The Anthracite Post

Highlighting Neighborhood News & Events **Volume 3, Edition 8, August 2026**

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ZION GROVE

A Community Comes Together as Hazleton YMCA Reopens

After more than seven years, the Hazleton YMCA has officially reopened its doors. Now known as the Mericle Family Center YMCA, the facility at 75 South Church Street returned to full operations on August 3, restoring a longtime gathering place for children, families and residents throughout Greater Hazleton.

The reopening follows a major renovation and restoration effort after the YMCA closed in June 2019 because of financial difficulties. More than $5 million in private contributions supported the purchase, renovation and programming of the property. The overall modernization project has been reported at more than $12 million, with additional public funding helping bring the community center back to life.

The renovated YMCA once again offers many of the amenities generations of Hazleton residents remember, including swimming pools, a wellness center and basketball court. Multipurpose classrooms provide space for educational, recreational and youth programs. An early learning center also provides child care and early education opportunities for area families.

A major focus of the reopened YMCA is serving Hazleton youth by providing safe spaces, positive activities and opportunities to learn, grow and stay active. The center is designed to serve the entire community, from young children and teenagers to adults, families and older residents.

With its doors once again open, the Hazleton YMCA brings swimming, recreation, fitness, learning and community programs back to the heart of Hazleton, returning an important community gathering place to a new generation.

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

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Community Information

The Anthracite Post

Highlighting Neighborhood News & Events

Letter from the Editors

Hello everyone! I hope you are all enjoying the beautiful weather. It's been so nice lately without the high humidity, but that can change by the time this is printed.

If you haven't gotten out to a local farm market, now is the time to go as they are selling their homegrown fruits, vegetables and flowers. I bought some sweet, juicy cherries and decided to get out the canning jars to make some homemade Cherry Jam. I plan on trying to make Caramel Apple Jam too. I saw the recipe online and it sounds delicious. My mom and Lee Ann's grandmother did a lot of canning when we were kids. My Mom's Garlic & Dill Pickles are the best - ever!!! I am going to drop off a jar of jelly for her on my way home, along with a few Blueberry Muffins that I baked last night.

If you''d like to submit a photo of your summer fun, don't be shy. Send me an email with the photo and caption to shari@anthracitepost.com. and I will try to fit in in a future edition of "The Anthracite Post".

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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- 2026 SEASON -

LOCAL TEAMS FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Hazleton Area
8/28 vs. West Scranton
9/4 @ Williamsport
9/11 @ Pocono Mtn. West
9/18 vs. Crestwood
9/25 vs. Pittston
10/2 @ Dallas
10/9 @ Berwick
10/16 vs. WVW
10/23 vs. Wilkes Barre
10/30 @ Pottsville

Berwick
8/28 @ North Pocono
9/4 @ Pittston
9/11 vs. Wyoming Area
9/18 vs. Wilkes Barre
9/25 @ Pottsville Area
10/2 @ Hanover Area
10/9 vs. Hazleton Area
10/16 vs. Williamsport
10/23 @ Crestwood
10/30 vs. Dallas

Crestwood
8/28 vs. Hanover Area
9/4 vs. Valley View
9/11 @ Carbondale
9/18 @ Hazleotn Area
9/25 vs. Honesdale
10/2 @ Wyoming Area
10/9 vs. Pittston
10/16 vs. Shenandoah
10/23 vs. Berwick
10/30 @ WVW

Tamaqua
8/28 vs. Lehighton
9/4 vs. Schuylkill Haven
9/11 vs. Marian
9/18 vs. Exec Ed Academy CS
9/25 vs. Blue Mtn Area
10/2 @ Pottsville
10/9 @ North Schuylkill
10/16 vs. Panther VAlley
10/23 @ Selingsgrove
10/30 @ Pine Grove

Shenandoah Valley
8/28 @ Columbia Montour VT
9/4 @ Pine Grove
9/11 vs. Panther Valley
9/18 vs. Tri-Valley
9/26 @ Marian
10/2 vs. Minersville Area
10/8 vs. Schuylkill Haven
10/16 @ Nativity BVM
10/23 vs. Williams Valley
10/30 @ Mahanoy Area

Marian Catholic
8/28 vs. Palmerton
9/4 @ Panther Valley
9/11 @ Tamaqua
9/18 vs. Minersville
9/26 vs. Shenandoah
10/2 @ Tri-Valley
10/9 vs. Nativity BVM
10/16 @ Williams Valley
10/23 vs.Mahanoy Area
10/30 @Schuylkill Haven

Mahanoy Area
8/28 vs. Panther Valley
9/4 @ Catasauqua
9/11 @Pine Grove
9/18 vs. Schuylkill Haven
9/25 @ Williams Valley
10/1 vs. Nativity BVM
10/9 vs. Tri-Valley
10/16 vs. Shenandoah Valley
10/23 @Marian Catholic
10/30 vs. Minersville

Panther Valley
8/28 vs. Mahanoy Area
9/4 vs. Marian Catholic
9/11 @ Shenandoah Valley
9/18 vs. Greater Nanticoke Area
9/25 @Tunkhannock Area
10/2 @ Blue Mountain
10/9 @ Pottsville Area
10/16 @ Tamaqua
10/23 vs. Pine Grove
10/30 @ North Schuylkill

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LEHIGH TIRE

Harness Racing Tradition Continues at the 2026 Bloomsburg Fair

Harness racing has been part of the Bloomsburg Fair for generations, connecting one of Pennsylvania's oldest agricultural fairs with the state's history of horses, farms, breeders and racing.

The Bloomsburg Fair began in 1855 as a one day agricultural exhibition. As the fair grew, horse racing became an important attraction. Permanent fairgrounds were purchased in 1859 and a track was developed for racing. By the late 1800s, racing was drawing crowds and had become an established part of the annual fair.

That tradition continues in 2026.

Two year old horses will race Friday, September 25, and three year old horses will race Saturday, September 26. Racing begins at 11 in the morning both days.

Bloomsburg can start four horses across the starting gate with one trailer, allowing a maximum of five horses per race. When more than five horses enter a class, the class is divided into two groups.

There are four classes each day with Group A and Group B series. They include Filly Trotters, Stud and Gelding Trotters, Filly Pacers, and Stud and Gelding competition.

Every horse must have been sired by a registered stallion standing in Pennsylvania, continuing an important connection between fair racing and the Pennsylvania horse breeding industry. All races are one mile dashes.

Racers must also show an acceptable qualifying line at a pari mutuel track. Two year old trotters must meet a time of 2 minutes and 10 seconds and two year old pacers must meet 2 minutes and 6 seconds. Three year old trotters must meet 2 minutes and 8 seconds and three year old pacers

must meet 2 minutes and 4 seconds.

All two and three year old fair starters must have two full days off between races. Sire Stakes are raced in separate colt and filly divisions.

Starting fees are 75 dollars for Group A and 50 dollars for Group B. These fees are paid to the host track and added to the purse.

Purse distribution is based on the number of starters. With five or more starters, the distribution is 50, 25, 12, 8 and 5 percent. With four starters it is 50, 25, 15 and 10 percent. Three starters receive 60, 30 and 10 percent, while two starters receive 65 and 35 percent. A walkover receives 100 percent.

Championship points are awarded in order of finish at 35, 25, 15, 10, 8, 5, 4 and 2 points. Horses must have at least five starts to be eligible for a championship, and only points earned in Group A count toward the fair finals.

A horse winning three of four starts in Group B must advance to Group A. A horse finishing first or second in Group A must remain in Group A for its next two starts.

More than 170 years after the first Bloomsburg Fair, harness racing continues to bring Pennsylvania agriculture, competition and tradition together at the fairgrounds.

Dan and Galla will provide entertainment between races on both days.

Friday, September 25 at 11 in the morning
Two Year Old Harness Racing
Saturday, September 26 at 11 in the morning
Three Year Old Harness Racing

Madonna Del Monte and Saints of Cilento 127th Festival

Our Lady of Peace Parish at Most Precious Blood Church held their 127th Madonna Del Monte and Saints of Cilento Festival from August 7-9.

Friday and Saturday was highlighted by various food items as well as a bake sale, tricky trays, and games for children.

Friday also featured entertainment by Jim Cerminaro who performed Italian favorites.

Saturday, legendary local band Kartune performed before a crowded audience.

Sunday, the annual procession was held through the streets of Hazleton. A dozen cinte were carried in the procession. The carrying of the cinte (elaborate candle houses) is a Southern Italian tradition. The procession was then followed by a Benediction at the church grotto.

Sunday also had a pasta and meatball dinner with entertainment by local musician Joe Bogwist.

WEATHER WORD SEARCH

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

WORD LIST

BALMY	FROST	RAIN	SUNSET
BAROMETER	GALE	OVERCAST	SUNSHINE
BLIZZARD	HAIL	RAINBOW	TEMPERATURE
CHILLY	HUMIDITY	SHOWERS	TIDE
CLOUDY	HURRICANE	SLEET	TORNADO
COLD	PRESSURE	SNOW	WIND
FOG			

Hazleton Area Hall of Fame to Hold 21st Induction Ceremonies

"The Hazleton Area Sports Hall of Fame will hold its 21st Induction Ceremonies on Sunday, September 20, 2026 at Capriotti's Palazzo. If you are interested in attending, please contact Joe Clark at (570) 454-9727 or jclark14@ptd.net. The deadline to purchase tickets to this years event is Friday, September 11, 2026. You can also contact Joe Clark if you would like to purchase an advertisement to the program."

"The Hazleton Area Sports Hall of Fame will be inducting the following honorees into the Class of 2026"

Dennis Buchman
Carla Edwards
George Evancho
Shawn Gallagher
Chris Jais
Allison (Sampson) McElroy
Mark Otterbine

HAZLETON AREA
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John "Pilsey" Petrilyak, Jr.
Adam Sieminski
Steve Stallone
Nate Staruch
Jessica (Herring) Witek
Mackenzie Yori

Senator Dave Argall
29th District Pennsylvania Senate
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dargall@pasen.gov
Schuylkill, Carbon and Luzerne counties

Need Help? Call my Offices!

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

Need assistance with a state-related issue? Call my district offices! Our common requests include providing help with property tax/rent rebate forms, driver's license applications, obtaining birth certificates, filing unemployment, and retrieving unclaimed property. Since January, we have helped file nearly 600 property tax rebates and 250 birth certificate applications for the residents of Carbon, Luzerne, and Schuylkill counties.

If you ever have a state government related question or problem, we're here to help! The locations and contact information for my district offices in Hazleton and Mahanoy City with Rep. Dane Watro, Pottsville with Rep. Tim Twardzik, and Weissport with Rep. Doyle Heffley can be found by visiting www.senatorargall.com/district-offices/.

On July 26, Emma Boehmer, Connor Kofluck and Pandora Teter were awarded the Nathan Fetterman Scholarship Award in Mt. Zion. Congratulations Emma, Connor, and Pandora! The winners are shown with Reverend Phil Smith of Mt. Zion Lutheran Church.

Hazleton Area Public Library Receives $8,000 Slice of Literacy Grant from the Pizza Hut Foundation

The Pizza Hut Foundation, in partnership with the iconic Book It!® reading program, has awarded a $8,000 Slice of Literacy Grant to the Hazleton Area Public Library, recognizing the organization's outstanding commitment to promote literacy and empower people of all ages in the local community.The grant supports the Pizza Hut Foundation's goal to expand the Pizza Hut Book It!® reading program through additional literacy-focused initiatives. The Book It!® program, which has inspired generations of young readers for over 40 years, continues to fuel literacy efforts nationwide through customer donations and community partnerships.

The funds will help the Hazleton Area Public Library expand its literacy programs and continue its mission to make learning accessible to everyone.

"We're honored to receive this generous grant from the Pizza Hut Foundation," said Samantha Palermo, Head of Youth Services at the library. "This support will allow us to reach even more members of our community and spark a lifelong love of reading. We're grateful for the partnership and excited about what's ahead."The Pizza Hut Foundation's Slice of Literacy Grant Program supports nonprofits located within 15 miles of a Pizza Hut restaurant that are actively working to improve literacy outcomes in their communities. For more information about the Pizza Hut Foundation and its programs, visit PizzaHutFoundation.org.

Eric Mintel Investigates: Paranormal Projection Room

Step into the unknown with Eric Mintel Investigates: Paranormal Projection Room at the Hazleton Area Public Library, 55 N. Church Street, Hazleton, PA 18201. Join Eric Mintel, host of the hit television series Eric Mintel Investigates, seen nightly at 7:00 PM on the Pocono Television Network, as he shares fascinating local investigations into ghosts, UFOs, Bigfoot, haunted locations, and other unexplained mysteries.

From 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM, Eric will present exciting video clips and compelling evidence of strange activity captured throughout the Pocono Mountains and beyond, along with behind-the-scenes stories from the investigations.

Registration is required, so reserve your seat today by calling the Hazleton Area Public Library at (570) 454-2961. Don't miss this unforgettable evening of history, mystery, and the paranormal!

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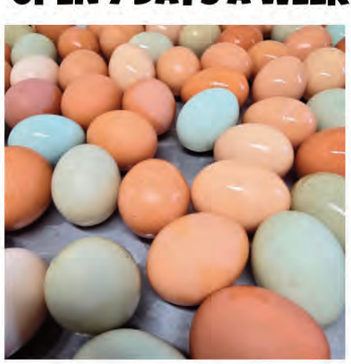

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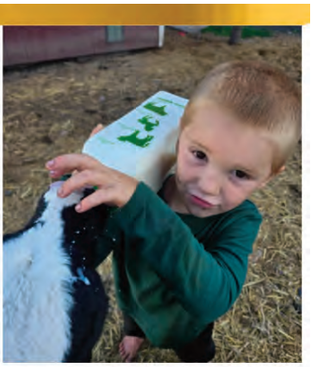

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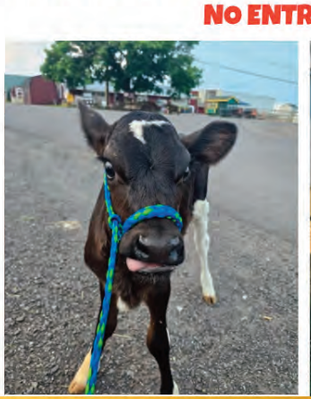

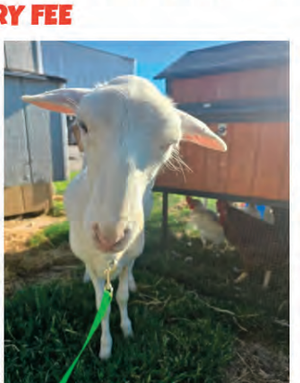

Trooper Anthony Petroski III
Public Information Officer
Community Service Officer
Pennsylvania State Police
Troop N - Hazleton

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.
$10,000 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!

Representative Jamie Walsh
117th Legislative District
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
717-260-6474
RepWalsh.com / Facebook.com/RepJamieWalsh

I Voted No on Unsustainable State Budget Plan

By State Rep. Jamie Walsh (R-Luzerne)

While the 2026-27 state budget passed by the House of Representatives on July 12 reined in Gov. Josh Shapiro's appetite for overspending, it still spends too much and sets the Commonwealth up to have its reserve funds completely depleted in two years.

I voted "no" on the $50.8 billion spending plan because it does not stay within the confines of what the state generates each year in terms of revenue.

I was also particularly frustrated about proposals left on the table regarding the way in which local municipalities address plans for proposed data centers.

I had hoped budget negotiations would have forced movement on Senate Bill 1345 to give municipal leaders an option to place an 18-month moratorium on new data center development; House Bill 2496 to create a zoning consideration period for data centers; and House Bill 2198, which would repeal the data center tax exemption and generate millions of dollars in revenue for Pennsylvania. This would have helped fill some of the "gap" between expenditures and revenue.

In addition to neglecting important data center legislation, this budget underfunds rural schools like those in our district. This misstep could force smaller school districts to make decisions that, in the end, hurt students.

Overall, the budget is a mixed plan with some worthwhile expenditures like increased funding for career and technical education and retired law enforcement officers. However, it also underfunds rural schools and defers over $1 billion in payments to Managed Care Organizations. These are decisions that only hurt our communities.

Eventually, these budget decisions will result in a massive tax increase, and I just know we could and should do better. Families sit around their table and make difficult budget decisions every day, and the state needs to do the same. I could not vote in favor of a proposal that defers payments to make the current budget look better but will lead to large tax increases in future years.

COME IN, WE'RE OPEN!

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EYE CARE SPECIALISTS

August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month: Start the School Year with Healthy Vision

By: Donna Thornton - Physician Liaison, Eye Care Specialists & Northeastern Eye Institute

It's hard to believe that summer is already beginning to wind down. Before long, backpacks will be packed, lunch boxes filled, and school buses will once again be making their morning rounds. While parents are busy checking off school supply lists, there's one important item that is often overlooked—making sure your child's eyes are ready for the classroom. August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month, making it the perfect time to schedule a comprehensive eye examination before school begins. Good vision plays a critical role in a child's ability to learn, yet many children struggle with vision problems without anyone realizing it. In fact, experts estimate that as much as 80 percent of learning during a child's early school years is presented visually. Reading, writing, using computers, seeing the classroom board, participating in sports, and even interacting with classmates all depend on healthy vision.

One of the biggest misconceptions parents have is believing that a school vision screening is the same as a comprehensive eye exam. While school screenings can identify some vision concerns, they are designed to catch only a limited number of problems. They often check how clearly a child can see at a distance but may miss issues such as eye teaming, focusing difficulties, depth perception problems, eye movement disorders, or certain eye diseases. A comprehensive eye examination performed by an eye care professional evaluates the overall health of the eyes as well as how well they function together.

Children don't always realize they have a vision problem because they assume everyone sees the way they do. Instead of complaining that they can't see, they may simply struggle in school or develop behaviors that seem unrelated to their

eyesight. Parents and teachers should watch for signs such as squinting, sitting very close to the television, holding books unusually close, frequent headaches, rubbing the eyes, covering one eye, losing their place while reading, avoiding reading altogether, poor hand-eye coordination, or declining grades. Sometimes what appears to be a lack of attention or difficulty concentrating can actually be an undiagnosed vision issue.

As students head back to sports practices this month, eye safety is also worth remembering. Protective eyewear designed specifically for sports can significantly reduce the risk of serious eye injuries during activities such as baseball, basketball, racquet sports, hockey, and many other recreational activities. Regular eyeglasses are not designed to protect the eyes from impact during sports.

Healthy vision begins long before children enter the classroom. Encouraging outdoor play, limiting excessive recreational screen time, and providing a balanced diet rich in colorful fruits and vegetables all contribute to healthy eye development. Research also suggests that spending time outdoors each day may help reduce the risk of childhood nearsightedness, or myopia, becoming worse.

As families prepare for another exciting school year, adding an eye exam to the back-to-school checklist can make a meaningful difference. Detecting vision problems early gives children the best opportunity to succeed academically, participate confidently in activities they enjoy, and experience the world with clear, healthy vision.

A new backpack and fresh school supplies help children prepare for success—but clear vision may be the most important school supply of all!

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Big Win for Private Property Rights

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

Every Pennsylvanian deserves to feel safe and secure on their own property. In a unanimous decision, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court upheld the strong privacy and property protections provided by the state constitution.

The court's ruling, which came in a case involving two hunting clubs and the Pennsylvania Game Commission, is a major victory for private property rights across the commonwealth. It places needed restrictions on warrantless searches and correctly overturns the court's 2007 decision in Commonwealth v. Russo.

Specifically, the court held that "Article I, Section 8 provides Pennsylvania citizens with greater protection than the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution as it relates to the open fields of any landowner that has demonstrated a reasonable expectation of privacy by taking sufficient steps to exclude intruders therefrom." State game wardens have an important and dangerous job, which we all respect. However, the court emphasized that the Game Commission must also respect the lawful rights of property owners.

Veterans Temporary Assistance Available

The Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) is reminding veterans of the Veterans Temporary Assistance (VTA) program, which provides financial relief for necessities of life such as food, shelter, fuel and clothing.

Since the inception of the VTA, DMVA has awarded more than $8.6 million to assist over 9,650 service members, veterans and their families with emergent financial needs.

Eligible veterans or their survivors can qualify for an amount not to exceed $1,600 in a 12-month period. For more information about the program's criteria, eligibility and needed documentation, go to Veterans Temporary Assistance on the DMVA website under state veterans programs.

To apply, eligible veterans should contact the county veterans affairs director in the county in which they reside.

New Telemarketing Law to Benefit Consumers

Telemarketing companies will be prohibited from "spoofing" and limited in when they can make calls under a new law unanimously approved by the General Assembly and signed into law by the governor.

Act 47 of 2026 specifically bans telemarketing companies from faking their name or spoofing a local phone number on a caller ID in an attempt to trick people into answering. It also limits calling hours to between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday, instead of the current 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Calls will be prohibited on Sundays and holidays as well.

Additionally, the law requires clear, upfront disclosures about the purpose of the call, the telemarketer's identity and what's being sold. It requires immediate cessation of a solicitation call when requested and expands to prohibit all deceptive or abusive telemarketing acts.

The law takes effect in 90 days.

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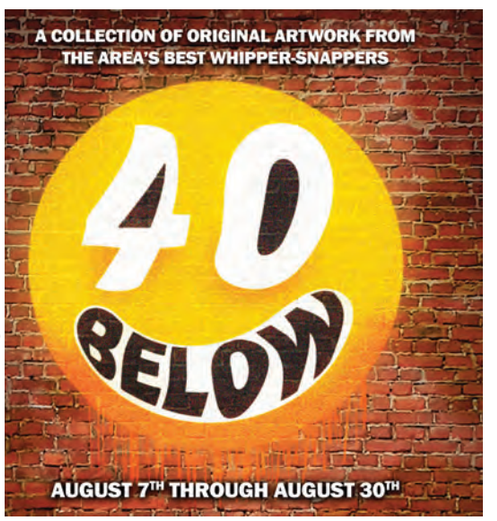
1940s Style Dance in Freeland on Friday Sept 4

Submitted by: Frank Balon

The annual 40's Style Big Band Swing Dance is scheduled for the Freeland Public Park on Friday September 4th from 6 to 8 pm. The popular event features the famed Hazleton Philharmonic Big Band under Bob Lagana. The band is an authentic 15 piece swing era ensemble and plays many swing favorites by Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller and the Dorsey Brothers. In recent years, swing dance enthusiasts have come to the event from all over NE PA. Many attendees also dress in 1940s style dress! Freeland Rec Board will have various food choices for sale. If you would like to reserve a table at the dance, call or text Frank Balon at 570-436-0604. If there is no answer, please leave a message.

Hazleton Art League Opens "40 Below" Exhibition Aug. 7



The Hazleton Art League will open its newest exhibition, 40 Below, with a public reception on Friday, Aug. 7, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Hayden Family Center for the Arts, 31 W. Broad St.

Curated by Charli Lentz and Emalie Marya, 40 Below features original artwork by artists under the age of 40. The curators describe the exhibition as "a collection of original work from the area's best whippersnappers." A floral arrangement created by Hazleton Area Garden Club member Kathleen Leonard will be raffled during the reception to benefit the Art League. An artists' talk will be held Sunday, Aug. 9, from 1 to 3 p.m. The exhibition remains on view through Aug. 30.

The Art League's Summer Art Camp continues through Aug. 14, with openings still available for children ages 6 to 14. Nationally acclaimed portrait artist Gavin Glakas will also lead a two-day portrait workshop for adults and teens on Aug. 8 and 9.

Sponsorship opportunities are available for the 4th Annual Color the Course Golf Tournament, to be held Friday, Sept. 25, at Valley Country Club.

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

Affordable Adventures

By: Shari Roberts with Beverly Brobst

Everheart Museum

1901 Mulberry Street • Scranton, PA 18510 • (570) 356-7186 • everheart-museum.org

If you followed my Adventures in *"The Freeland Progress"* for 8 years, then you know what it's all about. I like to grab a friend (or two) and head off somewhere for some good, cheap fun to share with you. For my first Adventure with *"The Anthracite Post"* I got a hold of my friend Bev who enjoys visiting different places. It was a nice Friday at the end of July and I had the day off of work. When I asked Bev if she wanted to go, she said "Yes, but if we're going to Scranton, can we also go to Krispy Kreme". I said "sure, and I'd also like to stop at Designer Shoe Warehouse to look for sneakers". I struck out on finding a new pair of sneakers, but we did pick up some Krispy Kreme's and also brought back a dozen for Lee Ann.

We also stopped for a late lunch. The food was so-so and the service was very slow, so I don't feel the place is worth mentioning.

Anyway, back to the Everheart. I've been there a few times in the past and it really is an informative museum to visit. They currently have an "America 250: We the People" exhibit celebrating America's 250th Birthday which runs until September 7th.

Eugene Dubinsky, (b. 1933) Model of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, 2026
Various Materials
On loan from Eugene Dubinsky

Reproduction of the Declaration of Independence, ca. 1990s
Paper, ink
Museum Purchase.
94.82

The exhibit includes artifacts from the American Revolutionary War Era, through the trials and tribulations that challenged the new nation, and onto the present, encompassing original flags, clothing, weapons, paintings and prints highlighting the nation as it turns 250.

Focuses include the infamous Sullivan's March through Northeastern PA, replicas of Colonial Williamsburg and reproduction revolutionary war weapons and clothing, and original paintings and prints by local master John Willard Raught, and by modern masters Robert Indiana, Ed Rusch and Jacob Lawrence, among others.

This Colonial Williamsburg Village was made by Eugene Dubinsky using official Architectural Plans supplied by the Library of Congress.

There are several other exhibits in progress and more to come, which can be viewed on the website.

The Everhart Museum is open Wednesday thru Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. *Open 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Thursdays Memorial Day through Labor Day. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Office hours are Monday to Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Closed Saturday and Sunday.

You can contact the museum at info@everhart-museum.org or by calling (570) 346-7186 ext. 10.

Museum Only admission
Adults: $10.00
Seniors (60+) and Students: $5.00
Children 12 and Under: Free
Everhart, NARM, and ROAM Members: Free
SNAP, WIC, and EBT Recipients: Free
Active and Retired Military and Family: Free

Museum and Office admission
Adults: $20.00
Seniors (60+) and Students: $10.00
Children 12 and Under: $10.00
Everhart, NARM, and ROAM Members: $10.00
SNAP, WIC, and EBT Recipients: $10.00
Active and Retired Military and Family: $10.00

Groups of 15 or more must notify the Museum in advance.

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Freeland's History & Future Awaits 150th Spectators

By: Bobby Maso, Freeland 150th Committee President

The borough of Freeland has been celebrating its Sesquicentennial (or 150th) anniversary for over a year now, and the celebration isn't over yet.

In fact, now is the perfect time for native Freelanders and visitors alike to learn all about and experience the unique history as well as potential future of this small, but mighty town.

The Past

Freeland officially became 'Freeland' on Monday, September 11th, 1876. That is when this great piece of small town America went from Freehold to Freeland, and forever laid out its destiny as a jewel on the mountain, and a steady, constant place for community, exploration, and hard work.

Since early 2025, the Freeland 150th Celebration Committee has promoted the many interesting facts and stories of the town's early days. Among the best methods used to accomplish this has been the now annual History Walk & Cemetery Tour- a joint effort between the committee and the Freeland Historical Society. Guides lead groups to the most historic sites in Freeland and detail the full history of each locale, providing vintage photos and the ability to view the properties up close. Meanwhile, the Cemetery Tour brings tour takers right to the gravesides of town founders and notable figures, providing comprehensive accounts of their lives and contributions. This year's expanded tour will feature costumed actors portraying several of the key people connected to Freeland's development.

The next History Walk & Cemetery Tour will be Saturday and Sunday, August 15th & 16th. The History Walk runs Saturday only and kicks off at the Borough Building on Fern Street at 10 a.m., running about four and a half hours, not including a short break. While walking is a key component of the event, a bus will transport attendees to further stops on the route, cutting down the amount of walking. The Cemetery Tour is Sunday only, taking place at Freeland Cemetery, and begins at 1 p.m., running two to three hours. Registration is required for each event and can be done by visiting the 150th Committee Facebook page at FreelandPa150thCelebration and clicking the registration link. You can also register by e-mailing freeland150th@gmail.com or by calling 570-233-0204. The cost is $10 for the walk and $5 for the Cemetery Tour.

Freeland's unique past is also covered in history presentations jointly produced by the 150th Celebration Committee and the Freeland Historical Society. The next of these will be Sunday, August 23rd at 2 p.m. at the Borough Building. The program will be Bloody Sunday: The Shootout at St. Casimir's, covering the fatal meeting between rival church groups in 1894. Admission is $8 for Adults, $7 for Seniors and kids under 12. Proceeds benefit the 150th Committee.

Another history presentation will follow on Sunday, September 6th at 2 p.m. at the Borough Building. It will be entitled Freeland Meets Hollywood, detailing the motion picture production company that existed within Freeland in the 1950's and 60's. The date will be announced soon. Admission is same as listed above.

It has also been over 30 years since Freeland has had an updated history book. A new volume will be published by the 150th Committee later this year. A formal stage play will be produced to coincide with the release of the book. Details will be forthcoming in the following weeks.

The Future

Remembering the past is always important. One key reason is because it often enables us to have a clearer picture of the future. This will be best reflected from Sept. 10th-13th during Celebration Weekend, when Freeland boasts all that it has been, as well as what it looks to be. The festivities begin with the soft open night on Thursday, Sept. 10th from 5-9 p.m. That night only, craft and food vendors can set up free of charge in the Freeland Public Park. That same night, all residents and anyone with a connection to town are welcomed to gather inside the historic park pavilion to reminisce and share their favorite stories about Freeland, while enjoying great photo and memorabilia displays.

The borough will officially kick off its birthday celebration on Friday morning, Sept. 11th at 10 a.m. with a ceremony at the borough building. Local leaders, school students and dignitaries will be on hand to formally begin the town's next 150 years. *(cont'd pg 14)*

A Trail Worth Waiting For: Weatherly's Trail Connection is an Investment in the Future

By William M. Dempsey

You won't find some of the most beautiful places in northeastern Pennsylvania from behind the windshield of a car. You discover them beside creeks and streams, beneath hemlocks and pines, among rhododendrons and mountain laurels, and along historic railroad corridors that tell the story of our local area. Soon, residents and visitors will have an easier way to experience one of those places.

The planned multi-use trail connecting Weatherly to Penn Haven Junction may only add a few more miles to the map, but I believe its impact will be felt for generations. When completed, the trail will connect the borough directly to the Delaware & Lehigh Trail, giving residents access to one of Pennsylvania's premier trail systems while opening new recreational and economic opportunities for the community.

As someone who enjoys spending much of his spare time exploring trails throughout our area, I view this project as far more than another path through the woods. It's an additional link in a growing network that makes our natural areas more easily accessible and more inviting to both residents and visitors.

Trail projects of this size don't happen overnight. Before construction can begin, years are spent acquiring property, completing environmental studies, securing permits, designing the trail, and obtaining funding. It requires cooperation between local governments, conservation organizations, state agencies, property owners, and many other partners working toward a common goal.

Most projects never make it this far.

The confluence of Black Creek and Quakake Creek near the future Weatherly-to-Penn Haven Junction trail corridor. The planned trail will improve public access to this scenic area while connecting Weatherly with the Delaware & Lehigh Trail. Photo by William M. Dempsey.

According to Weatherly Borough, the project is being completed in two phases. The first phase includes approximately one mile of ADA-accessible trail beginning near the Weatherly Museum and appears to be complete, or almost complete. The second phase extends about four miles to Penn Haven Junction. The borough's current goal is to complete the project in 2027, although, like any major infrastructure project, that timeline will largely depend on continued progress and funding.

What excites me most isn't simply the trail itself—it's where it leads.

Once users arrive at Penn Haven Junction, they can continue north toward White Haven or head south through the scenic Lehigh Gorge on the Delaware & Lehigh Trail. Rather than being the end of a trail, Weatherly will become an integral component of a much more extensive outdoor recreation network that stretches for miles through some of eastern Pennsylvania's most scenic landscapes.

I also think it's important to understand what this project isn't.

In my view, the initiative isn't about turning Weatherly into another Jim Thorpe or overwhelming the borough with heavy tourism. Rather, it provides residents with an accessible and convenient place to walk, run, or ride a bicycle without having to travel elsewhere. Families gain another place to spend time together outdoors. Older adults have another accessible place to exercise. Young people have another chance to enjoy nature nearby.

Visitors will no doubt discover the small town of Weatherly, and that's a welcome development. Many will stop for a bite to eat before a ride or a hike or spend time visiting local businesses. That's the type of environmentally friendly tourism that benefits a community while preserving the character that makes it special.

What might be even more exciting is that this project represents only one piece of a larger vision. Additional trail connections continue to be discussed throughout the area, and each completed segment strengthens the entire network. Every connection creates new recreation opportunities, encourages more active lifestyles, and connects more people to the natural beauty of the Anthracite Region.

The natural beauty of our area is one of our greatest assets. Our mountains, streams, woods, and historic railroad corridors are resources many communities wish they had. Projects like these simply make those resources easier for us to enjoy.

Standing at the confluence of Black Creek and Quakake Creek recently, I couldn't help but wonder about the future. Years from now, most people won't remember all the hard work that will, in time, make this project a reality—planning meetings, grant applications, and engineering studies that made it possible. They'll simply enjoy the opportunity to step onto a trail, follow it to Penn Haven Junction, and discover another remarkable corner of what makes where we live so special.

To me, that's an investment worth making.

(William M. Dempsey is an outdoor writer, photographer, and member of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association.)

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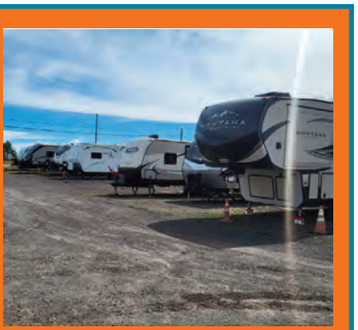

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Freeland's History & Future Cont'd

Later that day, from 4-10 p.m., vendors will continue at the park, alongside bands, and a special candlelight vigil in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks. This program will feature special guests to Freeland. Following the solemn tribute, we turn our attention back towards the celebratory with a birthday party for all those who have a September 11th birthday, as well a spectacular fireworks display to crown the night.

Saturday, Sept. 12th will include vendors and bands in the park all day. A significant highlight will be a large parade through Freeland, beginning at noon. Opening remarks will be made by special guests to town. All businesses, civic organizations, churches, and unique vehicles are welcome. We also want to especially invite anyone who has an ancestral connection to one of Freeland's founders or early families. Floats and banners are encouraged to make the parade even grander. The day's events will run from 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 13th will feature vendors and bands in the park from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and concluding remarks and benediction.

The entire weekend is intended to serve as a reminder that Freeland stands ready to embrace its next century and a half.

The Celebration

From the inception of the planning for Freeland's Sesquicentennial festivities, it has been the intent of the 150th Committee to make this the biggest, most significant observance in the history of town. While much care has been taken to achieve this, the committee wants to remind all residents, civic clubs and business owners that these celebrations are truly only important if others in town decide to attach importance to them. Almost everyone enjoys looking back at past accounts of large scale celebrations and marveling at the crowds they gathered and moments they created. An anniversary of this significance does not come along very often. It is a chance for everyone to literally experience history in the making and become part of accounts that future generations will one day read about. How do you want your business, your organization, or your very self to be remembered in those reflections? Do you want someone to look back decades from now and see that you participated, contributed and celebrated in a way that demonstrates your pride and appreciation for Freeland? We hope so. And if so, then know that through these Sesquicentennial celebrations, Freeland's history, as well as its future await.

FREELAND, PENNSYLVANIA

Celebrating 150 Years of History & Community (1876 – 2026)

CALLING ALL VENDOR'S, FOOD TRUCKS, And Organizations!

Be a part of our historic 150th Sesquicentennial Celebration. Showcase your business, crafts, or delicious food to visitors!

SOFT OPENING	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
Sept 10	Sept 11	Sept 12	Sept 13
Time: 5pm- 9pm	Time: 4pm-10pm	Time: 10am-10pm Parade at Noon North of 40 performance at 6pm	Time: 10am-5pm

CRAFT & MERCHANDISE VENDORS
- Handmade crafts, local goods, and unique merchandise
- Promote your local small business
- Flexible attendance: choose all days or select dates

FOOD VENDORS & TRUCKS
- Seeking diverse cuisines, treats, and beverages
- Great opportunity to feed hungry community crowds

Vendor Space Fee: **$10.00** per vendor stand (covers all or select days) No fee for non-profits

Setup Requirements: Vendors must provide their own tables, chairs, and canopies/tents. Please indicate if electricity is needed.

Flexibility: Participate for the entire 4-day celebration or pick individual days that fit your schedule!

SECURE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

For vendor applications, inquiries, and additional details, please contact:

Contact Person: Bobby Maso **Phone:** 570-233-0204 Alternate Kristen at 570-861-2255
Email: freeland150th@gmail.com

FREELAND, PENNSYLVANIA

Celebrating 150 Years of History & Community (1876 – 2026)

SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION — VENDOR/NON-PROFIT APPLICATION

Event Dates: September 11, 12, & 13 (Soft Opening: September 10) At the Freeland Public Park.
Vendor Space Fee: **$10.00** per vendor stand (covers all or select days) No fee for Non-profits
Requirements: Vendors must provide their own tables and chairs. Please indicate electricity needs below.

1. BUSINESS & CONTACT INFORMATION

Business Name:

Contact Name: **Phone Number:**

Email Address: **Mailing Address:**

Products / Services to be Sold or Displayed:

2. ATTENDANCE SCHEDULE & OPERATING HOURS

Vendors may choose to attend all days or select specific days.

Select	Day	Operating Hours
☐ All Days	**Full Event Pass** (Sept 10 – Sept 13)	As scheduled below
☐	Thursday, September 10 (Soft Opening)	Time: 5pm-9pm (setup starting at 3pm)
☐	Friday, September 11	Time: 4pm-10pm (setup starting at 2pm)
☐	Saturday, September 12. Parade at Noon	Time: 10 am-10pm (setup starting at 8am)
☐	Sunday, September 13	Time: 10am-5pm (setup starting at 8am)

3. LOGISTICS & UTILITY REQUIREMENTS

Do you require electricity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Important Guidelines:
Fee: $10 vendor fee must accompany this application to secure your space. (No fee for non-profit)
Equipment: Vendors are strictly required to provide their own tables, chairs, and canopies/tents.
Setup: Detailed setup and tear down instructions will be provided upon application approval. **All vehicles must be removed from the public park 30 mins before scheduled start time each day. All food vendors must present State license/permits.**

Vendor Signature:

By signing this form you release Freeland Borough and their entities along with the Freeland 150th Celebration Committee from all liability for any damage or theft of personal and business property.

HOSTING ORGANIZER CONTACT
Freeland 150th Sesquicentennial Committee
Contact Person: Bobby Maso
Phone:570-233-0204
Email: freeland150th@gmail.com
Alternate Kristen 570-861-2255

Nuremberg Community Vacation Bible School - with a twist

Submitted by: Rev. Phil Smith

Our theme was ***Junkyard Redemption - God's Master Plan To Remake Our Broken World***. Material included a Junkyard Cat - Miss Sarge. That gave us an idea. Instead of a puppet, how about a game: Pin The Tail On The Cat? Savannah Herring drew a cat on a poster board and tails for the game.

May our Lord be with you!

Wine HOPS & Road Stops

IT IS FESTIVAL TIME IN THE HAZLETON AREA!

The Annual Hazleton Rotary Wine & Beer Festival is happening on August 22nd at City View Park in Hazleton. This means it's time for an afternoon of sampling great beer, wine, & food. Here are a few simple rules to help you make the most out of it and end the day with your dignity still intact.

EAT SOMETHING FIRST
Going into a festival like this on an empty stomach is like entering a demolition derby in a shopping cart. You might survive but you're going to regret it.

DON'T TREAT EVERY SAMPLE LIKE A SHOT
It's a tasting festival, not spring break in 1997. Sip it and enjoy it.

DRINK WATER
Yes, water. That boring clear stuff. Have some between samples and your future self will be considerably less angry with you.

PACE YOURSELF
Those little pours look harmless until you realize you've had 17 of them.

And finally...

DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!
No explanation needed for this one.

-Jeff & Desiree Bonomo

Watch Jeff & Desiree talk about all things in the craft beverage world on Wine, Hops & Road Stops online at www.youtube.com/@drinkerguide and facebook.com/winehopsandroadstops

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A Thousand Times a Day (Part 12)

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.

Some stories deserve to be recalled first hand. As you read this following news clip, remember that it accounts for "one day" in **Sgt John Lehans** time at war.

Pfc George Guido Jr: of 658 Vine St, MMI grad, was sketched by Yank Magazine artist John Scott while serving with the 3rd Aux Surgical group at Isigny, 9 miles from the Vire River following the Normandy landing. The field hospital would eventually follow the fighting across France, into Belgium and Holland. His brother, **1st Sgt Edward Guido** is stationed in England.

Pfc George Uhrin: of Slope St, Drifton, received the Bronze Star in Luxembourg during fighting in January 26, 27, 1945 while serving in a communications outfit. He would later be sent to Austria to act as an interpreter between American officers and Russians. Brother **Michael Uhrin** is back from England, and **John Uhrin** is back in the US after being wounded twice in action in France and Germany.

Pvt Lloyd E. Eckrote: of 539 Johnson St, Received the Bronze Star while serving in the 967th Field Artillery Battalion. He went into action with the 1st Army in Normandy in June 1944, then was transferred to the 9th Army to push across the Rhine and north central Germany. From June 26th 1944 to April 30th 1945, Lloyd served in France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. His Bronze was awarded by Major General Parker at XIX Corps HQ on June 10, 1945.

Pfc John Spock: of 1129 Birkbeck St, age 24, was reported MIA on March 4, 1945 but was later rejoined with his unit. He enlisted June 6th, 1944, went to Europe in November and was with the 5th Inf Div when attacked during the Bulge at Christmas. In a letter home on March 3rd, he said he was relieved to be in a rest area after a month in Action. (also, info suggests John was from Sandy run and a MMI grad.) His cousin John Ondich, of Upper Lehigh was KIA on Luzon in the Phillipines, in Jan 1944.

S/Sgt William C. Wisdow: of Upper Lehigh, received the Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster for his part as a radio operator while dropping supplies to troops trapped in the "Bulge". His unit, the 438th Troop Carrier Group made drops over D-Day, in Belgiums operation "Market Garden", and into Germany, with missions to Bremen to Munich to VE day.

1st Lt James D. Boyle: of 538 Walnut St, Received the oak Leaf Cluster and Distinguished Flying Cross as navigator with the 8th Air Force flying B-17s over Germany and occupied Europe. Prior to enlisting, he was a law student at the University of Scranton.

Pct Louis (DeNoia) Dinovic: of 636 Ridge St, age 25, was WIA February 7th, 1945 while serving with the 11th Armored Div in an Infantry Battalion, attached to Patton's 3rd Army. He enlisted July 26th, 1944 and arrived in France in early January 1945. His brother **Pfc Michael Dinovic**, has been a POW since October 1944. Brother **S/Sgt Dominic Dinovic** is at Camp Lee, Va. And brother **Sm 1st Cl John Dinovic** is with the Seabees in the Alaskan Aleutians.

Freeland Soldier One Of Only 15 Americans Surviving Attack

A Freeland soldier, Sgt. John Lehan, was one of only 15 men accounted for out of a company (about 240 men) after American troops occupied the outskirts of Vesly, north of the Ay River in France, on Tuesday in the face of withering Nazi fire.

Following is an Associated Press dispatch written by War Correspondent E. D. Ball which describes the action, without a doubt one of the most severe in which American troops have taken part since the invasion began:

With U. S. Forces North of the Ay River, July 12. (Delayed) (AP)—Fifteen dust-caked soldiers came straggling to the rear today along a dirt road lined with dead men.

They were all who could be accounted for out of a company of infantry which attacked one position at 8:30 a. m. yesterday.

First it was snipers, then machine-guns and finally 88s.

Theirs was no Verdun, no Marne. The place they were attacking was Vesly, just a wide place in the road.

We were in the outskirts of Vesly last night because our men fought and died bravely.

Some of the 15 gave the details:

Staff Sgt. Joss Gordon, Binghamton, N. Y.:

"We pushed off at 8:30 towards that village. First off, we ran into snipers. They killed two of our lieutenants. Then we came smack up against machine-gun emplacements. They got our captain."

Pvt. Floyd Bew, Norfolk, Va.:

"After the machine-guns they hit us with a barrage of 88s. As we withdrew, there were more 88s."

Pfc. Daniel Crist, Shelby, Ohio:

"They killed a lot of us, but we got our share, as many or more than they did. Our captain was standing there throwing grenades like a wildcat. They shot him through the neck and he kept on chucking pineapples."

Pfc. George DePaulo, Quincy, Mass., had just joined the stragglers and this was the first he had heard about the shooting of his company commander.

"He is the finest officer that ever lived," said DePaulo. "I would have done anything in the world for that man."

"One of our lieutenants—he is from Georgia—got 13 holes through him when he went for a machine-gun nest in a house," said Cpl. Walker Bernardi, Bowler, Bowler, Wis. "They cut him down before he got there, but he let go his grenade and the Huns quit shooting."

Pfc. K. B. Mitchell, Rockingham, N. C., recalled that this 22-year old lieutenant had a brother in the parachute troops who was killed on D-Day.

"When we hit France the lieutenant told us about his brother," Mitchell said. "His brother was a lieutenant colonel. When we heard that the Germans shot him after he landed the lieutenant told us he had a score to settle. They got him, but not before he settled."

"Another lieutenant was a Montanan, also 22 and he is what we GI's call a right guy," Sgt. John Lehan, Freeland, Pa., said. "Now we have a score to settle ourselves."

"Yes, we'll get even with those pink-cheeked, fuzzy-faced sniping rattlesnakes," added Pvt. Vito Buffa of Brooklyn, N. Y. As he spoke he had his gaze fixed across the road on a blond stripling of a German—a sniper who had got it right between the eyes.

"A third one of our lieutenants who is from Chicago was shot through the head," said Pfc. Nelson Cusumano, Tampa, Fla.

Others from the shattered company were too weary to talk, but who seconded what their comrades had to say were Pfc. Sol Tepper, Brooklyn; Pfc. Rafaelle Degrogatis, Bronx, New York; Pvt. Richard Matthews, Springfield, Mass.; Pvt. Lester Weeks, Tupelo, Miss.; Pfc. Dalton West, Dnn, N. C., and Pfc. Jesse Plummer, Madisonville, Texas.

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The Korbs Celebrated Their 60th Wedding Anniversary

Grand Canyon 2009

Hazleton, PA 2026

Mike and Pat Korb have celebrated many important days together, but the beginning of the magic was August 13, 2016 when they became Mr. & Mrs. at St. Stephen's Byzantine Catholic Church, Euclid Ohio with a three hour mass and a big, boisterous reception with many humorous stories to follow.

The Korbs will celebrate 60 years together this August, 2026 with a celebration dinner with their children, Matthew and wife Jessie and daughter Kathleen. "Mike promised me a "life of adventure" and indeed, coming from small-town Ohio to years of adventure in many more different places than I ever imagined" says Pat. Mike adds, "We have survived the bad times together and enjoyed all the good times with continuous hope for more to come.'.

Mrs. Korb is the daughter of the late Rose and George Trubisky, Mr. Korb is the son of the late Maxine and Richard Korb

They have a son Matthew who lives with his wife Jessie in Los Angeles, California . Their daughter Kathleen resides in Palmyra, PA.

The Korbs have known each other since grade school, graduated in 1961 from Perry High School, Perry, Ohio but never started dating until 1963

Mr. Korb, a mining engineer, retired from DEP in May 2016 and Tetra Tech in 2026. Mrs. Korb is the retired Executive Director of Leadership Hazleton.

Both are still active community volunteers. They have lived in Perry, Ohio; Rolla, Mo; Hibbing, Minn; Oroville and Oakley, California, El Pao, Venezuela and several locations in Pennsylvania-Bethlehem and Ebensburg, PA as well as Hazleton, Wapwallopen and currently Sand Springs, PA.

A Veterans Journal #113

By Joseph Barna • Freeland
USMC, Korea 1952-1953

Bert Ruechel with Ryan Walkowski on the Zoom Call in Wisconsin and Joe Barna on the Zoom Call in Freeland.

I would like to tell of a reunion of two Marines, 70 years apart. We first met, briefly, during a battle in Korea, on a mountain called Bunker Hill. The second meeting was in November 2023, made possible with modern video cameras and the internet.

Several years ago, I was contacted by a young man from Wisconsin. To honor his grandfather, a Korean War Veteran, he wanted to interview Korean War Veterans and compile their stories into a book. The young man's name is Ryan Walkowski. Ryan traveled to Freeland, met at my home and videotaped an interview. After he spoke with me, he continued to New York to interview another Veteran. I have had reunions with Ryan several times over the last few years including in San Antonio TX in 2025 and here in Freeland for my 95th Birthday Party. He and a buddy drove to Freeland from Wisconsin.

Ryan co-authored his book "In Combat in Korea" with Veteran and Author Ed Gruber. The following is an excerpt from his book, in the words of Bert Ruechel, a Combat Marine from Wausau Wisconsin:

"I heard someone yell 'Can I get in your hole?' So of course, I said yes. He sat there for a little bit then picked up and shot that damn flamethrower off. He took everything out that was in front of me. With that flamethrower, nothing lives. It takes the oxygen out of the air. He sat there for a little while and got up and took off when there was a break in the fighting.

That was the last damn time anyone was going to jump in my hole. He took off and I took the brunt of it. I thought, no more of that. They really started shelling and firing our on my position thinking that flamethrower was still here. I could hear and see the mortars falling all around me. No more shooting flamethrowers out of my hole. Christ you want to talk about scary!"

To be continued.

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