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Blue Valley Farm Show Celebrates 80th Year



The 80th Annual Blue Valley Farm Show was held August 11th-15th. This year's Blue Valley Farm Show Queen was queen Gillian Smith. More photos and videos can be found on our Facebook Page. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press.

Space, Fantasia, Inganamort To Introduce Emergency Relief Legislation For Farmers Devastated By April Freeze

Senator Parker Space, Assemblywoman Dawn Fantasia, and Assemblyman Michael Inganamort (all R-Morris, Sussex, Warren) are introducing legislation to provide direct financial assistance to New Jersey farmers devastated by the historic April 2026 freeze.

The legislation would establish a one-time Emergency Crop Loss Relief Program within the Department of Agriculture to provide grants or reimbursements for verified crop losses resulting from the freeze. The bill includes a streamlined application process, a per-farm funding cap, and authorizes the NJ

Department of Agriculture to adopt emergency regulations to expedite relief.

The bill responds to the unprecedented weather event that struck between April 19 and April 22, 2026, when unseasonably warm temperatures caused crops to bloom early before a sudden hard freeze destroyed blossoms and developing fruit across the state, causing an estimated \$300 million in agricultural losses.

"New Jersey's farmers are why we earn the nickname the 'Garden State', and they experienced catastrophic losses through no fault of *FARM cont'd on pg 2*

Roseto, PA, Hosts Annual National Night Out



Roseto Borough held their National Night Out along side their 250th Birthday Celebration on August 15th. This event was a great way to reach out and connect with the community. They even had two BMX bike shows. More photos and videos can be found on our Facebook Page. Photo by Dale Young/The Free Weekly Press.

Project Self-Sufficiency Proudly Hosts Event for Expectant and New Parents

Expectant parents and those with young children are invited to receive up-to-date information about preparing for their child's first year at a Baby Beginnings Fair offered by Project Self-Sufficiency, Thursday, August 27th, 1:00 p.m. Representatives from the Child Mind Institute will address the importance of self-care during pregnancy and the months following the arrival of a new baby. Attendees will also be able 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



Preparation for an infant's first year will be discussed during the Family Connects NJ Baby Beginnings Fair hosted by Project Self-Sufficiency (photo credit: Shutterstock, used with permission)

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 parents of young children are invited to

call 973-940-3500 to register.

"Accurate information about early childhood and development is crucial for the success of new parents and we are grateful to offer this information session to the community," explains Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director of *BABY cont'd on page 3*

FARM

Continued from page 1

their own," said Senator Space. "Many invested an entire season's worth of labor and resources only to see their crops destroyed by a single weather event. This legislation will provide the emergency assistance they need to recover and continue feeding New Jersey."

"In talking with farmers from District 24 and throughout the state, the need for direct financial assistance is crystal clear," said Assemblywoman Dawn Fantasia, a member of the Assembly Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee. "The spring freeze produced devastating agricultural production losses and the legislature needs to step in to help ensure the viability of our farms."

The April freeze placed an immediate financial burden on New Jersey farmers, who had already made their



annual investments in labor, fertilizer, equipment, and irrigation expenses before their crops were destroyed. Many now face debt, property taxes, insurance premiums, and payroll costs despite having little or no harvest to sell. Although the State did successfully secure a Secretarial Disaster Designation from the US Department of Agriculture which enables impact-

ed farmers to apply for emergency low-interest loans through the federal government, direct financial assistance from the State will help fill in the gaps.

"These are hardworking families and small businesses that had already invested heavily in this year's crop, only to watch months of work disappear in a matter of hours," said Assemblyman Michael Inganmort. "We cannot undo

the freeze, but we can make sure a temporary disaster doesn't become a permanent loss for the farms and communities that depend on agriculture. This legislation is about giving New Jersey farmers a fighting chance to recover and plant again next season."

The devastating impacts from the freeze threaten an industry that generates more than \$1.5 billion in annual wholesale value and supports approximately 25,000 jobs statewide. Without prompt assistance, many otherwise viable farms could be forced to reduce operations, lay off workers, or close altogether, jeopardizing New Jersey's agricultural economy.

The legislation is modeled on a disaster relief framework employed by the State in 1999; a prolonged period of exceptionally dry weather brought severe drought conditions throughout New Jersey, resulting in a substantial loss of agricultural crops.

Flood Highlights \$1.5 Million in Available School Safety Funding

More than \$1.5 million in School Safety and Mental Health Grant funding is now available for schools and educational institutions serving the 138th Legislative District, according to Rep. Ann Flood (R-Northampton).

The funding can be used for physical security enhancements, behavioral health supports or both. Local schools and educational institutions eligible to apply for the funding include:

- Bangor Area School District – \$220,790.
- Career Institute of Technology – \$70,000.
- Easton Area School District – \$470,929.
- Nazareth Area School District – \$313,095.
- Northampton Area School District – \$335,487.
- Pen Argyl Area School District – \$163,605.

The six listed recipients have a combined \$1.57 million in grant funding

available to them through the program.

"I am pleased to see this funding becoming available to schools across the 138th District," said Flood. "These grants will give our local schools additional resources to strengthen security, address behavioral health needs and create safe, supportive learning environments for students and staff. Supporting the safety and well-being of our students is an important investment in our communities."

The School Safety and Mental Health Grant Program provides funding to help schools address safety and security needs, as well as support the behavioral health and well-being of students and staff. Eligible applicants can use the grants for physical security improvements, behavioral health initiatives or a combination of both.

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Adult Fiction:

The Wild Beneath by Kelly Anderson; *The Castle in the Glen: A Novel* by Rhys Bowen; *In Farleight Field: A Novel* by Rhys Bowen; *Take What You Can* by Naima Coster; *June Baby: A Novel* by Shannon Garvey; *Monster* by S. E. Green; *Meet Me in the Garden: A Novel* by Nina LaCour; *Time to Burn* by Ellery Lloyd; *Adversary to the Villain* by Hannah Nicole Maehrer; *Three Reasons for Revenge* by Dervla McTierman; *The Secret Life of Sunflowers* by Marta Molnar; *Raising the Titanic* by Marta Molnar; *Time Travel for Beginners* by Jaclyn Moriarty; *Under the Falls: A Novel* by Richard Russo; *The Secrets We Hide: A Novel* by Karin Slaughter; *The Seekers of Deer Creek: A Novel* by Thao Thai; *Crown Me Dead* by Liv Zander

Adult Non Fiction:

Erie Canal; *Along the Delaware River* by Richard C. Albert; *Korea: A New History of South and North* by Victor D. Cha; *River Towns of the Delaware Water Gap* by Don Dorflinger; *Biological War: A Scenario* by Annie Jacobsen; *Scar Tissue* by Anthony Kiedis; *Tommy Land* by Tommy Lee; *Make Something Good Today: A Memoir* by Erin Napier; *The Renoir Girls: A Hidden History of Art, War, & Betrayal* by Catherine Ostler; *Sun & Moon Signs* by Julia Parker; *Hotel Exile: Paris in the Shadow of War* by Jane Rogoyska; *The Housewives Underground: The Untold Story of the Women who Made the JFK Assassination Our Most Enduring Mystery* by Kaitlyn Tiffany

Large Print Adult Fiction:
Meet Me in Paris by Kristin Harmel

Easy Fiction:

Baby Diplodocus Finds Shapes; *Bluey's Heelerween*; *Thank You for this Day* by Sheleana Aiyana

Junior Fiction:

The Lion of Lark-Hayes Manor by Aubrey Hartman

Young Adult Fiction:

Wings of Reverie by Anna Bright; *Bitten* by Jordan Gray; *Arcana: The Cursed Fate* by Sam Prentice-Jones; *The Dream Thieves: The Graphic Novel* by Sas Milledge

DVDs:

Doubt; *In the Grey*; *Michael*; *Pressure*

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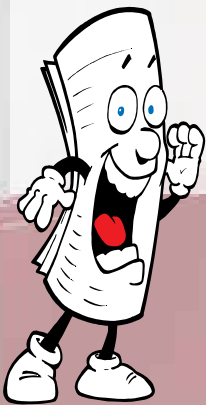
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BABY

Continued from page 1

Project Self-Sufficiency. “In addition to free items for baby and family, the Family Connects NJ Baby Beginnings Fairs allow pregnant women and new parents to engage with area experts and meet others in similar circumstances.”

Project Self-Sufficiency will be joined by representatives from the SNAP-Ed, the Sussex County Library, and Zufall Health.

To register for the Family Connects NJ Baby Beginnings Fair, to discuss your early childhood parenting needs, or to find out more about other programs and services available at Project Self-Sufficiency, call 973-940-3500.

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 or call 973-940-3500.

Family Connects NJ is New Jersey’s universal newborn home visiting program, offering every family with a newborn a free home visit from a specially trained, registered nurse during the critical first weeks after birth. The program is designed to strengthen families from the very beginning by providing trusted guidance during the early postpartum period — a time when many parents face new challenges, health concerns, uncertainty, and stress.

During the visit, Family Connects NJ nurses:

- Identify maternal and infant health concerns early, before complications develop.
- Answer questions from families.
- Connect families to community services such as lactation support, mental health care, pediatric services, and parenting resources.

Make postpartum support for families accessible and routine. For more information, visit www.familyconnectsnj.org.

Kean Hosts Eagle Scout and Girl Scout Gold Award Event

Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. (NJ-07) held his third Eagle Scout and Girl Scout Gold Award Event. Scouts from New Jersey’s 7th Congressional District who achieved the rank of Eagle Scout or completed their Girl Scout Gold Award in 2025 and 2026 were invited to attend. Family, Scoutmasters and other adult scout leaders from across the district were also welcome to join the celebration with their Scouts.

Eagle Scout is the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouts of America organization. To become an Eagle Scout, one must earn a total of 21 merit badges and demonstrate scout spirit, service, and leadership. This includes an extensive service project that scouts plan, organize, lead, and manage.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest and most prestigious achievement in Girl Scouting, requiring Seniors and Ambassadors in grades 9–12 to complete a rigorous, sustainable community service project of at least 80 hours. They must identify a community issue, research its root cause, build a team of volunteers and community experts, and create a sustainable, long-lasting solution.

“Very few receive the



rank of Eagle Scout or earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, and those who do deserve to be recognized for this achievement,” said Congressman Kean. “Through their generosity and creativity, they are laying the groundwork for lives that will be directed by the values of volunteering, leadership and civic duty, which will impact the world around them in distinct and impactful ways.”

“As an Eagle Scout myself, I was pleased to participate in Congressman Kean’s Scout recognition ceremony, where I had the opportunity to say a few words and introduce him,” said Eagle Scout Christopher Forzani. “Because of this, it was an honor to learn about the Eagle Projects

gressman Kean has been a consistent and genuine supporter of Scouting in our district. His commitment to recognizing the hard work, leadership, and service of our Scouts strengthens these programs and the young people who benefit from them. We’re fortunate to have a representative who understands the value of Scouting and actively invests in its success.”

“Being an Eagle Scout takes years of commitment, leadership, and hard work. It is a challenge that most kids, even Scouts, do not achieve,” said Eagle Scout Christopher Forzani. “Because of this, it was an honor to learn about the Eagle Projects

of other local Scouts and to meet Congressman Tom Kean, who gifted each Scout a flag that had been flown over the Capitol.”

“I appreciate Congressman Kean and his staff hosting this event to recognize those who have earned the highest awards in Scouting,” said Girl Scout Gold Award recipient Faith Feldman. “It was really cool to receive a flag that has been flown at the US Capitol.”

The event honored 20 Eagle and Girl Scouts who represented all six counties in New Jersey’s 7th Congressional District. More than 55 people attended this event, including parents, grandparents, siblings, and adult scout leaders.

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80th Annual Blue Valley Farm Show

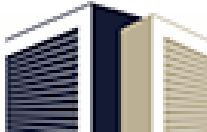


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80th Annual Blue Valley Farm Show Continued



Congratulations to The Winners of The Blue Valley Farm Show's Annual Pet Photo Contest. Pictured L-R: 1st Place - Tucker, Owner: Olivia Peters; 2nd Place - Jack, Owners: Stan and Judy Garrison; 3rd Place - Oakley, Owner: Kristina Ford; and 4th Place - Poppy, Owner: Sharon Labar. Photos courtesy Blue Valley Farm Show Facebook



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New to the Blue Mountain Community Library

216 S. Robinson Ave. in Pen Argyl. Hours: Monday-Saturday, 10am-12pm and Monday and Thursday 6-8pm. Questions? Call 610-863-3029 or email info@bmcl.org.

A message from our fish Bubbles: Look for my photo at the Blue Valley Farm Show! And please vote for me! Pet photos will be on display for voting Aug. 11-15 at the fair. Voting ends Saturday evening, the last day of the fair, at 7pm. The pet that receives the most votes will be the winner!

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

It's not too late to participate in the BMCL Summer Fun with Reading Program (SFRP) 2026: Words and Wonders! ALL AGES are invited to stop in for reading challenges with exciting prizes, a readers' raffle, and programs!

Children ages 4-9 are invited to the next special outdoor program on Wed., Aug. 5 at 10:30am at Wind Gap Park at 334 S. Lehigh Ave. Meet Slate Belt Regional Police Officer Lowe and his police K9 Zorro! And on Wed., Aug. 19 at 10:30am at Wind Gap Park, learn all about goats and parasites! Children ages 3-6 are also invited to "Two Stories and Craft" story-time on Thurs., Aug. 13 at 10am at the library. Call 610-863-3029 or email info@bmcl.org with program date/s, child's name and birthdate, parent/guardian's name, and phone number to register. See www.bmcl.org/services for additional program listings.

Children ages 3-6 are also invited to "Books and Bedtime" storytimes on Thurs., Aug. 27 at 7pm. No registration is required. Children are encouraged to wear their coziest pajamas and bring a stuffed animal. The adult book discussion group next meets on Tues., Aug. 11 at 6:30pm to discuss The Correspondent by Virginia Evans. Email info@bmcl.org to RSVP.

New to the circulating collection:

Adult fiction: The Final Target (Nora Roberts); Private Rome (James Patterson); An Infinite Love Story (Chanel Cleeton); The Secret Book Society (Madeline Martin); Choke Point (Brad Thor); Daughters of the Sun and Moon (Lisa See); Our Perfect Storm (Carley Fortune); When You Loved Me (Beatriz Williams); The Girls Before (Kate Alice Marshall); The Girls Trip (Ally Condie); Lost Lambs (Madeline Cash); Jill Is Not Happy (Kaira Rouda); A Killing Cold (Kate Alice Marshall); The Names (Florence Knapp); The Missing Half (Ashley Flowers); Next to Heaven (James Frey); Forget Me Not (Stacy Willingham); Most Eligible (Isabelle Engel); The End of Everything (M. John Harrison); The Favorites (Layne Fargo); Horror Movie (Paul Tremblay); The Paradise Problem (Christina Lauren); Starling House (Alix E. Harrow); The Last Word (Taylor Adams); The Top of the World (Ethan Joella); Ransom (Daniel Silva)

Adult nonfiction: Communion (J.D. Vance); The Solo Honeymoon (Laura Murphy); Fifty States, Five Thousand Ideas (Joe Yogerst)

Large print fiction: All the Colors of the Dark (Chris Whitaker); Sisters and Friends in Lavender Bay (Michele Brouder); The Author's Guide to Murder (Beatriz Williams, Lauren Willig, Karen White); The Maid's Secret (Nita Prose); The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo (Taylor Jenkins Reid)

Juvenile fiction: Pen Pals (Edgar Hyde); The Golden Goblet (Edgar Hyde); Narwhal: Unicorn of the Sea (Ben Clanton); Super Narwhal and Jelly Jolt (Ben Clanton); The Furball Strikes Back (Aaron Blabey); Attack of the Zittens (Aaron Blabey); InvestiGATORS Ants in Our P.A.N.T.S. (John Patrick Green); InvestiGATORS Braver and Boulder (John Patrick Green); Arthur, Clean Your Room (Marc Brown); I'm a Frog! (Mo Willems); Bedtime Favorites (Disney); The Fox Went Out on a Chilly Night (Peter Spier); The Adventures of the Baby Moos (Lena Schultz); Science Verse (Jon Scieszka)

Juvenile nonfiction: The Slug (Elise Gravel)

Boscola Announces \$1,565,885 in State Funding for Two Multimodal Transportation Projects

State Senator Lisa Boscola today announced state funding totaling \$1,565,885 for two transportation projects in the 18th Senatorial District through PennDOT's Multimodal Transportation Fund.

"I'm pleased to announce the approval of these state funds to help expedite these critically important transportation projects in Bethlehem and Easton that will improve our local transportation infrastructure and increase public

safety for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists," Boscola said. "I will continue to seek state funding and resources for local projects seeking to make our community a better place to live and work."

PennDOT approved the following projects for funding in the 18th Senatorial District:

- City of Bethlehem - \$1,000,000 – Broad Street Activation Project
- City of Easton - \$565,885 – 611 Sidewalk Project

The City of Bethlehem's Broad Street Activation Project will implement safety and multimodal improvements along Bethlehem's Broad Street corridor, advancing Vision Zero goals by reducing crashes, calming traffic, and improving safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers.

The City of Easton's 611 Sidewalk Project will implement pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection of S. 3rd Street and S. Delaware Drive (PA611) as well as the crosswalk along Route 611, leading to Delaware Canal Park and the trailhead to the D&L Trail.

Statewide, 50 highway, bridge, aviation, port, bike, and pedestrian projects in 27 counties were awarded a total of \$54 million in funding through the Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF).

Created by Act 89 of 2013, the Multimodal Transportation Fund provides grants to ensure a safe and reliable transportation system is available to the residents of the Commonwealth. The 2027-28 round of PennDOT's Multimodal Transportation Fund opens on September 14, 2026, at 8:00 AM. Applications are due by 4:00 PM on October 30, 2026 with grant awards expected to be announced in the summer of 2027.

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Gaydos, Mihalek, Shaffer and Policy Committee Highlight Need for Accountability in Second-Degree Murder Sentencing

Pennsylvania's lack of a clear sentencing framework for second-degree murder could produce inconsistent sentences, overwhelm courts and force victims' families to repeatedly relive the murders of their loved ones, prosecutors testified Thursday during a House Republican Policy Committee hearing.

The hearing, "Protecting Pennsylvania: Accountability and Justice in Second-Degree Murder Sentencing," was hosted by Reps. Valerie Gaydos (R-Moon Township), Natalie Mihalek (R-Allegheny) and Jeremy Shaffer (R-Allegheny) at the Moon Township Municipal Building.

In March, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that automatically imposing life without parole in every second-degree murder case, without considering an offender's individual role and level of responsibility, violates the Pennsylvania Constitution. The court gave the General Assembly 120 days to establish a new sentencing framework, but the deadline passed without a final measure reaching the governor's desk.

"No court ruling or legislative action can undo the loss these families have endured, but we can ensure their voices are heard and respected as Pennsylvania determines its path forward," said House Republican Policy Committee Chairman David H. Rowe (R-Snyder/Union/Mifflin/Juniata). "Victims' families deserve more than un-

certainty. They deserve meaningful participation in the process and confidence that the justice system will never forget the life that was taken."

Rowe opened the hearing by reading letters submitted by Stella Getgen and Christine Hickman, the wife and sister of murder victim Todd Getgen. Both described the loss their family has endured since his 2010 murder and the renewed trauma caused by the possibility that his killer's sentence could be reconsidered.

Todd Getgen's son was 6 years old when his father was murdered and has grown up without him. In her letter, Stella Getgen described having to explain to her young son why his father would never return, while assuring him that the man responsible would remain in prison. Hickman wrote that while her brother's killer received life, Todd "didn't get life; he got death."

"Pennsylvania must get second-degree murder sentencing right—for victims, families and public safety," said Gaydos. "Law enforcement has made clear how serious this issue is, yet without a consistent sentencing framework, our judicial system is in chaos and public safety is in jeopardy. Pennsylvanians should be outraged that House Philadelphia Democrats chose politics over public safety. It's time to restore the rule of law, hold violent offenders accountable and demand that House Democrats take up this

legislation immediately."

Testimony was provided by Ronald M. Wabby Jr., deputy district attorney for the Critical Case Review Unit, Appellate Division, Allegheny County District Attorney's Office; Westmoreland County District Attorney Nicole Zicarelli; and Indiana County District Attorney Robert Manzi.

Wabby said Allegheny County has more than 160 individuals convicted of second-degree murder in cases dating to the 1970s. Drawing on his experience with juvenile-lifer resentencings, he warned that without a statewide framework, inconsistent sentences and years of additional appeals could force victims' families to repeatedly revisit murders committed decades earlier.

"There is no finality that I can give a victim," Wabby testified. "When a victim is forced to relive events decades later, I can't explain to you the pain I saw in these people's eyes."

Mihalek, a former Allegheny County prosecutor, criticized House leaders for allowing partisan politics to derail a bipartisan sentencing solution, stressing that accountability for violent offenders is fundamental to public safety.

"In a day and age when

the average Pennsylvania resident is done with partisan nonsense, House leaders played a dangerous game by waiting until the final hours of the court's deadline to amend a commonsense bill first passed by the Senate," Mihalek said. "Holding accountable violent criminals, convicted of some of the most atrocious crimes possible against their fellow man, is not a political game—it's a cornerstone of public safety. I'm happy to discuss prison reforms for nonviolent offenders and offering hands up to help them change their lives, but I am completely opposed to simply unlocking the cell doors for Pennsylvania's most violent criminals."

Zicarelli testified that approximately 1,100 people currently serving second-degree murder sentences could seek resentencing or possible release. She said the resulting proceedings would impose significant costs on taxpayers, strain courts and prosecutors, and jeopardize public safety.

She recommended preserving victims' statutory rights to participate in parole proceedings, protecting the finality of plea agreements and establishing a mandatory minimum sentence while retaining life without parole for the

most serious cases.

Zicarelli also discussed a pending Westmoreland County case involving the murder of Anthony Williams, a 31-year-old father of five. His family waited five years for a jury verdict but continues to await a final sentence because no legislative framework is in place.

Manzi rejected portrayals of second-degree murder defendants as innocent bystanders. He explained that a conviction requires participation as a principal or accomplice in an underlying felony such as robbery, rape, arson, burglary or kidnapping, during which a death occurs. He then detailed several Indiana County cases involving shootings, beatings and other brutal murders.

Shaffer said testimony from law enforcement underscored the seriousness of the issue and the need for a statewide solution that protects victims' families and ensures uniform justice. "I've expressed my disappointment regarding the situation surrounding second-degree murder sentencing. It was good to hear from law enforcement officials about the seriousness of this issue. We need to move forward with a solution to protect victims' families and have uniform justice across the state,"

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Letter To The Editor: Summary of August 10, 2026, Knowlton Township Meeting

Public Comment & Removal of Committeeperson

During the public comment portion of the meeting, a Knowlton resident asked about the rules governing Committee members' attendance, noting that one member had attended few meetings this year. She expressed her dissatisfaction with Knowlton's congressional representative Tom Kean for missing several months of votes in Congress and said she saw a similar situation occurring at the Township Committee level. She noted that a fifth committeeperson is needed to break tie votes and said she likes to see a diversity of opinions represented on the Committee. Mayor Shipps responded that the Committee was aware of the attendance issue and would be seeking advice from the Township attorney later in the evening.

Following an executive session at the conclusion of the meeting, the Committee returned to public session and

unanimously passed a resolution vacating the seat of Committeeperson Ryan Lembeck due to absenteeism. The resolution stated that six meetings had been missed this year, including four consecutive meetings between May and August, and that the duties of the position had not been fulfilled. It further noted that Committee members receive an annual stipend of approximately \$3,700 and that the Committee wished to be fiscally responsible. The resolution will be forwarded to the Knowlton Republican Committee for next steps, which will include submitting recommendations for a Republican replacement. (Editorial note: The Township Committee may need to hold a special meeting to review and select a replacement in order to meet the statutorily defined timeline.)

Updates:

During the portion of the meeting when Township staff and members of the Committee give department

and subcommittee reports, it was noted that:

- The County has completed its work on the bridge on Lime Kiln Road;
- The paving of Auble Road is complete. Striping will happen in the next few weeks;
- The date for Knowlton's Community Day has been moved to October 24;
- A request has been submitted, via Congressman Kean's office, for Knowlton to become a "gateway community" under the Explore Act. According to the federal legislation, a gateway community is a small town or city located directly adjacent to or near an entry point to a major federal recreation destination, such as a national park. The designation could help Knowlton increase its standing and prove useful in efforts to fight the NJDOT's rockwall through the Delaware Water Gap; and
- The Committee approved submission of an application for a survey of gypsy moth egg masses in Knowlton. If

the NJ Department of Agriculture finds high concentrations, the area will be aerially sprayed with *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a bacterium that kills gypsy moth larvae.

Website Audit:

The clerk shared the results of a recent municipal server and technology audit that turned up some vulnerabilities in Knowlton's systems. These included a firewall that has minimal security features and is not located on-site; a very old server that holds critical user data related to finances, accounting, resident tax records, and pets; and the lack of a backup system that is in the cloud or can be monitored remotely. In addition, it was recommended that the email system, which is also very old, be upgraded so that it can deploy two-factor authentication.

Since this topic was first introduced at the last meeting, Committeewoman Starrs ran the proposed changes past tech professionals she knows. She shared that while they could

not make definitive recommendations or speak to the pricing, the tech experts did reiterate the need to shore up firewalls, especially in light of cyberattacks that have targeted public water and wastewater systems in states across the country, including in New Jersey.

The Committee discussed the high cost of correcting the vulnerabilities in the system and whittled down the proposal for email coverage, eliminating as many extra addresses as possible. In the end, the Committee approved moving forward with shoring up security for the municipal software and online systems at a cost of approximately \$26,000. This does not include replacing the municipal computers, which are all more than six years old.

Brugler Trail and Historic Assets:

The Committee discussed the ongoing work to clear a trail in the "Brugler Preserve," an area adjacent to Tunnel Field. Deputy Mayor Baley noted that the

area must remain closed to the public until dead ash trees are removed. A local tree service has offered to remove the trees at no cost, and the Township attorney will prepare a resolution for the next meeting to allow that work to move forward. Discussion then focused on whether some additional areas of historic interest in the vicinity, which were not part of the Committee's original discussion about the trail, should be preserved. The chair of the Historic Commission, who was present at the meeting, noted that the dead ash trees could safely be removed and that the Commission would review the larger issue and have recommendations for the Committee soon.

—Adele Starrs, Rene Mathez

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



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Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary?



Mary E. Stone
Stone Associates
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Hello fellow readers,
Mile-a-minute weed and Japanese stilt grass have decided to cohabit in parts of my woodland, creating a knotted-up carpet of mini bamboo-like stilt grass roped around a triangular-leaved invader with one of the most perfectly descriptive common names there is—mile-a-minute weed.
Its botanical name is *Persicaria perfoliata*, and it can grow as much as six inches a day and twenty-five feet in a season. It hangs like thick drapery over trees and shrubs, shading the plants beneath it and hindering their photosynthesis.
The almost perfectly triangular leaves make mile-a-minute weed easy to identify. Its flowers are insignificant,

but then come green berries that ripen to a reflective blue. Birds and other critters eat the berries and help spread the seeds far and wide. So I've been determined to keep mile-a-minute in check. Thankfully, it's pretty easy to pull, although I wear gloves because it is prickly and sticky.
The other morning, before heading out for a client meeting, I pulled a bunch and piled it in the driveway to cook the heck out of it, so the roots wouldn't remain viable and re-root themselves in the brush pile.
Speaking of weeding, a favorable outcome of the recent heavy rains involves my pond. Until recently, it was covered in duckweed—that fascinating plant we spoke about in *The Tiny Wonder of Duckweed*, archived on AskMaryStone.com. It's amongst the smallest flowering plants in the world, and while it reproduces quickly, it's beneficial. But I admit I missed seeing some clear water.
I've described before how my pond helps control mountain runoff. There's a cement dam at the end—gratefully, now largely covered with moss—and an overflow trough that dumps the water toward the John-



sonburg Creek.
During the recent storms, the rushing water took the duckweed away. Mother Nature did the skimming for me. The frogs are more visible now, and I adore how the trees reflect on the surface like a mirror.
Back to my other weeding mission: Japanese stilt grass, *Microstegium vimineum*, has become increasingly prevalent in my woods. Another common name for it, oddly enough, is Mary Grass. I have no idea why—but I take no ownership.
Maybe it's just me, but the stilt grass seems taller this year—about knee-high in places. It is kind of a pretty, soft grass if you didn't know how aggressive it is—squelching out desirable native plants.
There's an old rock wall that's begun to disintegrate, and I've been slowly restoring it myself, repositioning some of the stones. So after tackling the mile-a-minute, I started weeding the stilt grass to reveal the ferns and sedges that have naturalized there.
When pulling stilt grass, I always wear long sleeves and garden gloves. I've heard from people who have developed terrible rashes after working around it.
As I knelt clearing around the old wall,



I thought about other parts of the garden I hadn't gotten to. You know what? We do the best we can. And we start by weeding out the undesirable things that bother us most.
There will always be another weed to pull. Another stone to put back into place. Another part of the garden that needs tending. And another part of our lives that does, too.
Last week we talked about letting go of what we cannot control—allowing ourselves to be like a leaf floating with the current rather than fighting against it.
Maybe this week's lesson is the companion to that. While we let go of what we cannot control, we can tend what we can. We don't have to clear the whole woods, put every stone back in place, or weed the whole garden. Clearing a little space around an old stone wall so the ferns can show themselves again is enough.
We aren't meant to tend everything at once. We tend what we can, when we can, and trust that the rest will wait until we get there.
Garden Dilemmas? AskMaryStone.com or tune in on your favorite Podcast App.

On Sunday, August 30th, the E. Bangor UMC Church welcomes the community to join in celebrating "Rally Day" at the Blaine Reimel Memorial Park in East Bangor. Open-air worship will begin at 9:30 a.m. (bring a lawn chair or blanket). This will be followed by a potluck luncheon under the park pavilion. There will also be olde-tyme games for kids (and adults, who are young at heart!). Please join us as we usher in the fall season and the start of a new school year. (610-588-4453 or www.ebumc.org)



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Applications Being Accepted for Warren County Community College Trustee Board

The Warren County Community College Trustee Search Committee is seeking persons interested in serving as Trustees of the Warren County Community College.

Applicants shall have been residents of Warren County for at least four years, and cannot currently hold any elected public office or be employed by Warren County or Warren County Community College.

College trustees must be available approximately 20 hours per month. Trustee duties include: fiscal and operational oversight of the institution; setting policies and procedures to be implemented by the college administration; evaluation of the college president and appointment of other staff; determination of the educational curriculum and programs consistent with the institution's mission; development and approval of master planning concepts; and preparation of reports to New Jersey Higher Education, the Warren County Board of County Commissioners and the community in general.

Interested applicants are required to submit resumes, a letter outlining their interest and ability to fulfill the role of WCCC trustee, and any other pertinent material by Friday, August 28, 2026. Please send applications to Chairperson, Warren County Community College Trustee Search Committee, c/o Board of County Commissioners Office, 165 County Route 519 South, Belvidere, NJ 07823.

PFBC, DCNR Announce Collaborative Strategy for Statewide Public Fishing and Boating Access

On Thursday, August 13, 2026, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) announced a new, collaborative statewide public fishing and boating access strategy.

The strategy provides a clear blueprint for state agencies and their partner organizations to follow as they develop, plan, and enhance public access opportunities in their communities. Partners including heritage areas, watershed organizations, 501(c)3 nonprofit groups, local governments, and water trail managers, can use the tools available through this strategy by visiting the Pennsylvania Fishing and Boating Access Strategy page on the PFBC website (Fishandboat.com).

"Pennsylvania is rich with more than 85,000 miles of rivers and streams and 4,000 lakes that provide recreational fishing and boating opportunities, and this strategy will help make more of our natural resources accessible to everyone," said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn. "Communities



across the Commonwealth are recognizing the benefits, socially and economically, when they provide high quality public access areas to attract more anglers and boaters."

Fishing and boating are extremely popular recreational activities in Pennsylvania, and an increasingly diverse population is looking for nearby access to our waterways. As an example, polls conducted by DCNR for the 2025-2029 PA Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan indicate record levels of interest in kayaking and canoeing. Still, many residents and visitors encounter barriers, from physical and financial challenges to social and psychological obstacles, that may prevent them from using and benefiting from existing access areas.

"This strategy recognizes those obstacles and offers solutions for overcoming them," said Mark Sweppenhiser, Director of the PFBC's Bureau of Boating. "By optimizing placement for new public fishing and boating projects, prioritizing areas with limited access, building local support for access projects, and focusing on existing Water Trails, we can work alongside our partners to maximize the useability of our waterways to meet the interests of their communities."

Public fishing and boating access projects that may benefit from this strategy include the construction of boat launches, trails for walk-in fishing access along waterways, the implementation of ADA accessible features such as parking areas and walking paths, and adaptive amenities including launching docks.

Both the PFBC and DCNR offer programs compatible with this strategy to assist communities in the development of new or enhanced public fishing access areas.

For more information on the PFBC's Boating Facility Grant Program, visit the PFBC website. More information on DCNR's Community Conservation Partnerships Program visit the DCNR website.

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Boscola Announces \$150,607 in Agricultural Innovation Grants for 2 Northampton County Projects



Senator Lisa Boscola announced today that Agricultural Innovation Grants totaling \$150,607 have been awarded to two projects in Northampton County. “The Commonwealth’s Agricultural Innovation Grant Program provides important funding to projects that assist Pennsylvania agricultural businesses enhance efficiency and production, while also protecting soil and water resources as these two Northampton County projects demonstrate,” Senator Boscola stated.

The following were awarded grants:
- Pennsylvania Saffron – \$116,807 (regional impact): Development of an AI-enabled weeding system for small farms
- Kenneth Barleib – \$33,800: Farm water-use efficiency system
The two grants were announced as part of the second round through the first in the nation’s Agricultural Innovation Grant Program. Across the Commonwealth, the second round of grants will see \$9.7 million investment supporting 97 projects and lever-

aging an additional \$4.8 million in private investment. The first two rounds funded 185 projects at a total investment of \$30 million. Pennsylvania’s Agricultural Innovation Grant Program helps farmers and other agriculture businesses implement new agricultural technologies, conservation, and renewable energy innovations — expanding their potential to generate profits, enrich soil and water resources, and produce energy on the farm.



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The American Red Cross Declares National Blood Emergency

(NAPSI)—The American Red Cross has declared a national blood emergency and is urging all eligible individuals to give blood to help ensure patients receive the transfusions and care they need.

The emergency comes after the nation's blood supply fell by nearly 25% during June due to a concerning drop in blood donations.

Summer Challenges to Maintaining the Blood Supply

This decline in the blood supply and in donation appointments comes at a time when maintaining a stable blood inventory is especially difficult. During the summer months, schools and colleges are on break, resulting in fewer blood drives that typically help support the blood supply.

At the same time, more people are traveling and spending time outdoors, increasing the likelihood of accidents and

traumatic injuries. According to AAA, fatal crashes involving teen drivers increase by 30% during the so-called "100 Deadliest Days," which run from Memorial Day through Labor Day. This trend disproportionately affects communities such as the Latino community, which has a larger youth population.

A trauma patient can require as many as 100 units of blood, and it is the blood already on

hospital shelves and ready for use that can make all the difference in a life-threatening situation.

The Need for Blood Never Stops

Unlike other medical treatments, blood cannot be manufactured or stockpiled indefinitely. It must be continually replenished because it remains available for transfusion for only a limited period of time—just a few weeks for red blood cells and only a few days for platelets.

A well-maintained blood supply is essential for treating and saving the lives of people facing emergencies, mothers experiencing severe bleeding during childbirth, and patients with cancer who depend on transfusions as part of their treatment.

This blood shortage is especially critical



for patients who need B-negative and O-positive blood. "This is where the Latino community can make a life-saving difference," said Dr. Maribel Garcia, regional medical director for the American Red Cross. "Nearly 60% of Latinos have Type O blood, one of the most needed blood types and one that is frequently used in emergencies."

The Red Cross is grateful to Latino blood donors, whose participation increased by 7%

last year, and encourages them to continue supporting the blood supply and helping patients across all communities through their blood donations.

Make an Appointment Today

The most important way to help during this blood emergency is to make an appointment to give blood today by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).



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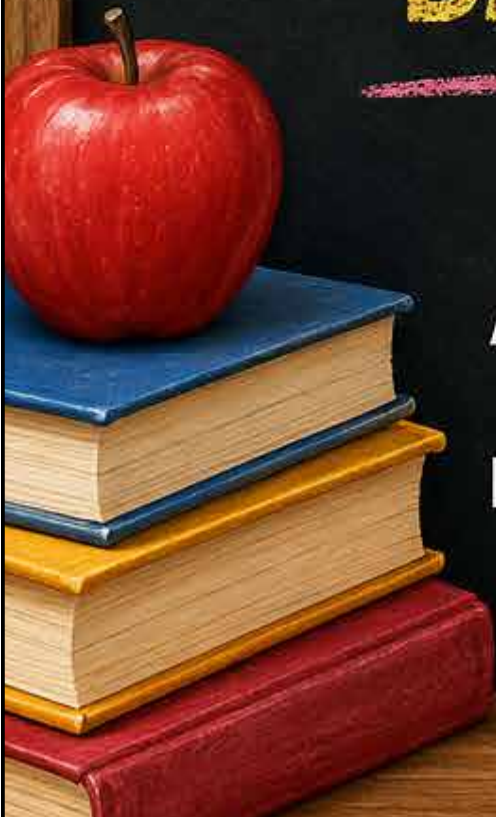
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