

Neighbors



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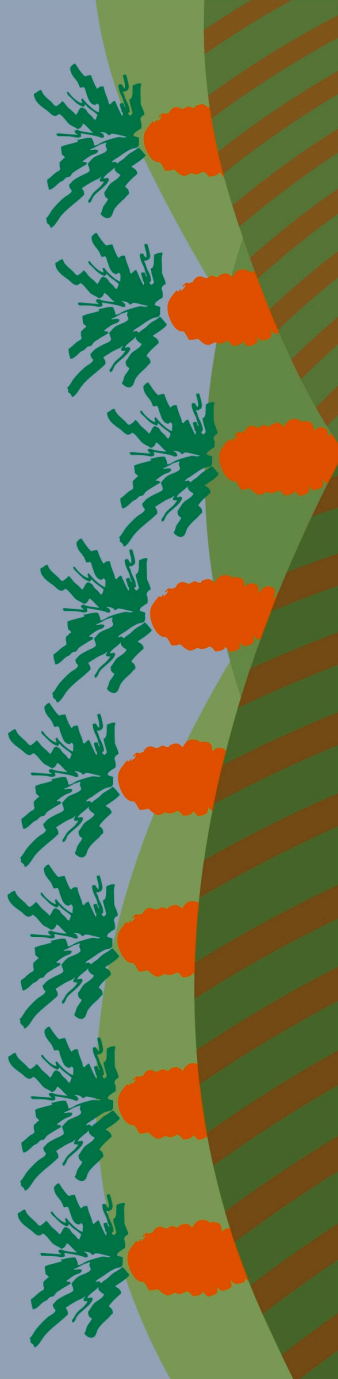
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Looking Up:

Putting Aside Doubts and Enjoying Earth's Sky

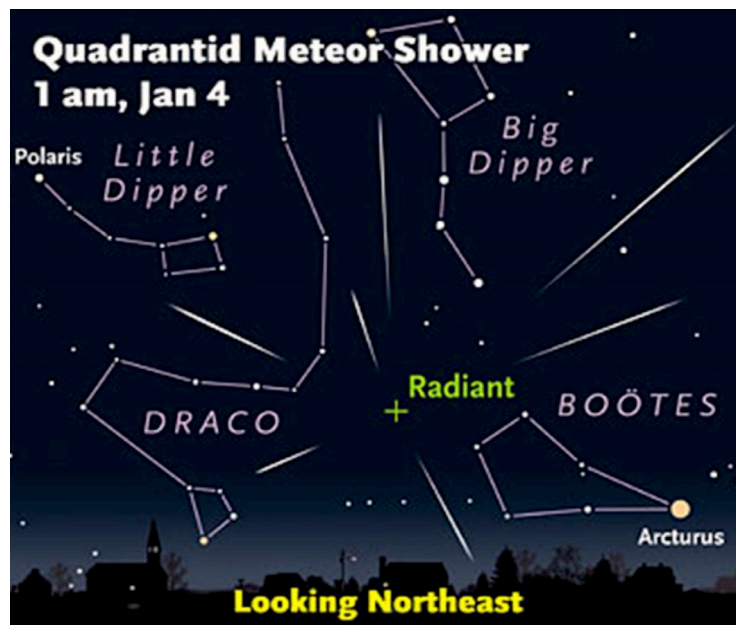
By Bob Grindle

I can remember waking up to the sound and feel of the washing machine chugging along...perhaps it was on spin cycle...but I would wander out of the bedroom in my pj's, navigate the piles of sorted dirty clothes down the hallway and across the laundry area at the back of the kitchen, grab a donut from the bag that Mom had picked up on her walk home from work and have a quiet chat with my mother. My four sisters were still sleeping; Dad had just left for work and it never occurred to ten- or eleven-year-old me that mom was probably enjoying her solitude as much as I enjoyed getting first crack at the donuts. I don't recall the conversations, but I was a child prone to getting into trouble for lots of family or school infractions, so there was always plenty of material, and at that age, it always felt like grownups spent a lot of their time putting up barriers and blockades to freewheeling youthful test-piloting, so the early morning talks were a kind of (before the day gets rolling) neutral zone.

Sitting down to write can also be a sort of neutral zone, like free play...let the imagination flow. We pretty much all agree that a certain amount of warming up is helpful before exercising our muscles, whether for work or sport or play, but might not the same sort of mind-limbering-up help before tackling a mental challenge? Years ago, when fishing some of Oregon's coastal rivers and streams with friends, it was easy to lose total track of time and place in a sort of magical reverie, imagining—or is that hallucinating?—that I was one with the flowing water and timbered hillsides; almost able to hear the fish. Rrrright...! I no longer spend time fishing, just as I

no longer wake to the sound of the washing machine, but I delight in occasionally drawing on random recollections to rekindle the fires of curiosity at the world around us.

The anthropologist Loren Eiseley, in his most popular book "The Immense Journey", speaks of the pow-



erful interplay of youthful curiosity, scientific discovery, society's rigid adherence to social custom and the craving for adventure...yes, The Hobbit does pop into mind. Anyway, Mr. Eiseley writes that, as a youth, he often spent time outside, staring up at the immensity of the night sky and simply waiting. Not for anything specific, just waiting... for the next arrival. Put aside doubts and simply become one with the parent of everything that exists on this Earth,

Mother Earth—perhaps it is possible to hear the fish.

Putting aside doubts, though, the coming first month of this new decade offers ample reason to look up and find your way across the night or early morning sky with very little homework required. Venus dazzles the southwest sky right after sunset for the entire month of January, growing rapidly higher each night and dancing a sort of pas de deux with the Moon in its crescent phases. Turning your eyes a full 180° to the northeast in the wee hours after midnight on January 3rd should be a great chance to see the 'shooting and earth-grazing stars' of the Quadrantid Meteor Shower. This meteor shower without a home, since it doesn't originate from a specific constellation, is the briefest of all showers, but find a spot with a good look northeast to southeast, bundle up and sit down to enjoy what ought to be a rather good display this year...especially since there won't be much Moon to wash out the viewing.

The full Wolf Moon of January 10th, 2020 will rise slightly below Orion and roughly opposite sparkling Venus, and ten days later wanes to a crisp crescent that forms a tight compact with Mars and Antares (the heart of Scorpio) on the 20th, before then waxing through another crescent phase and highlighting Venus' bright presence.

As the New Year and new decade gets started, here's hoping that each one of us finds the time and interest and energy to turn over the many well-worn stones and bits and pieces of long lost memories that line the shores of the ponds and lakes and oceans of our lives.

Bob Grindle is a Windham Hospital Retiree and 2017 ECSU graduate who concentrated in Astronomy.



Happy New Year 2020



ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES
BLUES
RAMBLIN' DAN STEVENS
Saturday January 18th | 7:30pm



ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES
FOLK
CLAUDIA SCHMIDT WITH
MARK MANDEVILLE & RAIANNE RICHARDS
Saturday, January 25th | 7:30pm



ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES
FOLK / INDIE
BELLE OF THE FALL
Saturday, February 1st | 7:30pm



JAZZ SERIES
LEALA CYR QUARTET
Saturday February 22nd | 7:30pm

COMING UP!

- 02/14: **THE GENERAL** - "SILENT FILM SERIES" WITH JOHATHAN MURRAY
- 03/07: **LIBBY JOHNSON IN CONCERT** (FOLK / INDIE)
- 03/27: **ERIC SOMMER** (BLUES / AMERICANA)
- 03/28: **HORIZON BLUE** (FOLK / AMERICANA)
- 04/25: **AJ JANSEN BAND: THE OUTLAW WOMEN OF COUNTRY SHOW**

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January 8th | 7:00pm

"SOCIAL DANCE" w/KELLY MADENJIAN

Every 2nd Thursday!

January 9th | 7:00pm

"EC-CHAP FILM SERIES"

"Faces Places" 2017 (PG)

with "The Making of a Willington Mural: A Canvas of History & Social Change"

Friday, January 17th | 7:00pm

"EC-CHAP INFORMATION EXCHANGE MEETING"

Wednesday January 22nd | 7:00pm

All proceeds go to support:



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This is our time on earth.
What are we doing with it?

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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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Loving the Quiet Corner

By Loretta Wrobel



What a thrill for me, walking next to the Quinebaug River and musing about the turn of a new decade. A decade can be a long time or a short time, maybe related to your age.

Gazing at the river in the glow of the low winter sun, I observe that a decade is not a long time for a river. The river looks the same to me as it did a decade ago or even several decades ago. I, however, cannot say the same for myself. I not only carry those extra years in the contours of my face and body but feel those years regularly when I stand up, approach sitting on the floor with my 8-month-old grand-nephew, or run up the stairs. Thankfully, I can still move up the stairs quickly.

The river just keeps flowing and bringing water downstream, based on what weather systems have impacted our area or what is happening upstream. There is a majesty to the winter sunset by a river with the banks covered by snow and ice. This is the essence of living in the Quiet Corner. We still can witness mother nature at her best.

In our neck of the woods, we are blessed with many waterways that are healthy, and provide recreation and drinking water in addition to habitat for diverse wildlife. Not all water is high quality in this era of toxins and pollution. I consider myself fortunate to be living in a watershed that is able to support vibrant natural resources.

I remind myself to be grateful for all the forests, animals, and healthy air in my ecosystem. I am appalled that the state is looking at constructing a gas-powered energy plant in Killingly. We prefer clean energy without all those pollutants discharging into the air and the high potential for leakage from gas lines.

How can anyone not fall in love with our little corner of Connecticut? We have an abundance of organizations working to maintain our precious resources and keep ahead of natural disasters. The bouts with the gypsy moths within the last several years have raised havoc with our oak trees. Trees are our best friends as they remove carbon dioxide from our air, keep us cool in the heat, provide habitat for our birds and wildlife, and give us lumber, maple syrup and other wood products.

I recently attended a seminar on climate change and forest health. How are the native trees responding to higher temps, longer and fiercer storms, extended droughts, and the steady march northward of invasive beetles and

bugs? Our native trees are struggling to deal with these shifts in our climate, and scientists are examining the ongoing impact on our trees.

Yale Myers Forest is an important resource, as it does research on all aspects of healthy forestry. The Last Green Valley offers many funding sources for forested landowners to learn how to maintain their forested lands. The Forest Legacy Program, administered by the US Forestry Division, offers grants to assist landowners in maintaining healthy forests in exchange for keeping their forested land intact.

When I first moved to this area in 1987, I questioned my sanity. Why was I moving to the sticks? I have come to love where I reside and can't remember my reasons for questioning the move.

If you also love this area, consider how you can help keep it as fresh and pure as it is today. What can you do? Perhaps you can take a friend on a hike or show them your favorite view. Are you aware of the many land trusts in our area? Would you consider a membership in Joshua's Trust, Wyndham Land Trust, or Wolf Den Land Trusts, just to name a few? Or tell a friend to not litter our road ways. Or pick up litter when you are out in nature.

How can you show your gratitude for our precious wildness? Consider introducing a child to a natural place and allowing them to listen to the sounds and peace of our fields and streams.

I question what needs to be done in order for our landscape to continue to offer such gifts to us humans. I do not want the next decade to end with our natural resources compromised and possibly destroyed. If we do not consciously work to protect our environment, we could be struggling to exist in a vastly different environment by the end of the next decade.

I, for one, do not want that to happen, and I often ponder how we can continue to maintain our resources with the threats we now face. This is our ongoing challenge. How much are you willing to do to hold the beauty so that in ten years we are still falling over in love with the winter sun setting, the otter swimming so easily in the nearby stream, and the scarlet tanager serenading us in the spring?

I encourage you to consider all this as you end this year of 2019 and open to the surprises and adventures of a new year and a new decade. You can make a difference when you participate, even in small ways. Support the natural world, be an ally to all the beings, and be a grateful human who loves the Quiet Corner. Join me in celebrating this new year of 2020. See you by the river, in the field, or on the trail.

My Last Visit with Judy

By Juan Perez, Isabela, Puerto Rico - Curbstonista in Exile

I moved to Puerto Rico in 2012, to help care for my elderly mother. I have returned to Connecticut only twice ever since, until last September. The Curbstonistas were having another anniversary of the Julia de Burgos Park, and the season of Poetry in the Park was coming to an end. I was traveling to Florida to visit a friend with cancer. I received emails from many friends to try come to the celebration; I indicated I would be unable. In a late-night reading of my emails, there it was! Judy asking me to try come and that she would like to see me. I change my itinerary the next day and decided to fly to Connecticut for one day (I had to be back the night of the park event).

In 1981, I met Judy Doyle and Sandy Taylor when I was rebellious 16-year-old high schooler who advocated for the Independence of Puerto Rico and felt in love with the awakening revolutions in Central America. I read on the local news of a group named HOLA (Hands off Latin America) going on a bus to Washington DC to join others around the nation to protest President Rea-

gan's genocidal-terrorist policies in Nicaragua and El Salvador. It began a long relationship as a volunteer with anything Curbstone Press and its Commanders, Sandy and Judy, were involved in. Judy would gift me every book published as reward. Little did I know, they were making me a better person, a conscientious citizen of the world. I loved Curbstone, Sandy, Judy, Bob, Janet, Jim and Arleen. I even



Juan Perez and Judy Doyle

dismissed the room filled with smoke! Judy would call me upstairs after sending Sandy a cup of coffee and say, "Here have some bread and cheese with your coffee. You need to eat and be strong." Judy was the roots of the Oak Tree Curbstone press was; unseen, but fundamental to the growth of the organization. Sandy was the

leaves. Judy was Curbstone, Windham Area Poetry Project, Windham Area Arts Collaborative, Julia de Burgos Park co-founder, Poetry in the Park, Hands Off Latin America-HOLA, provided poets to the Windham Boxing Club, Colectivo Mestizal, 3rd Thursday Street Fest, Windham 2000 Committee, and, yes, builder of community leaders, champions for diversity, women rights and multiculturalism. Judy was an avid promoter of the Greater Windham Area.

On that September visit, I arrived early and went to see Judy before the crowd came. Once again, we had coffee and sat at the park to spend some time with Sandy (that's another story only a Curbstonista knows!). Throughout the ceremony, I sat the most with Jon Anderson and Judy. I think we both knew, after the event. Judy and I hugged (I think we cried). She whispered in my ear "I love you Juan, Sandy loved you like a son." She went upstairs as she indicated being exhausted. I stared at the 2nd floor open window, hoping to see another glimpse of her.

Adios Judy, I know Sandy is anxiously waiting. As this world you leave, I echo Sandy's words: "Fuck'em."

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Adventures with Geese

By David Corsini

In May 1988 Delia and I lived in Bolton on a wooded property that had a brook. One day, as we were out for a ride, we passed a sign advertising baby geese and Delia commented how much Ana (her daughter) would like a pair. So we stopped.

Neither the people selling the geese nor we knew how to sex geese, so we just picked two—one with orange (*naranja*) feet that we called Nara and one with green (*verde*) feet that we called Verde.

We bought a goat house at Thompson's Feed Store, made a pen with posts and wire, made a door for the house to lock the geese in at night, and got a plastic pool for water. There was a path down to a brook and when the geese were a few months old, we took them to the brook. The geese loved going to the brook and it was great fun watching them wash and play. At first we accompanied them to the brook, but after a while we just opened the pen and let them go and come back on their own.

During that first year we took them on vacation to a cottage on a pond in Plymouth, MA. First we put the geese in the canoe and gave them a ride around the pond. We were not sure what they would do on their own in the pond, but eventually we put them in the water and luckily they followed us in the canoe. They were attached to us and even liked to help us in the gardens. Although we liked having them with us while we gardened, we were never successful in teaching them the difference between a flower and a weed.

One morning in April of their second year Nara did not come out of the house with Verde. Later we found an egg. When we took them to the brook that week, we observed Verde mounting Nara while they were in the water. This looked to us like mating behavior and we thought we had a male and female goose and began discussing whether we were going to eat the eggs or let them raise goslings. But the next day Verde was sitting in the house and laid an egg, and the play in the brook showed there was quite a bit of randomness in the mounting behavior. We had a pair of geese that were playing for the same team. While a group of little goslings would have been cute, in retrospect I am glad we didn't go there.

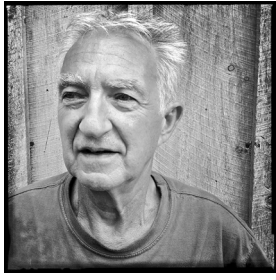
The two geese laid eggs from April to June for four years: 72 eggs the first year, and then 74, 76, and 70. In the fifth year only one goose laid and we had just 34 eggs. As each goose egg is at least twice the size of a chicken egg, this is a lot of eggs for a family that does not eat many eggs. We gave eggs to friends for eating and decorating, Delia made flans, and we had scrambled eggs.

I claimed that the eggs tasted different—stronger. Delia thought I was crazy and didn't believe I could tell the difference. So she bought some chicken eggs and was determined to put me to the test. She suspected that I would cheat by checking the refrigerator so she hid the chicken eggs and made me a batch of scrambled goose eggs. Of course, I said they tasted like chicken eggs. Advantage Delia!

One time I ordered a shirt from L.L.Bean. When I opened the package, Delia could not believe I had ordered such a color. A kind description of the color would involve some reference to mustard. The next day, when I went out to feed the geese, I wore the shirt. The geese went crazy. They ran around their pen squawking and flapping their wings as if they had seen the devil. Needless to say that shirt was immediately added to the Goodwill bag. I am not sure how she did it, but I suspect Delia communicated something to those geese. In retrospect, I should have kept that shirt and used it to conduct some avian research. I sure hope the new owner never encountered geese while wearing it. Perhaps I should have attached a note of warning: *Never to Be Worn in Presence of Geese.*

Each night the geese would go into their goat house and I would latch the door. But every once in a while, I would forget to latch the door and in the middle of the night I would hear agitated squawking coming from the goose pen. This meant a raccoon was harassing the geese and I would jump out of bed and race outside to chase away the raccoon and latch the door. The raccoons never hurt the geese at night. But one morning, while I was off birdwatching, one of our pet parrots was on the bottom of the cage whispering to Delia: *"It's all right, it's all right..."* The parrot was looking back and forth between Delia and outside. Delia, who is amazing at her ability to understand parrots, looked outside to see a raccoon attacking Verde.

Delia ran to the garage and got a spade and started beating the raccoon. She said that hitting the raccoon felt as if she were pounding on a rubber tire. The raccoon let go of



the goose and Delia went in to call 911. The 911 responder was a little flummoxed by the call but agreed to send someone. Delia went back outside and saw the raccoon again had hold of Verde. She pounded on it again and drove the raccoon off. Delia could tell that one of Verde's eyes was completely crushed. The officer came with a gun ready to shoot the raccoon, who was nowhere to be found. Delia put the goose in a box and went off to Bolton Vet. There was nothing that could be done about the eye, but after minor surgery and a two night stay, Verde seemed fine. When with us, she kept the good eye toward us and it was difficult to tell she had a handicap.

A year later we had another tragic incident. This time it was a wandering pit-bull that attacked Nara. Again, I was not at home and Delia had to take Nara to the vet. While the vet found some significant lacerations on her body, it did not appear that there was organ damage. The vet expected she would be fine, but the next morning he called Delia at work with bad news. Their efforts to save her had not succeeded.

We felt very sad about the loss of Nara and also concerned for Verde, with only one eye and now no partner. We located a farm in Hebron that had geese for sale. The farmer had lots of geese and we spotted one that to us looked just like Nara. We asked the farmer to catch that particular one and with considerable effort and a muddy struggle, he got the goose into a burlap bag. Off we went, happy that Verde would now have a companion. We called the companion Company.

Well... Company looked a lot like Nara, but she was twice as big. In addition, she had no interest whatsoever in Verde and only wanted to go home. The pen posed no problem for her as she easily flew out from the ground or from atop the goat house. Several times we received calls from neighbors asking if we had lost a goose because they had just seen one crossing through their yard half a mile away. Even though I kept saying *"You're going home"*, getting Company back into the burlap bag was not easy. The farmer tried to return our \$10 but we felt like we really should pay him again for his trouble.

Verde did ok by herself, and in 1996 we decided to move closer to Delia's work in Willimantic. We were looking for a house that had good inside accommodations for our two parrots and good outside accommodations for our one-eyed goose. We found the perfect house in Windham Center. The kitchen had two nooks perfect for the parrots and there was a pond for Verde. When we picked up Verde to bring her to our new house, we noticed that she was light as a feather. She had not been eating! The food dish had always been empty, but the food must have been eaten by other animals. We called the vet, who thought the only thing to try would be some antibiotics. We squirted antibiotics into her mouth for several days, but she showed no interest in eating. She wandered down to the pond and spent several days bobbing her head into and out of the water. And then she died.

We buried Verde on the side of the property with a view of the pond. Her grave is marked by a large piece of white quartz, a cross-like piece of metal I embedded in cement, and daffodils. As I am not religious and never had the opportunity to discuss the issue with Verde, I don't know why I made a cross-type marker. In any case, we are grateful to Verde for the pleasure she brought us, for the memories of the two sisters, and for helping us find our house.

(Reprinted from "Joint Accounts" by Delia Berlin and David Corsini, available at bookstores and online; see amazon.com/author/deliaberlin)

the Neighbors paper-
black and white
and read all over!!!

The Last Ant

By Delia Berlin

I've been going to way too many funerals lately. I always heard that this happens when you get old, but at 61 I don't feel old and I'm neither resigned nor prepared to accept so many losses within a short time.

After all, my mother is in her mid-eighties and doing well, and I only recently lost my 103-year-old mother-in-law – with her centenarian sisters, by the way, still alive.

But timely or not, all these deaths and their accompanying rituals have been reminding me of someone who affected me years ago. Oddly, this "someone" was not another human; not even a dog or a bird. Actually, this someone was an ant.

When my daughter was seven or eight, we ordered one of those clear plastic, iconic ant farms. It arrived via US mail from Georgia, with detailed care instructions. The care manual also explained that all our ants were sterile female workers, and therefore unable to reproduce. Federal regulations prohibited the shipping of queen ants across state lines to avoid the establishment of exotic species.

Worker ants never reproduce, but since they care for a related reproductive queen, they contribute nevertheless to the successful passing of their genes. Our ants would set up housekeeping and spend their lives in a carefully organized community, but they would not be able to exhibit the full range of behaviors observed in wild ant colonies, such as caring for the queen, tending her eggs and feeding the young.

It was quite moving to see these ants at work as if the whole world was their narrow slice of space between the clear plastic walls of their container. Their subsistence depended on their dedication and ability to grow a fungus on which they would feed. Once we put the kit together, all we had to do was add a few drops of water every now and then, and watch.

We spent many hours watching these tireless ants and trying to understand their efforts and exchanges. Correctly or not, our anthropomorphic perspective led us to interpret observed behaviors as communication, mutual grooming, and cooperation. I don't recall ever observing anything that could be interpreted as aggression or a fight. These ants really seemed to get along to a fault.

But all good things must come to an end, and one day, an ant died. To our surprise, we watched what seemed like a funeral proces-

sion of ants carrying their dead relative up a "hill" towards an upper corner of the farm. From then on, each time an ant died, this ritual was repeated. Indeed, the ant farm had a cemetery.

The "someone" who so moved me that I still think of her every now and then, even after more than 30 years, was the last ant. You would think that an old and achy ant who has already lost every peer would simply throw in the towel and eat the last of her fungus without a care. But an ant has to do what an ant has to do, and this last ant used every bit of strength left in its tiny body to roll up her friend to the cemetery. And then, as if she knew that nobody else was left to do her the honor, she stayed there.

It amazed me to witness this ant's effort and commitment to do what had to be done according to the rules of her colony. Most humans seem to have little trouble walking away from duty even in ideal circumstances, let alone under duress. What kept this ant going up the hill?

We humans fill in the blanks of our knowledge with assumptions, and so we believe that all ants' behaviors are pre-programmed. But the apparent tenacity and dignity of this ant's ultimate effort made a strong impression on me, and I often remember the perseverance of her last hours during my own difficult times. And as I go to yet another funeral, I can't help feeling tiny, sad and very tired, as that ant rolling her dead friend to the top of a hill. But I won't stay there yet. There is still work to do for the colony.

(Reprinted from "Joint Accounts" by Delia Berlin and David Corsini, available at bookstores and online; see amazon.com/author/deliaberlin)



Hindsight is 2020: What Will You Do Differently This Year?

By Laurence Hale, AAMA, CRPS®
Principal/Managing Partner,
Co-Founder, & Chief Investment
Officer



As many of you, our dedicated readers, know, Jim Zahansky, Principal/Managing Partner, has historically authored a column each month. Jim has welcomed me, Laurence Hale, Principal/Managing Partner and Leisl Cording, Vice President, Associate Financial Advisor, to contribute our knowledge of the industry, to you, our readers. Jim, Leisl, and I will alternate authorship throughout the year, sharing our experience and unique strategies to encourage you to Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.TM

Every New Year, as we recover from the holidays, we develop goals and resolutions to motivate ourselves to be better. Perhaps you want to go to the gym a few times a week, read more books, or start that hobby you've been thinking about. This year, why not try focusing on a different aspect of your life—your finances?

According to a recent survey, 76% of Americans reported having at least one financial regret. Over half of this group said it had to do with savings: 27% didn't start saving for retirement soon enough, 19% didn't contribute enough to an emergency fund, and 10% wish they had saved more for college.¹ This year, align your priorities, define goals, and create – and follow – a strategy for responsible saving and spending.

The saving conundrum

What's preventing Americans from saving more? It's a confluence of factors: stagnant wages over many years; the high cost of housing and college; meeting everyday expenses for food, utilities, and childcare; and squeezing in unpredictable expenses for things like health care, car maintenance, and home repairs. When expenses are too high, people can't save, and they often must borrow to buy what they need or want, which can lead to a never-ending cycle of debt.

People make financial decisions all the time, and sometimes these decisions don't pan out as intended. Hindsight is 20/20, of course. Looking back, would you change anything?

Paying too much for housing

Are housing costs straining your budget? A standard lender guideline is to allocate no more than 28% of your income toward housing expenses, including your monthly mortgage payment, real estate taxes, homeowners insurance, and association dues (the "front-end" ratio), and no more than 36% of your income to cover all your monthly debt obligations, including housing expenses plus credit card bills, student loans, car loans, child support, and any other debt that shows on your credit report and requires monthly payments (the "back-end" ratio).

But just because a lender determines how much you can afford to borrow doesn't mean you should. Why not set your ratios lower? Many things can throw off your ability to pay your monthly mortgage bill down the road – a job loss, one spouse giving up a job to take care of children, an unexpected medical expense, tuition bills for you or your child.

Potential solutions: To lower your housing costs, consider downsizing to a smaller home (or apartment) in the same area, researching and moving to a less expensive town or state, or renting out a portion of your current home. In addition, watch interest rates and refinance when the numbers make sense.

Paying too much for college

Outstanding student debt levels in the United States are off the charts, and it's not just students who are borrowing. Approximately 15 million student loan borrowers are age 40 and older, and this demographic accounts for almost 40% of all student loan debt.²

Potential solutions: If you have a child in college now, ask the financial aid office about the availability of college-sponsored scholarships for current students, or consider having your child transfer to a less expensive school. If you have a child who is about to go to college, run the net price calculator that's available on every college's website

to get an estimate of what your out-of-pocket costs will be at that school. Look at state universities or community colleges, which tend to be the most affordable. For any school, understand exactly how much you and/or your child will need to borrow – and what the monthly loan payment will be after graduation – before signing any loan documents.

Paying too much for your car

Automobile prices have grown rapidly in the last decade, and most drivers borrow to pay for their cars, with seven-year loans becoming more common.³ As a result, a growing number of buyers won't pay off their auto loans before they trade in their cars for a new one, creating a cycle of debt.

Potential solutions: Consider buying a used car instead of a new one, be proactive with maintenance and tune-ups, and try to use public transportation when possible to prolong the life of your car. As with your home, watch interest rates and refinance when the numbers make sense.

Keeping up with the Joneses

It's easy to want what your friends, colleagues, or neighbors have – nice cars, trips, home amenities, memberships – and spend money (and possibly go into debt) to get them. That's a mistake. Live within your means, not someone else's.

Potential solutions: Aim to save at least 10% of your current income for retirement and try to set aside a few thousand dollars for an emergency fund (three to six months' worth of monthly expenses is a common guideline). If you can't do that, cut back on discretionary items, look for ways to lower your fixed costs, or explore ways to increase your current income.

Align your priorities in 2020

To help ensure that you align your priorities for this year, look at your spending from last year. Where can you cut back, what changes can you make, how can you spend more responsibly? With the start of the new year, there's no time like the present to establish a unique and strategic plan for achieving your financial life goals. At Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors, we understand that life comes with many changes, and we will be there with you along the way to help you Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.TM I look forward to writing for you all again soon! You can access weekly market highlights, along with additional information, on our website at www.whzwealth.com/resources.

1Bankrate's Financial Security Index, May 2019

2Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Student Loan Data and Demographics, September 2018

3The Wall Street Journal, The Seven-Year Auto Loan: America's Middle Class Can't Afford Their Cars, October 1, 2019

The accompanying article has been authored in part by Broadridge Investor Communication Solutions, Inc © 2019 and Laurence Hale, AAMS, CRPS® of Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors. 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.

WTG Giant Indoor Tag Sale 2020

Submitted by Robin Rice

Have you been waiting all year for the WTG Giant Indoor Tag Sale? Well, it's just around the corner. But the Windham Theatre Guild needs your help! Start Spring cleaning today and donate any unwanted items to the tag sale. Drop of dates are January 4th from 9 am to 2 pm or January 5th from 11 am to 2 pm at the Burton Leavitt Theatre, 779 Main Street Willimantic.

Donations of clothing and shoes will be accepted again this year to be sold to Savers in Manchester (\$\$ for pounds). These items will NOT be available for purchase at the tag sale. Please do not donate any electronics, computers or exercise equipment.

Then come shopping for bargains at the Giant Indoor Tag Sale at the Burton Leavitt Theatre, 779 Main Street, Willimantic on Saturday, January 11th from 9 am to 1 pm. The snow date for the sale is Saturday, January 18th. For more information, call 423-2245.

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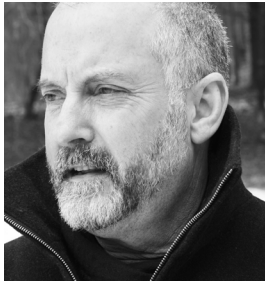
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All About Garlic

Tomatoes and oregano make it Italian; wine and tarragon make it French. Sour cream makes it Russian; lemon and cinnamon make it Greek. Soy sauce makes it Chinese; garlic makes it good.
-Alice May Brock

By C. Dennis Pierce



As we take a deep breath from the whirlwind excitement of the holidays, we have typically neglected to recognize another important date in December and that is December 21st. This year's Winter Solstice. I am reminded of the date by an annual winter solstice card sent by friends from N.H. that appears in my post office box in Storrs. It typically has a picture of their farm, which is located in Saint Georges Mill, a small town near Sunapee, N.H. The solstice is important in their lives since they maintain a small farm and like every farmer, even those in our area, the longer days ahead mean planning and preparing for a new growing season.

The winter solstice marks the shortest day of the year and the longest night of the year. For inhabitants of the Northern Hemisphere, the winter solstice process becomes noticeable around December 1st when the sun appears to move south and gets smaller. By the day of the actual winter solstice, the sun has reached its lowest point in the sky. Once it has reached this lowest point, an interesting thing happens. The sun, appears to stop moving for three days. After this, the sun moves one degree north, announcing the coming of spring. The sun will then continue to move northward until the summer solstice, when it reaches its highest point.

For this column I wanted to spend some time writing about another item that we take for granted – garlic. Garlic, what do you know about it? While preparing dishes for the recent holiday feasts I realized I only held a smattering of knowledge about that multi-sectional standard ingredient used in most savory recipes. To some, you may find garlic in the produce section with the two heads of garlic enclosed in a small box with a cellophane window so the garlic can peer out at the surrounding produce. While there is nothing wrong with using this garlic (I can say that I too have used these in a pinch). However, I would highly suggest that your purchase local garlic which is significantly different.

When shopping for garlic at your local farmers market look for Hardneck garlic (*Allium sativum ophioscorodon*) which tends to have more flavor than the soft-necked variety. How can you tell garlic is of the Hardneck breed? They're characterized by a central hard woody central stalk that goes right through the bulb and when growing it has flowering scapes. The cloves arrange themselves around the stalk. They also tend to have four to twelve cloves in each bulb. Hardneck garlic can sometimes verging on being more spiciness or hot. Some say they are more complex, and altogether more "garlicky." Hardneck garlic tends to grow best in areas with very cold winters, since they require a long, cold winter to be dormant so they can flower in the spring. If you're at a farmer's market and spot bulbs of garlic that have a rosy/violet cast to the flesh of the cloves and thinner skins, you're probably looking at Hardneck garlic.

Softneck garlic (*Allium sativum sativum*) is believed to have evolved from Hardneck garlic and comprises of most of the garlic that you see in the supermarket. Because it lacks the flowering scape of Hardneck garlic, it produces many more cloves—sometimes as few as eight, and sometimes getting as high as thirty or more. It does not have a stalk running through the middle of the bulb.

Another variety that you may come across is Elephant garlic. These giant bulbs that look like garlic on steroids are actually part of the leek family. Elephant garlic is actually *Allium ampeloprasum*, not *sativum*. It's milder than most garlics, but has an onion-y edge to its taste. When cooking Elephant garlic is often interchangeable

with Softneck garlics in terms of taste and works as well as Softnecks in sauces, vinaigrettes, and stir-fries. It's also great when roasted, especially if you have a lot of people coming over, since it can serve a lot of guests. Before you go and spend five times the price for already-peeled cloves, just throw the whole bulb in the microwave on high for about twenty seconds. When you take it out, the peel should come right off. Another tip when mincing garlic cloves (taught to me by a great chef at UConn) is put a little salt on your cutting board. The gains will help the garlic stay in place and not slide all over the board.

Next time you are preparing mashed potatoes to accompany your meal or as an ingredient to a Shepard's Pie prepare the following recipe:

Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

2 pounds of potatoes, unpeeled, washed and remove eyes if present, cut into large dice
1 tablespoon of unsalted butter
4 to 5, garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
2 cups of heavy cream
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon of fresh ground pepper

Directions:

Place the potatoes in a large saucepan, cover with cold water
Bring to a boil over high heat
Reduce the heat to medium and cook until the potatoes are

tender, about 15 minutes
While potatoes are cooking prepare additional liquid mixture.
Melt butter in a pan over medium heat.
Add garlic and cook until garlic is golden, about two to three minutes. Make sure garlic does not burn.
Add cream and cook until it is reduced by half. About seven minutes.
When potatoes are done (insert a knife into them or just pluck a piece out and taste... just don't burn your mouth)
Dain and return to the pan
Mash with a fork or potato masher
Add your liquid garlic cream mixture (to the point the potatoes are at the consistency that you want)
Add salt and pepper
Mix well

If necessary, reheat over low heat. Serve...

Choose higher starch potatoes (like Russets or Yukon golds) for the fluffiest, smoothest, and most flavor-packed mash. Waxy potatoes (such as red or white varieties) require more mashing to become creamy.

Here are a few tips when preparing mashed potatoes: No salting the water. When potatoes cook, the starch granules swell and absorb water and — if you've added it — salt.

Don't start with hot water. If you start in hot water, they'll cook unevenly, with the outside falling apart before the inside is cooked.

Not draining well after cooking. Make sure to drain well after cooking to avoid a mushy, watery mess. Let your butter come to room temperature before melting it into the hot potatoes, then mash in the warm milk or cream. It will be absorbed more easily, and won't cool everything down

Don't over work your potatoes. The swollen starch granules in your cooked potatoes are in a delicate state. Mashing them too vigorously, or too long releases lots of starch, which makes them gluey and unappetizing.

Don't make them too far in advance. If you want to make them ahead you can hold the prepared potatoes in a heat-proof bowl, with the surface covered with plastic wrap, over a pot of simmering water.

If you have a suggestion for a farm or a local grower or even a recipe that could feature a local ingredient, please let me know. I will do my best to share your suggestions in a future column. Drop me a line at Codfish53@Yahoo.com. Peas be with you...



Photo by C. Dennis Pierce



Remembering Carroll Spinney "Big Bird"

Article and photo by Carol Davidge

I was fortunate to interview Carroll Spinney at his home in Woodstock, CT in 2006, where I found him to be gentle and endlessly imaginative. I, along with billions of others around the world, mourn his passing on December 8, 2019. He brought to life "Big Bird" and "Oscar the Grouch" on "Sesame Street." Born in 1933 in Massachusetts, Spinney was five when he saw his first puppet show. After service in the military, Spinney played many different hand-puppet characters and nine walkabout characters on "The Bozo Show," a Boston television program. During the 1968 annual festival of the Puppeteers of America, Jim Henson saw Spinney's show, "Picklepuss and Friends," and offered him the role of Big Bird. To play Big Bird, Spinney had challenges. He couldn't see out of the costume and played the role by watching a miniature television screen inside the puppet. He held up the eight-foot, two-inch Bird by extending his right arm straight overhead. He also transformed Big Bird from the dumb, clumsy grown-up that Henson had envisioned into a child in a bird's world.

"Children come in all sizes and colors and personalities. I was the shortest boy in my class and I'd been picked on a lot as a kid. Big Bird was the too-big kid in the class. I felt I could really develop a complex, human character for him. It may be because I get to re-live my childhood when I play Big Bird. Somehow his life and heart get across to the children," said Spinney.

Oscar the Grouch was initially challenging because Spinney needed an entirely different personality from Big Bird. One day he got into a taxi in New York City, and the cabbie turned around and growled "Where to, Mac!" The cabbie inspired Spinney with the voice and personality of the Grouch.

As I left, Carroll called from the doorway in the voice of Big Bird "Come back soon." I never went back, intimidated as so many of us are by celebrity. I regret that. He often appeared in UCONN Children's Literature Classes with Professor Francelia Butler. Carroll lived in Woodstock CT with the love of his life, wife Debra, to whom much is owed by the world for her love and support for Carroll. He died on December 8, 2019 of dystonia, an involuntary muscle disability. He appeared on Sesame Street for 50 years and earned numerous awards including being named a Living Legend by the Library of Congress. Thankfully, he is immortal through his performances on "Sesame Street."

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The Curse of Computerized Appliances

By Angela Hawkins Fichter

In case I didn't already know, I got a lesson on Thanksgiving Day of the curse of computerized appliances. It was the first time that I roasted a turkey in the stove I bought when I moved here in May, 2016. I always cook a turkey by the Adelle Davis cookbook, and she favors the slow roasting method. I have had a reverse shoulder replacement, so I needed an assistant to heave the turkey in the sink and wash it out, then put it on the roasting pan and shove it in the oven. This was done at 8 PM. Actually, the oven was turned on to 300 degrees then, while the washing took place, and as soon as the temperature registered 300, my helper and guest for the dinner put the turkey in the oven. You do NOT put any stuffing in the turkey. You make stuffing on top of the stove so that the 300-degree temperature will kill all surface germs, both inside the cavity and on the exterior. (I will give you a recipe for stuffing that I got from a Killingly farmwife years ago, and your guests will ask for seconds on the stuffing!) After one hour you turn the temperature back to 200 degrees, and leave it there for hours. You go to bed, and the house smells like turkey, and when you get up in the morning, the house smells like turkey. Yum! It makes Thanksgiving last for more than just the meal but for a day more!

Adelle's slow roasting method takes approximately three times that of moderate temperature roasting at 300. You look at her chart for various kinds of meat roasted at 300 degrees to figure how long it would take to cook a roast of that meat and weight at 300 and then multiply that by 3 and add one hour of pre-heating. In other words, for my 13.2 pound turkey it would be 13.2 X 20 minutes= 264 minutes divided by 60=4.4 hours X 3=13.2hours + 1=14.2 hours to be done. Well, at 8 the next morning when I was getting dressed for the day, I heard a song coming from the stove that I never heard before. The stove has a silly song it sings to me when I set a timer for 5 minutes, and the 5 minutes is up. It was not that song; it was an alarmist song. I ran out to the kitchen and looked at the stove. It had a message for me typed on the stove screen just below the clock. The message said, "your cycle is done". I said to the stove, what are you talking about, I am already through menopause. It kept singing to me and showing me the typed message. I then noticed that the temperature in the oven had dipped from the 200 it was set at to 185. I panicked. Oh no, I thought the oven had

turned itself off, and I won't be able to cook the turkey till done. After calming down a bit I thought of trying to hit clear/off on the oven. That stopped the song and the message. So I turned the oven on again to 200 degrees, and the interior temperature went up to 200 degrees in just a few minutes. By the way, the turkey was done at 12 noon, and the meat was so tender and juicy, it fell off the bone as my guest sliced it.

I discussed the stove event with a number of friends, and we all decided there was some new safety feature on stoves, that ovens would turn off after 12 hours all by themselves, just in case you forgot you left the oven on and left the house for a trip somewhere.

Frankly, the only thing I like about my new stove is the glass top is easier to clean when you accidentally slop food on it when dishing food out of a pot. The old stove had metal ring burners with a metal dish under a burner where slopped food fell then burned onto that dish. That was very hard to clean off. My husband had stiffness in his hands and hated turning on burners with the new stove because you have to poke at the stove panel to do that, where with the old stove you turned the dial to the temperature wanted. He used to take a wooden spoon to poke the temperature he wanted with the new stove, whereas he could easily turn the dial on the old stove to any temperature.

The stove is not the only computerized appliance. I had to get a new dryer when I moved here, because the old dryer got injured in the move. The first time I used the new dryer we nearly fainted. We were each elsewhere in the house, no where near the dryer, when after a while it let off a loud screech. I ran out to the dryer. It had finished its cycle, and the clothes were dry. I learned you could turn that screech off, but it's kind of practical when you are doing more than one load of laundry to know when you can empty the dryer and put the new load of clean clothes in. I still haven't forgiven the oven for its song and confusing message, but that doesn't mean I won't cook a turkey the slow way again, and it doesn't mean that the oven won't scare me with a new tune and message again! By the way two girlfriends borrowed my slow roasting method for their turkeys, and they had fantastic results, with fully cooked, moist meat just falling off the roast as their husbands carved the bird. And their ovens didn't sing at them! I forgot to ask how old their ovens are.

Wildlife and Water Quality Protected in Canterbury

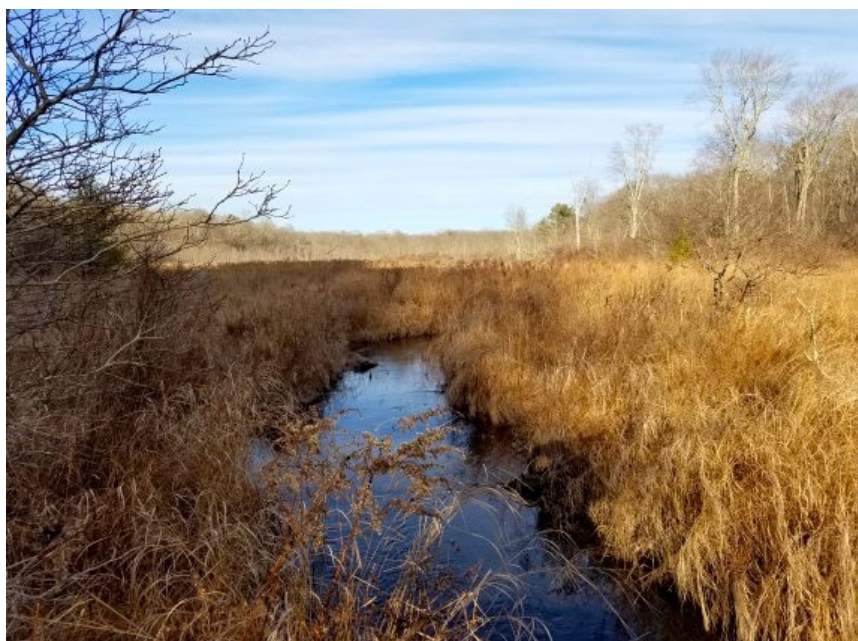
Submitted by Michael St. Lawrence

POMFRET CENTER—Local wildlife and water quality in Canterbury just got a boost thanks to a donation of land from the Campagna family to the Wyndham Land Trust.

The 58-acre property donated to the land trust sits on the west side of Brooklyn Road in Canterbury. An expansive swamp sits along the northern boundary, and the pristine wetland is home to a diverse array of animals and plants. The swamp feeds into Downing Brook which continues through the property before entering the New River. The property has a mixture of oak forest, white pine stands, and red maple swamp and is riddled by stone-walls—a testament to hard scabble farming activity from previous generations.

"The property is located in a large undeveloped forest in Canterbury," said the trust's land manager, Andy Rzeznikiewicz. "The land trust holds a conservation easement nearby on 100 acres. Large unbroken forest lots are critical for supporting wildlife, and I'm happy to see this protected. We want to have more of a presence in the towns in the southern part of our range—Canterbury, Sterling, and Plainfield—so this is a great opportunity for the land trust."

Local hearing specialist,



Downing Brook cuts through the new Campagna preserve. Contributed photo.

Ralph Campagna, steered the donation to the land trust with support from his five siblings. The land was acquired by Campagna's grandfather in the 1950s and passed down through two generations.

"I walked the property with Andy Rzeznikiewicz," remembered Campagna. "It was a beautiful day, and his enthusiasm for the property was infectious. I always knew it was a special place, and his visit reinforced our family's decision to donate the land. We wanted to keep it intact, just as it

was hundreds of years ago."

The Wyndham Land Trust was formed in 1975 and now protects over 4,500 acres in Northeastern Connecticut. The work of the all-volunteer group is possible through the generosity and dedication of its members, and donors.

To learn more about the Wyndham Land Trust visit wyndham-landtrust.org. You can also follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

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A Very Special Postage Stamp

By Bill Powers

As an active 10-year-old, I loved playing sports and collecting stamps. One of my coaches was also our postmaster. Whenever a new postage stamp was released, coach Mike would set aside for me a corner block of four unseparated stamps containing the printing plate number. In those days a block of four stamps cost 12 cents. I placed each block carefully into a specially designed album with protective, transparent pages.

As my collection grew, so did my pride in it. This was also apparent to my grandparents, who lived in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. They always showed great interest in my new acquisitions.

Whenever my family traveled north from Connecticut to visit them, I always brought my albums, containing my newest acquisitions, to show them. It was the only time a stamp album ever left home!

As my grandparents looked closely at each stamp, they would comment about it. We had wonderful discussions about the images that appeared. On one occasion, there was noticeable excitement as they inspected a new 3-cent commemorative stamp. It depicted The Old Man of the Mountain (issued in 1955). To my grandparents, The Old Man was a beloved place that they revered.

"It is a special and mystical place," they told me and further exclaimed, "It has to be shared with our grandchildren." The very next day they drove my younger sister Patty and me over to New Hampshire to meet The Old Man of the Mountain. We sang songs the whole way there and back.

We also had a picnic complete with apple pie. It was a memorable time with them; one that I cherish. I never anticipated that one day this place would have bitter-sweet memories for me.

On May 4, 2003, the wonderful memories from 1955 all came streaming back to me. I was in North Conway, New Hampshire attending a two-day program, sponsored by The Mount Washington Observatory. It was a "workshop about bedrock geology and surficial geology of the White Mountains region of New Hampshire with special attention given to the processes of glacial geology. Mostly it consisted of time in the field examining geologic features first hand at various locations. Being a teacher and a hiker, I found this aspect of the workshop to be especially appealing.

During the workshop, our instructor received word of a disastrous nature. Something had happened to the Old Man of the Mountain. Had he collapsed? Could he be repaired? Coincidentally, the site was already on our field trip itinerary. When we arrived there, we joined dozens of people who appeared to be in shock as they viewed what remained of the Old Man. The news was traveling fast. Among the viewers was a media contingent. A WMUR-TV television news crew interviewed our instructor, a prominent glacial geologist.

It was quickly apparent that the Old Man had not just been severely damaged but completely obliterated. The Old Man was gone, totally lost. From our vantage point, we listened intently to our instructor's analysis and interpretation of what had most likely occurred. We worked our way out through the crowd of people who were still arriving. Many of the people appeared to be in shock and disbelief. Some were crying. A sobbing older woman



told me, "My grandmother brought me here as a child. This is unbelievable". Trying to console her, I said, "My grandparents brought me here, too. This is a shock." We gave each other a hug.

Just as my grandparents believed, this was a "special and mystical place" and had been for generations. Before he was lost to us, I am grateful to have shared The Old Man of the Mountain with my own children while hiking in the beautiful White Mountains. Thanks to the wisdom of grandparents, who wanted to connect with their grandson, I have some lasting happy memories because they shared an important part of their lives with me. It all came about due to a new very special postage stamp.

The Old Man of the Mountain had been a famous New Hampshire icon for many decades. He appears on the New Hampshire quarter dollar. His basic structure and image was formed as a result of post glacial mechanical weathering and rock fall on Conway Granite with glacial erosion forming the cliffs and U-shaped valley known as Franconia Notch.

Bill Powers is a retired licensed professional counselor and high school teacher from Windham, CT and currently is a volunteer Master Naturalist at the Goodwin Conservation Center in Hampton, CT. He was attending the MWO White Mountain Geology Workshop to improve his knowledge of the Whites and enhance his experience as a hiker. He would also like to call attention to the existence of the Old Man of the Mountain Legacy Fund: a lasting legacy of remembrance. A private non-profit organization - <http://www.oldmanofthemountainlegacyfund.org>

Letters and Emails

To the Editor -

For many years, for perhaps millennia, I have enjoyed and admired Bob Grindle's monthly column, "Looking Up." For a long time, for perhaps centuries, it would appear deep within Neighbors, so I would thumb ahead looking for it, looking forward to reading it first. More recently, for perhaps decades, it has rightly appeared front and center, above the fold, on the first page, beckoning us as readers to forgo all our other earthly pleasures and instead to revel right here and right now in Bob Grindle's poetic prose, ever inspiring us to Look Around and to Look Within as much as to Look Up.

Only ostensibly about the nocturnal world of astronomy, Mr. Grindle has seized upon the stars and

the planets as his firm footholds from which to ponder some of the truths of the universe and maybe, just maybe, some universal truths. Though his eyes are on the stars, he reminds us to never lose sight of our feet on the ground. His penetrating vision was most clearly demonstrated in the December 2019 issue, his closing column for this teen-aged decade. Its sonorous first paragraph, composed of four languorously long sentences, has sparked my long overdue short letter of appreciation. For the coming 2020s decade, I am looking forward to eons more of "Looking Up."

Mark M. Braunstein
Quaker Hill, CT

CLIR's Winter Session

Submitted by Blanche Boucher

CLIR, UConn's lifelong learning program, begins its winter session Tuesday, January 7. Come join us to hear UConn baseball coach Jim Penders and to learn more about Brexit, vaccines, CranioSacral therapy, UConn's cannabis program, slavery reparations, cybersecurity, generational differences, and many more topics.

A fee of \$25 covers any or all of the hour-and-a-half classes.

For a complete listing see clir.uconn.edu or the brochure available at your local library or Senior Center.

Classes are held during the day on UConn's Depot campus on Route 44.

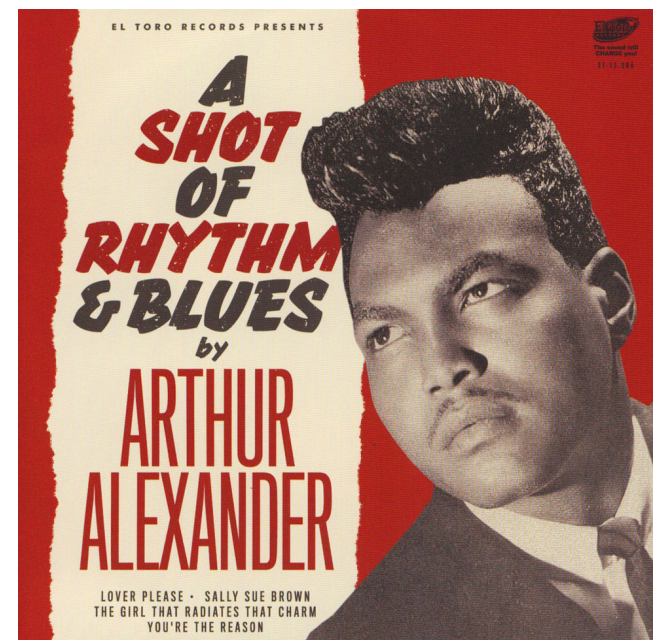
Unsung Heroes of Soul:

Arthur Alexander

By Dean Farrell

As host of "The Soul Express" on WECS, I play the biggest names in 1960s and '70s-era soul music. I also mix in the many great soul artists who did not make it big but were no less talented. This month's column is about one such act: singer-songwriter Arthur Alexander, who is best known for remakes of his songs by others. Allmusic.com said of Alexander, "His music is the stuff of genius, a poignant and deeply intimate body of work on par with the best of his contemporaries."

He was born in Sheffield, Alabama on May 10, 1940. Twenty years later, he made his first single, "Sally Sue Brown," for Judd Records as June Alexander (short for "Junior"). In late 1961, he recorded the self-penned "You Better Move On" at the Fame Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Released on Dot Records, it reached #24 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in early 1962. It also produced remakes by the Rolling Stones, the Hollies, and George Jones & Johnny Paycheck (as a duet).



In 1962, the Beatles recorded a live set in Hamburg, Germany, that included three songs first done by Alexander: "A Shot of Rhythm & Blues," "Where Have You Been (All My Life)," and "Soldier of Love." They also recorded his ballad "Anna" on their 1963 debut album, "Please Please Me." (Alexander's 1962 original was a top ten R&B hit that would inspire an episode of the Fox-TV sitcom, "Married...With Children.")

In 1963, Steve Alaimo became the first to record Alexander's "Every Day I Have to Cry Some." It reached #46 in Billboard and charted again when Alexander himself waxed it in 1975.

In the middle '60s, he changed labels to Sound Stage 7. Despite some fine recordings, commercial success eluded him. By the early '70s, Alexander was on Warner Brothers, for whom he recorded a self-titled album. One of its tracks, "Burning Love" (not written by Alexander), became a #2 hit for Elvis Presley.

His final charted single, in 1976, was "Sharing the Night Together" (also not written by Alexander), a remake of which by Dr. Hook went to #6 in 1978. As the decade drew to a close, Alexander left the music business and spent many years working as a bus driver.

By the '90s, there was growing interest in his catalog, prompting Alexander to attempt a comeback. He recorded "Lonely Just Like Me," his first album in twenty-one years, and signed with Nonesuch/Elektra in 1993. Unfortunately, on June 9th of that year, Alexander succumbed to a fatal heart attack. He was fifty-three.

Other acts who recorded Arthur Alexander's songs include C.J. Chenier, Elvis Costello, Marshall Crenshaw, Billy "Crash" Craddock, Mink DeVille, Bob Dylan, the Gentrys, Gerry & The Pacemakers, Humble Pie, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roger McGuinn, Esther Phillips, Otis Redding, Dusty Springfield, Joe Stampley, Joe Tex, and Ike & Tina Turner.

Charted singles:

"You Better Move On" (1962) Pop #24

"Where Have You Been (All My Life)" (1962) Pop #58

"Anna" (1962) R&B #10, Pop #68

"Every Day I Have to Cry Some" (1975) Pop #45

"Sharing the Night Together" (1976) R&B #92

Dean Farrell hosts "The Soul Express" on WECS, 90.1-FM, from 9:00 p.m. - midnight on Fridays. He plays vintage soul music of the 1960s and '70s—everything from #1 hits to long-lost obscurities. Dean archives his shows at <https://www.mixcloud.com/dean-fioral/>. His e-mail address is soulexpress@gmail.com.

Warming Shelter Opens

The Northeast No Freeze Project Opens Shelter and is Seeking Volunteers

Submitted by Elisha Sherman

Danielson, CT – Communities of Putnam, Killingly, Brooklyn, Woodstock, Pomfret, Plainfield, Sterling, and Thompson are boosting their capacity to keep the area's homeless population safe this winter with the Northeast No Freeze Project. New winter shelter capacity next to the Access Emergency Shelter in Danielson is currently being renovated after an outpouring of support from the community.

St. Albans Church's Rectory on 254 Broad Street will open as soon as renovations are done to accommodate up to 30 individual men and women per night as needed through March 31. Families with children will be sent to the Access Emergency Shelter on Reynolds Street.

Access operates one of only two year-round Family Emergency Shelters in northeast Connecticut, with 40 beds to shelter individuals and families. Over the past three years, the Access Shelter which is located in Danielson has also allowed as many as 15 additional people who are not residents of the Shelter to stay overnight in the first floor community room. A group of local nonprofits in collaboration with local town government, faith communities and concerned residents came together and formed the Northeast No Freeze Project to create a space to shelter people experiencing homelessness during the winter in northeast Connecticut.

Ashley Vienneau is the new Volunteer Coordinator for the project and is taking applications for volunteers. The Northeast No Freeze Project will need as many as 30 individuals willing to volunteer for one night per month or 15 volunteers for 2 nights per month. Please contact Ashley Vienneau at 860-207-4279 or ashley.vienneau@access-agency.org for more information or to get an application.

Guests are allowed to enter the Shelter each night between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. if sufficient staff coverage is available. No guests will be admitted to the Shelter after 10:00 p.m. Guests will be asked to present an ID but will NOT be denied shelter for lack of ID. Guests with felony convictions will be allowed in the Shelter.

The Shelter closes each day at 8:00 AM, at which time all guests must leave the property, unless they have an appointment scheduled with an Access staff member helping guests find housing. Each guest is allowed to bring into the Shelter one bag or backpack of personal belongings. No food is allowed in the shelter, the Northeast No Freeze is simply a warm place for the night.

Land of the Long White Cloud - New Zealand

Submitted by Anne Christie

Hampton resident Dale May will present "Land of the Long White Cloud- New Zealand", a look at the ecology and spectacular natural beauty of New Zealand on Wednesday, January 15th at 6:30 p.m. in Fletcher Memorial Library. A retired wildlife biologist, May says the island nation "inspires me like no other place on earth," citing the tremendous diversity of the landscape and the wonderful fly fishing.

Connecticut residents may already know some of New Zealand's natural wonders thanks to the Lord of the Ring films, but May will discuss the range of island landscapes, including high mountains, pristine beaches, lakes and rivers as well as glaciers and volcanoes.

Besides the charm of its scenery and its exotic fauna and flora, May points out that New Zealand has some lessons for other countries as well. As an isolated island, New Zealand is particularly susceptible to introduced species. May will describe the country's efforts to minimize the impact on native species, including programs designed to protect native birds from introduced predators.

He also promises tips on economical travel to New Zealand.

Fletcher Memorial Library is at 257 Main St, Hampton. Info: 860-455 1086.

Local Talk Show Host Celebrates Show's First Year

By Morgan Cunningham



Wow! Getting ready to wrap up year one of The Morgan Cunningham Show. It has been quite a journey, so far, and I hope you're as ready as I am to enter another year of "less hype and more talk" - discussing the unexplained, the paranormal, and the alternative. We've got a lot coming up this year, and there's no excuse if you haven't taken part in the show yet. We're LIVE every Saturday night at 9 p.m. (E) via streaming at MorganTalks.com.

We start the new year of talk on January 4th with Kaitlyn Czapiga of "Soul Magic" in Glastonbury. Kaitlyn recalls her days battling depression, and she explains how she uses her story to help others achieve better self-awareness.

It's a night of the "Oddest Things I've Seen" with author, podcaster, and explorer J.W. Ocker on January 11th. January 18th is TBD...so stay tuned for details...

We welcome demonologist June Lundgren back to the show on January 25th to talk about her new book "Demon Seer,"

As of this writing in December: 2019, an avid reader of the *Neighbors* paper will be joining me on February 1st to discuss his near death experience and the powers that came with it. Let this be a reminder that I'm always looking for guests. If you think your story is worth being told, it probably is. Send me a note via MorganTalks.com/contact.

Phone calls are welcome during our LIVE shows. Just call (860) 952-9498 to join the conversation.

If you miss one of our LIVE shows on Saturday night, programs are available for FREE on-demand listening at MorganTalks.com.

2020...bring it on!

Greater Equity for Women and Girls

Submitted by Jennifer O'Brien

NEW LONDON – The Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut announces \$210,554 in 2019 grants to 53 nonprofits aimed at providing greater equity for women and girls throughout Eastern Connecticut from its four Women & Girls Funds.

Northeast Area Women & Girls Fund awarded \$18,795 to 11 nonprofits, including Community Health Resources for basic needs of women coming out of intensive residential treatment programs;

Norwich Area Women & Girls Fund awarded \$8,500 to three nonprofits, including Safe Futures for a short term safe living program at the Katie Blair House; Southeast Area Women & Girls Fund awarded \$122,259 to 20 nonprofits, including Hispanic Alliance of SECT/La Latina Network for BRILLA, a leadership development program for Latina teens; and

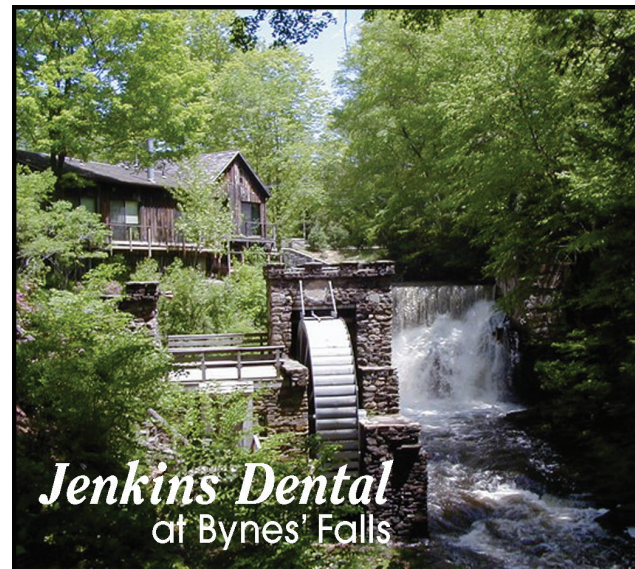
Windham Area Women & Girls Fund awarded \$61,000 to 19 nonprofits, including Perception Programs to empower new residents to begin their journey on the path to self-worth and positive decisions.

"The Foundation is excited to announce an increase of nearly \$30,000 in our grantmaking from 2018 that supports programs to lift up women and girls throughout our region. In partnership with our generous donors, we are able to focus on economic security and domestic violence, as well as improved health and educational outcomes for those in greatest need. We are committed to deploying our grants to programs that promote equity and social justice so that women across our 42 towns will have access to opportunities to thrive," stated Program Director Jennifer O'Brien.

In 1999, the Community Foundation established its first Women & Girls Fund to support nonprofits that empower women and girls to pursue positive, productive lives – for themselves and their families. Since that time, three other Women & Girls Funds were established in Windham, Norwich and Northeast Connecticut to advance the equity and well-being of women and girls through grantmaking, advocacy and action.

Collectively, the four Women & Girls Funds have an endowment of over \$4 million and have awarded more than \$1.9 million in grants to over 440 programs.

To learn more about the Women & Girls Funds at the Community Foundation, or how to set up your own named fund to benefit women and girls in Eastern Connecticut, please contact Alison Woods, alison@cfect.org or by phone at 860.442.3572.



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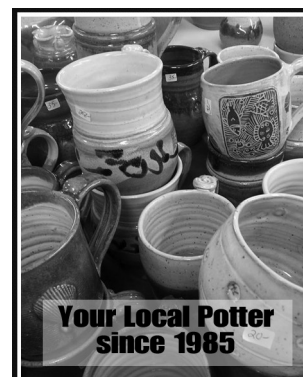
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A New Beginning: 2020

By EC-CHAP

JANUARY

“The first month of the year,
 A perfect time to start all over again,
 Changing energies and deserting old moods,
 New beginnings, new attitudes”
 Charmaine J Forde

Do you believe in New Year resolutions?

We do. It’s a time of renewal, and EC-CHAP is committed to reinventing new content, programs, and performance offerings in support of our mission. We have some cool ideas, and with support and feedback from local and regional community members and visitors, we hope to meet your ongoing cultural needs.

In addition to our scheduled performances, we would like to remind you of our recurring monthly events: “Talent Showcase” (2nd Wednesday) – January 8th; “EC-CHAP Social Dance with Kelly Madenjian” (2nd Thursday) – January 9th; Monthly Film Screening, “Faces Places” 2017 (PG) with “The Making of a Willington Mural: A Canvas of History & Social Change” – Friday, January 17th; and Monthly “Information Exchange Meeting” – Wednesday, January 22nd.

Details for January’s events are included below and we encourage you to visit our website frequently for additions and updates, artist bios, soundbites, videos, and additions: www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming. Ask at the door about our “Frequent Flyer Program” for additional savings!

As in past months, we have invited colleagues to share their creative journeys and stories as a part of our monthly Performing Arts column. This month, Arthur Rovozzo, DJ and founder of the Saturday afternoon jazz program, “Musical Myriad”, WECS 90.1FM, continues to share his perspective this month with the jazz piano.

Wishing you one of many new beginnings!

Peace,
 EC-CHAP Board

EC-CHAP ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES

“Ramblin’ Dan Stevens” (Blues). Saturday, January 18th, 7:30pm.



Ramblin’ Dan Stevens performs a mix of traditional finger style blues, americana and originals and has entertained audiences throughout the United States, Germany, UK, Canada and US Virgin Islands. His unique style of “bottleneck” slide playing popularized by early Mississippi Delta bluesmen includes use of a homemade, three stringed “Cigar Box Guitar” and one stringed “Diddly Bow”, both primitive blues instruments.

A finalist in the International Blues Challenge on Beale St. in Memphis TN and protégé of the legendary folk and blues icon Dave Van Ronk, Dan has been lauded as a raconteur and for the authenticity of his approach. Dave’s career has recently been highlighted by the release of the Coen Brothers movie, “Inside Llewyn Davis”, set in the Greenwich Village scene in the sixties. Also, Dan plays regularly in the New York City Subway System in locations such as Times Square and Grand Central Terminal. Tickets \$15.00 Advance / \$20.00 Door.

“Claudia Schmidt with Mark Mandeville & Raianne Richards” (Folk). Saturday, January 25th, 7:30pm.

Claudia Schmidt has been weaving her musical magic for almost 50 years for audiences of thousands at festivals worldwide to living rooms of rapt listeners, and the response is overwhelming: “I feel like she was singing just to me”; “she is a shaper of space and time”; “I feel so refreshed and exuberant after seeing and hearing her live”.



With her multi-octave voice accompanied by 12 string guitar and her most unusual approach to the mountain dulcimer, she navigates mostly original music along with some gems from fellow songwriters to the American Songbook to the traditional treasure trove of songs. Add the wonderful spoken word spilling forth here and there, and you have a musical and theatrical performance of the highest caliber.

She has written award winning scores for theater, run a B&B and a restaurant, done theater, and she brings all this to the stage of The Packing House on Sat. Jan. 25th. A lifetime of wonder and musical exploration on a winter night in Willington. Claudia will be joined by Singer Songwriters Mandeville and Raianne Richards.



Mark Mandeville and Raianne Richards are clearly inheritors of a timeless legacy, creating music that is both original and evocative of a rich tradition. Blending distinctive voices and a wide range of accompaniment (guitar, harmonica, ukulele, clarinet, penny whistle, electric bass), their songs have been well-received by audiences around the eastern United States and Canada since 2010. Transcending the genre of folk Americana, their music echoes inspiration from traditional folk duos and singer/songwriters like Ian & Sylvia, Kate Wolf and Neil Young – combining beautiful harmonies and a lyrical intensity, while establishing a unique sound of their own. Tickets \$15.00 Advance / \$20.00 Door.

EC-CHAP Film Series:

“Faces Places” 2017 (PG); with “The Making of a Willington Mural: A Canvas of History and Social Change”. Friday, January 17th, 7:00pm



Join us for a creative evening of film and conversation. Faces Places is a unique public art film written and directed by film maker Agnes Varda and photographer/muralist J.R. (IMDb).



Mural artist Chris Gunderson. Photo by Lulu Rodriguez.

Varda has been making films since 1955, and throughout her career, which saw her as one of the key figures in the French New Wave, she’s been a generous and ingenious collaborator. For this movie, which is part character drama (with real-life characters), part road documentary, and part essay-film, Varda collaborates with the French artist who calls himself JR. A bit over one-third Varda’s age, he always sports a hat and dark glasses. His work is in photography and public art. He travels through Europe in a van that’s a photo booth, creating large-format portraits of people he meets. (Roger Ebert)

This film will be preceded by a look at The Making of a Willington Mural: A Canvas of History and Social Change, with a brief discussion by the artist Chris Gunderson.

This event is a part of the EC-CHAP Film Series hosted by the Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance (EC-CHAP), a 501.3.c non-profit membership-based cultural organization. To learn more and how you can become a member, visit www.ec-chap.org. 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 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 for the secret recipe.

Program cancellations will be listed on the EC-CHAP website (www.ec-chap.org), and The Packing House website (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) or The Packing House (info@thepackinghouse.us).

Jazz Piano Poetry, From Detroit to New York

By Arthur Rovozzo, EC-CHAP Contributing Writer

When the conversation turns to “Who was the most elegant-sounding pianist in jazz?” most people instantly respond with the same name, delivered with the same tone of awed assurance: Bill Evans. Anyone who encounters Bill Evans, whether via his “Waltz for Debby” trio, his work with Miles Davis or his lengthy procession of later bands and recordings, becomes enamored of him.

There was, indeed, something close to magical about Evans’ entire sound and playing style. The artist (1929-1980) had an ultra-sensitive keyboard touch, a genius for subtle dynamic manipulation, a deep understanding of classical piano works which he combined with his jazz influences for results that have been called “transcendent”.



continued on next page



Eagle at Roseland Lake.

Photo by Patrick M.L. Smith of Woodstock.

Explore the Last Green Valley- Photo Contest Winners Announced

Submitted by Francesca Kefalas

The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV) announces the 13 winning photos gracing its 2020 calendar. TLGV's "Explore the Last Green Valley" calendar for 2020 features magnificent photos of The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor.

The coveted cover shot was taken by Richard C. Tremblay of Putnam, CT and is called "Fall Collection." The photo is a beautiful image of a honeybee hard at work collecting pollen from a hydrangea.

"I wanted to capture a photo of the bee hovering," Tremblay said. "I pushed myself into the bush and when you enter their world and put yourself in the middle of their day without interfering with them, you're totally accepted."

Tremblay, a veteran who served in the Marines, began taking photos when he was serving in Vietnam. Retirement has allowed him to pursue his hobby more often. The cover photo was taken in his own backyard, but he travels all over The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor with a camera. The photo was taken with a Canon 80D and a 100 mm macro lens.

The other winning photos are: "Eagle at Roseland Lake: Putting The Wings Out to Dry," by Patrick M. L. Smith of Woodstock, CT; "Thawing Waters at Bigelow Hollow," by F. P. Cusumano of Canterbury, CT; "Acorns in the Moss," by Julia Roemer of Pomfret, CT; "Fly Fishing on the Natchaug," by Gloria Gelt of Woodstock, CT; "Visitor From Baltimore," by

Ken Carpenter of Danielson, CT; "Back to Breakneck," by Sarah Hamby of Danielson, CT; "Umbrella Boys," by Smith; "A Peaceful Morning in Pomfret," By Jimi Gothreau of Putnam, CT; "Brunn Barn at Woodstock Fairgrounds," by Gothreau; "Falling Leaves in Pomfret," by Martin Stepalavich of Danielson, CT; "Old Trinity Church," by Samuel Alexander of Waterford, CT; and "Captured in the Ice," by Roemer.

This year, additional, smaller images were used throughout the calendar as well. The more than 65 entries were chosen by a committee through a blind review of the photos.

"We had a lot of great entries and it was a difficult decision," said Lois Bruinooge, executive director of TLGV. "We were able to include more images by using them as smaller photos throughout the calendar."

The 2020 calendar is filled with interesting tidbits about the natural and cultural history of the National Heritage Corridor. The calendar is on sale soon for \$15. Please call the TLGV Office at 860-774-3300 to order a copy. All proceeds support The Last Green Valley's programs to protect our natural and historic resources. TLGV is a 501(c)(3) non-profit.

The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor is the last stretch of dark night sky in the coastal sprawl between Boston and Washington, D.C. The Last Green Valley, Inc. works for you in the National Heritage Corridor. Together we can care for it, enjoy it and pass it on!

Some fans, naturally, would vote for other keyboardists as a number-one choice. Erroll Garner, Ahmad Jamal, Hank Jones, the masterful Duke Ellington, John Lewis, Keith Jarrett, Herbie Hancock- all have their fervent supporters. On a recent series of "Musical Myriad" radio episodes, I pointed out that not every great pianist gets close enough to mainstream-media-deluge-coverage in order to make the transition to "household-name" status.

One of those fellows is a prime contender for being remembered as the truly best-balanced of the elegant jazz pianists. With a style neatly encompassing muscular Be-Bop technique, wonderful imagination as an improviser, a full frame of reference as to the evolution of the music and a penchant for creating phrases of sheer

beauty. A certain number of his albums had the very appropriate title "Jazz Poet"; that man is Tommy Flanagan (1930-2001) from Detroit.

Whether performing high-speed note runs, heartache-hangover-slow songs, romantic and lush ballads or crisply accompanying vocalists and horns, Flanagan carried every move off with great care, impeccable, immaculate taste, dignity-always the right chemistry for the tune at hand. In this manner, he was on the same wavelength as elder Detroit pianist Hank Jones (b. 1918); both were masters whose nearly flawless playing retained palpable, deep emotions. They didn't go for fluff.

Flanagan started out as a clarinetist, switching to piano at age 11. He kept track of all the classic jazz keyboardists,

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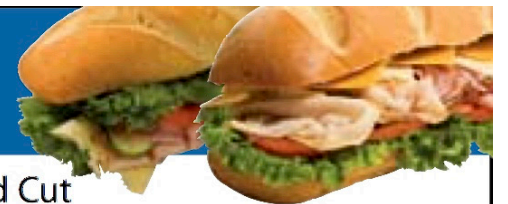
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but turned into a Be-Bop devotee when he heard Bud Powell. A stint in the military took Flanagan out of Detroit's bustling jazz scene. Returning in 1953, he realized that the career he wanted would need to get off the ground elsewhere. In 1956 Tommy

moved to New York along with his school buddy, guitarist Kenny Burrell. Immediately finding work, he eventually settled-in as a sideman for the trombonist J.J. Johnson. Flanagan then honed his craft as an

continued on page 15

I Don't Know How To Know. Do You?

By Grace Preli



I'm thinking about newness. I'm thinking about creation. How do we create that spark within our lives that acts as the catalyst? How do we nurture ourselves as we grow? How do we make decisions that guide us through our life?

I don't have answers to these questions. Or at least I don't think I do. What works for me might not work for you. Do I even know what works for me? I thought I did. But everything is up for a second look. Things that I was comfortable with and within no longer serve me. Ideas and beliefs I thought were pillars of my life are crumbling. I realize that I'm learning. I'm growing. And I will be expanding and changing within this physical body and within my human life until my last breath.

How do you know what you want? How do YOU know what YOU want? This isn't rhetorical. I'm actually asking you, YOU reading this right now to pause and think about how you know what you want? Do you know what you want? Do you know why you want it? What guides the feeling of what you want through your body? What mechanism or thought pattern pulls it into your brain? What pulls it to your lips as speech or into your heart as intention? What moves you? What sparks creation in your life? What is the reference point to which you are attuned?

I too am asking myself these questions because I'm not sure how I know what it is that I do or don't want. I'm not sure I know what guides me. How do I make any decision? What do I want my reference point to be? Which sign posts do I look for and use to guide my life?

A few summers ago I was totally hedonistic. I had just spent two years off and on traveling the world. I was sick. I was tired. I needed a break. I wanted to live. I took a break. I moved out. I did whatever I wanted to do. What did I want to do? Eat delicious food. Lay in the sun. See boys. Swim in a different lake every day. See my friends. Lay in the sun some more. Hike. Feel. Read. Cry. Eat some more. I was living day to day. Not even. Hour to hour, minute to minute. Every day was rich and saturated. Kaleidoscopic. A feast for the senses. Stuffed. Dripping. Too much icing on the cake.

The body makes the best drugs and I was high, high, high all the time. Whatever I wanted to eat, I ate. Whatever I wanted to wear, I wore. 2 boys, 10? I'll take them all. That lake, that trail, that warm spot of sun. I would lay down and move hours later only to move into a new spot. Cold water? Good book? Fresh peaches? Hot date that night? Check, check, check, CHECK.

The days bled together, I had no plans. I thought I had cracked the code... I finally know what I want, and it's more of this! No tomorrow! Only right now! How do people not live like this I thought to myself? This is easy! I just have to take this moment to moment. If it's a fuck yes, then I'll do it. If not, I won't. Ha, you have obligations? Get rid of them. Ha, you feel like you have to do something that you don't want to do? Not me! I only do what I want!

Spoiler alert: this is not a sustainable way of living. I wanted to live? Yeah, and I also wanted to die. Every night. I didn't care if I woke up the next day. Dying was easier than coming down. I wanted to be high all the time, and going out on a high note meant not having to deal with the come down. Dying meant not having to face those niggling thoughts and feelings I was trying so hard to push away. I could literally not even comprehend putting off instant gratification and pleasure for something long term... and for me, long term meant an hour away. I couldn't do it.

I look back and I understand I was SO afraid. So afraid of struggling, trying, failing or making a mistake. So afraid of living! I lived every day like my last because I was afraid of the next day. I'm not exaggerating here... I thought of dying all the time. That was easier to me than coming down. What kind of trap is that? One day I finally realized, that the harder thing for me is not to live today like it's my last day, no, I've got that down on lock... it's to live today like I have a tomorrow that is the far greater challenge.

Why am I sharing this? Because I knew what I wanted. My reference point was pleasure. My reference point was distraction. My reference point was this minute, not that minute. Right here, right now. More, please! But was that what I really wanted? What I really needed? In a journal entry from that time I write: "I have the feeling that I'm not fully experiencing myself and all that I am. I am seeing I guess where I am not fully stepping into my power. How do I ask for what I need? I ask. How do I know what to do? I know. And it really is that simple." Except, what do you do when you don't actually know what you

need? What do you do when you think you know what you want, but at the end of the day, doing everything you thought you wanted leaves you high and empty and afraid. So afraid that you'd rather die than face the next day. Yet every day you get up and do again, what you think it is that you want.

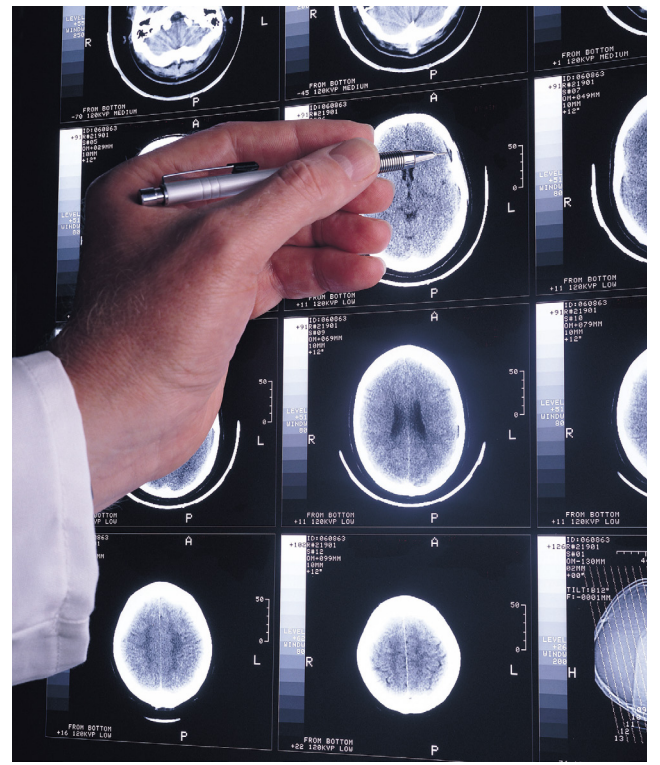
Why do we do what we do? Why do we do anything? What's the driving force in our lives? What are we working towards, striving for? How do I determine what I want? Is it because I want it now, right now? Do I do what I want because I'm afraid of not doing something? Was I pulled along and simply went with a decision? Can I not think of anything better or is this really the best? Is the reference point external or internal? For someone else, or for myself? What if the decision affects other people? Is the reference point obligation? Distraction? Habit? Is it for now or for later? Is it to sacrifice or gain? Is it for discomfort or pleasure? Is it because I should do it or because I want to do it? Am I forcing or flowing? Is it for money? Power? Control? External or internal validation? Is it limiting or expanding? Decisive or flexible? Is it my body guiding me, or my mind, or my heart? Is it that little whisper from within? Or is it the shouts and screams of the thousand voices all around me? Are my yeses and nos aligning or am I saying yes to what I don't want and no to what I do want?

What happens when you get everything you think you wanted and it's not what you want? So then what is it that I want, damn it! What do you do when what guided you no longer serve you? What happens when your reference point, your north star, changes? Some part of me knew I couldn't keep living like I was. I needed different guy lines, different support systems to determine what it is that I wanted or needed. I needed to re-orient myself and try different reference points out. I still don't have this figured out, but now I'm not so sure if I'm supposed to have it figured out.

Is balance possible? Or is it just avoiding extremes that creates a sense of balance? Or are extremes okay too? Because when I look back on my life, on how I got to where I am now, I realize that somehow it all worked out. There is incredible power in this moment right now, because it adds to my past to help orient me for my future. Does this mean when I make a decision or determine a want or need that whatever the signpost, reference point, or reason for making it, it's all okay? And why be afraid of making the wrong criteria or reference point? Why be afraid of making the wrong decision, having the wrong want? At the end isn't it all okay, all worth it? But how do I get through today to get to tomorrow, let alone the end?

I think it's about starting small, that perhaps each moment and each decision is just an opportunity to choose whatever it is we want or try to choose what we want. If I want to choose love and joy and kindness and benevolence, okay. If my decision is coming from a place of fear or indifference or malevolence, okay. I'm learning. I'll keep learning. I think I know too that deep down it doesn't matter if I'm up a creek without a paddle or with a paddle. Or if I'm swimming up the creek, or walking along the bank. We all end up at the bottom of the creek. All of our experiences similar and different at the same time. Am I giving my power away to the decision making process or is there power in the decision making process that I'm not fully aware of yet? Am I living life or is life living me? I don't think there's a wrong answer here but right now I'm not sure there's a right answer either.

So why do you do what you do? Why do YOU do what you do? How do you make your decisions? I'm asking myself these questions too, so I can learn more about my past and more about where I want to go in the future. I'm asking myself so I know what my reference points are and so I know what my signposts are. What guides me? What guides you?



5 Important Things Learned About Alzheimer's Disease in 2019

(StatePoint) In 2019, researchers discovered meaningful insights into the causes, risk factors and treatment of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Here are five of their important discoveries:

1. Lifestyle may play a major role in reducing risk. We're told that eating a healthy diet and exercising are good for overall health, but did you know that these habits may also reduce one's risk for cognitive decline and dementia? Research reported at this year's Alzheimer's Association International Conference suggested that making multiple healthy lifestyle choices -- including eating a low-fat, high vegetable diet, not smoking, getting regular exercise and engaging in cognitive stimulation -- may decrease dementia risk and may even offset increased risk caused by genes or exposure to air pollution. This year, researchers also learned that intensive high blood pressure treatment can significantly reduce the occurrence of mild cognitive impairment, which often leads to dementia.

2. A blood test is on the horizon. Researchers are working at full speed to develop a simple blood test that can detect signs of Alzheimer's early and accurately. Blood tests are cheaper, easier to administer, less invasive and more accessible than many advanced technologies currently available for Alzheimer's research and diagnosis. Once these tests become available in doctors' offices, they may also play a role in early detection of dementia, giving individuals and families more time to plan for the future and get needed care and support services, and potentially increase their chances of participating in clinical trials.

3. Alzheimer's is different in men and women. Two-thirds of people living with Alzheimer's disease in the U.S. are women, but scientists aren't exactly sure why. This year, researchers learned about a number of differences in progression and risk between women and men, including newly identified sex-specific risk genes, sex-based differences in how Alzheimer's may spread in the brain and cognitive benefits for women who participate in the paid workforce.

4. Vision and hearing loss may increase dementia risk. Most older adults experience some form of vision and/or hearing loss later in life. New research suggests these sensory impairments may increase risk for cognitive decline and Alzheimer's, especially if you experience both. Sensory impairment screening may help identify older adults at higher risk of developing dementia, thereby encouraging early detection. This new knowledge opens the possibility that preventing or correcting sensory impairments may reduce dementia risk.

5. Researchers are looking at new drug targets. Researchers are taking a fresh look at the possible causes for dementia and how drugs might be used to stop the disease in its tracks. More than 500 new candidate drug targets have been identified that address everything from reducing inflammation in the brain to protecting nerve cell health. The Alzheimer's Association's Part the Cloud awards help fund this type of out-of-the-box research and move findings from the laboratory, through trials, into possible therapies for people.

Researchers are poised to uncover even more in 2020 and beyond. Increased funding for research from the federal government and nonprofit organizations is driving the rapidly growing body of knowledge about Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

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The Ashford Women's Group.

Photo by Esther Jagodzinski.

New Ashford Women's Group is growing daily

By Carol Davidge

A new "Ashford Women's Group" formed in the fall of 2019 after newcomer Jill Zaghi asked on the "Ashford CT Community Connections!" Facebook page if there was a women's group in town. When others responded that they would like such a group, Jill, Seema Gupta and Esther Jagodzinski organized meetings in October and November, with monthly meetings in January and throughout 2020 being planned. Fifty women brought appetizers, food for the Ashford Food Pantry, and introduced themselves. Jill had moved to Ashford in July 2019 after managing businesses in New Hampshire. She helped start the group because "Ashford has many talented and smart women and I wanted us to find a place where we can share our skills and support each others' endeavors." Those who attended include wine makers, leaders of workout classes, a bee pollen collector, a Medicaid advocate, and a person who is both a musician and a justice of the peace. "She can play at your wedding and marry you!" said Jill.

Seema, a speech language pathologist who works with adults, helped because she "wanted to develop a sisterhood that could be there for each other, where everyone has a voice." She stressed that the leaders don't want the organization to be rigidly structured. "It's a group where ideas and suggestions for activities are welcome. Many of us were wishing for such a group, and Jill was able to bring it into being," she said.

The mission of the group is "to introduce women to each other and make new friends and connections;

share businesses, hobbies, interests and concerns within the Ashford community; brainstorm and plan future events based on various interests; assist the Food Pantry with much-needed donations; meet, greet, talk; and have fun in a free, friendly and female environment." Since organizing, people have shared events and work opportunities, started a hiking group, and helped people in need. The group encourages folks to bring information about their businesses, hobbies, crafts or special talents to monthly meetings. Find information on Facebook at "Ashford Women's Group." You don't have to be from Ashford to be a member.

"I love bringing people together, especially women. It's how we all learn, grow, support and empower each other," said Jill.

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The Importance of Valuing Play and Honoring Special Interests

By Michelle Baughman

Parents of autistic children are becoming wise to the fact that autistic adults are a great resource for advice and insights on understanding their children and meeting their challenges with insightful wisdom. Here are two questions I was recently asked by parents and my responses to them:



Q: Seeking advice for a situation with my 13-year-old autistic son. In the fall he became interested in watching the local evening news. He watches it for the full 90 minutes until the world news starts, at which point it's time for dinner. Generally, I'm in favor of this as it's good to be informed about what's going on in your community, and the news itself doesn't upset him. However, it borders on obsession as he refuses to leave the house on weeknights between 5 and 6:30pm.

This Thursday there's an important school event from 6-7:30 where students show off projects they've been working on. He has no issue with the event itself (and he finished his project), but he's very upset at the thought of missing 60 minutes of news to attend (it takes us ~25 minutes to drive to the school). We've told him all the stories are posted online, and I've offered to let him stay up late that night to watch the 10pm news on another channel, but he doesn't find those alternatives acceptable.

Any suggestions on how I can help him attend this event and not be upset? (I'd also love to do evening activities with him on a weeknight now and then so this would hopefully set the stage for that.)

And finally--while he watches the news, he also watches unrelated videos on his tablet, so he rarely remembers the details of any news stories when I ask him to tell me about one or two of the stories he found interesting. This makes it even harder for me to understand why he'd be upset about missing something he doesn't really pay attention to in the first place.

A: I strongly believe that special interests should be encouraged. He could be a budding news anchorman, for all you know. I am including a link to a good video that (although it isn't specific to autistics) illustrates why it is important (for all people) to follow their passions. I believe it is even more important for autistics to follow our passions because I believe that is key in building resilience (studies show that the autistic population is at a much higher rate of risk for depression and suicide). So having something to be passionate about is a wonderful way to maintain good mental health hygiene.

When things seemed to get too ridged with my son (like you described, not wanting to leave the house during that time of day) we found alternative outlets in which he could indulge that interest. This way, if he misses one thing, he has alternate back up ones. This helped him to be a little bit more flexible. For example, The Connecticut Children's Museum has an exhibit sponsored by Channel 3 that is a news room set and weather report exhibit. See if there something like that near you that you can take your son to. This could be furthering his interest by going

from watching to doing. This might be more exciting for him, and could be something that you could use to motivate him (For example, if he has to miss the news broadcast on a certain day for some reason, you can promise to make it up to him by bringing him to the museum exhibit on the weekend). This might make him more flexible about having to miss the news broadcast once in while if he knows he has something better to look forward to.

Often times the struggle between the parent and the autistic child is about the parent's inflexibility and need to control. Maybe you can re-examine why it is so important to you to prevent him from engaging in a passion that isn't hurtful to anyone, and could be doing him a world of good. This video points out all the positive consequences from being allowed to follow your passions. Why would you want to deny your child of these things? https://youtu.be/5ViKPK_CJmo

(Remember, your autistic kid will be cutting his own path in life, so don't be so hung up on following the norms. You are blessed with an independent thinker who may have the potential to change the world just because he is able to think and perceive things differently...so be careful not to hinder that potential by trying to "make him fit into a box" that he will likely never fit into. (And that is a good thing)!

Also, just because he can't organize his thoughts at that moment to tell you what he just watched doesn't mean that he isn't paying attention or isn't getting anything out of it. We are like sponges, we absorb everything and we turn it around in our heads for a while and then we will come out with something totally new from all the different pieces of information we took in. Just like you need to put a cake in the oven to bake for a while before the final product comes out... You wouldn't expect to take that cake out five minutes after putting it in the oven and really expect it to be a cake, would you? You need to give things time.

After a day of listening to lectures (sensory input) I can't tell you what I just heard. But given time to let my brain process all that information and get some REM sleep, and I can tell you almost every detail the professor covered.

Another point, about what you perceive as being unrelated stuff that he's looking at on his tablet. We autistics have an uncanny talent for finding patterns in things that others overlook. So you, as an outside observing neurotypical (NT), may not see any connection between the two. But maybe he has found a unique connection?

And another completely different possibility: Maybe he's not interested in what they have to say on the news but how they say it? Or how they dress, or their mannerisms and facial expressions, or how their banter works? All these are the "nonverbal communication" things that we don't pick up naturally. Maybe he's trying to study these parts of communication that are elusive to us autistics? (In my college Chase Fellows Honors program, the professors told us to watch the news anchors for role models of how to dress and conduct ourselves for job interviews). If this is what your son is doing, then it is very insightful of your son to realize this on his own!

Q: When it comes to supporting your child's needs/helping them gain skills, how do you find your balance with it? I think I had it drilled into my head that we

needed as much early intervention at possible (around age 2 or so) that now that he's a little bit older, and I'm more lax, I wonder if I'm doing enough. He used to get another "therapy" but has been out of that for over a year now.

He just turned 5. Mostly nonverbal, he also has low muscle tone/hypotonic CP and doesn't walk independently yet. He's on his first part of summer break, goes for the extended school year in July and then has August off before school starts back in September. We're still doing outpatient speech, physical and occupational therapy (each therapy is once a week.) But we mostly just focus on play at home.

I have anxiety and doubt myself but I'm curious how other parents balance it.

A: You sound over scheduled and stressed out, and you are the parent...how do you think your son feels?! We autistics show more autistic traits the more stressed out we are.

The balance is in not doing so much. There are a lot of people out there who try to make you think that you need to pump a lot of money and time into their programs to help your kid. And I'll bet they are very aware of your insecurities...it is easier for them to sell you on their stuff when you are insecure. Don't fall for it.

Also, fun stuff can be "therapy" too. Horseback riding is great therapy for kids with poor muscle tone. Also, just playing in the surf at the ocean is too: The force of the waves pushing and pulling on the body, and having to walk through the water provides gentle resistance. And connecting with your kid while he is having fun is the best therapy or "intervention" and you don't need to pay anybody to do that!

I think your focusing on "just" play at home is spot on and completely developmentally appropriate. Don't doubt yourself for that. It isn't "just" play; play is very important! It is how we learn, grow, connect with others and make sense of our world. Every intelligent creature on the planet plays (and in many cases, it isn't limited to the young: Dolphins, otters, and primates play in adulthood as well). As human adults, we use play (as in sport or musical instruments) to help regulate our emotions and to achieve a state of relaxation and enjoyment (ie: your weekly golf or tennis game after work, or my gardening). So it is very important that you instill a lifelong value for play in your child by honoring his natural impulse for it and allowing him time for it. After all, autistic kids are kids first and foremost. And all kids need play!

Michelle M. Baughman is a late-in-life diagnosed adult on the autism spectrum, an educator, a parent of a twice-exceptional child on the spectrum, and an AANE Certified AsperCoach who provides intensive, highly individualized life coaching to individuals with Asperger Syndrome (AS) and related conditions. Michelle subscribes to the Neurodiversity Paradigm and writes to help debunk the general misconceptions surrounding this condition, to help autistics live their best lives, and to change the negative cultural narrative about autism.

She may be contacted via email: LifeCoach.PELC@gmail.com, phone: (860) 207-4263 cell, or her online presence: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1015628291826263/> <http://linkedin.com/in/michelle-m-baughman-28b5a92b>

Our Community Calendar

Compiled By Dagmar Noll

Ed. note: Our calendar starts here and wanders through the issue.

January 1, Wednesday

Hiking: First Day Hike, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. Guided hike at Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov

Celebration: New Year's Bonfire, 6:30p.m.-8:00p.m. Free! Bring wishes for the new year and things to let go. Jillson Square, Willimantic.

January 4, Saturday

Skill Share: Distaff Day, 10:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. Drop-in spinning bee or other fiber art. Celebrate an ancient tradition when women's work resumed after holiday festivities! Potluck lunch. Silk winding demonstrations. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main St, Willimantic. 860-456-2178

Gallery: 2020 Vision Opening show, 10:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. Free! View works by Tammy Glaeser, Tony Miles, and Christopher Gunderson. The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery, 156 River Road, Willington. Info: communitygallery@ec-chap.org 518-791-9474 www.thepackinghouse.us

January 5, Sunday

Film: "How to Let Go of the World & Love All the Things that Climate Can't Change", 3:00p.m. Free! Refreshments included. The Mill Museum, 411 Main St, Dugan Hall (Union Street Entrance). Info: randymcmahon@protonmail.com or Bev at 860-423-1878

Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. Non-sectarian, Buddhist-style sitting and walking meditations, teaching and sharing. Knight House, ECSU. Info: 860-450-1464 dmangum617@gmail.com

January 8, Wednesday

Walk: Relaxed Ramble, 11:00a.m. -

1:00p.m. Easy to moderate walk on forest trails. All welcome. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov

Art Gallery: Women in Watercolor, featuring Mackenzie Silk, gallery opening, 4:30p.m. - 6:00p.m. Demonstration at 5pm. Fletcher Memorial Library, 257 Main St, Ashford. Info: 860-455-1086

Live Entertainment: "Talent Showcase" - Come share your talents! Doors 6:30pm / Showcase 7:00pm. Free and open to all ages. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington. Call in advance to sign-up (recommended) or sign-in at the door (time permitting). 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming.

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, 986 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-423-8331

Live Music: Quiet Corner Fiddlers, 7:00p.m. Grill 37, Pomfret. Info: qcf.webs.com

January 9, Thursday

Dance: Social Dance Series with Kelly Madenjian, 6:30pm. \$10.00 door. Enjoy a lovely evening out social ballroom dancing including a beginner ballroom dance lesson. All levels welcome. Partners not required. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington. Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474 www.thepackinghouse.us

January 10, Friday

Hike: Mostly Full Moon Night Hike & Campfire, 6:00p.m. - 8:00p.m. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov

January 11, Saturday

Dance: The Snow Ball, 7:00p.m. - 11:00p.m. \$75.00. Live Big Band, hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, silent auction. Celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the 19th Amendment! Fundraiser for the Mill Museum at ECSU's Betty Tipton Room, High Street, Willimantic. Tickets: www.purplepass.com/snowball2020 860-456-2178

Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery- 2020 Vision

By Rebecca Zablocki

Looking back at 2019, it was a strong year for the arts within our EC-CHAP community. We have continued our Artist-in-Residence program, providing work space and solo show opportunities for a local artist. We were able to launch our Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery; and have completed a beautiful mural developed by a team of volunteers, and painted by artist Chris Gunderson which folks can observe as they drive by or visit our building on River Road. All of these wonderful developments have been great for our visibility here in the quiet corner, and we hope that it will continue to grow so that we can support and reach more of our local community. So if you haven't already, join in and take a closer look!

The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery has been a conduit for relationships with local artists, bringing us closer to the talent of the surrounding area. Having



the opportunity to work with and display the works of 15 local artists of all ages and levels of experience, from high school students to hobbyists to professional artists, has been such a delight. We hope that you were able to enjoy the works of these artists as much as we were and perhaps they will be back again! We can't wait to see what 2020 has in store.

One thing we know for sure is that this January and February we have another show for you in the Community Gallery featuring more local talent, Willington-local, Tammy Glaeser, Tony Miles & even our very own mural artist Chris Gunderson! This talented group will be displaying photographs, illustrative and surreal paintings and drawings and abstract monoprints. The exhibition, 2020 Vision, will be on view from January 4 to February 22, 2020. Stop in between these dates on Saturdays from 10am-2pm and witness the talent that surrounds us here at the Eastern Connecticut Center of History, Art & Performance.

The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery is located within our home, The Mill Works, at 156 River Road in Willington, Connecticut. We welcome everyone to visit and view the artwork during open hours and encourage artists, hobbyists, students and more to participate and apply to have their work on display! If you or someone you know is interested, send an email with a brief biography and images of the artwork to communitygallery@ec-chap.org

Rebecca Zablocki is the EC-CHAP Artist-In-Residence, and Director, Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery.



When Mills Go Silent

By Tyler Hall

It is a story that has been told in nearly every New England mill town: the rise and fall of a local industry. The whims of industry have raised great cities, and left others to wither in decay. When a principal manufacturer closes, the very essence of a city changes. What remains is a void, at its center a granite and brick husk where men and women once walked the halls, tended the machines, and socialized with their neighbors. The sidewalks no longer click with the bustle of high heels and work boots, the fields fill with saplings, and the city lights lay dormant, as if waiting to flicker back to life. The creations of past generations - the homes, schools, parks, monuments, and community centers - fall into disrepair. They stand as curious reminders of a period in time that feels both familiar, and foreign. It is the nature of progress that even the strongest of industries can crumble with the passage of time.

In the village of South Willington, and many like it, the community could do nothing but watch and wonder what would be done with the pieces. At its height The Gardiner Hall Jr. Thread Company owned thousands of acres of farmland, maintained thirty-nine company houses, and employed nearly three hundred workers. It produced over thirty-six million spools of cotton thread annually. A web of traveling salesmen and regional offices spanned from coast to coast. Willington thread sat on store shelves throughout the US and Europe and traveled the world on the backs of soldiers. As the successes that defined the early 1900s began to fade, the company had no choice but to scale back operations.

The new century had brought with it radical advancements in thread production. Industry behemoths, such as The American Thread Company, were on the cutting edge of synthetic thread. Manufacturers began to migrate to more affordable regions, seeking cheap labor and a closer proximity to Southern cotton. All the while, the family-owned thread mill in South Willington operated as usual.

When Gardiner Hall Jr.'s son, company president William Henry, passed away in 1922, the mill board's decades-long interest in farming came to an end. Slowly, the award winning herd of Holstein cattle was thinned, milk production stopped, and the fields fell silent. Regardless, the company operated through the depression years and thrived throughout the 1940s. In 1953, the Korean War came to a close, and so ended The Gardiner Hall Jr. Company's final government contract. That same year, Rosa O. Hall, daughter of Gardiner Hall Jr., and long-time company president, passed away.

During the early months of 1954, the number of employees was reduced to fifty-five...then thirty. The final blow came on April 7th, 1954, as William R. L. McBee, company treasurer, announced the cessation of thread production, the sale of all machinery, and the transfer of trademarks to the Standard Thread Company of New York. One year later, the remnants of the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company, now an investment group, sold the mill complex to the New England Development Corporation of Willimantic.

"Everybody just watched it fall apart in a natural way," recounted Clyde Hall Sr. of Willington, "It affected a lot of people. The company had been very influential, and its closing affected people because it was a huge financial support. The company sold things off little by little. After everything was sold there was nothing else to do but find work. People were worried about where their next paycheck would be coming from. Most people found jobs doing work up in UConn and were able to continue." And so, the story of the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company reached its conclusion. The symbiosis that had existed for 94 years was severed, and a community was left wondering what would become of the creation that had been born from the vision of one company, built by the labor of thousands, and maintained with the expectation of continued prosperity.

"This is the way the life of a mill ends, not with a bang, but with the snuffing of a final glimmer." (The Hartford Courant, November 22nd, 1955)

Tyler Hall is the Curator of Gardiner Hall Jr. History Museum, Board member at the Windham Textile Museum, and History student at ECSU.



Arthur Rovozzo continued from page 11

accompanist for singers, including Tony Bennett and Ella Fitzgerald. After spending ten years backing Ella in a second stint with her band, Tommy decided to be his own boss leading his own groups in 1978. He had already revitalized his recording career by that point, releasing impressive albums on the German label Enja and American label Pablo. Overwork, a hectic life and travel pressures brought about a heart attack prior to the age of 50, but Flanagan recovered well and seemed to get musically better and stronger with the passage of time.

Tommy Flanagan's rise to pianistic greatness definitely had a few helping hands along the way. The pianist who deserves special mention in this regard, as a guide and mentor to Tommy, is fellow Detroit jazzman Barry Harris (b. 1929). Harris, although only months older than Flanagan, was so advanced at an early age that he gave piano lessons to all the high school-aged students, up through the mid-1950s. He had based his piano conception upon the style of Bebop founding father Bud Powell (with nods to Bud's antecedent Art Tatum and later friend Thelonious Monk). After coaching so many contemporaries on correct bop methodology, it shouldn't be a surprise that Harris became a formal music educator. This aspect of his career was in addition to his accomplishments as a performer, sideman and recording artist, beginning his years as a group leader in 1958.


Barry Harris managed to pull something of a coup. Where many other pianists who emulated Bud Powell were harshly judged by jazz critics or called unworthy imitators, Harris prospered. Barry blazed his way into being semi-officially recognized as the heir to Powell's bop keyboard throne, blending-in enough of his personal musical traits to avoid being casually written-off as an insignificant copyist. He retained the trademark Powell left-hand at the keyboard -the expected steady bass line replaced by Bud-like irregular, jabbing low-range notes and sudden chordal plouks. Harris kept drawing attention to other worthy, major figures as well, including composer Tadd Dameron, through his albums for Riverside, Xanadu and Uptown.

Whenever you get a craving for jazz piano at its most attractive, remember to search beyond the Bill Evans discography. The Detroit-to-New York lineage of players offered us two of the most elegant pianists of all time in Hank Jones and Tommy Flanagan, and the distinguished teacher and Bebop mainstay Barry Harris. The Motor City was once a great jazz city.

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The Measure of Dogs

By Donna Dufresne

I don't know what it is about dogs and why we love them so fiercely, or why we can't go about our lives without them. I know that I can't seem to find my compass without a dog in my life. My dog companions enable me to map the territory of the heart, and when they leave, I am broken of heart until the next one comes along and trains me once again to remember to be kind-hearted and compassionate, and to love unconditionally.

It seems that the older I get, the harder it is to let go when a dog passes.

I grieve more deeply and can't seem to bounce back as quickly. It is the fragility of age. My rubber ball is cracked and dry and doesn't roll with the punches or the resilience of youth. Perhaps it is because death edges ever more closely once you skid over the hump of middle age, and it's hard to ignore the fact that we too will follow our beloved little friends into the dark unknown.

We measure our lives in the years of dogs. They come to us, foreshadowing our future and guiding us from one stage of our spiritual development to the next. I suspect that the intensity of my grief is not only the loss of my best little friend and his companionship, but the loss of another stage in life. Each of our beloved dogs have ferried my husband and I through marriage and our life together. Some were more benevolent and human than others, but all of them accomplished their mission in one way or another – A job well done.

Having been raised by at least two dogs at a time throughout my childhood, it's hard to imagine a life without them. I relied on their comfort and protection when the adults seemed remarkably absent. I was sure that my dog, Lassie, had saved my life more than once from the danger and anxiety my mother harbored and projected onto the world. When I think of the dogs of my youth, I see the romping of children in the yard and the pitter-patter of little feet around the holidays. They were my brothers and sisters in a lonely little life.

There are dark days and dog days, and the darkest of days are those spans of time when I did not have a dog. Sure, it allowed me to be foot-loose and fancy-free during a frenzied resistance to settling down. I know I had cats come and go during those years, but I don't find them particularly centering or grounding. You can have a cat on your bed one day and gone the next and they just don't seem to be able to navigate the territory of the heart in the same way as dogs. I don't know where the Ancient Egyptian cat stars might be in the night sky, but I sure as heck know where to find the Dog Star.

It is possible that I never got to bond with cats because I wasn't allowed to have a cat from the time I was five-years-old until I left home at eighteen.

We used to have a cat named "Bootsy" when I was really young, and I still remember his big white socks and double paws, and the rumble of his baritone purr. But cats disappeared from my life abruptly, when I caught Cat Scratch Fever. Yep – I'm probably one of the few individuals you'll ever meet who almost died from a disease made famous by a rock band.

At any rate, my strange encounter with the disease happened long before Ted Nugent. It was 1960, and I was five-years old. I was sick for so many weeks I never made it to the local kindergarten. I was left to fend for myself on the screened porch in the heat of August and the dog days of September. It was me and Captain Kangaroo, surrounded by my favorite books on the couch through an eternal fever.

As it turns out, I became the poster child for curing cat scratch fever with penicillin. After two surgeries and weeks of a raging fever, and the flax seed poultices, which my mother used to draw the infection out of my lanced lymph nodes, the doctors decided to try an antibiotic. It most likely saved my life, but I still bare the scars.

My parents never allowed another cat in the house. I don't care to wonder what happened to Bootsy and the kittens in the barn. They were all "disappeared" by the time I got home from the hospital, probably in some football stadium in Argentina. To this day, the scent of flax seed

and burlap bags tied with string conjure up nightmares.

My first dog after leaving home was an English setter. He was a devil dog, and probably had no choice but to act out my bad choices in life. My first husband, whom I'd married at eighteen, named him Damion. When we left him for a weekend in the care of a neighbor, he literally tore our little cottage apart. He pulled down the Christmas tree, chewed up all the bedding and pillows, and ran through the house with a roll of toilet paper on which he defiantly pooped. He was too much dog for young newlyweds to handle, and we gave him back to our friend who had bred him. He was one of those lopsided dogs with two different colored eyes, a gangly gate, and random spotting from every genetic trait in his setter lineage. He could have turned out to be a good dog, but already, my feet were getting itchy to move on from that marriage, and it wasn't the right time for either of us (meaning the dog and I) to be together. I hope he found his people and was able to accomplish his mission in life. We were his failed experiment, and that marriage couldn't possibly have lasted. After all, that practice husband was a cat person in heart and we parted ways after four years.



It wasn't until I met my present husband after several years of nomadic life, that I was able to find my dog star again. I suppose it was best not to have had a companion during my hobo days, but I do wish I'd had a dog with me when I hiked the Appalachian Trail by myself. When Michael and I settled into our tiny little home on thirteen acres of land, the first thing I did was visit the local dog pound. I couldn't help myself. I came home with three dogs! A beautiful sable collie for us, named Tansy, and two other dogs which I gave away. I gifted my mother with the white mutt, which my father named Rebel, after a precarious first encounter where he refused to let my dad in the house. That dog later became my father's constant companion, riding shotgun in the truck. I think I gave the shepherd mix to a friend or neighbor, but I can't recall who. It was in the 80's - a long time ago, and the lens of my memory is blurred around the edge of reality.

Unfortunately, Tansy, the collie, didn't last long. We'd inherited heartworm along with the dog, and he died of a heart attack while under treatment. He was a joyful lion-maned collie who captured our hearts and reminded me of my own Lassie from childhood. My husband, who came from one of those odd families who never had a pet bigger than a goldfish, was smitten and finally understood the love of a canine friend. We soon embarked on collecting a series of collies who ferried us through two decades of nesting and trying to build a family. Our collies were a just-right combination for two busy people, working to build a life while putting ourselves through college.

They were devoted, but gave us space, always watching over us as though we were their very own tiny flock of sheep. Never underfoot, just there in case they were needed. They were a noble breed and brought us many years of joy with their individual personalities.

The collie years were a domestic phase, all about building a home and a community. Guinness, the noblest of our tri-colored collection was the most beloved of that tribe. He touched our hearts more deeply than any of the others. He was our high priest, watching over us from his throne on the berm, where he surrounded himself with plastic he'd collected in the neighborhood. We were devastated when he passed, and our refrigerator became his

shrine.

It wasn't just the dog - it was the passing of happiness, and an unfortunate turn of events - a hysterectomy and the loss of hope for a family of our own. Yet there were new things on the horizon - a dawning of creativity and a different way of being in the world without the burden of trying to fit my restless spirit into motherhood. Sadie, our smooth-coated collie held ground for several years, and crankily presided over the changes in our relationships with friends and with each other. She put up with the expansion and renovation of our house and a parade of musicians as I tried to formulate the right band to give wings to the songs I birthed like children. Sadie had a bit of an attitude: "I am what I am - take it or leave it." She tried very hard to teach me to just be who I am and not to care what people think. Unfortunately, I care a bit too deeply what people think.

As Sadie got old, the wind began to shift. One day, I went to the local pet store to buy crickets for a frog in my classroom. That's when I met Django, a mini schnauzer who captured my heart the minute I picked him up. That little dog was a game changer. I named him after Django Reinhardt, the Gypsy Jazz musician who created the "Hot Club" movement in Paris - the inspiration for my own songwriting. Django became my muse in more ways than one.

Even though we still had Sadie in our lives, she was becoming more of a shadow, content to sleep most of the time and slither into dark corners. Not so attached to us anymore. Her spirit had already left. But when we brought Django home, she had a reprieve. She diligently showed him the ropes, taught him how to handle us, and proudly brought him around the neighborhood. He became her puppy, and he brought out the puppy in her, although she was more often than not a bit snippy and impatient with him. The house was filled with the tapping of toes on floorboards, and Django seemed quite happy to have someone besides us whom he could boss around. When Sadie left us, he was quite depressed and went through weeks of mourning. He developed separation anxiety and focused all his attention on me.

One thing about mini schnauzers is they have a strong and in-tact personality from the get-go. Although all of our animals have had their own voices that matched their personality, including special songs we made up about them, Django literally talked to me. The minute I met him, I heard his voice clear as day. Our house was filled with on-going commentary about other humans and life, with Django coining the phrase, "I'm just saying", long before we'd ever heard that on T.V.

Because Django was becoming all too human, we decided to stunt his growth in that department so he could stay with us a bit longer. It was selfish, I know, but we loved him so very much and didn't want him getting the idea that his work was done. That's when we rescued Carlo, thinking that Django needed to be reminded that he was a dog.

I have dubious feelings about the rescue craze in this country. There's no doubt in my mind that many of the so-called rescue services are really conduits for a pipeline of puppy mills coming up from the South and the Midwest. It's very probable that Django was the product of a puppy mill. After all, I bought him in one of those pet stores filled with lizards, snakes, and rodents. He had congenital eye problems, anxiety, and later died of a terrible cancer, all signs of over-breeding. Nevertheless, he was a great dog, and didn't hesitate to tell me so: "C'mon, I was born in a puppy mill, and I turned out fine!"

It is a reminder that in the end, it doesn't matter where they come from. What really matters is the love we give our dogs.

Carlo was found on a rescue site by our friend, Amy, who later became known as the "Fairy (or furry) Dog Mother. He was fostered to a couple in Cambridge. Because he came from a family with two Boston Terriers who were also rescued, they mixed up his papers and labeled him as a Boston Terrier. But he was oh-so-clearly a mini schnauzer. Before he died, we were toying with the idea of making a YouTube video with Carlo sitting ever so seriously across from Henry Lewis Gates on the show Finding

continued on next page

Your Roots. Dr. Gates would have the big black book spread out on the table, which contains all the genealogy research and DNA of his guest. He would impishly smile, in that way of his, and say to Carlo: "Turn the next page." And Carlo's jaw would drop to the floor. He would exclaim in his Spanglish accent, "What?! I'm a Schnauzer?!~ I thought I was a Boston terrier!"

That little boy had quite the personality. When we walked into the apartment in Cambridge to pick him up, he bolted across the room and literally jumped into Michael's arms. I swear to God, I heard him say out loud in the deep baritone voice of Antonio Banderas, "Dad! You're my new dad!"

Django and Carlo became fast friends, after Django quickly established that he was the boss, and that I belonged to him. Carlo was so malleable and mellow. When Django was getting all nerved up, he would shrug his shoulder and walk away. More often than not, I heard him say, "Ah - whatever."

We should have named them Felix and Oscar, after the "Odd Couple". Their temperaments were so different, yet they blended so well. Django - all white and stiff, was the salt to Carlo's hot pepper personality. They became known as "The boys" among friends and in the neighborhood, and they made the perfect little brace of dogs during our many hikes and adventures. Most memorably, was our "Iddy-Biddy-I-Did-a-rod" adventure where the boys went cross-country skiing with me.

It was a lovely time, we had with them. They helped to smooth over some rough edges in our marriage and brought humor and joy into our home, and I miss them so much. I miss their voices and their endearing love. The couches and the bed were cold and uninviting without the soft circle of dogs cuddled up against us. When Django died, I thought we'd get another dog right away. But we didn't. Carlo, after his mourning period, relished being the only dog and having our full attention. We put it off, thinking we'd have at least five years to think about a companion for Carlo. Selfishly, I wish we had found that perfect little schnauzer friend, because the house wouldn't have been so lonely when he died. On the other hand, Carlo had the best two years of his life. A life well-lived, and well-loved.

This much I know is true: I am not only grieving the passing of our dear companions, but the passing of an era. Another decade is gone, and a new chapter awaits the next dog to turn the page. I know Django manifested my discontent in life, the tension between my work and my creative yearnings. Carlo, was perhaps the manifestation of that more creative and internal being. With the help of the two of them, I was able to navigate the stress of teaching, and the pull toward a writing life. But now, it seems they have helped to close a door for me (or at least nudged it a crack).

And now, we have two new mini schnauzers in our lives, Leo and Carla. The bearers of change, they escorted me into a new era. I think this next measure of dogs will be about reclamation. Already, with their encouragement I am reclaiming my soul from the hard work of teaching, nurturing my creative voice. I hope these little people masquerading as dogs will grow and evolve with me as we each become who we are meant to be in this world. I know that Django and Carlo cannot be replaced, but I do have faith that our new furry companions will fulfill their mission and do a good job as we all strive to become more human.



3 Great Ways to Get Kids Motivated to Move More

(StatePoint) Getting regular physical activity helps children meet developmental milestones and promotes mental and physical wellness. However, forming this healthy habit works best when you get started early. To motivate your kids to move more, consider the following ideas:

Go on an outing: At least some of the time, be sure to select active outings. This way, physical activity will become a natural part of your family's lifestyle. For example, go skating or rock climbing instead of to the movies. If you're going on a picnic, hike or bike to the picnic site and bring along frisbees, balls and other toys and games that keep people moving.

Put on your dancing shoes: It's easy to get kids moving and grooving with fun dance games. Especially those that incorporate innovative and interactive tech such as the new VTech Kidi Star Dance. By wearing motion-activated bands, kids can learn 20 cool dance moves step-by-step by following the animated dance instructor. Once kids learn the moves, they can put them together and dance along to the included music. Color-changing lights flash along to the music to make kids feel like a star. Play four motion games or create music through movement by playing 14 different effects, including drums and magical fairy sounds. Give the second band to a friend and challenge them to a game or dance-off. Connect your own MP3 player or load songs using a microSD card to add more music so kids never get bored.

Take evening walks: Instead of heading straight for the couch in the evenings, make a ritual of taking a short walk first. This is a great chance to chitchat, get some fresh air and even promote better sleep. Kids may not be able to travel too far at first, so start with a brief walk around the block. As they begin to build endurance, extend it a bit farther or consider turning the ritual into a friendly race.

Physical activity is not only great for you, but it's also a lot of fun. By incorporating games and activities into evenings and weekends, parents can play an active role in getting kids motivated to move more.

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Dear Reader-
Please consider contributing to Neighbors- Write an article about a person you admire or a local program you believe is important. Take a photo of a friend, loved one or pet. Write a poem or a piece of flash fiction. These pages would be full of press releases without submissions from local residents who care about each other and their community.

T. King, Publisher

Love Animals?

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Should I Be Worried About That Condensation on My Windows?

(StatePoint) If you take a look at your home's windows and doors in winter, you may notice condensation. As temperatures drop, it often appears on the inside and outside of these surfaces.

Here's what you need to know about why condensation occurs, when it matters and what you can do about it:

Interior Condensation

When the heat is on inside the home in wintertime, a certain amount of humidity feels good -- we breathe easier, our skin is less dry and there's less static in the air. This is fine usually, but when temperatures outside get extremely low, problems can arise. Under these circumstances, humidity can generate condensation on your windows -- whether they're old or new -- and this should be managed.



While there's no problem with condensation on the window glass itself, (except for the fact that visibility can be obscured) that condensation could affect wood trim around the windows and lead to mold and rot. Perhaps even worse, it could be an indicator that condensation is also occurring within your walls, which can lead to unhealthy mold.

Unfortunately, the most common sources of home humidity are everyday parts of life, including showers, cooking, doing laundry and even fish tanks. However, if you see condensation on your windows there are two actions that experts recommend. One, if you have a humidifier, turn it down. The second, use a dehumidifier.

Exterior Condensation

Exterior condensation occurs when the dew point temperature approaches the outside air temperature. When the air is saturated and can't hold any more moisture, water vapor forms droplets on surfaces -- including your roof, siding, windows and doors.

If you have energy-efficient windows, you may notice exterior condensation occur more than you did when you had

older, less energy-efficient windows that allowed warmth from inside the home to reach the outside glass pane and dissipate the condensation. Unlike with interior condensation, there's nothing to worry about in the case of exterior condensation. Moisture on the outside pane of glass is normal and a good sign that your windows are functioning correctly to prevent warmth from reaching the outside glass. The condensation will dissipate when the outside air temperature rises.

Next Steps

If there's no condensation on the exterior of your windows but there's moisture on adjacent exterior surfaces, this would be a good indicator that it's time for new windows. Also, if you get constant internal condensation on your windows in very cold weather and your humidity is low, then upgrading to a more thermally efficient window would be a good idea.

Look for high-performing replacement windows with the latest technological advances that offer maximum efficiency and comfort. Third-party recognition for a particular brand or product is a strong indicator that you're investing in a quality product. A recent "Remodeling" magazine survey of remodeling contractors ranked ProVia vinyl windows as number one in window quality in part because of their features that are tested against the most stringent requirements for air and water infiltration.

This winter, pay attention to your home windows, glass doors and other surfaces. Understanding the ins and outs of interior and exterior condensation can help you address potential issues.

10 Doctor-Recommended Health Tips for the New Year



(StatePoint) Four in 10 adults in the U.S. have two or more chronic diseases, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While certain conditions and risk factors are beyond one's control, the new year is the perfect time to consider the many lifestyle choices you can make for improved health.

"With too many holiday sweets and not enough exercise likely in the rearview mirror, now is the perfect time to consider your personal goals and how you can make positive health choices in the coming year," says American Medical Association (AMA) President Patrice A. Harris, M.D. "The good news is that there are a few easy steps you can take that will set you on the right track for a healthier 2020."

To get you started, the AMA is offering 10 wellness tips for the new year:

1. Steps you take now can help prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes. Learn your risk by taking the self-screening test at DoIHavePrediabetes.org.
2. Be more physically active. Adults should do at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity, or 75 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity activity.
3. Visit LowerYourHBP.org to better understand blood pressure numbers and take necessary steps to get high blood pressure -- also known as hypertension -- under control. Doing so will reduce your risk of heart attack or stroke.
4. Reduce your intake of processed foods, especially those with added sodium and sugar. Eat less red meat and processed meats, and add more plant-based foods, such as olive oil, nuts and seeds to your diet. Also reduce your consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and drink more water instead. Drinking sugary beverages

-- even 100% fruit juices -- is associated with a higher all-cause mortality risk, a new study published in JAMA Network Open suggests.

5. If your health care professional determines that you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed. Antibiotic resistance is a serious public health problem and antibiotics will not make you feel better if you have a virus, such as a cold or flu.
6. If consuming alcohol, do so in moderation as defined by the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans -- up to one drink daily for women and two drinks daily for men, and only by adults of legal drinking age.
7. Talk with your doctor about tobacco and e-cigarette use (or vaping) and how to quit. Declare your home and car smoke- and aerosol-free to eliminate secondhand exposure.
8. Pain medication is personal. If you're taking prescription opioids or other medications, follow your doctor's instructions. Store them safely to prevent misuse and properly dispose of any leftover medication.
9. Make sure your family is up-to-date on vaccines, including the annual influenza vaccine for everyone age six months or older. If you're pregnant, you can receive the flu vaccine during any trimester, but should receive the Tdap vaccine early in the third trimester to protect yourself against flu and whooping cough.
10. Manage stress. A good diet, sufficient sleep (at least 7.5 hours per night), daily exercise and wellness activities, like yoga and meditation, are key ingredients to maintaining and improving your mental health, but don't hesitate to ask for help from a mental health professional when you need it.

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The History of Ice Skating

Submitted by Ellen Wilson

Just in time for January's wintery chill, the Canterbury Historical Society will feature noted historian Rob Lyon presenting a program on ice skating. Wearing 1830s period clothing, Mr. Lyon—recently retired after a long career at Old Sturbridge Village—will display antique ice skates and share illustrations of skating history. This lively and informative talk covers 5,000 years of men and women remaining upright and traveling, playing, romancing, and even fighting wars on ice.

Details at <http://canterburyhistorical.org/?event=january-regular-monthly-meeting-and-program>
Free and open to the public. Free refreshments. Bring a friend.

WHEN: Friday, January 10, 2020. 7 PM business session; speaker at about 7:30.

WHERE: Community Room of the Canterbury Town Hall, 1 Municipal Drive, Canterbury, CT 06331.

Early Childhood Literacy Classes

Enrollments are now open for Early Childhood Literacy Classes (beginning in January) offered by the Canterbury Public Library.

Bouncing Baby Tales: For infant to 18 month olds Tuesdays at 10:30 to 11:00 beginning Jan. 7 through March 3
Music and Movement: For 18 months to 3 year olds (2 class time options): Thursdays 9:30 to 10:15 and Thursdays 10:30 to 11:15 beginning January 9 through February 27.
Registration required for all programs. Contact the Canterbury Public Library at 860-546-9022 or e-mail: canterbury-publiclibrary@gmail.com, or sign up directly through the website: canterburylibrary.org.

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January 12, Sunday

Open House: Tour the 4-H camp, 2:00p.m. – 4:00p.m. New and old campers, families and friends are welcome. Take advantage of early registration discounts! Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp, 326 Taft Pond Rd, Pomfret Center, CT.
Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 1/5)

January 13, Monday

Film: "Hypernormalism", 7:00p.m. Free. Not available to stream online! 2nd Monday Film Series. Storrs UU Meeting House, 46 Spring Hill Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-428-4867.

January 15, Wednesday

Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 1/8)

January 17, Friday

Kids: Winter Teen Weekend, 5:30p.m. through Sunday, 9:00a.m. \$50. Food, games, sledding, leadership skills and lots of fun for teens 13 – 17. Pre-registration required by January 12. Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp, 326 Taft Pond Rd, Pomfret Center, CT. Register: 860-974-3379 or campdirector@4hcampct.org
Film: "Faces Places" (PG), 1946 & "The Making of a Willington Mural: A Canvas of History and Social Change". Doors 6:30pm / Film Showing 7:00pm. \$5. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington. Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us.

January 18, Saturday

Hiking: Long-Distance Hike, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. 5-6-mile hike. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov
Live Music: Ramblin' Dan Stevens (Blues). Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00 door. Senior & student discounts. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington. Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474 www.thepackinghouse.us

January 19, Sunday

Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 1/5)

January 22, Wednesday

Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 1/8)

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To all our contributors- Thank You!
Without your submissions of writing, poetry, artwork and photographs, this paper would not exist. T. King, Publisher

January 23, Thursday


Walk: Relaxed Ramble, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. (See 1/8)

January 25, Saturday

Live Music: Claudia Schmidt with Mark Mandeville and Rianne Richards (Folk). Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00 door. Senior & student discounts. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington. Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474 www.thepackinghouse.us

January 26, Sunday

Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 1/5)
Skill Share: Introduction to Ice Fishing, 6:00p.m. - 8:00p.m. Free! RSVP required. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP. Goodwin@ct.gov
Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 1/8)

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Where to find the Neighbors paper

- Ashford**
Terry's Transmissions
Hope & Wellness
Ashford Spirit Shoppe
Wooden Spoon Restaurant
Ashford Post Office
Babcock Library
- Brooklyn**
Brooklyn Post Office
Baker's Dozen Coffee Shop
The Ice Box
- Bolton**
Bolton Post Office
Subway-Bolton Notch
- Chaplin**
Chaplin Post Office
Pine Acres Restaurant
- Columbia**
Saxon Library
Columbia Post Office
- Coventry**
Highland Park Market
Meadowbrook Spirits
Coventry Laundromat
Subway
Booth and Dimock Library
Song-A-Day Music
- Eastford**
Eastford Post Office
Coriander
- Hampton**
Hampton Post Office
Hampton Library
- Lebanon**
Lebanon Post Office
- Mansfield/Storrs**
D & D Auto Repair
Holiday Spirits
All Subway shops
Bagel Zone
Storrs Post Office
Mansfield Senior Center
Starbucks
Storrs Comm. Laundry
UConn Bookstore-Storrs Ctr.
Chang's Garden Rest.
Liberty Bank
Spring Hill Cafe
Nature's Health Store
Mansfield Supply
- Mansfield Center**
Lawrence Real Estate
Mansfield OB/GYN
Mansfield Library
East Brook Mall
- Mansfield Depot**
Thompson's Store
Tri-County Greenhouse

- North Windham**
Bagel One
Subway
No. Windham Post Office
- Pomfret**
Weiss, Hale & Zahansky
Vanilla Bean Restaurant
Pomfret Post Office
Baker's Dozen Coffee Shop
- Putnam**
Antiques Marketplace
Putnam Library
Subway
Putnam Post Office
- Scotland**
Scotland Library
Scotland Post Office
- South Windham**
Bob's Windham IGA
Landon Tire
So. Windham Post Office
- Stafford**
Stafford Coffee Company
Stafford Library
Subway
Stafford Post Office
Stafford Cider
Hangs Asian Bistro

- Tolland**
Birch Mountain Pottery
Subway
Tolland Library
Tolland Post Office
- Willington**
The Packing House
Franc Motors
Willington Pizza I & II
Willington Post Office
Willington Library
- Windham/Willimantic**
Willimantic Food Co-op
Design Center East
Schiller's
Windham Eye Group
Eastern Eye Care
CAD Marshall Framing
Clothespin Laundromat
Main Street Cafe
That Breakfast Place
All Subways
Super Washing Well
Willimantic Public Library
Windham Senior Center
Elm Package Store
Not Only Juice
Willimantic Records
- Windham Center**
Windham Post Office

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Rev. Jaclyn Sheldon, Eucharistic Celebrant

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Sun: 7:15am - Reflective/Hebrew Chant service
Sun: 8:15am - Worship & Bible Service
9:30am - Celebration of Holy Eucharist
Tue: Yoga in St. Paul's Community Room 10:00am
Tue: The Pilgrims Way 4-5:30pm
Every 2nd & 4th SUNDAY - Community Breakfast served following 9:30 service
Every 3rd Sunday of each month - birthday celebration with cake after service.
All are welcome. Come worship the Lord with us!
Listen to Rev. Sheldon's pre-recorded Sunday service on WILI-AM 1400 @ 9:05 Sunday morning. Also on WILI website. Soon to be on church's website and FB page.
860-423-8455 www.stpaulswillimantic.org

Lose Weight – And Keep it Off

By Nicole T. Smith, L.Ac.

Upwards of 95% of diets fail the person trying to lose weight. Note that I did not say that 95% of people fail at diets. It's the diets themselves that are failing.

Most diets focus on one thing: cutting calories and leaving out the foods most people crave. But this does not lead to sustainable weight loss, or an enjoyable relationship with food!

Some factors that influence the inability to lose weight or stubborn fat:

- Eating the wrong foods
- No exercise
- Lack of sleep
- Stress
- Toxins
- Certain medications
- Weakness or malfunction of internal organs
- Mood
- Nutrient deficiency
- Misinformation and simply not knowing what to do

There is a lot of misleading marketing out there. Products are labeled "low-fat" or "no sugar" or described as "heart

healthy" or "lean" – but are they really good for you? In most cases, these are processed foods in disguise, and can cause rebound weight gain. Also, eating less can make us cranky, depleted, stressed, and set us up for overeating later on.

The key to permanent weight loss is not counting calories, or limiting food, but eating the right food. In addition, medical issues, sleep troubles, toxicity, stress, mood disturbances, etc., must be treated so that the body will have an easier time losing weight and keeping it off.

In my practice, every one of these factors is addressed through acupuncture and nutritional counseling. Also, using an effective technique learned in France, patients report a decrease in cravings the very same day! Lastly, there are abdominal points specific to targeting the inner energy of the abdomen and the nervous system of the gut to further enhance weight loss.

Start the year right. You have nothing to lose but unwanted weight!


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

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Preventing Type 2 Diabetes

(StatePoint) More than one in three Americans -- over 84 million people -- have prediabetes, which is a serious condition that often leads to type 2 diabetes and other significant health problems, such as heart disease and stroke. Despite its prevalence, nearly 90 percent of people with the condition don't know they have it. The good news is that prediabetes can often be reversed. The first step is learning your risk, say experts.

As part of its efforts to lead the charge in preventing chronic diseases and confronting public health crises, the American Medical Association (AMA) is encouraging all Americans to learn their risk for type 2 diabetes and take action accordingly during November, which is Diabetes Awareness Month.

"Preventing type 2 diabetes starts with ensuring that people are aware of their risks for developing the disease and advising them on interventions," says Dr. Patrice A. Harris, M.D., M.A., president of the AMA. "Research shows that people who are aware of their condition are more likely to make the necessary long-term lifestyle changes that can help prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes. The AMA is focused on improving the health of the nation by leading the charge to prevent chronic disease. As the cornerstone of that effort, we are committed to helping America achieve no new preventable cases of type 2 diabetes."

A one-minute self-screening risk test available at DoIHavePrediabetes.org can help you determine where you stand. The AMA encourages those with high scores who learn they may be at risk for prediabetes to consult their doctor to confirm a diagnosis, as well as to find out how lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, eating a well-balanced diet that includes a variety of foods and being more physically active can help prevent type 2 diabetes. For additional resources, visit amapreventdiabetes.org and cdc.gov.

The prevalence of adults diagnosed with diabetes more than doubled in the past 20 years, making it more important than ever that Americans find out whether they have prediabetes. Armed with that knowledge, they can take steps to manage or even reverse the condition.

WTG Auditions



Submitted by Robin Rice

WHAT: The Windham Theatre Guild will hold Open Auditions for the March/April 2020 Main Stage production of *Calendar Girls* by Tim Firth.

When Annie's husband John dies of leukemia, she and best friend Chris resolve to raise money for a new settee in the local hospital waiting room. They manage to persuade four fellow WI members to pose nude with them for an "alternative" calendar, with a little help from hospital porter and amateur photographer Lawrence. The news of the women's charitable venture spreads like wildfire, and hordes of press soon descend on the small village of Knapeley in the Yorkshire Dales. The calendar is a success, but Chris and Annie's friendship is put to the test under the strain of their newfound fame.

WHERE: First Congregational Church, 199 Valley Street, Willimantic, CT

WHEN: Sunday and Monday, January 12th & 13th, 2020 at 7:00pm.

NEEDED: 4 MEN/10 WOMEN.

Auditions will consist of readings from the script. Sides will be provided at auditions. British accents will be used. For character descriptions, go to windhamtheatreguild.org. If you have any questions please contact Director Linda Ferreira at linda.m.ferreira10@gmail.com.

SHOW DATES: March 27, 28, 29 & April 2, 3, 4 & 5, 2020



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