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*All proceeds benefit Covenant Soup Kitchen*

## ~Spring 2020 Music Series~

~Sunday, February 16th~

**Aztec Two-Step 2.0**

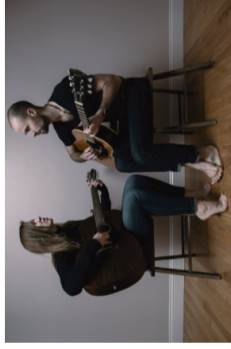
4:00 pm ~ \$25



~ Sunday, March 29th ~

**Mad Agnes  
Hugh Blumenfeld &  
Faithful Sky**

4:00 pm ~ \$25



~ Sunday, March 8th ~

**Porch Party Mamas  
The Promise Is Hope**

4:00 pm ~ \$25



~ Sunday, April 19th ~

**Adam Ezra Group**

4:00 pm ~ \$30



~ Sunday, May 10th ~

**Jonathan Edwards**

4:00 pm ~ \$35



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Willimantic, CT

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February 2020

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# Neighbors



Looking Up:

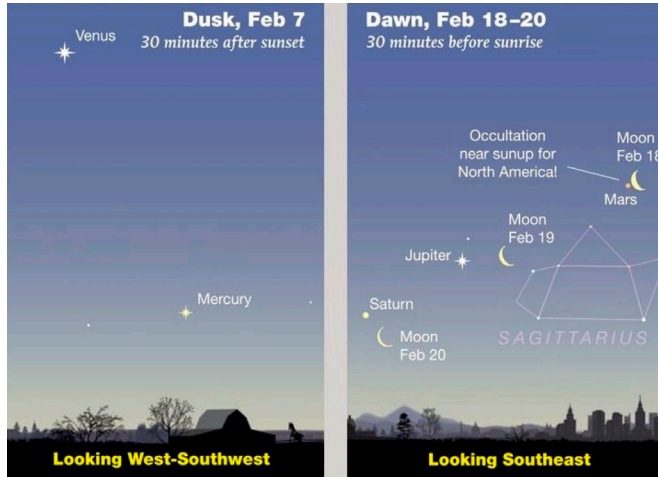
# Sappy Songs and Dazzling Displays as February Unfolds

By Bob Grindle

The restaurant was dark and quiet and smelled of fried chicken and dill pickles and a sort of carpet mustiness that combined the fermented grime of beer and onions and the juices and ooze of a host of things that customers like to eat and drink and then leave to be cleaned up by the crew their tabs and tips support. The quiet was put to rest as the jukebox clicked and rattled a bit and Ray Charles filled the stale air trapped inside this 1960's Indiana roadhouse with the unmistakable lyrics... "Georgia,...Georgia,...the whole day through, just an old sweet song keeps Georgia on my mind....."

One benefit of working the last shift before locking up and shuttering the restaurant for the night was getting to play the jukebox for free, and as a sophomore in high school working my first non-paper route job, play it I did. To this day, those songs of the night shift at Max's Roadhouse are a time machine capable of transporting me back to an almost tangibly vivid diorama complete with the smells and sounds and even the atmospherics of a time that I have no desire to relive or return to, but occasionally enjoy sitting back and reflecting upon. Finishing work, turning off the lights and bicycling 4 miles of pitch-black back roads through the night sky was a solitary chance to pick through the complications of life's Newtonian habit of gaining speed over time. It was easy to stop riding and lay the bike down, flop down beside it, and wonder at the vastness of the night and the stars and even the inside of my mind where an imagination would leap from night vision to homework to summer vacation and back to Roy Orbison or Connie Francis and then out again to the very concept of vastness...ohhh, approaching headlights.

Back on the bike, off again into the night and



home...The Everly Brothers, Brenda Lee, The Shirelles and Percy Faith...homework and conversation with whoever is still up. One great thing about a big family is there is always somebody up—multi-shift living, hive-like and each cell in this comb is slightly different from its neighbor. There is a vastness in the simple fact of being alive... we can feel it when standing at the ocean's edge, or the mountain's top; when gazing across a desert or staring into a cavern or up into the tumbling clouds and maybe especially while looking up into the quiet furnaces that are the stars of the night sky and feel a kinship of almost cellular sameness. Do we really come from dust and is that how it all ends? Our species has come a very long way and we now realize that everything we see and know and feel and fear and love is made of the same stardust. Stars die and are born again in every single thing that is. If that isn't the stuff of poetry, I don't know what is.

Speaking of poetry, Venus will dominate the western and southwestern skies during the evenings and

early nights of February as this loveliest of planets, heiress to the legacy of the goddess of love and subject of endless sappy sonnets and songs, gets into position for some truly dazzling displays in March. And, for a rare treat, tiny Mercury will make its best appearance of the year; grab your binoculars for a close-up of this hermit-like neighbor of ours. Not to be outdone, the morning southeastern sky promises some great views as well, with Saturn, Jupiter and Mars lining up almost as props for the Moon's waltz through Sagittarius in the hour or so before dawn for most of the month. Again, a pair of binoculars will allow you to see Saturn's rings, Jupiter's moons and the well-defined reddish basins of Mars.

By February, Orion has moved to center stage of the southern sky and is completely unimpressed by the beautiful and radiant Venus. This legendary hunter is also the subject of endless stories and occupies a star-filled address in the night sky: Sirius and Aldebaran and Rigel and Capella and Betelgeuse and Procyon, to say nothing of Castor and Pollux and the Pleiades all piggyback on Orion's considerable star power. So, if you have a few moments on an evening in February—maybe you're walking the dog, or hurrying across campus, or have just put the baby down for the night, or are having dinner on date-night and happen to be sitting by a south-facing window, or even milking the goats, or carrying in an armload of firewood, whatever—take a look up and see Orion and friends on their multi-billionth pass across planet Earth's sky-mounted monitor. Happy viewing and listening to Beethoven or Mozart or Queen or Usher or Imagine Dragons or Tim McGraw or perhaps just the many sounds of silence.

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

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Silent Film Debut - Introduction

by Dr. Jonathan Murray

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Cover photos: Top - Hooded Merganser at Raymond Brook Marsh along the Airline Trail in Amston. Photo by Stan Malcolm of Marlborough. Sharp-shinned hawk (left) and titmouse and black-capped chickadee at feeder. Photos by Tom King.

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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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# Real Story — The Overstory

By Loretta Wrobel

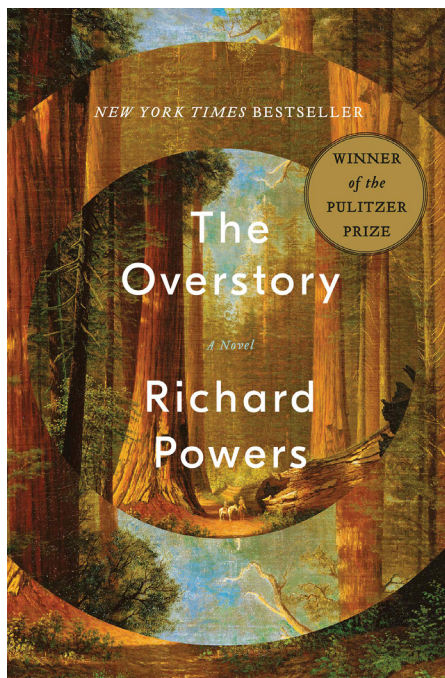
While reading *The Overstory* by Richard Powers, I had several flashbacks of my long-time relationship to trees. Growing up in Manchester, which back then had wooded lots and abundant trees, I remember the peace of sitting in a neighbor's tree, the delight of shaking apples out of a tree on my way home from school, and the tantalizing aroma that enveloped me while sprawled beneath a huge lilac tree. Some say lilacs are not trees due to possessing more than one main trunk. To me as a child this elegant flowering beauty next to our apartment was a tree. Now as an elder, I live among the trees, and my connection to these magnificent living creatures has only deepened over the years.

The dictionary defines overstory as the foliage layer in the forest. I thought I was knowledgeable about trees and their importance to the earth. During the reading of this fictional story about an unrelated group of individuals who become passionate about saving the trees, I was intrigued and mesmerized by the abilities of these giant friends. I know I will never gaze at a tree again without whispering or bellowing, "Thank You!"

Powers did his homework and shares the fascinating connections and characteristics of our tall friends. Reading the book is definitely a commitment, as it is a thick one with over 500 pages. It charmed me and rekindled my early love of our tallest plants.

Since reading the book, I have learned about bristlecone pines, which are the ancients of all trees, beings that live thousands of years. They are those otherworldly naked branches and gnarly specimens that are found in the White Mountains in eastern California. They grow in arid hostile environments and face few competitors. Can you imagine how much these creatures have witnessed? They hold the histories of civilizations in their trunks. By examining their tree rings, data can be gathered about the changing conditions of our earth. The concept of being alive for four thousand years pushes my ability to comprehend. I remain in awe of something being alive for so many centuries.

The book presents an entertaining twist in that the "understory" is the humans who become vibrantly aware of trees and their worth. Several become eco-warriors or eco-terrorists, depending on your point of view, as the trees are threatened by human activities and climate change. Essentially the trees "tell" their story and the reader enters the arboreal world to explore their perspective. As I read *The Overstory*, I began to see the world more from the perspective of a tree and less from my limited human bias.



Trees protect all of life, and in our highly technological world, we humans barely acknowledge them. We don't spend time in our frantic lives understanding how a tree experiences the world. Unaware of this vast, interconnected and resourceful living community, we pay trees little respect. All of us know the value of trees, but we refuse as a society to learn from the lessons they teach.

I recall that during Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, a stand of oak trees survived the fierce gale winds because their roots were entwined. The connected trees swayed and rocked but the roots held. Because there were connected, they were stronger. The power of community! Now engineers and architects are researching to develop foundations that have horizontal components so that houses remain standing like their sister trees.

In the novel we witness how trees coexist and aid each other. When a tree is dying, it releases its nutrients into the soil so that other trees can benefit. When a tree is attacked by a pest or disease, nearby trees react and work to protect themselves. And we think we are the only creatures that possess intelligence? I am curious about how a group of trees communicates that danger is present.

Perhaps this shifting of perspective can help us navigate our troubled times. How could it influence our decision-making if we thought like a bristle cone pine; for instance, in terms of centuries rather than a five- or ten-year plan. Or think like trees in terms of the whole environment not just our home, or examined the impact on the continent rather than just a country. Can we learn from our older and wiser

sentinels?

Trees provide us with clean air, as they take in carbon and pour out oxygen. We all are aware of the forest products that trees produce. Do we know how critical trees are to a healthy watershed? Next time you see a fish swimming in a waterway, make sure you give thanks to the trees. If you pause and consider what you know about trees, I am confident you will gain more respect and compassion for our life-givers.

As I became more enraptured with the astounding qualities of our vast canopy in the Quiet Corner, I thought about how hard a tree works to draw nutrients up from the soil and release oxygen through its leaves. Its resiliency enables it to survive drought, excessive rain, and extreme heat. Trees are remarkable living creatures who can provide answers to the difficult questions facing us, and we need only let them reveal their secrets.

It may be that trees can save us only if we let them. We all have a favorite tree. Can we let go of our arrogance, honor the creativity and innovation that goes into such an unbelievable piece of work, and treat it with the respect that it deserves? May you find a tree to love to in 2020.

## Local Web-based Alternative Talk Show Gears Up for the Leap Year

By Morgan Cunningham

Hello, 2020! The first month of 2020 has been a good one so far for The Morgan Cunningham Show – your source for less hype and more talk on Saturday nights at MorganTalks.com.



We started another year of live talk radio with Kaitlyn Czapiaga of Soul Magic in Glastonbury, who opened minds to consider alternative ways of thinking about ourselves as we start the New Year.

J.W. Ocker—an accomplished author, podcaster, and overall explorer—talked about some of the odd things he has seen in New England, as well as elsewhere in country. We even talked about our predictions for autonomous cars...you really never know

what will come up on my talk show.

The Morgan Cunningham Show continues pushing minds to think about the unexplained and the unusual, and I couldn't be more excited for my upcoming guests in February, 2020.

A local-area listener, Joe Sadlowski, will join me the night of February 1st to discuss his near death experience from decades ago and the powers he believes it gave him.

For the first time ever, I'll be hosting a U.F.O.-themed show on February 8th. Peter Davenport of the National U.F.O. Reporting Center (NUFORC) in Washington will share his most recent U.F.O. reports from 9 – 10 p.m. Then, Dr. Lori Paluti of Pittsburgh [Pennsylvania] Drone Services will discuss recent unidentified drone sightings from 10 – 11 p.m.

Preparing for the Apocalypse and imminent grid failures will be the topic the night of February 15th with author G. Michael Hopf.

February 22nd remains T.B.D.

Leap Year 2020! The night of February 29th will be devoted to astrology and special predictions with spiritual consultant Jeff Harman.

People ask me how they can listen to The Morgan Cunningham Show...

The show streams LIVE every Saturday night from 9 – 11 p.m. via MorganTalks.com.

Recent episodes are archived at MorganTalks.com.

Don't have the internet? Consider calling your local radio station and asking "where's Morgan Cunningham?"

Do you have any kind of paranormal or alternative story to share? Send me a note through MorganTalks.com/contact.

Thank you for listening.

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Willimantic, Now and Then:

# Food, Fun and Friends Lead to Adventures in Community

By Mark Svetz

“Life is what happens when you’ve made other plans.” An old friend said that many years ago, but I was too young at the time to understand that it was really a lot more than a catchy phrase. I had no idea how true her words were; how accurately they would describe so many major events in my life. I’ve never really been a planner. I find it’s best to make my choices from what’s in front of me.

A recent series of “choices,” involving my good friend Carol, might illustrate what I’m trying to say. Carol and other friends have been gathering at our house every Friday evening for the last 10 years or more. Sarah and I call it Happy Hour, and we started doing it when so many of our friends were staying in touch via what we call social media. We felt a little left out, so we thought we would get together and stay abreast of what’s going on in our world. I look forward to Fridays more now than I ever did when I had a full-time job.

One evening at Happy Hour some years back, Carol was trying to lighten her load, and she asked if I wanted a stone soup pot she had gotten years ago in Brazil. I wasn’t such a soup maker, but I do love to cook and, come to think of it, I make a lot of stews. So, I said yes. It was just one of those exchanges that happen all the time. Who knew it would change my life? I have come to love that soup pot. Now I make soup for Happy Hour almost every week. I started following recipes and bringing soups to family gatherings; I bought a couple new soup cookbooks.

My soups have become part of our household diet, as well as the main Happy Hour fare. Sometimes, I feel as though all those soups have melded a group of casual friends into something more. We have helped each other out countless times; we listen to each other when we need that, and we have been a shoulder to cry on for each other at times. Sarah and I started Happy Hour because we wanted conversation, but out of the steam rising from my soup in Carol’s stone pot, it seems a family was created.

We would all still be friends without the soups, I’m sure, but that stone pot has become a central presence in my life. I’m so glad Carol offered and I accepted. But who would ever have predicted all that has happened since.



Carol’s cake dish with a gingerbread cake with cream cheese frosting. Sarah Winter photo.

The beautiful serendipity of my life continued the other day when Carol, still lightening her load, offered to give me an electric mixer. I have never owned one of those, although I remember licking the beaters when my mother made cakes. I have a hand cranked egg beater that I helped make 50 years ago when I worked at the Turner and Seymour Mfg. Company in Torrington. Truth be known, I never used a mixer very much. My granddaughter Miriam and I, however, really like frosting. In fact, just a week or so earlier Miriam and Sarah were baking muffins together. Miriam said they could turn the muffins into cupcakes by adding frosting. Sarah magically whipped up some frosting and the muffins turned into cupcakes. I thought I might try to make a cake.

In any event, here was Carol pulling an electric mixer out of her bag. I said yes, and I have since made three cakes for Happy Hour and Miriam. They came out

pretty well, especially the frosting, which is surprisingly easy to make with an electric mixer. I made two spice cakes, which had always been my favorites, and one carrot cake that was really good, and is now my favorite. It had carrots and pineapple in it, and I made cream cheese frosting that Miriam and I really loved.

So here I am, delighting in baking cakes at a time in my life when I really should not be eating a lot of sugar. I dare say most of our friends are in the same boat. This might explain why there has been a fair amount of cake left over from Happy Hour. Although Miriam has enjoyed that circumstance, there probably really isn’t a time of life when a lot of sugar is good for you.

This all got me to thinking how wonderful it will be to spread the cake out by offering a little cake with coffee to friends when they stop by. I was a little hung up on how to keep the cake wrapped up for a few days. The frosting always sticks to the foil, and using all those toothpicks to keep them separate is just too fussy.

I was thinking about all this when I remembered my mother had a cake plate with a glass cover that fit over it. This subject came up at Happy Hour as we were enjoying my first spice cake with butter frosting. We moved on to other subjects, and I thought that was the end of it.

I think it was the very next day that I got a call from Carol. She told me she had something for me and couldn’t wait to get it to me. In a few minutes she was sitting in my living room pulling from her bag a really cool cake plate. It has an interlocking cover and a handle so I can carry the cake as well as keep it fresh. I have used it for one cake and a second batch of cupcakes Miriam and Sarah made. So far, nobody who dropped in wanted cake, but that hasn’t been a problem. When Miriam came to visit last week and I told her I made a cake, she jumped into my arms and gave me a big hug. Not a problem, indeed.

Making soups and cakes has, for me, been a wonderful education and a delightful adventure in friendship and community. And it all started at a slow simmer in Carol’s stone soup pot.

*Mark Svetz has been a journalist, activist, teacher and self-appointed knight errant in Willimantic for the last 45 years... and counting! You can read more of Mark’s writing at [www.WillimanticToday.wordpress.com](http://www.WillimanticToday.wordpress.com)*

## “There’s Magic in the Air” in Hampton



Submitted by Saul Ahola, Trustee Finnish American Heritage Society

Hannu Makipuro and his talented band of jazz musicians received accolades for their sold-out “Love Songs in Spring” concert in 2017, and they will strive to recreate that musical triumph in their concert “There’s Magic in the Air” at StoneHurst at Hampton Valley, Route 6 in Hampton, CT on March 28. The evening’s program will feature vocal and instrumental Jazz, Swing and Broadway Show Tunes with Hannu on vocal and trumpet, Phil Palonen on guitar, Bill Rood on sax, Rufus ‘Baby Grand’ Davis on keyboard, Roger Glidden on bass and Matt Vernali on drums.

Known by many as ‘The Singing Barber of Willimantic’, Hannu has been cutting and styling hair for over 40 years at Jackson Street in Willimantic and for even longer has been singing jazz and swing at area venues and at Finnish-American events throughout the US and on tour in Finland. At the Finnish events he’s added traditional Finnish tunes to his repertoire, and he has also included one medley of Finn tunes in

this concert at StoneHurst. Proceeds from the concert will go to the Finnish American Heritage Society.

Hannu’s son Mark Makipuro, who sadly passed away in November 2019, was an ECSU music graduate, vocalist, keyboardist, arranger and composer. He performed with numerous local bands over many years, and had been involved in many of Hannu’s musical endeavors. Mark’s magic touch will be felt in the March 28 concert, as he not only arranged the music for the StoneHurst concert but also along with Hannu composed its theme song “There’s Magic in the Air.”

StoneHurst at Hampton Valley, 119 Providence Turnpike (Rte 6), Hampton, CT with its brand-new barn, rustic but chic décor and cabaret seating, will contribute to the magic atmosphere of the night. Doors open at 6 pm with complimentary hors d’oeuvres served before the 7 pm concert and at intermission. A cash bar will also be available. Admission is \$35 per person. Tickets sold on Eventbrite (search: Hannu Makipuro) or contact Eila 860-423-3854.

## Stafford Library Events

Submitted by Deb Galotto, Program Coordinator

10 Levinthal Run, Stafford Springs, CT

- All events are free! -

We ask that you pre-register by phone 860-684-2852 or online [www.staffordlibrary.org](http://www.staffordlibrary.org)

During the month of February the Stafford Library will have a collection of travel photos by local photographer, Richard Incurvati, in the display case. Come chase away the winter blues by viewing his travel photos and maybe get some ideas for a trip of your own!

Rhyme Time - Mondays @ 10 am - Geared for ages 0-2yrs. Enjoy rhymes, songs, finger play & board books followed by a short playtime.

Teddy Bear Time - Tuesdays @ 10 am - Geared for ages 2 & up. Enjoy rhymes, songs, finger play & stories followed by a short craft time

Animal Story Time - Thursdays @ 10:30 am - Enjoy stories, rhymes, songs, finger play a visit from an animal friend! Families welcome.

Sensory Story Time - First Saturday @ 10:30 am - Stories, music with movement, finger play, rhymes and puppets with guest musical therapist, Renee Coro. All ages welcome.

Take Your Child to the Library Day: Sat. 2/1: Three events-

1) Sensory Storytime @ 10:30 am

2) Lego Club @ 1:00 pm

3) Horizon Wings Live Bird Program (Bird Brains) @ 3:30 pm

Far from being “hard-wired” as previously thought, research proves that birds possess sophisticated cognitive abilities. Join us as we compare and contrast the fascinating qualities of avian intelligence among four different species of birds: an American Crow, a Peregrine Falcon, an Owl, and a Parrot.

Open Art Studio: Sat. 2/8 @ 2 pm - Make a Valentine’s Day themed craft or paint a snowman on wood. For teens and adults. Please pre-register so we will have enough supplies.

Cookie and Canvas: Sat. 2/22 @ 2 pm - Enjoy hot chocolate and cookies while you paint a love themed canvas. For tweens and teens in grades 6-12. Please pre-register so we have enough supplies.

Book Club: Wed. 2/26 @ 6:30 pm - Join the Stafford Library Book Club to discuss “The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper”; by Phaedra Patrick. Pick up a copy at the front desk.

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## Unsung Heroes of Soul: The Sweet Inspirations

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: the Sweet Inspirations, who appeared on acclaimed recordings by Aretha Franklin, Elvis Presley, Dusty Springfield, Jimi Hendrix, and Van Morrison (among others).

The Sweet Inspirations grew out of the Drinkard Singers, a family gospel act from New Jersey. They were the first gospel group to release an LP on a major label. "A Joyful Noise," recorded live at the Newport Jazz Festival, came out on RCA Victor in 1959.

The original Sweet Inspirations comprised Lee Warwick, her daughters Dionne and Dee Dee, Emily "Cissy" Houston (nee Drinkard), and Doris Troy. In 1963, Dionne Warwick launched her solo career with "Don't Make Me Over," as did Doris Troy with "Just One Look." The Sweet Inspirations appeared on both singles. Later group members included Estelle Brown, Myrna Smith (who both joined in 1965) and Sylvia Shemwell (who came aboard in 1966).

The group spent much of the '60s as in-demand studio singers. In 1967, they provided back-up vocals on Van Morrison's "Brown-Eyed Girl," a #10 hit. They also lent their voices to Jimi Hendrix's "Burning of the Midnight Lamp" and the Queen of Soul's album, "Aretha Arrives." Her label, Atlantic, was impressed enough to offer the Sweet Inspirations a recording contract. Their self-titled debut LP produced three charted singles. The first was a secularized version of the Staple Singers' civil-rights anthem, "Why (Am I Treated So Bad)." They followed with "Let It Be Me," previously a hit for the Everly Brothers (1960) and the duo of Betty Everett & Jerry Butler (1964).

Their third single, named for the group, became their biggest hit. "Sweet Inspiration" reached #5 on the R&B chart and #18 pop in the spring of 1968. That same year, they provided back-up vocals on the albums "Aretha Now," "Lady Soul," (Aretha Franklin), "Dusty In Memphis" (Dusty Springfield), "Goodies" (George Benson), and "The Blue Yusef Lateef." They also released their own LPs, "Songs of Faith and Inspiration" and "What the World Needs Now Is Love."

The ladies continued their back-up work in 1969, lending their voices to Wilson Pickett and Brook Benton. They also released their fourth LP for Atlantic, "Sweets For My Sweet," and went on tour with Elvis Presley both as background singers and as a warm-up act.

Cissy Houston's final session with the Sweet In-

spirations came in October 1969. After that, she left the group to concentrate on her solo career and family (which included her six-year-old daughter, Whitney Houston). Her replacement was Ann Williams, who performed on the group's fifth and last Atlantic album, "Sweet Sweet Soul."

By 1973, the Sweet Inspirations were reduced to a trio. They recorded an LP for Stax, "Estelle, Myrna and Sylvia." By the following year, they were on Columbia, for whom they released one album, "Wanted Dead Or Alive."

In 1978, the Sweet Inspirations sang back-up on Frankie Valli's #1 hit, "Grease."

In 1979, they toured with the Bee Gees, providing background vocals on the "Spirits Having Flown" tour. By then, Estelle Brown was no longer with the Sweet Inspirations. Her replacement, Gloria Brown (no relation), toured with the group but did not appear on "Hot Butterfly," their first album in five years. As the 1970s wound down, the Sweet Inspirations broke up.

They re-formed in 1994 with Sylvia Shemwell, Myrna Smith, Estelle Brown, and a fourth member, Portia Griffin. They performed at Elvis Presley tribute shows, but did not record any new material until 2005. They did, however, sing on the

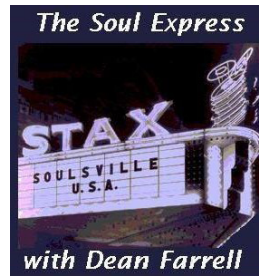
Killers' hit album, "Hot Fuss," in 2004.

In 2001, Shemwell had suffered a stroke that kept her from any further touring. She died on February 13, 2010. That same year, during a European tour for "Elvis: The Concert," Myrna Smith caught pneumonia. Back home in the States, she endured both kidney failure and a severe stroke, culminating with her death on December 24, 2010.

Charted singles:

"Why (Am I Treated So Bad)" (1967) R&B #36, Pop #57  
 "Let It Be Me" (1967) R&B #13, Pop #94  
 "Sweet Inspiration" (1968) R&B #5, Pop #18  
 "To Love Somebody" (1968) R&B #30, Pop #74  
 "Unchained Melody" (1968) R&B #41, Pop #73  
 "Crying in the Rain" (1969) R&B #42  
 "(Gotta Find) A Brand New Lover" (1969) R&B #25  
 "This World" (1970) R&B #45  
 "Evidence" (1971) R&B #44

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-farrell/>. His e-mail address is [soulexpress@gmail.com](mailto:soulexpress@gmail.com).



The Sweet Inspirations. Contributed photo.

## News from Hampton's Fletcher Memorial Library

Submitted by Deb Andstrom, Librarian

### Top Shelf Gallery

January & February—"Women in Watercolor," the January-February show at the Top Shelf Gallery, will feature watercolors & drawings by Mackenzie Silk.

Take Your Child to the Library Day-Saturday, February 1st, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Check out your local library! Fletcher Memorial Library invites the community to visit our beautiful library. A love of reading and books starts with pictures, stories & rhymes, which even the youngest child will enjoy, and Take Your Child to the Library Day is a great excuse to drop by. We'll have stories, a craft, and refreshments throughout the day.

Valentine's Day Card Making Saturday, February 8th @ 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Come to the library to make a Valentine's Day card. We're open from 9-3. All ages are welcome!

Computer Class-Saturday, February 8th @ 10:00 a.m. A free basic class for seniors or for those who would like to sharpen their skills. Reg-

istration is suggested, but not required.

Fisher Cat (Weasel) Presentation-Saturday, February 22nd @ 1:00 p.m. Paul Colburn will give a presentation on this very interesting animal, which is a member of the weasel family.

Dr. Seuss's Birthday Party featuring The Cat in the Hat!! Saturday, February 29th from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Dr. Seuss stories, a craft, birthday cupcakes, and a visit from The Cat in the Hat in person. He will be available for pictures, and an autograph.

FML Book Discussion Group Wednesday, February 12th @ 6:30pm We will discuss Washington Square by Henry James. New members are always welcome!

Mah Jongg Class-Every Wednesday Afternoon, 1:00 - 4:30 p.m. We are pleased to offer free Mah Jongg classes, an ancient Asian game played with tiles, on Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 - 4:30 in our new sun room.

Yoga & Meditation Instruction-Two Classes - Every Thursday

Morning, 9:15 - 10:15 & 10:30 - 11:30. We are offering two sessions of Yoga & Meditation on Thursday mornings. The first session will take place from 9:15 - 10:15, followed by a second session from 10:30 - 11:30. Please join Hampton resident, and certified yoga instructor, Angela Hutchins, in our new sun room. For more information, call Angela at 860-450-6561.

Story Time, Song & Play-Every Friday Morning 10-11 a.m. Story Time, Song & Play for children (ages 0-5) and their caregivers. This is an interactive program using a variety of musical instruments, rhymes, songs, finger plays, puppets, as well as a story or two. Our goal is to encourage a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Knitting Group Every Wednesday 12-3 p.m. The Knitting Group meets every Wednesday from 12-3. Drop in and have a cup of tea/coffee and work on a needlework project, or just come in to socialize. All are welcome!

Drop-In Adult Coloring-Experience the stress-reducing and meditative benefits of coloring.

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# Mon Soleil Market Garden in Union

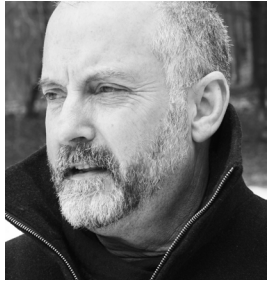
By C. Dennis Pierce

Today is a “on again, off again” day. Mother Nature continues to surprise us as she teases us with glimpses of spring. Yesterday, I came close to Googling, “How to build an ark” , because of the torrential rainfall. But on a positive note the snow has disappeared to allow the sun to warm up the ground so the seasonal cycle can begin. As I look around my yard, I regret that once again, I did not plant bulbs in the fall. I am that person, who has great ambition, purchases a bag of bulbs for planting, and never gets around to it. Maybe I am hampered by the year that I actually did purchase a lot of bulbs in mixed colors and types, only to find, come fall, I realized that I was not planting bulbs, but feeding the little critters in my back yard who thoroughly enjoyed their new found treat.

Actually, besides Fall this is my favorite time of year. As mentioned in previous columns, the geese across the road that use the reservoir for a rest stop start squawking early in the morning announcing the departure time for the next flight out. This morning when driving to Storrs there was a proud male turkey deciding if crossing the road was a wise decision. All around us there are indications of Spring. The ground is warming up and the smells are awesome. I do not know about you but I seek out these experiences. It is almost like sticking your face in pile of warm bath towels that come out of the dryer. It brings back memories and brings comfort in a sensory rush.

Since Spring is around the corner you might want to think about buying a garden share in a local CSA (Community Supported Agriculture). Recently, I was introduced to Deborah Winicki, farmer / gardener / owner of Mon Soleil Farm, in Union, CT. Deborah grew up in Connecticut and have lived and raised her family in Stafford for over 25 years. Her produce growing career began about thirteen years ago when she was a member of the Down to Earth Farm and later was a staff member there. The importance of local, sustainable foods is incredibly important to Deborah. During our interview it was evident that Deborah was passionate about her garden. She spoke about the importance of the soil. The benefits of no till, versus till production. Her philosophy was basic. “Healthy soil improves nutritional quality and thus produces healthier produce.” Her mantra was simple also, “Eating healthy, living plants makes you a healthy animal (person)”.

While Mon Soleil Garden Market is not a certified organic garden the vegetables that are grown are grown using organic methods. In the beginning Deborah could not get enough as she strived to feed her gardening passion. She attended many NOFA and sustainable food conferences, joined the Hartford Chapter of the Bio Nutrient Food Association, and devoured many small-scale farming books include JM Fortier’s, The Market Gardener and all of Eliot Colman’s books. As she became more ingrained in the local agriculture movement, she helped start-up and run the Stafford’s, Community Farmers Market and in 2016 began the Mon Soleil Market Garden, using organic and no-till growing practices. Finally, in 2018 she began moving production to the Taylor Spring Farm in Union, CT where she joined like-minded local food growers Cathi and Bruce Taylor. The combined efforts allowed for not only produce from Mon Soleil Market Garden but also add on access to chicken and eggs from the Taylor Farm. Deborah shared that Mon Soleil Market Garden is a polyculture of lots of seasonal produce, herbs and flowers, all grown together in permanent, no-till beds using organic growing methods. This bounty is available weekly to the members of Mon Soleil, spring, summer, and fall over a 25-week season. Mon Soleil lettuce, greens, salad vegetables and herbs are also available at Valley View Farm in Staffordville and at the Taylor Spring Farm Stand in Union starting May 2020. However, if you want all the fresh, delicious and nutritious produce grown at the farm such as broccoli, carrots, onions, and slicing tomatoes, become a Mon Soleil



Member where fresh produce will be harvested from their gardens to your table.

Mon Soleil Market Garden has an interesting twist on how they market their garden shares. One, which I have never seen before. They sell their shares in three “seasons”, knowing not everyone wants to have early produce while some may want more variety that comes from the later growing season. Information on their shares, what a share encompasses and the form for purchasing shares can be found here: <https://monsoleilct.com/membership> The farms email is : [monsoleilfarm@gmail.com](mailto:monsoleilfarm@gmail.com)

As the weather warms up and the growing season begins, I am eager to visit Mon Soleil Market Garden not only to see the garden planning but to meet an incredible, passionate farmer who is living her life’s dream. Mon Soleil translates to, “my sun”, or “the light of my life”. A better name could not have been chosen.

I realized in all of my past columns I have never posted a recipe that featured tofu. I am also surprised that the vocal vegans and vegetarians never pointed this out! . As we enter into the early season of the local CSA’s and Farmer’s markets the selection of produce is limited. However, those with the means for early growing will be featur-



Deborah Winicki, owner of Mon Soleil Garden Market. Contributed photo.

ing various lettuces and early spinach. So, in the attempt to please all, I am providing you with the following recipe. For those that have an aversion to tofu I would suggest you give it a whirl. You will be pleasantly surprised.

Tofu Spinach Pie  
Makes 6 servings

Ingredients:

Pie crust for a double crusted pie (shell and top crust). If you do not have your own recipe you can find on here:

<https://sallysbakingaddiction.com/baking-basics-home-made-buttery-flaky-pie-crust/>  
6 cups of washed, dried, chopped fresh spinach

2 to 4 teaspoons of sesame oil or olive oil  
1 tablespoon of butter  
3 cups of diced onions  
1 tablespoon of minced garlic  
1 cup of sliced mushrooms  
2 tablespoons of chopped parsley or 1 tablespoon of dried parsley  
2 ½ teaspoons of dill weed or 1 ¼ of dried dill weed  
2 tablespoons chopped basil or 1 tablespoon of dried basil  
2 teaspoons of salt  
4 cups of firm tofu (2 pounds), rinsed, dried and mashed  
2 tablespoons of cornstarch dissolved in 1 tablespoon of water  
¼ cup of maple syrup mixed with 2 tablespoons of water

Directions:

Pre heat oven to 350 degrees  
Roll out 1 /2 of the pie dough and prepare the bottom crust in a 10-inch pie pan / dish. The roll out top crust.  
Cover and place in refrigerator to keep cold.  
Sauté spinach in butter. Set aside  
Heat oil in a large saucepan. Sauté onions, garlic until translucent, then add mushrooms and seasonings. Add spinach.  
Add tofu and heat until heated through.  
Add dissolved cornstarch mixture and stir until thickened (should only be a few minutes).  
Remove pie crust from refrigerator and add mixture to the dish and cover with top crust.  
Seal the edges with by pressing down with a fork.  
Bake for 20 minutes and then brush top of crust with maple syrup mixture  
Bake for an additional 15 minutes  
Serve with a mixed green salad

Here is an interesting fact. Did you know that you burn more calories eating celery than it contains? I guess that means the more you eat the thinner you become. If you have a suggestion for a farm or a local grower or even a recipe that would 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](mailto:Codfish53@Yahoo.com). Peas be with you...

# Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

Well the holidays are behind us and I hope everyone had a safe one. This month we are going to talk about up-selling services for your car or truck. This type of business technique pertains to the automotive trade and to any other type of business that sells services or products. The person doing the selling usually works off a commission of how much product or service they can sell. This type of business practice has been around for as long as I can remember. A prime example is if you managed or leased a full service gas station. You could purchase tires, batteries, and accessories from that oil company. In 1968 an enterprising manager of 2 company gas stations sold \$100,000 of product by paying a commission to his employees for what they sold. Some of these products may have been unnecessary.

The automotive manufacturer suggests time and mileage for maintenance services for your vehicle. This is not a case of up-selling. Your vehicle just like your body has to be taken care of or it fails. The suggested time for some maintenance items, I feel, are too long in some cases. AAA suggests 15,000 miles between synthetic oil changes. Older vehicles that are using engine oil could run out of oil if you waited that long between oil changes. (We do check our oil levels between services, right?) I feel that it is important that no more than 5,000 miles should be driven between oil and filter changes. The vehicle inspection that should go with your oil change will help to head off that costly repair you weren’t planning on,

The Big Box stores rely heavily on Saturday and Sunday business. The vehicle is either left off or the owner is waiting while the service is performed. The convenience, free promotions, or discounted oil changes is a large draw. They get you in the door and this is usually followed by some sort of up-sell. Examples include, but are not limited to, the flushing of power steering systems, transmission service, brake flushing, and coolant system flushing.

The best thing you can do as a consumer is to become aware of your vehicle’s needs. The type of driving and the age of your vehicle should play a large role in your decisions. The manual that came with your vehicle, some online information, or a repair facility that you know you can trust can help you to decide what is best for your car or truck.

Until next month drive safely and Happy Motor-ing!!

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

# Our Community Calendar

Compiled By Dagmar Noll  
Ed. note: Our calendar begins here and wanders through the paper

## February 1, Saturday

**Kids:** Laughter is the Best medicine, 11:00a.m. Comic mime Robert Rivest will have families roaring. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 [www.willimanticlibrary.org](http://www.willimanticlibrary.org)  
**Kids:** Kids Craft, 11:00a.m. - 12:30p.m. Ages 3+. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 [www.willimanticlibrary.org](http://www.willimanticlibrary.org)  
**Live Music:** Belle of the Fall (Folk/Indie). Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00 door. Senior & student discounts. Snacks and soft drinks available. “BYOB&F”TM (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](http://www.thepackinghouse.us)

## February 2, Sunday

**Dance:** Butoh Dance Series at the Bhakti Center CT; 750 Main St. Rear, Willimantic; Six Sundays begins Feb. 2 through March 8, 4pm-6pm; \$90 entire series, \$18 per class. Info: [kitsunebutoh@gmail.com](mailto:kitsunebutoh@gmail.com), <https://www.facebook.com/BhakticenterCT/>, <https://www.facebook.com/butohsomatics>  
**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](mailto:dmangum617@gmail.com)

## February 5, Wednesday

**Kids:** Preschool Learning with Jumpstart, 9:30a.m. - 11:30a.m. Ages 2-6. Reading and hands-on play. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 [www.willimanticlibrary.org](http://www.willimanticlibrary.org)  
**Walk:** Relaxed Ramble, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. Easy to moderate walk on forest trails. All welcome. Goodwin Forest

# “Is That Cat With You?”

By Bill Powers

Whether enjoying a walk on a path or hiking on a challenging trail, it is not uncommon to see a dog having a great time while in the company of people.

Henry, our cat, loved to join us on walks and more challenging hikes. This is his story. The story of “Henry, the Hiking Cat.”

Several years ago, when working as a hospital administrator, I collaborated with a medical team to establish a cardiac rehabilitation program. It included a cardiologist, a health psychologist, an exercise physiologist, and a cardiac nurse specialist. The messages coming from many sources were extraordinarily clear and finally were having an impact. Regular exercise improves fitness and quality of life, reduces stress levels, and extends life.

There was abundant evidence that regular exercise was key—not just playing basket once a week and occasionally working with a woodpile. In addition, many studies had validated the importance of exercise during rehabilitation and for the prevention of disease.

My colleagues, in a good natured way, often reminded me that my “Type A personality,” lack of regular exercise, and excess weight were not in my best interest. So, armed with this advice, my knowledge of the studies, and support from my wife, I decided to make changes in my exercise routine and diet.

About that time, our family adopted a handsome rescued tiger cat named Henry. I had begun my new exercise regime by vigorously walking up and down the length of the street (a cul-de-sac in Mansfield). We had been told that Henry had probably been an outdoor cat before we got him. He was now adjusting to a new life, which included being indoors at night after being fed and outside at other times.

As I continued my walks, I was surprised that Henry was accompanying me for the entire Trip! My wife often joined us and the three of us would team up for enjoyable exercise.

One spring day we decided to walk down to the Fenton River, a short distance from our home. Our plan was to cross it and walk the section of the Nipmuck Trail between Gurleyville Road and Route 44. As we cautiously crossed the river, stepping from one rock to the next, we were surprised to hear a loud “Meow!” and turned to see Henry carefully leaping from rock to rock. He then joined us, staying very close behind. A little later along the trail, a young couple smilingly asked us, in seeming disbelief, “Is that cat with you?”

Over the next two outings with Henry to the Nipmuck, many walkers were amused if not amazed. Our cat was becoming quite a hit on the trail. Henry was often courageous and even fearless, as evidenced by the time he stood his ground to fight off a large flock of wild turkeys, even when totally surrounded, while protecting his territory (our backyard). However, when suddenly startled by something, he would resort to taking flight as a survival strategy.

Unfortunately, two incidents soon occurred that put an end to our companionable walks with Henry on the Nipmuck Trail. In the first, a trail runner was coming down a path from the UConn Forest as it intersects with the Nipmuck. The fast-moving runner emerged just as Henry was passing. Henry was startled as were we and he immediately took off headed north on the trail toward route 44. We worriedly called and searched for him, and it was twenty long minutes before we finally found him, happily stalking frogs at a pond just off the trail.

After that, we considered not allowing Henry to accompany us on future trail walks. But never before had we encountered runners on that trail. We thought it might be unusual and decided to try again. After all, Henry was okay, and had not strayed far from the trail.

During the following weekend, a second incident occurred. As we made our way along the trail, we watched for runners ahead, behind, and at intersections. There weren’t any. However, all of a sudden an unleashed dog came charging up the trail followed by its concerned owners. With the dog running after him, Henry darted up a steep wooded incline and quickly disappeared over a ridge. The dog soon quit the pursuit and returned to the trail and its owners. One of them quickly attached leash. The other asked, as she worked to catch her breath, “Is that cat with you?”

Meanwhile, Henry had disappeared into a totally unfamiliar, densely wooded area that was far from the trail. Not knowing in which direction Henry had headed, we split up in order to find him. We searched for over an hour with no success.

Darkness was falling. We joined forces to talk about what to do. Come back at sunrise and continue the search? Prepare missing cat posters and leaflets? As we walked back, still calling out him, we also vowed that if got Henry back, we would never bring him here again.

Suddenly we both thought we heard a faint “Meow!” As we moved up a slope in the direction from which it seemed to be coming, it gradually became louder. We walked faster and called louder. Then we saw him and he saw us. Jubilation! We were all very tired and hungry – and happy to be heading home.



Sigmund Freud said, “Time spent with a cat is never wasted.” This was certainly true of our experiences with Henry. He was a willing walking companion. Later when he went with us on longer and more secluded and challenging expeditions (excluding runners and dogs), we were able to see an even greater scope of his natural behaviors. This is what led to our affectionately calling him “Henry, the Hiking Cat.” His inquisitiveness led us to make many discoveries that we would not have made without him. [Read more about the escapades of this special cat in a future issue]

*Bill Powers lives in Windham, CT and is retired. Before working as a Licensed Professional Counselor and a teacher in Windham and Hartford Public Schools, he was a Registered Respiratory Therapist and a hospital administrator. These days he hikes less and kayaks more.*

## Soups ‘n Silents Show in Hampton

Hampton Congregational Church, 263 Main Street, Hampton, CT has announced this year’s gala Silent Film event to be held at the church on Saturday, February 29th. This year is pure comedy featuring Buster Keaton in one of his funniest features: STEAMBOAT BILL. Made near the peak of his career, the film includes all the usual Keaton conniving touches to keep audiences of all ages laughing.

Accompanying the film is Hollywood’s own Clark Wilson, considered by many to be the best silent film accompanist in America. He’ll use the church’s special-designed digital organ that’s custom fitted with all the needed musical flavors for silent comedies.

As in past years, this event includes pre-show dinners of homemade soups and breads. Servings begin at 5 p.m. and continue to 6:45. Showtime is 7 p.m.

This is a show for everyone from school kids to grandparents...something really refreshing to help break the deep winter blahs. Meal and movie are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. Children 5 and under are free. Bring the entire family for \$40.

Call: 860 455-9677 or hcc06247@gmail.com for questions and pre-show ticket purchases.



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# A Place in the City

By Delia Berlin



The search for a rental apartment near my granddaughter's home has concluded. It wasn't as easy as I had expected. Online sites to look for listings were plentiful but disappointing. Often the pictures were not representative of the actual apartment. Sometimes the address listed didn't even exist. And contacting listing agents via email or phone rarely resulted in a timely, professional response.

Clearly, the distance did not allow us to screen every potential listing in person. We couldn't even ask my daughter and her family to take on such a task with their busy schedules. Fortunately, I remembered the name of an agent who had been helpful nine years ago. I contacted her and she replied almost immediately. She was still working in the same neighborhood agency, a good sign, and she quickly developed a feel for what we were looking for.

After a few viewings of small apartments in the Hudson Heights area of Manhattan, a charming studio appeared good enough to start a lease application. We soon discovered that things had changed a lot since we last leased in New York. Now, the application was online and required more disclosures than a full security clearance, and from both of us. In addition, the forms did not seem tailored to our "second home" situation. There may be bias against older tenants as well. Some New York laws intended to protect elderly renters, seem to have backfired and made some landlords skeptical about leasing to this population. But in the end, our application was approved and we got the studio.

When we were almost ready to take possession, we were informed on short notice that we were both expected in New York the next morning to sign the lease in person, with two bank checks. We managed to clear our calendars, get everything ready and leave early for the difficult drive on a rainy day. Once there, we must have signed and initialed at least fifty times. The lease was enormous and in fine print. Any reasonable lawyer probably would have advised us against signing it, but if you want to rent an apartment in New York, that's what you have to do.

Interestingly, there was one form that only my husband needed to complete and sign, even though the lease is in both of our names. That form was a tax form for the eventual refund of the security deposit upon termination of the lease. The decision had been made to return the deposit to him, even though I was paying it myself, along with all other expenses related to the lease. But this is just one of many examples of the blatant sexism in the finance area that we have recently encountered. They deserve a separate story at another time.

The best thing about a studio is that it doesn't require much for furnishing. I still had most of our previous studio's furniture in our attic. My daughter and son-in-law were in the process of getting a new sectional and they offered us their previous sofa sleeper, delivered. So, very little else was needed to get the studio ready for comfortable occupancy. The main problem was to get everything there.

The studio is on a busy parking avenue with public transportation. It faces the rear of the building, so it's very quiet. But a "parking avenue" in New York just means

an avenue completely full of parked cars, offering a very slim probability of ever finding a nearby parking space. Narrower streets in the surrounding area offer a better chance and sometimes we do find parking there. But on the day that I was taking the first full carload of stuff to the studio, road construction had closed some of those streets, creating a traffic and parking nightmare.

Additionally, there was a communication breakdown with my son-in-law. I had driven alone and had understood that he would be ready to meet me upon arrival to help me unload the car. But as I arrived, he was teaching and unable to meet me until an hour or two later. Since I had left my magic wand at home, I had no choice but to keep driving until I found a place to park.



Three or four blocks away from the studio, I found a garage that allowed me to park there during the day, with enough access to my car to unload it in stages. The garage was, however, completely full overnight. At least, I could start unloading the car, but my search for parking wasn't over.

After the three-hour drive, I was shaky and knew that I had to eat before starting a physically strenuous task. I was prepared. I had brought almonds, fruit, milk, crackers and coffee to fuel me through the process. But I also had left my Popeye's spinach at home, so unloading the car was still extremely difficult.

I drive a Honda Fit. Those familiar with this car will understand how much I was carrying. The cargo capacity of the Fit is legendary and surpasses that of many larger hatchbacks and even SUVs. My car was fully packed, so unloading by myself and at a distance seemed overwhelming. But I never give up before I start, so the process of carrying as much as I could on each one of many trips, back and forth between garage and studio, began in earnest. By the time my son-in-law could join me, only one last trip remained. The items that were left were too big or too awkward to carry on foot for that distance. Fortunately, he came equipped with a sturdy folding cart, large enough to fit it all and carry it quite easily.

Once I had everything in the studio, I managed to clean up and get it all organized just in time to pick up my granddaughter at her school, which is located near the

garage where my car was. As soon as we were reunited, I returned to the garage with her, hoping that by then they may have found a vacancy to park overnight. They hadn't, but they helped me find a solution in that miraculous "only in New York" way.

The garage guy told me that his shift was ending at 4:00 pm and that the worker who would take his place had a van. He would ask him to keep an eye on any suitable parking space that may open, hold it for me with his van, and call me on my cell phone to come switch his van with my car. As a garage employee, he could pretty much put his van anywhere in the garage and move it as needed, so he didn't need an official spot.

My granddaughter and I returned to the studio, where she helped me assemble a set of shelves for a closet. And sure enough, soon after 4:00 pm, the van guy called me and I ran to the garage for the switch. I tipped him generously and he seemed happy to have been able to help. Had the garage been open for overnight parking, it would have cost me more, so it was a win-win.

People unfamiliar with New York often hold negative stereotypes about New Yorkers, considering them aloof, rude and uncaring. But in my view, this reputation is completely undeserved. If by "New Yorker" one means anyone who lives in New York, I think they may be the one of the most caring and empathetic urban populations in the world.

Few of these New Yorkers are born and raised in New York. They have managed to adapt to the city's hustle and bustle, having become familiar strangers. The bond that holds them together is not their familiarity or belonging, but their strangeness, their otherness. They struggle to survive in a busy urban jungle and they easily relate to others in the same predicament.

In this particular case, both of the garage guys were Dominicans, but I've had similar experiences with people from many different backgrounds. For sure, opportunistic predators and criminals are also attracted to big cities because they provide fertile ground for their activities. But if one is aware of surroundings and follows basic urban self-preservation rules, those characters can be avoided. What's left is a sea of mostly good and hard-working people trying to improve their lives. They find pride and satisfaction in helping others.

A factor in getting so much help may be my bilingualism. It amazes me how often I use Spanish in New York. It's easy for bilingual people to determine the most comfortable language of other bilinguals, so I switch languages as I see fit. It is possible that this alone may establish a commonality that elicits empathy and helpfulness. I'm sure good people are predisposed to helping anyone, but it may be easier to find the best way of helping when language is not an obstacle.

By now, three more car loads have made their way from Willimantic to the studio. Although living spaces are always in flux, I can say that the studio is now mostly set up and that, in a pinch, I could go there anytime with just the keys to spend the night. There is even a cage for our oldest parrot, should my husband and I go together overnight.

The challenge now will be finding the time to spend here and there, without disrupting family responsibilities and community activities. It will be a process. But it's been fun to get this far and we are ready for the new adventure.

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. Authentic West African Rhythms, all ages, all levels. Drum provided if needed. BENCH SHOP, 986 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-423-8331

## February 7, Friday

**Dance:** Quiet Corner Contra Dance, 7:45p.m. - 11:00p.m. Includes a 15 minute beginner workshop. Partner not necessary. BYO soft-soled shoes, lightly layered clothes and water bottle. Snacks welcome. Live caller and band. Patriot's Park Lodge, 172 Lake St, Coventry. Info: knowdj@charter.net or 860-742-9498

## February 8, Saturday

**Festival:** Romantic Willimantic Chocolate Festival, 8:30a.m. - 3:00p.m. Road race, baking competition, Chocolate Chip Stroll,

window decorating contest, and more! Downtown Willimantic.

**Kids:** Valentine's Day Cards Craft, 11:00a.m. - 12:30p.m. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org

**Kids:** Chocolate, Checkers and Cards, 12:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. Free. Make chocolate creatures, stencil cloth checkerboards, and make St. Valentine's Day cards. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

**Community Food:** Baked Potato Buffet, 5:00p.m. - 7:00p.m. \$5. St. Mary's Church, 218 Providence St, Putnam. Benefit or Troop 21 Boy Scouts of America. Info: 860-928-7241

## February 9, Sunday

**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 2/2).

## February 10, Monday

**Kids:** LEGO Fun, 4:30p.m. Ages 6+. Build with thousands of LEGO bricks. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org  
**Film:** "Hypernormalism", documentary film by BBC filmmaker Adam Curtis, 7:00p.m. Free. Not available to stream online! 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday Film Series. Storrs UU Meeting House, 46 Spring Hill Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-428-4867.

## February 11, Tuesday

**Live Music:** Quiet Corner Fiddlers, 7:00p.m. Dog Lane Cafe, Storrs. Info: qcf.webs.com

## February 12, Wednesday

**Kids:** Preschool Learning with Jumpstart, 9:30a.m. - 11:30a.m. (See 2/5).  
**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. (See 2/5).

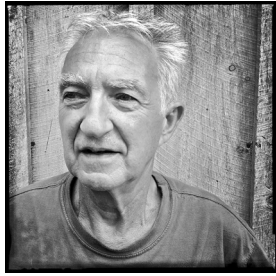
## February 13, Thursday

**Kids:** Valentine's Day Cards Craft, 5:30p.m. - 7:00p.m. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org  
**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.



# Looking Back On Turning 80

By David Corsini



Whether or not the groundhog sees its shadow, come Feb 2, 2020, I will turn 80. While it is just another year, it is a milestone deserving of reflection on my past, the present and the future.

I was born in 1940 and thus was ahead of the baby-boomers who commenced after the end of WWII. In fact, I remember the spontaneous celebration at the announcement of the end of the war in my small suburban community in Massachusetts. A few children and I marched through the neighborhood banging on pots and carrying an American flag. The late 1940s and 1950s were a period of optimism and growth. Society was getting ready for the wave of baby-boomers. My class was the first to enter two new schools and first to graduate from a new high school.

Little league baseball started in my town when I was 11. The local paper published accounts of games and posted both batting averages and team standings. I was on TV as one of four players before a Boston Braves game in a program called the Knothole Gang.

I rode my bike all over town, had a paper route, played tag football on the street, and baseball in vacant lots. One of these lots was a little too close to houses as one of my drives once entered an unopened window. I explored woods, ponds and fields with nets and made various collections of live and dead life forms.

Dogs were free to roam and rarely caused trouble, except when the garbage man came around to collect the organic matter we put into a container in the back yard. I can remember the smell of the "honey wagon". We had to take our trash to a dump where I learned the fine art, or curse, of dump picking. In the fall, we burned big piles of oak leaves in the street. It was fun to make those fires and I liked the smell of burning leaves. I had a great childhood.

Looking Back On Turning 80 As I look back over my education and professional life, I am appreciative of how fortunate I have been. My family was not wealthy. My father taught watercolor in an art college that was not part of a university system. We got "new" cars as hand-me-downs from his financially better-off brothers. My mother was a college graduate and in 1938, when she got married, was teaching. In those days married women were not allowed to teach, so she had to stop. She returned to teaching in 1958 when her income was needed during the college years of me and my sister.

I went to Bowdoin College in Maine with some financial assistance but no loans. My college transcript shows I was not an outstanding student. But after working as a psychology assistant for two years, I was admitted to graduate school. I entered graduate school, with a baby and non-working wife, supported at first by an assistantship and later by a National Defense Education Act fellowship, only half of which I had to pay back. When I completed my Ph.D. in 1997, there were many teaching positions at universities, with full benefits. I chose to teach at the University of Georgia because I wanted to experience a culture different from the one I was used to. I "escaped" four years later by landing a position at the University of Connecticut, attained via the "buddy" network. After 30 years of teaching, I could retire with a generous pension and health benefits with time to begin a new career as a folk artist.

As I age, there are limits to be accepted. An important part of my life was playing sports at a very amateur level. I played touch football into my 30s, league softball into my 40s, and tennis/racquetball into my 60s. But because of spinal stenosis, I had to give up vigorous sports. Now my main physical activity is swimming, with occasional games of ping pong. At the Mansfield Community Center I look on at the new game of pickleball, wishing I could participate. It pains me to resist playing but there is no such thing as playing at half-speed.

I feel extremely fortunate to have had the loving support of Delia for almost 38 years. We started out with two houses and three children. Over the years we have lived in three different houses and acquired three grandchildren. We have cared for geese, rabbits, guinea pigs, chickens, goldfish and, most significantly, parrots. We have weathered significant medical issues and helped each other with extended family issues. Without her support, I would have never traveled, developed my hobby as an artist, or ventured into writing essays.

I feel privileged to have participated in nature based travel with Earthwatch, Connecticut Audubon, birding buddies and my brother-in-law, Bill. On these travels I have observed some spectacular life forms, some of which

are endangered. For example, on the islands around Hong Kong, as a member of an Earthwatch team, I found a pangolin that curled itself into a ball we could carry. We found several species of snake, including venomous kraits and cobras as well as many species of frogs, including the endangered Romer's Tree Frog. We were conducting inventories of species living on the islands around Hong Kong and sending specimens of snakes and frogs to the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard. My name is listed as the collector on a few specimens there. The pangolin was documented, and released.

On a trip to Belize with Bill, I saw a Boat-billed Heron, Jesus Christ Lizard, and a jaguar, which did not stay around to be petted. In Panama, Bill and I found Resplendent Quetzals', bell birds and several species of trogons. In the Pantanal in Brazil, on an Earthwatch expedition, I saw a tapir at a distance, a giant anteater, white-lipped and collared peccaries, capybara, Hyacinth Macaws and many other species of parrots. In Costa Rica, I counted eggs as they were laid by leather-back and olive Ridley sea turtles. And on birding trips in the U.S. and Canada, I have seen red-cockaded woodpeckers, golden-cheeked warblers, jacana, ivory gulls and beluga whales. And even in Connecticut I have seen some birds considered threatened; such as, cerulean warblers, golden-winged warblers, and piping plovers. It saddens me to think that several of the species I have been privileged to have observed are becoming difficult to find.

As I turn 80, there is a sense of vulnerability that I don't remember feeling when I was younger. In the sports world there is an expression, "day-to-day" that is used to describe the status of a player who is recovering from an injury. It generally means that the player is about to return to active duty. These days I sometimes think of my status as "day-to-day". By this I mean that while I am generally ok, I am not as proficient as I used to be and could easily slip into the category of "injured reserve." Contributing to a feeling that things could go "south" in a hurry, is learning about friends and acquaintances who have died or have suddenly experienced serious health issues. I clearly recognize that I am very much closer to the end of my life than the beginning. While I do not look forward to dying, I don't believe I fear it. But the circumstances of my death at this point are difficult to imagine.

Years ago, I thought that an age of 90 might be a good age to shoot for. If I can live that long with a sense of curiosity, purpose and reasonable good humor, I think that would be fine. I'm not too sure that beyond that would be such a good idea. However, choosing the age at which to die is not really an option. There are some longevity genes in my family. My mother lived to almost 104, her sister did live past 104 and a third sister, who is still alive, is about to reach 104. While they all reached those ages without full-blown dementia, there were serious sensory and physical challenges in the last five to eight years of their lives, when living did not seem to be much fun.

So, here I am at 80. Several systems, such as vision and hearing, require augmentation. Most of the time I can walk at a good clip and I feel that if needed, I could burst into a short dash. My sense of smell is so bad that I do not process the essence of skunk and my sense of taste is diminished, such that it is best not to let me taste-test the wine. While there are concerns as I go forward, there are plenty of things that still give me pleasure and a sense of purpose. Stay tuned.

## Comedy Show Fundraiser

The Coventry Lions Club is sponsoring a Comedy Night show at Villa Louisa in Bolton on Saturday Feb.8 at 7pm. Small plates will be served. All proceeds go to community projects supported by the Coventry Lions. All tickets are \$30.

For tickets or information, contact Carolyn Dionne at 860-985-3558 or Paul Sanderson at 860-578-3988 or contact any Lions Club member.

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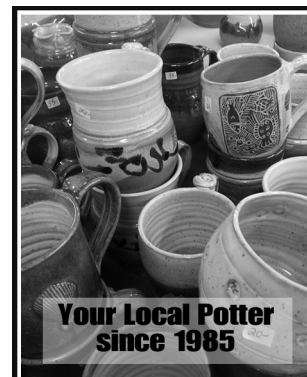
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# On Horticulture In the Quiet Corner

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

**HORT TOURS?** As a new resident and gardener in this “quiet corner” of eastern Connecticut, I wander this Last Green Valley seeking horticultural wonders and a good sandwich, and offer my musings to new NEIGHBORS.

Nearby journeys such as Diana’s Pool on the Natchaug River, a notorious destination, rite of passage for Storrs students and near my backyard. A sign says No Swimming, but kids drive from Boston. Bright red Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) accents the path. The rocky river rushes to Mansfield Hollow and the Willimantic, to the Thames flowing past Connecticut College Arboretum in coastal New London, to the sea.

Alternate near and far? How far afield will readers read? Journeys to western reaches of Rhode Island and Connecticut? Cape Cod in Massachusetts? Arnold Arboretum, my Olmsted-designed spiritual sanctuary in Boston? Shelburne Falls’ Bridge of Flowers off the Mohawk Trail in western Mass? Coastal Maine Botanical Garden in the narrow ribbon of warmer shoreline extending north to Nova Scotia?

**CIRCA 1750** Closer to home, found an old farmhouse in Chaplin after three years looking... and Wait, Wait, Waiting to plant trees. (Kudos !!! to realtors Liz Zimmer & Corleen Law) Trees clean our air and reduce our stress (hormonally, science says) -- in fact, “forest-bathing” was popular in America in the 1980s and is now a cornerstone of Japanese healthcare. Here in the LGV, stress is less and I enjoy trees more. Win-win. (Favorite local sandwich? Meatball at Coriander Café, a few miles north on Route 198 in Eastford.)

Whitebarked Birch (*Betula*) are planted in a fast-growing grove with mounds of compost to screen the road (below); also April-blooming Serviceberry (*Amelanchier* AKA Shadblow), common names regionally referring to weddings or when the ground thaws for burial services, and when shad run upriver to spawn.

American Beech (*Fagus*), very shade-tolerant, will be planted in the woods visible from the house with its wide branching and overwintering tan leaves, pinkish orange in a setting sun, my iconic first impression of winter woods in New England. Mother trees are surrounded by baby beeches sprouting from her roots, also dispersed by seed. (She is actually both sexes, monoecious in horticultural terms.) Beech is vulnerable to bark damage by an insect (*Cryptococcus*), then infection by deadly orange fungus (*Nectria*). Diseased Centenarian beech trees were recently removed at Arnold Arboretum, and I replace them ninety miles away, in my mind.

Disease, death and burial... wedding, spawning and motherhood... a mind marvels at the layers of life on this path, but there is a coincident dissolving of worry and anxiety, and less thought in the company of trees.

Front garden beds are more contrived with many plants orchestrated for all-season interest. My partner simply wanted white flowering Dogwood -- native *Cornus florida* and Chinese *C. kousa* are planted -- with blue *Hydrangea* and ample lawn.

What is more contrived than the

perfect American lawn? I advocate biodiverse lawn (Fescue, clover and weeds) and reduce it with flower, fall color and evergreen ground-cover. But grass is useful. Our lawn is a walkable unifier of new garden beds and untamed thickets. I like flowing mow lines, the contrast of mown grass against taller plants, and the therapeutic exercise of mowing. The mind clears.

Lawn flows back around the house to non-native but naturalized thickets of *Forsythia* blooming bright yellow in April, Lilac (*Syringa*) fragrant in May, and fall-colorful Burning Bush (*Euonymus*). All are non-natives planted by past generations; all are fine ornamental shrubs that are here to stay. A 15’ specimen of native Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus*) has fuzzy red fruits (drupes) that make pink lemonade in Native American lore.



Birch by Scott E. Rhoades of Mansfield.

The thicketed backyard remains naturalistic, if embellished at edges. From our windows, many small birds, bunnies and squirrels are mesmerizing, occasionally fox, opossum and woodchuck. A gang of bluejays, pairs of doves and cardinals, and a red-headed woodpecker also feed here, sometimes a murder of crows. A hawk swoops. Deer sighted, but my yellow-flowering ‘Capistrano’ *Rhododendron* seems to be spared.

Trails disappear into the forest, hill and dale. Woods cleared for farming after 1750 have grown back in drier times to Oak (*Quercus*) that feeds over 150 species of insects, birds and mammals, and Hickory (*Carya*). Final ecological succession in moderate moisture is Sugar Maple (*Acer*) and Beech. Also Yellow Birch, evergreen Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga*) and White Pine (*Pinus*). My line of whitebarked birches lead to new beech and Showy Lady’s Slipper (*Cypripedium*, a threatened native orchid) planted along the trail to secret spaces.

Abundant water flows through this Last Green Valley of forested ridges, brooks, ponds, lakes and a dozen rivers flowing to the sea. An unnamed brook running to the Natchaug meanders across our stonewall boundary into the backyard. A shallow pool will be widened with chairs to dangle feet on a hot day. (2019 was the hottest July globally since records started.) Cardinal



Diana’s Pool in Chaplin.

Photo by Pete Polomski, also found in Chaplin.

Flower (*Lobelia*) will be planted at a sunny edge.

**A GROVE OF BIRCH** Planting groves of Birch (*Betula*) has been an obsession since finding Arnold Arboretum’s birch collection in Boston a dozen years ago. Mine is now the Gospel of the Whitebarked Birch.

Why? The bright white bark is showy all year. Fast-growing multi-stem trees with a wide clump form can screen views. Repetition of a plant calms busy plantings with many species. At my self-proclaimed Chapel of the Birch, three species of whitebarked birch compare for suitability, form, leaf and bark:

1. Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera* AKA Canoe Birch) is our tall native birch (50 to 70’). Tough, graceful trees. A wide decurrent multi-stem / clump form is the natural result of pruning or damage to the initial excurrent single trunk, as most trees. The exfoliating white bark is showy, black-marked with age. Papery bark was used for canoes, hence the common names.

Exfoliating - Horticultural term for peeling bark, derived from mid-17th century Latin *exfoliat* = ‘stripped of leaves’

But simply planting native does not assure good growth. Matching native conditions can improve performance; gardening assures it. Ecologically, non-native “exotics” may not feed native species. Our interconnected web of life depends on native plants to feed local insects, birds and mammals. If available, native plants might cost less. Smaller plants adapt better to conditions and always cost less.

2. ‘Whitespire’ Birch, formerly considered a borer-resistant cultivar of Asian White Birch (*Betula platyphylla*), is reclassified as our native Gray Birch (*Betula populifolia* AKA White Birch, Poverty Birch and Old Field Birch) which is resistant to Bronze Birch Borer, as ‘Whitespire’ was reported to be. Non-native Asian Birch may be susceptible, so reclassification makes sense. Renamed ‘Whitespire Sr.’ is not botanically different from junior; it simply recognizes the change in species. Its medium height (30’) fits smaller spaces.

Native *populifolia* survives on rough sites, naturalizing on poor, dry soil as it seeds and suckers (shoots from base roots). Planted at Loring Park on the edge of downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota (USDA cold-hardiness zone 4a, minus 30 degrees F. average low) some thirty years ago, ‘Whitespire’ suffers bitter winter dieback, but new growth outgrows it. In that time, Boston has warmed a half-zone from 6b to 7a (5 degrees F. average low). Inland Chaplin CT seems colder in winter, hotter in summer, than coastal Boston. Warning: more insect pests overwinter in global warming and summer humidity increases fungal disease.

3. Himalayan Birch (Non-native *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii*) has been used in India’s remote Himalayan Mountains for centuries as paper for Sanskrit text. The pure white bark peels off in wide bands for writing sacred mantras worn around the neck in amulets for a blessing or protection. I extol the milky white bark and dark green leaves. Its medium height (35’) fits smaller homes.

Himalayan Birch is, however, more susceptible to our U.S. borer and leafminer, Japanese Beetle, and Gypsy Moth caterpillar, so tree health is paramount. Perhaps a systemic *Bacillus* control of caterpillars. My gardener’s mantra: Copious compost, much mulch and water when dry.

**DESIGN** As a master gardener / designer and community education teacher, I like working at a smaller scale, one garden at a time. Still learning as I plant near native woods and bugs. What else have I learned?

Suiting the site and fitting the space is good garden design. Knowing microclimates and suitable plants creates better gardens, but beauty is subjective and people can plant what they like -- not necessarily what others such as I prefer. Best is environmental stewardship, an ethical choice to respect our ecological web of life. Plant native plants that feed local species of life, with minimal chemical use. Forests compost their leaves, me too. Non-native exotic plants may also suit -- and feed -- the site. I seek balance.

I preach copious compost. Purists do not advise amending soil in native plant communities: Better to plant what adapts to existing soil. I understand. But I have disturbed soil. My birch bed was a compacted driveway for decades and my ecological duty is to plant trees. My gardener’s duty is to compost.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, Master gardener / designer lives in Chaplin.



Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) Contributed photo.



Snow fog in woods.

Photo by Christine Acebo.

# Get To Know Your Farmers

By Susan Mitchell, Cloverleigh Farm, Mansfield

Eastern Connecticut has a wonderful agricultural heritage that deserves recognition and attention, in addition to a wide range of new growers who are producing high-quality food. Our farms not only continue a rich tradition but also provide open space that we all enjoy, create habitat for animals and pollinators, and yet struggle to survive as small independent businesses. Small towns depend on small businesses to provide that special community feel that you can only get in a small town.

Choosing to eat food produced within Connecticut can be really easy! It supports our small farm economy and allows you to eat delicious and healthy food. One way to meet a lot of local farmers at once is by visiting the 5th annual Know Your Farmer Fair, to be held on Saturday February 29th 10am to 1pm at Windham Town Hall in Willimantic. (Snow date: Sunday March 1st)

The fair is a great way to both learn and shop. You will have the chance to talk to farmers about their community supported agriculture (CSA) programs and buy local products. CSA programs celebrate a sense of community

and the bounty we can harvest from the earth. The farmers appreciate the early support as they begin their preparation for the upcoming season, while members receive weekly shares of fresh delicious produce during the growing season. This is great for people who enjoy cooking and appreciate the seasonality found in New England.

Locally grown food is available all year! The Know Your Farmer Fair is also a farmers' market where you can purchase vegetables, meats, honey, eggs, maple and more. You can learn more about where seasonal farmers' markets, farm stands, and pick-your-own opportunities are located. You'll meet other like-minded individuals and participate in a great community event

When we all work together, we can help create a viable farm economy for our local producers and support our small towns. A group of farmers and food advocates from Willimantic, Canterbury, and Mansfield coalesced under the Windham Community Food Network umbrella to bring farmers from Tolland, Windham, and New London counties to one central location in Willimantic. It's a great family event! Additional information is available on our Facebook page or by emailing russosroots@gmail.com

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EC-CHAP is interested in expanding its Board of Directors to ensure we have the capacity and necessary skills to oversee the next phase of our work. Though we embrace a diverse range of creative and analytical talent; at this time we are inviting interested individuals possessing Financial, Legal, or nonprofit Development experience to apply for three Board positions.

Please visit [www.ec-chap.org/board2020](http://www.ec-chap.org/board2020) to learn more and to apply online. Questions may be addressed by email to: [info@ec-chap.org](mailto:info@ec-chap.org); or by calling: 518.791.9474.

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# Dead and Dying: A Narrative of Denial and Healing

... My little town, my little town  
Nothing but the dead and dying back in my little town  
Nothing but the dead and dying back in my little town  
In my little town

Simon and Garfunkel, 1997

By Phoebe C. Godfrey



No culture is as ideologically, economically and emotionally committed to denying death and dying as our own. For example, one only needs to critically analyze a few normative behaviors such as our embalming of our dead, our removing of all identifiable body parts from our slaughtered animals to ensure non-recognition, our inability to successfully address gun violence or suicide, and of course our ongoing dismissal of ecological collapse, to gain confirmation of this statement. This is not to say that we don't at times, in ritualistic moments grieve those who die, or that we don't attempt to institute policies aimed at reducing the seemingly accidental, undesirable or unnecessary outcomes of death but in terms of fully facing the larger causal trajectories we utterly fail.

In a 1998 speech given at an environmental conference held at Rice University, the author and social critic Daniel Quinn posed a straightforward question. He asked, "Protecting the Environment: Whose Business Is It?" (<https://www.ishmael.org/daniel-quinn/essays/protecting-the-environment-whose-business-is-it/>) and in order to offer a provocative answer he began with an illustrative example using youth suicide. He proposed that, "Once upon a time in a certain city it was noticed that the pre-adolescent children were beginning to throw themselves off the roofs of tall buildings with alarming frequency". As a result, the city leaders got together and passed new policy measures that resulted in higher guard rails on all buildings over a certain height. Then the youth moved to drowning themselves and so new protective measures were installed at lakes and rivers but then the youth rebelliously moved on to other means. Given that none of the preventative measures were working the citizens became increasingly outraged that their leaders had failed to stop the incidents of youth suicide and so a city-wide meeting was held at which an ordinary person posed a provocative question. They asked not how do we stop the suicides but rather, "why don't we spend some ...[funds]...to find out why they WANT to do it in the first place? What is IMPELLING them to self-slaughter?" The room fell deadly silent, shocked expressions and shrugs were shared and then the city leaders, followed by their constituents, went back to "...their former conversations" as to how to institute new policies / practices to prevent and criminalize the undesirable behavior.

Quinn then goes on to apply this made up example of trying to stop youth suicides to "protecting the environment", which we understand to be the job of government (or not, as more and more common under the Trump administration). In fact, it is perfectly, normal in our thinking to look to government to protect the 'environment' from people who would abuse / misuse / destroy and kill it, much in the same way we look to government to protect society (us) from drug use, suicide, gun violence, animal abuse ...etc. As a strong advocate of environmental regulation, I too fall into this pattern of thinking. And yet at the same time we must also ask, as the citizen did in relation to youth suicide, "WHY?"- why are our youth increasing depressed, anxious and suicidal (as confirmed by recent studies) and why, as Quinn poses, do "We seem to be impelled to destroy the world..."? One important caveat here is the use of the term 'we', which for Quinn includes "anyone under the spell of our cultural mythology" as opposed to all humans. This is an essential point made throughout Quinn's work that not all humans operate under the same cultural ideologies and therefore do not engage in the same social behaviors, such as ecological destruction, along with having high rates of youth suicide and other undesirable behaviors.

This semester I am teaching a course I designed a few years ago titled Sustainable Societies. Most students come into this class thinking it will be all about green energy, environmental policies and 1000 ways to 'save the planet'. In contrast, the course focuses on Quinn's questions, as in why are our youth / college students (including

those in my classes) increasingly depressed, anxious and suicidal, as well as asking why are we as a culture consciously destroying our 'mother' in the name of profit, even as we are increasingly denying doing so. Hence, the class seeks to put into practice Quinn's realization that "If the world is to be saved, it will not be saved by old minds with new programs, it will be saved by new minds with no programs at all". As such our task, my task, in not to 'save' anyone or anything (or to encourage my students to 'save the planet') but rather to change minds and, I would add, more importantly hearts. For as Quinn also recognizes, 'protecting the environment' is very clinical and dispassionate sounding - but "saving the world", "our HOME", the places and people we love are feelings / concepts that can motivate us, and link us to a sense of belonging and community. Likewise, 'saving our youth' requires linking them socially and emotionally to a sense of themselves, as well as to one of belonging to a supportive health community that can only be done if we are first willing to face how badly they are really feeling. Furthermore, we need



Grandmother Tree being enjoyed by students swinging... Contributed photo.

to also face how much the larger culture has contributed to those negative feelings, not only about themselves but also about the future of the world, including the fate of 'the environment'.

This past week two college students, one at ECSU and one at UCONN, took their lives. I am not going to go into details as to who they were and why these individuals might have been suffering enough to make suicide seem like a logical choice, but rather I'm going to, like Quinn, use the one that occurred at UCONN to make a larger point. The young woman, an international student from China, choose to drown herself in the freezing waters of Mirror Lake on UCONN's campus. My office is next to this lake and so I painfully witnessed the EMT people pulling her lifeless body out of the lake. As I stood there behind the yellow 'do-not-cross' police tape, I remembered that in that same spot there had been another recent death, one that had gone unmentioned and yet that was very apparent and distressing for me, as well as no doubt for many on campus who knew the comfort and healing powers of her presence. I am speaking of the large Grandmother Tree (as I had named her) upon whose branches there had hung two swings with such affirmations as "You are Loved" / "You are Enough" carved into them. There had also a journal there for students to write messages to themselves / each other, making the site a sacred and healing one. As such, I had over the years told students who were stressed and / or distressed to go to her, to swing on her swings and bask in her comfort, much like the boy once did in the controversial Shel Silverstein book *The Giving Tree*. And so, with the Grandmother Tree gone, I felt in my heart that the lakeside was no longer a comforting, healing and protective space. In fact, now it has definitively become a site of tragedy, loss and sadness.

To acknowledge this tragic loss, I decided to take time in my Sustainable Societies class last Friday to invite students to write words of love and comfort on sea shells that I had brought with me to class. Once having done so we walked from our classroom across to the lake side where we gathered and read out our written words -many of which included the names of other young people my students had lost. Once having done so we then placed the shells upon the shore, joining a few bunches of now wilted flowers. Finally, before we departed, I mentioned to my students that I also wanted to recognize the loss of the Grandmother Tree and that the campus, our schools and our communities need more intentional healing places that bring us together in socially crafted natural spaces. In reflecting now upon what I said then, it is obvious that this objective can only be created with new minds with no programs-ones strong enough to first face the reality that in so many tragic ways there really is "...Nothing but the dead and dying back in my little town..." Only then can we begin to heal and create life anew.

## City Kid

By Bill Powers

I was a city kid. At the end of my street in the West End of Hartford was a small fenced-in area. We called it "the park". It came to life every year on the day after the schools let out for the summer. On that day, large numbers of kids from my block of apartment buildings, would head to this green oasis in the middle of the city like a flock of noisy, migrating birds.

Inside the park were a small and a large swing set; a small and a large slide; a sand box; a large partially furnished "playhouse" (where little kids often played); a single basketball hoop with a backboard but no net; a couple of picnic tables with benches; a large locked green wooden box containing balls; a horse-shoe set and board games; a water fountain and a flag pole with no flag. It was a good place to play.

Order was kept by three counselors who shared the shifts 6 days a week. Board games and arts activities were offered each morning and in the afternoon, twice a week, Mrs. Doyle (a retired teacher from the neighborhood) read to us or told us wonderful stories. Adults enjoyed the park, too. After supper, the women would sit and talk while the men played horseshoes.

A narrow corridor of woods ran along both sides of the Park River (known locally as the Hog River) and separated my block from the Mark Twain Estate. The famous author's home was just to the east and served at that time as our local public library. Today that section of the river is channeled underground through concrete conduits. The wooded river front is also gone. The park has been replaced by a parking lot.

As much as I loved the park, looking back now, I realize that that the kids from my neighborhood were missing out on some incredible experiences. We had little or no opportunity to experience Connecticut's woodlands and all they offered. There was little or no chance, either through school field trips or Scouts, to establish physical, spiritual and emotional connections with nature and all its richness and diversity. The only trails in my neighborhood were shortcut paths through vacant lots or the extensive system of concrete sidewalks throughout the city. Not until I discovered Connecticut's Blue-blazed Trails as an adult did I appreciate the extent of what I had missed as a child.

Recently, I was thrilled to be part of programs at the James L. Goodwin Conservation Center (Hampton, CT) for Scouts and for students, including hundreds of city kids. It was truly gratifying to witness their enthusiasm as they made connections with the wonders of nature. The opportunity to experience nature first hand is a priceless gift. I came to it late, but I'm happy to know that these kids can enjoy it now.

*Bill Powers is a retired Licensed Professional Counselor and public school teacher. He volunteers for the CT Forest and Parks Association, the James L. Goodwin Conservation Center and Windham Public Schools. He Lives in Windham, CT.*



Share Curiosity.  
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# I Love M.E. Do You?

By Grace Preli and Jabez Manning

Here at Manning Enterprizes, we love people and our community as much as we love building, which is to say, A LOT! Our company's logo isn't "I Love Me" for any old reason, it's because we strongly believe that love goes a long way. When you love something, it drives you, it excites you, it makes you happy and it inspires you. Love is why we dedicate our lives to creating unparalleled structures; structures as unique and beautiful as the people and the world they are created for.

What do you want to accomplish in your life? How exactly do you want to live? What do you want your home to look and feel like? Dream big! If you can imagine it, it can be done. How can your home, your environment and the places and spaces where you spend your time support you? Life is about sustainability. Sustainability of time, of resources, of energy. Life is about building systems that support sustainability, so that you can spend your precious time and energy and love on the unique things that you want to create in your life.

You are important and the work you do and what you bring to this world is important too. We at Manning Enterprizes are here as humans, as community members and as builders and creators to help you to live your best, most free, most supported and most sustainable lives. Where a gap exists between how you are currently living your life and how you wish to live it, we can help you bridge it. We bridge this gap by working with you to create structures and spaces that embody all elements of our living systems. Nature seeks balance. Nature seeks to sustain itself and the lives of countless animals and plants (and humans) that inhabit this beautiful earth. Nature is nurturing, nature is supportive, nature is integrated. We build to help you integrate yourself and your space. We build to help you feel loved and supported.

What are some of the things we do? We build tiny houses out of recycled materials. We remodel kitchens with rough-cut locally-milled lumber. We design creative and ingenious solutions to help solve your unique problems. We retrofit your living room so all your latest tech is perfectly synched. We build movie theaters in your basements. We build high quality custom furniture. We focus on alternative ways of building that prioritize the health and well-being of you, our community and the planet.

We specialize in both traditional and non traditional methods of building. If you want your basement remodeled, your deck repainted, or your kitchen redesigned, we can support you with that too. We've worked on earth ships and on large commercial projects. We've worked up and down both coasts. We build every day right here in our community. We build because we have love to give; a love for people, a love for building and a love for the environment.

This spring we'll be working on our latest project; redesigning and retrofitting trailers and campers. We want to create affordable and accessible housing that is sustainable and practical for us and our communities. We're also working on a sauna and a luxury treehouse too! Follow us on Instagram @manningenterprizes or friend us on Facebook for updates.

Interested in working with us? Need support with your latest building projects? Check us out at manningenterprizes.com.

P.S. One of our most popular programs is the Walter Program in memory of our owner's grandfather. The Walter Program is a discounted handyman service for senior citizens living within 30 minutes of N. Windham. Please send us an email at: sales@manningenterprizes.com for more information.

# Random Thoughts of An Aging Curmudgeon

By Alan Smithee

- Stop saying "The American people aren't stupid." Yes, we are! The American people are the reason we have eight "Fast & Furious" movies. And have you noticed some of our recent presidential choices?

- It's a car horn, not a doorbell. Get up off your rear and knock on the door, you lazy jerk.

- If you can't go two hours without checking your phone, you should be banned from every movie theater on Earth.

- Financial planners need to stop going on TV to tell poor people how to manage their money. You can't manage what you don't have.

- Meteorologists must stop apologizing when the weather is bad. We all know you don't control the weather, you simply report it.

- If you wear a T-shirt that says "I'd rather be a Russian than a Democrat," you're not patriotic; you're just a moron.

- Stop saying "OK Boomer." It's a childish phrase that stifles, rather than encourages, dialogue.

- If a movie or TV show is at least five years old, you're not allowed to complain about spoilers.

- People who tell jokes that you find offensive are not automatically horrible; you simply have different senses of humor.

- If you become outraged over curse words while ignoring poverty, war and racism, you are the rankest of hypocrites.

- Not everyone cares about your favorite sport. Deal with it.

- Nothing says "privileged" like a diet based on what you refuse to eat.


- If you don't know the difference between "your" and "you're," you don't get to whine about immigrants who can't speak English.

- Similarly, if you emigrate here from a non-English-speaking country, it's your job to learn my language -- not the other way around.

- Stop using adjectives as nouns, e.g. "my bad," "be best," "explore your awesome." You're grown men and women! Why talk like eight-year-olds?

- Facebook is not the real world. Most Americans are too focused on paying their bills to care about flag-burning, gender pronouns, "Merry Christmas" vs. "Happy Holidays," or whatever your pet non-issue happens to be.

- You're not always right, and those who disagree with you aren't always wrong.



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# I Have Control Issues and You Probably Do Too

By Grace Preli



Hi readers! Welcome! I'm Grace. I am 24 years old. I have control issues. I am jealous. And insecure. A lot more than I would care to admit. Okay, I'm admitting it. I feel lost. I've stepped out of the safety and security of habits and patterns and ego-driven stories. I am currently in the wilderness of discovering what new habits and behaviors I'd like to build my life on. Digging deep means looking within. Digging deep means looking in the mirror. Digging deep means I often don't like what I see. I am building my foundation. Every day I get myself a bit more free from patterning that no longer serves. Every day I show up for myself the best I can. My foundation is very shaky but getting firmer every day. I fuck up every single day. I get triggered and upset and frustrated and sad every damn day. I beat myself up every day. I learn everyday. And let me tell you, these lessons are not easy.

For the last year I dated two people. This was my first 'real' relationship and I fucked it up spectacularly. We all fucked it up. It takes two to tango (well in this case, three) and we all had a hand in it. It was a lot of fun and also a huge challenge. I had no model of a healthy relationship. I had no clue what to do. I came into the relationship at a time when I was just starting to dig into my shit. Just starting to look at what I was hiding. Just starting to learn that I don't have to be defensive and righteous and entitled and hurtful and passive aggressive but not knowing how to go from one well engrained way of being to another more healthy way of being. I had no idea how to communicate my needs and wants in a healthy way. No idea how to attend to the REAL wants and needs of another. Dating one person would have been an experience, dating two was like getting chucked off the deep end. Of course I did a lot of things right but I did a lot of things wrong. To say I learned would be an understatement. I learned enough for five lifetimes and I'm still learning. The stuff I had to unpack whilst in this relationship was alarming in the best sense. I'm still sifting through it. Still growing through it. None of the lessons learned or memories made fade with the ending of the relationship. Instead, I have the opportunity to dig even deeper and integrate everything I've learned.

I had to get real about who I am. I had to become aware of the stories I was telling myself, the bad habits I was addicted to. It's hard enough to see all of this shit. It's even harder to learn these lessons. And hardest still to make the daily adjustments to usher in profound change. Once you know, you know. You can't un-know. You can't suddenly be like, oh wait, just kidding I'm not actually insecure or jealous. Oh wait haha, passive aggressive communication isn't thaaaaat bad. Ha! I am completely in it folks. I am bloody and bruised. I don't wanna get into the ring and fight these lions every day, I want to befriend them. I want some damn relief from the constant stream of insecurities and negative self talk that runs through my mind all day. I want to set down the million pound boulder I've been hauling up this damn mountain. All I have to do is set it down but after 24 years my arms are cramped and I'm used to the weight. Can I set it down and get myself free? I'm not there yet but I will tell you this, I WILL be free. I will get to the other side and man, it will be sweet!

There's a million things I have learned and will keep learning thanks to the richness that my relationship provided me, but what I want to share today is what causes a lot of my distress, anxiety, worry and fear and that is: control. I feel that I both lack and desperately want control but for the wrong things, for the wrong reasons.

We humans seem to want control over everything we can't control (literally everything outside of ourselves) yet we eschew control over and responsibility for the one thing that we do have control over... ourselves! I can't control anything outside of myself and you know what, right now, that really sucks because I'm still in a place where I haven't reached acceptance yet. I still want control over so many things that I can't control. The feeling is still pretty desperate. I've spent most of my lifetime not aware of my huge desire to control everything and everyone outside of myself. Now that I'm becoming aware of it, it feels kinda yucky. I'm now having to come to grips with the fact that I can't control anyone but myself. I'm not really sure what to do with myself. I know I can't control anyone or anything else. It's a dawning realization that I'm starting to see in my day to day life. But what do I do?

I'm realizing that the stories I create are the problem. The illusion that I have control over anyone or anything else is a huge distraction. I worry and stress and feel out of control. This leads me to feel fear and desperation, anger, sadness and it makes me grip harder and grasp more.

It's a complete delusion. Clearly I have control issues. But still, what do I do?

Okay. Okay. I know what to do. I have to accept what is. I can't change the past. I can change the future but only because of or based on what I choose to do. I can't control or change anyone else. I can only alter my behaviors, thoughts, patterns. I have to take FULL responsibility for myself. I have to see that I have complete control over my thoughts and actions and there is incredible power here. I'm only just starting to see this. I've spent a lifetime wanting to control other people instead of realizing that the most important person for me to make friends with is myself.

And this is SO hard. I can't make anyone love me. I can't make anyone want me. I can't make anyone do ANYTHING they don't want to do. I can't control my relationships. I can control how I show up to them, control how I act, how I take or don't take responsibility for my actions and behaviors, but I can't control anyone or anything else. It is such a slippery slope to grasp for control over things you can't have. It creates false stories, it creates non-realities, it creates situations where we don't see clearly.

You can't make anyone do anything they don't want to do. You can't get something from someone that they don't want to give. You can want a person to do or be or act a certain way. You can wish so hard for them to be what they're not or for something to be different. But it is NOT that way. They are NOT that way. That traffic really is NOT moving. That person really isn't being kind. This situation is really out of your control. That person really is under no obligation to do what you say.

How do you get someone to give you what you want? You don't. How do you get someone to act how you want or do what you want? You don't. How do you get someone to be respectful of you? You don't. How do you get someone to love you? You don't. They have to decide. They have to show up. They have to choose.\*

Isn't there an inherent freedom in this? If you can't control other people then you're free to live and do as you please, with full control over and responsibility for yourself. If you can't control other people then doesn't that mean you can't be controlled by other people?

What would happen if I let go? What would happen if I stopped trying to control the situations in my life that I have no control over? What would happen if I let go of my inability to control other people. I think I'd be a lot more peaceful. I think I'd be a lot more relaxed. I think I'd have a lot more power and confidence.

It's hard to see my ex partners together still, right now it's hard to see anyone together. I get insanely jealous. When we were all dating my friends would say man how do you do it, I'd get too jealous. I'd always say oh it's there, but I want to work on it because I don't want to be jealous my whole life. And this is true! Life, work, day to day circumstances and relationships of any sorts are great grounds in which to play all of this out. Do you want to be insecure and jealous and have control issues for your whole life? I sure as heck don't. Do you want to set conditions for yourself and other people? Not me. Do you want to spend all your time stuck in someone else's head instead of inhabiting your own mind/timeline/process? Not me! I want to work this shit out! I'm doing it and it is damn hard!

Emotional well being isn't something I can fake. Affirmations are great and it's probably better that I tell myself I'm a loved and kind and capable person (which I am) instead of a piece of shit who can't do anything right (which I often feel I am), but I can't fake being well adjusted and chill. I can't fake being secure and confident. I can't fake being okay. Well, I can fake all of these things because I've faked them my whole life but it's all bullshit okay? And I can't fake it anymore. I'm an insecure, jealous wreck sometimes. I'm a lot of great things and I'm also a lot of crappy things and that makes me human.

I see the desperate struggle for control in the people around me. I see the complainers. The demanders. The ultimatum makers. I see the people who throw their shit around. I see the people who project. I see the people who are insecure, who are jealous, who are hurting. I see the people caught in their stories. I see the people who are anxious and afraid. Why? Because I am that person too.

You cannot have control over other people. You cannot have control over other people. You cannot have control over other people. I cannot have control over other people. I cannot have control over other people. I CAN NOT HAVE CONTROL OVER OTHER PEOPLE.

I'm working on my control issues. Are you?

\*P.S. I've just started reading Dale Carnegie's book *How To Win Friends & Influence People* and I can already tell it's going to be life changing. I'll update you readers once I'm finished!

## TLGV's February Events

Submitted by Francesca Kefalas, Assistant Director, The Last Green Valley, Inc.



Full Moon Snowshoe Hike to the Tri-State Marker: 6-8 p.m., Feb. 8, Air Line Trail parking area at 653-659 East Thompson Road, Thompson, CT. Join The Last Green Valley's Rangers John and Kevin for a full moon snowshoe hike on the Air Line State Trail and to the Tri-State Marker where Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island meet. The full moon will start rising at 4:30 p.m. to illuminate the hike. If there is not enough snow for snowshoes, we'll hike anyway. The hike is 2 miles round trip with level ground on the Air Line Trail and uphill for about 0.3 miles to the Tri-State Marker. Hikers will meet at the Air Line State Trail parking area at 653-659 East Thompson Road, Thompson, CT. Registration is required and space is limited. Please call 860-774-3300 or email Chief Ranger Bill Reid at [Bill@tlgv.org](mailto:Bill@tlgv.org) to register.

Historical Happenings – Telling Your Story, Part I: 6 – 8 p.m., Feb. 19, The Last Green Valley office, 203B Main St., Danielson, CT. We all have a story to tell, but as non-profit historical and cultural organizations getting our story in front of new visitors and supporters can be a challenge. But, in 2020 the opportunities to tell your tales are greater than ever before. Join The Last Green Valley's Assistant Director Francesca Kefalas in part one of a two part series aimed to help historical organizations, and any non-profit looking for some help, spread the work about the wonderful work being done. This session will focus on understanding your audience and how to use that to create more effective press releases, e-newsletters and create a social media presence. Registration is required and a light supper will be offered. Please call 860-774-3300 or email [Fran@tlgv.org](mailto:Fran@tlgv.org). In case of snow, the seminar will be rescheduled for Feb. 26. Part II of the session will be held April 15.

Acorn Adventure – Animal Tracks: 10 a.m., Feb. 22, Lead Mine Mountain Trail, parking area, 10 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA. Some animals love winter. Snow and the winter landscape can provide the perfect opportunity to follow their movements, even if you never see them. Join The Last Green Valley's Chief Ranger Bill Reid on a kid-friendly woods walk where we will look for animal tracks and all the other signs critters leave behind (like poop). Kids will learn what to look for and the differences between some of the more common animal tracks we see in The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor. Acorn Adventures are sponsored by Putnam Bank. For more information call 860-774-3300 or email [Fran@tlgv.org](mailto:Fran@tlgv.org).

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!

Read issues of Neighbors  
from January 2015  
to present in COLOR  
via a link on our website:  
[neighborspaper.com](http://neighborspaper.com)  
You will also find  
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## Fear, Teeth, and World Peace

Last week in our home,  
I was praising my son for being responsible.  
Going to the dentist while home on his break.  
Brushing and flossing two times a day.

He's watched siblings need dental work,  
-- siblings lose teeth --  
"Actually", he smiled, "I've been scared into dentistry."

Which curiously  
interestingly  
pairs fear  
with sound judgement.

This week in our world:  
We see protesters storming our American Embassy.  
Then awake to the news:  
The Iranian General, struck dead by our drones.

The next days in Iran:  
A massive outpouring of deep rage and deep mourning.  
-- with brazen threats of brazen revenge.  
-- met with counter threats of counter revenge.

It came as a shock. It happened so fast.  
And suddenly everyone's fearing the worst.  
Because suddenly rage is spinning out of control.

These days from our friends:  
"Wait. What? War?!? With Iran?  
What? No. Who wants War? Nobody wants War.  
Wait. What? They said they'll do what?  
No. Wait. Now what...? ... "

The world takes a gasp...holds its breath...starts to tremble.  
Knowing too well how fast this could spiral.  
Knowing too well how dark this could turn.

And does not each of us grasp all that's at stake?  
And fear for the lives that are held in the balance?  
Held in the balance and held in the hands of two proud angry men  
who hold in their hands  
both the weapons of war  
and the strength of restraint  
..... ? .....

And not one of us knows  
what either might choose.

I think of my son, my responsible son,  
owning the fear that drives his decisions,  
when with no hint of shame, he so readily states:  
"Actually, Mom, I've been scared into dentistry."

Curiously, oddly, I'm thinking of him  
as I pray for these men, as I pray for our world.

May these proud angry men feel the weight in their hands.  
And feeling that weight,  
face the fears  
that have set this world trembling  
and holding its breath.

Actually, I pray these proud men  
-- without one hint of shame --  
might yield to these fears  
-- and be scared into peace --

Call me naive. Call me a fool.

But curiously, oddly, actually, yes.  
I pray these proud men might be scared into peace.  
Actually, permanently, scared into peace.

## Not talkin', Just sayin'...

Not talkin' about yesterday. Not talkin' about tomorrow.  
Not talkin' about good or bad, honorable or evil.  
Not talkin' about motives or fears or failed intents.

Just sayin':  
That night/this day: January 8, 2020  
Iran shot many missiles and killed nobody. No one. Not one.  
They said they had "slapped the face" and they were done.

Maybe that night/this day, Iran chose Life. ....? ....

Again, not talkin' about yesterday or tomorrow.  
Or good or bad or honorable or evil.  
Not talkin' about motives or fears or failed intents.

Just sayin':  
That this day: January 8, 2020  
Our president read words that others had written.  
And with the whole world watching and holding its breath,  
-- he stayed on script --  
"Our missiles are big, powerful, accurate, lethal and fast.  
We don't want to use them.  
We are ready to embrace peace with all who seek it."

Maybe that night/this day, our president chose Life. ....? ....

I write this quickly on that day/this day: January 8, 2020.  
I write this quickly -- wanting it to stay true -- fearing it will not.

Fearing it will not  
-- because mistrust and rage run deep and rest not --  
-- because violence breeds violence, and what's done is done --  
And more words have been spoken  
than the words I have quoted.

But for now:  
Not talkin' about yesterday. Not talkin' about tomorrow.  
Not talkin' about good or bad or honorable or evil.  
Not talkin' about motives or fears or failed intents.

Just sayin':  
-- Grateful --  
That that night/this day: January 8, 2020  
Missiles killed no one. Not one.  
And Enemies Chose Life. ....? .....

(Note: this was written prior to learning of the plane that was struck, tragically ending so many innocent lives.)

*Both poems were written by Shoshanah Kay of Willimantic.*

## Opinion

### True Colors- How Small Town Republicans Ran On a Racist Platform and Won

By Donna Dufresne

Many of us in Northeast Connecticut were dismayed by the Killingly BOE decision to reinstate the former sports mascot and logo, The Redmen. This was especially disappointing after the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, where a number of students, faculty, school administrators, local community members and Native Americans representing several tribal nations spoke eloquently against the renowned racist mascot. The charge to reclaim the Redmen mascot was picked up by Killingly republicans who adopted rhetoric which could have come out of the white supremacy handbook. This is not a surprise, since the leader of their racist platform is known to have been a member of the white supremacist group, The American Guard.

Vitriol and outrage against changing the mascot was voiced by alumni in local papers, and especially on the WINY Facebook page where Killingly residents who should have moved on from high school twenty years ago, personally attacked all who beg to differ with their racist opinions. It is unfortunate that racist is such a loaded word. Surely, no one wants to be called a racist. However, The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) specifically identifies sports mascots as being racist and stereotypical. NCAI first launched their campaign to address stereotypes of Native Peoples in media, popular culture and sports back in 1968. They have lobbied for ending the tradition of using Native American mascots and stereotypical titles in the sports arena for over 50 years.

Most Native American sports mascots, titles and logos were initiated during the early twentieth century, an era rampant in Jim Crow laws, lynching, anti-immigration and the KKK infiltration into the northeast and rural areas. In fact, the Killingly mascot, Redmen, was initiated in 1916. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century was a period which institutionalized the continuation of the physical and cultural genocide of Native Americans. However, the names themselves, of which Redmen is a prime example, along with The Braves, The Indians, Redskins, Tomahawks, Warriors, etc. harken back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Andrew Jackson (Trump's favorite President, no surprise) had decreed that Native Americans must be exterminated in the name of American progress.

For those who are still NOT convinced that Native American mascots and sports titles are racist, why not conjure up some of the other common stereotypical names for marginalized groups of people as your sports mascots. In the tradition of Andrew Jackson, why not name your team The Yellow Men, or The Irish Potato Heads? Or how about The Blackmen or worse, the N.....s?

Yet when it comes to Native Americans, we have accrued the mythological baggage of the noble savage which was perpetrated by 19<sup>th</sup> century poets. Somehow we have misconstrued our racist and stereotypical images as being "an honor", when in fact they perpetuate the myth that Native Americans are archaic and anachronistic people of the past, rather than of the present and future.

The call to "Change the Mascot" is not just about one little town in Connecticut. It is a national civil rights movement gaining momentum across the country. The state of Maine has banned Native American mascots to be used in public schools and many other states have pending legislation to make it illegal to use Native American mascots on sports teams. Killingly may face future law suits and perhaps State and National laws against Native American mascots. But in the meantime, the students and athletes in Killingly have to put up with the ignorant and short-sighted mistakes of a backwards citizenry, shunned in the future for a foolish name they did not choose.

The campaign to keep the Redmen mascot is a sad and desperate attempt by those who are not content with the present and want to keep Killingly chained to an idyllic past that never existed. Like many in the current Trumpian republican party who do not embrace change or the future, Killingly is grasping for the threads of their nostalgic past in a fabric which unraveled long ago. But in spite of the myth of an America that was once great and is no longer, we continue to move ever steadily toward a better, kinder and more equitable future. And so be it.

The students who led the charge to change the mascot at Killingly High School are to be commended for their sensitivity to civil rights issues and their forward thinking. They are, after all, the link to the future, unlike the small-minded and let's just call it what it is, racist Republican Party which ran a bigoted campaign rife with white supremacist rhetoric and won. I guess small town politics doesn't fall far from the national tree.

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# EC-CHAP

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

## Performing Arts

# THE PACKING HOUSE

1870  
HISTORIC VENUE FOR PERFORMANCE & EVENTS

## 48-Days

By EC-CHAP

February

"The February sunshine steeps your boughs  
and tints the buds  
and swells the leaves within".

-William C. Bryant

The distance from the beginning of February to spring is 48 days. February can be cold and dark, but despite the many who have written about the negative side of this shortest month, we take a different view... In many ways, 48 is not a very big number, really. With respect to song lyrics, "Born to Run by Bruce Springsteen averages 281 words per song. Nothing Like The Sun by Sting averages 206. The Beatles' Abbey Road averages 102 and Let It Be averages 139." (Graham English). So... look at February as simply a small soundbite!

With respect to February, we embrace the words of Terri Guillemets, February is the border between winter and spring. We suggest you get up, get out, and join us for some great soundbites with Belle of the Fall and the Leala Cyr Quartet: Talent Showcase (2nd Wednesday); Social Dance with Kelly Madenjian (2nd Thursday); and EC-CHAP Silent Film Series debut with Dr. Jonathan Murray on Valentine's Day.

Details for February's events are listed below and we encourage you to visit our website frequently for additions and schedule updates: [www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming](http://www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming). Ask at the door about our "Frequent Flyer Program" for additional savings!

This month, Arthur Rovozzo, DJ and founder of the Saturday afternoon jazz program, "Musical Myriad", WECS 90.1FM, presents the first of a two-part article this month celebrating the sounds of New Orleans.

Wishing you 48 good things!

Peace,  
EC-CHAP Board

### EC-CHAP ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES

**"Belle of the Fall" (Folk/Indie). Saturday, February 1st, 7:30pm.**



Belle of the Fall continues to demonstrate a thoughtful approach to song writing and performance. Their unique sound, sweet harmonies and musicianship differentiates these artists from many.

As the first musical artists to perform at The Packing House in 2015, their image appears as a part of "A Canvas of History and Social Change", EC-CHAP's 200' mural along RT-32 in Willington. Belle of the Fall will debut their new album, "The Bending of Light" with us on February 1st.

Tracy Walton- 2014 and 2015 New England Music Award nominee Best Male Performer. An accomplished bassist and songwriter who has written for Alfred Books and taught at the National Guitar Workshop. Tracy is a Taylor guitar artist. Julia Autumn Ford- CT Music Award Nominee Best New Artist 2014 and Song of the Year 2015. Her debut solo album has gained her well deserved attention as a singer of rare talent. "It's almost freakish how

good she sings. I watched her and it was hard to process that it was actually coming out of her mouth." Joe Micheli, River City Extension. Tickets \$15.00 Advance / \$20.00 Door.

### EC-CHAP JAZZ SERIES

**"Leala Cyr Quartet". Saturday, January 25th, 7:30pm.**



Leala Cyr complements her impeccable vocals with a warm, golden tone on the trumpet. As a member of Esperanza Spalding's "Radio Music and Chamber Music Societies," she has performed around the world and has appeared on The Late Show, The Tonight Show, The View, The Daily Show, Jimmy Kimmel Live, Austin City Limits, and more.

In February 2019, Cyr released her debut album, First Instinct. A blend of originals and standards, the album showcases her unique talent for vocal improvisation as well as her ingenuity as a songwriter and arranger.

Leala has appeared with her own group at highly regarded venues such as Cornelia Street Café, National Sawdust, Zinc Bar, and Rockwood Music Hall in New York City; Ryles Jazz Club, the Bee Hive, and the Beat Brew Hall in Boston; the Egg in Albany, NY; the Blue Opus in Green Bay, WI; and at the Baby Grand Jazz Series in Hartford, CT.

Her current collaborations range from membership in Jody Redhage Ferber's group Rose and the Nightingale to an upcoming album with Milton Nascimento, Ricardo Vogt, and Pedro Bernardo. Leala will be joined at The Packing House by Will Goble on bass, Ben Bilello on drums, and Dan Liparini on guitar. Tickets \$15.00 Advance / \$20.00 Door.

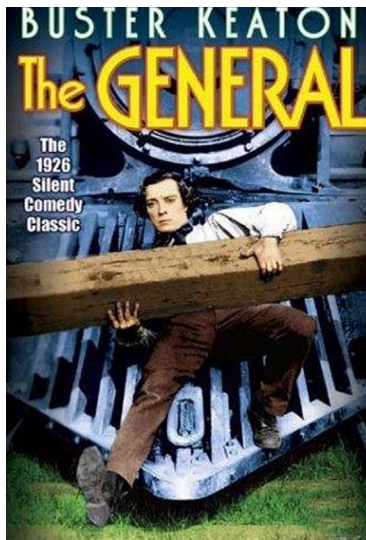
### EC-CHAP FILM SERIES:

**"The General" 1926 (NR). Silent Film with Commentary by Dr. Jonathan Murray. Friday, January 17th, 7:00pm**

The General (NR) is considered a classic among silent films. This 1926 film was written and directed by Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman. When Union spies steal an engineer's beloved locomotive, he pursues it single-handedly and straight through enemy lines. (IMDb)

The screening of this film represents the debut of a select catalog of silent films. Introduction and commentary by Dr. Jonathan Murray with Q&A to follow.

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](http://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](http://www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming) or at the door. Unless otherwise specified, doors open 30-minutes prior to show time. Senior, student, and member discounts available.

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

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

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

## Never Can Say Goodbye in New Orleans: Part-1

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".

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, heart-ache-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, 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

continued on next page



# Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery - 2020 Vision

By Rebecca Zablocki

2020 VISION is on view in the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery, open Saturdays from 10 AM - 2 PM through February 22, 2020. This showcase of 3 local artists is the perfect exhibition to kick off our new year. From photos to digital illustrations to meticulous surrealist paintings, this show has something that everyone could enjoy. Come check out the space, get to know the art and learn something about local talent from right here in your community. I am going to share a little bit of what I take from these pieces, but words and digital reproductions do not do them justice. Find out for yourself, explore the details and nuances of each piece, here at 156 River Road in Willington, CT.



Tammy Glaeser a Willington artist and educator, has an eye for photography, finding the overlooked but misplaced elements within nearby forests. One particular focus, being the archery range of Nye Holman State Park. The targets, pierced, aged and some blending into their natural surroundings, along with the litter and man-made objects that live there become monoliths within Glaeser's photos. She has a way of focusing on details, bringing life into inanimate objects and stepping back and making these targets that blend into the trees, somehow seem like a monument or creature standing amongst nature. Bringing importance and creating a destination out of something that on a daily basis, is more of a pit stop on someone's path. Tammy also has 3 monoprints on view, these expressive one-of-a-kind prints still have the same artistic voice however showcase an entirely different process and way of thinking. Her ability to capture a moment and mood is evident in each body of work, but these painterly pieces really showcase her ability to create a composition out of movement and time.



Christopher Gunderson a designer and painter has had a studio at The Mill Works, the location that EC-CHAP shares with a community of artists and businesses for quite some time. The large mural that encases our upper parking lot right along route 32 is the work of Gunderson. This large painting is a wonderful project that showcases the history and culture of the mill that EC-CHAP calls home. This mural however, is just one VERY LARGE, but small glimpse at Gunderson's talents. Inside the mill, five somewhat small illustrations hang on the walls of the Community Gallery. Providing the viewer a wonderful way to get up close and personal with the work of Gunderson. At first glance, these pieces look like paintings, a similar use of color planes and



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 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



## Visual Arts

brush strokes to the mural outside, but these digital pieces were created on a tablet. Chris's knowledge and talent for painting is not lost and you can also get a glimpse inside the mind of this artist. Anyone, at any age, you, your children or grandchildren could find amusement in the characters that he creates. From sleepy sloths, to boxing robots the imagination goes wild, dropping you into a charming animated story. These imaginative scenes and characters have an inviting sense of whimsy but are made up of elegant painterly strokes like that of master paintings.

Anthony Miles Napoletano is a local artist born in 1988. He began his artistic journey at a very young age and continued on to receive a degree in Visual Fine Arts in 2010. Since then, Napoletano has been busy establishing a career building and upholstering furniture and playing with his artistic style and process. The pieces that Anthony has on view in the Community Gallery are like a labyrinth of imagination, pattern and color. Each piece is made up of a sea of geometric shapes full of vibrant hues, endless space and imaginative creatures and creations. These meticulous paintings can bring your imagination through a journey of space and time and your eye through a never ending cycle. Whimsical and flowing, yet structured and repetitive, dark yet bright, these paintings display some of the most satisfying contradictions that I have seen in any work of art.



Each show that we have had in the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery has proven that art can enrich any setting. Our simple exhibition space comes alive through the works of these three artists. I hope that these introductions provide you with some insight to the talent that surrounds you, however I feel that my words do not do them justice. You have until February 22, 2020 to join us on a Saturday from 10 AM to 2 PM and see for yourself.

For more information about the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery and how you can be a part of our efforts to showcase regional artists, contact [communitygallery@ec-chap.org](mailto:communitygallery@ec-chap.org) or drop by! Each exhibition is on view for approximately 8 weeks and we accept artists, hobbyists and talent of all levels. We hope to see you soon!

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

## To all our contributors- Thank You!

Without your submissions of writing, poetry, artwork and photographs, this paper would not exist. T. King, Publisher

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 bebop 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



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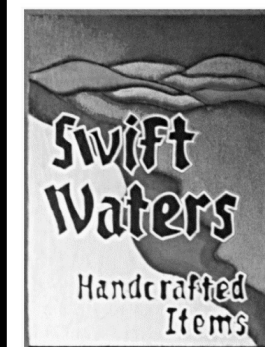
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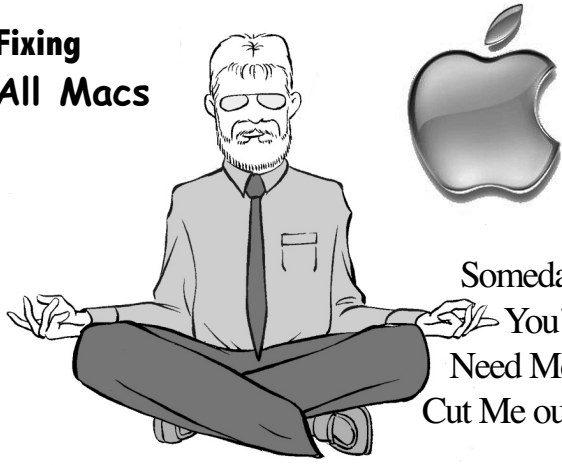
imitators, Harris prospered. Barry blazed his way into being semi-officially recognized as the heir to Powell's bop keyboard throne, blending-in enough of his personal musical traits to avoid being casually written-off as an insignificant copyist. He retained the trademark Powell left-hand at the keyboard -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.

To be continued...

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## Where IS That?



Some think the answer is putting everything on their desktop. It's not. Finding files can be a headache. And...

I've always found the Spotlight feature very lacking in the Mac OS. Its supposed to tell me where anything is on my computer. It's not supposed to just tell me it exists, It's supposed to tell me WHERE it is. That's what I want to know. Spotlight seemed to not do that. Finally I did some research as to how it really works and it was a learning lesson. Mac apps are supposed to work intuitively and you're not supposed to have to get a lesson in finding out how they work. well I had to.

For those of you that gave up on Spotlight, don't know how to use it or don't even know what it is; listen up.

### How Use Spotlight on your Mac

With Spotlight, you can find apps, documents, and other files on your Mac. And with Spotlight Suggestions, you can also get news, sports, movies, weather, and more.

Click in the upper-right corner of the menu bar, (the magnifying glass icon) or press Command-Space bar in finder (desktop).

Enter what you want to find. You can search for something like "apple store" or "emails from emily".

To open an item from the results list, double-click the item. Or to quickly look through the results, use the Up Arrow and Down Arrow keys.

To search by file type or location

To search by file type, use the word "kind" and the file type. For example, type "kind:folders" or "kind:audio".

To show the location of a file on your Mac, choose the file from the results list, then press and hold Command. The file's location appears at the bottom of the preview. To open the file's location, press Command-R. *These two commands are what I didn't know!*

To see all the results from your Mac in the Finder, scroll to the bottom of the results list, then double-click "Show all in Finder."

### Get definitions, calculations, and conversions

Spotlight can show you dictionary definitions, calculations, measurement conversions, and more.

Here are examples of what you can do:

To get a definition, enter a word or phrase, then click the result in the Definition section.

To get a calculation, enter something like "2+2" in the search field.

To convert measurements, enter something like 25 lbs or "32 ft to meters".

### Find movie showtimes, weather, and nearby places

You can use Spotlight to search for movie showtimes, weather, and places near you.

Here are examples of what you can do:

To get showtimes, enter the name of the movie that you want to see. To see what's playing near you, enter "showtimes."

To get local weather information, enter "weather."

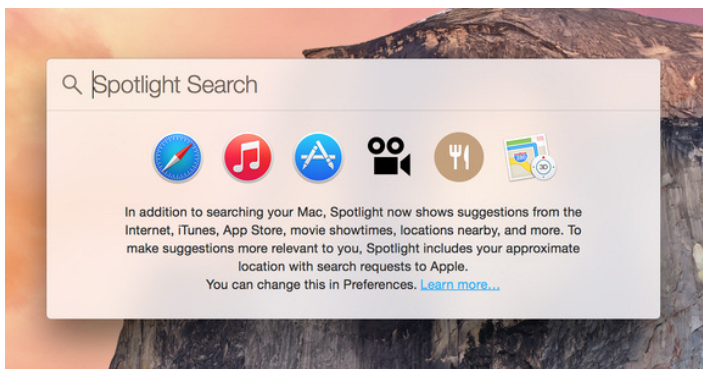
To find restaurants near you, enter something like "places to eat," then click a result in the Maps section.

If searching your Mac doesn't return expected results, rebuilding the Spotlight index might help.

Search: How to rebuild the Spotlight index on your Mac on Google for directions.

I hope you use Spotlight more often now. I know I will after these tips.

*Steve Woron is an artist and Mac technician and lives in Vernon CT. Contact him at (860) 871-9933 leave a message, or [illstudio@snet.net](mailto:illstudio@snet.net). He also has been doing desktop publishing for 21 years. He also scans slides and negatives professionally. See his ads to the left. See [DrMacCT.blogspot.com](http://DrMacCT.blogspot.com)*





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9:30am - Celebration of Holy Eucharist  
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Tue: The Pilgrims Way 4-5:30pm  
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**February 14, Friday**

**Kids:** Story Rhyme Wiggle Time, 10:30a.m. 6-36 months. Stories, songs and play time. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082  
**Film:** "The General" (1926, NR). 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.

**February 15, 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  
**Kids:** Kids Craft, 11:00a.m. - 12:30p.m. (See 2/1).

**February 16, Sunday**

**Live Music:** Aztec Two Step, 4:00p.m. \$25. Bread Box Theater, 220 Valley St., Willimantic. Tickets: 860-429-4220 breadboxfolk.org  
**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 2/2).

**February 17, Monday**

**History & Community Food:** Party with the Presidents, 6:00p.m. Dine at Willibrew and celebrate our American Presidents and discover what they ate and drank with historian and raconteur Bev York. Benefit for the Windham Textile & History Museum. Willibrew, 967 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 960-423-6777

**February 19, Wednesday**

**Kids:** Preschool Learning with Jumpstart, 9:30a.m. - 11:30a.m. (See 2/5).  
**Skill Share:** Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 2/5).

**February 20, Thursday**

**Walk:** Relaxed Ramble, 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. (See 2/5).

**February 21, Friday**

**Kids:** Story Rhyme Wiggle Time, 10:30a.m. (See 2/14)  
**History:** Opening Reception for "Unlacing the Corset, Unlashing the Vote: Celebrating 100 Years Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, 5:00p.m. - 7:00p.m. Includes light refreshments. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

**February 22, Saturday**

**Skill Share:** Spinning Bee, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. Drop-in spinning, knitting or other fiber art. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

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**Ashford Senior Center**  
**25 Tremko Lane, Ashford**

**Kids:** Kids Craft, 11:00a.m. - 12:30p.m. (See 2/1).  
**Live Music:** Leala Cyr Quartet (Jazz). 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

**February 23, Sunday**

**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 2/2).

**February 25, Tuesday**

**Kids:** KEVA Night, 6:00p.m. Ages 6+. Challenge engineering skills by building gravity-defying structures with KEVA planks. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.org

**February 26, Wednesday**

**Kids:** Preschool Learning with Jumpstart, 9:30a.m. - 11:30a.m. (See 2/5).  
**Skill Share:** Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 2/5).

**February 28, Friday**

**Kids:** Story Rhyme Wiggle Time, 10:30a.m. (See 2/14)  
**Hike:** Come Walk Among the Stars, 6:00p.m. - 8:00p.m. Learn some basic astronomy and then head out with Ralph Yulo to enjoy the night sky. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 DEEP.Goodwin@ct.gov

**February 29, Saturday**

**Kids:** Kids Craft, 11:00a.m. - 12:30p.m. (See 2/1).  
**Painting:** Painting with Twist, 6:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. \$20.00 Painting, knowledge and self-care with the Windham/Willimantic branch of the NAACP. Come out for fun and to

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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

learn about Civil Rights Advocacy, incorporating the history of Sankofa. Masonic Lodge 375, Boston Post Rd, North Windham. Tickets: naacp2016b@gmail.com

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# Where to find the Neighbors paper

- Ashford**  
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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  
Artisans at Middle River  
Stafford Post Office  
Stafford Ciderly  
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**  
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Design Center East  
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Windham Eye Group  
Eastern Eye Care  
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Main Street Cafe  
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All Subways  
Super Washing Well  
Willimantic Public Library  
Windham Senior Center  
Elm Package Store  
Not Only Juice  
Willimantic Records
- Windham Center**  
Windham Post Office

# Acupuncture for Epilepsy

By Nicole T. Smith, L.Ac.

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder in which the person suffers recurrent seizures as a result of excessive, uncontrolled electrical brain activity. The condition can be very scary for both the affected, and their close ones. About 1 in 26 people in the US will develop the disorder, many being children.

The use of medications to suppress or control seizures is not without adverse and long-term side effects. Certain people cannot take medications, such as pregnant women, some do not want to, and many don't respond to drug treatments.

The National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health has noted several studies showing the efficacy of acupuncture for treating epilepsy and seizures.

One study demonstrated the use of auricular acupuncture to suppress seizures by activating the parasympathetic nervous system. Since most nerves that innervate, or supply, the external ear consist of parasympathetic nerve fibers, treating the ear is a way to access the nervous system of the entire body. This results in an increase in parasympathetic tone. Since epilepsy is associated with decreased parasympathetic tone, the treatment gets to the cause of the problem.

Another study found that after completing the course of acupuncture

treatment, 47.7% of patients had a reduction in seizure frequency, and 12% were seizure-free.

The study concluded that "compared to conventional anti-epileptic drugs, surgical interventions, and neurostimulation procedures, acupuncture therapy is simple, safe, and less invasive."

Diet also plays an important role in the treatment and prevention of seizures. Working with a qualified practitioner is necessary to ensure that the right steps are being taken.

In summary, the combination of acupuncture and diet can effectively treat epilepsy, resulting in a decrease or elimination of seizures, and an increased quality of life.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3292226/>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=acupuncture+for+epilepsy&oq=acupuncture+for+epilepsy&aqs=chrome..69i57j0l5.3272j0j7&-sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

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

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