

# Neighbors

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Looking Up:

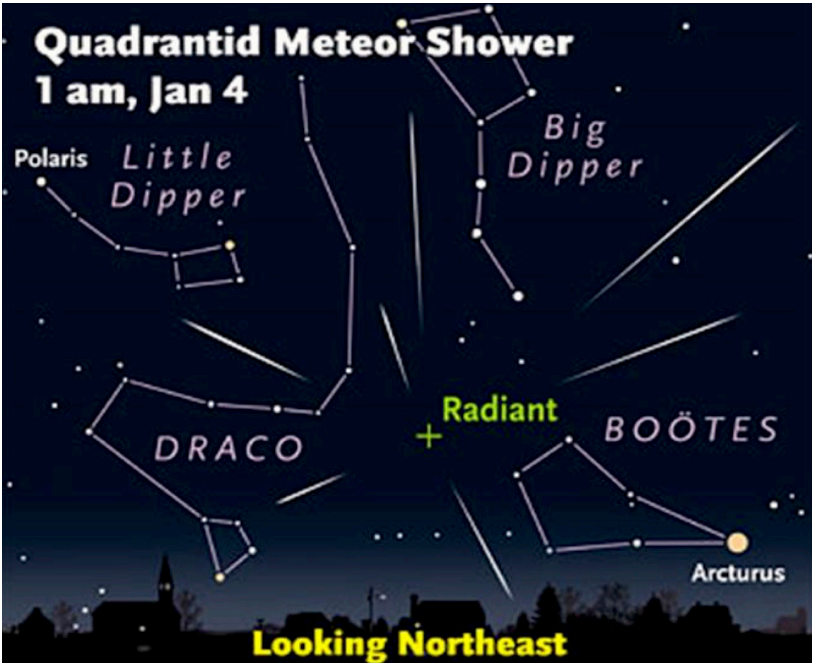
Friends Can Make the Cold Seem Unimportant

By Bob Grindle

I have read that the stars in the Southern Hemisphere, long before the advent of modern lighting and large cities, were so abundant that islanders of the southern seas—Australian aborigines, many of the cultures of the African continent, and the native civilizations that predated Argentina, Peru and Chile in South America—actually had names for the dark spaces between the stars. I don’t know about you, but this old mind is blown away by that thought. I sometimes think that old minds getting blown around—rather like tumbleweed on a bit of Midwestern prairie—is a healthy way to refresh curiosity, amplify one’s concern for our habitat and maybe even recharge a person’s tolerance for seeing things from different point-of-view.

On those occasional “paint nights” (I don’t know if you’ve ever done one, but I have, and they’re rather a good time), when part of the assignment is to paint a night sky, people can be a little timid when it comes to filling in the stars...a star here, a star there and so it goes. Ahhh, a sky so filled with stars that the dark spaces are the exception rather than the rule. That would be a pleasure. Paint away...wouldn’t that be fun. Stars everywhere, just the way the Cosmos intended. In the meantime, we’ll have to settle for what we think we know.

A few nights ago, after having dinner with friends, my wife Lin and I went back to their house in a valley here in eastern Connecticut to continue the conversation, eat dessert, and perhaps have a nightcap. When leaving their house, it was a cold and blustery night, and the sky over the valley was full of stars. It was a busy and enchanted sky...except...to the south was a faint glow of casino light pollution; to the east a bit of Walmart light pollution; the



west wasn’t bad since hills blocked the lights that crowd up from the Windhams; and in the north there wasn’t much to see anyway due to a rather close line of trees. After returning home from dinner, we both stood out on our own porch in the cold and paused to appreciate what seemed a very special and rather unpolluted night sky. ...Ahh, there was Sirius, the Dog star in Canis Major, at the foot of Orion... and then Canis Minor, with its bright star Procyon, just below Gemini and the twins, Castor and Pollux. The sky can seem a very crowded and remote place sometimes, rather like a busy street in the city until you see a familiar face, and then perhaps you notice a friend, and it feels much more inviting. No matter whether it’s the stars, or patrons in a shop, or travelers at a bus stop, or passersby in the neighborhood, it doesn’t take long to chase the cold away

in the warm embrace of familiarity. I think it all starts with making the effort to get to know what’s going on around us.

I’m not sure if my memories of the skies of old are as accurate as I think I recall, but a recent article in the Wall Street Journal included the Indiana Dunes Park on the shores of Lake Michigan in its list of the current 100 best places on Mother Earth to look up and enjoy stargazing. I do remember, growing up in northeastern Indiana, that campsites in what was then just a State Park—it’s a National Seashore now—were only a dollar, and that was a great vacation bargain for a large, scrimping family. Not only could you exhaust 7 children during the day, but could keep them pretty well fascinated at night with stories of the sky overhead. Even all those years ago, the park rangers were a great source of information and inspiration. Perhaps we’ve all grown just a bit jaded in this age of information overload, but I think just about anyone laying on their back under a sky full of thermonuclear furnaces blazing millions of degrees hot and shedding light that travels billions of miles, over tens of billions of years might just forget the cold for a bit and grow a bit misty-minded at the scope of very existence.

Venus will be our dominant morning star all month, sitting high in the Southeastern sky early in the month and about midway in the South-Southeastern sky by end of month. A few days before the end of the month, Venus and Jupiter and Antares will form a line in the Southeastern sky just before the dawn of January 26th. Brilliant Venus on the left, respectably bright Jupiter in the middle, and Antares, a red supergiant of a dying star that has burned up all its hydrogen and is now fusing heavier elements, whose name means anti-Mars because the ancient often mistook it’s reddish color for the red planet Mars.

If you’re up in the wee hours of January 4th, heading home from a second shift job or taking a break on a third shift job, or feeding the baby, or having a sleepless night, or maybe laying out just looking at the sky, there’s a slight chance you’ll be treated to a meteor streaking from high in the Northeastern sky. This is the Quadrantid Meteor Shower. This youngest of meteor showers is now often referred to as the Boötids since they radiate from the Boötes constellation.

Here’s hoping that whatever the reason you find for looking up, you find yourself stopping in your own mental tracks, just like the first time you heard a piece of music that touched your heart, or tasted something truly wonderful, or saw a familiar face in an unfamiliar place and felt that smile of comfort that can chase away the cold. Friends are like that.

HISTORIC VENUE FOR PERFORMANCE & EVENTS

Happy  
New Year  
2019!

**ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES**  
*INDIE / FOLK*  
**KALA FARNHAM**  
Saturday, January 12th | 7:30pm

**FILM SERIES**  
*BIOGRAPHICAL DRAMA*  
**“MAUDIE”**  
Friday January 18th | 7:30pm

**ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES**  
*INDIE / ROCK*  
**PATTI ROTHBERG**  
Saturday, January 19th | 7:30pm

**JAZZ SERIES**  
**SARAH HANAHAN - PART-2**  
Saturday, January 26th | 7:30pm

**UPCOMING SHOWS**  
**02/03: VOICES OF CONCINNITY** (CHAMBER ENSEMBLE)  
**02/09: AN EVENING WITH KEYBOARDIST BOB MALONE**  
(SINGER/SONGWRITER AND KEYBOARDIST FOR JOHN FOGARTY)  
**02/29: GRASS ROOTS** (BLUEGRASS)

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**APRIL 13, 2019**  
**An Intimate Performance**  
**WITH TOM RUSH**  
*A BENEFIT CONCERT TO SUPPORT EC-CHAP*  
**3:30PM & 7:30PM**  
TICKETS: [THEPACKINGHOUSE.US/UPCOMING](http://thepackinghouse.us/upcoming)

RECURRING MONTHLY EVENTS

**“BLUEGRASS FEATURE”**  
**Every 1st Wednesday!**  
February 6th | 7:00pm

**“TALENT SHOWCASE”**  
**Every 2nd Wednesday!**  
January 9th | 7:00pm

**“SOCIAL DANCE”** *w/KELLY MADENJIAN*  
**Every 2nd Thursday!**  
January 10th | 7:00pm

**EC-CHAP FILM SERIES**  
**“Maudie”**  
**(PG-13). 2016.**  
Friday, Jan 18th | 7:30pm

**“EC-CHAP INFORMATION EXCHANGE MEETINGS”**  
Tuesday, Jan 15th | 7:00pm

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On the cover: Singer-songwriter Tom Rush is coming to The Packing House in Willington this spring. See EC-CHAP Performing Arts article on page 14.

Neighbors  
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The Purpose of Neighbors:  
-To encourage reading  
-To provide a place where ideas, writing, artwork and photographs of area residents can be shared  
-To encourage people to get involved in their communities  
-To begin to solve national and global problems on a local basis  
-To provide useful information  
-To serve the inhabitants and environment of our region

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# We Need Each Other

By Loretta Wrobel

As the new year begins, I am grateful for having survived the past two roller coaster years. Since the 2016 election, we have been bombarded with incredible and often unimaginable news. Lately, while stirring my oatmeal preparing for breakfast, I heard the morning news reporting a man probably walking away without a sentence because he was not informed that he could not lie in court! I laughed and laughed. What a joke. I waited. And no, it was not a joke. In the afternoon, the paper reported the same shenanigans.



How civilized are we if we have to inform an adult that lying is not permitted in a courtroom? Any six-year-old knows that. Have we reached the nadir of human development by accepting that policy makers know less than a small child? What kind of a role model are we providing for the world when we operate in this bizarre fashion?

It dawned on me, if I continue to dwell on the increasing weirdness happening in our political scene, I will not maintain my sanity until the end of 2019. We know that the 2020 political campaign has begun. It is our plight to be subject to the barrage of the procession of candidates for two years. Our truth, alternate or regular, is that the presidential campaign never ends. Candidates come and go as we have to bear witness to their ridiculous media dancing and vying for our wallets.

How to survive the morning news that is unmoored to common sense and a forever presidential campaign? We need to support, help and comfort each other. We are in this descent with our politics and rules of civility being trampled and distorted into an Orwellian nightmare. This trauma encompasses a cast of characters that continue to devise new means to confuse, cheat and manipulate any semblance of order and fairness.

For me this is a challenging time, as the rules of respect and conduct are not adhered to by many elected leaders. I watch as the 45th President threatens the wall or a shutdown. What kind of any example is broadcast to the world about how our Country is functioning?

It would be easy to fall in step and behave in a similar fashion, bullying, using manipulation and fear to push my program. I am determined to stay with my values and not let anyone force me into acting in a manner that is hurtful, harmful and unkind. If we do not stay together and assist each other, we could easily take on the characteristics of these bullies, manipulators and kleptocrats.

My 2019 resolution is simple: ferret out the positive and connecting. Shifting the focus to acknowledging kindness, sharing and goodness is the remedy. There are many working for the benefit of others and that tends to get pushed out of view. Before the Christmas holiday, the monthly artist showcase at the Bread Box Theater in Willimantic featured the Mansfield Middle School Choir. They sang their hearts out and brought with them over 300 pounds of food for the food bank. Plus, over seven hundred dollars was raised for the soup kitchen that evening at the concert. These are the important events that are occurring frequently in our community and deserve more of our attention. This is what I crave hearing as I am stirring my oatmeal or brushing my teeth. Happenings like this are what give me hope and strength. It makes me feel in awe of the depth of our human capacity for caring and giving.

I am not willing to fall into despair and rage. By looking around and connecting with my neighbors and friends, I can gain the stamina to continue to work toward a just, honest and compassionate world.

I offer to you, as this new calendar year unfolds, to embrace balance in your life, and monitor what toxins and inhumanity you expose yourself to. It is a time where we need to nurture ourselves while staying aware and knowledgeable. When we practice sensitivity to our own selves, we have energy to work towards the kind of world we want.

There is much to be done and much that is being done. I think of the courage and fierceness of the students in Florida. I look at the bravery of the women who have spoken up about their abuses. I admire the teachers who support their students standing up for inclusion and protection. I applaud the young people who are shouting out about the need to address climate change, before the earth is irreversibly damaged.

Look around at your own community and see what is going on to support a gentler, healthier planet. A little bit of effort can make a difference. Remember to thank those who are using their time and skills for the betterment

of their community. Start looking around and you will spy many busy beavers who are often not acknowledged for their actions. I am energized when I focus on what is changing for the good rather than all the sad, bad and scary news with which we are inundated through our multimedia portals.

The more I focus on people who are involved with those who are struggling, the more I see potential for activities, people or projects that call to me. I don't feel isolated and alone. Once I am connected, it is easier to see the positive and get myself in a less grumpy and angry mood. This carries me through my day and makes my day meaningful.

I suggest you review your daily activities and evaluate how you get information and how it influences your behavior, moods and energy. I encourage you to share this with friends and neighbors. You may discover you have a lot in common with those around you. Enjoy the process, and who knows, it may lead to intriguing adventures in 2019.

I am all for connection and community and being involved in your piece of the planet. If we each do just a little, what a big difference it will make. Happy and Connected New Year!

## Lifelong Learning Begins Again

Submitted by Natalie Majewski

The Center for Learning in Retirement, otherwise known as CLIR, is one of the many programs offered through the University of Connecticut (UConn) Extension, part of the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources. CLIR is a lifelong learning program that provides meaningful and serious intellectual activities for adults of retirement age. Individuals from all walks of life are welcome and there is no educational requirement, just a desire for learning.

Each CLIR class is approximately 1.5 hours long and held in Vernon Cottage on the UConn Depot campus. CLIR covers a wide range of topics including agriculture, technology, psychology, culture, and so much more. It is not too late to register for one of the many classes available during the spring semester that starts in January. The fee for each semester is \$20 and there is no limit on the number of classes you can attend. Interested participants are also welcome to attend two free classes before deciding to join CLIR.

Michael Adams, a professor from Eastern Connecticut State University, will be teaching a course January 3rd on close up and macrophotography. On January 15th the President and Secretary of Windham County National Alliance of Mental Illness will be teaching a class on Mental Health Awareness. Cameron Faustman, the Interim Dean of the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, will be teaching a class on Food Insecurity on March 13th.

Interested in learning more and seeing what other classes CLIR has to offer? Visit [clir.uconn.edu](http://clir.uconn.edu), email [marilyn.diaz@uconn.edu](mailto:marilyn.diaz@uconn.edu) to get on our email list, or call us at (860)570-9012. We look forward to seeing you soon!

## Steve Schumacher at Top Shelf Gallery

Submitted by Janice Trecker

January- February Show at Hampton's Fletcher Library

Visions and Scapes, the January-February Show at the Top Shelf Gallery, will feature recent drawings, screen prints and acrylic paintings by Steve Schumacher. They are a mix of lively folk art inspired images and abstracts. Current paintings include imagined landscapes, topical scenes, and mystical allegories. He sees the Buddhist concepts of impermanence and imperfection and the Taoist philosophy of how life unfolds as inspirations.

Schumacher has drawn and painted since he was a child, particularly enjoying what he calls "free style" drawing that begins without any starting image in mind. He has also made and sold greeting cards, favoring clean black and white images, as well as screen printed apparel.

Schumacher spent a decade fabricating mixed media pieces that embedded his drawings with textiles, advertising images and found objects. He has subsequently had a solo show in Cincinnati, Ohio and appeared in three group shows including two in Cincinnati and the Gallery at the Wauregon in Norwich, Ct. while exhibiting regularly at the SOS Cincinnati show at the Cincinnati Art Academy.

Visions and Scapes opens January 5, 2019 at the Top Shelf Gallery inside Hampton's Fletcher Memorial Library, 257 Main St, Hampton. Info: 860 455 1086.



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# Resolutions, Seed Catalogues and Black Eyed Peas

By C. Dennis Pierce

Resolutions. The dictionary defines it as a firm decision to do or not to do something. Each year I entertain the idea of creating New Year’s resolutions and unfortunately, I find myself misguided and being short of accomplishment. I do remember, many years ago, in my late twenties I was bet a case of beer if I gave up smoking until Saint Patrick’s Day. Needless to say, the bet took place at a bar and it was very late on a New Year’s Eve. In the morning I was reminded of my wager, and as a person who’s true to his word, I gave up smoking...cold turkey. I look back at the event to some degree of fondness and gratitude. Today I am healthy, lack the addition of cigarettes and still do not recall who made this fortuitous wager. Why do I share this obscure tale? Probably just to suggest to readers that it is never too late to stop smoking and maybe for you, create some New Year’s resolutions. I have lost too many friends and recently, relatives to cancer because they have smoked most of their lives. So maybe this year you may consider it. Look at it this way. You will be giving yourself a raise since you won’t be purchasing cigarettes. Go ahead take the money and reward yourself.

While Christmas did not feel like Christmas this year, maybe because it fell on a Tuesday but I do know that New Years Day is close behind since I have already received this year’s Territorial Seed catalogue in the mail. Forty years of quality seed, the cover boasts. When I was a child, I would spend hours poring over the pre-Christmas, Sears catalogue, folding down pages and making dog ear’d lists in the toy section. Now I have shifted my focus to seed catalogues. You see how priorities change over time. This year I am trying my hand at potatoes again. Territorial has a potato called “masquerade”. This could be a good choice as it is versatile as mashed or roasted.

Shifting over to annual traditions and common myths, black eyed peas are a symbol of good luck. A way to start the New Years. In the Southern United States, eating black-eyed peas or Hoppin’ John (a traditional soul food) on New Year’s Day is thought to bring prosperity in the new year. The peas are typically cooked with a pork product for flavoring (such as bacon, fatback, ham bones, or hog jowls) and diced onion, and served with a hot chili sauce or a pepper-flavored vinegar. The traditional meal also includes collard, turnip, or mustard greens, and ham. The peas, since they swell when cooked, symbolize

prosperity; the greens symbolize money; the pork, because pigs root forward when foraging, represents positive motion. Cornbread, which represents gold, also often accompanies this meal. I have not been able to find locally grown black eyed peas but have been able to make a recipe with local pork. The following recipe was based on a recipe I obtained years ago from the New Your Times with a few minor changes.

- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2 pounds collard greens, cut in 1-inch ribbons (about 8 cups)
- 1 bunch scallions, cleaned and chopped, for garnish

Directions:

Drain peas and put them in a large Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed soup pot. Add ham hock or bone (if using slab bacon, cut it into 2-inch chunks), cover with 10 cups water and turn heat to high. Add salt, onion stuck with cloves, bay leaf, black pepper and allspice.

Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a gentle simmer. Skim off and discard any foam that rises to the surface. Simmer for 1 1/2 to 2 hours, until peas are tender.

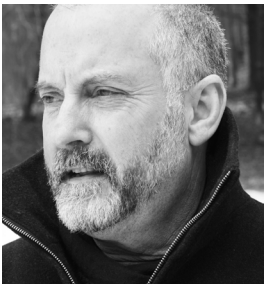
Throughout cooking, add water as necessary, always keeping liquid level 1 inch above surface, stirring with wooden spoon occasionally. Turn off heat. Check broth for salt and adjust seasoning. Mixture should be like a broth consistency.

With a pair of tongs, remove ham hock, ham bone or bacon. Chop meat and skin in rough pieces and set aside. Put a large wide skillet over medium-high heat. Add vegetable oil and heat until wavy. Add garlic and red pepper and let sizzle without browning. Add collard greens and stir to coat. Season with salt and add 1 cup water, stirring to help wilt greens.

Add chopped ham and reduce heat to medium, then cover with lid slightly ajar and cook until greens are soft, about 20 minutes. Check seasoning.

To serve, put greens and meat in low soup bowls, then ladle over hot black-eyed peas. Sprinkle with scallions.

As we enter into a new year, I once again want to say how grateful that this paper exists. To make this happen every month, writers keep on contributing without compensation and do so because it is truly a great paper that is based on commitment, love of life and a great way to give back to the community. As always, I would like to take the opportunity, once again, to thank you for taking the time to read this column and maybe even try your hand at a new recipe. No matter if you do or so not set New Year’s resolutions just take a moment to count the blessings that surround you. I have a close friend that sums it up the best by saying, “Every day is a gift”. If you enjoy this column, please take the opportunity to let me know. If you have a suggestion or a farm or a local grower you would like featured in a future column drop me a line at Codfish53@Yahoo.com. Peas be with you.



Black Eye’d Peas New Year’s Style  
Serves 6 to 8

- Ingredients:
- 2 pounds black-eyed peas, soaked overnight if possible
  - 2 pounds smoked ham hock, meaty ham bone or slab bacon
  - 2 teaspoons kosher salt
  - 1 large onion, peeled and stuck with 2 cloves
  - 1 bay leaf
  - ½ teaspoon black pepper
  - ½ teaspoon allspice
  - 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

## Our Community Calendar

Compiled By Dagmar Noll

**Ed.note:** The calendar starts here and winds its way through the paper.

**January 1, Tuesday - HAPPY NEW YEAR!**  
**Hiking:** First Day Hike, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. Guided hike. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov  
Festivities: Annual First Night Bonfire, 6:00p.m. - 7:30p.m. Jillson Square, 1 Jillson Square, Willimantic.

**January 2, Wednesday**  
**Skill Share:** Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. Authentic West African Rhythms, all ages, all levels. Drum provided if needed. BENCH SHOP, 786 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-423-8331

**January 4, Friday**  
**Dance:** Quiet Corner Contra Dance, 7:45p.m. - 11:00p.m. \$6-12. First Friday of every month. Live caller and band. No partner necessary Soft-soled shoes. Snacks welcome. Info: cannell.dm@gmail.com 860-4845204 quietcornercontradance.tripod.com

**January 5, Saturday**  
**Nature:** Winter Birds, 10:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Indoor discussion and outdoor walk. All ages welcome. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov  
**Skill Share:** Distaff Day, 10:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. Free. Bring a spinning wheel of

other fiber arts. Pot luck lunch. Windham Textile & History Museum, Dugan Hall, 157 Union Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org  
**Kids:** Crafts, 11:00a.m.-12:30p.m. Ages 3+. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org  
**Hiking:** Long-Distance Guided Hike, 12:30p.m. - 3:30p.m. 5-6-mile hike. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov

**January 6, Sunday**  
**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. Non-sec-tarian, Buddhist-style sitting and walking meditations, teaching and sharing. Knight House, ECSU. Info: 860-450-1464 dmang-um617@gmail.com

**January 7, Monday**  
**Kids:** Toddler Time Play Group, 10:30a.m. Stories, songs and activities at the Williman-tic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org

**January 9, Wednesday**  
**Hiking:** Senior Walk, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. Free. Easy walk not just for seniors. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov  
**Kids:** LEGO Fun!, 4:30p.m. - 5:30p.m. Free. Ages 7+ build and play with thousands of LEGO bricks. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org

**Show:** “Talent Showcase” – Come share your talents! 7:00pm. 2nd Wednesday of the month. Free and open to all ages. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Snacks and soft drinks available. “BYOB&F”TM (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Call in advance to sign-up (recommended) or sign-in at the door (time permitting). 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us  
**Skill Share:** Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 1/2)

**January 10, Thursday**  
**Meditation:** Start the New Year with Med-itation at the Library, 6:00p.m. - 7:30p.m. Workshop for teens and adults with Clare Vidich. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-465-3079 www.willimanticlibrary.org  
**Dancing:** EC-CHAP Social Dance Series with Kelly Madenjian (Ballroom, Swing, Latin, etc.). 7:00pm. 2nd Thursday of the month. \$10.00 at the door. Enjoy a lovely evening out social ballroom dancing. Each month will feature a beginner ballroom dance lesson followed by a fun social dance to all your fa-vorite ballroom hits. Viennese Waltz to West Coast Swing and everything in between. All levels welcome. Partner not required. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. www.thepack-inghouse.us.

**January 12, Saturday**  
**Skill Share:** Game of Logging Certified Training: Chainsaw Training for the Novice and Amateur, 8:00a.m. - 3:30p.m. \$100-120. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov  
**Kids:** Crafts, 11:00a.m.-12:30p.m. (See 1/5)  
**Hiking:** Long-Distance Guided Hike,

11:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. (See 1/5)  
**Live Music:** Kala Farnham with Glen Kendzia (Indie/Folk). Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Part of the EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00 door. Senior & student discounts. Snacks and soft drinks available. “BYOB&F”TM (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Info and table reser-vations call: 518-791-9474. www.thepack-inghouse.us

**January 13, Sunday**  
**Skill Share:** First Class is Apiary Series: Starting Your Hive, 1:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. The first of a yearlong series in hive management. Register: Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov management.  
**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 1/6)

**January 14, Monday**  
**Kids:** Toddler Time Play Group, 10:30a.m. (See 1/7)  
**Film:** “A Will for the Woods”, 7:00p.m. Free. Second Monday Film Series. Storrs UU Meet-inghouse, 46 Spring Hill Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-428-4867

**January 15, Tuesday**  
**Art:** Opening for “Visions & Scraps” at the Fletcher Memorial Library’s Top Shelf Gallery. Work by Steve Schumacher. 257 Main St, Hampton. Info: 860-455-1086  
**Information Exchange:** EC-CHAP Infor-mation Exchange Meeting. 7:00pm. Eastern CT Center for History, Art, and Performance (EC-CHAP). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT



# Thoughtful Development for Willimantic’s Main Street

Submitted by Barbara Wright

Where would you rather shop, stroll, meet friends, and eat dinner – at a big-box mall or on a charming, historic Main Street? In Willimantic, we’re fortunate to have a designated Historic District with scores of unique shops, eateries, and other amenities. Local residents benefit, and Willimantic is also a destination for visitors from the region and even other parts of the state.

In the last couple of weeks, readers of *Neighbors* may have seen a petition at the Coop supporting “protection of historic buildings at 819 and 833 Main Street.” Those addresses refer to the Hale and Hooker buildings. Why the need for “protection”? A developer has proposed demolishing these buildings, which contribute to the federal designation of Main Street as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

Investment in our Main Street could be great news. Of course we’d like more feet on the street, more life and commerce on Main Street. The developer’s plan calls for six-story buildings that will include storefronts as well as 350 market-rate apartments. But with no input from our community – or objection from Town Hall, apparently – the plan also calls for demolition of the Hale and Hooker buildings, two of the very buildings that contribute to our Historic District designation.

A group of concerned citizens is working to obtain more information on the developer’s plans, the role of the town, and alternatives to demolition. This group is not opposed to development, but it does want to see thoughtful development promoted by a solid developer. What does “thoughtful” mean? First and foremost, it means protecting Willimantic’s remaining historic landmarks and cultural heritage. But it also means consideration of the region’s economic drivers, the city’s current housing stock, demographic trends, and emerging needs. It’s not apparent that that homework has been done.

Second, the city needs a solid partner in development. That means a developer with a reputation for integrity and follow-through. It means someone with a commitment to doing right by the local community as well as by his (or her) balance sheet. It means someone who welcomes community input, listens carefully, and responds respectfully, understanding that strong community support will contribute materially to the success of the project. It means someone who is open about the business plan behind the project, including the market analysis, the funding required (and its sources), financial projections, risk management, and contingency plans for different economic scenarios. At the moment, however, we don’t even know who the developer is, much less anything about the architectural designs or the calculations behind the project as a whole. Transparency is urgently needed.

Some residents argue that we need to grab this opportunity for development right away or the developer will walk. This is a false choice – or should be, assuming the developer is reputable and the project stands on a firm footing. A change of this magnitude, with its potential for good or ill, shouldn’t be presented as an all-or-nothing proposition, and decisions can’t be made in haste. That doesn’t mean resolution needs to take years. A reasonable, inclusive process for sharing, community input, discussion, and negotiation needn’t take more than a few months.

The wording of the petition is important: it does not oppose development. It simply calls for “the protection, preservation, and enhancement of historic structures,” as recommended in the 2017 Plan of Conservation and Development. That can

happen in many ways. Historically authentic “restoration” – for example, the reinstallation of gas lighting – is neither possible nor desirable. But alternatives like rehabilitation, reuse, and incorporation of the Hale and Hooker into the design of the overall project should be actively considered. Willimantic offers exemplary models of reuse in WilliBrew, the Path Academy, the Savings Institute, Arts at the Capitol Theater, and many small storefronts. There are countless other examples around the country.

The concerned citizens group seeking to protect Main Street has contacted the State Historic Preservation Office and the CT Trust for Historic Preservation and is working with their representatives. The hope is that with their backing, Willimantic will be able to collaborate with the developer to find a “prudent and feasible alternative” to the current plan for demolition, one that retains as much as is reasonable of the existing structures. To reach that “prudent and feasible alternative,” however, residents need, first of all, basic information about the developer, the architectural plans (including adherence to the town’s Design Guidelines), and business plan. Second, we need opportunities for active involvement and input from the community. A development project of this scope and potential impact could be a huge plus – or a huge disaster. Demolition followed by no construction, should there be a serious economic downturn, would be the worst of all possible worlds.

A meeting in Hartford will likely be scheduled for early February. It will include representatives from the State Historic Preservation Office and CT Trust for Historic Preservation as well as the developer, the town, and representatives of the citizens group. The State’s Attorney General will also attend and will then decide whether to issue an injunction to prevent demolition.

We look forward to working in a productive and collaborative way with the town and the developer to respect historic values, preserve the cultural attractiveness of the town, and retain its character while enhancing economic activity. Ironically, the current plan threatens the very qualities that make our Main Street desirable, qualities that have been successful in attracting everyone--from teens, college students, and gen-xers to millennials and seniors--to revitalized city centers all over the country.

So if you’re at the Coop, or a neighbor knocks on your door, please sign the petition. Stay alert, keep informed, attend any informational meetings that may be called, and help us to promote Willimantic’s future while protecting the city’s past. The petition is also available at [Change.org](http://Change.org).

## Sign the Petition to Save Willimantic’s Historic Main Street!

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What’s the issue?**

A: A developer has been identified who wants to demolish the Hooker and Hale buildings on Main Street and build apartments. Our goal is to save these historic landmarks from demolition.

**Q: Why does it matter?**

A: Downtown Willimantic is an attractive regional center precisely because its period architecture stands in contrast to malls and box stores. The Hooker and Hale buildings (from 1886 and 1929) are critical to keeping the Historic District intact and our town’s character alive. Over the past 35 years, development plans for Willimantic have emphasized the need to protect what remains of our architectural heritage. Historic preservation is even more urgent now, as appealing downtown commercial areas gain popularity with

many demographics, from gen-x’ers and millennials to seniors.

**Q: Don’t we need development in Willimantic?**

A: Yes, we do! We’re not anti-development. But we need *thoughtful* development. Windham has a long history of vacant lots and depressed economic activity resulting from demolition.

**Q: What are the developer’s plans, exactly?**

A: The developer is proposing 6-story market-rate apartment buildings on the sites of the Hale and Hooker Hotels, on top of the Theater Guild and behind the Savings Institute, and on the vacant Chapman/Tin Tsin lot. The buildings will have retail/commercial spaces at street level and some 350 apartments and/or offices above, in compliance with zoning requirements for this area.

Because this project is privately funded, the town has little control over what happens, except for compliance with zoning regulations. The Windham Planning and Zoning Commission’s Design Guidelines discourage bland, Storrs-style buildings, but they’re just guidelines, not regulations. The town has no requirements for parking or affordable units.

**Q: So what can we do?**

A: Under the CT Environmental Protection Act, residents can voice their concerns by signing a petition, which then goes to the State Historic Preservation Office. The SHP Council then decides whether to bring the issue to the Attorney General. A temporary or permanent injunction may be placed on demolition while SHPO works with the developer to explore alternatives to demolition. The goal is to have the developer use the existing buildings. State and federal tax credits can help offset any additional costs.

**Q: Who is supporting this petition and the initiative to prevent demolition?**

A: Concerned residents of Windham and the surrounding area have begun this petition drive. Anyone in the region can sign and participate in related activities. However, Windham residents will have the most influence with town government. We encourage you to add your personal comments at [change.org](http://change.org) Petition to Protect the Historic Hale and Hooker Hotels. The petition is also at the Willimantic Food Coop.

**Q: Where can I get more information?**

A: Contact Jean de Smet at [j.desmet@att.net](mailto:j.desmet@att.net)

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# Rediscovering Goodwin State Forest

By David Corsini

Artists Open Studio is over for another year. During the two months before Open Studio, I made a few assemblages to add to my inventory, I developed new ways to display my work, dusted, cleaned and organized. This year at Moulton Court six artists opened their studios and more than 160 people visited. The reactions of people to my art varied greatly. Some did not say a word and only walked around in my studio and then walked out. Many expressed interest, laughed and declared me creative. And there were a few who seemed delighted to see my work.

Open Studio runs five days from 10AM-5PM and, because for the majority of that time there are no visitors, the days seem long and I am relieved when it is over. At the end of Open Studio, I am happy to have talked with some interesting people, to have made a few sales, and to have a cleaner and more organized studio.

However, as I closed the studio on the last day, there was also a sense of disappointment and futility. First, some of the people I wanted to see my art, did not visit. Second, when I looked around the studio and saw the number of pieces that remained, I worried and questioned. What is going to become of all these things and why should I bother to make more? I know! I know! A real artist doesn't worry about making more work: we have to create. While I plan to keep making pieces, I do not have the drive that I suspect some artists have.

So for me, after Open Studio there is a period of feeling discombobulated and it often takes time to get back into the studio. In the past when I have found myself in a funk, one activity that has helped me feel better is taking a walk in the woods.

From 1972 to 1984 I lived in Hampton and walked, cross-country skied, and skated on the ponds in Goodwin State Forest. Since 1984 I have lived in Bolton, Windham Center and now Willimantic. In the 35 years since I left Hampton, I have walked in Goodwin only a few times. Maybe a walk there would help me defunk. So on December 6 I put a bottle of water and a few snacks in a backpack and headed for the parking area on Old Route 6 in Hampton by Brown Hill Marsh. This is one of the spots from which I used to enter Goodwin. However, I found the small parking area by the marsh to be taken by two horse trailers.

I remembered an isolated entrance to Goodwin on a dead-end road off of RT 97 and headed there. I intended to take Cedar Swamp Road, but ended up on Old Town Pound Road. This road also ends at a forest entrance but it was not Goodwin. The sign said Maurice and Rita Edwards Preserve. This was a new spot to me.

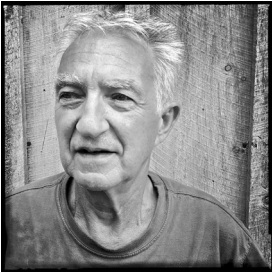
I got out of the car and started walking up the woods road with the preserve to my left and private land to my right. When I got about a quarter of a mile up the road, I became nervous. It was hunting season and I was wearing dark clothing and I didn't see any "No Hunting" signs. I returned to the car and backtracked to the Goodwin entrance I had been looking for at the end of Cedar Swamp Road. There should be no hunting there and it was a trail I had used many times.

I had told Delia I was going to Goodwin but did not tell her the entrance I would use. I considered texting her about my entrance but didn't. Thirty-five years ago there were no cell phones so of course I walked in Goodwin with no phone. These days I cannot imagine going for a walk by myself without a phone. Later, when I told Delia about my walk, she asked whether or not I had phone signal—I didn't know. I had my phone and I was relaxed. Sometimes it is better not to know everything.

I walked the trail from the end of Cedar Swamp Rd straight down to Pine Acres Lake. Along the way there were multiple vernal pools that were partially iced over. I remember passing these pools in spring many years ago and made a mental note to visit them next spring. The quacking of wood frogs is a delight that signals the loosening of winter's grip and the assurance of spring. As amphibians are among the first species to register negative effects of climate change, I worry about the amphibians I have seen here in the past. I will come back in the spring hoping to hear wood frogs and peepers and to find egg masses of spotted salamanders.

As I approached Pine Acres Lake, I saw that it was mostly frozen, but with patches of open water. I slowed, hoping I might find migrating ducks such as hooded mergansers, wood ducks, or ring-billed ducks in the open water. But there were no ducks.

From the end of the woods road, I went a short



way to the right on the White Blaze trail that proceeds along the edge of the Pine Acres Lake. This trail is quite uneven with many rocks and after a short distance I began to worry about twisting an ankle and so turned back to the open path. The White Blaze trail to the left had a sign that said: "Not Recommended For Horses". It didn't say, "And Old Men", so I went up the trail for a short distance and found myself in a sunny spot overlooking the lake. The wind off the lake was cold and my gloves were not warm enough. But the sun was warming so I remained there for 15 minutes leaning against a tree with my gloved hands in my pockets.

Then, I headed back toward the car and found the Red Blazed trail to the left that went to a spot I remembered called Governor's Island. I followed this path to a bridge under which a steady brook flowed over stones and ice. I stopped to listen and breathe deeply. I thought this would be a great place to meditate. But, unfortunately I don't meditate. The depth of my breaths seemed greater than I had experienced in a long time. I thought: "I'm going to return here soon".

I like the feel of winter woods when I can see far in all directions. I thought I might see some woodpeckers and perhaps a brown creeper. But the only bird I saw in the woods that day was a white-breasted nuthatch. I also like to be alone in the woods and in the past I rarely encountered another person when walking in Goodwin. This day, the only sign of another person was a boot print in the dusting of snow near the bridge.

I did not continue to Governor's Island but returned to the car, ate an apple, felt a little less funky, a bit more combobulated and with plans related to my art. I resolved to put several of my flower assemblages in various locations within Willimantic and to also look for ways to donate some of my smaller pieces. Also, as I will soon turn 79, I am hoping to put together a retrospective of my art work called: "In My 80<sup>th</sup> Year". Stay tuned as all will be invited.

I planned to return soon to the bridge on the Red Blazed trail and make it out to Governor's Island. How great it is to have Goodwin State Forest only 18 minutes from my home in Willimantic.

06279. Interactive exchange of ideas. Discuss EC-CHAP mission, membership, program / support opportunities, solicit feedback. Refreshments provided. Information: 518-791-9474. [www.ec-chap.org](http://www.ec-chap.org)  
**Live Music:** Quiet Corner Fiddlers, 7:00p.m. Midway Restaurant, Coventry. Info: [qcf.webs.com](http://qcf.webs.com)

**January 16, Wednesday**  
**Skill Share:** Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 1/2)

**January 18, Friday**  
**Film:** EC-CHAP Film Series: "Maudie" (PG-13). 2016. Doors 7:00pm / Film Showing 7:30pm. Join us for this award winning biographical drama! The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Suggested donation \$5.00. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. [www.thepackinghouse.us](http://www.thepackinghouse.us)

**January 19, Saturday**  
**Skill Share:** Winter Tree ID for Beginners, 10:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Dress for the outdoors. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 [DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov)  
**Kids:** Crafts, 11:00a.m.-12:30p.m. (See 1/5)  
**Live Music:** Patti Rothberg in Concert (Indie/Rock). Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Part of the EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00 door. Senior & student discounts. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. [www.thepackinghouse.us](http://www.thepackinghouse.us)  
**Live Music:** Annual Lovefest with Bruce John 60's Style!, 7:00p.m. - 11:00p.m. \$25. Tix @ Willi Food Coop. Dance to the 1960s! Costumes welcome. Fundraiser for Windham No Freeze.Elks Lodge, 198 Pleasant St, Willimantic. Info: 860-450-1346

**January 20, Sunday**  
**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 1/6)

**January 21, Monday**  
**Kids:** Toddler Time Play Group, 10:30a.m. (See 1/7)  
**History:** Martin Luther King Day, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. Celebration, education and performance. Cavalry Baptist Church, 412 Valley Street, Willimantic  
**January 22, Tuesday**  
**Hiking:** Full Moon Night Hike, 7:00p.m. - 8:00p.m. Followed by a campfire! Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534

## Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

Each month I try to write about automotive things that we all take for granted. This month I would like to talk about tires. The years have seen many changes in the types of tires that are manufactured for cars and trucks. The industry has seen bias and belted tires that were often recapped to provide extra life be replaced by the modern radial tire that is found on today's cars and trucks.

If there is one thing we can count on in life its change. The tire industry like just about everything else we know has changed tremendously. Up to the mid 1960's this area of Connecticut sold a large volume of recap tires. The recap tire was an inexpensive way to have new tire tread on your car or truck. The manufacturer of recaps would collect old tires which were called a casing. Then they would bond new tread to the old casing. The quality of tire varied from recapping facility to recapping facility. The Willimantic area had a great recapping and repair facility by the name of Ideal Tire. This family owned business set high standards on recapping tires. Unfortunately, due to the many changes that happened with the tire industry Ideal Tire is no longer in business. The trucking industry still uses recap tires on the rear wheels or drive axles of many trucks today.

The first radial tire that we sold in our repair facility was a Michelin around about the year 1967. I can remember that a customer with a Chevrolet station wagon asked my dad if he could purchase radial tires for his car. We sold Sieberling tires at that time and Sieberling did not offer a radial tire in their product line. So my dad purchased Michelins for the customer from another distributor. The tires arrived, the customer's car was scheduled, and we started to mount the tires. The problem was not mounting the tires, but inflating them. We tried everything, but could not seat the bead to the wheel. The issue was finally resolved by installing inner tubes, but not regular tubes, special tubes for radial tires. This still was not the answer to this dilemma though. We ended up purchasing a special tool for seating radial tires so that this wouldn't happen again. Little did we know that this would only be the beginning of purchasing special tools for the many new product lines to come. The next problem we encountered involved the installation of 4 Michelin radial tires on a Chevrolet pick-up truck. The truck had a vibration under power that was not there before the tires were changed. The Michelin people told us to check the driveshaft. The driveshaft looked fine, but we still removed it. After inspecting the driveshaft we found a partially frozen U-joint. We repaired the driveshaft and road tested the truck. The vibration was gone. The Michelin people explained that radial tires have better traction than the old bias belted tires thus causing the vibration from a bad U-joint under acceleration.

The radial tire has caused problems over the years, but it has also solved some. The mileage from a properly maintained tire ranges from 30,000 to 60,000 miles depending on the vehicle, driving habits, and quality of the tire. The vehicle handles better, steers easier, and rides smoother. The radial all season tire has stopped tire changes between regular tread and snow tires twice a year. The only thing that I don't like about a radial tire is that you can not feel the changing road conditions. The bias belted tire definitely would let you know if you encountered ice or slippery conditions. The flexibility of the sidewall on a radial tire absorbs the changing of the road conditions making it difficult to detect black ice.

The automobile industry has begun producing vehicles with run flat tires and a monitoring system for proper tire inflation. These new changes require repair facilities to purchase more equipment to be able to properly service these tires. All of this, of course, will cost the consumer more when changing these tires. The tire monitoring system receives a signal from the tire valve stem or a speed sensor that usually monitors through the ABS brake system. The tire valve system has a 3V battery sending a signal to the computer. This system usually lasts five years and has to be replaced because of battery failure. The run flat tire is original equipment on vehicles where a spare tire is not provided by the manufacturer. This design tire is priced much higher and is not commonly stocked by tire distributors.

I hope this article has provided you with some new insight into tires and some information to keep in mind when having new tires put on your vehicle.

Until next month...Happy Motoring.

*Rick Ostien is the owner of Franc Motors in Willington.*





# Silver Linings

By Delia Berlin

Life is full of surprises, and just like one person’s junk could be someone else’s treasure, a great tragedy may bring small consolations in serendipitous ways. Such was the case for Missy, the dog, who was facing certain death at the edge of a busy highway, on a cold and rainy winter night, when an unlikely rescue changed her life.



Twenty-six years ago, I was driving to work when I heard on the radio news about a shooting at Simon’s Rock College of Bard, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. I had a friend who taught there, so upon arrival to my office I called my former husband, who also knew him well. My heart sank in disbelief and grief when he confirmed that our friend was, indeed, one of the fatalities. Oddly, we later found out that we also had connections to a second fatal victim, Galen Gibson, an 18-year-old poetry major who had been a colleague’s nephew. Another four people had been shot, but they had survived their injuries.

On the evening of December 14, 1992, Dr. Nacuñán Sáez, my friend and a popular faculty member at Simon’s Rock, had died instantly of a gunshot to the head as he drove to his campus office to finish grading papers. He was only 37 years-old. Nacuñán had been a random target of the shooter, who probably didn’t even know him. But on that fateful night, he was just one of the victims of student Wayne Lo, who had been mail-ordering and stockpiling ammunition for weeks, simply planning to kill people when the moment was right.



Dr. Nacuñán Sáez  
Contributed photo

According to Wikipedia, Lo, who is now serving two consecutive life sentences without possibility of parole in Massachusetts, had been accepted to Simon’s rock In April 1991 and given a scholarship. He soon became an outcast, known as a hardened racist by fellow students, who knew him to have fascist and homophobic beliefs.

The morning of the shooting, Lo had taken a taxi to Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and purchased a semi-automatic rifle at a sporting goods store. That evening, he first shot a guard in the school’s security area. Shortly after, he fatally shot Nacuñán, as he was driving his Ford Festiva into campus.

Galen Gibson, the other fatality, was at the library when he heard shots. Being a trained emergency medical technician, he ran towards Nacuñán’s car to try to help. He was shot and killed by Lo before reaching the car. Lo then ran into the library, where he wounded another student, and then went to a dorm, where he shot two more freshmen. Fortunately, his rifle then jammed and he decided to surrender to police.

Many years later, when journalist Maria Hinojosa interviewed Lo for a PBS show, he said: ‘The fact that I was able to buy a rifle in 15 minutes, that’s absurd. I was 18. I couldn’t have rented a car to drive home from school, yet I could purchase a rifle... I only had five days left of school before winter break ... If I had a two-week waiting period for the gun, I wouldn’t have done it.’

But Wayne Lo’s insight came too late for the victims. There wasn’t any waiting period and the consequences were fatal. It may provide some comfort that Lo’s rampage moved the state of Massachusetts to make important legal changes. According to The Boston Globe, today Massachusetts has some of the strictest gun laws in the country and approximately 70% fewer gun deaths than the national average.

Wikipedia describes Nacuñán as “an Argentine-born Spanish professor” – but he was, of course, so much more... A brilliant literature scholar with a winning smile and a puzzling British accent, Nacuñán had earned a doctorate at UCONN and was in the process of completing his first novel. He had been planning to fly to Argentina that Sunday to spend Christmas with his mother. I couldn’t imagine not seeing him again, always joyful in reunion, but the hardest part was breaking the news to my 14-year-old daughter, for whom Nacuñán was like a dear uncle.

Lacking family in the US, Nacuñán had given my former husband’s name as an emergency contact. So, it was he who had to deal with his remains, legal affairs and family notifications. It was a retraumatizing period for him, since his only brother had been killed in Argentina years before, quite similarly, although in different circumstances. For a few weeks, he had to take many trips to Simon’s

Rock in the cold short days of winter, for the most unpleasant of tasks.

Returning from one of those trips, while he was fortunately accompanied by his wife, they ran into heavy highway traffic, at night and during a bad rain storm. Incredibly, they barely avoided running over a small puppy who was perilously shivering near the edge of the road. Convinced that the puppy would face certain death within a short time, they managed to stop and to retrieve it. She was cinnamon-colored female Chihuahua, near six months of age. If Nacuñán had been in the wrong place at the wrong time, this puppy had managed to be in the right place at the right time to avoid her sure demise.

My former husband couldn’t keep the puppy, so he turned to my family for help. Due to allergies, we weren’t permanent candidates, but we could help with finding another home. And soon, we did. My friend Kate, a co-worker with young children of her own, took the puppy into their loving family. Missy, as they called her, wasn’t housebroken and she was past the age of easy training. But she was an affectionate dog who quickly won their hearts and there was no turning back. With much persistence and patience, Missy became their most cherished pet. When the family moved to Florida, she moved with them. Missy went on to live a very long and pampered life.

I thought about Missy the other day, when I ran into Kate’s parents at a restaurant. They were celebrating one of their birthdays and they were accompanied by a young married couple. Upon introductions, I realized that they young man was Matthew, one of Kate’s sons. I had seen him once or twice since their move to Florida, but in my mind, he always remained a young boy. I asked him if he remembered Missy – it was a rhetorical question, because, of course, he did. He was one of the people who changed her life for the better, as I’m sure over the years, she changed his.

More than a quarter century has passed since Nacuñán’s death. The memory still feels fresher each year as the end of the semester nears. And sadly, frequent mass shootings offer periodic grim reminders. It hasn’t been easy to find silver linings in this cloud. But as it is the case with any cloud, Missy’s story brightly illustrates that there were at least some.

DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov

**January 23, Wednesday**  
**Skill Share:** Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 1/2)

**January 24, Thursday**  
**Hiking:** Senior Walk, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. (See 1/9)  
**Kids:** Bedtime Stories Pajama Party, 6:30p.m. Ages 4-7. Wear pajamas to the library and bring your favorite stuffed doll. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org

**January 26, Saturday**  
**Hiking:** Snowshoe Hike, 10:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Limited snowshoes provided; bring your own if possible. If no snow, walk without snowshoes. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Reservations: 860-455-9534 DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov  
**Kids:** Crafts, 11:00a.m.-12:30p.m. (See 1/5)  
**Film:** “I Am Not Your Negro”, 2:00p.m. Biopic about James Baldwin followed by discussion. West Ave Community Center, Valley St, Willimantic. Info: 860-742-6511 c2pattee@aol.com

**Live Music:** Sarah Hanahan Quartet – Part-2 (Jazz). Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Part of the EC-CHAP Jazz Series. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00 door. Senior & student discounts. Snacks and soft drinks available. “BYOB&F”™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us  
**Ball:** Snowball, 7:30p.m. - 11:30p.m. \$65. Tickets at purplepass.com/snowball2019. Celebrate the Mill Museum’s 30th Birthday at ECSU with dancing to the big band sound of the Flamingos, light dining, a cash bar and a silent auction. ECSU, Betty Tipton Room, High Street, Willimantic.

**January 27, Sunday**  
**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 1/6)

**January 28, Monday**  
**Kids:** Toddler Time Play Group, 10:30a.m. (See 1/7)

**January 29, Tuesday**  
**Kids:** Game Night, 6:00p.m. - 7:30p.m. Ages 5+ play Wii, iPad games and more. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org

**January 30, Wednesday**  
**Skill Share:** Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 1/2)



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# Capisci? The Importance of Communicating Effectively

By Grace Preli



Communication is arguably the most important aspect of being human. We communicate every second of every day to ourselves and to others around us. Whether it be through our voice or the movement of our bodies or the energy we give off, we spend most of our lives communicating: how we feel, what we are thinking, what is important to us, our wants and needs, our boundaries and our ideas.

A few months ago I gave up speaking for 100 hours as part of a project for my Philosophy class. We students had to give up some form of technology which according to Marshall McLuhan’s theory of media and art is anything that extends the embodied characteristics of a human. Clothing extends skin, shoes extend feet and talking and the written word extend our ability as humans to communicate. As such, I chose to give up speaking in order to see how it affected my ability to communicate both with myself and those around me.

My time not speaking allowed me to reflect on what it means to share information and receive information and the ways in which we as humans do so. It also gave me the opportunity to see where I fall short as an effective communicator. I share my feelings, I talk about my fears and opinions, I ask for help and I give advice or guidance when asked and I’ve long felt I was good at verbally expressing my wants, needs and desires. However in the last few months, from both abstaining from speaking and in surrounding myself with people who connect and communicate differently than I do, I have come to realize that it is necessary to continually work on upping my communication and connection game and that there is always room for improvement. What follows are some of the realizations I have had and some of the lessons I am currently learning and working with in order to become a more effective communicator of my wants and needs, ideas and feelings both to myself and to those around me.

1) Shut up and pay attention! Communication goes two ways, someone is giving and someone is receiving, the speech, the chocolate chip cookie recipe or the directions to the store. One cannot receive the necessary information if they are not focused on the other person and willing to hear/listen/receive. So often we listen only to respond. So often we don’t actually hear what the person is saying or see what they are trying to communicate. Whether someone is trying to convey something to us verbally or non-verbally, we as listeners, as receivers need to be able to pay attention. This means being engaged and present. This means being focused on the other person and their verbal or non-verbal cues. This means asking questions after or clarifying what we aren’t sure of or are confused about. Not being able to speak helped me really see the importance of being attentive and receptive. Because I was unable to respond to someone save for a gesture or a quick scribbled word or two, I was forced to focus on the other person and to focus without the thought of responding to them. This opened up so much space in my mind during conversations. Instead of worrying about or feeling pressure or being expected to respond, all I had to do was listen! Some of the most illuminating and soul-searching conversations that I had in the last few months occurred while I was not speaking. How’s that for effective communication?!

Stopping to focus and listen can go beyond communication with humans. It goes for tuning-in to your body and your own inner feelings, it goes for assessing a situation or making a decision. How can you hear what your body is trying to tell you if your brain is running through every Web MD search you’ve ever made and every worst case scenario? How can you assess a situation or make a clear and effective decision if you can’t touch base with your own intuition and your own inner sense of knowing? How can you work through an argument or a difficult conversation if you can’t open yourself up to the other person? Quieting the mind and the body, both in communicating with others and oneself is necessary in order to receive the relevant information and to communicate needs and wants clearly.

2) Use your body! Effective communication is so much more than speaking. We take for granted the ways we ourselves have to communicate with our outside world. Not all of us can speak, this language, that language or at all. Think of the small child who can’t speak yet, think of the person who can’t speak English when they arrive in this country, think of yourself on vacation in some foreign land,

unable to communicate with locals verbally... but yet in all of these instances, we still are able to convey our needs, share our opinions and ask for help. Why? Because sharing or receiving information goes beyond being able to speak or shout. It seems to me that we aren’t as aware as we could be about how to communicate with our bodies and how to use them to help convey information.

A hug speaks volumes, holding someone’s hand can convey many different things, speaking with one’s hands or using facial or body movements help add to a conversation and helps those who might not be able to communicate verbally as effectively as you. ‘Speaking’ with the whole body if one is able to do so can help those who don’t speak the same language, those who communicate in other ways or those who have difficulty with your personal dominant way of communication.

My mom is hard of hearing and because of this we were told when we were young to face her when we speak and to speak clearly because she would watch our lips. To this day, I too watch people’s lips and faces when they speak because it helps me better understand and contextualize what they are saying and I make sure to speak clearly and to face people when I speak. While abroad, I rely more on hand gestures and body language to help me understand a message or communicate with somebody. Hand, body or facial movement helps me understand further what someone is trying to convey or communicate to me.

Some people might also be more effective communicating non-verbally. We all know people who can convey so much with a look, or with the way they carry themselves. As humans, we are incredibly adept at reading all of these subtle ways of communication. We often know when someone is angry or sad or joyful just by the way they carry themselves or the way they move their bodies. My time spent not speaking forced me to communicate more effectively with my body. It felt like a new type of dance, letting my body communicate what it needed, sadness or joy or surprise with my face or hands.

Non-verbal communication is essential whether you are giving a speech to a crowd or whether you are asserting yourself in a tricky situation. With yourself, with friends or with the world, it is important to recognize the wealth of communicative possibility that exists within the body.

3) Surround yourself with effective communicators! My time not speaking provided a learning opportunity for those around me and allowed me to impartially observe people and their effectiveness as communicators. Some people would ask me open ended questions I had no way of answering and then get frustrated because I wasn’t responding. Some would ask me a yes or no question but turn away, therefore not able to see the shake of my head or my nod. Others were good communicators, offering up a word, or paying attention to my body and my gestures and helping to fill in the sentence or ask the next relevant yes or no question. One friend would catch my eye at the bar or party and introduce me to those around, saying that I wasn’t speaking and answering questions in an effort to help me communicate with those around me. Those who were good communicators were those who were present in the moment with me and who were receptive to the ways in which I was able to communicate, with my body or with my facial or hand movements. Many of the best communicators I encountered were those who had spent time abroad, were parents of young children or those who spoke multiple languages. Their life experiences helped them reach out to me and helped me communicate clearly with those around me.

It also helps to have effective communicators in your life when you yourself don’t feel like one. We’ve all struggled with expressing ourselves verbally or non-verbally. We’ve all struggled to find the words or convey our feelings or thoughts. It helps to have people in your life who are themselves effective at communicating in different ways. I have people who can read my body or my energy and they can provide a different perspective or offer their insights to what I’m trying to say or convey. Some people are better communicating verbally, or through writing or through their body movements or the way they carry themselves. Having people around who communicate in different ways or who excel in a way that is different than your preferred way of communicating can help you become more aware of where you need to or can improve.

Because there are so many systems of communication that we as humans are constantly interacting with it is necessary to be an effective communicator. We interact daily with other people, with animals, with our body, other bodies, with energy systems, our environment and the general human consciousness at large and all of these

require subtle shifts in the way we give or receive information. How we communicate, verbally or with our bodies, with our energy or with the way we carry ourselves is super important.

I’m thankful for the people in my life who help me when I forget a word in French or who help me improve my hand gestures while speaking Italian. I’m thankful for the people in my life who talk a lot or a little or not at all. I’m thankful for those who communicate well with their bodies and who challenge me to be present and focused and to pay attention with more than my ears and eyes. I’m thankful for all the ways we as humans have for communicating our fears and our wants, our desires and our ideas. I’m thankful that we have the ability to continually grow and improve our ways of communicating effectively with ourselves and those around us.

Here’s to you dear reader, here’s to effective communication and here’s to a wonderful new year!

## An Artist’s Perspective:

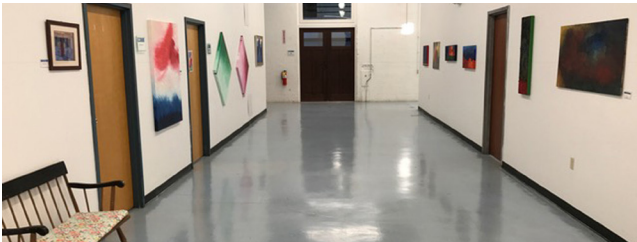
The “Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery” (Cont.)

By Rebecca Zablocki



Last month I provided a brief introduction to the “Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery” located at The Mill Works historic facility in Willington, CT. This month, I’d like to provide a few additional details as we plan our launch of this new community resource in 2019.

This Gallery space will exist in the corridors of the first and second floor of the Mill Works, which boast bare walls and multiple spacious areas perfect for displaying art. Floor-1, home to the Gardiner Hall Jr. History Museum and a handful of our Creative Community member’s studios, is comprised of a large U-shaped



hallway, framed by vast white walls and 16’ ceilings. Floor-2, the location of The Packing House and many of the other work spaces, contains a long hallway and rich, warm refurbished wood flooring frequented by tenants and their guests. These community spaces are perfect for exhibiting both two and three-dimensional works that may be experienced by visitors during open hours, performance intermissions at The Packing House, and other public events held at The Mill Works.

With competitive galleries and artists everywhere, the art world can be overwhelming; but with the involvement of area artists and art enthusiasts, we would like to develop this space as a free gallery, available for the public to use and enjoy. We hope for the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery to become a center for artists of all levels and ages in Eastern Connecticut and beyond, and create a place where everyone feels welcome to display or become a patron of the visual arts.

Our plan is to establish a regular weekly schedule of open hours for public viewing supported by the artists that show their works. This collaborative approach will allow us to create a cost free “platform” for art presentation where local and regional artists may assist with installation design, display their works, and share in the supervision and monitoring of the gallery.

If you, or someone you may know, are interested in learning more about this project, displaying your work, or supporting this community gallery operation, please plan to attend one of EC-CHAP’s monthly Information Exchange Meetings. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 15th at 7:00pm in the Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum, 156 River Road, Willington, CT. Please feel free to contact me directly by e-mail: CommunityGallery@ec-chap.org or telephone: (516) 567-5183; or EC-CHAP at (518) 791-9474. Spread the word and stay tuned for scheduled hours and exhibit information!

*Rebecca Zablocki is the Assistant Director of the Gallery Store at the Worcester Center for Crafts; EC-CHAP “Artist In Residence”; and Director of the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery. Contact: CommunityGallery@ec-chap.org.*



# Rethinking the Fourth Thursday of November

By Dagmar S. Noll

November 22, 2018 brought bitter air into the streets of New England, even colder at the shores of the Atlantic where we gathered by the feet of the great Wampanoag sachem Massasoit on Cole’s Hill to hear the story of Thanksgiving. Here is the story as I heard it that day:

Our scene opens in November of 1620 with one hundred Pilgrims landing on Cape Cod. Here their first act is to ransack the graves of Wampanoag people for valuables. Their second act is to steal winter stores buried in the earth for protection until they are needed by the Wampanoag during the barren winter months. Despite these violations, Wampanoags aid the Pilgrims to survive their first year in a brutal and unfamiliar climate. This aid takes many forms, including a joint harvest feast in 1621 with provisions largely supplied by the Wampanoag people.

While this shared feast is popularly remembered as the first thanksgiving, it was not called so by the attendees. The first official Thanksgiving is actually proclaimed sixteen years later, in 1637, by the white Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop. Winthrop wishes to celebrate the successful massacre of the Pequot Indians in Mystic, Connecticut. It is written of that massacre,

*“Those that scraped the fire were slaine with the sword; some hewed to peeces, others rune throw with their rapiers, so as they were quickly dispatchte, and very few escaped. It was conceived they thus destroyed about 400 at this time. It was a fearful sight to see them thus frying in the fyer, and the streams of blood quenching the same, and horrible was the stincke and sente there of, but the victory seemed a sweete sacrifice, and they gave the prayers thereof to God, who had wrought so wonderfully for them, thus to inclose their enemies in their hands, and give them so speedy a victory over so proud and insulting an enimie.”*

In the century following, every Thanksgiving Day ordained by a Governor is called to celebrate this bloody victory over the indigenous Pequots of the south.

In 1970, local white leaders invite Wampanoag member Wamsutta Frank James to speak at a 350th anniversary banquet commemorating the Pilgrim’s arrival in Massachusetts. They read the speech Frank James has prepared and disinvite the indigenous elder from their proceedings after he refuses to read a sanitized speech they prepare for him in place of his true words of genocide and oppression of Native Americans. Thus is born the first National Day of Mourning, on United States Thanksgiving Day, 1970, to protest the erasing of Native American lives and the real lived experiences of Native peoples in service to a myth which, in its sanitizing of truth, has served white supremacy and Native genocide across this land.

Threats to the sovereignty of native nations, racism against indigenous Americans, and poverty deriving from colonial oppression continue to this day.

This is the Thanksgiving story spoken by Wamsutta Frank James’ son to a crowd of hundreds on Cole’s Hill, at the feet of the figure of Massasoit, in Plymouth, MA, as I heard it in the frigid November air.

We marched then through the streets of Plymouth,

lead by Native Americans, hundreds following the sound of drums and the scent of sage from Cole’s Hill to the water’s edge and the Pilgrim’s Memorial. The Pilgrim’s Memorial is the site of many years of protest. The march ends on a hilltop where, two church basement halls were secured for a massive pot luck meal for all. The line for food was long and warm, and the bounty was endless.

I ponder thus: What, if anything, is there to salvage from Thanksgiving as I have known it and celebrated it my whole life?

I imagine my Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Grandfather Tilly stepping off the Mayflower that first day to trespass, raid graves and steak food. If he did not raid and thief himself, he and his kin nonetheless benefitted from the thefts at Corn hill—so named by the Pilgrims, and described in their own journal account of their first days in the New-to-them World for the stores of corn they found buried within. In their own account, as they fill every pack and pocket with corn, the Pilgrims praise God for the bounty, not the natives, and thank God that they had no run-ins with a Indian.



James Flores (center) of Willimantic, carries the National Day of Mourning Banner in Plymouth, MA. Contributed photo.

What is there to salvage in this? What is there to celebrate? I conclude that my ancestors have had enough of my attention for their struggle to construct their famous settlement on the site of a Patuxet village wiped out by diseases they brought with them from Europe.

I understand the heart-food of gathering with friends and allies and breaking bread. I understand the spiritual food of giving thanks. In those church basements, full were we with food and camaraderie and diversity, all united in knowing a truer story, of celebrating Native American resiliency, autonomy, dignity and perseverance.

As the year turns anew, I consider my path in 2019. Already, my colleagues from this corner of Connecticut—James Flores, Kristin Fortier, and Chris Bettis—have made a pact with one another to attend again together next year. And we have filled a van full with those who, having heard our witness, have indicated they wish to join us next year. If you would like to resolve to join us for the 50th National Day of Mourning in Plymouth, Massachusetts, on November 29, 2019, sign up for a seat on a van, on a bus, or in a carpool at 860-456-4143 or dags78@yahoo.com.

## Historic Preservation & The Arts

By EC-CHAP

QUESTION: What’s better than preserving an historic landmark?

ANSWER: Preserving an historic landmark that will be used to enhance arts and culture for local, regional, and statewide communities and beyond.

EC-CHAP was recently notified by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) that we were one of twelve non-profit recipients of a “Good To Great” grant administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Good to Great was created in 2014 to fund improvements that will significantly enhance cultural and historic sites and the way people enjoy them. Specifically, the program targets smaller and mid-sized cultural



organizations that have creative propels to enhance the customer experience, improve access or otherwise grow their audience. DECD also targets organizations that received limited state funding in the past.

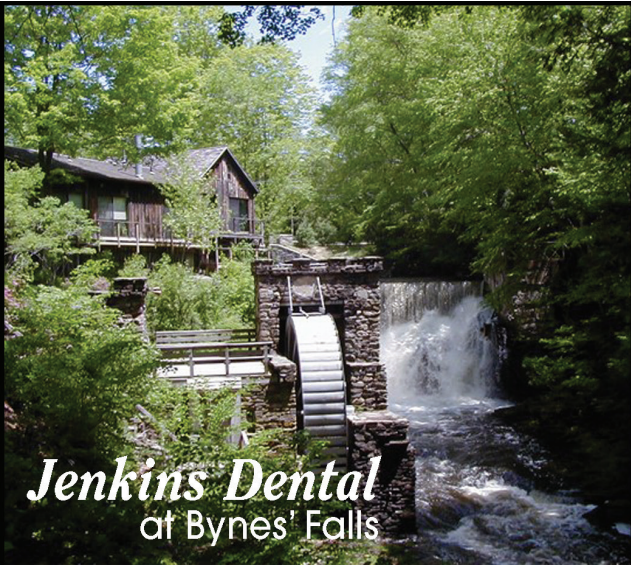
“Connecticut is an incredible place to live thanks in part to the outstanding historic and cultural institutions throughout the state,” said Governor Malloy. “By making these investments, we are ensuring that these assets will continue to offer first class, one of a kind experiences to everyone that visits them.”

This grant will allow us to make structural repairs and renovation



of two out-buildings: Building #7, the original “Oil & Paint House” will provide a dedicated Artist-In-Residence (AIR) working studio space; and Building #3, the original “Drug House”, is planned to be developed into a unique Artisan Café with direct views of the falls. This grant will also allow us to also address a moisture mitigation issue within the main facility.

EC-CHAP is extremely grateful for the opportunity and privilege to be considered for, and be awarded this important grant! These funds will allow us to further our mission and vision of being one of Southern New England’s premiere cultural destinations.



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# Four Takeaways from Cyber Risk Insights Conference for Consumers and Businesses

By Corey Sipe

While much of Connecticut’s Quiet Corner is rural, technology is still changing the way people live in good and bad ways. A recent conference in New York City talked about issues that affect us here in Connecticut and what we can do to better safeguard ourselves. About 1,000 professionals representing over 300 companies from around the world attended the Advisen Cyber Risks Insights Conference on Oct. 25. They heard from over 75 speakers who spoke during 23 sessions at the world’s largest cyber risk conference. Issues discussed included insurance, threats, and technology. The one-day conference was held inside The Grand Hyatt at Grand Central. The conference was covered using the social media hashtags “#cyberNYC” and “@advisen” on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

## 1. Bad News: Increase in Attacks Could Threaten Democracy, Data Accuracy and Could Cost Lives

Here in Connecticut, television viewers saw political commercials this past fall explaining cyber security concerns. “With the click of a button, these days you can do almost anything,” said Connecticut Secretary of the State Denise Merrill, who won re-election a few weeks ago. “We all saw in 2016 how foreign governments tried to interfere in our elections. As Secretary of the State, we’ve made improving cyber security a top priority and I’ve worked with Democrats and Republicans from across the country so that federal, state, and local governments are working together. We need to protect democracy today and for future generations.” While election interference was briefly discussed by some of the speakers at the conference, they were more concerned about foreign governments hacking into government or private entity computers to gain information which could result in loss of life.

During the session “Cybercrime, Inc.,” Jarrett Kolthoff, CEO of SpearTip, said that cyber-attacks from China have “increased dramatically...historically we have a number of good sources inside the PRC, People’s Republic of China, that identified a number of Chinese operatives here in the states.” Cybercrime has changed from being just a hobby for some to being an activity attractive to highly professional criminal organizations, some of whom are tied to specific countries. Kolthoff is a former special agent of the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Agency and has over two decades of experience in information security. He said that forums, like the Advisen Cyber Risk Insights Conference, is “more collaboration, not just with U.S. (government) but civilians.” He said that criminal enterprises are an operation “but they make mistakes and that’s when we find and are able to track them down.” Kolthoff said, “The issue is how well can you respond to minimize the cost to your organization.” He said that traditional firewalls and anti-viruses cannot detect these attacks since it involves malware.

Retired U.S. Navy Admiral Michael S. Rogers, who was the morning keynote speaker, had a different perspective. He served as the 17th Director of the National Security Agency and Chief of the Central Security Service from 2014 to 2018. Rogers was also the second commander of the U.S. Cyber Command. He retired from active duty in June 2018 and recently joined the Board of Directors for Cybercube. Rogers said that his greatest fear is not for visible attacks, which would be discovered after the fact, but invisible attacks that could go undetected for a long time. An example of an invisible attack would be the manipulation of computer systems which we have come to depend on. “We make a lot of decisions in our everyday lives based on the assumption the data is accurate,” he said, giving examples of online banking and GPS systems.

## 2. Bad News: Our interconnected world leaves us increasingly vulnerable

Other sessions at the conference reiterated the importance of combating cyber-attacks and loss of life issues. “IOT (Internet of Things) integrated with the human body must be impervious from attacks and other breaches...when human lives are at stake, there is no room for error,” said Marya J. Propis, Senior Vice President of Distribution and Broker Partnerships, of All Risks, Ltd. IOT refers to everyday devices like vehicles, home appliances, and others that are able to connect to the Internet. These go beyond items we typically think about that connect to the Internet. Propis served as moderator of the session “Portable/Wearable Risks.” Wearable

technology include smartwatches, fitness trackers, and heart monitors. Shiraz Saeed, National Practice Leader of Cyber Risk for Starr Companies was one of the speakers. He said, “Anytime information is being exchanged through the Internet, that’s what leads to privacy issues,” adding that monitoring of individuals is where the privacy issue really lies. As an example, he talked about a wearable device that would go in the back of a construction worker’s vest to monitor the worker’s movements throughout the day. Saeed said that if the worker bends over the wrong way, it could set off an alert that the worker’s back might be injured. While he admitted it’s a great tool for an employer and an insurance company, Saeed questioned how this would impact an employee’s privacy. A stark warning of future large-scale cyber-attacks was given during the afternoon keynote address by Shawn Henry, President and Chief Strategy Officer of CrowdStrike Services. Henry, who formerly worked in the FBI for 24 years, served as an executive assistant director overseeing all cyber investigations. “When do people start to take all this seriously? When they can’t charge their iPhone for three days,” Henry asked, adding “If NotPetya doesn’t get people’s attention, I don’t know what will.” NotPetya was a June 27, 2017 malware attack where thousands of computers in Ukraine were destroyed. The attack was attributed to Russia. He also said that cyber criminals can use vulnerabilities in everyday appliances belonging to consumers to thwart such cyber-attacks. “People’s refrigerators and dishwashers were used in botnet attacks against corporations.” Henry advocated that companies address these issues before it is too late.

## 3. Good News: Cyber Insurance Will Provide More Jobs for Connecticut

Leland Holcomb, head of Scouting and Investor Relations, at the Hartford InsurTech Hub, powered by Startupbootcamp was another conference speaker. According to their website, www.HartfordInsuranceTechhub.com, the “Hartford InsurTech Hub, powered by Startupbootcamp, is an initiative that was created by a group of executives from the Hartford-area, including insurance carriers and other related firms, City of Hartford representatives, and several other community stakeholders.” The group identified opportunities to increase InsurTech innovation in the region. Holcomb served as moderator for the session entitled “Cyber Risk Start-ups: A Growth Driver in the InsurTech Sector.” Advisen wrote in the conference’s booklet that “investors poured a record \$3.2 billion in capital into InsurTech in 2018, and 2019 looks to be even larger. While most were into personal and small commercial venture lines, cyber insurance is rapidly growing as well.” After the session, Holcomb explained “we partner with larger insurance companies like Travelers, The Hartford, Cigna, and White Mountains Insurance Group.” He said that Startupbootcamp helps assist new insurance technology companies so that they can grow. “We take them into Hartford and help them scale and market themselves,” he said. The Hartford InsurTech Hub website states that the company traveled to 21 cities to meet start-up companies and selected 10 which they regard as the best talent in insurance technology.

- Those ten include:
- CareValidate
  - ClaimSpace
  - Dream Payments
  - Handdii
  - Medyear
  - Pineapple
  - Pitch Gauge
  - See Your Box
  - Skywatch
  - Talem Health Analytics

They will relocate to Hartford and grow through working with insurance companies, investors, and industry experts. “There are just not enough insurance technology companies covering the biggest risks,” Holcomb explained.

## 4. Good News: Government, Companies, and Consumers Are Taking Action

At the 2017 Advisen Cyber Risk Insights Conference, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and President Donald Trump’s cybersecurity advisor and attorney, was one of the speakers. He was quoted by CFO Magazine, “there’s a lot of work the government has to do, this administration has to do, in getting the government up to a level of security where [we] can be

comfortable.” For more information on Advisen, visit <https://www.advisenltd.com/>. Back in November 2018, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced Trump signed the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Act of 2018 into law. Congress passed this legislation only a few weeks prior. The new agency, according to DHS, will lead the national effort to “defend critical infrastructure against the threats of today, while working with partners across all levels of government and in the private sector to secure against the evolving risks of tomorrow.” More private companies are understanding cyber security threats and 10 percent more purchased cyber insurance in 2018 versus 2017, according to the 8th Annual Information Security and Cyber Risk Management survey released by Zurich North America and Advisen. It was discussed during the conference’s “Factors that Impact Cyber Insurance Purchasing Preferences and Experiences” session. The industry is getting better at making cyber insurance options more attractive for medium-sized businesses, according to Kevin Kalinich, global practice leader at Aon Commercial Risk Solutions. Issues regarding cyber security are not going away but there are ways we can be smarter in how use technology. According to “Tech Talk with Solomon,” all consumers and companies should:

1. Always use secure websites which have an “s” next to the “http” in a URL address
2. Minimize or avoid location sharing
3. Never open a suspicious link sent via e-mail or from the web
4. Use strong passwords and change them regularly
5. Protect sensitive personally identifiable information
6. Backup data regularly
7. Use caution when using public free Wi-Fi
8. Be vigilant with all social media presence
9. Use an up-to-date anti-virus tool

With recent news that Washington D.C.’s attorney general, Karl Racine, is suing Facebook over its user data protection and protection practices, users might be wondering what they can do to protect their privacy on Facebook. According to CNBC, steps users can take include being careful in taking quizzes and apps on the social media network. They said users should consider avoiding third-party apps on Facebook. CNBC suggests users tighten their privacy settings so that it gives alerts when logging in from an unfamiliar device and turn on two-factor authentication requiring users to enter a code every time they log in to use Facebook. CNBC said that users can also ask their Facebook friends to tighten their privacy settings. While they said that some people might consider leaving Facebook, CNBC suggests they should also consider their use of the social media website. Those people might want to consider whether giving up Facebook might make it difficult or impossible to use other services linked to Facebook.

As for password managers, PC Magazine recommends that all consumers use either free or paid programs so they can prevent the use of using the same passwords for all websites or using passwords that could be easily guessed. Password managers create randomly generated passwords and most of them can be synced with multiple devices such as Windows, Mac, Android, and iOS devices. Their article can be found online by searching for “The Best Password Managers of 2018” and “PC Magazine.”





# Financial Planning: Helping You See the Big Picture

By James Zahansky, AWMA®

Think about all the things you want to accomplish in 2019. You may want to pay off debt, buy a second home, or travel the world. There are many goals you may want to accomplish, but it is important to consider how they fit within the whole financial picture because you may have more than one of these goals, amongst other needs throughout 2019.



A well-developed strategy that is tailored to your unique needs considers the whole picture and may help you achieve your goals. Strategic planning is a process that can help you plan for your goals your goals, and outline strategies to help you achieve them.

### Why is financial planning important?

A comprehensive financial plan serves as a framework for organizing the pieces of your financial picture. With a financial plan in place, you'll be better able to focus on your goals and understand what it will take to reach them.

One of the main benefits of having a financial plan is that it can help you balance competing financial priorities. A financial plan will clearly show you how your financial goals are related--for example, how saving for your children's college education might impact your ability to save for retirement. Then you can use the information you've gleaned to decide how to prioritize your goals, implement specific strategies, and choose suitable products or services. Best of all, you'll know that your financial life is headed in the right direction.

### The financial planning process

Creating and implementing a comprehensive financial plan generally involves working with financial professionals to outline specific goals. Financial Professionals will be able to help you develop a clear picture of your situation by reviewing your income, assets, liabilities, insurance coverage, investment portfolio, tax exposure, and estate planning. Considering all the following they may help you establish priorities and goals actively working to achieve them.

It is key in the process to implement specific strategies that address the weaknesses you face and also to build on the strengths you may have. It is a process, therefore, financial professionals will continuously monitor and adjust your plans by amending goals and time frames to help you achieve the plan when circumstances change.

### Some members of the team

The financial planning process can involve a number of professionals. Financial planners typically play a central role in the process, focusing on your overall financial plan, and often coordinating the activities of other professionals who have expertise in specific areas.

Accountants or tax attorneys provide advice on federal and state tax issues. Estate planning attorneys help you plan your estate and give advice on transferring and managing your assets before and after your death. Sometimes insurance professional will provide recommendations on needs and appropriate products and strategies.

The most important member of the team, however, is you. Your needs and objectives drive the team, and once you've carefully considered any recommendations, all decisions lie in your hands.

### Why can't I do it myself?

You can, if you have enough time and knowledge, but developing a comprehensive financial plan may require expertise in several areas. A financial professional can give you objective information and help you weigh your alternatives, saving you time and ensuring that all angles of your financial picture are covered.

Financial professionals act as a fiduciary relationship. This means a hired professional that is responsible for a service to you will act in the best interest of you with thinking similar to, "If I were my client, what would be best for myself in this given situation?"

### Staying on track

The financial planning process doesn't end once your initial plan has been created. Your plan should generally be reviewed at least once a year to make sure that it's up-to-date. It's also possible that you'll need to modify

your plan due to changes in your personal circumstances or the economy.

Some events that may result in a necessary review of your plan are things like the birth of a child, marriage, illness, or job loss. Specific events that prompt an immediate financial need like drafting a will or managing a distribution from a retirement account. Also, if your goals or time horizons have changed, you may need to re-align your financial picture.

Other forces such as the economy and the performance of your portfolio will impact your plan.

### Common questions about financial planning

#### What if I'm too busy?

Don't wait until you're in the midst of a financial crisis before beginning the planning process. The sooner you start, the more options you may have.

#### Is the financial planning process complicated?

Each financial plan is tailored to the needs of the individual, so how complicated the process will be depends on your individual circumstances. But no matter what type of help you need, a financial professional will work hard to make the process as easy as possible, and will gladly answer all of your questions.

#### What if my spouse and I disagree?

A financial professional is trained to listen to your concerns, identify any underlying issues, and help you find common ground.

#### Can I still control my own finances?

Financial planning professionals make recommendations, not decisions. You retain control over your finances. Recommendations will be based on your needs, values, goals, and time frames. You decide which recommendations to follow, then work with a financial professional to implement them.

*Presented by James Zahansky, AWMA®, researched through Broadridge Investor Communication Services. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret Street, Pomfret Center, CT 06259, 860.928.2341. www.whzwealth.com*

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# Reimagining and reinventing democracy

By Len Krimerman

In governance, **sortition** (also known as **selection by lot**) is the selection of political officials as a random sample from a larger pool of candidates, **a system intended to ensure that all competent and interested parties have an equal chance of holding public office.** It also minimizes factionalism, since there would be no point making promises to win over key constituencies if one was to be chosen by lot, while elections, by contrast, foster it. In ancient Athenian democracy, sortition was the traditional and primary method for appointing political officials, and its use was regarded as a principal characteristic of democracy.. Today, sortition is commonly used to select prospective jurors in common law-based legal systems and is sometimes used in forming citizen groups with political advisory power (citizens’ juries or citizens’ assemblies). (from Wikipedia)



### Coming close to a disturbing conclusion

My *Neighbors* article in November came close to a very disturbing conclusion — *that elections and political parties, as they now function, disempower the electorate – we the people – thereby undermining democracy.* Our voices are unheard, unwanted, of little or no consequence. We vote for “representatives” we know little or nothing about, and for political parties we (rightly) distrust. As Jean-Jacque Rousseau put it three centuries ago, as soon as election day is over we “are again in chains, and are nothing”, deceived into believing we are free citizens engaged in shaping a self-governing commonwealth.

### Can we get beyond electorate disempowerment?

But at the end of November’s article, we also concluded with a fascinating podcast dialogue between Rob Hopkins, a radical environmentalist and co-founder of the world-wide *Transition Town Movement*, and David Van Reybrouck, the Belgian author of *Against Elections; the Case for Democracy*. Both provide ways to re-imagine and reinvent forms of “democracy” that go well beyond’s Rousseau’s bleak account.

### David began the dialogue in this way:

*Elections were introduced to stop democracy, rather than to make democracy possible. If innovation (and imagination) are truly important, let us rethink the key procedure we use to let people speak (and not just vote). Ticking a box is no longer an option.*

### Rob then posed two intriguing questions:

*If you had been elected Prime Minister of Belgium, and you had a run on a platform of ‘Make Belgium Imaginative Again’, so rather than ‘Make America Great Again’, your mission was to prioritize a rebuilding of the nation’s imagination. **First, what might you do in your first 100 days in office? But secondly, what might you do to the electoral system ...do you propose just doing away with elections entirely?***

Here’s a good part of David’s response:

*If I were Prime Minister... I’d love to hear what the citizens think, not just on the eve of the elections, but also throughout the electoral cycle, or the government cycle of four years.... I would start using a lottery to bring together random inhabitants of this country, to come and talk about crucial issues on a very regular basis.*

*Perhaps in the beginning I would do it every three months, and then later it might even become something more frequent. I think the possibility for citizens to speak out – not just to vote, not just to tick a box and that is the end of their democratic input – but to give people the chance to speak out about what is on their minds, and have people talk together.*

*What I would do is make a random sample of 300 Belgians on the issue of migration, and bring them together. Not just have a phone conversation with somebody from a polling company, but I would bring them together for three weekends in Brussels and I would sit down, and have them get information on what is at hand. Make sure they understand the problem. Make sure*

*that experts can give input to that group. And then have this group basically deliberate where things should be going...*

Rob then turned to his second question: “*Do you propose just doing away with elections entirely?*” To which David responded:

*That would be foolish....I mean, I don’t want to live in a country that would do away with elections right away, tomorrow morning, and replace it by lottery. That would be just crazy. But I don’t want to live in a country either that doesn’t change its democratic procedures although they come from the late eighteenth century and have never been updated. The right to vote has been given to more and more people, that is true, **but the right to speak has remained in the hands of a very few. The model I suggest is basically an enlargement of democracy from the right to vote, to the right to speak.*** (My bold, LK)

### What then to think of “enlarged model of democracy”? Can we see it taking shape in our towns and communities?

**It seems that “lottery-based” democracies have begun to emerge within numerous European cities in Holland, Germany, Ireland, and Spain, and as well in Australia and Iceland. Why so? One reason Van Reybrouck offers is that:**

*It’s the sheer energy and happiness of people who feel taken seriously. Who are seeing that people are confident in them, who are trusting them. I don’t think creativity and imagination can be released in a community that is not trusted by its leaders. People who are part and parcel of these deliberative democratic processes, they are living something.... I’ve seen (it) with my own eyes, I’ve organised these things myself.*

To put it differently, elections and political parties typically disdain our innovativeness, intelligence, and imagination, keep us from learning from and listening to our neighbors, and prevent us from living fully and becoming self-directed. No wonder these enlarged democratic processes are experienced as a breath of very fresh air!

### Not just sortition; democracy as imaginative and inclusive

Sortition is just one of several ways democracy is being “enlarged”. In an earlier article, I discussed the remarkable adoption of digital technology to enable more and more of our usually unheard voices to be taken seriously. Spain’s *Decide Madrid* is perhaps the most fully developed initiative of this sort, having designed a “path-making civic technology platform” whose mission is:

*“to ensure the inclusion of everyone in the participatory processes, so that all voices and wills form a part of them and no one is left out.”*

How this mission is achieved involves open source software that allows ordinary citizens to influence and shape the City of Madrid’s planning and policy making. For example, citizens can propose new laws or projects, and subsequently vote on them. They do so by simply clicking a button marked “Create a Proposal”, and providing a title and brief description. Since its onset in 2015, over 20,000 proposals have been submitted. One of these is called “*Madrid 100% Sustainable*”. It was originally submitted in February of 2017, and received a “yes” vote from almost 200,000 Madrilenos. A working group was formed, including the Madrid City Council, “to ensure compliance with the points of the proposal.” Thus far, this has involved over 100 specific actions that have been incorporated into municipal policies. Here’s a short list of some of these developments:

- The City Council of Madrid has contracted its electricity supply for all municipal buildings and equipment with companies that only sell energy of 100% renewable origin, *which guarantees that CO2 emissions and the generation of radioactive waste are zero.*

- Photovoltaic panels have been installed in municipal buildings to save and improve energy efficiency;

it is expected that 2018 has ended with 89 photovoltaic installations, e.g., in both cultural and sports centers, compared with only 5 last year; moreover, this initiative is not only part of Madrid 100% Sustainable, but is supported by multiple participatory budget proposals approved by the City Council.

- The Environment and Mobility Area of this proposal offers schools workshops, courses, facilities, visits and other activities concerning energy, waste, mobility, etc. during the school year. In addition, prizes for ‘*Savings, Energy Efficiency and Climate Change*’ have been launched in 25 early childhood and primary education centers. The objective is to recognize and distinguish the schools that achieve greater energy efficiency thanks to their pedagogical plans and projects.

- There are several very diverse measures of Sustainable Urban Development that promote *sustainable mobility*. One involves creating a new 8-kilomtere cycling facility linking several districts within Madrid together. Also, at the end of 2018 new regulations will have come into effect for Central Madrid: this is the large Centro district that will become a low emission area, that is, *a lung in the heart of the city*. Traffic will be restricted, and pedestrians, bicycles and public transport will prevail.

- Madrid’s Municipal Transport Company has introduced *15 standard 100% electric buses* which circulate through three downtown lines of the city. In addition, its vehicles now *include 78 zero emission electric cars.*

- The Sustainable Urban Development Area, which is a major part of the citizen proposal for 100% Sustainability, has initiated *a grant program to rehabilitate housing in urban areas*. The objective is to regenerate the city instead of expanding it, by meeting demands from some 15,000 homes for increased and efficient insulation, and renewable forms of energy. (For more on Decide Madrid see: <https://diario.madrid.es/> and <https://decide.madrid.es/>.)

Madrid is only one of at least one hundred towns and cities, in some thirty-three countries, that have moved away from traditional electoral politics in favor of inclusive citizen-shaped governance. One of these – *New York City* – is quite close by; it has just begun utilizing the Consul digital platform for reinventing democracy described in my September 2018 *Neighbors* article. For more on that, see <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/next-generation-of-digital-democracy-tools/>.

Perhaps we can learn from the NYC folks how to begin reimagining and reinventing our own democracy in our own quiet and not-so-quiet communities. Interested in this? Email me at [lenisageo@gmail.com](mailto:lenisageo@gmail.com).

## Sidonia’s Thread: Crafting a Life from Holocaust to High Fashion

Submitted by Sheila Amdur

Sunday, January 13, 2019 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
Temple B’nai Israel, 383 Jackson Street, Willimantic CT  
Please join us as Hanna Perlstein Marcus pre-views an exhibit of her mother’s creations which will be displayed at the Windham Textile Museum from February 8-April 28, 2019.

Having survived the Holocaust, Sidonia Perlstein emigrated from Hungary to Springfield, Massachusetts where she began a new life as a skilled dressmaker and clothing designer. As her daughter uncovered her mother’s secret past, she authored two books, *Sidonia’s Thread* and *Surviving Remnant*, which describe the emotional relationship with her mother and her life growing up among a group of Holocaust survivors. Hanna’s talk will include samples of garments fashioned by her mother that will be part of the collection on full display at the Textile Museum. Sponsored by ECSU and curated by Anya Sokolovskaya, Assistant Professor of Costume Design, the exhibit not only profiles this amazing woman, but also draws parallels with the experience of more recent immigrants to this area and throughout the country. It also highlights the importance of textiles and the growth and development of this industry in New England.

Hanna will bring her books, and is available for a book signing at the end of the program. Please join us for this remarkable preview event followed by time for discussion and refreshments.



# Community Media and Regional Arts



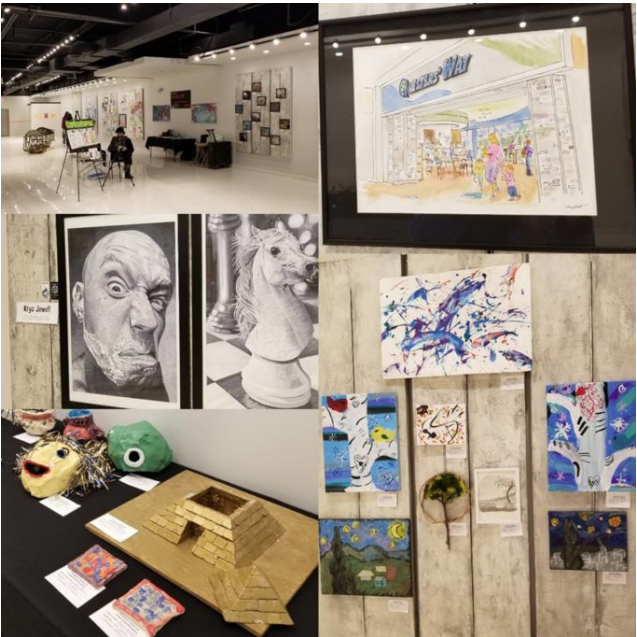
By John Murphy



*Neighbors* and Windham Arts has expanded arts community coverage and this month my focus will be:

1. The Art Emporium and Gallery at the East Brook Mall continues through January
2. The creation of a new Community Advisory Board at Windham Arts

## EAST BROOK MALL PROJECT UPDATE NEW ARTS EMPORIUM AND GALLERY



With the recent opening of the Windham Arts Emporium and Gallery at the East Brook Mall in Mansfield, Connecticut, the arts have found a new center for expression and our community has a new opportunity to support the regional arts economy during the holiday season.

Windham Arts, Northeast Connecticut’s designated Regional Service Organization, in partnership with *Questers’ Way* and the East Brook Mall, opened these unique art spaces on November 3. Currently there are 26 artists in the Emporium who are showcasing and selling handcrafted items throughout the holiday season and through January. Next door in the Gallery a series of exhibitions is planned for members of arts guild, councils and other arts groups to showcase their work.



The Gallery is dedicated to showcasing the art created in schools by young people from across our region as well as by arts groups and their members. Programs will alternate on a scheduled basis to share this new arts community asset. We plan to allow time for public viewing of each show, provide variety of shows and other reasons to visit again.

There is still room for more vendors. Contact [gallery@windhamarts.org](mailto:gallery@windhamarts.org) for more information. We are reaching out to artists who are in business and who want to sell their work in more than one location.

Recent Gallery Shows with young people’s art from schools in our region:  
Chaplin Elementary School      E..O Smith High School  
Coventry High School      Lyman High School  
Parish Hill High School

Recent Gallery Exhibitions with Arts Groups and Professional Artists:

Artist Open Studios  
Dr. Challa Vijaya Kumar from the UConn Departments of Chemistry/Molecular and Cell Biology  
Windham Regional Arts Council  
Northeastern Connecticut Art Guild

Special book signings with local authors:  
Diane Perkins, Ken Caputo, Daniel Urban and Phoebe Godfrey

A big THANK YOU to every artist who joined us to showcase their work at the Arts Emporium:

Karen Amill   Mary Brown   Sarah Brown- Quinones  
Posey Clements   Chelsea Cottle   Laura Cottle  
Daniela de Souza   Bill Dougal   Elaine Duchaineau  
Pazit Edelman   Lisa Froment   Sherrie Gage  
Vera Gray   Nancy Hoffman   Agatha Hoover  
Jean Johnson   Harrison Judd   Jo Kearney–Pulaski  
Maggie Kendis   Chelsea Knyff,   Kryz Jewell  
Kennedy Marshall   William Oellers   Scott E Rhoades  
Ruth Sangree   Stephan Scholan   John Starinovich  
Watija Yasmeeen

Many of these regional artists are joining us from January 18-30 in Hartford at the 3rd Arts at the Capitol Concourse Project -- on the Grand Concourse between the Capitol Building and Legislative Office Building (LOB). This is a joint project and we are partnering for the second year with Positive Expression, a Chaplin-based arts project that originated the series. Check the Windham Arts website for more specific details: [www.windhamarts.org](http://www.windhamarts.org). If you are in Hartford please stop by!

Keeping our money local, supporting artists and giving the gift of art in its many forms is an important value that lies at the heart of why this project was created.

The Windham Arts Emporium is open Thursday through Saturday from 12 to 8 pm and from 12 to 5 pm on Sunday. The Gallery will be open when the Emporium is open, and staffing is available to monitor the area.

Sponsors are welcome to help with this effort! Our plan includes creating special events at the Gallery, including book signings, performances and children’s programs. The website [www.windhamarts.org](http://www.windhamarts.org) has news and updates about both projects.

## WINDHAM ARTS CREATING NEW COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD REGIONAL ARTS GROUPS AND FRIENDS OF THE ARTS WELCOME

Windham Arts has launched a restructuring initiative to increase connection, communication and collaboration among artists, arts groups and friends of the arts from across its 36-town service area in Eastern Connecticut.

Early next year I will convene a new Community Advisory Board to begin work on the roots of our arts community and expand the regional foundation and service of Windham Arts. Our hope is to increase unity and a sense of family as we work in our own ways to build the Connecticut arts economy and encourage public support.

Over the past 16 months I attended meetings across our region and I am inspired by the genuine love for art and localism I see everywhere. I have also seen how many artists are still working alone and disconnected from their communities. I can feel their struggle, but I still see the potential! The limitations or obstacles don’t matter, if we do more with what we have and leverage our existing assets we can move forward and grow and raise the tide of good will that is beyond the reach of money. That tide of good will is the heart of sustainability.

My first step is here at home base within the Windham Arts website. If you are reading this we may already be connected by email, newsletter or homepage. This will be the platform I invite you to join so we can co-create a regional network of people and groups who consciously collaborate on common goals with a shared vision of service to our region. We can do this now with no need for delay beyond proper planning and logistics.

This effort is already imbedded in local media channels and existing formats —radio, TV and print—that are currently in production and ready for content. As a media producer my support for this effort will be to share arts news and information and the stories you are creating by the work you are doing now, every day. The content is already here with us, it is you and what you do! This larger story just needs to be organized and prepared for a launch in January 2019.

I would like to start with quarterly meetings at first. I am especially interested in having a representative from each arts organization in our region (council, guild) because this would increase efficiency and the value of

participation for all.

Quarterly meetings allow time for members to communicate with their locals and bring back information and suggestions to make this dynamic and responsive on both ends.

With time on our side and good communications this is all possible in the next year. All you need to do is send me an email, so we know you are interested and want to learn more.

## OTHER COMMUNITY MEDIA RESOURCES FOR OUR REGION

A great deal of programming about the spectrum of local life in our region is available throughout the year. Watch, listen and read—and let us know you are out there. Connect for cooperative action!

Neighbors Newspaper/Magazine.  
Monthly print version distributed throughout 22-town region in the Quiet Corner  
Available online in color at [www.neighborspaper.com](http://www.neighborspaper.com) with full archive  
Contact Tom King, Owner/Publisher, as [neighborspaper@yahoo.com](mailto:neighborspaper@yahoo.com)  
Send calendar/event listings to “Attention Dagmar Noll” in Subject Line

Local Radio Programs  
Windham Arts Radio Review, Wednesdays 5-6 pm on WILI AM 1400 and FM 95.3  
The Pan American Express, Tuesdays 12—3 pm on WECS 90.1 FM and [www.wecsfm.com](http://www.wecsfm.com)  
Guests invited! Email [john@windhamarts.org](mailto:john@windhamarts.org)

Charter Public Access TV Channel 192/NE Connecticut Area/North Windham Studio

For 24/7 on-demand access to CTV192 programs on the Internet:

1. Go to the website = [www.ctv192.com](http://www.ctv192.com)
2. Open the Programming Tab and select “watch programs.”
3. When you open you will see a display listing current shows
4. Make your selections based on the channel, program title, topic or date and enjoy!
5. On the Homefront is also on Channel 192 Tuesdays 2:30 pm, Thursdays 8:00 pm and Saturdays 2:00 pm.

Remember the Charter Public Access Channel moved from channel 14 to channel 192. Make it a “favorite” on your cable channel remote control and take a ride with community TV—it’s free and worth every cent.

Thanks for reading *Neighbors* and for letting others know about the work of this special collective of writers who are dedicated to serving our community.

Keep the faith for a positive and peaceful 2019!

John Murphy  
Executive Director  
[john@windhamarts.org](mailto:john@windhamarts.org)

## Invitation!

Do you know people who have consistently experienced practical healing in their lives by praying and living the way Jesus taught, as told in the Bible?

Members of First Church of Christ, Scientist, Willimantic invite you to visit our church and join us in learning more about how to heal as Jesus healed.

***Sunday church service: 10:00 a.m.***

***Sunday school for students up to the age of 20: 10:00 a.m.***

***Wednesday testimonial meeting: 4:00 p.m.***

***Reading Room: Tuesday-Friday 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.***

**870 Main Street  
Willimantic, CT 06226**

**860-456-3230 for more information  
[christiansciencect.org/willimantic](http://christiansciencect.org/willimantic)**





# EC-CHAP

Eastern Connecticut Center for  
History, Art, and Performance, Inc.

Happy New Year 2019!

By EC-CHAP

Just as we find ourselves penning “2018” consistently, it’s time again to change habits to record 2019. Where did the last 365 days go? It seems like a blur... Not sure where the days went – but we can say EC-CHAP had a record year offering a total of 89 performances, films, and programs during 2018! Whew... As we begin the New Year, we hope for continued growth, and wish all our patrons, members, volunteers, and performers nothing but good things for 2019.

In addition to the exceptional new and returning regional talent joining us, the first half of 2019 includes several special performances. On April 13th, EC-CHAP is



Tom Rush Photo creditBob Stegmaier C2010

privileged and honored to host a very special event featuring folk icon TOM RUSH! Tom will provide two performances, 3:30pm and 7:30pm, as an Annual Benefit Concert to support the Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance. Tom will be joined by singer / songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, MATT NAKOA. Local Contemporary Americana band, HORIZON BLUE, will provide a prelude opening for Tom and Matt on this magical musical April weekend. Come and experience musical legend Tom Rush, and support your regional cultural center!



Matt Nakoa Contributed photo

We are excited to have BOB MALONE return to The Packing House on Saturday, February 9th. Bob is a seasoned singer/songwriter, and keyboardist for John Fogarty. Bob Malone’s performance of “You’re A Mean One, Mr. Grinch” - from his new album The Christmas Collection - has been featured all year in theaters and online in the official trailer for the new Universal/Illumination production of “The Grinch.



2019 also marks the return of NICOLE ZURAITIS, New York based Grammy® Nominated vocalist, pianist, and composer. Since her debut performance at The Packing House last season, Nicole and her husband Dan Pugach were dually nominated in the arrangement category in the 61st annual Grammy® Awards for their version of Dolly Parton’s “Jolene”. We are simply thrilled to have such a talented and versatile artist grace our stage.



We have the great pleasure of presenting STEVE KATZ debut performance at The Packing House this

## Performing Arts



# THE PACKING HOUSE

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spring! Steve Katz is an original guitarist and founding member of Blood, Sweat, and Tears. Steve will provide an intimate “Evening of Music, Questions, and Answers” on Saturday, May 18th. In addition to his professional musical career, Steve is a photographer and author, recently completing his memoir, “Blood, Sweat, and My Rock ‘n Roll Years: Is Steve Katz a Rock Star?”. We can’t wait for Steve to join us in May.



Don’t forget about our recurring monthly events including our “Bluegrass Feature” (1st Wednesday, Feb-May), “Talent Showcase” (2nd Wednesday), “Social Dance with Kelly Madenjian” (2nd Thursday), Monthly EC-CHAP Information Meeting, and new literature offering, “Readings at The Mill Works” with Brian Sneed (1st Tuesday) beginning March 5th.

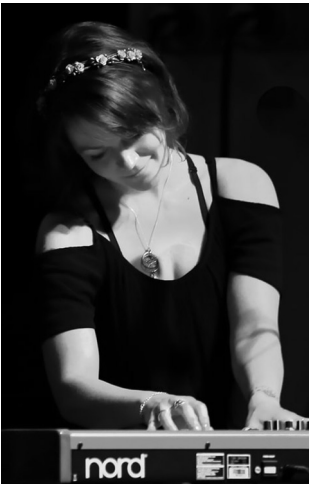
Wishing you and yours a healthy New Year filled with music and the arts!

Peace,  
EC-CHAP Board

### EC-CHAP ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES

**“Singer/Songwriter Kala Farnham with Glenn Kendzia” (Indie/Folk).** Saturday, January 12th, 7:30pm.

KALA FARNHAM is a multi-instrumentalist singer/songwriter from Northeastern CT. Kala’s signature songwriting has been described as a reinvention of the folk tradition made popular by artists such as Joni Mitchell and Joan Baez. In 2015, she was selected to be an Official Showcase Artist in Folk Alliance International’s SERFA Music Conference. October 2016 marked the release of her 2nd studio album, “Samadhi: Home Is Where You Are” as well as another Motif nomination for Best Americana Album. Kala is an alumni of the Johnny Mercer Songwriters Project and the winner of the 2017 Rhode Island Songwriters Association Performing Songwriter Contest. Kayla returns to The Packing House with Rhode Island based singer/songwriter GLENN KENDZIA. Tickets \$15.00 Advance / \$20.00 Door.



**“Patti Rothberg in Concert (Indie / Rock).** Saturday, January 19th, 7:30pm.

PATTI ROTHBERG returns to The Packing House! Hear this talented singer / songwriter extend her range from soft ballads on the keys to rocking the house on the guitar with her original works.

Patti’s recording career goes back to 1996, with her debut on EMI Records, “Between the 1 and the 9”, which refers to the time she spent performing in New York City’s 14th Street subway station. The title track relates some of her experiences, when EMI executive discovered Patti performing there.

Seemingly overnight, Patti Rothberg achieved the kind of worldwide success one could only dream of. Critically acclaimed, “Between the 1 and the 9” was an instant hit, and remains a timeless classic. The success of her debut album had Patti touring quite non-stop from 1996 through 1997, and into 1998. She toured the USA supporting the Wallflowers, Chris Isaak, Midnight Oil, and Garbage, and she toured Europe supporting the Black Crowes. Patti and her band performed on Late Night with David Letterman, The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, and she appeared on the



Oprah Winfrey Show. Tickets \$15.00 Advance / \$20.00 Door.

### EC-CHAP JAZZ SERIES

**“Sarah Hanahan Quartet – Part-2.** Saturday, January 26th, 7:30pm.

SARAH HANAHAN returns to The Packing House for Part-2 of her Jazz Series. Sarah Hanahan is a jazz saxophonist studying performance at the Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz within the Hartt School of Music (University of Hartford). Now a resident of Hartford, Connecticut but originally from Marlborough, Massachusetts, Sarah grew up listening to a wide variety of music, but always had a special love for jazz.

In 2015, Sarah was awarded a full scholarship to study jazz performance at the McLean Institute. Her college teachers include well-known jazz saxophone performers Javon Jackson and Abraham Burton. The McLean Institute has also afforded Sarah the opportunity to receive instruction from and perform with accomplished jazz musicians such as bassist Nat Reeves and trombonist Steve Davis.

Part-3 will conclude Sarah’s 2018-2019 Jazz Series at The Packing House on Saturday, April 6th with Special Guest and renown jazz trombonist, Steve Davis. Tickets \$15.00 Advance / \$20.00 Door.



### EC-CHAP FILM SERIES

**“Maudie”. 2016. (PG-13).** Friday, January 18th, 7:30pm  
Maudie is a 2016 biographical drama film directed by Aisling Walsh and starring Sally Hawkins and Ethan Hawke.

“Maudie,” from Irish-born director Aisling Walsh, is a film biography of Maud Lewis, one of the most beloved folk artists of 20th century Canada. The viewer never really learns just what Maud’s affliction is until the second half of the film (Maud Lewis suffered from painful arthritis all her life, stemming from childhood rheumatic fever). The town in which she lived, married, and made her simple colorful paintings is not named in an opening title (The setting is Nova Scotia, and the scenery of the film, which was partially shot in Ireland and other parts of Canada, is breathtaking).

“This is a remarkably assured movie, through and through. Walsh and cinematographer Guy Godfree have taken care to make every individual shot a thing of beauty. But the artfulness always acts in service of the emotions, which in the end become both inspiring and heartbreaking.” (Roger Ebert)

Join us for this unique true story about art and love! Suggested donation \$5.00.

### Tickets, Reservations, CANCELLATIONS, and Contact

Tickets for all shows and program registrations can be purchased online at [www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming](http://www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming) or at the door. Unless otherwise specified, doors open 30-minutes prior to show time. Senior, student, and member discounts available.

Table reservations and cabaret seating available. Unless specified otherwise, all performances will feature Bring Your Own Beverage & Food “BYOB&F”™ - wine & beer ONLY (Not applicable to Meetings, School Programs, and First Sunday events). Snacks and soft drinks will also be available. You can also bring your paid ticket to Willington Pizza House (or WP Too) for eat-in or take-out the night of the show and receive 15% off your meal purchase. If you’re feeling sassy, SPECIFICALLY ask for “The Packing House” pizza! You won’t go wrong. Visit [www.thepackinghouse.us](http://www.thepackinghouse.us) for the secret recipe.

Program cancellations will be listed on the EC-CHAP website ([www.ec-chap.org](http://www.ec-chap.org)), and The Packing House website ([www.thepackinghouse.us](http://www.thepackinghouse.us)). If you’re unsure, just call (518-791-9474).

The Packing House is located at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Parking is free and located onsite and across the street. For questions, program or rental information and table reservations, please call 518-791-9474. Email EC-CHAP ([info@ec-chap.org](mailto:info@ec-chap.org)) or The Packing House ([info@thepackinghouse.us](mailto:info@thepackinghouse.us)).



# Sacred or Cursed? Views we choose and realities we create ...

By Phoebe C. Godfrey

“..we will recover our sense of wonder and our sense of the sacred only if we appreciate the universe beyond ourselves as a revelatory experience of that numinous presence whence all things came into being. Indeed, the universe is the primary sacred reality. We become sacred by our participation in this more sublime dimension of the world about us.” Father Thomas Berry, *The Great Work*, 1999



Father Thomas Berry wrote and spoke much about our need to recover / rediscover the sacred in the universe, hence in ourselves, if we are to ever address the rapid self-destructiveness of our ideological and economic systems. I was reminded of him just last week when I was selling my newly self-published children’s book *A North Pole Tale* (as written about in the last edition of *Neighbors*) at the Willimantic Food Co-op. To encourage people who were checking out to come over and talk to me, I would declare that I had written a children’s book about Santa discovering climate change. As a result, some of them would come over and talk and a few even ended up purchasing my book. Others would show surprise and say something like “interesting” or “cool” and then explain that they don’t have children or that now was not the right time to stop and inquire more. Overall, people’s responses were positive except for one man who was with a woman and small child who was wearing a lovely Christmas sweater. Seeing that they were seemingly in the holiday spirit, I said my line and to my surprise the man’s reply was harsh, aggressively stating, “Climate change is a crock”. He then continued, while walking past me in order to get a coffee that was to the left side of where my vending table was located, stating, “We don’t believe in Santa and besides we live in a cursed world full of men who murder and engage in vice– haven’t you read the Bible?” At that point he looked at me glaringly. His small blond son was now right in front of me and he looked up at me with a slightly bewildered look (he must have been about 5), his cheerful sweater creating a stark contrast to the anxious emotions I was feeling and the harsh, fallen world believed in by his father, and therefore in which he too must live. I replied, “Yes, some men are destructive and others are not and fewer women are so, but the point is to work for good...” to which he interjected with a visible sneer, “Typical”. Having now gotten his coffee, he gathered up his son and wife and began leaving the Co-op and I too decided to say no more.

I share this experience as it reminded me of the surprising differences between Catholics like Father Berry, and even the current Pope (who in his Christmas speech again decried the sins of greed and consumerism), and evangelicals when it comes to views on climate change / the environment. Of course not all Catholics are



Father Thomas Berry

## Quiet Corner Fiddlers



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Midway Restaurant, Rt. 44, Ashford

Fiddlers of all skill levels always welcome at our sessions every Tuesday evening 7-8:30PM  
Info Bernie: b.schreiber@snet.net

environmentalists but certainly there is more openness to the issues, especially when compared to evangelicals in the American south. In fact, according to Pew, as reported by Megan Mayhew in *The Guardian*, “77% of Hispanic Catholics are likely to say human activity has contributed to the Earth’s warming. Religiously unaffiliated (64%) and black Protestants (56%) are also likely to tie climate change to human activity”. The lowest numbers though are for, “...white mainline Protestants (41%) view climate change as primarily due to human activity ... [and] white evangelical Protestants are *least* likely to hold this view.” In wondering, “...why there hasn’t been a more palpable response to climate change among people of faith in the south”, Mayhew offers an answer from Dr. Lucas Johnston, a professor of religion and environment at Wake Forest. “There is a longstanding antipathy toward environmental sentiments in Christian, and especially evangelical circles, because they have, for centuries, been imagined as pernicious and dangerous, and possibly bordering on paganism.” (“What Would Jesus Do? Talking with Evangelicals about Climate Change,” 12/18/18). Of course, this is highly ironic given that Christmas itself with the tree, holy, mistletoe and mid-winter ‘birth’ has its origins in paganism. In fact, as a man who thanked me outside the Willimantic post office for saying “happy holidays” to him (as opposed to ‘Merry Christmas’), went on to say, “Solstice is the real reason for the season”. And so these ancient yet lingering fears on the part of evangelicals that environmentalism borders on paganism are no longer merely ironic, hence amusing, but rather are now increasingly destructive, given the larger picture of what is happening daily to life on earth. In looking back now to the man in the co-op and his need for climate change to be a “crock” and for the world to be “cursed”, I can only feel empathy for his child who will no doubt feel the emotional and physical fall out of his father’s beliefs. But who knows, when he is a bit older this fallout may inspire him to join the many children around the world who are already taking action on behalf of the climate, including those involved with *Our Children’s Trust and Earth Guardians*. These two groups are involved in suing the US Government for violating their constitutional rights to a livable future and 20% of the proceeds from my children’s book are going to support this seminal court case.

Another example of youth activism is 15 year old Greta Thunberg from Sweden who began a solo climate strike; an idea that has now spread to over 20,000 students

across the world. Speaking recently before the UN assembly at the COP24 in Poland she boldly declared that,

For 25 years countless people have come to the UN climate conferences begging our world leaders to stop emissions and clearly that has not worked as emissions are continuing to rise. So I will not beg the world leaders to care for our future... I will instead let them know change is coming whether they like it or not. ...Since our leaders are behaving like children, we will have to take the responsibility they should have taken long ago....We have to understand what the older generation has dealt to us, what mess they have created that we have to clean up and live with. We have to make our voices heard (“Our Leaders are like children’, school strike founder tells climate summit,” *The Guardian*, 4/12/18)

Like Greta, the young boy at the co-op may one day come to question “what the older generation has dealt to us, what mess they have created that we have to clean up and live with”. And part of doing this, given my brief glimpse into his father’s beliefs, will have to include recognizing, as does Father Berry that “...the universe is the primary sacred reality” and therefore is *not cursed*. In fact, as I tell my students over and over, not all humans see the world as we do in our culture (and even if we are not all evangelicals the belief in a cursed world has permeated our larger culture) and therefore not all humans are responsible for climate change and environmental destruction. Additionally, I do think it is safe to say that in the indigenous roots of all human cultures (and for most surviving indigenous peoples), is the recognition of the universe as sacred just as Father Berry articulates. For this reason I think that until more people in our culture realize this, we will continue to put our culturally narrow and cursed versions of the universe / planet before our collative human duty to maintain the manifestation of creation. For as Santa realizes at the end of my children’s book, “...We really are all connected!” and this connection if seen and acted upon as sacred or as cursed will either save or erase us all.



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# Come Celebrate 10 years with Hope and Wellness Center and Salon Saturday, January 19th from 3:00 - 7:00 PM

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Next producer group starts 1/24/19 at 6PM. The studio is located at 207 Tuckie Road in North Windham.

You must reside in one of the following towns to be eligible for this program: Ashford, Brooklyn, Chaplin, Coventry, Canterbury, Columbia, Eastford, Hampton, Lebanon, Mansfield, Pomfret, Scotland, Thompson, Windham, Woodstock, and Willington.

## Feeling Stressed?

By Nicole T. Smith, L.Ac

If your answer to that question is YES, have you ever considered acupuncture? You might be saying: How can needles in my body help me calm down? I'm getting stressed just thinking about it!

The truth is, acupuncture is very relaxing, promotes endorphin production, and helps induce calming pathways that transmit throughout the entire body.

Stress interferes with every internal system. From aches, tense muscles, stomach upset, chest pain, frequent infections, low energy, sleep disturbance, weight gain, and headaches, these are just a few of the side effects stress brings.

It's important to understand the difference between acupuncture needles and hypodermic needles. When you get a shot or have blood taken, this is a hypodermic needle. These are large, with a hole, to either inject or extract, so they are more painful.

Acupuncture needles are solid, with no hole, so they do not feel at all like a hypodermic needle. In fact, many patients are so relaxed, they fall asleep during treatment. Other benefits include more restorative sleep, a stronger immune system, and a more positive outlook in general.

One group of researchers determined the biological connection to why acupuncture relieves stress, discovering that it "blocks the chronic, stress-induced elevations" of the assortment of hormones that are released into the bloodstream as a reaction to stress. ([https://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2013-03/gumc-sos031113.php](https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2013-03/gumc-sos031113.php))

It's estimated that 75-90% of all doctor's visits can be related back to stress. Stress is a factor in five out of the six leading causes of death. ([https://www.huffingtonpost.com/joe-robinson/stress-and-health\\_b\\_3313606.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/joe-robinson/stress-and-health_b_3313606.html))

It simply doesn't work to treat the symptoms of stress if you don't treat the stress itself! So, if you're feeling frazzled, call for an appointment today!

*Nicole T. Smith, L.Ac. is a Board-certified and licensed acupuncturist located in Scotland, CT. Visit her site at: [www.ThePamperedPorcupine.com](http://www.ThePamperedPorcupine.com). 860-450-6512.*

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