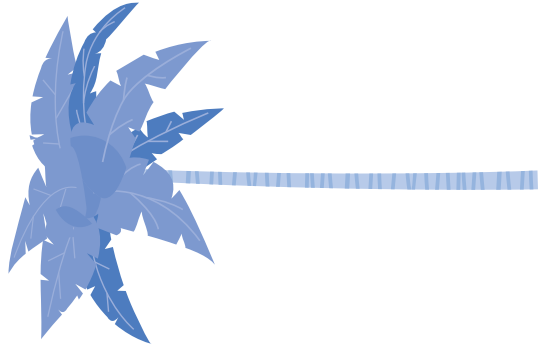
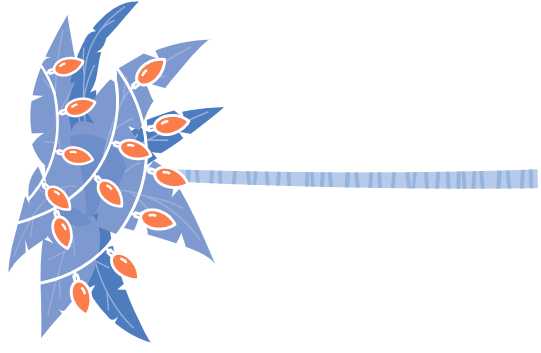




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Looking Up:

Five Diners and a Rainy Night Under the Stars

By Bob Grindle

We'd finished dinner...two mothers and a mother-to-be, one father and a father-to-be. It had been a perfect day before Father's Day, beautifully sunny and mild and, despite the rains that came late and forced a hasty retreat from the picture-perfect flowers and food-bedecked table on the lawn to a cramped, but still charming, dining area on the porch, everyone's spirits were also sunny and mild. The family was about to grow, and the evening's conversation, like a not-so-secret garden, was an easy ramble through untended memories that had grown a bit wild and gotten a little hard to identify, to some recent contacts with old friends that had bloomed and were fresh and worth mulling over. There was talk about current events that spring up like weeds and seem ever ready to take over any available space and yet, despite their relevance to our lives, must, like plants out of place, be kept under control; and, of course, comments on the wine and appetizers and food. But, like a common beloved perennial, the soon-to-be arrival of a new member of the family was the topic of choice.

As the unexpected rain sheeted off the porch roof, sizzling on the grill, and an occasional breeze misted us all, rang the chimes, and fluttered the candles that had been set out to enhance the mood, we enjoyed trying to imagine moving forward on this path that didn't yet exist. Babies have kept being born since time began, but whoever it was who first observed that every single one of these billions of human beings is a unique composition of genetic material, random events, and the passage of time probably understood that our lives are not so much composed as they are a simple improvisational jazz riff. Families are often, perhaps even usually, a sort of "Tales of the Arabian

Nights" collection of stories and recollections of memories that were themselves recollections of memories—all in all, an indecipherable brush pile of origins and how-we-met(s). These five diners, representing scores of extended family members scattered across the tangled byways of North America and connected across the Atlantic Ocean to ancient villages in Europe, understood the privilege and sanity of a small, intimate, nuclear group of family not so much trying to see into the future as simply enjoying a rainy evening's Tales of Connecticut Nights. Paul Simon's "Still Crazy after All These Years," playing, barely audible, across the porch, seemed more than innocently appropriate. The rain continued until almost midnight, and the conversation continued as we cleaned up and greeted the wee hours of Father's Day.

High above the rain and clouds, the show that Venus and Mars and Castor and Pollux have been putting on all month was not visible to our human eyes. There are some varieties of cold-blooded snakes, fish, insects, and frogs that can see infrared light, and I imagined how show-stopping it would feel to be able to look through the clouds and see the night sky. Sadly, it crossed my mind that humans would undoubtedly manage to weaponize such an ability.

There will, however, be countless clear nights and

early pre-dawn mornings in the coming weeks, and plenty of things overhead to make you go "ahhhh" or "hmmm," depending on your mood at the moment. After Earth reaches its farthest point from the Sun (called the aphelion) on July 5th, a beautiful waning crescent Moon passes through Taurus in the wee morning hours—about 4 a.m.—and on July 7th is directly above Mercury in the east-northeast sky. By all means, grab your binoculars and give a look. Mercury is a rare sight indeed and appears a bit reddish-orange.

The constellation Leo dominates—in terms of the space it fills overhead—the evening western sky, and by the 11th of July a waxing, barely visible, but beautiful crescent Moon will seem to amplify the extremely close alignment of Venus and Mars. (Does anyone recall the book *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* from about thirty years ago? Just curious; it was about communication and the difficulty we humans have with putting aside our egos and trying to work things out.) As the Moon progresses through the month toward its Full Buck Moon event in the southwest sky, it passes through Capricorn, and on the 24th it forms a notable triangle with Jupiter and Saturn. Again, binoculars help but are not necessary. Grab them if you have them.

I frequently ponder the odd plight of our species, and I am always heartened by the realization that life is tenacious and if solutions are to be found they will likely arise when no one is expecting them and from a person or persons unfrightened by our primordial home. Stay well. Enjoy the summer, your neighborhood, and the skies over our heads.

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



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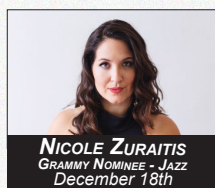
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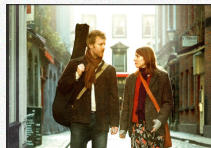
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Bottom: A sanderling catching a sand crab. © Michael Mill | Dreamstime.com

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

Neighbors
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The Purpose of Neighbors:

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

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Hello again

By Loretta Wrobel



Trying to wrap my mind around what is going on in the world, my community and my own head. Hard to believe that it has been since March of 2020 that everyone masked up. Only seeing the eyeballs of friends, acquaintances, and strangers began as an unsettling experience. To me, it felt like something out of a horror movie. With faces hidden except for the eyes, it was difficult to recognize who was standing near you, friend or foe.

At first, I dealt with this foreign manner of necessary masks by sticking close to home. Who knew where the virus was lurking and should you wash your hands a hundred times a day? What about the newspaper, mail and groceries? How long should you wait before opening any packages? We were receiving a higher load of packages due to online shopping and most stores were closed. However, as true-blue Americans, we had to shop. In the beginning only a few stores were open, such as pharmacies and grocery stores. As time slowly crept along, more stores opened, but several of us were nervous and jittery about going inside. Did this only begin in March 2020? It seems like it was another era.

Since as human beings we are flexible and adaptable (mostly), we did adjust to this weird way of living. We forgot about smiles and cheekbones, mouths and chins. We started to feel safer with our single masks, double masks, or masks plus face shields. We could protect ourselves--just mask up, stay away from crowds, and don't go into restaurants. Sanitizing became the new kale or gold. If you sprayed enough, you could survive. You ended up with cracked, red hands, but that was a minor price to pay for feeling safe.

In the winter talk began about a vaccine which was being rushed through the appropriate channels to stop this deadly virus. "Too soon!" replied the masses. "Who knows what the vaccines will do to us!" chanted many sceptics. Never mind that the virus deaths were skyrocketing. Everyone knew someone who died, or a friend of a friend who had caught the virus and was seriously ill, often hospitalized.

The oldies (myself included in my late 70's) started thinking, what do I have to lose? I could lose my life, I could be married to a respirator, or I could take the vaccination and have soreness in my arm. I lined up with the other elders and rolled up my sleeve. By February of 2021, I had received two Pfizer shots, and was working on my two-week period to insure total protection after the second needle.

As thousands of Connecticut residents followed suit and the percentages of vaccinated people rose as fast as the spread of COVID, a rainbow of hope emerged. Could we get through this?

As winter led to spring, we raced outdoors to gather with our friends. The privileged over age 65 were in the forefront. Yes we could meet with our friends, as long as we were vaccinated and had completed the two-week period. Grandparents wept for joy to see their little progeny, and adult children could visit their relatives in nursing facilities. There was much to celebrate. We were grateful for the miracles of modern medicine.

Just when I was happily moving into this new realm, I began to see ominous signs, such as "masks not required for vaccinated people." Immediately, my peace of mind plummeted. How would I know that everyone I passed was vaccinated? People who did not trust those shots or the scientists and doctors, believing they were a plot to control the population, would not be wearing masks. My paranoid thinking escalated and I was confused, bothered and bewildered. What if I contacted a stray virus and spread it to loved ones? Since I would be likely to not feel sick, how would I know?

Meanwhile all around me, I heard people saying, "You don't need a mask, we are all vaccinated." I was not sure that it was that easy. I had to adjust to seeing people with full faces. Initially, it felt overwhelming and a bit scary. I realized I was such a fool. First, I hated the mask and objected to wearing it. After a while, I got accustomed to having my face covered. I remembered how I did enjoy The Lone Ranger as an eight-year-old young kid. I made peace and friends with all my different colored and political masks, especially the one honoring Ruth Bader Ginsberg saying tRUTH! What fun to make political statements with your essential mask. Much easier than carrying a sign, and not so rigorous.

Now I was supposed to drop my mask and stand exposed in front of the whole world. I wasn't sure how to approach and navigate this new phase. What-ifs and how-abouts were swimming in my brain. I learned that adjusting is challenging when you have been on the planet for more than seventy-five years!!!

Would I need to contact a therapist? How about forming a group about reentry? If my mother was still around, I could consult with her. Yet I knew what she would say, "You've been here living for all these years, what is the big deal? Be grateful for all the healthy years you have walked on this dear earth."

I decided the best method for me was to write about it and see if others experienced similar or vastly different feelings. I know that often when you expose your deepest truth and fears, it becomes more manageable. Revealing does leave one vulnerable. Can I accept that risk? Why not try it? And so I did.

As we enter into summer, and the lush growth captivates my senses, I become more secure and less fearful. What a wild ride this last sixteen months has been. I wish you ease, peace, and fully exposed healthy faces for this beautiful summer. Keep smiling as we can now experience your special smile!

Bug Out with UConn Extension

Submitted by Stacey Stearns

UConn Extension is celebrating Bug Month during the month of July with virtual programs and resources for the entire family.

All ages are welcome to explore the activities dedicated to insects and their relatives. Bug Month virtual programs and resources are buzzing with the following:

Answer a few questions to qualify for a free bug kit. The bug kit comes with a Bug Month activity booklet, supplies for collecting and looking closely at bugs as well as ideas for backyard adventures with the kit. Learn more at <https://bugs.uconn.edu/bug-kits/>.

Check out the "Up Close" with the Luna Moth videos to learn more about Luna Moth development.

A beneficial insect section. Read more about beneficial insects in our area and the roles they play.

Want to make some bug-re-

lated crafts and recipes? Check out <https://bugs.uconn.edu/bug-kits/> for a wide variety of crafts and treats.

Planning to create a pollinator garden? We have added a "Native Plants for Pollinators" section to help you choose plants for your garden.

The Connecticut Science Center will be buzzing with programs to celebrate Bug Month from Monday, July 21 through Sunday, July 27. Spend time in the tropical Butterfly Encounter, participate in bug-themed Live Science programming, hear a bug themed story during Story Time, and be sure to explore what is flying around the Rooftop Garden.

We're having our photo contest this year with three categories: junior, senior, and professional. Learn more at: <http://bugs.uconn.edu/photo-contest/>.

Bug Month is one example of UConn Extension's mission in bringing UConn's research out to the citizens of the state by addressing

insects and their relatives. For more information on Bug Month, please visit our website at <https://bugs.uconn.edu/>, email bugweek@uconn.edu or call 860-486-9228.

UConn Extension has more than 100 years' experience strengthening communities in Connecticut and beyond. Extension programs address the full range of issues set forth in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources strategic initiatives: Ensuring a vibrant and sustainable agricultural industry and food supply Enhancing health and well-being locally, nationally, and globally Designing sustainable landscapes across urban-rural interfaces Advancing adaptation and resilience in a changing climate.

Programs delivered by Extension reach individuals, communities, and businesses in each of Connecticut's 169 municipalities.

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Willimantic, Now and Then:

Coming in From the Cold: New pot law welcomes us back into fold

By Mark Svetz



It occurred to me the other day, when I heard about the passage of Connecticut's new recreational marijuana legislation, that I have felt like an outlaw for most of my life. It hasn't been a major bummer for me, but the consequences of a drug arrest have always lurked in the background of my awareness. I imagine it has for most pot smokers. The recent legislation, signed by Governor Ned Lamont on June 22, has me thinking about coming in from the cold.

For most of my life I have been around pot smoking. When I was young it was a central element of our culture; our parents drank, we smoked pot. Like most of my friends, I have always believed the drug war, and the laws against marijuana particularly, were unjust. In fact, it always seemed like a repeat of the failed attempt to outlaw alcohol in the early part of the 20th century. Well, it seems our modern Prohibition is coming to an end.

Last week, as this bill worked its way through the state legislature, I began to imagine a world in which pot was legal. After living with and observing the casualties of the war on drugs for the last 50 years, it seemed to me the State of Connecticut was welcoming us back in from the cold.

Bob Marley's song, "Comin' in from the Cold," has been in my mind. The great Reggae musician was referring to the Rastafari movement welcoming people in from the cold cruelty of Babylon. I personally like the Rastafarian concept of Babylon, which is really the Eurocentric, corporate-driven culture of modern America. I think Babylon had a hand in making pot illegal in the first place. Babylon has dealt harshly in the past with those who obstruct the corporate agenda. I am thinking about the suffragists of the 19th century, the labor movement of the early 20th century and the Black panthers of the 1960s and 70s. The war on drugs has been Babylon's excuse for oppressive policing since Richard Nixon announced it in 1971.

We have all witnessed the carnage. The infamous 'stop and frisk' program in New York City saw something like 100,000 people a year stopped by the police, without cause. These were mostly people of color, and there were startlingly few arrests. This program, and others across the country, were immensely destructive to the communities in which they occurred.

Now, Connecticut's new law sounds almost like an apology, not only legalizing pot, but making some effort to erase the arrest records of the past. I look forward to reading the bill and finding out how that will work. I see this legislation as the state making amends for the drunken abuse of power that was the drug war, and I appreciate these terms of reparation included in the legislation. I believe when I find myself in a hole, the first thing I have to do is stop digging. Passage of this legislation seems to "stop the digging." I'm glad Connecticut has joined 18 other states in making recreational pot use legal. The Governor and many legislators seem to be in the mood to go further. There was talk of giving people with marijuana arrest records some advantage in the permitting process for growers and manufacturers.

Boy, wouldn't it be nice to have a national conversation about redressing past injustices. I guess we'll see, but I think the powerful gesture of making pot legal is good start for welcoming us in from the cold. The drug war has always seemed like one group of citizens declaring war on another. One community making another community the enemy in some crazy conflict, partly economic, partly political. As a result, many of us lost respect for the law and the lawmakers. It has undermined our democracy. The delicate social contract that is the foundation of democracy requires a lot of trust. Ours was squandered.

It is being squandered in other ways right now. It seems some of the energy that went into the war on drugs, is going to find other ways to keep people from voting. Remember, one result of all those felony arrests is that a lot of people lost the right to vote. Republicans in Congress are now blocking voting rights legislation. I hope some of the success we've had legalizing pot will energize people. We desperately need bring more people in from the cold. Expanding voting rights in all jurisdictions, making all our schools as good as our best schools and rooting out the systemic racism in our police departments are some of the areas that need our attention.

I am really pleased see marijuana legalized. I never really believed it would happen in my lifetime. But I can't help thinking about all the other people who are still left out in the cold. As the bumpersticker used to say: I'll be glad when our schools have all the money they need and the police departments need bake sales to get a new cruiser.

Mark Svetz has been a journalist, activist, teacher and self-appointed knight errant in Willimantic for the last 45 years... and counting! You can read more of Mark's writing at www.WillimanticToday.wordpress.com

Don't Chicken Out

By Delia Berlin



I used to be deadly afraid of wild mushrooms. I couldn't imagine foraging to eat them, risking my health and life in the process. Then, this summer, a beautiful huge mushroom appeared in our yard, and we got curious about it. Some cursory internet research pointed to Chicken of the Woods, supposedly a delicacy that is rich in protein and other beneficial nutrients. We read that it can be prepared and cooked in the same way as chicken, which is what it tastes like. Also, like chicken, it shouldn't be eaten raw and it can be frozen without cooking it first.



After more extensive reading, a handful of consultations, and sharing images with experienced mushroom foragers, we can now confidently say that we have Chicken of the Woods in our yard. Our chicken is already the size of a small turkey, so we plan to share it with my sister and brother-in-law later this week. If you are reading this, we have survived the experience.

Limited as my knowledge is about foraging mushrooms, it is huge compared to what I knew just a week ago. I will share it here, because I have the feeling that it may be of practical use, at least in our area of Connecticut.

You may have noticed that eastern Connecticut is teeming with dead oaks. Years of drought, coupled with consecutive defoliations from gypsy moths, took a toll on our tree populations. Oaks, a favorite food of gypsy moth caterpillars, suffered disproportionate losses. It turns out that our particular species of Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus cincinnatus*) loves dead oaks, which it helps to decompose. So, I see lots of these chickens in our future. We may just as well know how to use them.

Chicken of the Woods is among the most recommended mushrooms for beginner foragers. It is ideal for several reasons. Its large size and showy colors (bright yellow or orange) make this mushroom easy to find. Once found, identification is easy. There is only one similar species that is toxic, the Jack-O-Lantern mushroom. But these species can be readily differentiated by examining the underside of the mushroom: the Jack-O-Lantern has gills, as opposed to a solid underside with a few pores on the Chicken of the Woods. If you see gills, leave it alone. Apparently, this toxic look-alike will make you sick but won't kill you—a definite plus.

Another look-alike is the Velvet-Top mushroom, which is not poisonous, but it is inedible. Being fibrous and woody, rather than soft and pliable, one is not likely to be tempted by it. With more remote similarity, we find the Chanterelle mushroom, much smaller and not as showy, but also edible. Finally, another one to be mentioned is the Hen of the Woods, which is not very similar, but is often confused with the Chicken. This mushroom is brownish and looks like hen feathers, which is at the root of its name.

Besides the species mentioned, there isn't really anything that remotely resembles Chicken of the Woods, which makes it a particularly safe harvest for novices. While this mushroom is more common in the fall, it can be found from June to December, an incredibly long harvesting window. In addition, it tends to grow in the same places year after year, so, once you find a bounty, it will keep on giving.

Places to check for these mushrooms are fallen oaks and the bases of dead oaks. Recent oak casualties may take a few years to start hosting them. But with so many dead oaks around here, I'm counting on finding plenty of these chickens long before they hatch.

Local women meet Governor Lamont

By Carol Davidge

On June 11, Cheryl Kapelner-Champ and Mary Eliza Kimball of Pomfret with Claudia Allen of Thompson met Govern Ned Lamont in Willimantic. "We praised the Governor for his positive handling of this horrific pandemic and expressed our concerns about two urgent issues affecting Windham County: the elimination of Windham Hospital's Maternal and Newborn Delivery Room and Killingly's Fracked Gas Power Plant Project," said Cher. The three women are involved in local organizations including: Windham United to Save Our Healthcare, No More Dirty Power Plants, Windham-Willimantic NAACP, and Quiet Corner Shouts!, a grassroots group that encourages civic engagement.

"We learned from the Governor that he is working to address our concerns. He said prenatal and postnatal home visits will be offered to mothers and babies in Windham, there

will be statewide no-cost summer camps for children to prepare them for school this fall after their isolation due to COVID, and he's concerned about the Killingly power plant," she continued.



Mary Eliza Kimball and Cheryl Kapelner-Champ of Pomfret, and Claudia Allen of Thompson (l-r) met Governor Ned Lamont (center) on June 11 to express concern about Windham Hospital's elimination of its Maternal and Newborn Delivery Room and construction of a new Killingly Power Plant. Contributed photo.

"The Windham-Willimantic NAACP Branch is part of the coalition called Windham United To Save Our Healthcare because it advocates for healthcare that is safe and equitable. The women and babies of the Windham region no longer have an active Labor and Delivery Room at Wind-

ham Hospital. Instead of being able to safely give birth close to home they are being sent by ambulance to Backus or Hartford Hospital, often on treacherous roads. Since the delivery room was closed, there have been several motor vehicle accidents, putting mother and baby in serious danger. Due to this dangerous situation, our NAACP has joined the coalition as an effective way to work w/ the various concerned agencies and citizens who have stepped up to push back against this injustice," said Cher.

Claudia Allen, also pictured with the Governor, is a member of the Windham-Willimantic NAACP Environmental Justice Committee. That NAACP Branch has approved the Environmental Justice Committee's Resolution to oppose building of the Killingly Fracked Gas Power Plant, according to Cher, who introduced herself as "Mother Lightning," her artist and poet name since the 1970s. The meeting was at the Willimantic Brewing Company restaurant.

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).

Environmental Advocates React to Connecticut's Failure To Pass Regional Climate Agreement

CT Public Radio. "In 2018, Connecticut announced it would be part of an ambitious multi-state program to cut carbon emissions from transportation. In December 2020, Governor Lamont signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and D.C., committing to launch a regional transportation "cap and invest" program. But now, the regional program has suffered a setback: the Connecticut state legislature failed to bring the Transportation and Climate Initiative up for a vote during the 2021 legislative session." [Recording of the program, Where We Live]

Mansfield breaks ground on groundbreaking school the Chronicle. "After a decade-long process, the day finally came Thursday for the groundbreaking of Mansfield's soon-to-be new net-zero energy elementary school..." This has been a learning experience for us and for our management team, especially for our architects and their engineering team, however they did create a net-zero energy building with the use of an extensive geothermal field to reduce energy needs, abundance use of solar panels, appropriate orientation of the building, creation of a tight envelope in the building and finding creative ways to bring in natural light deep into the building."

How environmental bills fared during Connecticut's 2021 legislative session

CT Mirror. "The recently completed legislative session notched a number of wins — but also some losses — for environmentalists. Advocates hailed improvements to Connecticut's "bottle bill" but expressed disappointment with lawmakers' failure to sign on to a multistate program aimed at reducing vehicle emissions." Plus: Gov. Ned Lamont rejects veto plea from solar industry, signs labor-backed legislation for higher wages and benefits

Thousands of new solar panels to save East Haven money, power buildings

New Haven Register. "The town has a 20-year lease agreement and a no upfront cost, power purchase agreement with Greenskies Clean Energy LLC, which over those two decades is expected to save the town about \$1.4 million in electricity costs and additional revenue in annual lease payments."

Rise In Cremations Opens Unused Cemetery Space To New Solar Projects

Connecticut Public Radio. "...the CCA [Catholic Cemeteries Association] did look hard at burials versus cremations and asked a simple question: Would bodies need to go into that unused cemetery space in the next two decades. 'And the answer was no. The answer also is that, we knew in 20 years if we do need the land back, we can get it back,' Pinone said. 'This is just a lease ...It allows us flexibility to create another source of revenue.'"

The Average Dealership In Connecticut Sold 1.3 EVs In 2020

CleanTechnica. "Connecticut State Senator Will Haskell shared some interesting dealership facts on Twitter this week. Senator Haskell is pro-EV, anti-carbon emissions, and is pretty neutral on how the cars are sold. However, he stated that when 84% of the EVs in his state are bought directly from the manufacturer, it's clear that customers have a preference." Plus: Auto Dealerships Win Big In Connecticut — At The Expense Of Tesla, Rivian, And Clean Air

Town Moves Ahead With Solar Initiative For Schools, Homeowners

Patch. "After asking for an analysis of all town and school buildings in an effort to achieve energy savings through energy efficient projects including the possible installation of solar panels, First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove announced Tuesday that the town is moving forward with "new solar initiatives" for Branford schools, and for homeowners..."



Loud, polluting gas leaf blowers are under attack in CT by civic activists

New Haven Register. "Gas-powered two-stroke leaf blowers are inefficient as well, with 30 percent of the gas and oil used going unburned into the atmosphere, according to the group Quiet Communities. A laboratory study by Edmunds found that a two-stroke leaf blower emitted 300 times the hydrocarbons as a Ford Raptor pickup truck over a half-hour."

Waldo Renewable Electric installs 47.52-kW rooftop solar project for Connecticut's Running Brook Farms Solar World. " 'We have chosen to invest in solar technology simply because it is the right thing to do both for our business and the environment. We feel that is our responsibility to adopt more sustainable agricultural practices. In particular given the intense energy demands associated with indoor cannabis production, solar technology should be part of every growers' sustainability plan!' ... Running Brook Farms was able to secure a Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grant that covered 25% of the total project cost, with C-PACE financing covering the remainder." Plus: Verogy Solar uses 3 different mounting structures on retirement community PV project.

Free Museum Admission for Kids

Submitted by Bev York

It's time to explore! From July 1 to September 6, Connecticut children age 18 and under plus one accompanying adult can visit participating museums free of charge through the Connecticut Summer at the Museum program. The Mill Museum (Windham Textile & History Museum) and the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum have received grant funding to cover the cost of the tours.

The program is part of Governor Lamont's larger plan to use recovery funds to provide students and families with engaging summer enrichment and learning experiences in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. From art and children's museums and historical sites to zoos, aquariums, and science centers, there's a list of properties participating in #CTSummerMuseums. Please make sure you

check each museum for hours of operation, online advance ticketing and reservations, as they may be required.

In Willimantic, The Mill Museum exhibits will be open Fridays only in July from noon to 4 p.m. and have outdoor walking tours each weekend. In August the Museum will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (resuming regular museum hours.) Under the initiative, Connecticut children (18 & under) plus one accompanying Connecticut adult can visit free of charge until September 5.

The Mill Museum preserves the life in a late 19th century factory town including the living and working conditions of the immigrants who help to clothe the world.

Mill Museum Walking Tours will be Saturdays at 10 a.m. July 17 "The Thread Mill" and July 31 "Victorian Architecture." Sundays at

2 p.m. July 11 "Down Sodom' and July 25 "Mills along the Rivers." The walking tours are appropriate for school aged children aged ten and up.

The Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum is located at 55 Bridge Street down a long dirt driveway. The Museum is opened Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4:00 p.m. The Rail Museum features the Columbia Junction Roundhouse, the Chaplin Station, and numerous engines, cars, cabooses, artifacts and more.

The Mill Museum is located at 411 Main Street in Willimantic. 860-456-2178 themillmuseum@gmail.com and website: millmuseum.org

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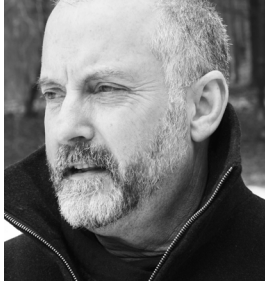
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The Neighbors paper
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On 'Factory Farms' and Mushroom Logs

By C. Dennis Pierce



Food is precious. We don't always remember this until not much is left. Then it is obvious. Food is an everyday matter, until it disappears. Then we know it's terribly important. When we replenish our cupboards and refrigerators what choices do we make? Do we purchase local or go the convenient route at our local chain market? Before you make that decision let's look at buying locally through a healthy food system. What is a healthy food system? What does that mean? We are all aware of the existing industrial food system that consists of commercial agriculture, food, and related industries which has contributed \$1.109 trillion to the U.S. gross domestic product in the year 2019 alone. Food is a big business. If you take a minute and step back before you make your choices you might find yourself questioning the current industrial food system that we take for granted.

Industrial or "conventional" agriculture describes the farming practices and scale at which most food is grown in the United States right now. These farms employ the principles of industrialization to maximize production and reduce cost, and function much like factories. This is why we use the term "factory farm" to describe the huge operations focused on mass production of a singular product — beef or eggs, for example.

The problem is this method of producing food consumes finite resources without replenishing them, including the very resources on which food production depends: healthy soil, clean water and fresh air. There are many aspects of the production of food on a large scale that most consumers do not stop to consider before reaching for that grocery item, meat or produce. The list of concern is long, to name a few, we need to take a look at, factory farming and animal life cycles, antibiotics in our foods, GMO foods and genetic engineering, animal feed for rapid growth, and pesticides in our food system. So, the question for us living in the "Quiet Corner", do we have the resources readily available for a decentralized food system? I have borrowed some thoughts from Ben Hewitt, a writer from Vermont, as he addresses the specifics of an ideal system. (1) It must offer economic viability to small scale farmers. (2) It must be based on sunshine. Industrial farming, through the use chemicals, has increased production but have neglected the land. A decentralized system relies on rotating crops and the use of cover crops to add nitrogen back in the soil. It is sad that we have become utterly dependent or just plain ignorant that we have become dependent on the chemicals that are used to out-farm the sun. (3) It must feed the locals. It must find a way around the cost issue since industrial foods in the United States are generally inexpensive. (4) It must be circular. From field, to table, to compost and back to the field.

In all of this pontification am I guilty too? I would not be not honest if I said all I eat is local. However, I consciously share a great portion of my wallet supporting Connecticut Grown. I believe we do have the resources for a decentralized system but as consumers we have to change the way we shop and eat. Unfortunately, we have evolved to living in a world of convenience. Convenience in food is fast, easy and cheap. However, convenience has a direct correlation to our well-being and our health. The fast-food industry wants us to believe that cooking for ourselves is a chore. So, they offer us labor saving products. Convenience is not necessarily healthy. Just grab a package and read the nutrition chart. Yes, once again I jump on my soap box and urge all to shift their diets to include local ingredients.

This month I'm highlighting locally grown mushrooms. America has always been abundantly rich in wild fungi, but several years ago local farmers found that mushrooms are a relatively easy crop to grow. You can't go wrong with mushrooms. In my research I have found that they are fat-free, low-sodium, low-calorie, and cholesterol-free. They're also packed with fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Nutritional benefits vary depending on the type of mushroom. But overall, they are a good source of the following nutrients: (1) Antioxidants. (2) Beta Glucan, beta glucan is a form of soluble dietary fiber that's been strongly linked to improving cholesterol and boosting heart health. It can also help your body regulate blood sugar, reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes. Mushrooms are rich in the B vitamins: riboflavin, niacin, and pantothenic acid. (3) Copper, copper helps your body make red blood cells, which are used to deliver oxygen all over the body. The



'Mushroom logs'

Photo by Dennis Pierce.

mineral is also important to other processes in the body, like maintaining healthy bones and nerves. Even after being cooked, a 1-cup serving of mushrooms can provide about one-third of the daily recommended amount of copper. (4) Potassium, potassium is extremely important when it comes to heart, muscle, and nerve function. There's about as much potassium in 2/3 cup of cooked Portobello mushroom as there is in a medium-sized banana.

Several weeks ago, I met Adam Cote, who operates with his family, Everyday Harvest Farm, in Mansfield. Adam sells at the Willimantic Framers Market every Saturday morning and one of his offerings is his locally grown mushrooms. As a graduate of UConn's Ag School, Adam now operates A. Cote & Sons Landscaping company. His educational background steered him to growing produce. However, twenty years ago he found there was not much desire for locally grown organic produce. At least not enough to keep a roof over his family's head. So, Adam shifted to landscaping with plants and now mushrooms. Adam shared that growing mushrooms is not very labor intensive. He has developed a system by using an angle grinder with a stop bit that enables him to cut a row in a log and place inoculated sawdust into the log. He then adds wax to each end of the log. He currently has about three hundred logs that are supporting his mushroom crop. His primary mushroom is the shitake. These mushrooms prefer to grow in hardwood such as red oak and white oak. A log once inoculated will produce mushrooms for four to five years. You can find Adam at the Farmers Market and he can also be reached at: acoteandsons@gmail.com. If you are interested in the process of growing mushrooms for yourself Adam is planning a demonstration at the market this fall so keep a watch out at the market's schedule or to make it easier, sign up for the Market's email with a weekly note that will arrive every week.

Mushrooms, tarragon and mustard are a remarkably compatible trio of ingredients. Try making this for your next Sunday breakfast.

Poached Eggs with Dijon Mushroom Sauce

Serves 4

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons of unsalted butter
 ¼ cup, sliced green onions, green tops included
 1 teaspoon of dried tarragon or ½ teaspoon of fresh, finely chopped
 ¾ pound of fresh mushrooms, sliced
 3 teaspoons salt
 ½ teaspoon of freshly ground black pepper
 ¾ cup of chicken stock
 ½ cup of heavy cream
 2 teaspoons of Dijon mustard
 2 teaspoons of all-purpose flour
 1 tablespoon of white wine vinegar (or white vinegar)
 8 fresh, (preferably local) eggs
 4 English muffins, split and toasted

Directions:

Sauce-

In a small bowl mash together 1 tablespoon of butter and the flour. Set aside.

In a medium skillet, over low heat, melt the butter. Add the green onions, tarragon and cook, stirring often, for two minutes.

Add mushrooms

Season with 1 teaspoon of salt and the pepper, stir, and cook for 3 minutes.

Stir in chicken stock and cream and bring to a simmer until mushrooms are tender and sauce is slightly reduced, about 4 minutes.

Whisk mustard into the sauce.

Slowly add the flour – butter mixture, bit by bit, whisking all of the time.

Cook for one minute and adjust seasonings if necessary.

Eggs-

Fill a flat pan with water, about 3 inches deep.

Add vinegar and remaining 2 teaspoons of salt

As water simmers, crack the eggs one at a time into a small bowl and slip them into the water.

I have also used a solid spoon to ladle water onto the yoke to quicken the cooking process of the egg yolk.

Cook about four minutes.

Reheat the mushroom sauce. When the eggs are cooking toast the English muffins. Set 2 English muffin halves on each of four plates. With a slotted spoon remove the poached eggs making sure the water drips off and place an egg on each English muffin half. Spoon sauce evenly over the eggs and serve immediately.

This is the best time of the year. Strawberries are out in abundance. More produce is popping up at the markets and the weather has been good to us. As always thanks for reading my column. 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...

July Events at Mill Museum

Submitted by Bev York for
 The Windham Textile & History Museum in Willimantic

The Mill Museum will be open Fridays in July from Noon to 4 p.m. The Museum will resume full hours in August: Friday, Saturday, Sunday 10 to 4.

The Museum is accepting books for an August book sale. For more information please call 860-456-2178 or themillmuseum@gmail.com website: millmuseum.org

Sun. July 4 Boombbox Parade line up at Jillson square 11:00-11:30 Join us as immigrant mill workers carrying flags. The Museum has flags from many countries.

Sun. July 11 Walking Tour "Down Sodom" Meet at Mill Museum 411 Main Street 2 p.m. \$10 adults

Wed. July 14 Croquet in Heritage Park 6-8 p.m. Family activity- beginners welcome-learn to play this lawn game very popular in the Victorian Era. Across the street from the Museum Donations welcome.

Sat. July 17 Walking Tour American Thread Meet at Museum, 411 Main St. 10 a.m. \$10 adults

Wed. July 21 Reception for retiring Director Jamie Eves Museum parking lot 6:30-8:00 public invited

Sat. July 24 Drop in Spinning Bee, All levels and public welcome. Must be vaccinated. Mill Museum, 411 Main Street.

Sun. July 25 Walking Tour "The Mills of Willimantic Falls" Meet at Mill Museum, 411 Main Street 2 p.m. \$10 adults

Sat. July 31 Walking Tour Victorian Architecture of Windham Road Meet at the Mill Museum, 411 Main Street. 10 a.m. \$10 adults

Unsung Heroes of Soul:

Chuck Jackson

By Dean Farrell

As host of "The Soul Express," I play the biggest names in 1960s and '70s-era soul music. I also mix in the many great soul artists who did not necessarily become household names but were no less talented. This month's column is about Chuck Jackson, one of the first artists to record songs written by Burt Bacharach and Hal David.

He was born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, on July 22, 1937, and grew up in Pittsburgh. In 1957, Jackson joined the Del Vikings, who had recently made the national top ten with the doo-wop rockers, "Come Go With Me" and "Whispering Bells." He left the group in 1959.

When Jackson performed at New York's Apollo Theater as an opening act for Jackie Wilson, he came to the attention of producer Luther Dixon, who signed Jackson to Wand Records (a division of Scepter, home of the Shirelles and later Dionne Warwick). In November 1960, Jackson recorded "I Don't Want to Cry," which he co-wrote with Dixon. It made both the Rhythm & Blues and pop charts in 1961. The following year produced Chuck Jackson's biggest hit, Bacharach/David's "Any Day Now," with which Country star Ronnie Milsap also did well in 1982. Another of Jackson's 1962 recordings, "I Keep Forgettin'," also became a hit twenty years later, this time for Michael McDonald.

By 1968, Chuck Jackson was on Motown, but his tenure with the Detroit powerhouse was not exactly lucrative. His biggest Motown single, a remake of Freddie Scott's "Are You Lonely For Me Baby," reached #27 on the R&B chart and missed the Billboard Hot 100 completely. By 1973, Jackson was on ABC, hitting the R&B top forty with "I Only Get This Feeling." Over the next twenty-five years, he turned up on such labels as All Platinum, Bulldog, EMI America, Platinum Pop, Kent (UK), Sequel, and Shanachie.

In 1992, Chuck Jackson received the Rhythm & Blues Foundation's prestigious Pioneer Award. In 2009, he received the Joe Pope Pioneer Award from the Carolina Beach Music Hall of Fame. In 2015, Jackson was inducted into the Official Rhythm and Blues Music Hall of Fame. And four years later, his 1964 recording of "Hand It Over" turned up in the video game, "Far Cry New Dawn."

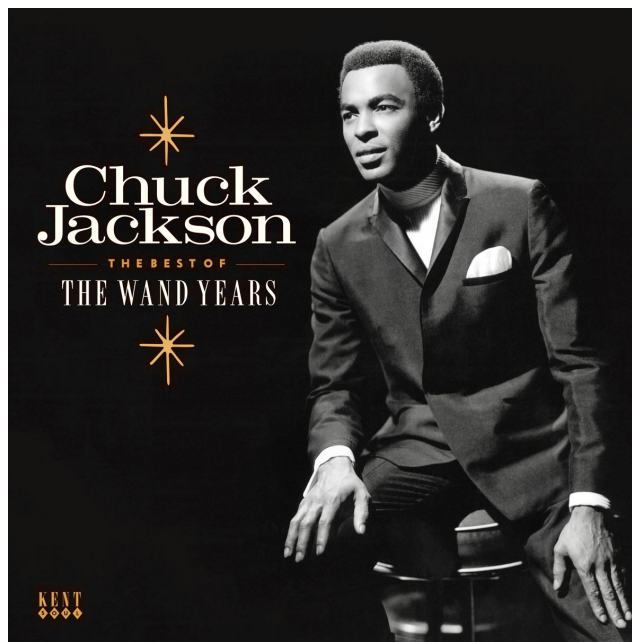
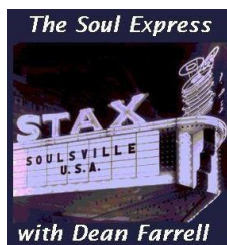
Jackson was a good friend of the notorious political strategist Lee Atwater and appeared in the 2008 documentary film, "Boogie Man: The Lee Atwater Story."

Though his chart career lasted longer than most unsung heroes of soul, Chuck Jackson's level of success was never more than moderate. Still, he has managed to earn a living in the music business for sixty-plus years.

Rock critic Dave Marsh included Jackson's "I Don't Want to Cry," "Any Day Now," and "Beg Me" in his 1989 book, "The Heart of Rock and Soul: The 1001 Greatest Singles Ever Made."

Charted singles:

"I'm Yours" (1960) Pop #91
 "I Don't Want to Cry" (1961) R&B #5, Pop #36
 "(It Never Happens) In Real Life" (1961) R&B #22, Pop #46
 "Mr. Pride" (1961) Pop #91



"I Wake Up Crying" (1961) R&B #13, Pop #59
 "Any Day Now" (1962) R&B #2, Pop #23
 "I Keep Forgettin'" (1962) Pop #55
 "Who's Gonna Pick Up the Pieces" (1962) Pop #119
 "Getting Ready for the Heartbreak" (1962) Pop #88
 "Tell Him I'm Not Home" (1963) R&B #12, Pop #42
 "Tears of Joy" (1963) Pop #85
 "I Will Never Turn My Back on You" (1963) R&B #29, Pop #110
 "Any Other Way" (1963) R&B #47, Pop #81
 "Hand It Over" (1964) R&B #13, Pop #92
 "Beg Me" (1964) R&B #5, Pop #45
 "Somebody New" (1964) Pop #93
 "Since I Don't Have You" (1964) R&B #18, Pop #47
 "I Need You" (1965) R&B #22, Pop #75
 "Something You Got" (duet with Maxine Brown, 1965) R&B #10, Pop #55
 "If I Didn't Love You" (1965) R&B #18, Pop #46
 "Can't Let You Out of My Sight" (duet with Maxine Brown, 1965) Pop #91
 "I Need You So" (duet with Maxine Brown, 1965) Pop #98
 "Good Things Come to Those Who Wait" (duet with Maxine Brown, 1965) Pop #105
 "I'm Satisfied" (duet with Maxine Brown, 1966) Pop #112
 "Hold On! I'm Coming" (duet with Maxine Brown, 1967) R&B #20, Pop #91
 "Daddy's Home" (duet with Maxine Brown, 1967) R&B #46, Pop #91
 "Shame on Me" (1967) R&B #40, Pop #76
 "(You Can't Let the Boy Overpower) The Man in You" (1968) Pop #94
 "Are You Lonely for Me Baby" (1968) R&B #27, Pop #107
 "Honey Come Back" (1969) R&B #43
 "I Only Get This Feeling" (1973) R&B #35, Pop #117
 "I Can't Break Away" (1973) R&B #62
 "I'm Needing You, Wanting You" (1975) R&B #30
 "I Wanna Give You Some Love" (1980) R&B #90

Please check out the Unsung Heroes of Soul blog at <https://60459fe07898a.site123.me/>

Dean Farrell hosts "The Soul Express" twice on Fridays: on WRTC, 89.3-FM (www.wrtcfm.com) from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. and on WECS, 90.1-FM (www.wecsfm.com), from 9:00 p.m. - midnight. He plays vintage soul music of the 1960s and '70s--everything from #1 hits to long-lost obscurities. Dean's e-mail address is soulexpress@gmail.com.

"There's Magic in the Air" Coming to StoneHurst

Finally You Can Enjoy
 Hannu Makipuro's
 Twice-Postponed Concert
 "There's Magic in the Air"
 on August 26 at StoneHurst

Submitted by Saul Ahola

What better way to celebrate our new freedom to enjoy music together than attending Hannu Makipuro's "There's Magic in the Air" concert on a late summer evening in the brand-new spacious barn at StoneHurst in Hampton CT. The concert, with proceeds to benefit the Finnish American Heritage Society of Canterbury, will feature vocal and instrumental Jazz, Swing and Broadway Show Tunes; and with several Finnish musicians in the band there will surely be one medley of traditional Finn Tunes

as well. Hannu on vocal and trumpet, Phil Palonen and Evan Bellman on guitar, Bill Rood on sax, Rufus 'Baby Grand' Davis on keyboard, and Justin Blackburn on drums will try to surpass the triumph of Hannu's "Love Songs in Spring" Concert of 2017, if that's even possible.

Known by many as 'The Singing Barber of Willimantic', Hannu has been cutting and styling hair for over 40 years at Jackson Street in Willimantic and for even longer has been singing jazz and swing at area venues and at Finnish-American events throughout the US and on tour in Finland. In 2010 Hannu was awarded the "Order of the White Rose" Finland's highest civilian honor, in recognition of his promotion of Finnish and Finnish American arts and culture. Hannu's son Mark Makipuro,

a popular and talented jazz musician, sadly passed away in November 2019, but his magic touch will be felt by the audience and appreciated by his musician friends in the band. He not only arranged the music for the concert but also along with Hannu composed its theme song.

StoneHurst at Hampton Valley, 119 Providence Turnpike (Route 6), Hampton, CT with its rustic but chic décor, cabaret seating, and expansive grounds, will be the perfect setting for this magical night of music and comradery. Doors open at 6 pm with complimentary hors d'oeuvres served before the 7 pm concert, and at intermission. A cash bar will also be available. Admission is \$35 per person. Tickets sold on Eventbrite (search: Hannu Makipuro) or contact Eila 860-423-3854.

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Two Camping Adventures

By David Corsini

My stepdaughter Ana, her husband Ray, and their daughter Eva live in Manhattan and like to spend time at camping facilities in Harriman State Park—the second largest New York state park, located only 30 miles from the city. Harriman State Park encompasses 47,000 acres and has thirty-one lakes and reservoirs, with multiple points of access. Ana and her family vacation in two places in the park: Nawakwa and the Stephen & Betsy Corman AMC Harriman Outdoor Center. The two places are close to each other but are on different lakes and governed by different rules. I have spent time at both. Each time, we said we were camping, but the conditions were quite different.

Nawakwa is a membership club on Lake Sebago with an approval process and the expectation that members help maintain the facilities. There are rustic cabins, tent sites, bathroom facilities, and a large building with a central area, kitchen, and porch. There is a dock with a swimming area, and canoes and other boats are available. Cabins and tent sites are occupied on a first-come basis.

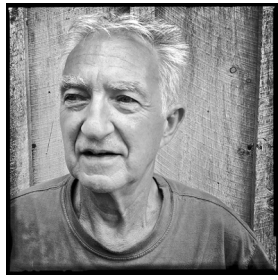
The Harriman Outdoor Center, run by the Appalachian Mountain Club, is adjacent to 64-acre Breakneck Pond. It has cabins, bunkhouses, bathroom facilities with a shower, tent platforms, lean-tos, and campsites around the pond. Canoes, kayaks, life jackets, and paddles are available, and there is a swimming area with a dock. Grills, fire pits, and picnic tables are provided, and there is also a dining room where meals are served. The Center is open to the public, but reservations are necessary.

Both of these settings remind Ana of a pond in Massachusetts where my extended family has had a cabin since the early 1900s. This cabin, on Boot Pond, which is a kettle pond, has been one of my favorite places since childhood. My wife Delia, Ana, and I—one time accompanied by our pet geese—have spent time at this camp. Ana wanted to share her new ponds and camping facilities with me.

My trip to Nawakwa was in 2015, when I was 75. Ana's husband was abroad, so it was just Ana, Eva (age 4), and me. I met Ana at her apartment in Manhattan and followed her to Nawakwa, where we were to tent. It had been a long while since I had slept in a tent. In the late 1970s, I remember, with my first family, I had a huge two-room tent. For comfort, we even brought a double foam mattress.

This time our tent was a two-person tent, but the three of us managed to arrange our sleeping bags and sleeping pads in it quite easily. Luckily, my car was not too far away, so I could keep extra clothes and gear there. At age 75 I was able, with some difficulty, to crawl into and out of the tent. I remember worrying that I would get a leg cramp when in a crawling position. I also remember that it was difficult to sleep because I felt my head was a bit lower than my feet. I was not at this point wearing hearing aids and was delighted to hear barred owls and whippoorwills during the night. I managed to crawl out of the tent to use the “facilities” during the night. My back was happy to see the dawn, and one night of sleeping in a tent was plenty.

Ana brought things for dinner and breakfast that we ate in the main building with other members. We took out a canoe and had a nice excursion around the lake. There was a moment of excitement when Eva fell off the



dock into deep water. She bobbed right up with a frightened expression on her face, and Ana was there in a flash to pull her out. Her dress was soaked and clinging to her body, and she looked a bit like a dead rat.

After camping several years at Nawakwa, Ana and Ray found the Harriman Outdoor Center, with cabins, meals, and recreation opportunities. They thought I would enjoy this easier setting and invited me to join them. Because of various medical reasons, I had to cancel our plans twice. I was hopeful that the third time wouldn't fail, and it didn't.

Although I was going to be away for only three days and two nights, I was a bit nervous. It had been a while since I had done a 150-mile, three-hour drive alone to a new place. And at 81 years of age there are general aging and medical issues that make me feel vulnerable. I



Ana and David.

Contributed photo.

have recently been treated for a respiratory problem and my hearing, the health of my ears, and the proper functioning of the hearing aids are a constant concern. And this is not to mention spinal stenosis, with variable levels of pain. Since Ana felt that the GPS to the camp might not be precise, she met me at nearby Mount Ivy All American Diner, and I followed her to the camp.

At the Harriman Outdoor Center there are only two cabins that have a bathroom and shower. Last November, when reservations opened up, Ana had reserved one of these cabins: Cranberry Cabin 1. The cabin was like new. It had a knotty pine 25- by 30-foot room with three large windows and electricity. There was a queen-sized bed, a set of bunk beds, a table with four chairs, a small refrigerator, shelf space, and hooks on the wall. The bathroom was also spacious, with toilet, sink, shower, wall hooks, and a bench. With this type of facility, it is a stretch of the imagination to call it camping. But I'll take it!

Ten-year-old Eva had the top bunk, and I had the bottom. To say that Ana and Ray don't travel light is a bit of an understatement. They had been there the day before, and there were things everywhere. But Ana said there was plenty of room, and I did manage to put one of the chairs at the foot of the bunk bed. That was the space for my suitcase and tote bags. My cell phone and hearing aid receptacle found a spot on the table, and my bags of toiletries found an empty space under the sink in the bathroom. I

melded in.

The weather during our stay was perfect—very hot to encourage swimming and cool enough in the morning and evening for hiking, canoeing, and kayaking. We had breakfasts and dinners al fresco, outside the main dining room.

The first morning before breakfast we took a 2.5-mile hike around the pond. The hike began at a pile of large glacier-deposited rocks. Initially, I thought this could not be the trail. But then I saw the green diamond on a tree: it was the trail. Eva was off over the rocks and soon out of sight. I have the memory of doing that myself. It was not hard to repress the urge, and I got going slowly, without much difficulty. The trail was relatively easy, and there were several side trails that looked out over the pond. I heard red-eyed and yellow-throated vireos and scarlet tanagers. Ana spotted a tanager. We came across a browsing deer that seemed quite comfortable with sharing the woods.

From Saturday afternoon to Monday noon, we swam and explored the lake in canoes and kayaks. When I first attempted to get into a canoe, my brain sent a message to my foot to lift. However, the execution was not good on the first try, and I only hit the side of the canoe. Getting into a kayak was not too bad, but getting out and staggering around was not graceful. At least I didn't fall.

During these adventures I saw a great blue heron, a belted kingfisher, a yellow warbler, and a family of geese with two goslings. A somewhat unusual nature event was seeing banded water snakes on five occasions: twice swimming in the shallows, once swimming in the middle of the pond, once falling from a bush into the water, and finally several slithering over rocks near the water. None of the snakes were very large. Because I caught this species of snake when I was a boy, I know they bite but are not venomous. I also know they give birth to live babies, because one snake I caught when I was 14 gave birth to thirty-three on my front lawn.

The highlight of the nature experiences for me was the calling of the whippoorwills at night, accompanied by a chorus of tree frogs. Whippoorwills, because they eat insects at night, are the kind of bird more often heard than seen. As a child, I would hear whippoorwills at Boot Pond, but I have not heard them there for many years. While this bird is not as common now in some areas where it used to be found, it is not considered to be endangered. But since it feeds on insects and there is a decline of insects, it is a species to monitor closely.

Some people find the repetitive calling of whippoorwills annoying, but I don't. As Ana and I were walking near a place where one was calling, she saw a bird fly away that I am sure was one. But my old pair of eyes did not see it.

During the day on Sunday, Ray gathered sticks and twigs to make a fire. At night, he got a two-match fire ablaze. As we sat around the fire listening to the whippoorwills and frogs, Eva was wrapped in a hammock her parents had brought. When asked if she would like to play her ukulele, she agreed. So, under the cover of darkness, Eva picked out several tunes. Then she requested her sheet music, and with the assistance of her headband flashlight she played a few more tunes. A magical evening around a campfire, like those that happen in real camping. But afterwards, I was very happy to crawl into my bunk bed.

Letters and Emails

To the Editor-

These are some of my thoughts. In the May issue of *Neighbors Little Paper* - 3 articles about the Black People/Black Lives Matter. Never is there a mention of the Native American Indians. I believe our God put the Native Indians here in the United States of America in the first place. In my eye (reading) the Native Indians had been treated much worse than the Blacks (by our forefathers). First driven from there land, homes. Tortured - Murdered - Raped - Marched or should I say driven to reservations. Land so poor nothing would grow. No wildlife, their natural food. When the Blacks were brought here in the 1600's they were cared for - clothing, a roof over their

heads. Most likely not the best. Note: read about 'The Trail of Tears' and the book *One Thousand White Women*.

James P. Balkus, Windham

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Check In On Your Finances Before Checking Out for the Summer: 5 Critical Steps to Take Right Now

Leisl L. Cording, CFP®
Vice President, Associate Financial
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At the start of the year, you likely set some goals for yourself, including financial goals such as saving for retirement, a child's college education, or an upcoming large purchase such as a new home or car. With half the year behind us (and summer vacations ahead that blur into busy autumn activities and the holidays), now is the time to review those goals once again and make sure you're still on track to meet them.

Particularly in a year as unusual as 2021 – as the world emerges from the pandemic and its many effects on the financial markets to the job and real estate markets, to more personal changes in priorities and lifestyle – it's likely there have been at least some changes in your life or finances since January.

Here are five key strategies to review and reassess right now to ensure your plan for 2021 is still on track to have you investing well and living well through the end of this year and beyond.

1. Review and re-assess your financial goals and budget.

Take a look at your income and budget to see if the numbers still match up, or if they need some adjusting. Are you earning more or less now than you were at the start of the year? Have your cost-of-living expenses increased?

If you're earning less or your expenses have increased, you'll need to update your budget accordingly. Ideally, you'll do this by reducing your flexible, or discretionary, spending in order to stay on track with your savings goals. Remember the handy 50/30/20 budgeting rule of thumb – whatever your take home income is, allocate 50% to your everyday bills and basic needs, 30% to wants like meals out and entertainment, and 20% to savings for future goals and emergencies.

If you're earning more now than you were at the start of the year, or if your expenses have decreased, it's just as important to update your budget accordingly. Don't just let those extra funds default into discretionary spending; put them to work for you by saving or investing more instead so that you can Live Well beyond the present moment.

2. Review and rebalance your investment portfolio.

Similar to reviewing and adjusting your budget, it's extremely important to review and adjust your retirement plan and other investments at the mid-year point as well. If after the above budgeting exercise, you find that you have more money than before available for retirement savings or other investments, be sure to add that additional money to your automatic contributions each month. If you're 50 or older, consider making catch-up contributions to your retirement plan.

If on the other hand you have less available to invest, talk with a financial advisor – we can strategize ways to help you make up the shortfall. Depending on how long you have until your goal retirement age, you may want to switch your investments to those that carry more risk but offer greater potential for growth.

There's also the possibility with the way the market has performed in recent months, that it has caused your investments to have a larger allocation to stocks. You'll want to talk with your financial advisor about what changes to make in order to bring your investments back into balance again. Just remember, investing well to live well is a marathon, not a sprint. Keeping a strategic investment plan today will yield the best results in achieving your long-term goals for tomorrow.

3. Do a dry run of your taxes now to avoid any surprises at tax time.

Pretty much everyone dreads the prospect of owing a large sum at tax time. But if you take a look at your taxes now to determine if any adjustments are necessary, you'll have a much better chance of avoiding that unhappy situation.

Use last year's tax return as your starting point. Then, factor in any gains or losses to your income (through both earnings and investments) since January, as well as whether there have been any changes in the tax deductions you can take. Also consider whether or not you'll expect

any changes to your income or deductions in the next half of this year. This will give you an idea of what your tax liability will be for 2021. (You can also use the 1040 Tax Calculator on our website at whzwealth.com/financial-calculators to estimate your expected tax liability.)

Then, check your withholding (you can check it using the IRS Tax Withholding Estimator at www.irs.gov. Are you tracking to have more or less than your expected tax bill taken out of your earnings by the end of the year? If so, adjust the amount of federal or state income tax withheld from your paycheck accordingly, by filing a new Form W-4 with your employer. If your income has increased and you're on track to owe more, consider diverting that increased income into tax-advantaged savings like your retirement account, a 529 college fund, or a health savings account (HSA). You'll reduce your tax bill while saving even more for the future.

4. Check your FSA or HSA accounts.

Speaking of health savings accounts – if you have one, or if you have a flexible spending account (FSA), check in on your balance.

HSAs are a great way to save in a triple tax deferred way if you participate in a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). The contributions reduce your taxable income, the money in the HSA grows tax deferred and if you take it out for qualified medical expenses it is tax free. After age 65, you can withdraw any money in your HSA for any reason without penalties. You can contribute up to \$7,200 for a family in 2021 and if over age 55, that number is \$8,200. HSAs can carry over from year to year and from employer plan to employer plan. HSAs are a great way to save on taxes and grow money for health care needs now and later in life.

FSAs for the most part must be used before year end (there is a carry over allowed amount of \$550.) However, the Consolidated Appropriations Act signed into law in December, 2020, temporarily allows you to carry over any unused FSA funds at the end of 2021, if your company has chosen to opt in to this carry-over; be sure to check with them. Are you contributing enough to cover your anticipated needs through the end of the year or are you contributing too much? Consider adjusting your contribution to match your needs through the end of the year.

5. Check your credit.

Many people have had their financial plans derailed over the last year, which may have resulted in missed payments on loans and credit card bills. But even if you didn't suffer these setbacks, it's a good idea to be aware of your credit score and to check your credit report periodically for any inaccuracies that could be negatively affecting you.

Everyone has the right to a free report from each of the three major credit reporting agencies each year. You can access yours at AnnualCreditReport.com. Review your report, dispute any inaccurate information, and assess the damage that may have been done to your credit due to missed payments in the last year. Once you're fully aware of where you stand, you can begin the work of repairing your credit and getting back on track with your financial goals.

Plan Well and Invest Well, so you can Live Well

All of these steps are part of our strategic Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well™ process. Financial health, wealth building, and the life goals that building wealth allows you to achieve are a direct result of Planning Well and Investing Well. They require careful strategy, constant review and adjustment and long-term commitment – but the payoff is priceless. Find out more about our process and how we can guide you through your own personalized strategy for Living Well and reaching your goals at whzwealth.com.

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To all our contributors-
Thank You!

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

The Union of Opposites: Inseparable

The great strength of alchemical thinking and the way in which it is completely antithetical to science and in fact why science has so much contempt for it, it's because the alchemist had the wisdom to see that everything occurs in the presence of its opposite. It's not either-or, it's both-and. They called this the coincidentia oppositorum. This is the coincidence of opposites, the union of opposites.

—Terence McKenna

By Phoebe Godfrey



This article will take a number of ideas on the theme of the union of opposites and link them, starting with the seemingly mundane and working toward the fight for the soul of America. The goal is not to make these ideas equal in significance but rather merely to illustrate an ongoing narrative that weaves through them and that has its roots in various forms of philosophical/religious dualisms—all of which, despite subtle differences depending on culture of origin, like ancient Greece, India, Iran, etc., conceptualize a distinct separation between good and evil, as opposed to seeing them as an inseparable union (perhaps best symbolized by yin and yang, or Taiji). Such a construct still involves a recognition of dualistic energies, but ones that cannot exist apart from each other, and thus co-construct. As the ethnobotanist and mystic Terence McKenna stated, “It’s not either-or, it’s both-and,” and, as such, there is no wiggle room to try to have one without the other, only the *wisdom* to embrace them both.

If we reflect on this wisdom in relation to our culture, we will see that it is an area where we are painfully, even destructively, lacking. You can pick any issue in our culture and find that our energies are focused on having the supposed “good” without the supposed “evil,” and that we have merely created more chaos and tragically tipped the balance toward collapse.

My first example is, as stated, seemingly mundane but encapsulates the same lack of wisdom. It has to do with geese and the fact that, like all living beings, they excrete waste, also known as poop. I row at Coventry Lake, where the geese like to hang out, for obvious reasons, and therefore poop on the shoreline, on the dock, etc. Many of the people I row with make disparaging comments about the birds and their poop, as if they do not have a right to be there, as if their presence is some sort of “evil” in our pursuit of the “good”—a fly in the ointment. I have reflected upon this and how it symbolizes a much larger question about how our culture conceptualizes the human-nature nexus, as in *what* or *who* belongs where, and how so much of our experience of nature is framed in terms of what does or does not work for us. This is very much the case in relation to insects, that they “spoil” our outdoor experience and so should not exist and we must annihilate them—and yet in so doing we have poisoned ourselves. Had we the

wisdom to seek a balance, a union, with them we could find cultural maturity and ecological abundance, instead of their opposites.

My next example is far graver and is about the ongoing battle for our nation’s soul in terms of whether or not we are willing to face the truth about the evil we have sown and reaped in relation to racism, genocide, sexism, and all the other ways we have so severely failed in the Enlightenment project of creating a liberal democracy based on “equality and justice for all.” Now, the tricky part is that this failure has not been complete, which neither lessens the failure nor enhances the success. Rather, it calls once again for the ability to hold onto “both-and,” in that America was *both* founded on slavery, genocide, and racism *and* at the same time allowed white males of property the opportunity to imbue their Enlightenment ideals with riches beyond their wildest dreams. So, when it comes to what has become yet another cultural war around the question of what to teach in schools, a number of key points have been lost.

The first point is that although the focus has turned to what is being termed “critical race theory” (a collection of theoretical lenses used in legal and policy analysis for recognizing the role of structural racism in our institutions), *denial*—even when legally enforced—cannot change history. Members of our society, in particular members of the Republican party, along with many who likewise seek to preserve their distorted views of this country, seem to think that the theory will turn children against America and “indoctrinate” them “with the belief that the United States is inherently wicked” (<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/us/politics/critical-race-theory.html>).

The second point being lost is that although there is a role for analysis and interpretation of historical facts (as in the debate over the 1619 Project, which spurred Trump’s 1776 pushback), no level of analysis or interpretation can make slavery anything but *both* “inherently wicked” *and* highly profitable (hence deemed good by many for a long time). Instead of merely conceptualizing that the teaching of our *actual* history will distort children’s view of this country, what children need, what our culture needs, is the ability to see the complexities and nuances involved and that in many ways what has made this country “good” for so many whites is inseparable from what has made it “evil” for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BI-POC). That this painful realization runs through all aspects of our culture is evident in our climate change denial: how can technological progress (good) lead to climate change and ecological collapse (evil)?

And yet, if we seek to collectively create a liberal democracy (it is still very much a work in progress), we must wrestle with the painful complexities that come with the pluralism of perspectives; we must allow for the other’s poop (seen by us as evil) as well as our own (seen by us as good), in a manner that brings some semblance of balance and harmony. For the only way to a more mature and wise society is to recognize the “*coincidentia oppositorum*.” If we don’t, we need only look to history to see where we are headed, as the dust of this Earth is replete with the still echoing cries of empires, nations, societies, communities, and individuals that sought only to be *good*.

“Everywhere”

By Judy Davis

Blessings are an honor to all who wait,
and pay attention. The bear spirit
shoulders the courage; the deer
breathes in sweet silence; and
the hawk sweeps across the sky,
crying, “Here comes freedom!”
We are channels for the message
of fire, and wind, and water –
at how we have been shaped. Some-
where, in the whispering pines, a
voice is saying, “Listen, Listen... be
present.”

Every time, you come to a bridge-
cross it. Be a teller of your story.

Each act of sacred time is the
native way. We are music – you
shall be the dancer.

Let us all stand tall together-
Life is calling!

Letters and Emails

To the editor-

Mansfield leadership needs to ensure that the potential costs and benefits of any development project are fully understood and shared with Town residents before beginning to entertain any new proposal. Does the proposed Agbotics project have real tangible benefits for anyone in Town? If a project has tax abatements and exemptions that greatly reduce any tax contribution that might have been paid to the Town, there is no real financial contribution. The neighbors surrounding the proposed site (including experts that live here --engineer, agricultural economist, CFA) have testified as to the potential costs/impacts: water consumption (with wells currently running dry during droughts), road repairs, traffic hazards, pollution, resource/power utilization and more. The conclusion from all 130 impacted residents that signed a petition against this project believe that it could easily be developed in an industrial/commercial area with public water, septic, flat lands and State highways. It could be built in partnership with the University to continue exploring hemp production on University property.

Originally the developer advised the Agricultural Commissioner that local solar power would generate the necessary energy supply for this 8-acre industrial complex and the project was conditionally approved with that understanding. Agbotics has now indicated they will pursue a grid outside of Mansfield (no benefit to Mansfield), is on a waiting list for virtual net metering (of which credit would go to developer not Town). One of the reasons Agbotics has not expanded in their current NY location is that power demands could not be met without an additional expenditure of over ten million dollars.

The project is touted as local and sustainable. And yet very expensive, designer greens will be grown and processed; packaged in plastic containers and transported to Boston and Providence. Agbotics is an international company looking to expand to 300 greenhouses in New England alone. Hardly affordable, local or sustainable. And yet truly local, sustainable CSA’s are not offered opportunities to purchase (vs. rent) cheap land and have moved into neighboring towns. What support message are we sending if we help venture capitalists line their pockets and yet can’t assist or accommodate young established organic farmers?

The sale of the Martin Farm development rights was to prohibit subdivision or development of this property for residential, commercial and/or industrial purposes. The intent was to preserve farmland, not bulldoze it and fill it with gravel or erect commercial greenhouses the size of football fields in a serene, protected and rural area. Beware if you purchase property next to supposedly preserved lands- anything can happen!

Judy Lovdal
Michael Moran

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Mansfield Historical Society Museum is Now Open

Submitted by David Landry

After a years’ hiatus due to COVID-19, our our museum doors are once again open to the public. Our newest exhibit, “Those Endangered and Those Saved” focuses on historic preservation and builds upon the success of the “Lost Mansfield” series on Facebook.

www.facebook.com/mansfieldcthistory.

This exhibit features historic buildings that are currently in danger of being lost and those that have been saved. State safety guidelines are being followed, and the wearing of masks indoors is required.

The museum is opened Saturday and Sunday 1:30PM-4:30PM, through the end of September. Please visit mansfieldct-history.org for more information.

Solar Today: Questions and answers about solar in our community and beyond

Honor Earth Day everyday with solar!

Greetings,



We will resume the monthly community zoom meetings in the fall. Please reach out to me directly if I can help answer your questions about solar or if you're interested in speaking with me about solar for your home. I would love to help you transition to a lower cost fixed rate than what the utility offers.

This month I am including revised excerpts from my previously published article in Spirit of Change magazine (02/2018): Yes, the same information is still valid today!

I invite you to join a peaceful revolution while simply changing where and how you buy your electricity.

We live in challenging times. Mother Earth is hanging in there, waiting for our commitment to jump into action as peaceful warriors on the path of preserving a healthy and vibrant planet. And fortunately, we are at the perfect time in history to take peaceful, but powerful revolutionary action as individuals - simply by changing how we access our energy by installing solar energy at home. When "We the People" use our collective power to create sustainable change, magic happens. With today's easy access to solar financing and power purchase agreements, we can control how much we pay for our energy and we can help revolutionize the world. Let's face it, electricity is a monthly budgeted expense. In most instances, switching to solar is not an added expense. It simply takes LESS of the same money you are already spending and puts it into a renewable resource where you have control of the cost!

The solar movement is a peaceful revolution, giving us the reigns to take control over our energy access and costs. Let's face it, your contract with the utility company basically says they can charge you as much as they can get away with, change the rate at almost any time (with utility commission complicity) and shut off your power if you don't pay your bill. Controlling your energy supply and cost by going solar contributes to a peaceful and healthy planet, as well as provide you with the peace of mind that you are doing something to help humanity with every kilowatt a home solar system produces.

When my wife, daughter and I went solar twelve years ago, we were pioneers in the solar revolution. Today our planet is in the early stages of a worldwide switchover to sustainable and less costly renewable energy. Bill Nye, The Science Guy, believes that with today's technology in solar, wind, geothermal and a little bit of tidal energy, we could be using 80% renewable energy worldwide by 2050!

Let's dig into some of the most common questions about installing solar energy at home.

What are the top reasons why people go solar?

1. Save money and take control of energy costs
2. Collect state and federal incentives
3. Save the environment (or more like save humanity; Mother Earth will be fine without us)
4. My neighbors, family or friends have gone solar

Is installing a solar system too expensive for average homeowners?

Solar myth #1: Solar is too expensive. Fact: In most cases, solar actually costs less than staying with your current energy supplier. Going solar means taking control of your energy costs in the long term. Your agreement with the energy company lets them charge you however much they can get away with.

Are state and federal incentives still available?
The federal credit is currently 26 percent of the cost of the system. The CT state rebate program ended last month.

Are there financial risks associated with going solar?
Not really. You're buying electricity for less, the price is locked in and Zillow claims that a home's value increases up to 6% with solar.

Will I get all of my energy from the solar panels?
Every solar home is unique. It depends upon roof direction, roof pitch, shading and energy usage, these are a few of the variables considered when designing a solar system.

Will solar extend my roof life?
In most cases your roof shingles will last much longer with solar panels covering them. The panels are now taking the weather hit rather than the shingles. Snow will also slide off of your roof faster with the tempered glass panels.

Will I need a re-roof before going solar?
It all depends on the integrity of your shingles. Before solar is installed, a site surveyor will evaluate the current condition of the shingles to make sure they are safe and secure to install solar on. If, in the future, you decide to do a home upgrade or to re-roof after the panels are installed, most solar companies offer a low-cost service to take the panels off and re-install them after the work is completed.

Do solar companies offer equipment warranties in case of roof penetration?
Yes, the best companies offer a 25 year warranty on production, efficiency and workmanship!

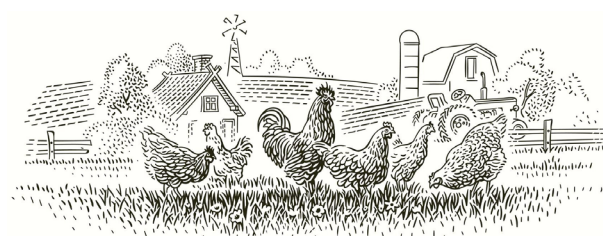
What about aesthetics and resale value?
I don't know about you, but I love the way solar looks! It looks like the future. It looks like taking control of your energy costs. My home will sell faster than the neighbor's because I have the added benefit of a lower electric rate that competing homes for sale can't match. One of the top four reasons people go solar is because their neighbors are doing it. If aesthetics is an objection to get past, my suggestion is to look around. The industry is growing fast. It won't be long before the majority of homeowners have solar on their roof.

Quote from Larry C., a recently installed local solar customer"
"Wow, just wow.... I'm SO happy, I've been wanting to do this for years!"

Until next month... ENJOY!

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Check out our monthly column: Solar Today!

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The Neighbors paper
Black and white
And read all over!

Roadtrip to Boston's OWL Tour

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

Ocean draws us to the water's edge, perhaps a primal urge to return whence we first crawled on land? Or for the salt air that still refreshes coastal Boston, which in 1630 was wooded Shawmut peninsula, essentially a glacial harbor island with a causeway.

The Algonquin meaning of "Shawmut" is "canoe landing place" or "place to ferry across" or it may refer to fresh water springs on the peninsula that encouraged settlement.

The OWL Tour joins Boston's popular Duck Tour Busses and the Swan Boats in the Public Garden, except the OWL is an adventurous self-guided walking tour of Boston's Original Water Line. It begins at Boston Common, pasture at the water's edge in 1630.

Beacon Hill was lowered while narrow "Boston Neck" (now Washington Street) was widened for better mainland access. Such is the bold "Cut & Fill" land-making in this still-growing urban seaport. Cut here; fill there. Boston Bold !!! Original Shawmut has doubled in size since 1630.

Although Boston has transformed from a small peninsular settlement to a sprawling urban port in four centuries, you can roughly follow the historic shoreline. Walk from the Common on existing city streets along the Original Water Line.

The OWL Tour is easily a two-day adventure in downtown Boston. Part One is Boston Common and the Public Garden, to nearby Newbury Street and Back Bay. Part Two (next month) is the loop around the rest of the Original Water Line through Beacon Hill, the North End and Chinatown.

BOSTON COMMON America's first urban park was mostly dry land in 1630, the Public Garden was salt marsh, and the OWL ran between them. Settlement radiated from Boston Common along the Charles River and the Atlantic coast. The Common is the hub of the Hub of New England.

Boston Common was 50 acres of upland woods along the bay side of Shawmut peninsula. First European resident William Blaxton (aka "Blackstone") lived in a cottage on Beacon Hill, six acres next to the woods until 1635 when he sold to the Massachusetts Bay Colony and fled the crowd. Trees were cut down for a "training field" and the feeding of "cattell". British troops camped there before fighting Colonials at Lexington and Concord in April 1775. Cattle grazed until 1830.

The north boundary of Boston Common is Beacon Street and the historic Beacon Hill neighborhood.

Farther is the North End that originally was the "Island of North Boston", a smaller peninsula at the end of Shawmut with a narrow neck (now Hanover Street). The shoreline then curved south toward Fort Point Hill (also leveled; now a skyscraper) where cannon protected the harbor, then the shore curved toward narrow Boston Neck. (Chinatown developed as land was "reclaimed"). South of the Neck, the bayside water line circled west to the Common, completing the circuit.

Northeast of the Common is the leveled top of Beacon Hill with the gold-domed, 23-karat-gilded Massachusetts Statehouse. It's topped with a pinecone to symbolize the lucrative colonial lumber industry and the state of Maine (a Commonwealth district when the dome was completed in 1798).

Across the street is a bronze relief sculpture by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Memorial to the legendary Massachusetts 54th (Black) Regiment and Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, on the Common's wall -- America's first civic monument to the Civil War heroism of African American soldiers. The Freedom Trail starts here; Black, Irish and Women's Heritage Trails also connect to the park. Frederick Law Olmsted's acclaimed 'Emerald Necklace' begins here.

Planted near the towering Soldiers and Sailors Monument is a sapling from the same Horse Chestnut tree (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) in Anne Frank's diary in

Amsterdam during WW2 (the tall tree had survived half a century until a 2010 storm). Anne had laid on the floor in her secret annex, looking through a window at the sky... at the horse chestnut branches... where she wrote,

"I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles."

West of the Common was the Charles River, pure before European settlement polluted paradise. Back Bay-side of the original peninsula was salt marsh and water, sometimes stagnant. Worse with the growing population's sewage by 1800.

Now many lay on the Common's grass seeking solace, sunshine and fresh air, some simply watching the procession of people. Six sidewalks radiate from the Common's corner at Boylston and Charles Streets. To the west, both Beacon and Boylston Street intersections are near the original water line. Salt marsh extended slightly into the Common and the diagonal walk to the Spruce Street entrance gate of Beacon Hill avoided the marsh.

"Eventually all things come together and A River Runs Through It," observes the film. Boston grew, the river suffered, then Boston grew smarter. The River Charles is now one of the cleanest urban rivers in the nation. Science Says! Key words are "urban river".

Paddle here and there, watch the Regatta, even dive in, but don't touch mucky bottom. And don't drink the water.

LAND-MAKING The 1630 sea level had been receding since the last glacier scraped-up soil on its frozen push south. Then it melted and deposited "glacial till" on mounds of clay compacted by past glaciers into low hills called 'drumlins'. Such hills defined Shawmut peninsula and the harbor islands.

As the city grew, excavators found deep layers of "Boston Blue Clay", a glacial marine clay deposited 14,000 years ago, unlike the red clay at the surface of some southern soils. If not for glacial till on the clay, native northern soils might be as unforgiving to gardeners. (I gardened for my mother Ingrid decades ago in Alabama.) In any case, add compost.



Memorial to the Massachusetts 54th (Black) Regiment and Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. Contributed photo.

A dam was built to bypass Boston Neck southwest of the Common along now-Beacon Street as a toll road to Watertown in 1814. Unprofitable, but the salt marsh was contained and the area began filling in 1857. A massive 25-year project, twenty-five 35-car trains arrived daily with fill from Needham quarries to "reclaim" land. The wrought iron perimeter fence was erected around the Public Garden in 1862. The Civil War raged farther south with Massachusetts troops while Boston was enhancing its urban fabric. Back Bay was filled by 1882.

Boston's water level is rising again. The Boston Harbor Association predicts a rise of 2 feet by 2050. Severe flooding would overflow the Charles River Dam, mixing salt and freshwater every year. By 2100 with the sea level 5-foot higher, Boston would have a "100-year coastal flood twice a day, every day", closer to the original water line. Think about that on Monument Hill.

Sun worshipers on Monument Hill now look west into the afternoon sun, past the Public Garden that was salt marsh, toward downtown's tall buildings and the elegant Back Bay that was a tidal flat along the Charles River in 1630. They can walk across Charles Street from the Common through the Public Garden to Newbury Street shops and restaurants, to Back Bay's Commonwealth Avenue,



Weeping Katsura in Boston Public Garden.

Contributed photo.

a fine example of late 19th-century urban design after the salt marsh was filled. Victorian brownstones now line a broad boulevard of fine old trees, continuing the Emerald Necklace southwest toward Arnold Arboretum.

BOSTON PUBLIC GARDEN The other side of Charles Street and the street itself was Back Bay marsh until 1862. Now walking across Charles Street just inside the entrance from the Common, a large Doublefile Viburnum (*Vib. plicatum tomentosum* 'Mariesii') spreads horizontal branches in elegant tiers. White flowers in May line tops of branches in two rows ("files", hence the common name) becoming showy red fruit, maturing black. Birds love 'em. Red-purple leaves in fall. Native Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) flowers earlier, often unnoticed with tiny red blossoms on bare branches, fuzzy in the distance before leafout... a spring harbinger in Boston and in Connecticut's Last Green Valley.

A lowland lagoon features Swan Boats on water that sustains such surrounding trees as the Weeping Katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Pendulum'). Its "senescence" (leaf leaving wood) is truly sweet in the fall, smelling like cotton candy.

Shade perennials show leaf contrast by May with feathery Astilbe and bold Hosta.

Astilbe flowers in summer, white, pink, red or purple; I add taller Bugbane (*Cimicifuga*, now *Actaea*) 'Hillside Black Beauty' for a 3' clump of purple leaves with 6' white-to-pink flower spires in autumn. *Actaea* and *Astilbe* need moisture and the Public Garden has irrigation; if you do not and garden in dry shade, avoid *Astilbe* and *Actaea*. Rather, use dry-tolerant Barrenwort (*Epimedium*) and Goatsbeard (*Aruncus*). *Hosta* survives anywhere, best in some shade.

IF YOU GO Boston is walk-worthy of a longer stay, several days wandering. The hospitality industry needs post-pandemic business, especially midweek. It's a compact city, easily traversed on foot. Park at the Charles Street ramp under Boston Common and walk from there. TRAIN: The Arlington Street Station (Green Line) on Boylston Street is near the Public Garden. Or walk from the Downtown Crossing Station (Orange and Red Lines) near the Common. NEED: Street map of downtown Boston and comfortable shoes.

Part Two will continue through the Spruce Street Gate to the tony Beacon Hill neighborhood of tiny townhouses and narrow streets. The shoreline circled toward open harbor around the North End. The Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway now connects the North End to Chinatown, near the Common.

I hope readers appreciate roadtrips beyond the regional treasure that is our Last Green Valley. The pandemic has certainly whetted my appetite.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes is a master gardener and lives in Chaplin.



Astilbe and Hosta in Boston Public Garden. Cont. photo.

Independence in Chinatown

Article and photo by Calen Nakash

I leaned against a wall, suitcase by my side, eating skewered fish on a hot-dog bun with two dipping sauces and wondering exactly how I was going to make it to my Chinatown hotel. This was my first-ever solo trip to a city. My mind was still recovering from the train ride into Grand Central, during which I heard “like” used as a filler word every other second for an hour by four college girls, and, with the exhilaration of being on my own after a year of Covid wearing off, I was starting to second-guess my decision to do this, exacerbated a few minutes later by the fact that I was now in a cab with the driver looking mostly at his phone and speaking a different language. I wasn’t sure if he was talking to me and expecting me to reply.

A year of Covid was not the only reason I felt I had to make a change. Dealing with anxiety and sensory overload of sounds has had a profound effect on my life, and I felt that a big step was needed, scary or not, if I was to become more independent.

I thought I would be relieved to arrive at my hotel and settle in, but instead the rush of city traffic and the blare of horns in the street below only added to my anxiety. I turned on my white noise machine to calm down. Could I manage on my own? What would happen when I went outside again? In the end, it was playing the portable game system I had packed that helped me to feel safe and centered, but I was not prepared to socialize on my first day in NYC, and I pushed forward the visit with my new friends to Sunday.

That Saturday afternoon was spent mostly in my room trying to sleep and then venturing out around the hotel like a rabbit surveying for predators and trying not to get lost. Many businesses have yet to reopen after suffering the financial impact of Covid, and Chinatown and New York City as a whole still reflect that. There was, however, no shortage of restaurants. In terms of tourism, Covid may have had a lasting impact. There were very few Caucasians in the area, but a large number of Black and Asian Americans. It could be a while before business truly resumes as usual, if it ever gets to that point.

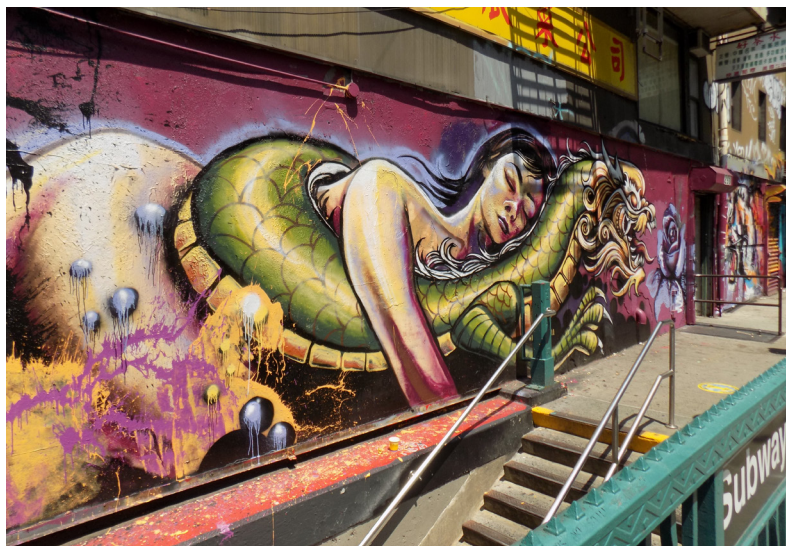
The view at night from my 11th-floor room was a surreal experience. I perched against the large window and gazed out at the Empire State Building with its glowing green tower. Half the city was bathed in lights, and the traffic sounds were softer and almost soothing.

I was impressed by the number of people wearing masks in the area as I ate a Sunday brunch and nursed my way-too-strong alcoholic drink. After a while I began to feel almost normal. Despite a heat wave, I walked down the street wearing a new blazer meant to impress people in the city who, it turns out, were not there to talk with me. It wasn’t until after the trip that a friend gave me some sage wisdom I’d been missing: “You don’t go to New York City to talk to people on the street.”

When going on a vacation, there’s a lot to be said for having people to meet. There have been a lot of jokes online about the societal impact of staying indoors for a year (for those who actually followed the guidelines), and, as someone with social anxiety, I was extra nervous about meeting new friends face-to-face, friends who were part of an online group of individuals from around the world. The climax of my trip took place on Sunday evening at a bar in Koreatown. While getting there was easier said than done (I walked for some distance wearing my blazer in the early evening heat with a GPS that kept telling me to turn around), my online friends were there to meet me, and the air conditioning came rushing into my lungs when we entered the establishment. In between bites of corn cheese

(an odd Korean dish that is just that — corn and cheese) and sips of soju, a delicious alcoholic drink, Michael, who seemed remarkably similar to me, shared that he wanted to be a therapist and seemed happy to lend his ear in that pursuit. Our conversation was filled with our life stories, the pandemic, and politics. Michael proclaimed that he felt I was on the correct path, and I mentioned how amazing it is that we sometimes meet the right person at the right time. Afterwards, we left the bar and ate at a Korean dessert place that served a shaved-ice dish called bingsu, and for the first time I felt like my trip had served a purpose.

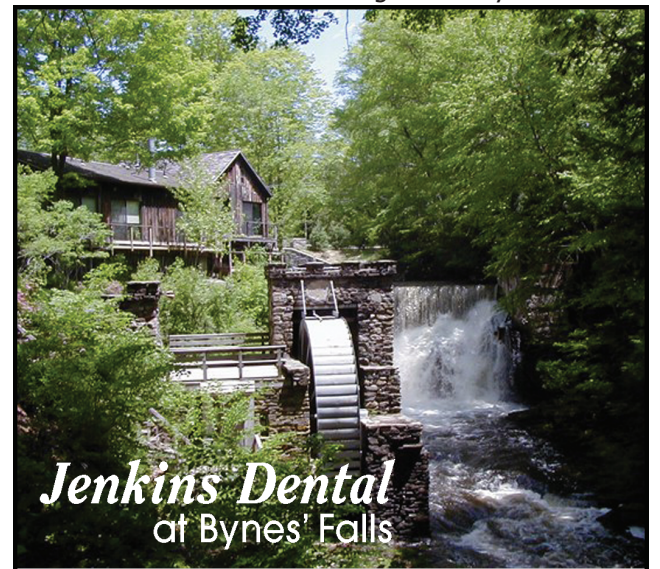
I have long felt, and continue to feel, that I’d like to live in a place that is more welcoming and friendly to strangers. It is easy to feel isolated when friendliness to the people you meet is met by indifference. Everyone has their own stories, but not everyone wants to talk. Being on my own for the first time, far away from family, helped me to realize which people I could talk with, however. After a visit to a karaoke bar on the second social outing of my trip, I was unable to find a cab and spotted a yellow dog with matted fur sitting next to a homeless couple. There’s



definitely a homeless issue in New York, but I think it’s important to view the homeless as people who are just in need of money. With their permission, I sat down beside them. The dog barked, but eventually trusted me enough to sniff my fingers and let me pet him. When I told the couple that I had recently lost my dog of fifteen years and two months, the man looked up at the sky and made a cross sign over his chest. “God is good, baby,” he said to his wife, while I scratched their dog behind his ears.

Chinatown was not my cup of tea, but it made me realize what I was capable of doing. Living my whole life afraid of certain sounds and then submerging myself in the epitome of noise was scary and freeing all at once. One standout moment was attempting to haggle, something I would never have done had it not been expected of me by my new city friends. It seems that haggling is only doable if you don’t care what people think. I remember staring with glazed eyes as my brain tried to compute what a good discount would be for a five-foot-wide ornamental fan, a display knife with dragons on it, a Chinatown T-shirt, and a lucky plastic cat with solar-powered paw action. My friend Wally jumped in to get me five dollars off, which he said could’ve been more had I not shown such interest in the merchandise. I lost the cat on the train ride home, but I managed to hold onto everything else.

In some ways, the person who checked into the Wyndham Garden Chinatown on Saturday afternoon is not the same person who checked out on Monday. My anxiety isn’t going to disappear overnight. I still need to find a way to hold onto a job and support myself, but coming back from a trip on my own, a trip to New York City no less, definitely put a spring in my step. As an old musical theatre song goes, “There’s no cure like travel to help you unravel the worries of living today.”



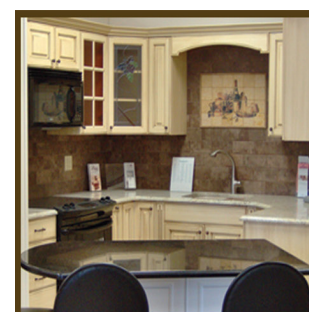
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A Sign for Safety

By Bill Powers

“An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure” - Ben Franklin

Traffic signs are symbols that help us make sense of our world and serve the purpose of communicating important messages to warn and guide drivers. Late one afternoon, as I headed west on route 14 in my car toward Windham Center, I realized that I had forgotten to bring my grocery shopping list. No problem, I'll just turn around and make the short drive back home to retrieve it. I would find that it was easier said than done! Also, it would lead to an adventure with government administrators that I would just as soon have avoided.

As I approached the historic Frog Pond on the right, I noticed the intersection with Follette Road was off to the left. It seemed, at the time, that this would be a good place to turn left in order to turn-around. While turning, I was shocked to see a car suddenly appearing and bearing down on me at a high rate of speed just after it came over the crest of the hill! The hill exists just west of the intersection. Vehicles traveling in an easterly direction and coming down the hill have a very short distance to travel until reaching the intersection.

Somehow, I was able to complete my turn without a collision with the speeding car. As I traveled on Follette Road looking for a place to turn my car around, I became acutely aware of my pounding heart and other signs of my adrenaline flowing. Little did I know that this would be only the beginning!

After turning my car around and driving back to the intersection, it was time to reenter route 14. My fight-or-flight reaction was still in full gear as a very long procession of cars and trucks came streaming down the hill. The posted speed limit there is 40 mph. Yah! Right! It may be posted, but it clearly goes unheeded. It took a long time to safely enter route 14 from Follette Road due to speeding traffic and a somewhat obstructed view of traffic traveling down from the crest of the hill. Eventually, I made it onto route 14 and back home to retrieve my grocery list.

Clearly, something about that intersection was very wrong because it was unsafe. On my way back home from Bob's IGA store, I considered it from the perspective of a motorist who was coming over the crest of the hill and headed down hill to the intersection with Follette Road. Then it dawned on me. There was absolutely **no warning** that one was approaching the intersection, one that was practically hidden. How could that be? At the very least a "Side Road Intersection Ahead" warning sign was needed. (See photo)

Since route 14 is a state highway and it seemed that something needed to be done in order to prevent a tragedy from occurring, I called the Connecticut Department of Transportation. After being rerouted a few times, I spoke to a gentleman who said that "I needed to 'complain' to my town's traffic official who would



need to contact the state after he investigated and determined it was necessary to make a request to the state. Furthermore, this gentleman stated that "He was not permitted to respond directly to me and my ideas about possible solutions, and he gave me the name of Windham's recognized traffic official.

When I reached the town official, he was not willing to go to the intersection to investigate the situation or to make a request to the state. He stated: "I am sick and tired of beating my head against the wall by trying to work with DOT." I had shared with him that what may minimally be needed was a "Side Road Intersection" warning sign to warn motorists of the upcoming intersection (see photo). I called the state's traffic engineer back and told him what had happened. There was nothing he could do because "There are sequences of rules to follow."

I thought that it shouldn't simply end this way due to bureaucratic intransigence occurring at state and local levels of government. Public servants? Concern for public safety? What to do? I contacted my state representative, Susan Johnson, who promised to look into it, and she did just that. In a few days, a member of her staff got back to me to say that DOT would be sending someone out to take a look. After two more weeks, there was another message—"DOT says there used to be a sign, it was gone and DOT would provide another sign," and they did!

Throughout my experience, on the job or as a volunteer, prevention has always been an important interest of mine. It has become ingrained in me that prevention contributes to the well-being of individuals and communities. Fire prevention, accident and injury prevention, prevention of illness and the prevention of child abuse and neglect are all examples of goals that can reduce the amount of human suffering in the world. To paraphrase Ben Franklin - It is better to stop something bad from happening than it is to deal with it after it has happened.

Bill Powers is a retired teacher and a resident of Windham.

The Complete History of Mankind

By Bob Lorentson

When the first early humans debuted on the world stage 2-3 million years ago in Africa, all they would have had for an audience is a bunch of almost human Australopithecus types and some other dead-enders, not exactly the kind you'd want to bring home to mother. Unless your mother was more of a smaller-brained, knuckle-dragging Australopithecus type herself who hadn't yet fully committed to terrestrial living. Having an almost human mother would have been hard to live down, even in those times, and is likely the reason some of the new early humans started to think about moving out of Africa.

Those early humans were no prize themselves, consisting at various times and places of the likes of Homo habilis, Homo erectus, Homo heidelbergensis, and Homo neanderthalensis, among other species who never really got it. Take H. habilis for instance, whose name means 'handy man'. He was known for being 3 1/2 feet tall and for using stone tools, so how handy could he have been? What with his smallish brain, he could not appreciate the finer things in life, never progressing beyond the 'eat or be eaten' stage of thinking. That should have been a no-brainer, but as he was also known for going extinct some 1.5 million years ago, he obviously didn't see the future in brains.

Before he left though, H. habilis may have been considerate enough to pass along some of his genes to H. erectus, whose name means 'erect man'. For a time this was an apt name, as H. erectus measured 5-6 feet tall when he was introduced 2 million years ago. When he went extinct 110,000 thousand years ago however, he wasn't erect, and could only be measured horizontally. It was too late to change his name by then. H. erectus had a still bigger brain and developed weapons, and so progressed from a 'eat or be eaten' to a 'kill or be killed' philosophy. His enemies just shrugged and killed him anyway.

H. erectus was the first early human to discover Europe and Asia. There was plenty of elbow room in those places then, which, oddly enough, he may not have actually needed, as the fossil record so far indicates that he may not have had any elbows. He had feet, and that's all that mattered to him. That, and the female of the species. Females of other species may have occasionally mattered to him too, if we're to be honest about it.

H. heidelbergensis was the Heidelberg Man, and he didn't care who knew it because his brain had grown to 1.9% of his body weight since ditching H. erectus. He knew it and that was enough, despite those who called him an intermediate species behind his back. He was 5 1/2 feet tall, controlled fire, hunted in groups, and hated to be reminded that he only lived in the Mid-Pleistocene, believing himself more

advanced than he was. H. heidelbergensis made his home both in Africa and Europe, and you know how that goes. Pretty soon, or about 300,000 years ago, the families stopped communicating, the European side changed their names to H. neanderthalensis, the African side to H. sapiens, and they all went along pretending the other didn't exist.

H. sapiens remained busy throughout Africa and the Middle East, then at the beginning of their Grand World Tour they thought they'd be the bigger species and went first to Europe to pay a visit. They were shocked by what they found. H. neanderthalensis had simply become Neanderthals, with limited speech capabilities, a receding forehead, and a double-arched brow ridge to go with a stocky, short-limbed body. The Neanderthals may have been apex predators and cooked their food, with a larger brain even than H. sapiens, but as evidenced by their low reproductive rate, it didn't even impress the women. It certainly didn't impress H. sapiens, and before long they were fighting like relatives everywhere. DNA testing indicates they did kiss and make up on occasion.

Homo sapiens, as we all know, is the Wise Man, and he knew that stone tools were so Middle Paleolithic. He also knew that he couldn't let the Neanderthals drag him down while transitioning to the Upper Paleolithic around 40,000 years ago. So he did what he had to and demonstrated what a big brain is really good for as he helped the Neanderthals on their journey to extinction. What can you say, he had that kind of talent. Still does to this day.

At some point around then H. sapiens became alternately known as the Early Modern Humans, or Cro-Magnon Men, because they all lived in a cave in France. They were also known for telling stories around the fire, singing, and drawing pictures on the cave walls of the other creatures they were helping on their journeys to extinction, like the woolly mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, and other woolly animals. They were not woolly themselves, and were not about to let some new Ice Age turn them into sheep.

Anyway, time passed as it usually does, and the Early Modern Humans became the Modern Humans, who are known for inventing things like pollution, over-population, pandemics, a new type of global warming, nuclear weapons, and conspiracy theories. Interestingly enough, at this very moment the Modern Humans are on the cusp of becoming the Late Modern Humans.

Bob Lorentson is a retired environmental scientist and an active daydreamer. For more of Bob's writing, see www.boblorentson.com

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ACT Students Get History Lesson from Civil War Performance

By Donna Dufresne

On June 7, students at Arts at the Capitol Theater (ACT)—a public, performing arts magnet high school in Willimantic—gathered in their theater for the first time since the pandemic. The mood was celebratory. They were happy to be together as they waited for Kevin Johnson of the Connecticut State Library to appear in the character of Pvt. William Webb, a Civil War soldier in the 29th Connecticut Colored Infantry Regiment.

The students had been introduced to the 29th Regiment a few weeks earlier through preparation materials provided by the Windham/Willimantic NAACP, which arranged the program and performance through its curriculum and education committee. During the preparation lessons, students were asked to dive into the concept of freedom, the most iconic of American ideals, in the context of enslaved Africans and free Blacks who did not yet enjoy citizenship or full freedom in the 1860s. Students explored First Amendment rights through case studies from the 1830s to the Civil War, in which abolitionists argued for equal education, free speech, and the right to petition, while the higher courts argued that “those of African descent were not nor ever would be citizens” (Dred Scott v. Sandford, 1857).

When Johnson stepped onto the stage in the character of William Webb, singing a traditional spiritual, “Freedom,” the audience was immediately hooked. More than a biographical sketch, the performance brought the students back to 1864, when Webb enlisted in the 29th Colored Regiment. He’d had his troubles as a young Black man a few years before when he committed a minor crime by stealing a boat with a friend. He was sent to prison, and the conditions were so terrible that he escaped, only to be sent to the Old Wethersfield State Prison for a longer sentence. When he was finally released, he would have found it difficult to find employment. Some things never change. The 29th Connecticut Colored Infantry Regiment provided an opportunity to turn over a new leaf, become a man, and fight for freedom.

“Freedom” was a loaded word for a young Black man, even in the North, where people of African and Native American descent were patronized as if they were children. They certainly were not shown respect or treated as citizens. Webb and the other soldiers in the performance conveyed immense respect for one of the Black officers who stood over six feet tall and held command over the troops. He was the target of their aspirations: “He was a man—a man that looked like me.”

Webb described the speech that Frederick Douglass gave to the 29th Regiment before they shipped out, a pep talk that instilled pride and determination as they reflected on the solemnity of their role as Black men who were fighting for the freedom of their enslaved brothers and sisters as well as a better life for themselves.

But the glitter of hope and freedom were soon lost as the 29th Regiment engaged in battles and Webb saw his friends and comrades fall around him. Most notable was the Battle of the Crater at Petersburg. The 29th fought valiantly and dug deep trenches to plant explosives. But the casualties were massive. In the performance, Private Webb put a human face on the fog of war as he appeared clearly shaken by the experience. It was not lost on his young audience, who absorbed the heaviness of the moment. And then he brought us all back to reality with levity as he described thehardtack biscuits that were part of his daily rations, and how he later got married. By the time William Webb sauntered off stage, singing his “Freedom” song, the



performing arts students were saluting him with a standing ovation.

But that was not the end of the event. When Johnson returned to the stage to take questions, the students rose to the occasion. They asked intelligent questions about the scholarship and research behind the performance, and provocative questions about racial justice. Perhaps the best lesson of the day was that of being fully human. When asked if the murder of George Floyd and current racial tensions made him angry, Johnson replied that he believed it is important to talk about race, but it is most important to put a human face on it and make positive connections through kindness. Indeed. Anger and hatred are the crumbs

that sustain fear. Johnson and Private Webb fed our souls and gave us much to chew on as we reflected on the lessons of the past in the context of the present.

After the Q&A, Johnson took time to talk with a number of students and NAACP members who flocked around him on the stage. In the words of NAACP member Sarah Smith, “Thank you for arranging for Mr. Kevin Johnson to teach true history in such an engaging and compelling way. Through his research and skill, we experienced what it was like to be a Black Union soldier. Kevin is truly knowledgeable, gifted and dedicated in portraying these heroic men.”

The Windham/Willimantic NAACP Education Committee looks forward to bringing more performances to local

schools next year as it expands its program, *Out of the Shadows: Black Soldiers in the CT 29th Colored Regiment during the Civil War.*



Leah Ralls, president of Windham/Willimantic NAACP, and Kevin Johnson, dressed as Pvt. William Webb of the 29th Connecticut Colored Infantry Regiment in the Civil War. Photo by Donna Dufresne.

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July

*"I have always had a certain aversion to heat.
And for me, the name of the game on the stage is 'beat the heat.'
It's always July under the lights."*

- Bob Weir

By EC-CHAP

Game ON! The GRAND REOPENING of The Packing House is scheduled for September 2021! As long as vaccinations continue to progress favorably, and critical health metrics continue to decline, we will be prepared.

We continue this month's article by highlighting the artists and film screening scheduled for the month of November. These include Gypsy Jazz Artist, Luke Hendon; and Americana/Blues Artist Eric Sommer. Our film screening planned for November is "Once".

If your EC-CHAP membership has expired, or if you are interested in becoming a new member, please visit: <https://www.ec-chap.org/membership-information> or give a call (518-791-9474).

EC-CHAP is looking for volunteers! Julie Engleke, our Volunteer Coordinator is seeking individuals that may possess video production and social media experience; as well as those that would just like to lend a helping hand. If you are interested in learning how you may be able to help support this effort, please contact Julie at: volunteer@ec-chap.org.

We will continue to stream our *Virtual Talent Showcase* on the **2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm** through September. We plan to resume our **LIVE monthly Talent Showcase on Wednesday, October 13th!** Please consider participating by sharing your talent, or just join us to see and hear local and regional creatives sharing their talent (see details below). Our next Virtual Talent Showcase is scheduled to stream at **7:00pm, Wednesday, July 14th** (all files must be received by Wednesday, July 7th).

Please join us for the Opening of a 10-week exhibit, The Mill Works Artist Community, 4:00pm, Saturday, July 17th at the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery, 156 River Road, Willington, CT.

We leave you with the following:

*"You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself any direction you choose.
You're on your own.
And you know what you know.
And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go..."*

- Dr. Seuss

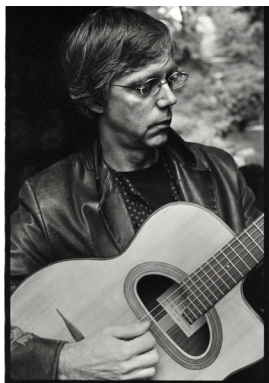
Happy July!
EC-CHAP Board

NOVEMBER 2021 HIGHLIGHTS AT THE PACKING HOUSE

An Evening with Luke Hendon (Gypsy Jazz). Saturday, November 6th, 7:30pm.

LUKE HENDON has had success in the world of Django music, performing with top players from around the world. A Veteran guitarist, Luke has had many successes in his career. He has opened for legendary acts such as Al Green, Sun Ra, and Los Lobos, performed on Broadway, composed and recorded for television and film, worked with dance ensembles, cruise ships, theatre companies, and many, many bands.

Luke is among the notable guitar staff/artist instructors who have taught at the acclaimed Django in June Gypsy Jazz event held at Smith College, North Hampton, MA.



Hendon travelled to Europe to a Sinti camp to study with Paulus Schafer and Fapy Lafertin. Upon his return to the U.S. he recorded Silk and Steel, an album of original gypsy jazz compositions. Silk & Steel, Luke Hendon draws from the tradition of the legendary gypsy guitar of Django Reinhardt and comes out swinging, soulful, funky, fresh, and innovative with his own project. In this stripped down acoustic setting, Luke's guitar takes center stage. "I sort of got obsessed with learning a bunch of Django Reinhardt solos note for note-which took me several years-Now I try to take the technique I gained into creating my own music!"

In his acoustic project, Luke Hendon cooks up a gumbo of old and new. He playfully mixes modern influences and traditional gypsy jazz with virtuosity and style. In other arenas Luke has worked professionally as a composer, a session musician and guitarist in many different styles of music.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.

"Eric Sommer in Concert" (Americana/Blues). Saturday, November 20, 7:30pm.

Singer/songwriter ERIC SOMMER is an unbelievable intersection of improbable influences and experiences channeled into an amazingly diverse catalog and a résumé that reads more like a musical adventure novel than a series of career bullet points.

Sommer emerged from the Boston music scene in the '80s with a vengeance, a Folk guitarist with a percussive, open-tuning style adapted from the likes of David Bromberg, Steve Howe, Townes Van Zandt and Brit Folk legend Davy Graham. But Boston was also a hotbed of New Wave, Power Pop and Punk at that point, and Sommer absorbed those influences as well, creating a Byrdsian jangle sound that earned him opening slots for national touring acts and regular bookings at the renowned Paradise Theatre.

Sommer eventually relocated to Europe where he scored tours with Bram Tchaikovsky, Wreckless Eric and Nick Lowe, calling Denmark and the Netherlands home for awhile. After honing his personal songwriting style and playing every conceivable club on the European circuit, Sommer returned to Boston homeless and broke.

Living on the streets and in abandoned squats, Sommer played every available open mic and picked up guitar tips from David Landau and Gary Burton/Steve Howe sideman Mick Goodrick, which led to the formation of a trio called The Atomics, which offered up an American version of Elvis Costello, Joe Jackson and Nick Lowe during its run. While The Atomics opened for the Dead Kennedys and Gang of Four and became one of Boston's best local New Wave outfits, Sommer was finding constant inspiration in the works of Jeff Beck, Pat Martino, Joe Pass and Charlie Christian.

With The Atomics' dissolution, Sommer's wanderlust took him to New York, Atlanta and finally the suburbs of Washington, D.C., where he founded the Georgetown Film Festival and embarked on a phase of independent film scoring. Since then, Sommer has been a troubadour with no fixed address, playing well over 250 gigs a year and slowing down just long enough to record a handful of brilliant albums, including Rainy Day Karma with his band, Solar Flares, and his latest solo effort, Brooklyn Bolero.

If there's any lingering doubt about Sommer's supernatural versatility, consider that he's opened for Old 97's, Nickel Creek's Sara Watkins, Bluegrass icon Jerry Douglas, Mates of State, Dr. John, Leon Redbone and Built



to Spill, to name a few - and Dead Kennedy's, Mission to Burma, Gang of Four, and Elvis Costello, Wreckless Eric and Brahm Tchaikovsky...

Whether in band or one-man form (which nakedly showcases his amazing acoustic Blues guitar styling), Sommer is a living history of contemporary music and a musical force of nature.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.

Film Screening

"Once" (R). 2007. Thursday, November 18th, 7:00pm

"Once" was written and directed by John Carney, and stars Glen Hansard, Marketa Irglova, and Hugh Walsh.

"The film presents "a modern-day musical about a busker and an immigrant and their eventful week in Dublin, as they write, rehearse and record songs that tell their love story." IMDb

"A vacuum repairman (Glen Hansard) moonlights as a street musician and hopes for his big break. One day a Czech immigrant (Marketa Irglova), who earns a living selling flowers, approaches him with the news that she is also an aspiring singer-songwriter. The pair decide to collaborate, and the songs that they compose reflect the story of their blossoming love." Rotten Tomatoes | 97% on Tomatometer

"I'm not at all surprised that my esteemed colleague Michael Phillips of the Tribune selected John Carney's "Once" as the best film of 2007... They are just purely and simply themselves. Hansard is a professional musician, well known in Ireland as leader of a band named the Frames. Irglova is an immigrant from the Czech Republic, only 17 years old, who had not acted before. She has the kind of smile that makes a man want to be a better person, so he can deserve being smiled at... They love music, and they're not faking it. We sense to a rare degree the real feelings of the two of them; there's no overlay of technique, effect or style... "Once" is the kind of film I've been pestered about ever since I started reviewing again. People couldn't quite describe it, but they said I had to see it. I had to. Well, I did. They were right." Roger Ebert, December 24, 2007

"Once doesn't plop its emotions on its characters' sleeves, and it trusts us enough to leave some of the best stuff unstated. In other words, it trusts us to know that half the music lies between the notes." Mark Bourne, Film.com, December 19, 2007

"A simple miracle of a film." Richard Propes, TheIndependentCritic.com; September 18, 2020 | Rating: 4.0/4.0

"If "The Commitments" shows the gritty, robust side of Dublin and the Irish music scene, "Once" shows us a softer, more romantic side." James Plath, Movie Metropolis; April 18, 2014 | Rating: 8/10

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

Doors 6:30pm / Show 7:00pm. Soft drinks and snacks available. Suggested donation \$5.00. We are pleased to offer our exclusive "BYOB&F" model - Bring Your Own Beverage & Food (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required).

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EC-CHAP ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES



"Twice Around" with Curtis Brand (Folk/Indie). Saturday, September 18th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.

"Ramblin' Dan Stevens" (Blues). Saturday, September 25th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.

"An Evening with Singer/Songwriter and Keyboard Artist Bob Malone" (Rock/R&B). Saturday, October 2nd, 7:30pm. Tickets: \$25.00 online / \$30.00 at the door.



“AJ Jansen Band: The Out-law Women of Country Show” (Country). Saturday, October 23rd, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.



“Eric Sommer” (Blues/Americana). Saturday, November 20th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.



“Tracy Walton” (Folk/Indie). Saturday, December 4th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.



EC-CHAP JAZZ SERIES

“Greg Abate Quartet” (BeeBop Jazz). Saturday, October 9th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$25.00 online / \$30.00 at the door.

“Luke Hendon” (Gypsy Jazz). Saturday, November 6th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.



“An Intimate Evening with Grammy Nominee Nicole Zuraitis (A Holiday Theme). Saturday, December 18th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$25.00 online / \$30.00 at the door.

EC-CHAP SPECIAL PROGRAM

“An Evening with Spiritual Medium Maura Geist”. Friday, October 8th, 7:30pm.

Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.



EC-CHAP VIRTUAL TALENT SHOWCASE

EC-CHAP has been offering our LIVE Talent Showcase since 2016. Our Talent Showcase is designed as a platform for local and regional artists to share their talent in front of a live audience. As always, acoustic musicians, film makers, poets, comedians, jugglers, puppeteers, and creative artists of all ages are invited to perform at The Packing House. Visit www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming for general details.

Since the arrival of COVID-19, EC-CHAP has been offering monthly online programming beginning in April 2020, and launched our Virtual Talent Showcase beginning July 2020. We are streaming our Virtual Talent Showcase on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm. Please consider participating by sharing your talent, or just join us to see and hear local and regional creatives sharing their talent.

If you would like to participate in our Virtual Talent Showcase, please give us a call for instructions to upload your videos. Each participant may submit multiple files up to a cumulative maximum run time of 15-minutes. All video files should be submitted in Landscape mode (Horizontal format), and .mp4 file format. Video files will need to be received one week prior to streaming, or by the 1st Wednesday of the month.

Our next Virtual Talent Showcase is scheduled to stream at 7:00pm, Wednesday, July 14th (all files must be received by Wednesday, July 7th). Visit www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming for general details.

EC-CHAP FILM SERIES

The EC-CHAP Film Series hosted by the Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance (EC-CHAP), a 501.3.c non-profit membership-based cultural organization. To learn more and how you can become a member, visit www.ec-chap.org. Suggested donation \$5.00.



“Begin Again” (R). 2013. Thursday, October 21st, 7:00pm

continued at column to right

Precious Moments

The bluest of blues mixed with a beautiful aqua green and white caps gently rolling into shore.

Seagulls drifting this way and that, carried on the tail of a cool breeze, with the sun sparkling on the water just below.

The serenity of the ocean breeze softly kissing your skin, mixed with the redolence of the sea and the melody of the crashing waves can render one into an hypnotic spell.

Time stands still as peace and calm take control and insist that your heart slows down its pace.

Tranquility caresses the mind and spirit offering up its fruit of precious moments to rest your soul.

Lynda George Bowen

To all our contributors-
Thank You!

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



“Once” (R). 2007. Thursday, November 18th, 7:00pm

“It’s A Wonderful Life” (PG). 1946. Thursday, December 16th, 7:00pm

Tickets, Reservations, CANCELLATIONS, and Contact

Tickets for all shows and program registrations for the Fall are available for purchase online at www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming; or may be purchased at the door the day of the event. Unless otherwise specified, doors open 30-minutes prior to show time.

Unless specified otherwise, all performances will feature EC-CHAP’s Exclusive Bring Your Own Beverage & Food “BYOB&F”™ model - wine & beer ONLY (Not applicable to Meetings, School Programs, and First Sunday events). Snacks and soft drinks will also be available. You can also bring your paid ticket to Willington Pizza House (or WP Too) for eat-in or take-out the night of the show and receive 15% off your meal purchase.

If you’re feeling sassy, SPECIFICALLY ask for “The Packing House” pizza! You won’t go wrong. Visit www.thepackinghouse.us for the secret recipe.

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

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

Twilight Sonata

The Goldfinch flies to me
when I hold out my hand
It tilts its head one way,
then the other, studying me,
and returns to the feeder
Thistle for you, my
tender feathered friend
In the trees, birdsong
and trembling leaves
Trills, lilting notes, a lullaby
as the sun dips to the West
When you return to me yellow bird,
I can feel your heart.
In my hand you feel like air
but your feet tickle my palm
I kiss your little head.
You pause, then fly away
And I sit there until the full moon rises

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Goal

By Felix F. Giordano

In last year's (2020) August issue of *Neighbors* Newspaper we discussed plots and subplots. To take that one step further is to discuss the goal in your story. Again, you can write a short story, a novella, or a novel, the goal in any of those literary styles becomes the foundation of your plot. Without a goal there can be no plot because then your characters interact among themselves with no clear purpose in mind other than to confuse the reader. Goals and plots are two distinct components of the Elements of Writing and are not to be confused nor are they interchangeable. The goal is what the protagonist wishes to accomplish and the plot is the way he or she gets there.

To appreciate the importance of a goal in your story you not only have to understand how to develop a plot but you also have to construct a clear and concise conflict, the power of three again. Do you see how the different segments of the Elements of Writing keep coming together to guide us along?

The plot and goal go hand in hand. For instance, select any mystery story. A crime may be committed early on and the plot usually centers on the detective searching for clues as to who is responsible for the crime. In some instances, the victim of the crime may be unknown and the plot can include a search for the identity of that victim. Obviously, the goal in the story is to solve the crime. That means identifying, finding, and bringing the suspect to justice which are all parts of the plot. The goal is the glue that keeps the plot from falling apart and it's the driving force that moves the plot forward.

We can once again refer to classical literature and examine how the masters used the element of goal in their writings to help develop and enhance the plot in their stories. Take for instance, the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*. The surviving manuscript is believed to have been written around the first millennium by an unknown author and it may have originated as an oral tradition. The goal in the story is to rid a kingdom of a monster. The plot trends toward that goal but along the way conflict comes into play as Beowulf encounters various challenges to his goal. This distinct variation between goal and plot is very important to us as writers. While the goal of your protagonist should remain the same and be clearly apparent to your reader early on, your plot can diverge as challenges come into play.

Take another story, a contemporary one. The Star Wars franchise has engaged two or three, maybe even four generations of loyal fans. The goal at the beginning of the original Star Wars saga is the Rebel Alliance's plan to defeat the Empire and restore the Republic. If you've watched the movies or read the novels you are well aware that goal is compromised by unexpected impediments as the plot unfolds. Princess Leia is captured and must be rescued and the Death Star must be destroyed before its cataclysmic weapon can be deployed. These are components of the plot that drive the story towards its goal.

If we can use *Beowulf* and *Star Wars* as examples we can see that as writers, if we present a clear goal to the reader (Beowulf is tasked to kill the monster and the Rebel Alliance needs to defeat the Empire and restore the Republic) then we will have engaged the reader to keep turning the pages. And that should be the objective of every writer, first to make the reader choose to read your work and then to finish reading it. How many times have you heard of someone saying that they stopped reading

a book because it was confusing or the plot wandered on and on and went nowhere? Sometimes that's because there were flaws in the plot or the goal either wasn't clearly defined or was not central to the story. The goal of your story should be so righteous, awe-inspiring, or the antagonist deserves such a comeuppance that the potential reader will be of the mindset that they must simply read and finish your story.

Now just as important it is to set a goal in your story and develop your protagonist's journey toward that goal, it is also important to take sidesteps here and there in the plot to either enhance or hinder your protagonist's quest toward that goal. In the examples of *Beowulf* and *Star Wars* we know that Beowulf suffers the agony of the loss of his soldiers to the monster and we know in *Star Wars* of the many challenges that Luke Skywalker faces in his efforts to assist the Rebel Alliance.

That being said, when defining the goal in your story make sure that you plan for your protagonist to face ordeals and hardships. You don't want your protagonist to reach his or her goal in a cakewalk. The challenges towards the goal may come in the form of people, natural disasters, weather, or even bureaucracy.

The last thing that I want to point out is that even if you have a clearly defined goal, your protagonist does not have to accomplish it. Depending upon your story and how your plot unfolds you may have your protagonist never attain his or her goal. There are many stories where the apparent goal is never realized and is elusive. Sometimes it's not even the protagonist who is working toward the goal but instead it's the antagonist. The best example that I can think of is the 1973 horror film, *The Wicker Man*. Police officer Neil Howie is investigating the disappearance of a young girl. We assume the goal is to find the girl and bring her abductor to justice. Right up to just before the end of the movie we have high hopes that he will reach his goal of finding the missing girl. However at the end of the movie we come to the realization that the goal belongs to the antagonists and the definition of that goal is to kill the police officer and end the investigation.

We defined "Goal" 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. His website is jbnovels.com.

Next Month's Topic: Plot Twist

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Schools Systems Should Tap Self-Advocates To Improve Their Autism Education

By Michelle M. Baughman



Almost any public school teacher, special Ed teacher, or instructional assist who has attended in-service day trainings can tell you that the three defining characteristics of autism are difficulties with social communication, difficulties in social interaction, and "repetitive, restricted, stereotypical behaviors."

This is essentially a mnemonic memory device (You know, those tricks you use to cram for a test? For example, "my very energetic mother just served us nine pickles" was used to remember the names of the planets in the solar system). The problem with a mnemonic memory device is that it really waters down concepts and it is no substitution for actually learning and understanding the original information. It is designed to prompt one's memory for a body of information that has already been consumed: Obviously, the planets in the solar system have nothing to do with mom making you eat an objectionable quantity of cucumbers stewed in vinegar and dill, and if this is the only information you had been provided, you would be sadly misinformed and ill equipped!

Often times in these public school in-service trainings on autism the important body of information is never actually consumed: The educational staff is presented with such a superficial and cursory understanding that it leaves them sadly misinformed and ill equipped to properly educate their autistic students. However, they do not realize that their in-service training was not comprehensive, so they think that they have now learned everything there is to know and they design ill-conceived educational programs based on this cursory understanding.

One example of an ill-conceived educational intervention for autistic individuals is ABA therapy. ABA, or Applied Behavioral Analysis was originally designed and intended to make autistic children "indistinguishable from their peers" by using punishments and rewards to extinguish "repetitive, restricted, stereotypical behaviors." However, these behaviors serve a purpose, and it is cruel and inhumane to control an individual via "aversives" (punishments). Likewise, it is cruel and inhumane to withhold things that could comfort the individual or help them to self-regulate until the teacher deems the student has satisfactorily performed some arbitrary behavior (that is most likely meaningless to the student) so as to use it as a "reward" to reinforce the desired performance behavior. The behavioral therapy that is used to train animals is more humane than what autistic individuals are subjected to in ABA. There are thousands of autistic adults in the online autism community who claim to have been traumatized by the ABA therapy that they were subjected to in public schools.

When educators mistakenly think that "social difficulties" simply means that the autistic person lacks manners and is rude or does not know the rules of polite society, a common intervention is to only focus on specifically teaching social skills to autistic children. (I will admit that specifically teaching social skills is a good idea since we autistics don't pick up on indirect or peripheral/nonverbal communication, and as Eusticia Culter, Temple Grandin's Mother and author of *A Thorn In My Pocket* asserts, manners can go a long way in getting along with people"). However, focusing *only* on this is inadequate and does

a grave disservice to autistic students. Also, the perspective or attitude that accompanies this interpretation has severe life-long consequences in terms of self-esteem and autonomy for the autistic individual because it conditions them to believe that they are always in the wrong, that any disagreements are their fault. (Even when they are trying to object to being mistreated or taken advantage of, they are left feeling guilt, shame, and a need to apologize to their antagonist!)

Another ill-conceived thing that I experienced first-hand when I worked as a substitute in a local inner-city's school system's autism classroom was a classroom design that was the antithesis of what would meet autistic individuals' needs. I can only assume this school was operating out of decades old, outdated information on autism: They had a cold, bare linoleum floor, no play space or area for "circle time." The entire space was taken up with dividers (the kind used in "cubical farm" office spaces). Each student was required to sit up right at a desk all day in their own individualized claustrophobic hell-hole and spend the entire time interacting with a one-on-one educational aid. They only got to move their bodies during recess. Any "fidgeting" during their seat work was discouraged (even though they were separated by tall dividers where no one else could see them to be distracted by their movement). I would not call what was happening there "education" (because this kind environment kills a child's natural curiosity and love of learning), and noting they were doing there would actually prepare them for life... unless that life is intended to be spent in a claustrophobic jail cell and to never develop a sense of autonomy. I think the term "educational neglect" is much more fitting for what was happening there, because students with disabilities were not having their educational needs provided for.

The best way for school systems to ensure that they are providing a comprehensive understanding of autism to their educational staff is to engage a panel of actually autistic adult self-advocates who can provide valuable insights on what may be behind a student's behavior, provide insights on educational approaches that would be more effective, and can make recommendations on better classroom design. Adult autistic self-advocates are very committed to making the world a better place for the next generation of autistics, and we are very eager to share our insights and creative solutions. Dialoging with such a panel of self-advocates offers educational staff a compassionate understanding of autistic human beings which will help them to interact more effectively with their students.

Michelle M. Baughman is a late-in-life diagnosed adult on the autism spectrum, an educator, a parent of a twice-exceptional child, and a trauma-informed AANE Certified AsperCoach who provides intensive, highly individualized coaching to individuals with Asperger Syndrome (AS) and related conditions. Michelle ascribes to the Neurodiversity paradigm and writes to help debunk the general misconceptions surrounding this condition to help autistics live their best lives and to change the negative cultural narrative about autism. She may be contacted via Autism Personal Coach autismpersonalcoach.com or her online presence: <http://linkedin.com/in/michelle-m-baughman-28b5a92b> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1015628291826263/>

Animal Rant

Hidden away in what passes for barns in these days
 Mostly in darkness, pent up in wicked wire cages
 Unhappy chickens are suffering crowded together
 Still the poor creatures eat, perpetuating their sorrow
 Why can't the chickens go on a hunger strike
 Refusing to eat 'til the corporate bosses are forced
 To free them from prison and give them a better life
 Why can't they live on a farm and do what chickens do
 Running around chasing bugs in the grass in the sunshine
 Tending their little chicks under their sheltering wings
 Why are the gentle cows shackled to milking machines
 Never to feel the sun, never to graze the green grass
 Why are the powerful pigs confined in cruel pens
 Too small to move so they gnaw on the bars in frustration
 Why can't they all go on strike and refuse to live on
 In such a hellish creation, the factory farm
 Why can't we just treat them kind like the good Lord
 intended
 When over all the poor creatures He gave us dominion?

Kathy O. LaVallee

Lawn Concert at The Fletch

This summer's lawn concert at The Fletch will be on Wednesday, July 14, (rain date: July 21). The free concert begins at 6:30 p.m. on the lawn of Fletcher Memorial Library. This year's featured group is Still Pickin', a bluegrass trio that plays bluegrass, and selected contemporary and original music, plus some old fashioned country tunes. The group aims to "provide your favorite style of music that is no longer readily available on radio" and their program includes humorous stories and audience participation.

This talented trio consists of lead singer Dennis Sheridan, who plays guitar, mandolin and fiddle, Patricia MacDonald on bass, and Jim Shapely, banjo and dobro player. All three share in the vocals and all have long been a part of the Connecticut music scene.

They have performed throughout New England and are looking forward to appearing this year at the Po-dunk Bluegrass Festival.

This year's concert is once again made possible by a gift from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Although the library building will be closed during the performance, the audience is invited to picnic on the grounds before the show, and sanitary facilities will be in place, also made possible by our sponsor.

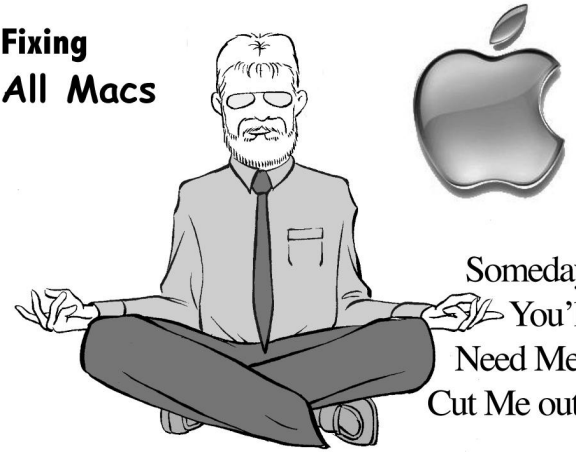
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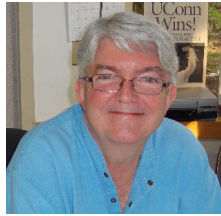
To all our contributors- Thank You!

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

Community Media and Regional Arts

By John Murphy

Happy summer everyone, I hope Life is treating you well. So glad we are here together with another issue of *Neighbors!* This month's column features local media and arts news and updates about projects underway:



1. Regional Arts Coverage Continues on WILI AM/FM
2. New WECS radio series with Connecticut writers continues in July
3. Update Report: Mansfield Agricultural Development Project on Browns Road with Agbotics
4. Engaging the Hate Locally in Facebook is Risky Business!

Eastern Connecticut Arts Review—Wednesdays at 5:30 PM



I was happy and honored to share the studio with the following guests during June:

- Stafford Arts Society, Maureen Griffin, President
- CT Make Music Day/Summer Solstice, Matt Fox, Make Music Alliance
- Art and Garden Tour of Northeast CT, Lauren Merlo, John Starinovich/participating artists
- Putnam Art Council, Karen Osbrey, President
- Consonare Choral Community, Sarah Kaufold, Co-Founder
- Cultural Coalition Serving Southeastern and Northeastern CT, Deb Mathieson,
- Bliss Marketplace/Willimantic, Kim Cash, Owner/Manager
- Joe Malinowski, Owner, Willimantic Records
- Art Guild Northeast, Elaine Turner, President

This series focuses on how people and groups made it through the Pandemic and how everyone is planning for recovery and restoration in 2021. Current events, arts-related news, and information about resources, training and grant opportunities will be featured. Please consider joining me in the studio when the timing is best for your efforts—everyone at the studio, including me, is fully vaccinated and we have a clean and safe space for radio to shine a light on all the good news to come.

Programs are broadcast live and video recorded. Interviews will be posted on my website and YouTube channel for on-demand access anytime to maximize exposure and outreach for all guests: www.humanartsmedia.com Reach out via email at john@humanartsmedia.com to schedule a conversation and we can make the most of our summer together. Send flyers and notices to keep me current with news to share during the program. I am in the process of having this program presented weekly on Spectrum public access TV channel 192—more information about that project in August.

Radio Series with Connecticut Writers Continues on WECS Radio

This new radio series with Connecticut writers continues after a successful launch in May. It was great to share time and conversation with people dedicated to the power and craft of words in many forms and contexts. Thanks again to poet, teacher, and editor John Stanizzi for helping me connect to this wonderful community! We include writers of all styles and levels of experience. The focus is on the art of creating meaning and sharing emotion through the blank page or with sound.

Interviews and readings are featured during The Pan American Express, Tuesdays from 12-4 pm on ECSU Radio WECS at 90.1 FM and www.wecsfm.com. The current schedule includes:

- June 29—Ed Ahern
- July 6—Laurel Peterson
- Jon Anderson/tba
- Pegi Deitz Shea/tba

Interviews will be posted at www.humanartsmedia.com and on my YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_JZT9nwKp-WuofMdyzPrUig/videos. Please subscribe for these conversations and many other features--enjoy!



Update: Mansfield Agricultural Development Project on Browns Road with Agbotics Inc.



I share this story in *Neighbors* to reach a larger audience because every town and city is struggling with how to grow budgets and not sell out the values and qualities that make local everyday life precious and unique. Watch what happens in Mansfield for a peek into the future of how local government balances citizen needs and interests with the needs and interest of private developers of all kinds.

An application is active and pending in Mansfield for the construction of a new agricultural business at 438 Browns Road by Agbotics Inc., a company based in Sackets Harbor in upstate New York. A smart farm was proposed that would include six greenhouses (to begin), a wash-and-pack building with a small office and two restrooms. Local journalism coverage of this issue has been limited and contributes to a significant gap in public understanding. There has been much local debate and expressed concern.

A second public hearing was held on June 7, 2021, at the virtual Inland Wetlands Agency/Planning Zoning Commission Meeting. The meeting was recorded and is available on the town website. I plan to air the public comments section of the hearing on my WECS radio program, as I did for the previous hearing in May.

On June 22 I interviewed two town residents with concerns about the project and information to share that came forward after the June 7 hearing. I spoke with Michael Stuart at 1 pm and Paul Stern at 3 pm. The interviews are posted along with all the others at www.humanartsmedia.com.

One important lesson learned from all of this is that we truly need a higher level of citizen involvement in the various stages of development and the related processes of local government. Most people on commissions and committees are volunteers and the increasing level of developer interest and applications is pushing their time availability, knowledge and understanding of rules and procedures to maximum levels.

When there are strong debates and differences the pressure is very high on these good folks. One solution is for more people to attend meetings at the early stages of the application process, when they are wonky and loaded with unsexy technicalities. This is where you can learn about the small or large details that make or break deals and letting them float by without careful review by those residents who are most interested or affected is a compromise to finding the best decisions for the long-term interest of the town economy and our quality of life.

For example, there are several new housing projects being considered for Mansfield near the Four Corners region. If all win approval that would create about 1000 new apartments, a massive expansion of people and cars, with a significant new demand on local water, sewer, and other physical requirements. UConn is already in court opposing one project that is located near campus in the Discovery Drive area. This is another huge local story for coverage and interviews on my weekly radio program.

Please thank and patronize our advertisers for making the Neighbors paper possible. Thank you. T. King, Publisher

Engaging the Hate Locally is Risky Business! We Need Dialogues at the Extremes to Make a Lasting Peace



Map from Southern Poverty Law Center website.

For this month I return to a critical national challenge and a local media proposal that I offered in the February *Neighbors*: finding ways to connect with and engage extreme speech and those groups in our region who are operating at the political and social fringes. On May 24 I expanded my radio outreach by posting the following media invitation on a few Windham-Region Facebook group homepages:

Looking to find people in our region who are members of the Proud Boys, Oath Keepers or Three Percenters -- for radio interviews in a SAFE MEDIA SPACE that is open and not hostile -- for sharing ideas, concerns, and thoughts for how our nation can heal and restore a social/political order that has been broken.

Not looking for rants or hyperbole but rather the roots of why groups were formed and their long term goals and interests. Ideas not rhetoric, I am looking for folks who really want to discuss and explore as all of us are trying to find a way out of our national challenge. Please reach out by email in confidence at: murphyjo@easternct.edu. Thank you in advance for any help with reaching people!

I want to *sincerely thank* everyone who shared over 110 comments over several days, with a wide range of criticism and support, colorful and sublime, reflecting exactly the zeitgeist I am trying to tap into with these interviews.

Our media and our democracy are significantly out-of-phase, and our nation's loyal opposition is lost in a sea of anger. The waves of hate are so high! Too much yelling and not enough listening! Too much talk of our neighbors as enemies and not fellow citizens!

Anyone working in media today must face the deep skepticism and mistrust much of the public feels. That is part of the zeitgeist too. And quite rightly so I might add, I have enough of that within myself as a citizen, a love-hate with my own profession and how a large part of it has compromised its mission and purpose to grow its power and make its money.

Whatever your political flavor or belief system it is being challenged continuously at its roots and core by our present events. This is happening whether you are aware or woke or perhaps blissfully ignorant of what is happening around you. Our political mechanism for systemic change and correction without violence is broken right now—and the shepherds are failing to protect it and make it serve the people. In 1964 and 1065 the nation finally accepted that it would be the ballot or the bullet. That agreement, tentative at best in its day, is now on shifting sand with a very thin lifeline. Going nowhere forward means you must move, but if you move too fast counterforces will bring you down. Only through talking and openly sharing solutions will clearer paths and stepping-stones be revealed.

Remember that the KKK held a rally here about 40 years ago. A newsman from a local radio station covered the gathering and aired a tape of a young boy sitting on his dad's shoulder's saying how nice and warm it was to stand near the burning cross. I can still hear that kid today when I listen to the news.

January 6, 2021, is another Day of Infamy for our history books, when we all saw for ourselves just how broken and dysfunctional our political nervous system is. The world saw the USA USA USA at its worst! We are still figuring out where to go and what to do after that terrible day, and the clock is ticking 24/7 on every channel.

For the nation to heal we must heal from the bottom up and inside out within ourselves individually and collectively in our local communities. If we rely on our leaders to do this crucial work for us, we will only get more of the same "stuff" that is getting us nowhere. What can we do quietly in our everyday lives to help?

We need a safe space to discuss positive non-violent change and how extreme differences can be understood and resolved beyond short-term impulsive fixes that

continued on next page

Cloudy With a Chance of Daydreams

By Bob Lorentson

Growing up, my parents would tell me that I could move mountains if I worked hard and dreamed big. To this day I don't know if they were hoping for a business leader or an explosives expert. Either way, that was before I ever saw a mountain. To my parents everlasting disappointment I soon settled for moving clouds. I found them much more cooperative subjects.

If you move a mountain, what have you accomplished? The mountain is still there, it's just in a different location, and likely in someone else's way now. And for your efforts, you will undoubtedly find yet another mountain in your way also. But if you move a cloud, you will have the whole universe in front of you.

I have been a cloud watcher ever since I realized the limitations of staring at ceilings. The sky spoke to me early on, and while it didn't yet make any more sense than anything on earth, at least it wasn't trying to fill my head with things like algebra, world wars, and "Great Expectations". But while the sky is interesting in its own infinitely mysterious way, it would be a whole lot less interesting without clouds. Clouds bring the sky's magic down to earth, so to speak, in a free show that anyone can appreciate. Even if your imagination is for mature audiences only. No one has to know.

To lay on a grassy lawn on a warm summer day and conduct a parade of cumulous floats slowly across the sky is far more satisfying to me than moving mountains. And I don't have to lift a finger to do it. I am no nephologist however. Nephologists are cloud scientists, people whose business it is to demystify clouds with scientific explanations. They might just as well de-mistify them while they're at it, for clouds with either their magic or their water removed cease to be clouds in my mind. Of course, my mind is always in at least a partly cloudy condition, so I may be biased.

Instead, I'll throw my lot in with the CAS, the Cloud Appreciation Society, a loose affiliation of cloud lovers whose business it is to fight 'blue-sky thinking' wherever they find it. It is a battle that only those with their heads in the clouds would consider, as the blue-sky thinkers have managed to convince most people that 'being under a cloud' is a bad thing. The CAS has countered with a phrase of their own, 'A Day with Your Head in the Clouds Keeps Your Feet on the Ground', but blue-sky thinkers just smile and point to the dark clouds on the CAS horizon.

never last. We can hate extremist political leaders and candidates and what they say and do, but we must respect and live with the folks who support them. They live with us, many of them vote, and they will not go away just because of disagreements. Our children deserve a more peaceful and just world than we are giving them these days.

The Southern Poverty Law Center tracks hate speech across the nation and the groups that create and share it. Many groups have active websites you can explore and the content can be eye-opening! Some groups are based in our state, and some are chapters of groups in other states. Some are private and some public. Take a look.

See <https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map> and <https://www.splcenter.org/states/connecticut>

If anyone reading this is a member of a group or knows one—please reach out to my email (below) to make contact and plan a radio chat. Really, this is a sincere invitation, we need to turn the heat down! Progress will be shared on my weekly program The Pan American Express, Tuesdays 12-4 pm on WECS-FM at 90.1 FM and on the web anywhere at www.wecsfm.org, and in the months ahead.

Thanks for reading *Neighbors* and for your comments and feedback, and for letting other folks know about this wonder-

ful collective of writers and editors who are dedicated to serving the people and inhabitants of eastern Connecticut. Keep the faith and best summer wishes!

Word has it that its illustrious founder, Gavin Pretor-Pinney, is finding running the CAS too much work, a concept guaranteed to set its 50,000 members running faster than a sky filled with cumulo-nimbus thunderheads. As author of "The Cloud Spotter's Guide," Pretor-Pinney has no doubt seen the dark clouds as well. It didn't help when he decided to take on the formidable World Meteorological Organization on his own. As publisher of "The International Cloud Atlas," the WMO, established in 1950, recognizes 10 genera of clouds, 14 species, 9 varieties, and dozens of 'accessory clouds' and 'supplemental features'. It does not recognize either sheep or fluffy bunnies.

Pretor-Pinney, however, recognized in 2009 that the WMO had missed one, a rare, wave-like cloud variety that he called 'Asperatus'. In what should be no surprise to anyone, the WMO forecast team never saw either the cloud or the storm that followed. But after eight long years of fighting Pretor-Pinney, they finally caved in 2017 and amended the Atlas, while ungraciously changing the name to 'Asperitus'. Still, it's proof enough to me that sometimes you can move mountains simply by watching clouds.

To my mind, Pretor-Pinney may have had an advantage that the meteorologists didn't have. Cloud watchers are nothing if not contemplative dreamers, and clouds an ever-changing Rorschach test for their souls. Whether you see fluffy bunnies, fierce dragons, or a mushroom cloud surrounded by angels praying, there is much they can tell you about yourself. With so much free psychotherapy, that other elusive cloud, Cloud 9, is always within their grasp. Stick that in your bleeping Atlas, WMO.



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John Murphy
john@humanartsmedia.com

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What's in a Name?

Our Search for a Sense of Place

By Donna Dufresne

I grew up in a world where the names of places were sacredly etched in our childhood memories. Those names had been passed down from sibling to sibling from a collective basket held by the elders. My ninety-six-year-old father still remembers the local names of places from his childhood. The same places I roamed as a child. China Hill was the place where you could dig a hole from the top and end up in China, living in an upside-down world where the bathtub drained in the opposite direction and mean third-grade teachers would never find you. I wandered up there once with my little tin beach pail and shovel when the summer breeze turned to boredom and my feet were particularly itchy. I didn't get very far through the gnarly ground but came home with the satisfied grin that I had at least tried.

Cow hill was the place where we picked our first batch of blueberries for pancakes on July 4th every year and later perched in the bed of the truck or on the hood from where we could see the fireworks at the stadium in Lawrence, several miles away. It was the place of sunrise services for the West Boxford Congregational Church on Easter. The deacons would carry the heavy wooden cross while some of us arrived by horse-drawn wagons because that was the quaint thing to do in the late 60's, dressed in our flower child granny dresses. The stunning view looked over Brook School and Lake Cochichewick where the prep schoolboys practiced rowing for crew races and my cousin and I would skinny dip and later consume the water of our exposed private parts from the faucet (being the town reservoir and all).

Other place names still evoke an emotional rollercoaster from nostalgia to terror. I can still remember the goosebumps and the hair raising on the back of my neck as we ran through Bob Cat Woods, a thin strip of land between Fred Whittier's potato fields and Syd Rae's cow pastures. It was a tangle of grape vines and "Tarzan swings" through which we ran full speed, eyes closed, screaming at the top of our lungs because we just knew that the bob cat which Mr. Spencer had spied in his back yard must have been holed up there, waiting to pounce.

Further away from our back porches where peas and corn were shucked and potatoes peeled for supper, there was the Grandfather Tree, a gnarled old white pine rooted in a stonewall dappled in pine pitch. Every spring we would test our mettle on the sticky branches, reaching for the sky and the best possible vista; driven by big ideas and limited by our smallness and lack of strength. We skulked home defeated at the end of the day and plopped into soapy tubs to try to remove the pitch. By the time we were able to hoist ourselves up the sticky ladder toward the sky, that ship had sailed. We were on to other challenges. There were new boys moving into houses that panted in the fields where Guernsey cows once foreshadowed rain. But in between the Grandfather Tree and the boys and the race riots and the Viet Nam War, other sacred places called us away from the security of home.

"The Broken-Down Tree" was one of those places in the ritualized exploration of the "neighborhood". It was probably stomped down as a seedling by one of Fred Whittier's cows, and grew at a slant rather than upright. It was the perfect challenge for our slightly tom-boyish sensibilities to "climb" to the top, arms outstretched like a tightrope walker, shimmying past upright branches until we were high enough to see the roofs of our houses below. And then, we would make our wobbly descent, knees knocking against the thumping of heart until we reached solid ground again and scurried like tiny Denham insects toward the light of home.

Every year marked a new place, further from our doorsteps, outside of the scope of mothers who had turned their gaze toward the TV and a world that baffled their equilibrium. They ironed. They smoked. They baked. They talked on the phone trying to bust through the isolation of a rural neighborhood where their husbands drove away in the only car and their children had become feral cats. It was a lonely national paradigm soon to be shifted by an economic turn that would call them to the few jobs available to women.

But meanwhile, our Columbian Voyages carried us further away into the childhood age of discovery. We

found a rope swing built by the Big Bad Messina Boys whom we had never met but we knew they were from "downtown" and lived in a new house that had popped up in a cornfield. Here we would let loose and sail over an old gravel pit above the treetops below, screaming at the top of our lungs, driven by the same adrenalin that has tethered men to vessels at sea and rockets in space. Our parents would have been terrified by the fine lines that held us to this earth. One false step would have brought tragedy yet was averted by grit and curiosity and our Wizard of Oz sense that there was "no place like home". We looked out for each other because we knew that our moms would kill us if one of us died.

When adolescence carried my friends away from the wild and toward the town, my ventures became solitary. I wandered a broader neighborhood alone, exploring the shores of the lake, spying on the prep-school boys, and venturing down the mysterious Purgatory Lane, where there were abandoned houses that understood the emptiness I felt inside. In between digging for old bottles and rubbing gravestones I discovered places whose angst matched that of a teenage girl. I found my Jane Eyre Moors in the broken windows of what was known as "the haunted house", and the shadowy ghosts in the ancient burial grounds.

I feel fortunate to have grown up in a time when children roamed freely and explored the sacred places that had been carved out in previous generations. These days it seems that few people waddle further than the grill in the backyard and children are imprisoned by their parents' fears and driven by social media and conspiracy theories in between organized games and adultified play. The names of sacred places are mostly lost, but if you listen to old timers, you can still hear the cadence of the past and capture a sense of place.

I find remnants of sacred places in the faded names recalled by my neighbors. Old Mr. Beady once told me that he used to hunt for bob cats in Cat Den Swamp. In the 1700's the nearby ledges provided a beautiful white granite/gneiss coveted for hearthstones and doorsteps. The Nathaniel Griggs House built in 1780 was outfitted with stone from the old Cat Den Quarry. It was rumored that a community of Nipmuc people who were also the descendants of enslaved Africans worked the quarry and lived in the nearby woods which was called Ashford Woods on early census reports and later became Webster Woods, named after the Webster family. The Civil War gravestone of their son, Charles, who fought in the CT 29th Colored Regiment is the only tangible remnant of their existence other than a few cellar holes. Their lonely homestead was later absorbed by the Natchaug Forest.

Place names are as ephemeral as spring wildflowers, lasting a few generations at best until the environment and the social climate changes. Old folk die and their children move away. When there's no one left to tell or listen to the local lore, it disappears. And yet we return to our childhood haunts in our dotage, expecting everything to be the same and miffed when we discover that our sacred places have been replaced by a cul de sac development named after textbook heroes from far away. I would be very upset if someone took away my China Hill and replaced it with something like "Williamsburg Terrace". Yet I am about to change the folkloric street sign of at least one locale with a history of teenage mystique, by inserting truth into a fictional narrative. Just a few miles away, about to be cut loose into the abyss of modern anonymity is the infamous Lost Village, also known as Bara Hack.

Never a village and certainly not lost, the ruins of the Higginbotham farm fell into obscurity after a fire in the 1850's. The last of the Higginbotham's to live there was the daughter of Darius who married Winchester Twist in 1839. They bought the farm from her father on a mortgage note, which was defaulted after the house and barn burned down. The land continued to be grazed and farmed, but the buildings were never replaced. Eventually, the abandoned mills rotted away, and the millpond became a swimming hole attracting errant teenagers in the early 1900's. Smoke rings from contraband tobacco carried imaginary stories about ghosts and the voices of children heightened by the amplified sound tumbling from the local hills.

Who knows how the cult of childhood wends its way into the cultural history of a place? Stories are exag-

gerated and passed down by older siblings. The hair-raising stories of Bob Cat Woods could have become the tale of the black panther had we not grown up and moved away. But some neighborhoods maintain their zeitgeist because the shape of the land and the geology seem to echo the past in the very rocks beneath your feet. An ordinary family, an ordinary farm become extraordinary within the isolation of time and space. The real ghosts of the past are found in the threads of truth woven in the scary stories told around a campfire. It is the tiniest of truths rendered from the past that maintain the rich understory of history.

The evolution of folkloric history is a study of big truths and little lies. The name Lost Village can be traced back to a book published in 1927 by the poet, Odell Shepard, *Harvest of a Quiet Eye*. Shepard had walked the northern perimeter of Connecticut from Rhode Island to New York sometime around 1915. He described visiting "The Village of Voices" with some artist friends. They picnicked and swam in the old millpond before languishing in a twilight nap in the abandoned orchard. It was there that Odell Shepard penned a poem in which he imagined the voices of the past – the sound of wagon wheels rumbling down the old lane, the cattle calls of men, children laughing, the sob of a woman. The images took on a life of their own as they tumbled onto the page and became the biblical catechism of ghost stories for generations to come.

In the 1960's, Harry Chase added color to the stories he'd been told as a boy. His camera captured unexplained orbs of light and he scared the bejesus out of trespassing teens with his insistence that the slaves of Jonathan Randall haunted the place because they were buried without headstones in the back of the cemetery. Harry made up the stories about Bara Hack being a Welsh community to explain why the Higginbothams would have lived on such an isolated scrap of boney land.

It doesn't take much detective work to uncover the truth that lies in the bedrock of our imagination. Obadiah Higginbotham was from Lancashire, not Wales. The remains of houses, barns and mills are the result of a family's rise and fall as they surfed one economic wave after another through the American dream. It wasn't a village of rune carving Celts who practiced secret rituals, but a family of Baptists and Revolutionaries from Rhode Island with an industrial skillset. Obadiah and his sons were millwrights. They knew how to harness the tiniest of streams which powered the dreams of an American industrial revolution. They worked hard. They tilled the rocky soil to grow flax and enough corn to subsist while they dabbled in mechanics. Children were born and children died. They lay their loved ones to rest in the burial ground they shared with George Randall. During lean times there were no carved stones for remembrance, and though their bones may rattle and quake with the shifting earth, it is a peaceful place which evokes a simpler time.

Once there was a mill which made spinning wheels on Nightingale Brook. There are enslaved Africans buried in the cemetery. A man named "Chief Cudjoe" lived in a house where the 4-H Camp Main Lodge stands. He was the last of the "Indians" educated in the Indian Schoolhouse up the road, and likely a descendant of Jonathan Randall's enslaved Africans. Cudjoe, being a West African name was common among enslaved people in the 1700's. The land at the 4-H Camp once belonged to Jonathan Randall. The stories travel onward through the names of places few people recall: *Sherman Hill, Ragged Hill, Cudjoe Pond, Indian Schoolhouse Brook, Cud Corner, The Lost Village of Voices*. Each name has a story to tell and nurtures our sense of place as we go dancing with their ghosts. But the real ghosts of the past are exorcised from the archival pages of land records and probate court notes. They speak to me in my dreams while I reimagine a new narrative for an old place and a new name. *Nightingale Woods*. Hmmm. One has to wonder about the stories of Joseph Nightingale of Providence who lived upstream at Nightingale Pond in 1776. There's always a story tucked inside of a name.

EC-CHAP Presents Summer Exhibit: “The Mill Works Artist Community”

By EC-CHAP

The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery has been closed for the month of June for improvements and upgrades. We will reopen on Saturday, July 17th exhibiting the original works of eight artists that comprise The Mill Works Artist Community.

Please join us in welcoming Jack Broderick, Martha Ennis, Christopher Gunderson, James Hunt, Emily Lyon, Carol Mackiewicz, Kim Pumiglia, and Jessica Regele to the Dye & Bleach House Gallery.

This exhibit will run from July 17th to September 18th. An Artist Opening Reception will be held Saturday, July 17th at 4:00pm. A Closing Reception is also planned for September 18th to transition from the conclusion of this exhibit to the Grand Reopening of The Packing House with a performance by CT Based acoustic duo Twice Around and local singer songwriter Curtis Brand.

Jack Broderick

Jack has traveled and painted extensively in Ireland, Argentina, Spain, Cuba and Italy. He has exhibited internationally in Paris, Tokyo, Buenos Aires, Palermo and Tilcara.

In 2003 and 2004, Jack participated in several international gallery shows in Buenos Aires, Paris and Palermo. In October 2003, he had a one man show in the Galeria EdeA,



in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In January 2004, he was in a diverse show of 5 artists from Japan, Argentina and the United States in Paris, France. The following month he was in an invitational show in La Galeria Civica di Enna in Palermo, Italy. In April 2004, Jack was awarded a residency at the Fundacion Valparaiso in Mojacar, Spain. In April 2006, he exhibited in the Niche-Gallery in Tokyo, Japan. He taught a plein air workshop in Vagliagli, Italy in 2006 and 2007 and has taught painting in Buenos Aires.

He is an Elected Member of the Lyme Art Association and the Connecticut Plein Air Painters Society. Currently he teaches painting and drawing at his studio in The Mill Works, Willington, Connecticut. Jack has been a member of The Mill Works Community for 10 years.

Martha Sternberg-Ennis

Martha Ennis is a resident of Willington, CT and full time physician at the University of Connecticut. Mar-

tha is a pastel artist who continually explores a delicate balance of color and space. She has recently explored work in charcoal creating a series of work representing interesting spaces and water views of the mill. Martha has been a member of The Mill Works Creative Community for 8 years and maintains a studio onsite.



Christopher Gunderson

Christopher Gunderson is an Eastern CT-based illustrator, graphic designer and muralist. His work is featured in various locations throughout the state, as well as in MA, VA, and Washington DC. He specializes in creative installations in local restaurants, children's illustration, and portraits by commission.

Chris led a Community Engagement Team to develop concepts for a 200-foot mural entitled “A Canvas of History and Social Change”. This project, funded by a DECD CT Office of The Arts REGI grant, and proceeds from a concert performed by Tom Rush and Matt Nakoa, took approximately one year to complete. A dedicated team of EC-CHAP volunteers helped to prepare the retaining wall as a “canvas” for Chris to sketch the image, and put color to a story of local history and innovation which spanned over 160 years.



You can view this mural at EC-CHAP's home at The Mill Works along River Road (CT Rout 32) in South Willington, CT. Chris has also been a member of The Mill Works Community for 10 years and counting.

James Hunt

James Hunt is a graduate of Coventry High School and has a degree in music education from the University of Connecticut. He has been an avid woodworker for most of his life and has been the owner of “Custom Carpentry Unlimited” for over 30 years, where he specializes in custom cabinets, fine furniture, and architectural woodworking. In addition to his passion for woodworking, James is also an accomplished Trumpet player and works with many local bands.



James became a member of The Mill Works Com-

munity in the Fall of 2020. Although most of his professional focus has been on the commercial side of wood-working, he has always enjoyed making smaller pieces for his friends and family. This will be his first opportunity to showcase some of these smaller pieces.

Emily Lyon

Emily Lyon has been publishing zines and artists' books since the 1990s. Her work has been archived and exhibited across the USA and in the UK. She has a BFA in Printmaking from UConn and an MFA in Creative Writing from Southern CT State.



Emily currently works as an NYC-based flight attendant and owns a record shop in Vernon (recordsthegoodkind.com), and continues to make text-based art as often as possible. Emily has been a member of The Mill Works Community for 10 years.

Carol Mackiewicz

Carol Mackiewicz is an artist who finds great joy in painting, drawing, collaging, and printmaking. Carol uses colors to evoke feelings and create an atmosphere of well-being. Carol is also a trained art therapist practicing in Massachusetts and lives in Brimfield, Ma with her loving husband, children, cats and dogs. Carol has been a member of The Mill Works Community for 7 years.



Kim Pumiglia

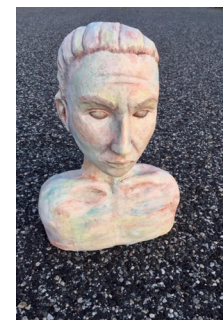
Kim Pumiglia is the owner and operator of “Summer Sun Photography”. She is a studio and natural light photographer specializing in maternity, newborn, 6 month and 1st birthday sessions. Kim has a passion for capturing these precious moments in time and creating art for her clients to love for years to come. She has been a photographer for over 10 years and has been a member of The Mill Works Community for 5 years.



When she has free time away from her studio, Kim loves spending time with her husband and 2 boys, Logan and Landon. You can find them doing anything outside, kayaking, hiking, enjoying the beach or biking on the trails. Their rescue dog, Rio, completed their family 2 years ago.

Jessica Regele

Jessica Regele is a native Connecticut Sculptor specializing in one of a kind ceramic and found object art. The Artist received her Associates of Fine Art Degree from Manchester Community College. Jessica is also a Certified Herbologist through the renowned Rosemary Gladstar's Sage Mountain Herbal Center and a Paranormal Enthusiast. From sculpture to decorative herbal pendants, many of her works reflect a talismanic approach to protecting one's living space, giving each piece a utilitarian aspect of being as well. Jessica has been a member of The Mill Works Community for 11 years.



The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery welcomes all to visit our facility, which is open under CDC and CT state guidelines on Saturdays from 10am to 2pm or by appointment. We request that all visitors wear a mask and stay 6ft. distant while they visit and enjoy a variety of art made by these very creative artists. We are located at 156 River Road in Willington, CT. Check out our website or social media for announcements and information regarding opening hours or closures: WWW.EC-CHAP.ORG.

The Dye and Bleach House Community Gallery encourages all local and regional artists alike to participate in our gallery shows! Whether you are a beginner or an experienced professional, we would love to show your work. Consider adding a gallery show to your resume! We love finding new and exciting art to fill our space, and our next feature could be yours. If you are interested in joining us in showing art, please contact us at CommunityGallery@ecchap.org.

Where to find the Neighbors paper

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

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

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

Note: Some locations may be closed due to pandemic.



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 - No previous history of low back pain in the past 6 months
 - No other pain conditions, history of spine surgery, recent falls or neurological deficits (weakness)
- Willing to participate in a 2-year study with 6 in-person clinic visits and 7 between clinic visit online surveys.
 - Able to speak and read English.

All participants will receive a \$50 gift card for the first and sixth clinic visits; a \$25 card for clinic visits two through five; and a \$10.00 e-gift card for each between clinic visit online surveys. Parking for all visits is free.

Contact: Center for Advancement in Managing Pain
Phone (860) 486-6930
E-mail: painresearch@uconn.edu

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