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Highlighting Neighborhood News & Events

Volume 3, Edition 4, April 2026



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Tulip Takeover Brings Community to Downtown Hazleton



Downtown Hazleton was in full bloom as thousands gathered for the second annual Tulip Takeover, a spring tradition made possible by Van Hoekelen Greenhouses.

With 50,000 tulips available for free picking, residents wrapped around city

blocks, waiting their turn to create their own bouquets. Under sunny skies, the day was filled with excitement, laughter, and music as a live DJ entertained the crowd.

Families, friends, and neighbors came together at CAN DO Community Park, turning a simple flower giveaway into some-

thing special. Children and adults carried armfuls of tulips while sharing smiles and conversation in line.

It was a great day for Hazleton and a reminder of what makes this community so strong.

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The Anthracite Post

Highlighting Neighborhood News & Events

Letter from the Editors

Well, well, well, after that long, cold winter Spring has finally sprung! I love hearing the birds chirping when I leave for work at 6:30 in the morning and the scent of fresh cut grass was in the air as I drove across the Valley (Drums) this weekend. Maybe I can finally get caught up with that darn electric bill.

Fall is definitely my favorite, but I'd say Spring comes in second place. It is nice to see everything waking up and coming back to life - the trees are budding and the grass has that nice bright green Spring color. Fishing season is back in, I need to get my license yet. My Dad always took my brother and I out fishing since we were little kids. A few friends of mine (especially Bev) are hoping Lake Frances will be opening back up in the near future.

Another thing I need to do is get online and book an all girls camping weekend. I am so looking forward to 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

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START TIMES MAY 22 THRU JULY 31 AT 6:30 P.M.

AUGUST 7 THRU SEPTEMBER 5 AT 6:00 P.M.

May 22	The Swingmasters Polka Band
May 29	Danny Pope (<i>playing Acoustic Guitar and Vocals</i>)
June 5	Tumbleweed (<i>playing Rock Covers and Originals</i>)
June 12	The Legends (<i>playing Rock Oldies</i>)
June 19	Hazleton Philharmonic Orchestra
June 26	Jack James Vocalist
July 3	North of 40
July 10	Dave Matsinko (<i>playing Folk and Americana</i>)
July 17	Tony Merker (<i>playing Country</i>)
July 24	Southbound (<i>Acoustic and Electric Classic Rock Duo</i>)
July 31	Just Us Polka Band
Aug. 7	Hazleton Liberty Band
Aug. 14	Richard and Maria Lutz (<i>Vocal Duo</i>)
Aug. 21	Freeland St. Ann's Band
Aug. 28	Jack James Vocalist
Sept. 4	Swing Dance (<i>Hazleton Philharmonic Big Band - 6-8 p.m.</i>)

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WORD LIST

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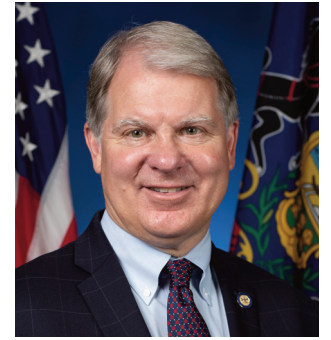


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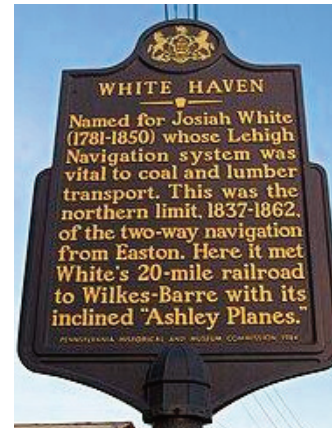
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Schuylkill, Carbon and Luzerne counties



White Haven Borough Awarded Over \$485,000 in State Funding

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



White Haven Borough was recently awarded two state grants totaling more than \$485,000. The borough received a \$135,000 grant and a second \$350,000 grant to improve sidewalks and streetscapes and create a new multi-use trail along Main Street.

White Haven's Borough Manger, Linda Szoke, put it best: "This funding is a significant investment in White Haven's future. Enhancing our sidewalks and streetscapes will improve safety, accessibility and connectivity for residents and visitors alike, while supporting the ongoing revitalization of our downtown and

Main Street corridor. We are grateful for the commonwealth's support and for the advocacy of our legislative partners in helping move these important improvements forward."

With its detailed Blueprint Community revitalization plans, the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway bringing new visitors into the borough from Jim Thorpe, Pittston, and beyond, the continued development of the D&L Trail's outdoor recreation connections, and new community development, library, and infrastructure grants, White Haven is taking some major steps forward for residents, businesses, and visitors. I'm pleased to support their efforts.



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Pennsylvania Ratepayer Protection Act

By State Rep. Jamie Walsh (R-Luzerne)

I have recently co-sponsored legislation to protect consumers from rising electricity costs driven by the growing energy demands of large-scale data centers.

The proposed Pennsylvania Ratepayer Protection Act is a proactive, sensible piece of legislation to help address potential rising energy costs with the construction of new data centers.

House Bill 2372 introduces a three-part strategy to lower costs and stabilize the energy market:

- ✔ Requires data center developers to fully fund their energy infrastructure and grid connections, ensuring no additional costs are passed on to consumers.
- ✔ Mandates large data centers build or secure their own power sources rather than relying on the public grid, reducing competition for limited electricity supply.
- ✔ Requires utilities to enter long-term power purchase agreements on behalf of consumers, ensuring ratepayers have equal access to stable, lower-cost energy supplies.

Together, these requirements are expected to deliver immediate electricity price reductions; increase available power supply across the PJM region; protect consumers from subsidizing large-scale energy users; and support responsible growth of the data center industry.



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



The warmer weather is finally among us, something we all have been looking forward to after this past winter. With the weather being nicer, more people will be outside, on foot, both day and night. This is a reminder to keep your vehicle doors locked, especially overnight. Whether it is parked on the street, or in your driveway, always keep your vehicle doors locked and valuables out of sight. The same applies for your house doors and even the shed. Unfortunately, when warmer weather arrives, so do thefts, so in order to avoid this, lock it up!

April at the Hazleton Art League



The Hazleton Art League (HAL) will welcome artist Tim Weaver to the Hayden Family Center for the Arts as its featured solo gallery artist for April.

The exhibition will open Friday, March 27, from 5 to 8 p.m., and continue through Sunday, April 26. An artist talk with Weaver is scheduled for Sunday, March 29, from 1 to 3 p.m. Weaver's last solo exhibition at the Art League was held in 1996 — inspiring the title of this show, *Tim Weaver: Thirty Years Later*.

A floral arrangement created by Hazleton Area Garden Club member Susan Ritsko will be raffled to benefit the Art League.

Looking ahead, the Art League will present its annual Art Youth Expo (AYE), opening Friday, May 29, as part of the Community Art Party taking place downtown through Saturday, May 30. Now in its 15th year, AYE features artwork by young artists ages 13 to 30.

A special group exhibition commemorating the upcoming United States Semiquincentennial will be held in July. Artists interested in participating in upcoming exhibitions may register through the Art League's website.

The Hazleton Art League is located at the Hayden Family Center for the Arts, 31 W. Broad St., Hazleton. For more information, call 570-455-3333 or visit hazletonartleague.org.

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New Tax Credit to Help Working Pennsylvanians

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

As income tax filing season comes to a close, Pennsylvanians who haven't yet filed should know about a new tax credit, adopted as part of the current year's budget, that could be beneficial to them.

The Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) Tax Credit, also known as the Working Pennsylvanians Tax Credit, provides income-qualified working Pennsylvanians with a tax credit equal to 10% of their federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). I was proud to support this measure to return hard-earned money back to taxpayers.

Pennsylvanians qualify for the credit based on their income and number of dependents. You can read more about the credit on the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue's website, or you can contact my office. My staff and I look forward to hearing from you. You can call my offices at 570-453-1344 or 833-933-3679.

Another Scam Involving Owed Tolls Making Rounds

A new wave of smishing scam texts is making the rounds. The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) advises that the smishing scam is being sent to random individuals, aiming to deceive them to share their personal financial information to settle outstanding toll amounts.

The texts purport to be from "Traffic Division of Philadelphia Municipal Court" and may include a fake QR code for payment and center on an unpaid toll violation, fine and court costs.

People who receive an unsolicited text, email or similar message suggesting it is from the PA Turnpike or another toll agency should not click on the link. E-ZPass account holders and Toll by Plate customers can use approved safe methods to check their accounts such as the official PA Turnpike E-ZPass website or the PA Toll Pay app available from the Apple App Store, or Google Play store.

Those who receive a fraudulent text can file a complaint with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov. That is a site dedicated to sharing information on Internet crimes across law enforcement agencies.

Plan Your PA Getaway!

The Commonwealth's 2026 Travel Guide is now available to help you plan your next getaway!

This year's free guide highlights special events celebrating the nation's 250th anniversary, as well as major sports attractions such as the FIFA World Cup, the NFL Draft, the PGA Championship and Major League Baseball's All-Star Game, all coming to Pennsylvania this spring and summer.

The guide also highlights an array of must-see attractions in all corners of the state for people of all ages. You can sign up to receive a free hard copy of the guide at www.visitpa.com/free-traveler-guide where you can also find a link to view the guide online. Happy travels!

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MMI Preparatory School Girl Scout Earns Prestigious Gold Award for Preserving History



Erica Schwear '26 (right) poses with MMI's Head of School, Mrs. Theresa Long.

(Freeland, PA – April 8, 2026) – Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania is honored to announce Erica Schwear '26 from Luzerne County has earned the highest award in Girl Scouting, the Girl Scout Gold Award, for the 2026 Gold Award class.

For her project, Schwear expanded upon work she completed to earn her Silver Award. She had previously restored graves at a local historic cemetery, and she now wanted to teach others how to preserve history. She created a video for YouTube and TikTok, providing a tutorial of the steps required to repair headstones or other historic objects. Her project will be sustained as people can access the tutorial indefinitely.

Schwear devoted a minimum of 80 hours to problem-solving, planning, and implementing her ideas for change. The impact of her Gold Award project will be felt long into the future, and Schwear has shown the next generation of girls what they are capable of accomplishing.

“We are so proud of Erica for achieving Gold Award Girl Scout status! MMI is a school deeply rooted in history, and Erica’s commitment to preserving the past is a deeply honorable one. Through her hard work, dedication, and service, Erica has proven herself to be a great role model to all of us at MMI,” said Mrs. Theresa Long, MMI’s Head of School.

The Gold Award is the highest achievement a Girl Scout can earn. It’s available to girls in high school who create sustainable change for a community or world issue. Gold Award Girl Scouts address pressing issues in their communities and create sustainable change to make the world a better place.

The Gold Award process not only enables girls to help their communities but also provides tangible benefits as they grow as individuals. By going Gold, girls build professional skills, earn scholarships, build their network, and, for those interested in serving their country, are able to enlist at a higher pay grade when they join the military.

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A Thousand Times a Day (Part 8)

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

This month we will remember the local men who gave their lives during WWII. As I write during this Christmas season, especially about this subject, let's remember December 16th, 1944 and the Battle of the Bulge. Approximately 19,000 American soldiers died (KIA) during that German counter offensive. 60,000 were wounded, WIA. 23,000 were taken prisoner (POW) until the end of the war. That is, unless they died in captivity. Let's not forget these men as we enjoy our days.

S. Sgt John Ondich: of Upper Lehigh was KIA on January 25th, 1945 on the Phillipine Island of Luzon. According to a letter written by his lifelong buddy **Sgt Jack Stumpf** also of Upper Lehigh, John had just returned to his foxhole with his breakfast when a Japanese sniper shot him. He was a lookout watching the enemy on the next hill and was drinking his coffee when he was shot. He died instantly. Both were with the 25th Div. Ondich was initially with the 43rd Inf Div during MacArthur's S-Day on Jan 9th. He joined the military in 1938 and spent 3 years in Hawaii until June 1941. He again volunteered May 10th, 1942. By Sept, he took part in the Guadalcanal Campaign, the Russel Island campaign, and then enjoyed R&R in New Zealand. He was then sent to New Guinea to "mop up" the enemy. At some point Stumpf was also WIA.

PFC Michael Drobnick: age 28 from Drifton, was KIA in Germany January 13th 1945. Brothers **PFC Andrew Drobnack** is in Iceland, and **PVT George Drobnack** is in basic training.

T-5 Michael Potchner: age 41, of Drifton was KIA Dec 26th 1944 in Belgium. He was first listed MIA as a defender of Bastogne at the city of Sedan during the Bulge. Potchner was in the 10th Armored Div with the 9th Armored and 101st Airborne when they held the Road Center (?) despite a 6 day attack. He arrived in France August 1944 and saw action in Belgium, France, and Germany. His

nephew **John "Ziggy" Potchner** is stationed in the Pacific with a Navy Medical Corp.

Sn 2nd CI Joseph Anthony Dinofrio: Died in an auto accident in Bainbridge, Maryland. Age was 25 yrs old, of Yale St. Dinofrio was changing a tire along the highway when he was struck by a taxi cab. **Pvt. Anthony Ricotta** was assisting with the change and was also injured. Ricotta was a welterweight champ and protégé of Johnny Campbell. The honor guard at his funeral consisted of **Sgt John R. Stoffa, Sgt Michael Guido Popovich, Cpl David H Menapace, Pfc William Derenich,** and **Pvt Russel W Bechtloff.** Bugler was **Cpl Thomas "Pugh" Ohara** and pall bearers were Navy men **John Wilson, Patsy DeFeo, Charles Rossi, Michael Mitsock,** and **Francis Curney.**

Sgt John Lehan: Age 39, was a veteran of 17 years of service in the US and Panama. He was KIA August 31st, 1944 in France. Sgt Lehan was included in an article written by an A.P. dispatch E.D. Ball on July 12th when Lehan was 1 of 15 men to return after 240 men attacked the Normandy town of Vesly, north of the river Ay on the Cotentin Peninsula. In that operation he lost a good friend, a 22 yr old Montana Lt. who was KIA during the attack. His Company first ran into snipers, then machine gun emplacements, and then a barrage by German 88's. His unit had just arrived in France in late June Lehan brother Stanley Lehan was wounded earlier in the war and was discharged.

S/Sgt Carl Malek: Age 29, of Kalmia St, was born in Laderovo Czechoslovakia and died June 24th, on Saipan from an artillery shell as he was directing fire of his own gun crews. He served with Co.D, 165th Inf Reg, 27th Div and participated in the invasion of Makin Island in the Gilbert Islands before moving into the Marianas group invasions. He was first WIA in the battle for Saipan on June 23rd but

later died on the 24th. As a child he was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and witnessed WW1 sweep thru their villages.

Sn 1st CI Charles "Reds" Mula: First listed MIA then KIA after serving aboard the USS Mount Hood. When the ship exploded Nov. 10th, all hands perished. (Molli?)

Sgt John J Televich "Tut": Age 29. Was KIA Nov. 20th, 1944 on Leyte Island while fighting with the 32 Inf Div. He was shot by enemy rifle fire near the town of Limon on the N.W. corner of the island. His platoon was attacking a hill a half mile from the town of Limon. He served in several New Guinea campaigns after arriving in late 1943. He received the "Purple Heart" for action in New Guinea on June 20th, and the "Bronze Star" for action July 13th, 1944. Televich had been a bartender in Crows Bar in Freeland and entered Army service Sept 29, 1942. His step brother **Sgt Edmund Tulanosky** serves with an Army Signal Corp in France.

1st Lt. Bruno "Tubby" Procopio: age 24 of 520 Ridge St (Procopios Bar). Grad of MMI and High Acres Penn State. Was lead navigator of the 8th AAF B-17 bomb group when he was reported WIA on Dec 24, 1944 over Germany. He died in Belgium. Bruno was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters. On his last mission with 300 planes they bombed communications and airdromes near Frankfurt along the Rhine. He enlisted on Feb 27th, 1942.

KIA listing to continue in part 9.

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Hazleton Rotary Volunteered at the Hazleton City Bunny Trail, City View Park, March 29th from 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

Submitted by Pat Korb



Hazleton Rotarians Tim Genetti, Mark Imbriaco, Joan Buffington, Danielle Matarella and Michelle Genetti celebrated Easter at City View Park.

Hazleton Rotary volunteered at the Hazleton City Bunny Trail, City View Park, March 29th from 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

Rotary partners with the city and other businesses' on this fun project yearly.

Families are invited to walk the trail and collect candy from themed stations along the path.

Children can bring a basket or bag to gather treats as they move from station to station. The event is free and open to the public.

The Easter Bunny was available for photos during the event, so families were encouraged to bring cameras. Visitors also enjoyed games, crafts and other family activities throughout the afternoon.

Andy Muller, Jr. Announces a Semiquincentennial Steam Celebration with a Special Visitor

The Reading & Northern Railroad will be celebrating the semiquincentennial of the United States in a "big" way. Reading & Northern is proud to support the biggest steam locomotive in the world, Union Pacific's "Big Boy" #4014. A single, one-way trip powered by #4014 from Nesquehoning to Pittston will be executed on Sunday, June 14 by Union Pacific.

Excursions powered by Reading & Northern's own Pennsylvania-built 4-8-4 T-1 steam locomotive #2102, will take place on Saturday June 13, Sunday June 14, and Wednesday July 1, 2026. All three of these steam excursions will depart Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station and operate round trip through the Lehigh Gorge to Pittston, PA. Each trip will feature photo opportunities for guests while safely remaining onboard the Reading & Northern excursion as it passes Union Pacific #4014 along the way. Ticket pricing will start at \$125.00 for Standard coach seating.

On Thursday, July 2, 2026, a special diesel-powered round-trip excursion will depart Nesquehoning southbound to Reading Outer Station. This trip will also offer safe, onboard opportunities for passengers to take photos of Big Boy #4014. Tickets for this trip start at \$49.00. per person for Standard coach seating. Reading & Northern's specially painted semiquincentennial diesel locomotives, SD40-2 #1776 and GP38-2 #2026, will power this train.

Tickets for all Reading & Northern #2102-powered and diesel-powered trips will go on sale Friday, April 10, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. Tickets may be purchased online at www.rbmrrr-passenger.com; or by calling 610-562-2102 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily.

According to Andy Muller, owner and chief executive officer of Reading & Northern, "The most fantastic railfan event of the 21st century will occur on the Reading & Northern. All are invited to join us for this event to either ride or safely follow the train. People will be required to stay a minimum of 25 feet away from all railroad tracks, which will be strictly enforced. One hundred percent safety is a must; ninety-nine percent is not enough."

Senior VP/GM-Passenger Matt Fisher says "We are most flattered that Union Pacific has chosen to make Reading & Northern a part of the Big Boy's eastern semiquincentennial tour. This locomotive has never been on the Reading & Northern, yet alone east of the Mississippi River since its construction in Schenectady, NY in the 1940s."

Reading & Northern Railroad with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 80 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations over the last 40 years; and projects 40,000 carloads of freight in 2026 (which removes over 220,000 trucks from the highway), while its Passenger Department welcomed over 410,000 happy customers in 2025. Reading & Northern operates its freight and steam- and diesel-powered passenger excursions over 400 miles of track, owns almost 2,000 freight cars and employs over 400 dedicated people. Reading & Northern has been repeatedly honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation, including being named Regional Railroad of the Year in 2020 by *Railway Age* magazine.



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Blooming Back to Life: Spring and Summer Pollinators in Carbon and Luzerne Counties

By William M. Dempsey

As winter breaks its grip across Carbon and Luzerne Counties, the landscape paints itself in more than color, coming alive with purpose. From local woods to backyard gardens and flowers along the roadsides, a steady flow of blooms will continue after spring, helping to sustain one of the region's most essential communities: pollinators.

Bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, and hummingbirds rely on a continuous supply of nectar and pollen from early spring through fall. Without that evolutionary process, many species would fail to survive. In our area, the mix of native plants and ornamentals in front and back yards plays a key role in keeping the cycle going.

Early Spring: The First Lifeline (March–April)

The earliest blooms are easy to overlook; we forget about the promise of spring while winter traps us inside. But they are arguably the most important. In wooded areas, spring plants emerge before the tree foliage fills in.

Look for trout lily, spring beauties, and native violets on the forest floor. These plants provide nectar for early-emerging bees, some of which are active for only a few weeks each year.

At the same time, flowering trees and shrubs begin to bloom. Red, silver, and sugar maples offer plenty of pollen when little else is available. Maple trees are essential for jump-starting pollinator activity in the region.

Introduced ornamentals, which so many of us love to plant, such as crocus, daffodils, and ornamental cherries, also appear in early spring. Although not native, many still provide useful nectar and help connect seasonal gaps.

Late Spring: A Surge of Color (May–June)

By May, the landscape becomes noticeably more colorful. Roadsides, yards, and rocky slopes fill with blooms that attract an even wider variety of pollinators.

Columbine is a standout native; you can often find it along shaded trails. Its red and yellow flowers are especially attractive to hummingbirds. Nearby, creeping phlox spreads across sunny hillsides, attracting early butterflies.

Shrubs like nine-bark and chokeberry start to bloom, giving you food sources that last longer.

These plants are commonly used in local landscaping and demonstrate how native species can be both attractive and ecologically valuable.

Non-native favorites such as lilacs, tulips, and fruit tree blossoms also reach their peak during this time. While some man-made hybrids offer less nectar, many still support pollinators when planted alongside native species.

Summer: Peak Pollinator Season (June–August)

Summer is the height of pollinator activity and the greatest variety of blooms. Fields, woodland edges, and



A honey bee gathers nectar and pollen from a blooming Japanese cherry tree in my backyard near Weatherly, highlighting the vital role even ornamental spring blooms play in supporting local pollinators.

- Photograph by William M. Dempsey

even utility pole lines come alive with color.

Among the most important plants are milkweed, bee balm, and coneflower. These species serve as cornerstones for pollinator health. All of these plants are very easy to grow from seeds.

Butterfly milkweed blooms from June through late summer, supporting a wide range of insects and serving as a host plant for monarch butterflies. Wild bergamot (bee balm) attracts bees and hummingbirds, while purple coneflower provides a reliable nectar source for honey

bees that lasts for weeks.

These species are becoming more common not only in the wild but also in residential landscapes. Pollinator gardens are gaining in popularity.

Late Summer into Fall: The Critical Finish (August–October)

As summer fades, fewer plants remain in bloom, making late-season species especially important.

Across fields and roadsides, goldenrod and asters dominate. Often overlooked, these plants provide essential nectar for pollinators preparing for winter. Without them, many species would struggle to survive the

seasonal transition into winter.

The Local Connection

Pennsylvania's native plants have adapted to local soils, climate, and elevation. As a result, they support far more pollinators than most non-native species.

In Carbon and southern Luzerne Counties, where forests, waterways, and developed areas intersect, even small patches of habitat can make a difference. Roadsides, backyard gardens, and reclaimed coal lands all contribute to the larger ecosystem.

When deciding to start a pollinator garden, remember, the key is variety and timing. A landscape that provides blooms from early spring through fall offers the ongoing resources pollinators need.

What to Look for Locally

As you explore our area in the next few months, keep an eye out for the waves of bloom that come and go:

- Early woodland flowers in March and April
- Flowering trees and shrubs in late spring
- Meadow and roadside wildflowers in summer
- Goldenrod and asters close out the season

Each phase is part of a much bigger cycle that benefits not only pollinators but also the overall health of the local landscape.

Those colorful spots along a trail or road are more than just signs of warmer weather. They are lifelines, important links between plants and the pollinators that keep our area alive and give us something enjoyable to look at.



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United Way of Greater Hazleton Announces, “Spring into Bingo” Fundraiser at PTPA Center



L to R: Jessica Spare – Board of Directors member, Amorette Barr – Fiscal Director, Donna Marie Dougherty – Board of Directors Governance Chair, Jace Whitaker- Board of Directors Vice Chair, and Leann Fallabel - Board of Directors Chair.

The United Way of Greater Hazleton is proud to announce its upcoming “Spring into Bingo” fundraiser, scheduled for Sunday, April 19, 2026. The event will take place at the Pennsylvania

Theatre of Performing Arts (PTPA) Center, located at 212 West Broad St., Hazleton, Pa. 18201

This community-focused afternoon offers residents a chance to win

big while supporting a great cause. All proceeds from the event will benefit the United Way of Greater Hazleton, Inc. Annual Campaign, which provides critical funding to our: Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Nurses Pantry, and our Backpacks and Beyond programs.

Event Details

- Date: Sunday, April 19, 2026
- Location: Pennsylvania Theatre of Performing Arts (PTPA) Center, 212 West Broad St., Hazleton, PA 18201
- Time: Doors open at 1:00 PM; Games begin at 2:00 PM

Gaming & Prizes

There will be 20 regular games and 4 special games. Participants will compete for a variety of Gift Card prizes.

In addition to bingo, the event will feature Door Prizes, Tricky Trays, and a 50/50 raffle. Refreshments will be

available for purchase, graciously offered by the Pennsylvania Theatre of Performing Arts Center.

We strongly encourage you, your business or workplace to consider the following sponsorship opportunities: Platinum Sponsor - \$500.00 Half page ad in Program Booklet, two tickets-reserved seating Gold Sponsor – \$250

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Eighth page ad in Program Booklet

If you have questions about sponsorship, please contact Amorette at 570-455-9515 x. 204.

Ticket Information

- Advance Tickets: \$25
- At-the-Door: \$30

Tickets are available for purchase online at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/spring-into-bingo> or one of the board of directors.

As America approaches its 250th birthday in 2026, communities across our region are beginning to look ahead to this historic milestone. It is a moment that invites reflection, pride, and the opportunity to come together in ways that feel meaningful to each town and neighborhood. Local communities have always found their own unique ways to mark important occasions, and this will be no different. Whether it is through simple acts of togetherness or larger community efforts, the spirit of the 250th will be rooted in connection and pride. As more information becomes available, residents are encouraged to stay informed. Keep an eye on local event pages, follow The Anthracite Post on Facebook, and watch for upcoming editions where we will share updates.



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Frank Balon to present "Centennial" Pictures on April 26

Submitted by Frank Balon

rousing success, the slides and narration cassette tape were stored away in my bedroom closet and somehow forgotten. Perhaps the original plan was to show the slides at a wrap-up event, but such an opportunity never occurred. The calendar turned, the years became decades, and ultimately a half century! Knowing that the current Sesqui-centennial Committee is holding events, I contacted Chairman Bobby Maso and told him about the 50-year-old slides still in my possession. I offered to update the slides into a mid-2020's electronic format and indeed, do a presentation during one of our 150th Sesqui-centennial Events this year. I am happy to say that my presentation will be on Sunday April 26th at 2 pm in the Freeland Borough Hall. The pictures I will present offer a uniquely special snapshot of our town and people in 1976. I like to think of the photo and narration as a Freeland Time Capsule from 50 years ago. Of course, our Freeland Historical Society will have a wonderful and interesting exhibition of their historical records and artifacts on display for everyone to view and enjoy. Hope to see you there on April 26th.

2026 is Freeland's 150th Anniversary. Our Sesqui-centennial Committee is holding various events and exhibits through the year in celebration. Back in 1976, when Freeland celebrated its Centennial, I was a sophomore at Freeland High School. Our Photography/Darkroom Club, under the guidance of the great teacher Gene Lutz, was tasked by the Freeland Centennial Committee to photograph the monthly events that they held thru the year of 1976. I attended each of the events and took many color photos. These photos were converted to slides and I recorded a narration with the intent of showing the presentation at a future time. Although the Centennial Year of 1976 was a

A Veterans Journal #109

By Joseph Barna • Freeland
USMC, Korea 1952-1953



REFLECTIONS

I wake up every morning, look in the mirror and ask the same question: Why doesn't God want me yet? 74 years ago, during a battle in Korea, he spared me, sending an Angel, a Navy Corpsman, to save me. So far, I have not heard from him. God must have shed a few tears over my name in his big book, blurring out the lettering.

There are so many of his angels in heaven waiting for me: All my Marine buddies, who I fought alongside in Korea, are probably asking "Where is that skinny guy who carried that heavy flamethrower?" All the boys I played baseball with are saying "When is Joe coming in to pitch, the bases are loaded and we need that last out." Down at the bowling alley, they're waiting for me to throw three strikes in the 10th frame. Our team will win by one pin. Maybe My Angel told the big guy "Let the Corporal stay on Earth a little bit longer so he can play with his two great-great grandsons.

Sometimes I feel so lonely. I miss that little blue-eyed blonde with the ponytail that I spent 68 years with. I remember the time I met her: At the movies, she was giggling and tossing peanuts at me from a few rows back. Outside the theater, we talked for the first time. From our two seeds, we created an orchard together, but now a daughter and a son are gone before me. Thank God for the grandkids. When I fire my rifle at a military funeral, I am saying farewell to another comrade. The list grows every year. My fishing buddy for fifty years, has

taken his boat to one of the lakes in the clouds. I hope the fish are biting for him. I always left him catch the big one.

Years ago, I heard a song with these words: "Where have all the flowers gone?" Now, I can put my own words in the line. "Where have all my buddies gone?" It's a very lonely life without them. I sometimes wish I did not outlive most of them. Those friendships have turned into beautiful memories. Gone are the laughing, crying, the good and bad times. Gone, but not forgotten.

Maybe I have to wait a little bit longer while my country gets straightened out and people learn how to get along instead of hating each other? Maybe I have lived so long because I always believed in friendship? The more true friends you have, the more strength you possess. It's all about the people you share your life with. Never try to keep to yourself. I always wanted to be part of something. If I have a gift I want to share it with others.

I have lived one hell of a life. I tried to do so many things. Many I was good at. A few, almost good. During my years growing up, through my military and wartime, through all my jobs and through my marriage with my wonderful wife, I learned many lessons, the most important is that we all need each other to be strong. Alone, all you find is weakness.

Looking in the mirror, I hope I earned the 96 years God has given me so far.

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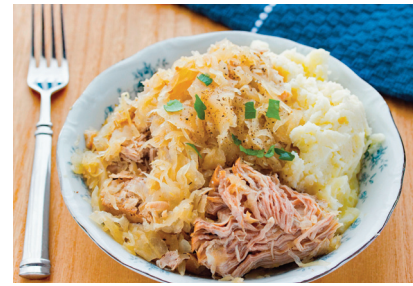
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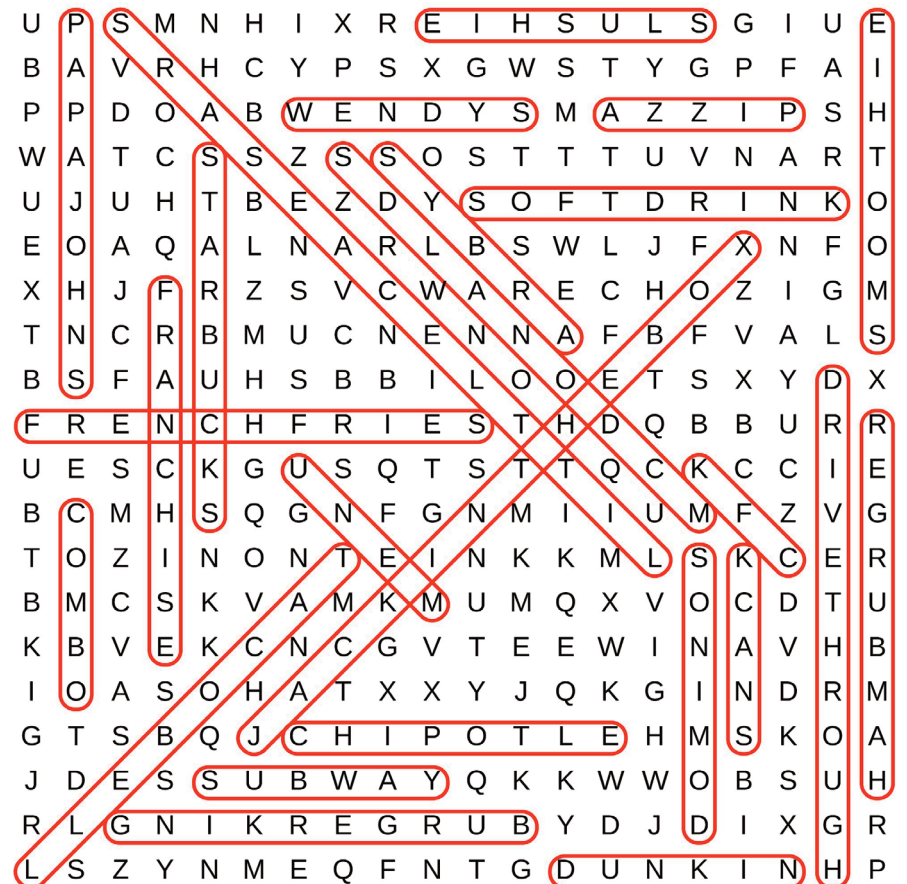
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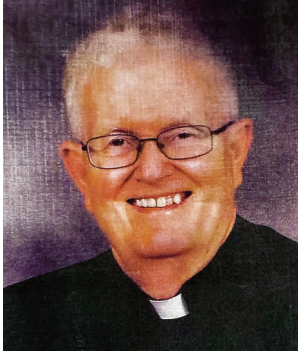


Sports Trivia

Treats

By Ron Marchetti

The Father McHugh I'll Remember



Reverend Connell A. McHugh was ordained into the priesthood on May 13, 1972. He celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination on May 13, 2022. His sermons often provided his audiences with insights on what every saint in the Bible did with their spare time. His sermons may have been boring to some, but they were intriguing and interesting to many. Father McHugh was a dedicated priest, who was always there when needed while serving many churches and enjoying his time at each one. The last two chapters of his life found him asparish priest at Good Shepherd in Drums before he supposedly retired. But not so fast the call came. He was needed at Holy Rosary Parish in Hazleton Heights.

He substituted again and again until he became automatic every Saturday and Sunday plus daily noon masses every weekday. Father McHugh became a fixture at Holy Rosary, even though he did not reside at Holy Rosary Rectory. While he was Pastor at Good Shepherd he purchased a modest small brick home on Putnam Street in West Hazleton. I was his plumber, then my son was, until Father passed. Father and I had much to talk about because we were both collectors. I was always into sports memorabilia, but he was strictly an advocate on baseball cards who owned the best baseball collection I've ever seen in my life. He donated a few unique items to my collection. Every once in a while, I asked him how much this vintage card is worth. My go-to-guy, of course, was Father McHugh. His knowledge of baseball cards was simply astronomical. He was an excellent tennis player in his younger years, and he also composed 145 poems in a book that he had published. He wrote bi-monthly articles for Panorama Magazine on what he loved (baseball cards). Father wrote his last article for Panorama one month before God took him early this past January. Father McHugh and I were both interviewed together twice (at my home and St. Joe's Gymnasium) by two writers from Virginia, (Sly Sobel and Jay Rosenstein), who wrote the book "Boxed out of the NBA". The book remembers the Eastern Professional Basketball League which the Hazleton Hawks were part of. I was a huge follower of the Hawks in my high school years. I never missed a game played at St. Joe's every Sunday. I even went on Poncho Sacco's Saturday night bus trip to Sunbury Wilkes-Barre and Easton. Father was an even bigger fan when he attended Saint Gabriel's long before I met him. We shared our memories of the Hazleton Hawks for a documentary that was being produced last year. Father would've turned 80 on February 2nd. I enjoyed our short chats after his masses while leaving Holy Rosary Church. That's the Father McHugh I will not forget.



FROM CRISP PILSNER TO BIG MALTY BOCKS

Hello alcohol enthusiasts! In this article we are going to talk about lagers. Some call lager the "regular beer" of the beer world, but it is so much more. It's brewed cold with bottom-fermenting yeast, then aged nice and slow, which is why lagers usually taste crisp, smooth, and refreshing. Here are a few popular types of lagers.

PILSNER

The best-known style is probably pilsner. This beer is golden, snappy, and a little hop-bitter, with that classic spicy-floral aroma.

HELLES

This one is softer, maltier, and less bitter. It is basically pilsner's more laid-back German cousin.

DUNKEL

This is the darker side of lager, bringing toasted bread, nutty malt, and richness.

BOCK

This turns the malt and alcohol up a notch, with bigger flavors that can lean toward caramel, toast, and dark fruit.

AMERICAN LAGER

light, fizzy, mild, and built for maximum drinkability.

-Jeff & Desiree Bonomo

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