



The Anthracite Post

Highlighting Neighborhood News & Events

Volume 3, Edition 1, January 2026



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Argall Applauds Penn State Hazleton Practical Nursing Graduates, Highlights Critical Role in Workforce Development



HAZLETON — Sen. Dave Argall (R-29) today applauded the 17 graduates of Penn State Hazleton's Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program as a powerful example of why preserving the Hazleton campus is so important for the region's future.

"These graduates represent exactly why we fought so hard to save Penn State Hazleton," Argall said. "This campus is a workforce engine that is helping to meet critical health care needs across northeastern Pennsylvania."

The 18-month practical nursing program continues to grow, with strong enrollment numbers demonstrating sustained demand. The current cohort of 27 students began their studies in August 2025, and 40 students are enrolled to start

the program in August 2026.

The December 2025 graduating class reflects the diversity and evolving nature of today's health care workforce. Many of the graduates and currently enrolled students are bilingual, a vital asset in serving patients across the region. Classes are composed of a mix of adult learners returning to school, mid-career professionals seeking new opportunities and students who are new to the health care field.

"Our practical nursing program is dedicated to advancing the health and well-being of individuals and communities by educating, empowering and inspiring adult learners to become skilled, compassionate entry-level health care professionals," said Dr. Heather Assise,

coordinator of Penn State Hazleton's practical nursing program. "Through a student-centered, evidence-based curriculum, we emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration, hands-on learning and service to others. At Penn State Hazleton, we take pride in preparing our graduates not only with the clinical competencies they need but also with the values and experiences that allow them to give back to their communities."

"As a land-grant institution, Penn State is committed to expanding access to education and serving community needs," said Regional Chancellor Durell Johnson, who oversees the Hazleton, Scranton and Wilkes-Barre campuses. "Our practical nursing program does exactly that — preparing students for in-demand health care careers while strengthening the health and well-being of northeastern Pennsylvania."

Argall has been a leading advocate for preserving Penn State Hazleton and Penn State Schuylkill, emphasizing their role in workforce development, affordability and access to higher education close to home.

"At a time when Pennsylvania faces serious shortages in nursing and other health care professions, students like this are essential," Argall added. "Penn State Hazleton is doing exactly what we hoped it would — preparing skilled, compassionate professionals who will strengthen our communities and our health care system."

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To submit an article/event/ad/photo to "The Anthracite Post" please contact theanthracitepost@gmail.com

Lee Ann Davidovich
Editor/Sales
(570) 582-0981
theanthracitepost@gmail.com

Shari Roberts
Editor/Graphic Artist
(570) 401-1798
shari@anthracitepost.com

Senator David Argall
Contributing Writer
Community Information

Frank Balon
Contributing Writer
Various Articles

Joseph R. Barna
Contributing Writer
Veterans Journal

Jeff and Desiree Bonomo
Contributing Writers
Wine Hops & Road Stops

William M. Dempsey
Contributing Writer
Escape to the Outdoors

Lisa Makara
Contributing Writer
Various Articles

Ron Marchetti
Contributing Writer
Sports Trivia Treats

Bobby Maso
Contributing Writer
Freeland 150th Anniversary Comm.

Trooper Anthony Petroski III
Contributing Writer
Community Information

Walt Shubilla
Contributing Writer
Various Articles

Rev. Phil Smith
Contributing Writer
Various Articles

Jamie Walsh, State Representative
Contributing Writer
Community Information

Dane Watro, State Representative
Contributing Writer
Community Information

The Anthracite Post

Highlighting Neighborhood News & Events

Letter from the Editors

Hello everyone! HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all! Let's hope 2026 is a good one. Every year my Mom (Kathy) makes Pork and Sauerkraut with mashed potatoes for New Year's Day. It's one of my favorite meals. She even made homemade dumplings to go with it this year. It was so good!

January seems like such a long month. Between the early darkness and the cold weather, I am all for hibernating in the house with a good book and a hot cup of Earl Grey tea or some hot chocolate. You go to work in the dark and come home close to dark. I don't know people in Alaska deal with it for part of the year. When it's dark so early, I just want to get under a blanket and stay there.

I don't know about you, but I am thinking that Mother Nature better give us an early Spring in March. It has been one cold, snowy December. As I write this, the weather is on tv and they are showing 40° this week and 50° on Friday, with rain. It is going to feel like a heat wave. We need a break and my car sure could use a washing to get rid of the salt on it.

As always, if you have any ideas, stories, recipes, photos, etc., that you would like to submit for **The Anthracite Post**, send us an email, text or give us a call.

Lee Ann & Shari

WRITTEN BY SHARI

538 CENTRE STREET • FREELAND, PA 18224
Lee Ann ~ 570-582-0981 • TheAnthracitePost@gmail.com
Shari ~ (570) 401-1798 • shari@anthracitepost.com



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JANUARY 2026

BIZARRE & UNIQUE HOLIDAYS

- 1 National Hangover Day
- 2 New Year's Day
- 3 World Introvert Day
- 4 Festival of Sleep Day
- 5 Fruitcake Toss Day
- 6 National Spaghetti Day
- 7 Trivia Day
- 8 National Bird Day
- 9 National Whipped Cream Day
- 10 Cuddle Up Day
- 11 Feast of the Epiphany
- 12 Old Rock Day
- 13 Bubble Bath Day
- 14 Male Watcher's Day
- 15 National Apricot Day
- 16 Play God Day
- 17 Bittersweet Chocolate Day
- 18 Houseplant Appreciation Day
- 19 National Whipped Cream Day
- 20 Step in a Puddle and Splash Your Friend's Day
- 21 National Hot Tea Day
- 22 National Pharmacist Day
- 23 International Skeptics Day
- 24 National Rubber Duckie Day
- 25 National Bagel Day
- 26 National Hat Day
- 27 Dress Up Your Pet Day
- 28 National Take the Stairs Day
- 29 National Bagel Day
- 30 National Hat Day
- 31 National Nothing Day
- 32 Ditch New Years Resolutions Day
- 33 Thesaurus Day
- 34 Winnie the Pooh Day
- 35 Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
- 36 National Popcorn Day
- 37 National Cheese Lover Day
- 38 Penguin Awareness Day
- 39 National Hugging Day
- 40 Squirrel Appreciation Day
- 41 National Blonde Brownie Day
- 42 National Polka Dot Day
- 43 National Pie Day
- 44 Beer Can Appreciation Day
- 45 Compliment Day
- 46 Opposite Day
- 47 Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day
- 48 Spouse's Day
- 49 Chocolate Cake Day
- 50 Fun at Work Day
- 51 National Puzzle Day
- 52 Red Carnation Day
- 53 Croissant Day
- 54 National Hot Chocolate Day

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Pennsylvania State Police Troop N Camp Cadet 2026

The enrollment period for the **2026 Troop N Camp Cadet** program is now open and applications are being accepted through April 1, 2026. Anyone interested in attending camp can obtain an application at any of the following Troop N State Police Stations: Hazleton, Bloomsburg, Lehighton, Fern Ridge and Stroudsburg State Police.

The application is available for online registration at the Troop N Camp Cadet website - www.TroopNCampCadet.com.

The Troop N Camp Cadet program is open to boys and girls that are between the ages of 12 to 15 and reside in the Troop N area. This includes (lower) Luzerne, Monroe, Carbon, and Columbia Counties. The camp is held at Penn State Hazleton Campus and will run **June 21, through June 26, 2026**. This week-long camp is designed to give young people a better understanding of law enforcement activities in an atmosphere of an actual State Police training school. Once accepted, the cadet will reside at the camp for six days under the direct supervision of state and local police officers.



www.troopncampcadet.com | [f](#) [i](#)

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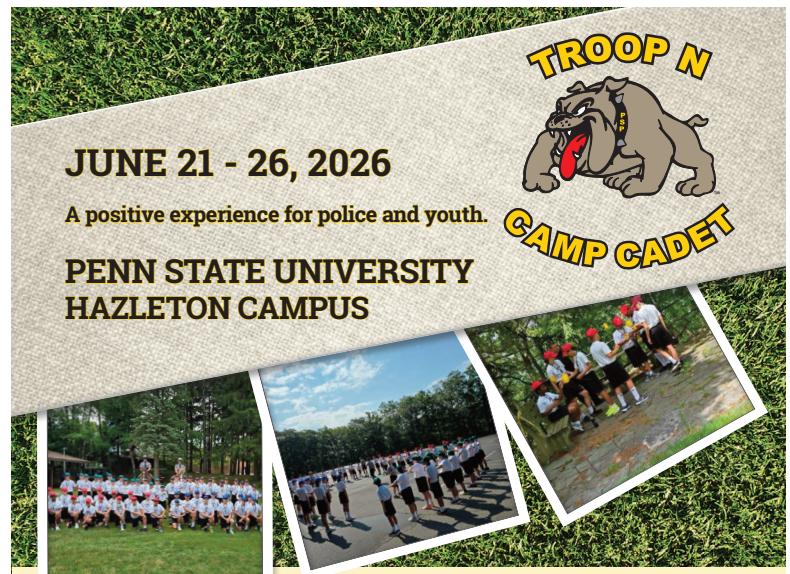
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ELIGIBILITY:

- ✓ Must be between ages 12 & 14
- ✓ Must be in good physical condition
- ✓ Must reside within **Troop N** counties:
lower Luzerne, Carbon, Columbia, Monroe

Scan to apply!



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 F L J Q E B O V P Z L W X L M O E Q O E
 R E A A H Z W C L U M G E P Z S S P R Y
 A S N E T T I M O D X Z I E I Y F U T D
 C A M U O P K I W A Q A N R P E F S H V
 S S N O W B O A R D I N G I K K U N P J
 V W R A K I E D H M S L I F Z C M O O I
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 R V V N B G T R C S W E A T E R N E X I
 Q F C H F A V U S N O W M A N B N G Q U
 B O O T S N O C X H Y R A U N A J G Y Q

WORD LIST

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 HOT COCOA
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Senator Dave Argall

29th District Pennsylvania Senate

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Schuylkill, Carbon and Luzerne counties



Discussing Growth in the Hazleton Region with Mayor Cusat & Rep. Watro

By State Sen. Dave Argall (R-Schuylkill/Carbon/Luzerne)

I recently joined Hazleton Mayor Jeff Cusat and Rep. Dane Watro (R-116) for our regular update on the continued growth and momentum throughout the greater Hazleton region. These meetings provide an important opportunity to take stock of where we are and where we're headed as a community.

We discussed the many new businesses choosing to invest in Hazleton and the surrounding area, creating jobs and strengthening our local economy. Just as importantly, we talked about how we can continue supporting and improving education at every level — from early childhood learning to higher education — including Penn State Hazleton, which we successfully worked together to preserve this past year for our students and families.

Our conversation also focused on housing needs across the region, ensuring that growth is matched with safe, affordable places for families, seniors, and workers to live. In addition, we reviewed the continued expansion of community programs that improve quality of life, including the ongoing renovations and investment at the Hazleton YMCA.

These regular meetings highlight the strong collaboration between local and state leaders that is helping Hazleton move forward. And for those of you who know Mayor Cusat, you'll understand exactly why these discussions are productive, engaging — and NEVER boring!



Lee Ann
 Davidovich

January 22nd

happy
 BIRTHDAY

Sharon
 Roberts

January 24st

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LIHEAP Can Help You Stay Warm this Winter

By State Rep. Jamie Walsh (R-Luzerne)

Residents who struggle with their home heating bills are reminded they can apply for assistance from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP is a federally funded program that helps individuals and families pay their heating bills through home heating energy assistance grants. It also provides crisis grants to help in the event of an emergency or if a resident is in danger of losing his or her heat due to broken equipment, lack of fuel or termination of utility service.

To qualify for LIHEAP in Pennsylvania, you must meet income requirements, which are set based on your household size. For example, the maximum annual income for an individual is \$23,475 and for a family of four it is \$48,225. For each additional person, add \$8,250 to the income limit.

Residents may apply for LIHEAP online at www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS, by phone at 1-866-857-7095 or by contacting the Luzerne County Assistance Office at 570-820-4882. My office is also always available to assist residence with this and other state programs.

LIHEAP runs through April 2026.



Trooper Anthony Petroski III
Public Information Officer
Community Service Officer
Pennsylvania State Police
Troop N - Hazleton



Happy New Year from all of us at Troop N. In Pennsylvania, it's the law to move over when approaching an emergency response area, which means a Police Officer who has a car pulled over or is investigating a motor vehicle crash, with their emergency lights on. If you are approaching this, you must move over to an adjacent lane, if possible, or if not, slow down 20 MPH below the posted speed limit. This law is often called the "Steer Clear Law" or the "Move Over Law". Penalties can include: - \$500 fine for first offense, \$1,000 fine for a second offense and \$2,000 for a third or subsequent offense and a 90-day license suspension for a third or subsequent offense.

- New point system that imposes 2 points for failing to merge into adjacent lane.
- \$10.00 fine if an emergency service responder is injured or killed.

Please be aware of this law and the strict penalties. Always focus on the road while you are driving to allow safe travels for everyone on the road!

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church Hoagie Sale

Sunday, January 25

Hoagie Sale will assist Mikey Blanchek with medical and rehabilitation expenses.

Mikey is 9 years old. He attends Beaver Elementary.

His parents are Denise [nee Lucas] Blanchek and Mike Blanchek [Mike's Auto Repair Services, Berwick].

To order call Deb Schell [570-889-5401]
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37 Faux Hill Road, Zion Grove, PA 17985
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- Hot Hands



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All sizes of new and gently used, clean clothes are welcome.

100



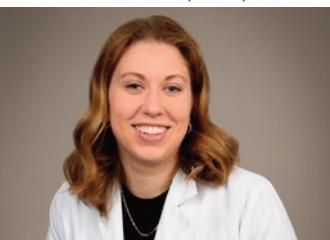
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Heating Assistance Program Now Open

By State Rep. Dane Watro (R-Luzerne/Schuylkill)

Winter is here and residents who struggle with their home heating bills are reminded they can now apply for assistance from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP is a federally funded program that helps individuals and families pay their heating bills through home heating energy assistance grants. It also provides crisis grants to help in the event of an emergency or if a resident is in danger of losing his or her heat due to broken equipment, lack of fuel or termination of utility service.

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Residents may apply for LIHEAP online at www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS, by phone at 1-866-857-7095 or through my offices.

The program runs through April 2026.

The 2026 Pennsylvania Farm Show

The 110th Pennsylvania Farm Show – the country's largest indoor agricultural exposition under one roof – will be from Jan. 10 through Jan. 17 at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg.

This year's theme is "Growing a Nation," which, with 2026 being the 250th anniversary of American independence, is a great reminder that our democracy was born in Pennsylvania and our country grew from the very soil of our Commonwealth.

The 2026 Farm Show will feature fan-favorites like the 1,000-pound butter sculpture, delicious Farm Show Food Court, thousands of competitive agricultural events, homegrown celebrity cooking demonstrations at the PA Preferred® Culinary Connection, and more than 1 million square feet of hands-on agriculture education opportunities and chances to engage with the people who are growing Pennsylvania and our nation through agriculture.

Admission to the show is free, but parking is \$15 per vehicle. Shuttle service is provided.

New Law Protects Senior Citizens' Prescription Coverage

Medications play a vital role in preserving health and improving quality of life, but they can be costly, especially for our senior citizens. That's why I was pleased to support a new law that will protect thousands of Pennsylvania seniors from losing access to affordable prescription drug coverage.

Act 49 of 2025 extends the current Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) moratorium for the PACE and PACENET programs through Dec. 31, 2027. Without this extension, more than 22,000 older Pennsylvanians would have faced disruptions in their benefits due to modest increases in Social Security income.

The PACE and PACENET programs serve over 250,000 Pennsylvanians age 65 and older.

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Investing in Families, Preserving Our Mission: **MMI Preparatory School Announces Meaningful Tuition Reset for 2026–2027**

Mrs. Theresa Long, Head of School at MMI Preparatory School, is proud to share an announcement shaped by hope, responsibility, and a renewed commitment to the School's founding ideals. Beginning in the 2026-2027 academic year, MMI will implement a meaningful tuition reset, placing tuition for grades 7–12 at \$14,350 and grade 6 tuition at \$10,000, down from \$17,150 and \$15,110, respectively. This is an investment not only in affordability, but in families, community, and the mission that has guided MMI for nearly a century and a half.

This tuition reset is more than a financial adjustment. It is a reaffirmation of who MMI is and who it has always aspired to be. For nearly 147 years, MMI Preparatory School has stood as a beacon of possibility, proving that when education is intentionally accessible, it can reshape futures and elevate entire communities.

In 1879, founders Eckley B. and Sophia G. Coxe envisioned a School that would open doors for the hardworking families of the coal region — a School built on the belief that education should empower, uplift, and create pathways to safer, more prosperous lives. Their vision was bold for its time, and it remains the School's guiding light today. At MMI, education has never been simply a service. It has always been a catalyst.

As an independent School committed to serving local families, MMI undertook a comprehensive analysis of the economic realities facing the region. Market data and household income trends revealed something unmistakable: while the value of an MMI education continues to be transformative, the cost structure no longer aligned with the economic conditions of the very community it was created to serve. At the same time, a tuition discount rate nearing 40% signaled that more families were relying on significant financial aid to access the education the Coxes intended to be within reach. This growing imbalance was not sustainable — nor was it in alignment with the spirit of MMI's mission.

Through thoughtful study and heartfelt reflection, the School recognized what needed to be done. With courage and clarity, MMI chose to realign tuition with the realities of the region and restore the accessibility that defines its founding purpose. With this tuition reset, MMI is removing barriers that stand between students and the futures they deserve. The change opens doors for more families to experience a comprehensive, values-driven college-preparatory education — one that nurtures both intellect and character and honors the belief that opportunity should never depend on circumstance.

Mrs. Long commented, "In recent years, we've seen more families needing significant tuition assistance, and we've provided it wholeheartedly, because no child's opportunity should depend on circumstance. But it also showed us that our tuition no longer reflected the realities of the community we were created to serve. We felt a responsibility to honor our founders' belief that education should open doors for every family willing to dream big for their child. This tuition reset is our renewed promise to them. My hope is that it gives families confidence to explore all that MMI offers, and reassurance that they belong here. This is who we are — and who we will continue to be."

For generations, MMI has been transformative by nature. Its students graduate with confidence, purpose, and the readiness to lead meaningful lives. Now, the School is recommitting to being affordable by design, ensuring that the life-changing power of an MMI education remains firmly within reach for families across the region.

As MMI approaches its 147th year, it does so with renewed vigor and an unwavering promise: to serve, to uplift, and to continue building the future our founders imagined — one student, one family, one community at a time.

A Thousand Times a Day (Part 7)

Submitted by Kenny Wenner. If you have any information about people in this article, please call Ken at 570-401-4564 or email kenwenner@gmail.com.

We will continue with our local soldiers that went MIA during war. Too often history repeats itself as is the case of **Pfc John Spock**: of 1129 Birkbeck St. MMI graduate of 1939, was 24 years of age when reported MIA March 4, 1945. John enlisted June 6th 1943, went to Europe with the 5th Inf Div. In December 44 his unit went into combat on Christmas Eve, and he was listed MIA but then later rejoined his unit. The 5th was in action for a month. His cousin **John Ondich** of upper Lehigh was KIA on Luzon, Philippines in Jan 1944.

Sgt /Donald J. Megargel: Of Jeddo, age 28, graduate of HHS 1935, was reported MIA over Guam since June 14, 1945. As a tail gunner on a B29 Superfortress with the 21st Bomber Command in the Marianas, Donald flew 20 missions over Tokyo and other targets in Japan. The day he went MIA, 520 B 29's dropped 3,000 tons of incendiaries on Osaka, a large Japanese Industrial city. Megargel Enlisted in Nov 1943, joined his B 29 crew in Pratt, Kansas, and flew to the Marianas in Feb 1944. His wife is Helene O'Donnell of 825 Walnut St.

Pvt Thomas A. Kunrod: 176 S. Washington St, was 20 years old when he went he enlisted while a senior at FHS. (Eckley) He went MIA as a Ball turret gunner on a B 17 of the 8th A.F. based in England on July 9th over France when his plane failed to return from a mission. Brother, **M Sgt Michael Kunrod Jr**, is a radio engineer with the 8th AF who returned home after two years in England. Cousin **T Sgt John Nemchick** (Eckley) is listed as MIA since Dec 29th, 1943 after a flight over Tarawa, in the Marshall Islands Group. John was a B 24 "Liberator" crew member that failed to return to base at Taroa. His plane sustained heavy damage and was headed southwest past Millie Island to Makin Island. All 10 crew members are listed MIA.

Pfc Lindsay Rowland: Age 32, of 626 Front St, was a graduate of MMI and Lehigh University. He was listed MIA over Germany since Oct 4th, 1944 which is unusual for an infantry man. Because of his

radio training he may have been an artillery observer in a light aircraft and either was shot down or had aircraft trouble. Rowland landed on D-Day and was wounded several days later. He recovered at an English hospital and rejoined his unit in mid-August. His close friend **Pfc Louis Bott** of Nuremberg was KIA in France Sept 17th. The two were together since enlisting in 1942. Rowland enlisted Apr. 27, 1942 and went to England in Aug of 1942.

Pvt Steve Kanyock: age 21, of Hollywood MIA since Nov. 21, 1944 was pronounced KIA. He had served in England, France, Belgium, and Germany. Brothers SSgt Andrew Kanyock, and Pvt Michael are serving in the US Army.

Sgt Steven Husovich: Age 27, of Walnut St, was a graduate of FHS and attended St Mary's school. Steven was listed a MIA in France since June 25th, 1944, then later as KIA. The 22nd Inf of the 4th Div took part in the D-Day invasion landing near St Mere Eglise on the right flank of the beach head. The 4th pushed toward the Cherbourg Peninsula and met stiff fighting at Montebourg. They then smashed forward to help capture and hold Cherbourg on Monday, June 26th. The 4th swept into Cherbourg on the right flank of the attack while the 79th and 9th Divs took center and left. The 4th was assigned to take the airport 1/2 mile east of town. Fighting raged for 3 days and it's quite possible Steven's life ended during this operation.

Lt. John Feeley: Listed as MIA in France then KIA. Graduate HHS of 1938, and Penn State University. He was a glider officer and Adjutant of a Battalion of the 82nd Airbourne. John participated in the Normandy invasion. He first went overseas Nov. 23, 1943 and served in Africa, Sicily, and Italy, before going to England to prepare for D-Day.

T-5 Michael Feno: Age 29, of Eckley, attended St. Mary's Church. Was listed MIA then KIA in France June 17th 1944. His 4th Div landed D-Day near St Mere Eglise where they met Airbourne troops. Fought their way into Montbourg on June

17th. And then to Cherbourg. Other area soldiers in company where **Sgt George Banyas** of Hemlock St, **Pvt John Duda** of RD White Haven, and **Sgt Steven Husovich** Rd of White Haven. Banyas and Duda were wounded in June 8th, 1944, and Husovich was MIA June 25th. They had all gone overseas together in Jan 1943. Michael's brother, **Cpl George Feno Jr** is serving in England.

Pvt Harold Krouse: age 34, of Sandy Run was listed as MIA in France since Sept 30th. Harold entered the service Jan 7, 1944 and went overseas in July. His father was a mine official for M.S. Kemmerer Co. in Sandy Run.

Pvt Albert Snyder: age 22, of Japan Jeddo, served as a medical corpsman when he went MIA in France on June 16th with the 2nd Div. The 2nd followed the 1st Div ashore on D-Day near Trevieres on the left flank of the American beach head. Their unit was next to the British and Canadien units. He was last seen on a road between St Lo and Caen as his unit rushed to seal off the Cherbourg Peninsula. Albert entered the Army in the fall of 1942. His brother **Pfc Peter Snyder Jr** was among the first to establish airbases on Greenland. His uncle **Pfc Michael Fogash** of Drifton is a veteran of Tunisia and Sicily and returned stateside after being WIA.

This is in no way is a full listing of POW's and MIA's. During WWII, Freeland was a town of 7500 people plus all the surrounding villages. There were approx. 2500 service connected people at that time. I may have the accounts of 400 total. Remember them. Maybe not "A thousand Times a Day" but once as you read their names.

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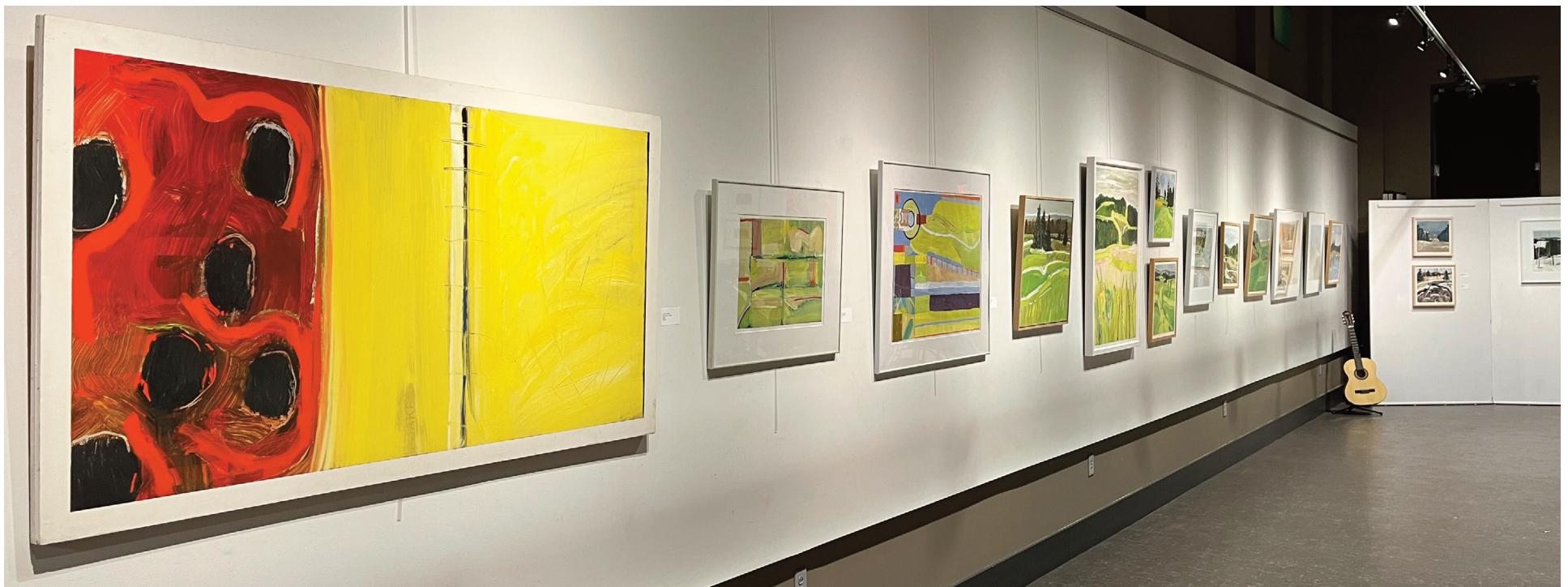
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Hazleton Art League to Host Free Artist Talk and Anthracite History Program Jan. 10



The Hazleton Art League will host a free public program on Saturday, January 10, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Hayden Family Center for the Arts, 31 West Broad Street, Hazleton.

The event will feature a talk by artist Earl W. Lehman, whose work is currently on view at the gallery through January 18. Lehman will discuss his abstract art and en plein air paintings inspired by scenes throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania. The program will also include a presentation by Bryan Dunnigan, curator of the Sophia Coxe Estate, who will explore the history of coal mining in the Hazleton and Freeland area in observance of Anthracite Mining Heritage Month.

Admission to the event is free and open to the public.

The Hazleton Art League is also preparing for its upcoming Members' Exhibition, which will run from Friday, January 30, through Sunday, February 22. Members may submit up to three works of art in any medium. The deadline to register artwork online is Friday, January 23. Annual membership is available for \$30 for adults and \$15 for students.

As the organization begins the new year, the Hazleton Art League extends its thanks to its members, volunteers, and donors who helped make 2025 a memorable year, and offers best wishes to the community for 2026.

For additional information, visit www.hazletonartleague.org or call 570-455-3333.

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A Changed Landscape: Local Hiking During the Winter

By William M. Dempsey

For people who enjoy hiking in the warmer months, winter hiking can offer a breathtaking change of pace. A winter hike is not just a change of season; it is a significant shift in how you see things. It takes away the familiar and presents you with the stark, appealing scenery of the Anthracite region. When the canopy of leaf-covered hardwoods gives way to bare branches, the forest is no longer a sealed-off world but a vast open cathedral that provides you a view of the terrain that you can't see at any other time of year.

The most rewarding change of the winter season is how clear the views become. The distant horizons look sharper, allowing hikers to fully appreciate the intricate network of mountains and valleys. You can see for miles from the ridges that look down on places like the Lehigh River Gorge, a strip of water that often runs dark against the white snow. It can also be seen from Campbell's Ledge, another excellent destination, in Luzerne County. This geographical discovery is abundant during the winter. These features provide us a deeper understanding of the area by revealing features previously hidden by leaf-covered trees, bushes, and plant life, such as subtle glacial erratics, the winding paths of long-abandoned rail grades and logging roads, and the dramatic curves of the local rivers.

The stark beauty of the snow and ice adds to the experience. The new snow covers the ground in silence, making it feel very lonely, unlike a busy summer trail. The green colors of late spring and summer of local woods change to a striking mix of grays, shades of brown, and pure snow whites. In this backdrop, the vivid emerald colors of hemlocks and pines stand out with remarkable visual intensity. The area's cascading waterfalls are even more captivating. The water often freezes into



Snow blankets Carbon County during a recent hike through the winter landscape.

- *Photograph by William M. Dempsey*

temporary ice sculptures. These columns of frozen water and crystal formations can change with temperature fluctuations. This unique opportunity to witness nature's power is worth pursuing.

Precautions are needed to enjoy this winter scenery safely. Hiking in the snow and ice can be unique, so you need two essential pieces of gear for your boots: Microspikes are vital for trails that are frozen, packed with snow, or glazed with ice. These small steel spikes strap easily over regular winter boots and provide the traction you need to safely walk on the potentially dangerous, icy terrain you will likely encounter. Another essential for deep, fresh, or soft snow (usually 6 inches or more) is snowshoes. They help distribute your weight and prevent "post-holing," which occurs when you sink deep into the powder.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) assists beginners by allowing them to borrow snowshoes at state

parks like Hickory Run and Nescopeck. Borrowing snowshoes lets you try the sport and become familiar with their use before you make the investment.

Here are some winter hikes in the area that offer everything from wide-open views to impressive ice formations. Before going out, always check the weather and trail conditions in your area:

- Hawk Falls Trail (Carbon County): Offers spectacular views of a frozen waterfall and river vistas. The trailhead is located in Hickory Run State Park (near Rt. 534).
- Lehigh Gorge Trail (Carbon/Luzerne County): A flat, scenic route through the river gorge, perfect for viewing ice formations. Access is often through the Rockport Access Area (Carbon Co.).

- Campbell's Ledge (Luzerne County): Provides a panoramic vista of the Wyoming Valley. The trailhead is near the Seven Tubs Recreation Area (off Rt. 115).
- Shades of Death Trail (Carbon County): A hike through a unique stream valley that features dramatic ice cascades. The trailhead is located within Hickory Run State Park.

Those who are prepared and willing to brave the cold will discover that our local winter landscape is a gift. Winter hikes allow you to experience the quiet side of nature and the beautiful world that the summer leaves hide. It is an exciting and rewarding perspective that turns a well-known path into a winter scene viewed through an entirely different lens.

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Junior Leadership Hazleton (JLH) Holds United Way Youth Allocation Panel at Butler Township Municipal Building

Submitted by: Pat Korb



JLH class members listen intently to presentations by local charities for special funding.

Five local charities made requests to Junior Leadership Hazleton (JLH) students for funds to complete certain projects needed by their agencies. Jennifer Sordoni, Interim CEO, The United Way of Greater Hazleton, addressed the students and provided guidance for non-profit evaluation asking them to consider mission & impact, leadership & governance, financial health, fundraising & revenue, and program quality. During the agency presentations, students asked many detailed questions. Then the students began a very spirited discussion with Leadership Hazleton members observing, before making their final funding decisions. The allocation recommendations will be turned over to the United Way of Greater Hazleton Board for their approval.

A very generous donation, sincerely appreciated, to cover this special funding was made to The Greater Hazleton United Way, Inc. by a local company.

JLH Program Coordinator Michael Dougherty says, "The JLH team is always interested in seeing what the students do with the opportunity to determine who has done the best job in presenting their needs and who deserves a portion, and how much, of the funds available. Unless you are here to observe, you can't imagine how very seriously they take this task and those requesting assistance should be very thorough in their presentations."

The next session, "Local Government," is Monday, January 19th at the Hazle Township Commons.

Junior Leadership Hazleton is dedicated to Dr. L. Edgar Dessen, founder of CAN DO. It is a program administered by Leadership Hazleton an affiliate of the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce. Funding for the program is provided, in part, by the CAN DO Community Foundation.

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Geisinger Hospitals Begin 2026 With Historic Patient Surge

Geisinger hospitals across northeastern Pennsylvania began 2026 facing an unprecedented surge in patients. During the first week of the new year, more patients were waiting for available hospital beds than at any time during the height of COVID. According to Geisinger, this increase is being driven largely by a sharp rise in flu cases across the state and throughout the United States.

Hospital leaders are asking the public for help by choosing the right care setting when possible. Doing so can lead to better care experiences for patients and help ensure hospital resources are available for those who need them most.

Emergency rooms are best used for life threatening conditions. These include heart attacks, strokes, serious injuries, severe breathing problems, and other critical situations. While emergency departments are always open and ready to help, they are not the best place for mild illnesses or minor injuries.

Geisinger reminds residents that mild flu symptoms and other common viral illnesses can often be treated at home. Over the counter medications such as Tylenol and Motrin may help reduce fever and discomfort. Patients are encouraged to speak with their healthcare provider about the best treatment options for their symptoms.

For those who need to see a clinician, primary care providers remain an important first step. In some cases, Geisinger primary care offices may have same day appointments available. Calling your primary care office can help determine the best next step. Urgent care centers are also a good option for many non emergency needs.

These locations accept walk in patients and scheduled visits and can treat a wide range of conditions. This includes respiratory illnesses, allergies, skin rashes, sprains and strains, tick removal, ear and eye infections, and urinary infections.

Geisinger is encouraging residents to spread awareness about appropriate care options and to use healthcare services thoughtfully during this busy time. Choosing the right care setting helps reduce wait times, supports healthcare workers, and ensures patients receive care in the most appropriate and timely way.

As flu activity remains high, Geisinger continues to thank the community for its patience, understanding, and cooperation as hospitals work to care for everyone who needs help.



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A Veterans Journal #107

By Joseph Barna • Freeland
USMC, Korea 1952-1953



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

When I think back to my time in the Korean War and stood feet away from a bullet hitting a young Marine or shrapnel ripping into a Soldier, I know what my New Year's resolution would be. I would trade my life for either of them. I have lived through enough years. Let them see their grandkids as I have seen and held mine in my arms. As I get older, I sometimes feel that I'm running out of tomorrows. I accept this.

Your life is what's behind you. It's what is ahead of you. But it all lies within you. How have you lived your life? We know the tradition that says: I'm going to make a New Year's resolution. Was there something in the past year that you wish you had done differently? I have always believed what I was doing was the right thing to do. If I was wrong, I was to blame, no one else. It all comes down to believing in yourself. Resolutions to me, are a way of saying, I could have done something a little different, but now it's too late.

All my life, I found out that the greatest things you can possess are strong friendships. Friends that will help you make the right decisions in life.

Never worry too much about what's in front of you. What you have done to that point, will get you through whatever comes your way. If you live with friendship, love, faith,

hope, courage and think of others, you don't have to say "Wait till next year, that I will do things differently."

Are resolutions the hope of what may happen? I believe when I was born, God left a message on the bed next to my mother. The message read: When this boy is growing up, teach him to think with his head, but act with his heart. I spent two years in the Marines. There, you don't think for yourself. Others tell you right from wrong, when to sit and when to stand. When to run and when to walk. You may find yourself in combat where there are no times for resolutions. Each day you live, you had one supreme goal, to stay alive.

Many parents prayed that their sons would come home and live a long life. Other parents had to bury a young boy who never got to be a father, who never got to be a grandfather, and who never got to be an old man. What would have been their last resolution?

You are the only one who can decide what kind of life you want to live. Take life one day at a time. When I sat in a trench for many nights, I only asked God for one thing. To see the sunrise the next morning. There are many things one asks for, but never receives. Be who you are and what you are, and only you can decide. No one controls your life but you. Happy New Year!

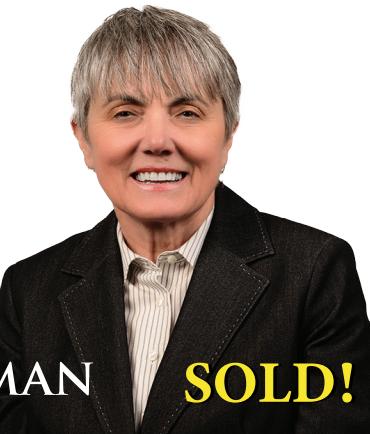
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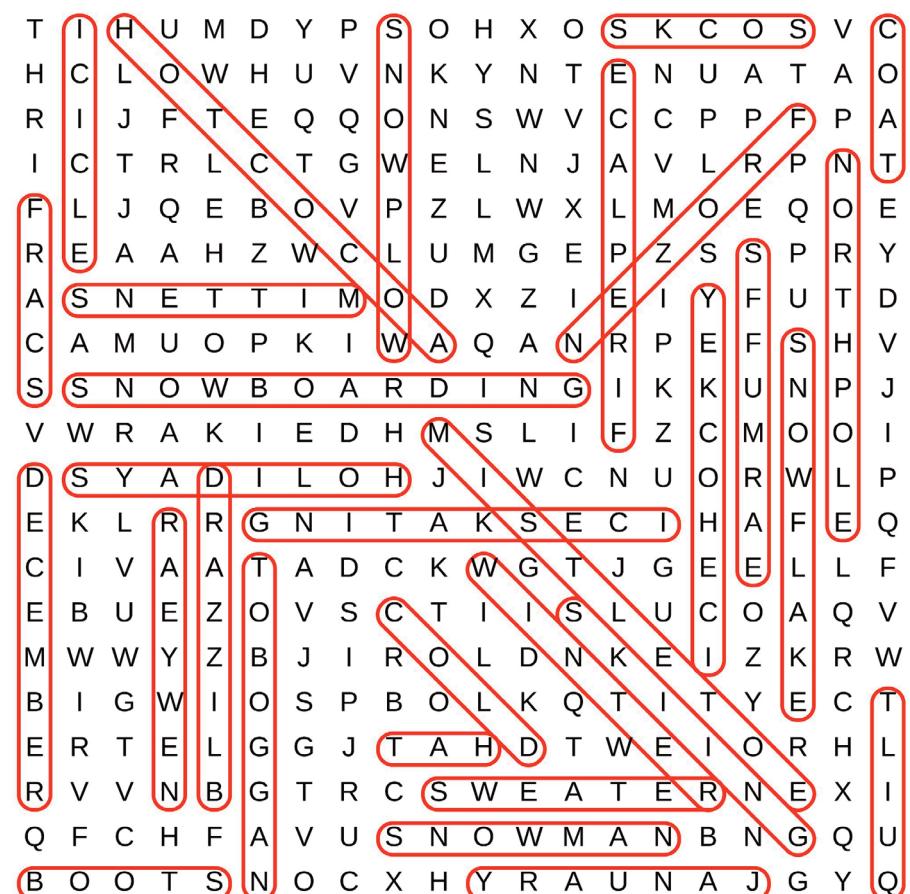
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WINTER WORDSEARCH





Sports Trivia Treats

By Ron Marchetti

100 Anniversary of the Rise and Fall of the Pottsville Maroons

In 1925, THE POTTSVILLE MAROONS, from the heart of Pennsylvania coal country, joined the fledgling National Football League. Built by an eccentric owner, molded by a visionary coach, and led by hardscrabble miners, the Maroons did the unthinkable by dominating the NFL in their inaugural season. The team so thoroughly humiliated one opponent that angry fans shot up its train car as Pottsville rode out of town. In the final game of the season, the Maroons traveled to the Midwest to face the league leading Chicago Cardinals in what was viewed as the championship game of 1925. The Maroons overcame a windy city snow storm to defeat the Cardinals 21. But the fans wanted more. College ball was still king at that time. As news of Pottsville's success was splashed across newsreels and headlines throughout the country, a movement was ignited to have the Maroons face a team of all-stars from the University of Notre Dame featuring the legendary Four Horsemen. Experts believed the NFL was still decades away from competing with college football. But on a neutral field in Philadelphia (Shibe Park), in a battle described as "The Greatest Football Game Ever Seen", the Maroons turned the football establishment upside down, defeating Notre Dame 9-7 on a last second field goal. Pottsville's victory over Notre Dame legitimized the NFL, but it also destroyed the town and team that made it all possible. Claiming the Maroons had violated the territory of another franchise by playing Notre Dame, the NFL suspended Pottsville and awarded the 1925 championship to the Cardinals. For more than 99 years, fans of the Pottsville Maroons - the team Red Grange said was "the most ferocious" he ever faced, have fought to have the 1925 title returned to its rightful owner.

Snubbing Notre Dame From the 12-Team Layoff Was a Travesty

11-2 BYU, 11-2 Texas and 10-2 Notre Dame were eliminated from the 12-team playoff of the best teams in the country to compete for the College football National Championship. Notre Dame lost their first 2 games this season by a total of 4 points (27-24 to Miami and 41-40 to Texas A&M) in the last week of September. However, since then the Irish have won 10 straight very handily while outscoring those 10 opponents 482 to 171 (over 30 pts average per game). Their 2 losses were to ranked teams that are in the top 12. 18 of the points yielded were touchdowns scored on the game's final play. James Madison and Tulane are good teams but certainly not in the top 12. They both will be destroyed by Oregon and Ole Miss. by at least 25 points. If I am wrong, I will eat crow in my next article. I don't think so. Change the format! Thanks for reading. Til next time, be a good sports and stay loose.



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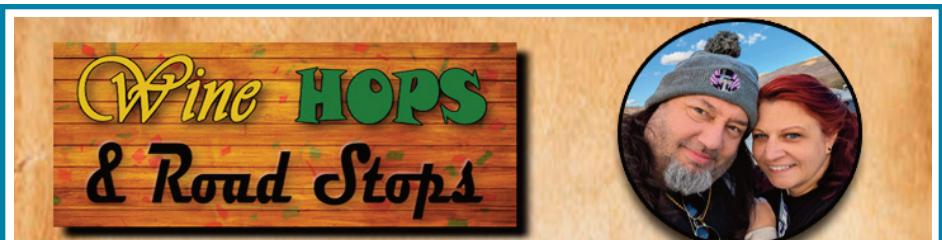
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What "Three Sheets to the Wind" Really Means

When someone says a person is "three sheets to the wind," it is a way of saying that person is intoxicated. But where did that saying come from?

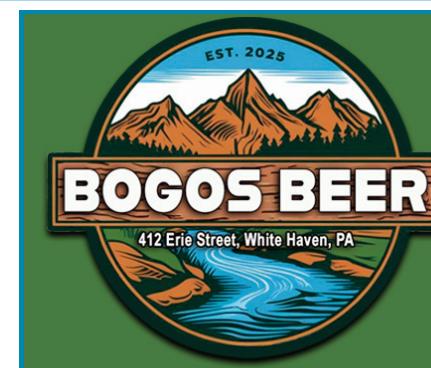
The phrase comes straight from old sailing ships. On a vessel, "sheets" are the ropes that control the sails. If one sheet comes loose, the sail flaps a bit and the ship wobbles. Two loose sheets? You're in trouble. Three sheets to the wind means the sails are completely out of control, catching wind randomly and sending the ship lurching in unpredictable directions.

Sound familiar?

So next time you hear it, remember it's not an insult. It's a nautical metaphor for losing control, courtesy of rum, ale, or whatever modern equivalent loosened those ropes.

-Jeff & Desiree Bonomo

Watch Jeff & Desiree talk about all things in the craft beverage world on
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