# NT SOUP KITCHEN **MUSIC SERIES** Bread Box Theater TO BENEFIT COVENA

At the Shaboo Stage





Sunday, September 13th Hugh Blumenfeld & Faithful Sky Mad Agnes



4:00 pm ~ \$25







Ramblin Dan Stevens Sunday, Oct 4th 4:00 pm ~ \$20 Kerri Powers

Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem

Sunday, Sept 20th

The New Alternative

~ \$25

4:00 pm

4:00 pm ~ \$30 Adam Ezra Group









Sunday, October 18th 4:00 pm ~ \$25 **Christine Ohlman** & Rebel Montez

You must stay with your car, NO MINGLING All shows are at 4:00 PM • On-line tickets only breadboxfolk.org irs • No vendors on premises BYO Snacks + Beverages + Chai You must wear a mask when using bathrooms •

No Alcohol

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S C C C 



By Dan McGinley

One of the most powerful films I have ever seen was never meant to be taken too seriously, and is still considered one of the greatest comedy classics of all time

And yet . . . American Graffiti - a comingof-age adventure co-written by George Lucas of Star Wars fame and released in 1973 - is one of the most powerful statements about American society that I have ever seen.

Even the young cast was an important slice of our culture, and would eventually become a who's who list of premiere Hollywood players: Harrison Ford, Ron Howard, Richard Dreyfus, Cindy Williams, Suzanne Somers, Mackenzie Phillips, Candy Clark, Bo Hopkins, Paul La Mat, Joe Spano, and even the legendary DJ Wolfman Jack, playing him-

It takes place in 1962, during the last day of summer vacation for recent high school graduates in a small California town. This was during a time when "cruising main street" was the chosen method of socializing for many people of high school age - especially in the car culture of California - but also on Main Streets throughout the country.

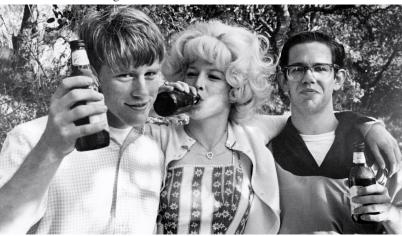
While all of the young people get into adventures and hysterical situations, there is also an underlying current that is disturbing, yet undeniable:

The plan for every young graduate is to leave town and make a life for themselves, to leave everybody and everything they have known far behind.

There is a telling scene when Curt (played by a very young Richard Dreyfus), pays a visit to the local radio station, and encounters Wolfman Jack. Curt asks for a song dedication and explains how he may be leaving town soon

for college, but is now having second thoughts. Wolfman explains how it's a big beautiful world out there, and to go see it while he's young.

And so it is, and so we go. Off to college, off to work, off to the armed services, off to wherever. We grow our wings and fly away, and sometimes we crash or limp home, missing several feathers.



It can be a very lonely endeavor, this inevitable journey toward an empty nest. As a parent I want nothing more than for my talented kid to go out there and show the world; to do great things and have a beautiful life.

Yet . . . now that the day has arrived and it's off to college (hopefully without COVID shutting things down), I feel a pain in my heart like never before, cultivated over many years of seeing our baby grow up and become such a part of our lives before taking flight, and this feeling of dread is followed immediately by guilt for selfishly wanting to hold our child back, and then . . . and then . . . heavy

Okay maybe not heavy drinking, but you get the picture. Birds leave the nest, furry creatures leave the den, and humans often move out. We are an exciting, dynamic

culture here in America, but we can also be a very lonely place, where separation is almost hard-wired into the plan. You don't want to be "that person" living in their parent's basement past a certain age, for any lengthy amount of time, uh-uh.

Then along comes COVID-19 to put a serious wrinkle into this entire process of taking flight, whereas

people are forced to cancel trips and often feel the pain of time and distance between visits to friends and family. Suddenly many people are forced to stay put, and Zoom or Skype or whatever can never replace that kind of personal interaction that is so vital in our society, despite this penchant for moving on up the road.

But! Suddenly a lot of people also rediscover their immediate surroundings, or even improve those surroundings by raiding the aisles of home improvement stores on or offline. Suddenly, a lot of people have to rediscover each other, and the people of their community. Suddenly, our culture has shifted just a little bit off its transient course.

And during these very trying times, that is often a very good thing, to stay close, to stay engaged, to embrace our immediate surroundings, and perhaps even work to change them.

All that being said, how the hell is this ever going to end?

Maybe like a chameleon, when we change enough, and maybe somewhere down the timeline of our lives, when this terrible thing is under control or eradicated, but will that make us come closer? Will this fade away to become another "remember when" as we continue to spread out and put distance between ourselves?

Only time will tell, and time isn't talking these days.

I hope you are safe, my friends. I hope you can still get to your loved ones.



HISTORIC VENUE FOR PERFORMANCE & EVENTS

# Eastern Connecticut Center for

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On our cover: Windham Center postmaster Bobbie Mattson. Bill Powers photo. Read Bill's article on page 3.

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

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The Purpose of Neighbors:

- -To encourage reading
- -To provide a place where ideas, writing, artwork and photographs of area residents can be shared
- -To encourage people to get involved in their
- -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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# The Fight Goes On

By Loretta Wrobel

While viewing the New York Times production of "Finish the Fight," which was released on August 18th, the anniversary of the ratification of the amend-



ment giving women suffrage, I was struck by how much I don't know. This digital performance focused on the lesser known radicals of women's rights. Women's history is rich in attracting strong and brilliant women from all nationalities and all races. The well-known suffragettes were white, educated, and relatively financially secure. As I thought about this, I hated to admit that most of the leaders of the suffragette movement that I could name were white, middle class and English-speaking.

This realization floored me, as I viewed myself as a champion of women's rights and equality for all. How did I mess up? How did I buy in to the white privilege mindset? What was wrong with me? I was proud of seeing myself as a passionate feminist with an open mind for ferreting out discrimination, inequality and erasure.

As I considered this, three points surfaced: The knowledge that I was raised in a culture of white privilege and racism, that my education was mostly controlled by loyal members of the white patriarchy, and that as an American, I spoke English and was taught to memorialize white wealthy males. I saw that the result of male domination on me was that I, a woman, did not realize how indoctrinated I was by the white male system.

"Finish the Fight" is a play written by Ming Peiffer and directed by Whitney White. The play showcases five heroines of women's rights that made significant contributions and were fierce activists. Their names and achievements are not known to most Americans. The five women--Black, Asian, Latinx, Native American, and queer, interacted in five different invented scenes with imagined conversations involving their activism. Their names--Mabel Ping-Hua Lee, Zitkala-Sa, Jovita Isdar, Frances Ellen Walkins Harper, and Mary McLeod Bethune, are not common household names. They were far from common, and made important contributions to the fight for women's equality. One name was familiar to me, and another's exploits I vaguely knew about, but never knew her name.

I encourage you to check online and watch this video performance, which gives a sense of how dynamic and fearless these women were. They did not back down against immeasurable odds. One young woman, Mabel, who was sixteen at the time, led a delegation of women activists in support of suffrage. She rode a horse through the streets of NYC with her troops behind her! That is what I call activism and courage.

The women who wrote and directed this play were young women of color, who wanted to honor these brave individuals who worked so hard for equal rights for all women. I was struck by the importance of the 19th Amendment, which granted women's enfranchisement. The Democratic party had just wrapped up their convention where the insistent message was, "Get out and vote," whether by

mail-in ballots or in-person voting. All during the political online convention, the power of voting was stressed again and again.

These rebels from the last century were on to something. They wanted to be treated equally and have a say as to who gets to make decisions regarding their daily lives. They were met with hostility and negativity, especially during the First World War. Nevertheless, they persisted and endured attacks, bullying, and imprisonment.

How invested these women from diverse backgrounds and cultures were to continue to fight for equal treatment. They understood the power of participation in the democratic process. Ironically, in today's world we have to remind people to vote, as the preservation of our democracy mandates that citizens actively participate.

The stories told by these young women were fascinating and engaging, yet sad. The cruelty and misogyny this great country dished out to women of diverse backgrounds is chilling. How far have we come in 100 years?

The digital play, "Finish the Fight," was initially going to be on stage for one night in NYC. However, due to the virus, the decision was changed to perform it online. The book by Veronica Chambers of the same name, "Finish the Fight," was the source for the play. You can view the digital play online at <www.nytimes.com/2020/07/23/the-ater/finish-the-fight-suffrage-centennial-performance.html> and savor the spirit of our forthright ancestors that stood up to the injustices, over a century ago. These warriors fought on and succeeded in helping push those stubborn legislators towards accepting universal suffrage for all women.

I am grateful to the young women who created this play and celebrated the first one hundred years of women's empowerment by spotlighting women of diverse backgrounds. They joined the crusade to move our country toward greater opportunity for all women, regardless of their race, origin, language or culture.

I want to nod my head in honoring the playwright Ming Peiffer, the director Whitney White, and writer Veronica Chambers for opening my eyes and gently tugging me to uncover my own bias and narrow thinking. You are never too old to learn, thank the universe. As humans, we can reeducate ourselves and re-examine the rigid destructive patterns that we learned growing up in a racist and patriarchal world.

If I can do this after over seven decades, anyone can. Our world is rapidly shifting, and diversity is finally being celebrated. If you have any doubt of this, look at the number of women, especially women of color, who are in office and/or running for office. In my area, we have State Representative Pat Wilson Pheanious, who is seeking reelection, and Lisa Thomas, who is battling Senator Dan Champagne for State Senator in my district.

I encourage you to not be left behind. Have the fortitude to embrace your biases and "last century" thinking, then let them go and actively work toward total acceptance of diversity and equality. You are never too old or too young to change intolerant behavior and thoughts to expansive and inclusive viewpoints that lead to a better world for everyone. What is preventing you from letting go of seeing all people as equal and worthy?

#### A Friendly Visit at the Windham Center Post Office

By Bill Powers

"Why I Live at the P.O." is a short story, a comic masterpiece by Eudora Welty. While I don't live at the Windham Center Post Office, I certainly love to visit – especially during the past two years. For centuries there has been a post office in Windham Center where folks, in addition to taking care of their mail, have an opportunity to see and converse with their friends and neighbors. The P.O. is a major contributor to the area's sense of community, especially in these days of the Coronavirus pandemic, wherein face-toface social gatherings are limited with people wearing masks and having to maintain a six-foot distance from each other.

Two years ago the Windham Center received a gift from the postal service in the wonders of Bobbie Mattson, a twenty year veteran of the postal service, who immediately set out to make the P.O. a much friendlier and welcoming place to visit. It was soon clear that she takes a personal pride in her work and was determined

to create a comfortable and warm working space. This was immediately apparent by her personal approach to customers and her obvious commitment to make the interior shine. Any problem you might have with the mail immediately became her concern as well.

Bobbie became instrumental in having the floors stripped, waxed and sealed. She even hung attractive pictures on the walls with the effect of warming what was previously a basically sterile interior. Seasonal decorations also greeted customers as soon as they entered the building. Tasteful decorations began to appear outside near the entrance. Neighbors even pitched in to provide plantings for the exterior and a local vendor donated attractive stone for the garden in front of the building.

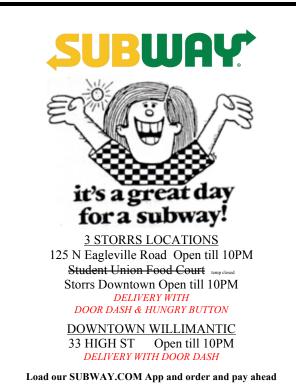
The post office in Windham Center had postmasters appointed periodically from 1794 until 2012 when an Officer -in-charge was appointed until 2015. At that time the P.O. was converted to a Remotely Managed Post Office under the direction of the

Postmaster in Willimantic. Bobbie advocated for major changes to the exterior of the building as well, with the Willimantic Postmaster. With his help, a new roof was installed and the exterior received a well-needed paint job, which was more complicated because lead paint had been used in the past.

Bobbie is moving to Tennessee to be near family and transferring to a Post Office there. Their gain is our loss. The community will miss this motivated, friendly and outgoing woman.

Interestingly, she is very talented and caring in many other ways. As a professional photographer, Bobbie specializes and loves taking photos of folks with their pets. Speaking of pets, she devotes much of her personal time helping to rescue animals with FABS Animal Rescue. She has been a huge credit to the spirit of the community and will be missed as a friendly, competent and creative worker at the Windham Center Post Office. She is a credit to the United States Postal Service.

Bill Powers is a retired teacher and resides in historic and beautiful Windham Center.



We're open 7 days a week







# CSA to the Rescue

By Delia Berlin

There was a time during the pandemic lockdown when for me, creating the next meal became an obsession. Not being able to go out to eat at restaurants, dine at friends' homes, or entertain at our house, my



creativity for cooking started drying up. Compounding this difficulty were the required quick and stressful food shopping experiences, and the unpredictable availability of items.

To speed up shopping and reduce our time in the grocery store, we would make a list arranged by "order of appearance" of the items we needed at each venue. I'm usually an uncommitted shopper who makes decisions depending on the particular appeal of produce at a given time, so this approach didn't suit me well. Some places, like the Food Co-op, closed the store to shoppers. One could order items online for curbside pickup, but that method didn't allow me to judge the quality of the items before buying them, and therefore didn't fit my style.

We decided that ordering local takeout foods a couple of times a week would introduce variety and help

support our restaurants at a difficult time. We experimented with orders from different establishments, but our satisfaction was variable. The experience usually involved arriving home with cold or soggy items packed in plastic. That was disappointing, to put it mildly. In spite of the best efforts by our favorite restaurants, we were left with the awareness that what we really liked about going out to dinner, was walking through town, seeing people, meeting

town, seeing people, meeting Photo by Libby Tarleton of Russo's Roots. friends. No takeout menu could give us that back. tic Farmer

Then, in early spring we got an email from Russo's Roots, an organic farm in Canterbury, about their community supported agriculture (CSA) program. I was intrigued. I was familiar with Russo's Roots organic vegetables, since they have been my preferred providers for years at the Willimantic Farmers' Market. The freshness, cleanliness and beautiful presentation of their vegetables always impressed me.

Arriving home with fresh food that can be readily prepared or put away cleanly is a treat. I appreciate this greatly. In the past, I've gotten vegetables from very nice farmers who didn't pay much attention to this aspect of product marketing. As a result, my return from the farmers' market was then followed by hours at the sink, trimming, selecting and washing huge amounts of muddy damaged greens that often dwindled to a small bundle of acceptable veggies. I knew from my past experience buying vegetables from Russo's Roots that this would never be a problem with them. The pride and generosity in the presentation of their vegetables has always been unparalleled.

Farmers are the first ones to tell you, right from the start, that CSAs are a gamble. A "share" is not a set amount of any particular vegetable. It could be a varied bounty in a good growing season, or a measly crop in a bad one. Russo's Roots offered full shares and half shares, and both were available for a full or a half season. Based on our household size of two people and two parrots, with no prospects for guests in the foreseeable future, we decided to try a half share for a full season, running for 20 weeks, from June to mid-October.

As I write this, we are about half-way through the season and I can already say that this CSA has been one of my best personal silver linings of the pandemic. Each week, we pick up a box full of wonderful and beautiful vegetables. Some of them are things we had never tried before and we probably wouldn't have experimented with otherwise. However, with a little research, I've learned to prepare and enjoy all of them. So far, as I write this at the end of July, the items we have received are almost too many to mention. They have included several kinds of lettuce and salad mixes, spinach, baby kale, cabbage, a variety of onions, scallions, garlic, cucumbers, zucchini, eggplants, carrots, potatoes, beets, radishes, turnips, beans, spaghetti squash, watermelon and tomatoes.

We have gotten a few vegetables that, had I been left to make my own choices, I wouldn't have bought. An example is radishes. I don't usually like slices of bitter radishes in salads, the only radishes I had ever tried. When we got a perfect "bouquet" of red radishes with crisp

greens, I researched recipes and found out that they could be cooked. I quartered them and pan-roasted them with onions, garlic and smokey tempeh. They were creamy and delicious, with none of the sharp bitterness characteristic of raw radishes. The greens can be treated like turnip greens, and they were great sautéed.

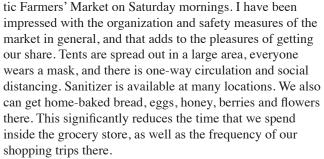
The amount of vegetables we have been receiving has also been perfect for our needs. There have been at least five different items each week, in sufficient quantity to prepare six generous dinners for the two of us. The parrots get small samples of everything, to their sheer delight. This amount is just what we wanted, since we decided that for as long as local infection rates remain low and the weather allows, we will eat at restaurants outdoors once a week.

As for the cost of a CSA, it wasn't our primary consideration. The freshness and quality of the produce is so superior to commercial vegetables, that comparing costs is not entirely valid. But for those who may be curious, our full-season half-share cost \$285. This is a little more than \$14 per week. Considering what we are getting, to us this seems like a good bargain. But it's important not to focus on the particular value of a share in a given season.

Farming is hard, weather dependent and risky. The purpose of community supported agriculture is to help mitigate these risks for a local farm. Therefore, in a

bad season, one should be prepared to accept a smaller crop and understand one's role in supporting that farm through the hardships of that particular year. It's a type of gambling with some good consequences even if one loses.

Although Russo's Roots CSA customers have a choice of ways to pick up their shares, including the possibility of special arrangements, we always pick up ours at the Williman-



The effect that the CSA has had on my cooking has been freeing and relaxing. Paradoxically, fully open-ended possibilities can stunt creativity. When one has to start a meal with unlimited choices, beginning with a shopping list of ingredients, the exercise can be fatiguing and overwhelming. Starting with the CSA box is like getting a good writing prompt – it points me in a given direction and gets me going. The box is never a complete surprise, since every Monday evening our farmers email CSA customers a newsletter. This informative weekly briefing includes a listing of the veggies to be included in the upcoming share, with tips, ideas and recipes to make good use of them. So, by the time I get home with our share, I have a rough plan for our meals during the week, can organize items accordingly and don't feel overwhelmed by the bounty.

We have learned a few things that we didn't know before this experience. For example, I had assumed that the scarcity of rain during the season would hurt the harvest. But our farmers have explained that, provided available irrigation and no lack of ground water, farming is much more pleasant, efficient and fruitful without frequent rain. Many of the required tasks for successful crops are difficult to accomplish in the rain, but dry conditions make them easier. We also have learned that tomatoes can be grafted, to combine the fruit quality of one variety with the disease resistance of another. These are just a few examples of many interesting bits of information from our weekly newsletter.

Along the way of this season, we have also gained new respect for the complexities and hardships of farming. We already knew, from our own experiments with vegetable gardening over time, that growing food can be unpredictable and complicated. Modern farmers must not only work very hard, but also know a great deal across multiple disciplines. Organizational, technical and marketing skills are all required to offer and manage successful CSAs and to deliver good produce with grace. We will miss our CSA when this cycle comes to an end, but we plan to be back for another round in the coming spring.

#### Opinion

# Every vote matters in 2020

By Carol Davidge

Every vote matters. It mattered in 2016. It mattered in 1960 when John F. Kennedy was elected President with 100,000 votes more than Richard Nixon. JFK's vice president was Lyndon B. Johnson. Alone against the recommendations of his advisors, JFK chose to defuse the Cuban nuclear missile crisis which might have annihilated the planet. After JFK was assassinated, LBJ became president and in 1964 signed the Civil Rights Act into law, which bans racial discrimination in public facilities, interstate commerce, the workplace and housing. In the 1964 Presidential election, LBJ's opponent, Barry Goldwater, advocated using nuclear weapons in war. LBJ won and in 1965 signed the Voting Rights Act to guarantee the right to vote for millions of Black Americans. LBJ also increased funding for public education, created the war on poverty, and established Medicare and Medicaid.

As we see these and other civil and human rights protections fall, our vote in 2020 can change things, nationally and right in our home towns. Great women candidates are running for the Connecticut State Legislature.

In the 35th State Senate District (13 towns in eastern Connecticut including Ashford, Chaplin, Coventry, Eastford, Ellington, Hampton, Pomfret, Stafford, Tolland, Union, Vernon, Willington, Woodstock), the Democrat, Lisa Thomas, is a first-time candidate. Lisa is a life-long teacher, the 2020 teacher of the year at her school. She understands and is living through the issues facing parents, pupils, teachers and staff. With training as an attorney, Lisa is a strong advocate for the environment, workers and social justice. As Chair of the Coventry Town Council, she brings people together who have opposing views, understands town budgets and supports small businesses.

Incumbent State Senator Mae Flexer faces a re-election challenge in the 29th District (Brooklyn, Canterbury, Killingly, Mansfield, Putnam, Scotland, Thompson, and Windham). Mae is a heroine for women and all good causes. Brenda Falusi is running for State Representative in the 8th District (Columbia, Coventry, Tolland and Vernon). Brenda, the wife of a recently retired member of the military, feels that it is time for her to serve. Kate Donnelley, candidate for the 47th District (Canterbury, Chaplin, Franklin, Hampton, Lebanon, Lisbon, Norwich, Scotland, Sprague), leads the fight againt the Killingly & other new fossil fueler plants in Connecticut. Pat Wilson Pheanious, a social worker and leader for families, is running for re-election in District 53 (Ashford, Tolland, Willington).

All registered voters in Connecticut will receive an application for an absentee ballot starting in mid-September. Every registered voter can mark the application that they want an absentee ballot because of COVID19. Follow the instructions carefully. When you receive your absentee ballot, drop it in the special ballot box at town halls. Or show up at the polls on November 3. Make your vote count for the causes you believe in. The choices are clear in 2020.

# Our Community Calendar

**Compiled By Dagmar Noll** 

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

#### September 5, Saturday

**Community Food:** Willimantic Farmer's Market, 8:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Produce, plants, maple syrup, and herbal products. Please wear masks and social distance. Jillson Square, Willimantic. Info: willimanticfarmersmarket.org

#### September 6, Sunday

Community Food: Ashford Farmer's Market, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. Seasonal produce, fruits, cheese, meat, syrups, honey, baked goods. Please wear masks and practice social distancing. Pompey Hollow, Rt 44 across the street from Town Hall. Info: Loretta, birdeye123@charter.net Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation (Online), 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. Non-sectarian, Buddhist-style sitting meditation, teaching and sharing. Info: 860-450-1464 dmangum617@gmail.com

#### September 12, Saturday

**Community Food:** Willimantic Farmer's Market, 8:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. (See 9/5)

**Reading:** Book Reading on the Lawn, 11:00a.m. Includes musical interludes by Mark Davis. Fletcher Memorial Library, 257 Main St, Hampton. fletchermemoriallibrary.org

#### September 13, Sunday

**Community Food:** Ashford Farmer's Market, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. (See 9/6)

# CT Green Energy News

Submitted by Peter Millman

Welcome to the CT Green Energy News, a weekly digest of stories that has been condensed into a monthly format for *Neighbors* readers. To read the full stories online, just Google the titles below. You can also subscribe to the free weekly email newsletter by contacting Peter Millman at peter.millman7@gmail.com.

News and events for advocates of clean energy, energy efficiency, and climate action at the state and local levels, focusing on Connecticut. Brought to you by People's Action for Clean Energy (PACE) and Eastern CT Green Action (ECGA)

# Connecticut needs to make big changes in 'who does what' in the electric power industry

**CT Mirror.** "Tropical Storm Isaias has shown everybody that Eversource has failed to main-

tain the reliability of the distribution grid — but what is less well known is how they've failed to invest in the infrastructure we need to support demand flexibility, renewable integration and community decarbonization efforts."

#### Connecticut Passed an Environmental Justice Law 12 Years Ago, but Not That Much Has Changed

Inside Climate News. "Even with Connecticut's environmental justice law... people in low-income neighborhoods don't know a major facility is being proposed nearby until after the construction starts. Whereas in middle class and wealthier communities, they tend to find out sooner...And if you find out about it, you're likely to have access to people who can tell you more about it."

# Connecticut regulator isn't interested in utilities' 'excuses' on power grid failures

Energy News Network. "Since becoming chair of the state's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority last year, Marissa Gillett has supercharged efforts around grid modernization...Grid modernization is about more than modernizing the grid," she said. "It's also thinking about the way we regulate the utilities and invite third parties into the conversation."

# Sweet Sunlight: Connecticut Green Bank program helps pastry shop go solar

**Solar Builder.** "Going solar is sweet! We're saving money, helping the environment and I think our customers appreciate how we're leading the way into the future with our new solar system."

# Stop investing in natural gas. Invest more in renewable energy.

Hartford Courant. "Choosing between renewable and conventional energy is no longer about weighing faraway climate impacts with the desire for inexpensive and reliable technologies. We can actually have it all, and we're heading that way right now with costs of wind and solar at an all-time low and dropping"

# How Connecticut's cautious first step on shared solar turned into a false start

**Energy News Network.** "The state is moving

forward with a full-fledged shared solar program even as a pilot program continues to limp along...Many clean energy advocates objected to lawmakers' toe-in-the-water approach, however, and argued that it was a waste of time, as states with existing robust shared solar programs offered successful templates to work from.

#### Vernon to install solar panels at police station, 3 schools

**Journal Inquirer.** "Solar panels that are projected to save the town over \$1.2 million over the next 25 years could be installed before the winter."

# Access To Air Conditioning Is Critical. It's Also Making Climate Change Worse.

Connecticut Public Radio. "Here in Connecticut, not all residents can afford to run air conditioners in the heat of summer because of sky-high electricity costs. We talk about how energy efficient homes are important not only for our state's carbon footprint, but also for racial

## **Eversource was on a victory lap. Then came Isaias**

and socioeconomic equity.

CT Mirror. "Since

moving to Connecticut last year to take the helm of PURA, I've heard the utilities tout significant investments in grid hardening and vegetation management made at the ratepayers' expense over the past decade," Gillett said in a statement. "Frankly, I am deeply disappointed in seeing this play out in real time. Utilities are in the business of delivering reliable service, and the public should know that I'm not interested in their excuses. This is fresh off the heels of PURA's announcement last week about our investigation into the pending rate increase requests."

# CT's largest ever renewable energy investment nears final approval

Hartford Business Journal." Connecticut ratepayers are one step closer to funding the state's largest ever purchase of renewable electricity, an offshore wind farm off the coast of Massachusetts that is expected to provide 14% of Connecticut's electricity once it's completed in 2025...It is not yet clear how the project will impact consumer electric bills. However, state officials said late last year that Vineyard Wind's bid price was lower than any other publicly announced offshore wind project in North America."

#### Why peak electricity usage matters

**Commonwealth.** "Peaks have out-sized importance because [New England] needs enough power plants to meet demand when demand is at its highest point. Lowering the peak

# We need green jobs, not a fracked gas power plant in Killingly

CT Mirror. "Gov. Ned Lamont is on the record saying he doesn't want the plant, but seems unwilling to stop it. He should take a page from our neighbor, New York, where Gov. Andrew Cuomo's administration killed two proposed fracked gas pipelines in the past few years by declining to issue required permits."

# Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

I thought this month I would look back on the changes that have happened to our business since the shut down happened in March. Matt and I have been very fortunate for all the support we've received from family and old and new customers. To all of you we thank you.

We never closed our doors during this most trying of times. We stayed open to assist our first responders and the many essential workers that needed repairs in order to get to work and help all of us. Our parts suppliers have done a great job trying to get us the needed parts to make repairs. Some of the repairs have taken longer because local parts warehouses don't have the inventory on hand. This means that they have to try other warehouses in their network. Lately 1 to 3

business days is becoming the norm to wait for the needed part to make a repair. It's important for customers to understand that and bear with us. We really try to fix your vehicle as quickly as we can.

We have added outside seating for customers who want to wait for their vehicle. The inside waiting room is cleaned every day and has limited seating capacity. We are glad that the lockdown days have ended as this provides more of a sense of normalcy. We still offer a shuttle service as we always have, but with a limited capacity of passengers.

The staff has done a great job protecting the customers and themselves. The mask and glove supplies have not been a problem so far. Let's hope that needed supplies stay available for all of us. The problem for us is not knowing what really lies ahead.

This uncertainty has definitely taken a toll mentally and physically on us. The one good thing is that we are country folk. This means that whatever knocks us down is a bump in the road, we will get back up and continue on.

The local small businesses have done what they can do to survive these times. Local restaurants have done a great job making sure they could still service their customers. This again shows that small business owners find a way to adapt and overcome.

Our business has serviced our customers past, present, and we will continue in the future. Again, our heartfelt thanks to all who have supported us. Our best to everyone always, Rick and Matt.

Rick Ostien is the owner of Franc Motors in Willington.



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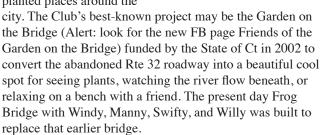
Submitted by Faith Kenton

500' long by 20' wide = 10,000 sq ft. – for up to 65 trees and shrubs to be planted in September on High Street, creating the High Street Gateway Garden. As you come off the highway and drive up High St to town, you may have noticed –since March- a long stretch of rocks and dirt, now covered with white solarizing plastic that has carried signs that say 325 Trees. And you may have wondered –since March, April, May, June, July, August -what's the plan and when will something happen.

High Street dates – Saturday and Sunday Sept 12th and 13th, and Saturday and Sunday Sept 26th and 27th. We need people with wheelbarrows and shovels to give us whatever hours they can. Public Works will have done the heavy digging getting the holes dug and ready to put pots in. Rock removal, and spreading 500 bags of mulch also to be done. For more information, email phiona8@sbcglobal.net or call 860-456-0817 (put High St photos here of the long strip of dirt and the white plastic with the rocks on top) Bring your friends, your civic group, your team.

As always with 325 Trees/Shrubs plans, Yves Kraus landscape engineer of Stump Hollow Design,

Mansfield, is the planning mastermind, still working pro bono. Faith Kenton is the founder of the project, now organizer, fundraiser, bookkeeper, and volunteer coordinator. She is a longtime community resident and active in civic groups in the area, most notably the Garden Club of Windham who oversees the 325 funds. Her commitment has been to promote the club as a public service club, creating and maintaining public planted places around the



volunteers at Heritage Park.



Yves Kraus and an unidentified volunteer plant a tree at Memorial Park in Willimantic. Faith Kenton photos.

If you are a fan of the Willi Brew Pub, take an extra look at the garden in the town-owned parking lot and imagine how it looked 15 years ago when it was a scrabbly, weedy, litter-filled barren strip. With serious help from Public Works, pro bono work from Jim Cardile and Danny O'Connell both masons and fund-raising from supportive citizens and businesses, it is now a year-round garden maintained by the Garden Club of Windham's volunteers.

Another favorite recycled spot is the Textile Museum's Dugan Hall on Union Street. Again with major help from Public Works, two unsightly sections were cleared of broken glass, rocks and sand, weeds, litter, urban waste and fitted out with soil, railroad tie edges and granite threshold stones. Contributions from local donors bought starter shrubs and perennials – all still growing well today.



Volunteers at work at Heritage Park in Willimantic.

The Garden Club and 325 also maintain the Schilberg Garden near the historic Jillson House on Main Street and the local Farmers Market. Founded by the Schilberg family in 2010, the club has focused on featuring it as a Pollinator Pathway garden, using plants that support the

life cycles of our native creatures, especially caterpillars and butterflies. Public Works-supplied benches make this a quiet relaxing place in the middle of downtown. It is now also the site of the large evergreen that serves as the town Christmas tree in December.

An important second gardening group is the Willimantic Wildlife Habitat who educates city residents renters or homeowners to plant less grass and more native-to-New

England flowers, shrubs, and trees. Their garden is seen on Bridge Street, on the edge of what the White Water Park group will be developing as a riverside park. And across Bridge Street by the Railroad Museum sign, visitors can walk the Greenway Trail along the Willimantic River and see groups of newly planted native plants. Look closely and there is a variety of insects busy at work doing their best to help these plants reproduce.

Smaller spots include the Thread City Diner's side garden, the square in front of the Public Library, and Kenton's own project, the long chain link fence garden at Design Center East because, as she said, "It needed to be done, and why waste a good fence". Over the 15 years of the Garden Club's existence, the members have worked on Whittemore and Ash St, Cardinal Square, the Congregational Church in Windham, the Main Street Baptist church, and others.

Back to the 325 Trees/Shrubs Project –

This High Street Gateway Garden site is the final piece of the 4-year long 325 Trees/Shrubs project begun in Willimantic in 2016 to celebrate the 325 years of Windham's status as a town. Kenton's goal was to raise money to plant 325 native trees and shrubs in the city over three years and has lost count at over 400.

The first piece in September 2017 was planting 25 tall New England trees in Memorial Park, downtown Willimantic, including 12 20' tall American elms on Watson Street. There are also flowering spring trees, evergreens, oaks, and tulip trees.

Then followed Heritage Park Part 1 October 2018. The same year was High Street Part 1 also October. In the spring of 2019, Kenton planted 5 large trees on Jackson St near Jillson Square with a grant from the Connecticut Urban Tree Council. And in the fall of 2019 was a second planting on Heritage Park with the help of the Windham High School football team. All these sites now maintain themselves with periodic attention from Kraus and Mother Nature.

Important dates as many helping hands needed on High Street– Saturday and Sunday Sept 12th and 13th, and Saturday and Sunday Sept 26th and 27th. We need people with wheelbarrows and shovels to give us whatever hours they can. Public Works will have done the heavy digging getting the holes dug and ready to put pots in. Rock removal, mulching also to be done.

Please come – it's fun and you'll be glad you did.

# 'Nightmare on Main'-Monsters: Beware!

Submitted by Bev York

The Mill Museum of Willimantic will hold their annual haunted event in October. Monsters: Beware will offer a socially distanced tour through gruesome and gripping stories about mythical characters that have terrified every culture around the world through the ages. Humans have used monsters to understand the unexplainable evil and events in the world. The event will be held in Windham Mills where huge sets and audience viewing areas will allow for socially distancing according to the state covid 19 guidelines.

Visitors will learn many stories of monsters that have plagued humanity for centuries. Monsters are alive in our imaginations as creatures of all descriptions fill horror novels, PG 13 movies and are everywhere in popular culture. In truth, throughout history, monsters have haunted people in every culture world wide. Generations conjured up horrible creatures to help explain evil occurrences before the enlightened times of science. Many thought monsters were working in association with the devil himself. People needed someone to blame for disasters, destruction and death that terrorize the community. So sea monsters and forest creatures explain why sailors and travelers never returned.

Take Dracula for example. Though the evil bloodsucking vampire may be named for real life Prince Dracula Vlad 111, the impaler. 19th century novels create the character that lives on in popular culture. However, vampirism, was also believed to be found in early New England. The first known reference to an American vampire scare is a letter to the editor of the Connecticut Courant and Weekly Intelligencer, published in June 1784. Councilman Moses Holmes, from the town of Willington, warned people to beware of "a certain Quack Doctor" who had urged families to dig up and burn dead relatives to stop consumption. In another case, former CT State Archeologist, Nick Bellantoni investigated a grave that the individual "had been completely...rearranged." The skeleton had been beheaded; skull and thighbones rested atop the ribs and vertebrae. "It looked like a skull-and-crossbones motif, a Jolly Roger. I'd never seen anything like it." The people may have feared that the dead arose like vampires and returned to infect the living so the burials were disturbed in desperation to stop the spread of diseases like tuberculosis. Historian Michael Bell has been investigating local vampires for over 30 years and stated, the public hysteria almost invariably occurred in the midst of savage tuberculosis outbreaks.

The Mill Museum (Windham Textile & History Museum) presents history on a horror themed subject each October. This year's event will be held in the Windham Mills Complex where huge spaces allow for social distancing according to the Governor's executive order. The tours that are strictly limited to eight visitors that will stand in marked spots. Cloth face coverings are required. The mill floor is not heated and windows will be open for cross ventilation. Please dress warmly. The event is subject to change or postponement due to the pandemic. Please check the website for updated information.

The evening tours will be held on October 3, 9, 10 and 17. A matinee will be held on Sunday, Oct 4. Tickets are \$15.00 per person. Pre paid Reservations for a specific date and time are available on the museum website and go on sale August 31. Please arrive at least 15 minutes before your time. The event is trying to eliminate crowds and waiting in line. Tickets are non-refundable. The event is (rain or shine). Grab and Go Refreshments will be available. The evening program is not recommended for young children.

The Museum (The Windham Textile & History Museum) is a private non-profit is currently closed due to the pandemic but is giving outdoor tours and providing on line programming and fundraisers. The Mill Museum is located at 411 Main Street, Willimantic, CT. 860-456-2178 millmuseum.org

#### 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

#### Unsung Heroes of Soul:

### Walter Jackson

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: Walter Jackson, whose mellifluous baritone graced the Chicago soul scene for 20 years.

He was born in Pensacola, Florida, on March 19, 1938, and grew up in Detroit. Jackson contracted polio as a child and had to use crutches for the rest of his life. In the Motor City, he recorded as a group member of the Velvetones for the tiny Deb label in 1959. He also auditioned (unsuccessfully) for Motown and recorded (also without success) for Columbia Records until Carl Davis, the Artists & Repertoire man at Columbia's Rhythm & Blues subsidiary, OKeh, caught up with Jackson.

Looking for new talent, Davis had wandered into a Detroit piano bar one night in 1962. He remembered, "This young man came out on these crutches, and I was a little taken aback. Then he began to sing and I realized that in his mind, he wasn't handicapped. You got so caught up in his delivery, you never saw the crutches!"

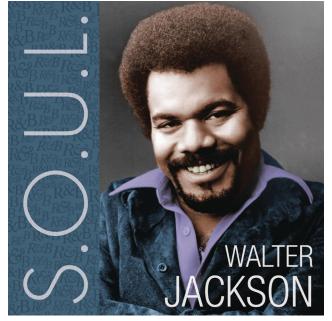
Davis instantly decided to bring his new discovery back to Chicago with him. Davis then caught up with the Windy City's hottest young songwriter, Curtis Mayfield, and asked him to meet with Walter. Mayfield remembered Jackson as "a warm and down-to-earth person. Carl Davis asked me to write and produce some things for Walter. One of my favorite productions was 'It's All Over'."

Also instrumental in Jackson's sound was singer/ songwriter/guitarist Billy Butler, who recalled, "The first time I saw Walter was in the studio...and it was mesmerizing. Walter was a very polished, very professional, no-nonsense singer. At the most, he might take five takes. He had some great pipes!"

Per Carl Davis, "Walter was a handsome young man. I remember he was onstage once—he had a way of dropping down on his crutches and catching himself. And the audience went 'Aaaaaahhh!!!'"

When Jackson appeared on Sammy Davis, Jr's TV show, Sammy walked into the green room and told his producer, "Go to a station break or something. I'm not going on after that young man." Some 30 years after he had produced Jackson, Carl Davis met Luther Vandross, who told him, "Walter Jackson was my favorite singer!"

After OKeh, Jackson went on to record for several other labels with little success. He even left the music business for three years before reuniting with Carl Davis for a soulful remake of Morris Alpert's "Feelings." It became



Jackson's biggest hit, reaching #9 on the R&B chart in

Walter Jackson, 45, died of a cerebral hemorrhage on June 20, 1983.

#### Charted singles:

- "That's What Mama Say" (1964) R&B #44
- "It's All Over" (1964), R&B #10, Pop #67
- "Suddenly I'm All Alone" (1965) R&B #13, Pop #96
- "Welcome Home" (1965) R&B #15, Pop #95 "It's an Uphill Climb to the Bottom" (1966) R&B #11, Pop
- "After You There Can Be Nothing" (1966) R&B #40, Pop
- "A Corner in the Sun" (1966) R&B #46, Pop #83
- "Speak Her Name" (1967) R&B #22, Pop #89 "Deep in the Heart of Harlem" (1967) R&B #43, Pop #110
- "Anyway That You Want Me" (1969) R&B #37, Pop #111
- "It Doesn't Take Much" (1973) R&B #91
- "Feelings" (1976) R&B #9, Pop #93
- "Baby, I Love Your Way" (1977) R&B #19
- "It's All Over" (New version, 1977) R&B #75
- "If I Had My Way" (1978) R&B #68
- "Tell Me Where It Hurts" (1981) R&B #19
- "If I Had a Chance" (1983) R&B #83

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-fiora/. His e-mail address is soulexpress@gmail.com.

# Walmart Adventure

By Lucy Mac Williams

Your first step, as a couple, heading into Walmart is to know the rules. Apparently, the man needs to push the cart. This sends the message to anyone who cares, that a man is taking care of his woman. He is doing the heavy work by taking control of the ever-growing poundage being piled into the cart. Of course, it is the woman's job to pick up and place all that poundage into the cart- the cases of water, the gallons of laundry detergent, is immediate. The tip is dangling by a cases of beer...however, he can always be counted on to put in the chips, ice cream and cheese dip that you both agreed should be steered clear of as he has gone up one pant size and you have gone up two – that you will admit to!

Now the woman, who has taken long pleasure in preparing the "list" and coordinating the couponswhich a man hates, as it says, "She has to save every penny as I don't provide well enough." When really she feels it evens the playing field between her as the consumer and those that would rip her off. We are not going into the fact that it's taken over three hours of her time to get done with this proceeding. That is a whole other story. I digress.

To continue, her head down, focused on the list, knowing the store like she knows every new fine line

around her eyes, striding just short of the front of the cart being wheeled by her strong, caring, protective man..... with full consciousness that he knows exactly what she is thinking.....she cuts across the front of the cart to head left towards the organic healthy choice isle, when unexpectedly something shiny and rubber catches her mates eye to the right! With yesterdays NASCAR still running through his veins he banks to the right.....

The pain her left pinky toe such a small piece of skin she should probably just rip it off, if it weren't for the amount of gushing blood that needs to be staunched before someone sees the deadly substance flowing on the floor. The look that passes between the couple, well.... Her eyelids narrow, teaming with blame. His, complete shock. He is trying to tame muscle memory that's wants to scream "what the f\*\*\*". Her own muscle memory wanting to scream "what the f\*\*\*!"

Now, because of the utterly complete devotional love for this woman and the fact that he's run over his woman, he stoped the impulse of his muscle memory, instead saying "Honey, why are you wearing those stupid sandals instead of shoes!'

Because she doesn't want to create anymore of a scene then has already taken place, she hands him

the list, coupons attached and with Kleenex flapping around her sandaled toe says, "I'll be in the car." Forlorn, gripping her world in his hands, he takes on the awesome reasonably, never failing his manhood and protective nature. "Honey, aren't you going to take your purse?"

As a woman she immediately wants to take it. The purse is her world. Standing there, all beauty gone in one swift second, toe blooded, throbbing, she reasons. He's worried about being seen by himself with a purse. She says through gritted teeth, "The money is in it." He, completely ignorant of why she has this attitude and holding onto everything his mother ever taught him about going into a ladies purse because certainly he was a gentleman he says, "Can't you get the money out for me?"

With a quick look back, moving towards the exit, not loosing a gimped step, she says, "We've been sleeping together for almost two years, it's ok now to go in my purse."





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Looking Up:

# Radios in the Corn Patch and the Riddles of Science

By Bob Grindle

It has been said that science is knowledge sitting on the edge of error. Indeed, the very concept of a "scientific method" is based on constantly challenging knowledge, looking for errors in the concepts, methods, plans and designs, and even, sometimes, opinions...all based on observation, logic and reason. Can these ideas be tested for accuracy? Do they fit with what can be observed by

people in a variety of places at different times? And if an idea can't pass the test of fitting with reality, if it's wrong, take it back to the drawing board. Revise it, come up with a new hypothesis or iteration of the previous idea or maybe even just discard the old idea and start over. Don't get so wedded to an idea or belief or opinion that you can't step back when faced with new information that may not support your conclusions and look at it in new light. Oliver Cromwell, a seventeenth century Englishman of mixed reputation, is famously reported to have pleaded to the church or Scotland, "I beseech you...think it possible you might be mistaken." I get discouraged when I hear people who are so certain they are not mistaken, or sometimes just talk as if they have absolute

knowledge, from whatever source, divine or historical or inspired or intuitive or rumor or science. They reach into a ragbag of centuries-old moral and cultural and ethical ideas and opinions in order to defend their position against the ever evolving and always changing culture of the human species. They stand their ground, resistant to the idea that western society or modern religions or American Democracy might still have work to do to deliver on their promise of equal opportunity for all.

Walking across the field and up the path over to our son and daughter-in-law's house, I am struck by how quickly and efficiently nature works to fill any space that isn't being challenged by the hard work of keeping it clear, managed by someone's vision of a purpose other than nature's rank exuberance, and I imagine a metaphor for a person's mind filling up with the rank misinformation and rumor and dogma that can invade anyone's brain if it's not constantly challenged by the hard work of testing for accuracy.

As an elementary school student I was fascinated with the incredible stories of the Assyrian and Egyptian and Greek and Roman civilizations, and have since often wondered at the almost stunning sagas of their decline and ultimate collapse. The lack of vision and imaginative leadership, the onset of partisan infighting and self-serving greed and corruption, the angry vilification of the outsider; perhaps no great society or civilization or empire, including our own marvelous United States of America, gets an

exemption from paying an ultimate price for their own folly. Plato suggested that dictatorship was a natural outcome of the chaos of Democracy; the commoners of Rome elected Caesar who then established a popular dictatorship; Thomas Jefferson understood that Democracy is the single most difficult form of government to administer because it requires the greatest commitment to and demand for an intelligent electorate and that that effort is perpetually made hard to reach because of the fertility of the simple answer.



Roughly the size of a football field, the ISS has been circling the Earth every 90 minutes since 1998.

As I sit here in the gathering dusk of a hot late-August, late, late afternoon feeling that fertility of the simple, unassuming desire to drift with the rising crescent Moon and the softly twinkling Spica as it comes into view below, I don't want to challenge my brain to work too hard. The chores are nearly done for the day--animals fed, lawns mowed, firewood split, bees inspected, garden harvested and dinner planned--there is time to drift with the flow of the Cosmos and have the kind of conversation with myself that feels as energizing as a mental jog. Turning up stones on the shores of this reverie is a scavenger hunt that often uncovers curious inconsistencies in opinions or beliefs and even more often serves as a sort of ritual tantric that brings a mental calmness. William Shakespeare offered, in his play Julius Caesar, that "...the fault...is not in our stars, but in ourselves..." and as the dark gathers and I watch as the International Space Station passes overhead, 250 miles above the Earth but trillions of miles below a thicket of stars gently coming on line, I am given pause at the bewildering complexity of a species who can solve the riddles of science but finds itself hating and sometimes killing one another over simple political or religious differences.

There is an old French proverb that 'autumn is the hush before winter', and true enough, there are times when the chill of the autumn air can sink into a person deeper than your bones, quieting your soul, as something primeval is touched by this never-ending connection to the very genesis of our planetary home. If you happen to be a lover of autumn, and I would guess most New Englanders are, that proverbial 'hush before winter' comes with a full woodshed's worth of images and memories. As September opens, the full "Corn" Moon rises over Route 6 and provides both a great and rather uplifting visual to those driving East out of Willimantic as well as great lighting for the ever adventurous and enterprising raccoons to find their

way to unprotected stands of sweet corn. Over the years we have built fences, left radios in the corn patch all night, set traps and planted extra corn... actually sat out for hours in the dark with a rifle... all to no particular advantage. We have had good years and bad, pretty much depending on the local raccoon population, I suppose, but they always seem to be more active when the Moon is full. While this early September full Moon probably serves as a harvest moon for the raccoons, the true Harvest Moon will not occur until the 1st of October this year, when October gets both a Harvest Moon and a Hunter's Moon. By the second week of September, the constellation Leo is rising in the early morning eastern sky just as the waning crescent Moon is fading into the rising Sun...and Venus

at her most brilliant stands by as the only planet in the September morning. Evening skies will be treated to Mars, Jupiter and Saturn...and if you're out late, about 11 pm, on the 5th of September plays hide and seek behind a waning gibbous Moon. Three weeks later Jupiter (on the right) and Saturn (on the left) play tag over a waxing gibbous Moon looking South. That's Sagittarius immediately to the right of the shining planets.

You can't just walk out and look up at the night sky, or day sky, for a few minutes and expect to feel the excitement or mystery or majesty that comes from understanding the world around us. Like almost any feature of the world around us, it is the repetition of the experience that makes it special and gives it deeper meaning. To hear an especially beautiful piece of music or a deeply meaningful song once, and only once, would create an ache that's hard to express. Like walks along the beach, hikes up the mountain or hanging out with friends, spending time looking up at the sky is something best done as often as the weather and your time allow. It doesn't have to be for long periods of time, but if you do it often the rewards will last forever. Enjoy the coming season and be the good neighbor that we all enjoy having.

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

# Pondering the 'New Normal'

By Kevin Pratt, Jr.

What is considered the new normal these days? The new normal is considered not going anywhere, not leaving your house, not enjoying your friends or your family because you're afraid of infecting them with COVID-19.

COVID-19 appeared at the end of February when the entire country was classified as a pandemic. Do I believe that COVID-19 could possibly kill me, my friends, my family, people I know, and even distant people I know? Yes, I absolutely do. I just don't think we're being told all of the findings because they don't want to alarm people. There are tons of conspiracy theories out there saying that the virus isn't real, that this is all made up and just one giant political move. Do I necessarily believe all of that? No. I think politics is going to play a major factor in the whole thing because there are people that should be getting relief that aren't getting relief. They need financial or physical assistance. There are children who are going to suffer for decades because they can't get the help they need at school. Then there will be kids too afraid to go back to school or parents too afraid to send their kids back to school.

One thing they're not talking about is what the financial implications are going to be after all 'said and done.' We as taxpayers are going to end up paying the price for all of this while all these politicians are going to sit back and still collect fat checks every year. Instead of arguing over stimulus checks or whether people are wearing masks or practicing social distancing they should be taking money away from these politicians. I guarantee if they decided to do that there would be a cure for this disease within 48 hours. Miraculously this is another ploy for people to argue and fight over money and power and position while peoples lives are in the balance. I love the fact that the government is playing Russian roulette with peoples lives. I love the fact that people are not actually listening anymore because they don't trust what is being said on the news. People have decided that they're going to do whatever they want to do and nobody's going to tell them different. However, when it starts affecting the people around them then they will stop and listen and by that time it will be too late.

Do I think people should stay in their homes? Not necessarily. I still think you should get out and enjoy the fresh air and enjoy the summer as much as you can because if the second wave hits by November you're not going be able to go anywhere. You should enjoy the weather as much as you can. People that are compromised or have lower immune systems should not be going anywhere or doing anything.

About this push for people to get back to work and to do all that stuff, I think you should use your own judgment. People are not stupid. They just act stupid because they're frustrated with everything going on, myself included. I'm upset that I haven't seen my friends. I'm upset that I haven't been able to go to the movies and kill two hours on a Friday or Saturday afternoon. That upsets me dearly, but will I get over it? Yes, because I know that I'm not doing anything stupid to jeopardize my friends. I also have home care people taking care of me every day. You have to factor in the people that are around you and the people that help you on a daily basis. People are forgetting this. I think COVID-19 is going to absolutely go away. No, I don't I think we're going end up like Japan and China and all those Third World countries where they all wear masks all the time. I think we're going to become part of what is going to be the 'new normal' - wearing a mask all the time because you never know what may happen. Will sports ever be the same? I don't think

so. Will anything ever be the same? No.

We have to stop being relaxed as a nation and start waking up and paying attention to what's going on around us. We need to be more conscious of our environment. We have little ones that are going to live well beyond us. We have to start thinking about them and thinking about how this affects them instead of worrying about ourselves. You have to worry about the next generation coming up. They're going to have to deal with bigger problems and bigger threats. People need to stop and think about that a little bit because nothing is what it seems in the end.

# **Book Reading**

by Alison Davis
on the lawn
at Fletcher Memorial Library
in Hampton
featuring musical interludes
by noted instrumentalist,
Mark Davis
Saturday, September 12th
at 11:00 a.m.

# Retiring into a Shaky Market? Think Long-Term Anyway

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

As we transition into the month of September, there are many other transitions occurring at this time of year: students going back to

school, leaves changing color, and for some, packing up their home office before beginning retirement.

If you have recently entered or are on the cusp of retirement, it's hard to tune out the stock market's recent volatility. Many investors who are still saving can safely ignore the headlines, turn off the television and go

Some, especially new retirees, may feel they're in a more precarious position. But by maintaining a healthy dose of asset allocation, risk tolerance, and confidence, they may realize the opportunities that lay ahead of them.

#### Asset allocation can protect your money

If your money is evenly split among stocks and bonds — which is often the case for retired people — then it already has a built-in cushion. That's not to say timing doesn't matter. It does — and big losses now are the hardest to overcome for people who are in the early stages of their retirement.

"The first couple of years of retirement, those are the years where we don't really want to suffer tremendous losses that we have to sell out of," said Jamie Hopkins, director of retirement research at Carson Group, a wealth management firm in Omaha, Nebraska. "That is your biggest risk period, from an investment standpoint, when you should probably have the most conservative portfolio."

Many — but not all — investors hew to that advice, particularly those in target-date funds, whose mix of investments gradually become more conservative as you approach a specific date.

But some retirement experts have found that an even more conservative mixture at retirement may be ideal. What they suggest may seem counterintuitive but underscores the long game that is the stock market: instead of maintaining that lower allocation to stocks, they suggest you gradually increase it as you age.

Certainly, such a strategy could backfire, especially if you have trouble sticking with it. But becoming too conservative introduces another set of risks: maybe the money won't last as long as you do, or it won't grow enough to offset inflation. For Americans who are 65 now, the average life expectancy is 84.4 years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There's also a strong chance those Americans will live into their 90s. That longevity calls for a decent helping of stocks.

#### So what do I do?

If you haven't retired yet, there are some simple ways to give your portfolio some breathing room. Working a little longer, even part time, is effective when that's possible. And if you're able to postpone collecting Social Security or Old Age Benefits that's another way to guarantee a higher paycheck in retirement over the long run.

If you recently retired, what's your next best step? First, consider what your portfolio mix looks like now; the recent market mayhem may have brought your overall asset allocation to a more conservative place, and maybe it makes sense to maintain that for now. If you have a sig-

Live Music: Mad Agnes/Hugh Blumenfeld and the Faithful Sky, 4:00pm. \$25. Reservation required. Attendees must come in cars, and may bring chairs to use in their designated area. Shaboo Stage, Jillson Square, Willimantic. Reserve your spot at www.breadboxfolk.org Info: 860-429-

**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation (Online), 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 9/6)

#### September 19, Saturday

Community Food: Willimantic Farmer's Market, 8:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. (See 9/5)

#### September 20, Sunday

Community Food: Ashford Farmer's Market, 10:00a.m. -1:00p.m. (See 9/6)

Live Music: Adam Ezra Group, 4:00pm. \$30. Reservation required. Attendees must come in cars, and may bring chairs to use in their designated area. Shaboo Stage, Jillson Square, Willimantic. Reserve your spot at www. breadboxfolk.org Info: 860-429-4220

nificant chunk of cash or another source of income outside your portfolio, experts suggest tapping that money in times of market turbulence instead of selling stocks.

Besides cash, investors with a whole life insurance policy — which typically includes a cash savings component that can be tapped — can potentially borrow from that pot of money, he said. (It is later repaid by being deducted when the death benefit is paid out.)

#### Other options you can consider

There are other adjustments you can make. The most obvious one plays into our base instincts: spend less during market downturns and spend a bit more when the market is doing well.

But if thinking about all of this causes too much anxiety, it may be worth considering whether an insurance product, like an annuity, can take some of the pressure off.

Annuities come in a variety, but some of them can be incredibly complex. There are cheaper, more straightforward products, including single-premium immediate annuities. You pay an insurance company a pile of cash, and in return the company sends you a stream of income for the rest of your life. Or you can buy an income stream for a set period — say, 10 years. Experts suggest figuring out what your fixed costs are — housing, food, taxes, other basics — and then buying enough of an income stream to cover the portion of expenses that government pensions do

That may not sound appealing. But David Blanchett, head of retirement research at Morningstar, suggested considering how much of an emotional burden an annuity could lift. "How is this affecting your happiness?" Blanchett said. "What kind of behavioral cost are you incurring? You can get rid of that if you delay government pensions or buy an annuity."

And if you haven't already considered paying for a dispassionate analysis of where you stand, now may be that time. But you need to be careful here, too. Find a certified financial planner - in times of uncertainty, some extra guidance could save you from a costly mistake.

#### Helping you secure your financial future

Whether you are planning for, approaching, or currently enjoying retirement, there are tips and strategies to help you maximize and protect your nest egg. This year hasn't gone according to plan, but you can live your best life despite the obstacles. Our Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well process can help you prepare for the unexpected, and get back on track when it happens. For resources and additional information regarding COVID-19, visit our website www.whzwealth.com/covid19-resources. To receive information regarding financial advising, visit www. whzwealth.com, call us at 860-928-2341, or email us at info@whzwealth.com!

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Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation (Online), 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 9/6)

#### September 26, Saturday

**Community Food:** Willimantic Farmer's Market, 8:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. (See 9/5)

#### September 27, Sunday

Community Food: Ashford Farmer's Market, 10:00a.m. -1:00p.m. (See 9/6)

Live Music: Rani Arbo & Daisy Mayhem, 4:00pm. \$25. Reservation required. Attendees must come in cars, and may bring chairs to use in their designated area. Shaboo Stage, Jillson Square, Willimantic. Reserve your spot at www.breadboxfolk.org Info: 860-429-4220

**Meditation:** Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation (Online), 6:30p.m. - 8:00p.m. (See 9/6)





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# A Welcome Publication

By C. Dennis Pierce

Wouldn't it be nice if there was a directory for all of the local Connecticut Grown resources available to you in one place? Well, now there is. The UConn Extension program, under the leadership of Jiff Martin, Extension Educator – Sustainable Food

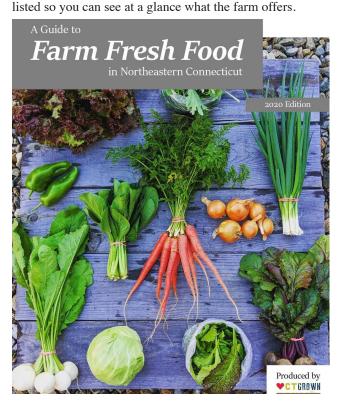


System and members of her staff have created a guide that is now being handed out, in limited quantities, at several of the local Farmer's markets and the Willimantic Co-op. This initiative, in conjunction with Heart CT Grown released a guide to help consumers easily locate local food producers in the state's Quiet Corner. The guide, for those reading this on line, can be found here, A Guide to Farm Fresh Food in Northeastern Connecticut. The new pub-

lication includes a directory of farm stands, farmer's markets and pick-your-own operations in the region. Those involved, with input from a farmer advisory committee, have created a guide aimed at growing sales among farms that sell directly to customers in the Quiet Corner of Connecticut and surrounding areas. The program originally received a grant from the USDA to deliver community presentations, organize outreach activities, conduct market research and launch new marketing tools and trainings to improve consumer awareness and increase product sales across twenty-three towns in Windham and Tolland Counties. The Farm Fresh Food Guide is a result of their marketing efforts.

I was fortunate to pick up a copy during a recent visit to the Willimantic Farmers Market. On that day they were handing out a

reusable bag for shopping and in the bottom, there resided the Guide to Farm Fresh Food in Northeastern Connecticut. It was a pleasant surprise. Almost like finding a toy in the bottom of a Cracker Jack box. The multi color, professional looking 2020 Edition not only contains a plethora of colored photos which capture farmers from the local area but also a "How to Use This Guide" with a map of all of the farms featured. It also has a helpful "key" which shows if the farm has a farm stand, CSA, pick your own, CSA and pick your own and Farmer's Markets / Co-op. There is also a farm product list with icons such as vegetables, fruits, eggs and other categories too numerous to mention. These icons appear on the following pages where each farm is



And did I mention the photos? Brilliant colored photos enhance the booklet. Photos by local photographers who truly capture the essence of what buying CT Grown is all about. To find out more about the new guide I contacted Becca Tom, one of the creators behind this great new resource for additional information. Becca has a background in social work but has been drawn to promoting

locally grown as a better option for the consumer. Becca believes that you don't have to crave food from your local chain grocery store when there is a cornucopia of options available to you through your local farmers. "COVID-19 changed so many things," says Becca Toms. "We were initially going to focus on in-person meetings and tabling events to talk to residents about buying local, but we had to put those on the back burner. With public gatherings limited, the idea of a digital guide became the priority and gives the community up-to-date and easy access to information to support farmers. It's a challenge, but it's exciting. The guide has started to create a sense among farmers in the region that something is happening. It's improving a sense of community, increasing awareness and visibility of the different operations in the region, and now the work continues to have more residents participate in buying food from these local producers". In addition to this project Becca has recently redesigned the Heart CT Grown website to add in-



formation for other areas of the state about where residents and visitors can find locally grown products. Access to the online guide, Guide to Farm Fresh Food in Northeastern Connecticut, which will be periodically updated, can be found at http://cag.uconn.edu/ces/fff/?page=1. Access to a PDF, printable version can be obtained by emailing Becca at, rebecca.toms@uconn.edu.

As gardens are at their fullest and markets are at their best, I wanted to feature the lonely zucchini who does not receive the acclaims that fresh basil receives or the standing ovation that a blushing tomato experiences as it is pulled from the vine. Yes, the lonely zucchini gets shunned as it is left on your neighbor's doorstep since you have too many on hand. Yet, it was not always this way the zucchini's reputation seems to have spiked recently when the popularity surged since it appeared as zoodles — zucchini as noodles — a healthy replacement for high-carb pasta. Zucchini, a member of the squash family, was first used as food in the Americas. Archaeologists found evidence of the dark green fruit in Mexico as early as 7000 B.C. Eventually it made its way to Italy (zucchini is an Italian word meaning little squash) and France, where it was called courgette. It probably made its way to the United States via Italian immigrants. Although zucchini can grow to giant proportions overnight, it's best to pick (or buy) when the fruit is

For this month's column I thought I would include a simple, inexpensive, tasty recipe with ingredients, most of which you probably already have at home. If you are not a baker this recipe will have everyone think you are.

Blueberry Zucchini Bread

Ingredients:

3 cups of all-purpose flour

2 cups of sugar

 $2\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons of ground cinnamon

1 1/4 teaspoons of salt

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon of baking powder ¼ teaspoon of ground nutmeg

3 eggs

 $1\ \frac{1}{2}$  cups of shredded zucchini

1 cup of vegetable oil

1 tablespoon of vanilla extract (pure is better)

1 cup of fresh blueberries (or you can substitute any other



In photo above:Yoko Takemura from Assawaga Farm in Putnam. At lower left: Rachel from Rachel's Veggies and Berries, Moosup, at the Willimantic Farmers Market with a customer. Contributed photos from UConn Extension.

berries) ½ cup chopped walnuts

Directions:

In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients.

In a separate bowl, beat eggs; add zucchini, oil and vanilla.

Stir into dry ingredients just until blended.

Fold in the cranberries and walnuts.

Pour into two greased and floured 8x4-in. loaf pans.

Bake at 350° for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Cool for 10+ minutes before removing from pans to put on wire racks.

As I wrap up this month's column, I want to leave you with a tip that makes my winter meals more enjoyable. Besides zucchini

you will begin to find corn on the cob at the markets. Buy as much as you can get your hands on, shuck off the husks, slice off the kernels from the husks and place them in a freezer storage bag. Add a tablespoon of sugar toss with the kernels and seal the bag. Date the bag and maybe list the farm that they came from. Place in the freezer. DO NOT BANCH THE CORN BEFORE HAND!

We are not through the woods yet. Stay safe. Protect each other. 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. Peas be with you...

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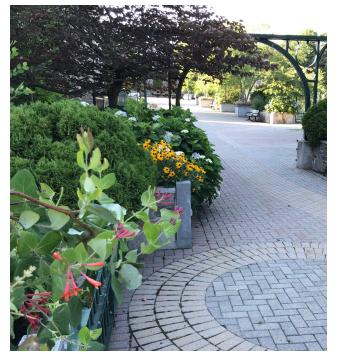
Our community will be healthier.

Look for locally sourced produce when you dine.

Shop at the Willimantic Food Co-op, Bob's IGA and other local markets.

Frequent our farmers markets.

To find a farmers market close to you visit the CT Department of Agriculture website for a link to markets.

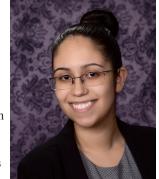




# A New Season for the Garden on the Bridge

By Briana Hernandez

The Garden on the Bridge is getting a makeover! A new volunteer group, the Friends of the Garden on the Bridge, has set its sights on polishing up this beautiful gem located between ArtSpace and Heritage Park. Come walk the bridge and discover its charms on Sunday, September 27, at



2 pm, when the Friends will offer a free tour as part of The Last Green Valley's annual Walktober.

Despite how well this Windham town park has served the community, the time has come for an upgrade. After fifteen years it's showing some wear, and the two approaches, from Main Street and Pleasant Street, were never fully integrated into the design of the bridge itself. The Friends want to change that - and provide amenities that will make the whole Garden on the Bridge area more appealing than ever. If you have an idea for how to improve the bridge, come to the Walktober tour and throw your suggestion into the suggestion box.

Now More Than Ever. . .

Since its creation, the Garden on the Bridge has become a popular destination for field trips, a relaxing lunch, or friendly meetup. In addition to the eye-pleasing plantings, visitors can take in the lovely stonework of the planters, the swirling pattern of the pavers, and the stunning metal arch that marks the beginning of the bridge. It's always been a great place to watch the river flow by, contemplate the waterfalls, appreciate the magnificent granite mill buildings, and remember the generations of diverse workers who toiled there, building new lives for their families and prosperity for the town.

Photographers and artists, historians and railroad enthusiasts, cyclers and joggers - hobbyists of all kinds have found the bridge a great place to pursue their passions. In fact, the Connecticut Plein Air Painting Society gathered at the Garden on the Bridge in September 2019 to paint the beautiful surroundings. It's been a favorite spot for wedding, engagement, and graduation photos, too. Parents and kids as well as folks just out for a stroll have gone the bridge to get some exercise and take a breath of fresh air. And it's handicapped-accessible, so mobility devices – and strollers – face no obstacles. Dropping in to the Windham Textile and History Museum, a.k.a. the Mill Museum, is quick and easy, since the museum is located

right across the street.

Now, with COVID-19 still forcing us to observe precautions, the bridge and its plantings have become even more attractive as a close-to-home getaway. The park serves as the perfect place to relax or visit while adhering to guidelines. Whether you go alone, with family, or friends, the gardens provide plenty of space for social distancing - along with the additional benefit of being outdoors in the breezes and sunshine.

How Did We Get a Garden on the Bridge?

Dating from 1857, this graceful, double-arched, structure- one of the few remaining dry-laid bridges in New England – was built of stone quarried from the riverbed below, replacing two earlier wooden bridges at the same site. For nearly 150 years it served as the major crossing over the Willimantic River into downtown Willimantic, surviving the hurricane of 1938 and the floods of 1955. But over time the narrow bridge couldn't handle increasing traffic, and ever-larger trailer trucks could not negotiate the railroad underpass. Pictures of trucks stuck under the railroad trestle turned up regularly in the Chronicle - and provided plenty of local amusement, in addition to headaches for truck drivers.

When Thread City Crossing, a.k.a. the Frog Bridge, was completed in 2001, CT DOT gave Windham the choice of tearing down the historic bridge - its recommendation – or taking ownership. Happily, the town claimed it. Inspired by the Bridge of Flowers in Shelburne Falls, MA, a local group under the leadership of Virginia Darrow began work, and in 2006 the Garden on the Bridge reopened as a public park.

Creating the Garden on the Bridge took years of collaborative effort. The project was funded by state DOT enhancement funds and the Town of Windham. Design work was donated by a landscape designer and a coordinator of the UConn Master Gardener program. The Mill Re-use Committee, Windham Recreation Department, and members of the newly formed Garden Club of Windham all contributed countless hours. The Garden Club has cared for the garden ever since, in cooperation with the Town of Windham and its Public Works Department. The Friends look forward to that kind of broad community support for this new initiative.

As wonderful as the Garden on the Bridge is, it can use some help. The Friends are thinking long and hard continued on page 13



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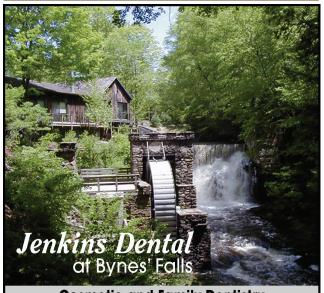
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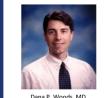
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Jennifer L. Capstick, OD

# Impressions of Griswold Art & Gardens

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

The Florence Griswold House (c. 1817) housed a summer art colony in Old Lyme, circa 1900. Earliest paintings are of the Hudson River School, and Tonalists and Impressionists were then drawn to the picturesque landscape and remarkable light on the Lieutenant River in the Connecticut River estuary. A museum is now on the

You can explore the collections accenting American art and Connecticut culture online - note the below -but the Griswold gardens, house and museum with its Café Flo are worth the short drive west of New London, about an hour from my home in the Last Green Valley.

First visiting the Griswold estate to see the old-fashioned garden (free) in August, I returned to the house and museum (\$10 in advance) to see the collection. Although the most notable paintings are in the museum, the house is very interesting with many paintings and "in situ" painted panels such as Henry Rankin Poore's **The Fox** Chase (1901-1905) above a fireplace, a parody of some English foxhunt prints. Also a "plein-air" kit display.

The former boardinghouse had several rooms where artists had congregated, and as my partner (an agropastoral watercolorist who liked William Henry Howe's many cows) remarked, "They must've had fun!"



The Ledges, October in Old Lyme, Connecticut (1907) -Frederick Childe Hassam

THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL was a mid-1800s art movement of American landscape painters influenced by the Romanticism that rejected the order of the Enlightenment's rationalism and the Industrial Revolution. Painters romanticized the primitive Hudson River Valley and beyond.

Study for *A Wild Scene* (1831 oil on canvas)

English-born Thomas Cole (1801–1848) painted landscapes of America's natural beauty. Executed in Italy, this canvas is an early study for his allegorical Course of Empire series of five paintings depicting the rise and fall of a civilization. The stormy landscape appears untamed, but small figures allude to the beginning of settlement.

Cole lamented that America's progress came at the cost of its wilderness. He inspired other artists of the Hudson River School to celebrate our natural heritage. Seventy years later, the "plein-air" style of painting outdoors at the Old Lyme Art Colony would record this gradual domestication – some say degradation – of the pastoral landscape of coastal Connecticut. Before it became agricultural and residential.

The Charter Oak at Hartford (c. 1846 oil on canvas)

Frederic E. Church (1826-1900), a native of Hartford, painted this homage to the famed Charter Oak while a student of Hudson River School's Thomas Cole.

In 1687, Connecticut defied the order of England's King James II to relinquish the 1662 charter giving the colony a degree of self-government. Legend says candles flickered out in the room where the King's armed forces confronted colonists, and in darkness the charter was hidden in a nearby large white oak.

(In solidarity, I started this column in candlelight during Chaplin's long power outage in August. There was less risk of virus in Eastern Connecticut, but no electricity, thus no well pumping water for showers and my plantings in a heatwave, so I sacrificed my affinity by escaping to Boston for a few days while my lawn suffered.)

The vaunted oak tree came to represent America's

commitment to freedom in the face of tyranny. Church silhouetted the Charter Oak against the sky without a nearby house, the solitary tree as a timeless symbol of liberty. Church completed several paintings in the 1840s, each linking the theme of freedom to Connecticut's past -- a nationalistic theme he would continue in his Hudson River School landscapes.



Peonies (1907) - Matilda Browne

TONALISM was a style employing Old Master techniques. Tonalist painters used glazes and varnish to imitate the golden tone of Masters' paintings, often caused by varnish layers that darkened with age. Tonalists believed their works would "ripen" with time, and glazes that were slightly brown did become darker. Impressionists mockingly called Tonalism the "baked apple" or "brown gravy" school.

The Wood Chopper (1906 oil on canvas)

Tonalist painters like Louis Paul Dessar (1867– 1952) were greatly influenced by Old Masters and in 1901 he acquired 600 acres on Becket Hill in neighboring Lyme to imitate their subjects and style. The rural region suited his interest in the Barbizon tradition of solace in nature. He stocked his farm with sheep and oxen as models, but found a compelling subject in the unyielding character of the axman.

IMPRESSIONISM was a painting movement that originated in France in the 1860s - the time of our American Civil War -- with such European artists as Monet, Renoir and Cézanne depicting visual impressions of the moment, notably with shifting light and color, brighter in tone than Tonalism. They sought to capture feeling not realism.

Impressionist painters repudiated both emotional Romanticism and the precise style of Classicists' accurate representations, especially landscapes influenced by early photography. Impressionism was first scorned in mocking reference to Monet's painting Impression: Soleil levant (1872).

Kalmia (1905 oil on canvas)

Willard L. Metcalf (1858–1925) first arrived in Old Lyme in May 1905 to spend the summer at Miss Florence's boardinghouse. This brightly impressionist painting depicts the mountain laurel shrubs that bloom along the Lieutenant River each June. Pleased, he exhibited it widely in Old Lyme then across America.

Mountain Laurel (Kalmia) Clusters of exquisite blossoms burst open in early summer. The bell-like flowers dispense pollen in a novel way. Stamens are arched with the tips held under the rim of the bell. When a bee lands, it releases the stamen, flinging pollen on the bee like a catapult! Likes moisture and part-shade.

Critics recognized the painting's significance: "Metcalf is at his best in Kalmia," one wrote (unidentified on the museum website), "with its flowering bushes at the side of a stream, the delicacy of the pink and white blossoms being caught with tenderness and feeling, the result being a picture having much of the poetry of nature." Metcalf's acclaim encouraged others to adopt the Kalmia motif, making it a signature subject for the Art Colony.

Top of the Hill (c. 1906 oil on academy board)

Frank Vincent DuMond (1865-1951) painted this work near his summer home on Grassy Hill in Lyme. He expressed affection for the area in a 1907 interview with The New York Sun: "Every year I grow more deeply attached to my summer place and less inclined to leave it. All of us who are associated with the Lyme colony I think have the same feeling, and our summer term has every season a more and more elastic limit."

The Ledges, October in Old Lyme, Connecticut (1907 oil on canvas)

Frederick Childe Hassam (1859–1935) was familiar with New England art colonies especially Old Lyme, the town's history and rugged terrain. He depicted the area's rock ledges in spring and fall during stays at the Griswold boarding house.

Choosing a square canvas and setting a high horizon line, Hassam created a decorative pattern of autumn leaves, tree trunks, shadows and boulders with light touches of his brush. The brushwork and bright color were soon embraced by other artists in Old Lyme, shifting the colony from Tonalism to Impressionism.

Peonies (c. 1907 oil on wood)

Matilda Browne (1869–1947) captured the glorious sunshine and lush color of a spring day when peonies bloomed profusely in Old Lyme, the essence of pleinair painting. The painting is thought to depict the garden of Katharine Ludington, down the street from Florence Griswold's boardinghouse.



The old fashioned garden on the Griswold grounds in Brian Karlsson-Barnes photo.

Peony (Paeonia) is a spring stalwart of old-fashioned herbaceous flower gardens. Large fragrant flowers are available in many color, white, yellow, pink and red, single and double. The large leaves are a lustrous dark green all season long.

While some Impressionists preferred to work on a white background, Browne achieved brilliant sunlight against the brown wood of a panel. A wood panel could stand up to the rigors of sketching outdoors in wind on uneven ground. Panels were propped inside a sketchbox or clamped to a folding easel, all part of the plein-air painter's kit. The original frame was carved by Hermann Dudley Murphy who signed the back, and with his Boston partners introduced handcrafted art frames to America as an antidote to commercial frames.

The Old Garden (c. 1912 oil on canvas)

Edmund Greacen (1876–1949) celebrated the "old-fashioned" garden in the spirit of Colonial Revival and the grounds of the Griswold house. Such gardens were filled with biennial and perennial flowers "that grandmother grew." (Biennials such as Hollyhocks flower the second year then die, but often reseed; perennials return year after year.) Reacting against commercialism and industrialization, old-fashioned gardens countered the formal displays of showy annuals popular in the mid-19th century with informal plantings of unpretentious beauty.

In his dreamy rendition of Miss Florence's garden, Greacen painted in an impressionistic vague style. His soft brushwork and melting colors mimicked the nostalgic mood of the old garden.

The old gardens drew me to the Griswold estate but the Impressionist paintings made the greatest impression. Sitting on the veranda with a cool breeze from the river and an iced tea from Café Flo, one can imagine the appeal to artists welcomed by Miss Florence.

Garden on the Bridge continued from page 11 about what, exactly, the bridge needs, both to enhance its strengths and to add to its appeal.

Stylistically, the Friends see the theme of the bridge as a touch of Victorian, blended with an embrace of Willimantic's industrial past and a smart refunctioning for our post-industrial present. The guiding principle for their work is, first, to build on the good things that are already there, and second, expand the design to include areas that got less attention when the Garden on the Bridge was first created: the hillside off Pleasant Street and the large, triangular plaza facing Main Street.

The Friends have started with diagnostics and are moving on to defining issues, imagining new uses, designing the spaces, choosing the amenities that will make the new concept work -- and raising the money for all this. The Friends look forward to in-kind contributions from Public Works and volunteers, but grants and donations will also be needed.

In the diagnostics department, the Friends invited a masonry expert to take a look at the bridge, and the news was good: after 150 years, the structure is solid and stable. However, there's a lot of vegetation growing out of the stonework –the trees are especially worrisome – that urgently needs to be removed. Otherwise the growing root systems will dislodge the stone, and a severe storm could topple trees and stonework.

Repairs and deferred maintenance are also on the agenda. There are sections of metal railing missing from the parapets, and all of the metal fences and railings that define the Garden on the Bridge area need to be repainted. Then there are cracked planters, sagging park benches, and faded pavers. The weedy hillside off Pleasant Street is crying out for attention.

Not least of all, the plantings – the very heart of the Garden on the Bridge – need to be refreshed. While you have to admire the resiliency of plants that have been growing within the confines of granite planters for fifteen years, many are in need of replacement. Some of the original trees and shrubs, like the beautiful river birches, redbud, and hydrangea, have grown too large, in some cases cracking planters and blocking views. Replacing them with lower-growing plants that can be enjoyed by birds, bees and butterflies will be a special focus. On the hillside, the goal is to create a pollinator pathway using native and pollinator-friendly plants.

At the same time, the Friends are looking at the whole park, from Pleasant Street to Main. One Google entry about the Garden on the Bridge refers to it as a "hidden treasure in the City of Willimantic," and in fact the park is far too easy to miss. The Friends want to make both the Pleasant Street approach and especially the large plaza facing Main Street much more visible and inviting. On the Pleasant Street side, tentative plans call for installing an arch to mark the path down to the bridge. The plaza has the potential to be a huge draw – for everything from family picnics and small gatherings to art fairs and food truck festivals – but it's underutilized now because, apart from some planters, it's just about empty.

So the Friends are considering ways the plaza could be redesigned to accommodate a range of uses and become more people-friendly and aesthetically exciting. What sorts of "furniture" and amenities would make the space work? Maybe tables and benches? A shelter offering shade, or a fountain? Maybe power and Wi-Fi? Murals and sculptures? What would make it kid-friendly? How about a life-size chess board or hopscotch court set in the pavers? The jury is still out on all these questions, but the Friends

are thinking hard and welcome your feedback.

An important part of the revised concept for the park will be providing signage: directional signs to point cyclists and hikers to nearby trails; interpretive signs to inform visitors of the history of the mills and the ethnic groups who helped the mills thrive; and botanical signs identifying the plantings. The signage will tell the story of our town and define its place in the region, past, present, and future.

Beyond amenities and signage, the Friends believe that a successful updating of the bridge will foster an even stronger sense of community and draw visitors from the region and beyond. How to do that? Faith Kenton, organizer of the Friends, says she wants the Bridge to become "a go-to gathering place, beyond relaxing or just crossing - for celebrations, performances, exhibits, mini-fests, town fairs of all kinds. We want to give people a reason to come to this place and re-design it so they keep coming."

The Friends would be delighted if the plaza could eventually promote local businesses and the town economy. How about food truck and busker festivals? Art and craft shows? Maybe hosting double-dutch or stepping competitions? Serving as a check-in point for walkathons or Rec Department activities? Concerts and poetry slams? The possibilities are limited only by our imagination. Tell us what you envision!

What's Been Done So Far – and What's Next

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic keeping most of us at home, the Friends have been working diligently, talking to town officials, contacting contractors, getting estimates, and doing what was possible with volunteer labor from the Garden Club -- while observing social distancing guidelines, of course.

The structural integrity of the bridge has been assessed, an arborist has been consulted about removing vegetation, and the Friends are working on replacing missing railings and painting the metal fencing. Public Works has helped by trimming back junipers that were crowding the sidewalk from Pleasant Street down to the bridge, making access easier and more pleasant.

Town Manager Jim Rivers has expressed support, while pointing out that the town's personnel and budget are both under stress.

Faith Kenton has been approved for an account with Patronicity, a crowdfunding platform that supports community initiatives and previously helped fund the 325 Trees project. Working with Sustainable CT, Patronicity matches donations from community members 100%. To donate, go to Patronicity.com. Any donation received by November 15 will be matched. Or pick up the Friends' brochure at the Walktober tour and tear off the donation form. Checks should be made out to Friends of the Garden on the Bridge and mailed to Box 773, Williamntic, CT 06226.

The Friends estimate that this project will be 3 to 5 years in the making, and plans are still in the earliest stages. But don't worry. The Garden on the Bridge won't be closed during this time! The end goal is to fix up the entire park, from Main Street to Pleasant Street and make it a celebrated town destination – more beautiful and more vibrant than ever.

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# Garlic

Article and photos by Christine Acebo

I'd taken garlic for granted for most of my younger years. In my first kitchens I'd usually had one of those small boxes that came with 2 heads of garlic sheltered under a plastic window. I'd use a clove, or two, in spaghetti sauce, or chili, or those casseroles I made to stretch hamburger when I was a poor graduate student. Garlic was a staple, though it did not have to be replaced very often, and it was certainly something I could live without if need be.

The Arizona Restaurant in Stafford Springs changed all that. We discovered that little restaurant sometime in the late 80's and it became a destination when we craved Italian food. The restaurant, with its huge

mirror above a beautiful old bar and comfortable booths and tables, was a family affair, with "Mamma" Teresa Andreoli in charge of the kitchen since the 1950's. The food was simple but classy and classic Italian, as if from one of the best home kitchens in an Italian Village. I almost always got the ravioli with Tenderloin a la Teresa. Each of Teresa's raviolo (now I know that is the singular form) was huge, perhaps 6 x 4 inches...tender pillows filled lightly with ricotta. One raviolo was a portion and it came out on its own plate swimming in Teresa's simple tomato sauce. Steak a la Teresa was a fat tender oblong of Delmonico steak, skillet cooked in olive oil, garlic, and red wine. The steak's sauce was rich and aromatic and the thought of it still makes me yearn for those meals. I once asked

Teresa how she cooked the steak and I managed to replicate it...mostly...but it always tasted better at the 'Zona. The point of this story, however, is about what came to the table first. We'd order roasted garlic as an appetizer. Whole garlic heads were served in a small bowl and steam rose as we opened their foil package. We'd pluck a clove from the head and squeeze the smooth, creamy garlic, drizzled in olive oil, onto crusty bread. I fell in love and garlic became a star in my eyes. Now garlic is an essential and face-forward ingredient in many of my meals.

In 2006, a fire badly damaged the Arizona and Teresa, age 79, chose to close the restaurant and retire. She died in 2019 and Stafford Springs dedicated a bench in town to her. She was a wonderful representative of the immigrants who truly make America great.

The garlic I'd planted last October grew well and still stood tall on the first day of August though browning lower leaves signaled time to harvest. That evening I pulled 27 plants and laid them in the grass. A rinse with the hose left the heads glowing white and ready to rest overnight, naked under a starry sky.

This morning I gather the stalks and clean them thoroughly, removing dead lower leaves and trimming still green upper leaves. These are hardneck garlic plants and the thick stalks will be tied with string into bunches and hung to cure from my loft's ladder.

The morning is splendid with the temperature hovering around 70 degrees and the cloudless sky an intense blue. I have nowhere else to be and am in no hurry to finish my task. A light balmy breeze makes me think of the ocean, though the air smells, not of salt, but of grass and meadow flowers. Hummingbirds zoom and twitter

around me, a family of catbirds flies into and out of the seemingly impenetrable patch of black raspberries at the edge of the yard, and a red-bellied woodpecker hammers and calls a cha-cha-cha, answered by another from a tree further in the woods. The house wren is down by the barn but his sparkling song is loud and clear. The air is full of other songs from chickadees, titmice, cardinals, sparrows, and some others I never seem to recognize no matter how often I hear them. Two mourning doves lift off from under the feeders with a noisy flapping and then whistling wings, and then land on a wire to mourn whatever it is they mourn so beautifully. From the depths of the woods the sudden scream of a young hawk splits the air, once, twice .... seven times. I'm glad to hear the screams are fewer and less insistent than they were last week when at least 2 young

hawks screamed all through the day for mom to bring food. I hope the shortened complaints mean they are learning to hunt for themselves.

The symphony is disrupted several times when the outside human world intrudes. A helicopter slowly makes its way across my southern horizon, just below the trees. Later I watch a small plane flying low overhead, followed shortly after by another. All at once I realize cicadas are responding to the drone of the planes' engines with brief bursts of trilling that start abruptly then fade as the planes move out of earshot.

As the morning nears afternoon something is happening on the road below, seemingly just at the end of my driveway. A truck dings as it backs up and soon I hear the clank of a hammer hitting metal, then men's

voices and the intermittent roar of a chain saw. Perhaps a branch has fallen from the old white pine, or perhaps crews have been sent to prune because of the forecasted hurricane. When the roar of a chipper starts, I finish tying the garlic into bunches. The sun in the bluest sky is high overhead and the air is becoming sultry.

I retreat inside and remember another time a garlicky meal made me swoon. I had arrived in Venice by train from Rome and wanted food. My B&B host sugge ed a small nearby osteria for lunch and I had one of the best meals I have ever had anywhere in Italy. The Spaghetti Laguna was a simple dish of spaghetti with sublimely fresh cockles and mussels in a garlicky wine sauce I never wanted to end. I soaked up every drop of sauce with crusty bread and a glass of dry white wine settled me firmly into that most improbable and beautiful city. I was exactly where I wanted to be, in one of what Maslow had called "peak experiences" in his writings. On subsequent trips to Venice I've tried versions of that meal (usually "pasta" alle vongole) at any number of restaurants. None surpassed the simple meal I'd had at Osteria ai quaranta (40) Ladroni on the Fondamente delle Sensa in Cannaregio. My photo of it hangs directly in front of me above my desk, ever ready to promote a brief daydream.

I have more than enough garlic this year. Some will be kept for my use. Some will be given away. I am saving 6 of the largest garlic heads to start next year's crop, each head holding 5 or 6 cloves. I'll plant the cloves in October and they will spend the winter nestled under a bed of hay, somehow putting down roots into the frosty earth and sprouting green shoots that will venture just high enough into the cold air to peek at the long dark winter sun.

#### **Supporting Our Postal Workers**



Fifty people supported the Willimantic Post Office on August 19. Photo by Randy McMahon.



Supporters at the August 19 demonstration at the Willimantic Post Office. Photo by Randy McMahon.

Folksinger Sally Rogers shows her support and concern at the protest in Pomfret on August 22, 2020. Photo by Monica McKenna.





Mary Eliza Kimball joined the demonstration in Pomfret. Photo by Monica McKenna.

#### **ECO-NOMICS**

Food Face

You are in my face,

No money, No food

I, sad and angry,

You, shame and angry too,

Line-ups at Food Banks, Soup Kitchens, and desperate corners, a two-edged hoorah,

generous and broken,

Hurry, hurry I'm entering the line on the deep rich hue end of despair but may trickle down to a faint color, and disappear,

I fear, no food, skull and bones may appear,

But my mouth opens today like a baby bird waiting for mother,

Mother Earth I've deserted you

forced you into cans and boxes and bags,

money can only buy you

and the world is infected,

'Round and 'Round

I'm falling,

no net below,

I look

you are there,

I claw at you fork and hoe

desperate to plant, an apple,

Now I need a hand -

out there

reach, reach, reach

till I can bite, pie

Just let me fully sink into a piece

of my eco-nomic pie.

a two-edged lament not enough fork and too little hoe

Hi neighbors, I'm part of a writing group who has been meeting weekly to write, read what we newly write or have previously written, and practice giving useful feedback. Marian Mathews offered a workshop through the Ashford Arts Council called 'Finding the Writer Within You' in March 2020 and the writers who wanted to continue are the core of this group. We explore writing through a prompt, without a prompt, and breathe air into personal writing projects as well. On the personal side, what I find unique to this group is that some members integrate other forms of art linked to their writing - photography, drawing, painting, and musical lyrics and script - as well. The group itself acts as a muse for me. As we continue to creatively evolve, we hope to regularly contribute to the Neighbors community.

Marian Vitali

#### Power Outage Song: Save the Last Flush for Me

Recognizing the challenges facing rural residents who lose water whenever they lose power. (to the tune of Save the Last Dance *for Me* by the Drifters)

You can cook Got some food in the fridge And it's fading fast.

You can brush your teeth And wash your face But just a splash

If you gotta go Please go Let's hope that it's only pee.

But darling Save the last flush for me.

When the power's back We can start the cleanup More or less.

We all need showers Got laundry and dishes Oh, what a mess.

The bathroom's gross I've seen more Than I ever want to see.

But darling, Save the last flush for me.

Don't you know the water pressure's low And the pump won't go.

Don't you know the water pressure's low And the pump won't go.

We've now got power And plenty of water Flowing free.

Got through 5 tough days With hard work and smarts And diplomacy.

It was a challenging time But most Importantly. You saved the last flush for me. You saved the last flush for me.

Ed Adelman 8.11.20

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History, Art, and Performance, Inc.

# Performing Arts



HISTORIC VENUE FOR PERFORMANCE & EVENTS

# It Takes A Village

By EC-CHAP

#### September

We know that in September, we will wander through the warm winds of summer's wreckage. We will welcome summer's ghost.

Heny Rollins

Last month we spoke about maintaining hope and resilience in these extraordinary times. Based on the uncertainty of when CT will announce Phase-3 reopening of live indoor performances; combined with responses to The Packing House Reopening Survey received to date; The Board of Directors has decided not to reopen The Packing House until 2021. Performing artists booked for the fall are being rescheduled for next year.

Since we can't really speak about upcoming performances in this article, we have chosen to highlight several of our volunteers that allow EC-CHAP to continue our mission. What you may not know is that EC-CHAP has no paid staff. Everything we do, and every program and event we offer is organized, coordinated, and executed completely by volunteers. The message that "It takes a village..." clearly applies to EC-CHAP.

Though certainly not a complete list, it is a privilege to introduce you to several EC-CHAP volunteers - the unsung worker bees providing you the best cultural experiences possible.

"I have met many folks who have become good friends and have seen a great deal of dedication sense of community in the volunteers and members. I would thank all of my fellow EC-CHAPers for fulfilling my need to connect and belong in a creative setting with folks from all paths in life and I look forward to the future as we all know it will be a change from our old patterns." -Julie Engelke

Arlene Avery Arlene Avery is a volunteer from Stafford. She was recruited by her friend and neighbor, Julie Engelke, EC-CHAP's volunteer coordinator. Among her pursuits, Arlene can be shamelessly described as a tree

hugging, nature



EC-CHAP Volunteer, Arlene Avery

loving, Mother Earth protector, community activist and arts advocate. Locally, Arlene serves her community as a member of Stafford's Zoning Board of Appeals and as a Commissioner on the Stafford Conservation Commission. She is a proud steward of the Dennis Pond Conservation Area. She also volunteers for Foodshare and the Stafford Area Community Thrift Shop. As an arts advocate, Arlene has a passion for connecting people through the arts. Arlene believes that creative expression through the arts is a vital human right that should be encouraged and cultivated. This is why she has a passion for supporting EC-CHAP'S Talent

um during open hours.

#### Cindy Moeckel

Cindy serves many roles at EC-CHAP, including Board Treasurer, member, and volunteer. Cindy is a retired CPA, and Accounting professor from Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. You may find Cindy behind our concession table or outdoors assisting with parking duties at events. She is an advocate of the arts, the environment, and supporter of local business.

#### Larry Grasso

Larry also shares his time supporting EC-CHAP as a member and volunteer. Larry is a retired CPA, professor, and prior Chair of the Accounting Department at Central CT State University. Larry is often helping with ticket sales and parking duty, not to mention assisting with preparing our mural project. Larry has a passion for music and serves as EC-CHAP's Fiscal Advisor.

"It takes a village..." If you would like to consider volunteering and/or becoming a member of EC-CHAP, and help support our mission and long-term vision, we welcome you with open arms! For information about our membership and volunteer programs, please email info@ ec-chap.org; call 518-791-9474; or visit:

Participate in EC-CHAP's Virtual Talent Showcase

We would love to include local and regional artists to share in our virtual events, and invite you to participate. All events are free to the public.

CALLING ALL acoustic musicians, film makers, poets,

comedians, jugglers, puppeteers, and creative artists of all ages are invited to perform in our virtual Talent Showcase! Here is an opportunity to showcase your work together with other "creatives" STREAMING LIVE in our VIRTUAL SETTING. Test ideas and concepts; and receive comments.

Our Talent a platform for local and Margaret Colvin



Showcase is designed as EC-CHAP Member & Volunteer,

regional performers to share their talent in front of a live audience. Until we are able to return to live performances in The Packing House, we are offering a virtual Talent Showcase which will be prerecorded and streamed live each month.

If you would like to perform in our monthly virtual Talent Showcase, please call for instructions to submit your video and be placed on the schedule. You may have up to 15-minutes to present your work, and we encourage anyone - of any age - to share your talent.

We will compile your videos and present the August Talent Showcase as a LIVE Stream on Thursday September 17th at 7:00pm. Please call 518.791.9474 for information and be placed on the schedule. The deadline to submit your video is September 10th. Join us for an ing of "talent sharing talent"! Virtual Access at: ww thepackinghoouse.us/upcoming the day of the show.

If you have missed our virtual Live Stream offerings, you can view them on our YouTube channel at: (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE7849dIweG-DhNCQvAEa8wQ).

The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery REOPENED on July 25th with "Continuation", a collection of two and three dimensional pieces by local and regional artists. This show will be on public display Saturdays from 10:00am to 2:00pm, July 25th through August

The Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum will reopen soon. Please check our website for reopening dates and times: www.ec-chap.org.

We leave you with the following:

"If you get tired, learn to rest, not to quit."

Banksy

Photos were contributed.



Willington - 20 Towns in 20 Days' - Julie Engelke, EC-CHAP Volunteer Coordinator interviewed by WFSB Channel 3 Reporter Carolina Cruz (foreground), with EC-CHAP Members and Volunteers Larry Grasso and Cindy Moeckel (rear)".

Julie Engelke

Julie is a Connecticut native, and despite her extensive travels, has always returned to her native soil settling in Willington in 2006. She is a graduate of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing, spending a career as a registered nurse in a range of diverse clinical settings and health care fields. Music has always been a big part of her life, and her love and support of live music venues brought her to a performance at The Packing House. She attended an EC-CHAP Informational Meeting soon after, and the rest is history. Julie Engelke has been a rock at EC-CHAP for nearly three years. She serves as our Volunteer Coordinator, supporting EC-CHAP's volunteer staff and insuring coverage at events. If you have visited The Packing House you may recognize Julie as the person often greeting you, checking you in and providing a ticket to the show you came to see. Most recently, Julie has assumed the role of 504 Coordinator for EC-CHAP.

Showcase by finding and recruiting local talent and serving as our Talent Showcase emcee. Arlene believes we can all learn and grow through the sharing of artistic expression.

#### Margaret Colvin

Margaret is a retired assistant professor of French. She has taught at Yale University, CCSU, Ball State University and Otterbein College. Prior to obtaining her Ph.D., she worked for the U.S. Government, including the Department of State, and worked abroad in Italy, Germany and Canada. She has studied in France and spent three years in Morocco as a child. She enjoys following the performing arts and has taken classical guitar lessons for about three years. Margaret was seeking to become involved in volunteer activities, and EC-CHAP is a perfect fit thanks to her cultural interests. As an EC-CHAP member and volunteer, you will see Margaret supporting activities in The Packing House and assisting in the Gardiner Hall Jr. History Muse-

#### The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery:

### Autumn Plan for the Arts with EC-CHAP

By EC-CHAP

The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery is open. Being located in the quiet corner of Connecticut often means

quiet space, with plenty of room to roam, this statement is also true inside of our gallery. The Community Gallery is a volunteer run effort that resides



in the spacious corridors on the first floor of our large quiet historic mill building, here at 156 River Road in Willington, CT.

As the leaves begin to change in the part of the state where trees are more abundant than people, and the warm weather

dissipates, take a drive through the colorful countryside and join us indoors. With masks on and plenty of room to socially distance, experience the artwork that we

have on view. With safety and sanitation measures in place, we reopened this summer after a long pause. The opening exhibition 'Continuation,' was a refresh of the exhibition 'E.O. Smith meets EC-CHAP' which

opened only two weeks prior to the countrywide closures in March. This show featured paintings, prints, ceramic sculpture, jewelry, and drawings by E.O. Smith High School faculty, staff, and students. The refreshed exhibit that opened in July, also included alumni and friends, with digital illustra-

tions, a variety of other print media and

woodburned images and sculptures.

Community is the pillar of our gallery and we couldn't be here without you! We have exhibited art created by artists in our community with ages between 15 and 85, with all levels of experience. We encourage everyone to take part and find their place in the art world, even if you start in our humble community space. Whether you are a trained professional artist looking to display your work closer to home, a crafter, student, or someone who has never set foot inside a gallery before, join us and become a patron of the arts, or even display artwork that you have never

shown before. Anyone can submit to have their work on view in the Community Gallery, it's as easy as a quick conversation or

Our community includes the artists that create within our own building. Starting September 5, until October 24, 2020 view the work of our Artist-In-Residence, Rebecca Zablocki. Rebecca has had a studio in our building since 2017, she has exhibited her work internationally, assisted workshops and artists all along the east coast and most recently had work featured in a solo exhibition at Five Points Gallery in Torrington,

Rebecca's work is mixed media with a focus on printmaking, ceramic sculpture, and fiber art and is a commentary

on chronic illness and self-care. During this pandemic, Rebecca has found new meaning and inspiration to create, thinking even more about the effects of chronic illness and the things that art can provide someone in their health and selfcare routine. This has allowed her to work more abstractly and create

work that she may have never considered before. Come view the work that she has created over the past three years for an all encompassing view of her recent artistic

journey, including some works in progress. As per usual, the gallery will be open on Saturdays from 10am to 2pm or by appointment.

During her time as Artist-In-Residence, Rebecca has helped to formulate

the residency program and to establish the Dye and Bleach House Community Gallery. She has also been the acting curator and Director of the Dye and Bleach House Community Gallery.



If you have questions or would like to visit or be a part of the Community Gallery, join us on Saturdays 10am-2pm during exhibitions or please email communitygallery@ecchap.org.

Sarah Ophelia Chittenden:

# Marriage on the Eve of Civil War (Part-2)

By Tyler Hall

As we continue to study the Chittenden family of Mansfield, Connecticut, I'd like to highlight how vital a resource government documents are in

the field of genealogical research. Census records, birth and death certificates, and military pensions all offer a wealth of information relating to an individual's age, location, occupation, financial standing, country of origin, languages spoken – even nicknames.

These simple snapshots in time, when woven together, can blossom into a strong and coherent story. Perhaps best of all, historical census data



(1790 to 1940) is free and easy to access online, in university archives, and at many public libraries. We all have a fantastic opportunity to be counted this year, and your reply may one day be used by historians, or even family, as a way to better understand

In our last installment, EC-CHAP's Gardiner Hall Jr. History Museum followed the bright eyed Samuel Chittenden as he journeyed from his home in Malden, Massachusetts, to Mansfield, Connecticut, chasing what was touted as endless fortune in Connecticut's famous silk industry. While in Mansfield, Samuel met and married the love of his life, local Sarah B. Davis. Hardship would fall on the newly-wed couple between the years of 1833 and 1834, as a devastating Mulberry blight ravaged the state. This catastrophic event would cripple Connecticut's domestic silk production, forcing Samuel to wander the state looking for work. During this transitional period the couple had three children, Emily Ann in 1835, John Ebenezer in 1838, and Sarah Ophelia in 1841.

1860 was a milestone year for Sarah Ophelia Chittenden. She was nineteen years old, living in the bustling industrial city of Waterbury, Connecticut - what would soon be crowned America's "Brass City". Abraham Lincoln was the Republican nominee for President of the United States, and tensions between the North and South were at a breaking point. Within a few years, over 200,000 brass Union Army buttons would leave Waterbury factories each day. Even so, 1860 was looking bright for Sarah. She had steady work at a local factory, her father Samuel's diligent work as a blacksmith had amassed the family a small fortune of three hundred dollars - nearly ten thousand

dollars today - and she had just met a young man from Derby, Connecticut, John T. Moulthrop.

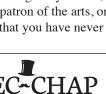
Born in 1841 in North Haven, Connecticut, John was one of five children. John's father Albert enjoyed great success as a skilled woodworker, while his mother Mahala was able to stay home and raise their children. Like so many families of the 19th century, the Moulthrops would be struck by immeasurable loss. Albert and Mahala's youngest son, Horatio Bishop, would pass away in 1847 at age four, and, less than a year later, they would lose their eldest daughter, Harriet Agusta, at age eleven.

Sadly, this was an inescapable reality of the mid-1800s, when infant and childhood mortality was as high as fifty percent. Serious infections such as pneumonia and tuberculosis, treatable with today's antibiotics, would have been addressed with largely untested and ineffective tinctures, miracle cures, and serums. Unregulated pharmaceutical companies would peddle their patented mixtures of alcohol, narcotics, and herbs, attesting to their products safety and efficacy, while simultaneously lacking testing, morality and accountability. This devastating loss would have undoubtedly weighed heavy on Albert and Mahala, and their three children.

By 1860, nineteen-year-old John Moulthrop was on his own, boarding at the Ansonia Hotel in the small town of Derby, Connecticut. John and Sarah Ophelia Chittenden would meet in Waterbury, and marry that same year. This momentous day, however, would be overshadowed by a nationwide atmosphere of political volatility and uncertainty. Unbeknownst to them, within a few short months, John would be on his way North Carolina with Company A of Connecticut's Tenth C.V. Infantry, marching headfirst into one of the bloodiest conflicts in American history.

In the next issue we will follow newly-wed John as he marches South, and Sarah Ophelia as she relies on the steadfast love of family to support her through her husband's multiple harrowing deployments.

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



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# Coping with COVID and the Risk of Abuse of Children with Disabilities

By Michelle M. Baughman

This COVOD-19 crisis creates a lot of extra parental stressors, whether they be from anxiety, the uncertainty of the situation, adjustments to the "new normal," or unemployment and financial concerns. With stress running



high, restricted access to regular outlets, and the loss of the six hour respite that a school day used to provide parents, the risk of child abuse or neglect increases, especially for children with disabilities or who have difficulty maintaining emotional regulation.

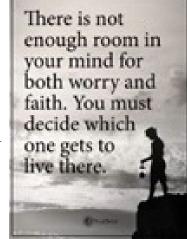
At times like these, the advice flight attendants give about oxygen masks is important to keep in mind: Take care of your own needs first, then tend to your child: If you don't assure that you are okay, you can't "be there" to be able to help your child.

Adults often deny their own anxieties and push on (this is why slogans like "Keep calm and carry on" are so popular). This may have worked very well for many people prior to COVOD-19. But muddling through on sheer will power alone just simply isn't sustainable. And it isn't going to serve us well during times like this because denying one's own feelings is like driving a car with a broken gas gauge; you'll never know when you will be caught out having exhausted your mental resources, just when you need them the most.

So amidst all the upheaval that this crisis has brought us, it has also brought us a gift: The opportunity to stop and breathe, check in with ourselves and our loved ones, and live more authentically and mindfully. This interruption from the pace of our modern living has brought an opportunity to reconnect with family, to reassess our values, and to learn healthier coping skills together.

Make "Me Time" a priority. While the kids are home with you, you can model the following healthy habits for them, which they can adopt also. This will have the added bonus of helping your children self-regulate their emotions, a skill that will serve them well throughout their lives. Some suggestions for how to cultivate healthy "Me Time":

Take a personal inventory of worries and resentments. This practice helps one to become more mindful of the things "lurking below the surface" that can rear their ugly heads at the most unfortunate times and cause one to say or do things that they would regret or that damage relationships. It also helps to prevent anxieties



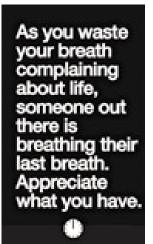
from escalating into catastrophizing thinking. A personal inventory is simply a hand written list of all the things that are causing you anxiety that you may be ruminating on, and asking for them to be removed. The process of putting these things in writing engages the hippocampus (the rational part of the brain) which disengages the sympathetic nervous system (emotional part of the brain) because while one of these parts is engaged, the other cannot be. Merely speaking or thinking these things will not be as effective because the mental process of putting thoughts into words and the mechanics of handwriting are necessary steps to engage the hippocampus. View this video see an example of what a personal inventory might look like: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2lu88X5LH0&list=PL1w-BaaVo3ny1BnzVVf5c-w-oObEa7v64P&index=51

Practice mindfulness meditation. This allows one to take a break from nagging, plaguing thoughts or worries by purposely focus one's attention on the present moment and accepting it without judgement or emotional reaction. It also has the added benefits of relieving stress, lowering blood pressure, reducing chronic pain, improving sleep, alleviating gastrointestinal difficulties, and improving one's overall happiness. By shifting your thoughts away from their usual preoccupations and developing an appreciation for the present moment you are less likely to get caught up in worries or negative thinking which allows one to be better able to form deep connections with others. To do this, simply sit quietly and focus on your natural breathing. Deliberately pay attention to any thoughts and sensations that come into you awareness, as though you are an "outside observer," and then let them go. For example, if you

are feeling hungry, notice what and where that feels like in your body. Your thinking might be: "This is hunger. It is a deep rumbling in my lower abdomen. It causes a kind of warmth and rumbling and it makes a soft gurgling sound." Then let it go and search for the next sensation or thought. (It is okay if your next though is about what you will do to address your hunger, but it is not okay to get up and act on that thought right away. It is important to stay with the mediation for a set period of time). Pay attention to sounds, sights, thoughts, and sensations without latching on to any particular idea or emotion that would normally follow them, and instead simply witness what comes and goes in your mind and discover which mental habits produce a feeling of well- being and which ones do not.

Exercise. Whether it be yoga, gentle stretching, palates, tai chi, qui gong, or something else you prefer doing, exercise can improve your and your kid's moods, and it is a fun way to pass the time while sheltering in

place. Exercise is the most transformative thing a person can do for their brain because it changes the brain's anatomy, physiology, and function. While aerobic exercise is important for weight loss, all forms of exercise are important because exercise releases endorphins, improves mood, improves energy levels, improves memory, and improves attention span. A single workout will have immediate effects on your brain because it increases levels of neurotransmitters such as dopamine,



serotonin, and noradrenaline which improve mood, focus and reaction time, and these effects can last up to two hours after the workout. According to brain researcher Wendy Suzuki, cardiovascular exercise actually produces new brain cells in the Hippocampus, which improves your long term memory. One of the most common cited findings in neuroscience studies in the effects of long term exercise is improved attention function, correlated with a larger Prefrontal Cortex. These two areas of the brain are most susceptible to neuro degenerative diseases and cognitive decline in aging, so incorporating exercise three or four times a week for a minimum of thirty minutes which includes some aerobic exercise can protect your brain. There are plenty of YouTube exercise videos to choose from, so try out some new ones today because as Edward Stanleyo said, "Those who think they have no time for exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness."

Journalizing is another method that can help clear your mind and regulate your emotions. Simply write down your thoughts as they occur to you without doing any editing. You want the situation to be as natural and authentic as possible. Write about how you are feeling and how the feelings affect you. Journalizing can help improve your outlook on life because it cultivates self-reflection. A regular practice of journalizing keeps one emotionally well-regulated.

Indulge in your passion/hobbies. Kids naturally have a sense of play and exploration, so they know how to do this, but unfortunately we condition this natural

healthy tendency out of them (and ourselves) by over programing sports and activities. The fact that all of that stuff isn't available right now is a golden opportunity to develop new hobbies to be passionate about. YouTube has a plethora of how to videos for children and adults on hobbies



that run the gantlet from learning how to paint in watercolors to how to renovate your home.

Time is the only non-renewable resource we have. This was often overlooked in the normal hustle and bustle of daily life where we let the clock govern our lives because earning a living was the main priority (which consumed the largest chunk of our time), and so our lives had to fit around that. Now, we are given this gift of time

to make good on all the promises we've made to ourselves and our loved ones, but never seemed to have time for. The purpose of family vacations is to take a break from the pace of the normal routine and to spend time together reconnecting. They do not have to involve traveling and spending a great deal of money. Well, in a sense, we have all just

been granted a prolonged family vacation in the sense that we now have plenty of time to spend together. So instead of taking the attitude that you are climbing the walls because you are trapped,



choose to see this as a gift. Do you know what the one regret people who are at the end of their lives report? It is having not spent more time with their loved ones. And people are dying from this virus...none of us can take for granted that any of us will still be here when the crisis is resolved. So now is the time to love and appreciate those whom we have been blessed with sharing our lives with. When you reframe our current situation in these terms, suddenly your values shift and your dissatisfaction with the situation dissipates.

But what if you are too consumed with worry to adopt this attitude? Then this is your golden opportunity to learn the practice of getting a handle on your worry. (Reread the paragraphs above to learn how). "There isn't enough room in your mind for both worry and hope. You must decide which one will live there." As Dr. Wayne Dyer says, "What you think about expands," so in order to avoid bringing the things you worry about into your life, you need to come to terms with your worry. Practicing mindfulness is the key.

Michelle M. Baughman is a late-in-life diagnosed adult on the autism spectrum, an educator, a parent of a twice-exceptional child on the spectrum, and a trauma informed AANE Certified AsperCoach. Her business Personal Evolution Life Coaching provides parental support, academic tutoring, and intensive, highly individualized life coaching to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and related conditions. She may be contacted via phone: (860) 207-4263, email: LifeCoach.PELC@gmail. com, or her online presence:

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#### The Elements of Writing

# Cliffhangers

By Felix F. Giordano

A cliffhanger is a technique used in literature to elevate the reader's suspense and induce them to turn the page. Cliffhangers are also used in theater and in the movie industry. How many times have we sat in a theater only to hear gasps from the audience as our protagonist is in a dangerous predicament with no imaginable escape? Then the theater ensemble or film switches to another scene. In the back of our minds we wonder what will happen next to our protagonist. Then we wait with curiosity and undivided anticipation to find out.

What does the term "Cliffhanger" really convey? Its basic definition is an abrupt ending. In modern times we can trace it back to the silent film era of the early 20th century. Serials such as "The Perils of Pauline" became popular and a cliffhanger was needed at the end of each presentation. That would induce the paying public to return to the movie theater for the next showing.

However, cliffhangers were in vogue even before the 20th century. Charles Dickens used the serial format to sell his stories and used cliffhangers to increase his reader's interest in the next installment. We can actually pinpoint the first use of the term "Cliffhanger" with a novel by a Dickens' post-contemporary. Famous English author and poet Thomas Hardy released the serialized novel, "Pair of Blue Eyes" between September 1872 and July 1873. In that novel, protagonist Henry Knight was literally left hanging off a cliff.

We can go back even further to medieval times when authors would use the technique of a cliffhanger to entice the reader into wanting more or to find out what happens next. Today, cliffhangers are commonly used in movies and on television shows to engage the viewer and bring back the audience after the commercial break or to tune into next week's episode. Even the nightly news uses a subtle form of a cliffhanger. How often do we hear, "You won't want to miss the next story so don't change the channel...now a word from our sponsor".

In writing, we should make abundant use of cliffhangers as often as can be tolerated. Obviously, best practice is not to insert so many cliffhangers that we exhaust the reader. To do so would have them become an emotional train wreck. If our writing is not presented as a serial publication then our use of cliffhangers should be considered for chapter endings. With that usage, instead of the reader choosing to put the book down they are encouraged to turn the page and begin reading the next chapter. Cliffhangers can be about danger, suspense, romance, impending doom, or even something that will evoke a sense in the reader's mind to remark to him or herself, "Ah-ah!" or "I can't wait to find out what happens next".

There are three aspects of writing that go hand in hand with cliffhangers. The first of these are short chapters.

Some authors make a habit of composing lengthy chapters of anywhere from twenty to thirty pages or more. Even if you have a cliffhanger at the end of such a long chapter, the chances that a reader will continue to read the next chapter of 20-30 or more pages isn't great. This is especially true if the reader has a limited amount of time to read, such as near bedtime, on public transportation, or when on vacation. Short chapters engage the reader, entice them to read on, and encourage them to be more likely to recommend the book to another reader. In bookstores and libraries it is a proven fact that long chapters usually result in the prospective book purchase or book rental being returned to the bookshelf.

The second and third aspects of writing that go hand in hand with cliffhangers are the unwritten rules of one scene and one point of view (P.O.V.) per chapter. P.O.V. is the terminology used in literature that describes in whose eyes the scene's action plays out.

Consider making each chapter in your book one scene and have each scene dedicated to one character's P.O.V. Not only will you compose a better scene but you will also engage the reader by not confusing them as to in whose eyes the scene is occurring. It will be a more enjoyable read and the reader will find your book to be less challenging to follow right through to the end.

Of the authors who do compose lengthy chapters, some utilize different scenes within each chapter and various P.O.V. shifts. Their method of managing these multiple changes is to insert either hashtags or asterisks between the scene changes and P.O.V. shifts within the chapters. There are no hard and fast rules that say it can't be done. However, if your aim is to traditionally publish your book with a publisher and generate a readership, my opinion is that it's best to present your book to an agent with one scene and one P.O.V. per chapter.

A strict no-no in the literary world is to include scene changes and P.O.V. shifts without the use of hashtags or asterisks. This usually happens when an author is writing in first person and then shifts to third person. It can also occur when an author wants to show how one scene affects different characters. The chapter may begin with Pat's thoughts about what is happening and then shift to Fran's internal fear of the same situation. If the author does this, it not only may be unacceptable to a literary agent but it can become confusing to the reader. If this occurs multiple times throughout a chapter, the reader can get disoriented not only as to which attributes and personalities belong to each character but also which character you are referring to. This is called head-hopping and can be very dishearten-

Envision how difficult it would be if you followed multiple museum guides each having different areas of expertise and different personalities while moving through a museum's great hall. You try to listen to each guide as they

randomly speak while jumping from one exhibit to another. That is how a reader would have to interpret a chapter when the scenes change and the P.O.V. shifts. If you need to convey your different characters' reaction to the reader, choose to stay in one P.O.V. and have that one character ask the other characters how the scene's circumstances may have affected them or how they feel physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

Let's take a look at a few cliffhangers in literature which I highly recommend reading in order to explore the technique.

In the classic crime novel "No Country for Old Men" by Cormac McCarthy, his protagonist goes through a series of cliffhangers with his life hanging by a thread each time. The novel is full of suspense, plot twists, and characters and events that you didn't anticipate.

One of America's best authors, Elmore Leonard, called "The Dickens of Detroit", wrote the novel "52 Pickup" in which the protagonist becomes involved in a compromising predicament. To the reader it appears that his life is doomed...or is it?

For some of the best examples of the use of cliffhangers in literature read any James Bond novel. Throughout each of his fourteen "007" novels, Ian Fleming makes good use of cliffhangers placing his protagonist in difficult situations against insurmountable odds.

In my novel, Mystery at Little Bitterroot here are two examples of cliffhangers at the end of two separate chapters:

Cliffhanger #1 -

"Do you think we missed anything?" Rocky asked.

Hank replied, "I'm not sure but I want to examine it with a fine-toothed comb."

Jim shook his head. "Hank, if you haven't noticed, it's been pouring. We'll have trouble finding more evi-

Outside, the rain maintained a driving rhythm against the wailing wind, swelling the Little Bitterroot again, eroding more riverbank soil, revealing new secrets waiting to be discovered.

Cliffhanger #2 -

Sam shook his head. "I told you, I want no part in this operation if murder is involved. Besides, the boss gave me a little demolition job to do up at old man Buchanan's farm. That'll be a pretty payout for me."

Anderson leaned over to Sam. "I got plans to take over the operation. I'll be the new boss and we'll be swimming in cash."

"Only if you promise me that they'll be no more killing."

"Sam, I don't make promises."

Hopefully, these two examples of cliffhangers in my novel will convince readers to continue reading. After all, the main reason to utilize cliffhangers in our writing is to build suspense and generate interest in what comes next. Make the reader guess what may be around the corner. When you use cliffhangers effectively, the reader becomes emotionally invested in what the protagonist experiences. We defined "Cliffhangers" as part of The Elements of Writing, and I hope I've piqued your interest in writing. Storytelling is inherent in us all. It is who we are as social human beings and we all have stories to tell.

Felix F. Giordano is a local author with books sales in excess of 7,000 and has had more than 3 million pages of his books read by Amazon Kindle Unlimited subscribers. Felix is also an organizer of the Eastern Connecticut Writers (ECW) at the Willington Public Library. To find out more about ECW, go to this link: https://easternconnecticutwriters.blogspot.com/

Next Month's Topic: Red Herrings

# Where to find the Neighbors paper

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Brooklyn Post Office Baker's Dozen Coffee Shop The Ice Box

#### **Bolton**

**Bolton Post Office** Subway-Bolton Notch

### Chaplin

Columbia

Chaplin Post Office Pine Acres Restaurant

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#### Coventry

Highland Park Market Meadowbrook Spirits Coventry Laundromat Subway Booth and Dimock Library Song-A-Day Music

#### **Eastford**

**Eastford Post Office** 

Hampton Post Office Hampton Library

#### Lebanon

Lebanon Post Office

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#### **South Windham** Bob's Windham IGA

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Photographer Bill Hoboth's antique Turk's Cap Lilies in blossom.

#### **Kelly Graves Achieves Career Milestone**



POMFRET CENTER, CT (September 2020) — Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors' Associate, Client Operations & Service, Kelly Graves Achieves Career Milestone

We are thrilled to announce Kelly Graves, Associate, Client Operations & Service has passed her FINRA® Securities Industry Essentials (SIE®) exam. FINRA's SIE® exam is an introductory-level exam that assesses a candidate's knowledge of basic securities industry information including: fundamental concepts for working in the industry, such as types of products and their risks; the structure of the securities industry markets, regulatory agencies and their functions; and prohibited practices.

Kelly Graves joined our team in October 2018 after a 17-year career as a paralegal where she developed invaluable skills in client service. Kelly has her B.S. in business administration and is broadening her industry knowledge by studying for the various FINRA® licensing exams.

Kelly supports our client operations and service team, helping to ensure timely and dedicated service on new accounts, transactions, and investment portfolio management.

We are happy for Kelly on this well-deserved accomplishment!

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