize wet soils and provides one of the earliest food sources for emerging insects. Its massive leaves, which unfurl in spring, shade and cool woodland streambanks. It belongs exactly where it grows—Mother Nature knows what she is doing.

So if you happen upon skunk cabbage during a spring walk and instinctively wrinkle your nose, perhaps pause a moment longer. Beneath its peculiar appearance lies one of nature's earliest and most determined signs of renewal. Much like life itself, the most meaningful growth often begins under challenging conditions.

And with that comes the delight of wonder. Garden Dilemmas? AskMaryStone.com or tune in on your favorite Podcast app.

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Sherrill Administration Delivers More Than \$25 Million In Grants To Clean Up Litter In New Jersey Communities

The Sherrill Administration recently announced the award of \$25.2 million in annual Clean Communities grants to municipalities and counties for local litter removal programs that help keep trash out of the environment and beautify New Jersey's communities.

The awards were announced at an event hosted by the New Jersey Clean Communities Council at Kean University's Liberty Hall in Union Township, Union County. Grant recipients will use the funding to educate the public about the environmental harms of littering, set up volunteer litter cleanups, acquire litter removal equipment, clear litter and debris from stormwater drains, remove graffiti, and support enforcement of local litter laws. NJ Clean Communities grantee receives presentation check during awards ceremony at Kean University's Liberty Hall in Union Township, Union County.

"Nobody likes to see trash-filled roads, rivers, or parks," said Acting DEP Commissioner Ed Potosnak. "By partnering with the Clean Communities Council to provide this critical funding, the

DEP is ensuring that municipalities and counties can keep their communities healthy and clean without bearing the costs of these initiatives alone."

The DEP is awarding a total of \$22.4 million to eligible municipalities and \$2.8 million to counties across the state. The awards are funded by taxes collected from businesses that produce litter-generating products and penalties paid for litter-related violations. The grant awards are prescribed by state law and are based on population, housing units and miles of municipally owned roadways.

The New Jersey Clean Communities Council

The program is overseen by the New Jersey Clean Communities Council, which manages reporting requirements for the litter abatement programs in 558 municipalities and 21 counties. The Council is a statewide, comprehensive, litter-abatement program that grew out of the passage of the state's Clean Communities Act of 1986.

"The New Jersey Clean Communities Council is incredibly honored to continue our partnership with NJDEP to advance litter education and clean-

up initiatives across the state," said Council Executive Director JoAnn Gemenaden. "Today marks the fourth anniversary of New Jersey's single-use plastics law – a shining example of the state's environmental leadership. Together we've made great strides in drastically reducing single-use plastic bags from littering our roadways and waterways, serving as a national example of how smart state policy can directly combat litter. This year's Clean Communities funding will continue to help local governments keep their communities cleaner, greener and prouder."

The Clean Communities Council also administers the Adopt-a-Highway and Adopt-a-Beach volunteer programs to support groups, organizations, businesses or individuals seeking to organize trash cleanups at specific public locations.

This year, the Council is partnering with Keep America Beautiful to engage with New Jersey mayors across the state by encouraging them to sign pledges to join the organization's Greatest American Cleanup in honor of America's 250th anniversary.



Municipalities Receiving Grants Over \$100,000

Atlantic County: Egg Harbor Township, \$130,167; Galloway Township, \$108,916; Atlantic City, \$101,602.

Burlington County: Evesham Township, \$119,852; Mount Laurel, \$107,693.

Camden County: Cherry Hill, \$182,922; Gloucester Township, \$151,911; Camden, \$145,202; Winslow Township, \$103,052.

Cape May County: Ocean City, \$110,682.

Cumberland County: Vineland \$160,664.

Essex County: Newark, \$533,511; East Orange, \$134,036; Irvington, \$109,304; Bloomfield Township, \$103,161.

Gloucester County: Washington Township, \$113,594.

Hudson County: Jersey City, \$544,337; Bayonne, \$131,530; Hoboken, \$119,453; Union City, \$109,397; North Bergen, \$107,875.

Mercer County: Hamilton, \$228,965; Trenton, \$170,733.

Middlesex County: Edison, \$217,300; Woodbridge, \$212,949; Old Bridge, \$146,114; Monroe Township, \$123,753; Piscataway, \$121,525; East Brunswick, \$118,417; South Brunswick, \$105,667.

Monmouth County: Middletown, \$185,012; Howell, \$145,251; Marlboro Township, \$112,185; Manalapan, \$102,828.

Morris County: Parsippany-Troy Hills, \$133,975.

Ocean County: Toms River, \$267,494; Brick, \$200,263; Lakewood, \$171,493; Berkeley, \$156,911; Jackson, \$140,268; Manchester, \$132,007.

Passaic County: Paterson, \$242,907; Clifton, \$166,411; Wayne, \$126,715.

Somerset County: Franklin, \$166,379; Bridgewater, \$118,090; Hillsborough Township, \$116,317.

Union County: Elizabeth, \$217,109; Union Township, \$114,878.

County Grant Awards
Atlantic, \$153,815; Bergen, \$182,891; Burlington, \$208,400; Camden, \$164,105; Cape May, \$87,596; Cumberland, \$223,293; Essex, \$88,736; Gloucester, \$171,307; Hudson, \$23,098; Hunterdon, \$100,722; Mercer, \$73,889; Middlesex, \$130,291; Monmouth, \$156,865; Morris, \$118,239; Ocean, \$254,692; Passaic, \$101,942; Salem, \$148,677; Somerset, \$103,111. Sussex, \$129,765; Union, \$74,516; Warren, \$108,267.

To find the complete list of municipal awards, visit njclean.org/coordinators/grant-funding.

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Land of Make Believe Slates Grand Opening for Memorial Day Weekend

There are many traditions come Memorial Day Weekend including parades, tributes to our service men and women, past and present, and family gatherings. For many families there is another annual tradition - a trip to the Land of Make Believe in Hope, NJ., a close by destination with affordable, bargain pricing.

New Jersey's #1 Amusement Park opens its gates for another family fun, adventure-packed season May 23-24-25.

Considered one of the top family day trip destinations in the region, Land of Make Believe is less than an hour from New York City and almost anywhere in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania. The park's focus this year is family affordability. Its one price admission is punctuated by free parking, free water park, free picnicking, endless rides and attractions. Visitors are welcome to bring their own food into the park and relax in the picnic Grove.

Indeed the award winning park features rides



for the whole family from the classics to the more daring. Want to see a show? Land of Make Believe's Middle Earth Theater is an interactive experience for children and their parents. Want to go back in time? Check out the travel safari ride. Want to go upside down? Scream Machine 360! Want to ride a steam locomotive? Get on board the C.P. Huntington, the little engine that could!

Land of Make Believe, which was named one of

the most iconic amusement parks in America (and the only one in New Jersey) alongside Disney World in Florida, Kings Dominion in Virginia, Knotts Berry Farm in California and many other "big name" parks around the country, has been recognized by numerous organizations for its outstanding safety record.

Situated among 400 beautiful acres of open space, the backdrop for the park is magical.

After Memorial Day

Weekend, Land of Make Believe is open weekends in early June, and daily beginning on Father's Day Weekend June 20.

Land of Make Believe is easily accessible off Route 80, Exit 12, Route 46 and Route 78.

For more about the park or to purchase tickets in advance, visit LOMB.com or its Facebook page, Land of Make Believe Hope NJ. For those interested in employment at Land of Make Believe, call 908-459-4521.



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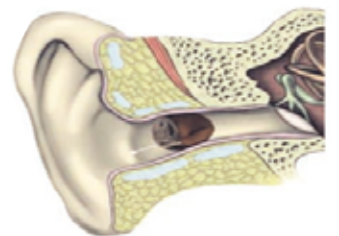
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St. Luke's Among First in Nation to Implement Game-Changing Stroke Care Technology

St. Luke's University Health Network has become the first health care system in Pennsylvania and one of the first nationwide to implement AngioFlow™ by RapidAI, a breakthrough perfusion imaging technology. AngioFlow is an advanced brain blood flow imaging tool used for acute stroke evaluation, said Dr. Martin Oselkin, neurointerventional radiologist. Traditionally, patients are sent to a CT scanner for perfusion imaging to help physicians make the decision for thrombectomy (clot removal) or not, but AngioFlow allows St. Luke's to skip the CT scanner and perform the perfusion study right in the operating room.

"This results in at

least 35 minutes in time saved," Oselkin explained, "which is vital to patient outcomes, as 1 million brain cells die with each minute that passes before a clot is removed."

The advancement further strengthens St. Luke's position as the regional leader in advanced stroke diagnosis and treatment – and is a testament to St. Luke's overall excellence. This past fall, 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, reaffirmed St. Luke's preeminent position among the leading health systems in the country.

AngioFlow is now available at St. Luke's University Hospital in Bethlehem, a Comprehensive Stroke Center recognized for providing the highest and most advanced level of stroke care and serving as the Network's hub for leading stroke and neurovascular capabilities.

For patients, the benefits are significant. Real-time perfusion imaging supports:

Shorter procedure times, which can directly improve outcomes in stroke.

Earlier identification of salvageable brain tissue, increasing the chance of functional recovery.

More precisely tailored interventions, reducing the risk of complications.

Enhanced safety, as clinicians have immediate insight into how treatment is affecting blood flow in real time.

At St. Luke's, these advanced stroke and neurovascular interventions are performed by Oselkin and endovascular neurosurgeons Dr. Evan Marlin and Dr. Nathan Quig. Together, they lead the Network's commitment to elevating stroke care across the region through innovation, rapid response and leading-edge technology.

For more information on St. Luke's Neurosciences and neurovascular services at St. Luke's University Health Network, please visit sluhn.org.

Slate Belt Heritage Center Gets Set For June Program



The Slate Belt Heritage Center & Museum will hold their monthly historical program on Thursday, June 11th at 7pm. Speakers for the evening will be Mr. Russell Stout and Mr. Richard Freeman whose topic will be: The Declaration of Independence: A vision for mankind. They will explain how one document has changed the world and the voices and vestiges that brought forth this Declaration. This program will coincide with the Heritage Center display being shown now, in the Chamber Room, entitled: Life, Liberty & the Pursuit of Happiness. 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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