

May 2022

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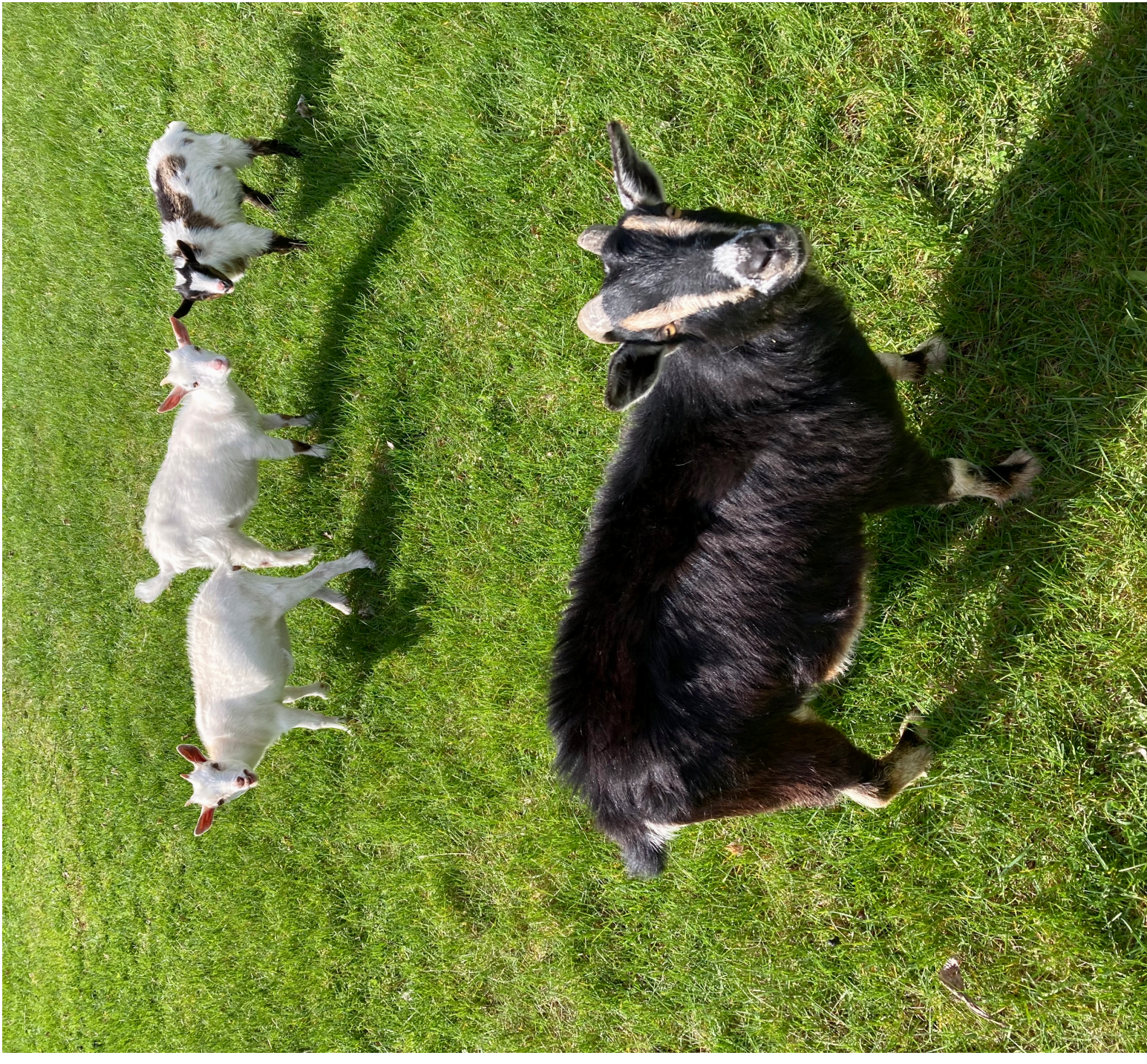
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Looking Up:

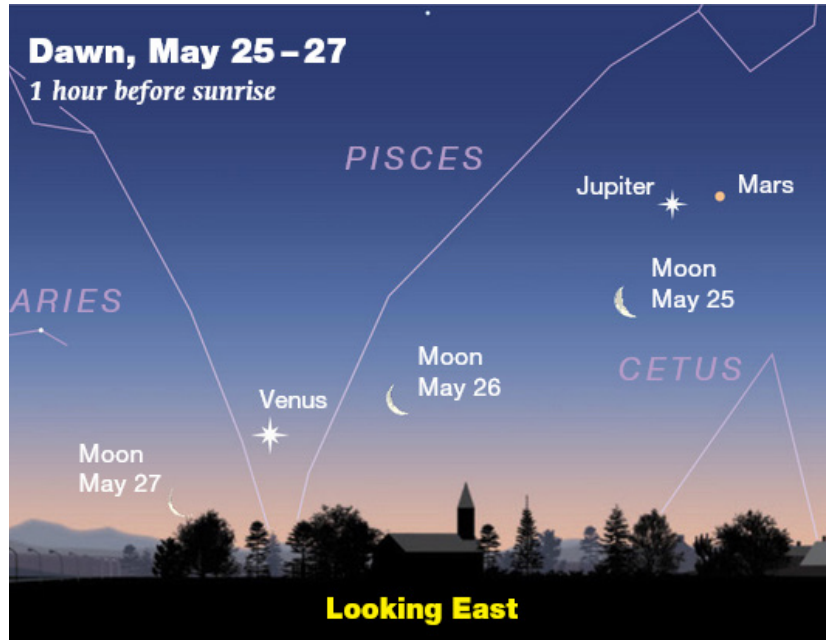
Grabbing the Kite's Tail and Inhaling

By Bob Grindle

We are all storytellers. Sitting here on the stone seat our son fashioned into the bar-way through the stone wall overlooking the pasture, I ponder the uniqueness of our human capacity for turning stones into walls as a sort of metaphor for threading the random minutes of our lives into a tapestry-like story that grows richer and more detailed over time. My mind grabs the kite-tail of an imagination that effortlessly carries me—without any technological assist—to a time almost unimaginably long ago, and suddenly I am sitting by a fire at the mouth of a cave listening to stories...perhaps of the day's hunt, or a new birth or perhaps the death of a tribe member and if I'm lucky the "imagineer" within me might visualize a storyteller with a piece of ochre crafting a picture: predator, game animal, tribal member or perhaps just an outline of the artist's hand...truly, every picture tells a story. Not long ago I read that cave paintings have been found in Indonesian caves that pre-date even the ancient art found in France and Spain and going back nearly 40,000 years. Yes, we have always been storytellers.

I am snapped out of my daydreaming reverie by a small group of crows—does anyone really call it a "murder" of crows?...really?—raucously cawing and fussing and possibly, could it be storytelling? Ironic how we modern humans usually reserve the really cool behaviors as unique to us, but there is some recent research to suggest that crows actually will communicate about their surroundings—anyone who's ever witnessed a flock of crows chase away a red-tailed hawk is probably already a believer—and the same research suggests that crows may hold a sort of court to de-

side on "bad" crow behavior. Anyway, the distraction gets me out of my comfortable stone seat and turned around to head back to the house as evening reminds me of chores to be completed—ancient storytelling around protective fires fades quickly and I smile to think that every story needs someone to listen. The trip back to the house is short, just a few hundred yards, but still enough time to recall stories that much of the great migratory spread of our species was



driven by a search for food and that that search was aided by observing the migration patterns of flocks of birds and also assisted by wolves domesticated by Siberian hunters who used the sturdy animals to carry packs over treacherous glacial terrain.

So much of Homo sapiens' history and success

is the story of our unparalleled ability to respond to planet Earth's ever evolving conditions, even those caused by us. As night falls and chores of the day are completed, I pause once again to look up into a sky that has served me as a sort of retreat since childhood. While no one has yet been able to explain why the very same set of neurons that allow us to feel fear in one circumstance can also let us feel love or joy when conditions are different, I do know that there is simply no wrong time to step out into the night and look up into the endless sky and universe of which we are a part and feel...well, that's up to each one of us. There is an added plus this month... It's May!

The Native American Ojibwe tribes believed that as trees began to sprout full foliage and flowers began to bloom in May, there was a spiritual side to the natural world that helped to uplift spirits and put people in a good mood. As the Sun's path across the sky lifts higher and the Sun appears a bit smaller, and the path of the Moon drops lower and the Moon seems larger (hence the full Flower Moon always seems large and especially bright) some Native American cultures knew the full Moon of May as the Dancing Moon...seems rather a pleasant thought, dancing in the moonlight. This particular May, much of eastern North America and all of South America will have to pause in their dance and be treated to a total lunar eclipse on the night of Sunday, May 15th from about 11:30 pm till nearly 1:00 am. Full Blood Moon, Super Moon call it what you want, the fact that our small 8,000 mile wide home Earth can block out the light of the 900,000 mile wide Sun and make the 2,000 mile wide Moon disappear for an hour and a half is a charming bit of celestial physics that never really gets old. Just stand outside while the Moon is disappearing and see if you don't feel a creepy shiver or two. A few years ago, as a group of us waited atop Brown's Hill in Mansfield to see a partial solar eclipse at dawn on a March morning, clouds suddenly appeared and all we saw was a rather murky dawn as the winds of March added their chilling touch... the shivers we felt had nothing to do with awe. Celestial events can be maddeningly fickle no matter how promising.

Later in May, just before dawn—that would be about 4 am, for all the early risers—the combination of bright planets and a shimmering, beautiful waning crescent Moon should add a touch of cheer to your morning. Between the 25th and 29th Venus, Jupiter and Mars will be high enough in the eastern sky to see easily and each day Jupiter and Mars will get close until almost seeming to touch. Grab your binoculars for a closer look, but do give it a look. Enjoy this season and if you get the chance pull a chair up close to a Korean Spice Viburnum and simply sit back and inhale, or so the story goes.

On our cover: 4.27.22 The goats of Bedlam. Karen King photo.



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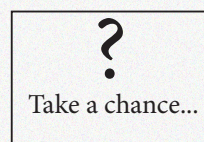
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- The Purpose of Neighbors:
- To encourage reading
 - To provide a place where ideas, writing, artwork and photographs of area residents can be shared
 - To encourage people to get involved in their communities
 - To begin to solve national and global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

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Raging All Over Again

By Loretta Wrobel



Here comes the month of May and my birthday month tells me I have climbed closer to 80...78 and counting. Consequently, I falsely believed that my angry days have left me behind. Seems to me at this juncture of my life I can relax and appreciate each day, and of course, delight in the magic and awe of spring. As I sit reading Pauli Murray's memoir, *Song In A Weary Throat*, I feel a spark of distaste while absorbing the particulars of her battle with Harvard Law School. This brilliant Black woman was not considered for admission to Harvard, despite stellar qualifications, because she was a Woman! Pauli Murray had graduated from Howard University with a law degree and was interested in pursuing a graduate degree at Harvard. In 1944 the school wrote back to her, "Harvard Law School...is not open to women for registration."

First of all, the date grabbed me as that is the year I was born, sliding into a world of war and clearly unequal rights for women. To simply read those words of denial for women in the year I was born unleashed a burst of rage. I began to understand why much of my earlier self was affected by the treatment women received. It called up all of the rigid barriers and limitations that women had to cope with in the not-so-distant past. I witnessed some of these discriminatory practices myself. I cheered vociferously when several prohibitions and discriminations were annihilated. I experienced these changes during the upheavals of the '70's, because of the strength and agitation of the Women's Movement.

As I considered the plight of Pauli, I saw that when she was thwarted, she quickly sprang into action. The harsh reality of a situation only made her stand up with ferocity, and use her highly effective tools. She chose law school because she wanted to end racial prejudice and discrimination. She understood that the only way to abolish racial injustice was to use the law to wipe out the Jim Crow laws that had enveloped her growing up in the south in the early 1900's.

Ms. Murray had to carry a heavy burden being both Black and a woman. She battled on two fronts: First in understanding systemic white privilege, the impact of racism on her, and the horrible devastation to her country. The second realization came with her growing feminism, which demonstrated that because she was a woman she also was oppressed.

Pauli Murray had some beautiful advice for her contemporaries, and also for me as I walk through my life nearly half a century after her. She said, "Believe in your dreams...then do not wait for the opportunity to open. Equip yourself for the position and open the door." Pauli was inspiring her Black colleagues to empower themselves

in spite of incredible ordeals. To me her words of wisdom resonate with all of us struggling in today's unsettling and unfair world.

Pauli Murray is such an influential woman in the history of civil rights. Why is her name not known to all of us? She wrote an essay, "Should the Civil Rights Cases and Plessy vs. Ferguson Be Overruled?" for a seminar paper. Years later it was used by lawyers to prepare for the 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown vs. Board of Education* which became a major civil rights victory. It struck down racial segregation in public schools, declaring segregation was unconstitutional.

This gal was arrested in 1940 for sitting in the whites-only section of a bus in Virginia! Please take notice that Rosa Parks' action happened in 1955. Ms. Murray was leading the civil rights movement before it even began. Even more rage gathers as I read of these momentous accomplishments and achievements. This hardworking, unsung heroine wrote "States' Laws on Race and Color" in 1950. Murray did exhaustive research, and with enormous determination penned a state-of-the-art treatise on the race laws that mandated racial segregation. This compilation helped with several separate but equal rulings in the court system. Still burning with the injustice of it all, I know her name would be peppered throughout our the history books if she had been white and male.

Anger can be a useful tool to fuel our passion and focus our energy. However, it must not destroy us by eating us from the inside out. Channeling the anger that we feel so intensely is not easy. We witness much cruelty and inequality, and to direct the anger into a path that moves us towards more kindness, generosity, and awareness is a solution that we often miss. I myself can sputter and gripe about all that is not working in our world or everything that is irritating to me. Can I take that extra step and use it in a constructive manner?

To reverse that patterned response is not always easy for me. We all can get caught in the "Poor Me's" or the perspective that it will never change. I am eager to learn to recognize when I fall into the old negative way that only infuriates me and raises my blood pressure. To come up with creative ways of transforming that stuck place into a positive is a goal to pursue.

After all these years, I wager that my anger will always be ready to burst forth, especially when I open my ears and eyes to what is going on in our world today. I intend to work on carving out a new approach as to how the various events I see take a toll on me or help me follow a new direction. In this way I hope to move from complaining, to taking action or plotting a new approach to the situation, not staying frozen in rage.

I wonder if I can stick with it and not have to write another article next May about yet another rage takeover? Maybe it could become a makeover, and who knows what direction that might take me?

Community Spirit Awards

Submitted by Elaine Nelson

At the annual meeting of the Windham County 4-H Foundation, community spirit awards were given to two wonderful women who have been camp supporters not just this past year, but for many years. Kristen Xeller is a former camper and current camper parent and has been our camp doctor for five years. During the two years of the pandemic she helped to create and was consulted on all healthcare protocols and testing plans. She

spent a LOT of time on the phone and reviewing documents this past spring and summer with our camp director. In addition she continued to keep our camp health services running smoothly and ensuring that everyone is professionally cared for.

Maureen Nicholson has served as First Selectman for almost 7 years. She is a former camper parent and is a familiar face at many camp events, supporting our auctions, take-out meals programs and was the first to rent the lodge after its renovation.

When DEEP determined the Taft Pond Rd bridge needed repair, she was able to find funding to fix it rather than close it and made it happen before camp opened. When the road washed out by horse camp, she was there immediately to look at the damage, notified DOT to close the road and was back early the next morning with sandwich board signs to direct people to camp that needed to get there that day. It was a privilege to be able to present Kristin and Maureen with these much deserved Community Spirit Awards.

Second Saturday Community Breakfast

Columbia Congregational Church
8AM – 11AM Route 87 in the Parish Hall

Gather with us Saturday, May 14th for an ALL YOU CAN EAT Breakfast buffet: Omelets (design your own), scrambled eggs, belgian waffles, home baked pastries, etc.
\$12 per person
Family of (4) 2 Adults & 2 child. (under 12) \$30
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More Travels Down Memory Lane

By David Corsini

In my last article I shared memories elicited by names in my address book from my high school, college, and graduate school days. When I was finishing my Ph.D., I had to decide where to go next. In 1957 finding an academic position with a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota was easy and primarily by word of mouth. One of my professors recommended me for a position at George Washington University. I interviewed there and was offered a position. However, the prospect of living in a city did not appeal to me. I was ready for something a little bit different.

I remembered that one of my professors from Bowdoin was teaching in Australia and I contacted him about a possible position. He wrote back saying that the time for hiring was six months off. I'll never know if that was fortunate or unfortunate. If I had gone to Australia, would I have ever returned? Of course, there are "what if" questions about every life decision.

Then, at a convention, one of my professors referred me to someone who was hiring for the University of Georgia, which was in the process of major growth. I had an interview at the convention and was hired without a visit to the university. Moving to the South in 1957 seemed to me to qualify as "something different," and I was not disappointed.

I was in the psychology department, teaching and doing research. But I soon became involved in a federally funded early education intervention project called Follow Through. Follow Through was designed to test different educational models/approaches to kindergarten through Grade 3 education in low income communities. I was eager to utilize my skills on something with social importance.

Our model had projects in Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and North Carolina. I got to travel to our sites and experience the huge variations of life in the South. I found living in the South interesting but a bit challenging with two small children, a nonworking wife, and a limited income.

The only names in my address book from my time in Georgia are from that project. Since leaving Georgia, I attended a reunion of project staff at the home of one of the women, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Since then, she has died. I still exchange holiday greetings with another woman from the project.

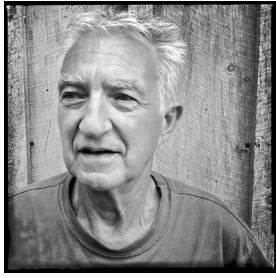
The memories that come back from those names are more about my time living in Georgia than of events with those people per se. I remember some things about wildlife. We had a different species of skunk—a spotted skunk—living under our house. I caught it in a Havahart trap to have a good look at it. I can't remember how, but for a while I had a pet flying squirrel. My family went on camping trips to Jekyll Island, Georgia, and found numerous box turtles on the road along the way. The high point of my week was being quarterback to my touch football team on Sunday afternoons. In the huddle I would say things such as, "I'm going to fake a run right. You [my receiver] count three and then go long left."

I was not politically active but I did write a letter to the local paper complaining about how much the Georgia state flag (in the late '60s) resembled the Confederate flag. I was called into my department head's office and, while not really reprimanded, was cautioned about such behavior.

My then wife became involved with a low income day care center. From her association with this center, we became involved in anti-war politics. There was a demonstration and we suspected trouble and got some. My wife and I were arrested and spent a night in jail. While in the cell with others, I got sprayed with mace. Some of the people we got arrested with clearly were not from our community. I experienced directly how "rabble rousers" taunt the police and escalate the confrontation. Several other faculty members also were arrested. When it was rumored that we might lose our jobs, there was considerable anxiety. But then a fancy lawyer came up from Atlanta, defended us in court, and the charges were dismissed.

When my daughter turned six, she began school in a newly integrated rural school. The principal had a wooden paddle hanging on the wall behind her desk. One of my colleagues reported that his son, as punishment, was made to sit in the corner wearing a dress. It was time to move up north.

Again I got lucky at a convention. One of my fellow students from Minnesota had taken a position in psychology at UConn. He knew that the Child Development and Family Relations department there was looking



for an early childhood professor. My friend introduced me to the head of the search committee, which led to an onsite interview and then a position. My family flew north and I followed in our Dodge van with three adopted stray dogs and a goat. I was 31—ah, youth!

When I reflect on my experience in obtaining academic employment, I am amazed at how different things were back then. I received my Ph.D. in 1957 and got hired at the University of Georgia and then at UConn in 1971 without having to send out resumes. I was not a superstar. It's just how things were for people like me at the time, and I feel very fortunate. Before I retired, I was on several search committees and remember the formal procedures that had to be followed and the piles of applicants for every position. If I was looking for a position today, I am afraid I would end up saying, "Do you want fries with that?"

In my address book there are ten entries for colleagues and faculty friends from UConn. When reviewing these names, it is disarming to realize that seven are dead. Among them there is only one I considered a best friend with whom I played sports, went on birdwatching adventures, and socialized. A friend sorely missed.

I maintain e-mail, telephone, or direct contact on a regular basis with the three remaining faculty friends. One of these friends is associated with one of the most frightening moments of my life. This friend had organized a trip to Turks and Caicos Islands that Delia and I went on. One activity was snorkeling. In literature about these islands, I had read that there was a friendly dolphin, Jo-Jo, who sometimes came near to swimmers. My moment of fright came while snorkeling. As I leisurely swam along looking for fish and sea turtles, I suddenly became aware of a huge form approaching me from behind. Luckily, my heart was good enough to withstand the jolt. Rather quickly I realized it was Jo-Jo.

Another name in my book was the head of the early childhood special education program at Cheshire, Conn. Shortly after I came to UConn, I received a call from the director of special education in Cheshire. She had developed a family focused, multidisciplinary approach to special needs 3- to 5-year-old children. She had received funds to document the effectiveness of her program and wanted me to design evaluations to measure such effectiveness.

I joined the main members of the early childhood team. The team included the director of the early childhood program, a psychologist, an architect, and me.

We all helped with program development. My main task was designing evaluations and grant writing. I worked with the program for more than 20 years as it developed from a 3-to-5 program into a birth-to-5 program and then into a training center to help other towns develop similar programs. I found working with the team at Cheshire the most meaningful aspect of my professional life. Although I continued to consult with this program for a few years after my retirement, I soon wanted to think about other things.

One of those things was more nature-related travel. Another was in response to Delia's directive: "You either have to get rid of all the junk you have accumulated or do something with it." Thus began my art career 25 years ago.



Our backyard in spring.

Delia Berlin photo.

Spring Thoughts

By Delia Berlin

(CONTEXTUAL

NOTE: This past month, globally and nationally, many temperature records were broken by as much as 13 degrees. Scientists declared a climate emergency and have warned us that we are quickly approaching a tipping point, after which our planet may become unsuitable for human life. At the local level, multiple urban projects to build housing units are stalling, while their suburban and rural counterparts, requiring razing acres of natural habitats, inexorably forge ahead, deaf and blind to all reason.)



Mayday

The deadline for the May issue of Neighbors nears. I have no submission ready or in the making. It disquiets me that already it's almost May. Another spring is coming to a close, even as my life's autumn wanes.

Is there anything I want to say?
In this momentous moment of doubt,
I don't know if I'm fortunate or unfortunate
to be here, now, overwhelmed by so much
beauty and evil, hope and despair, generosity and greed.

I both dread and welcome the end of the Anthropocene.
We are not losing the planet.
The planet is losing us!
When our survival becomes impossible,
whatever is left will be just fine.

The Neighbors paper Locally Written Locally Wread

Poppies and Hope for Peace

Submitted by Bev York

A poppy is a flowering plant often grown for their colorful flowers. Poppies symbolize peace, sleep, and death and has become a symbol of duty, service and sacrifice of all soldiers in all wars.

The poppy has become of symbol honoring those who sacrificed their lives in World War I which ended on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, and ever since, November 11 has been commemorated as Armistice Day, or Veteran's Day. The poppy was chosen as the symbol of Remembrance because pop-



py flowers grew on the battlefields after the end of the First World War. A poem widely shared around Memorial Day and Veteran's Day, In Flanders Fields, helped create the legacy of the poppy. The poem was written by Canadian physician Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae. He was inspired to write it on May 3, 1915, after presiding over the funeral of friend and fellow soldier Lieutenant Alexis Helme.

The red poppy represents remembrance of the soldiers and hope. The white poppy is hope for peace. The purple poppy is often worn to remember animals that have been victims of war. Poppies

In Flanders Fields
By John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

are herbaceous plants, in the subfamily Papaveroideae. Sometimes the remembrance poppy, an artificial flower, is sold by veteran's associations to raise money for servicemen and servicewomen.

CT Green Energy News

Submitted by Peter Millman

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



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

Connecticut regulators move to end subsidies for new natural gas hookups

Energy News Network. "The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority said a program meant to help Connecticut residents and businesses switch from oil to natural gas has not met targets and no longer aligns with the state's climate goals... 'It's time to get polluting, dirty fossil fuels out of our homes. Gas poisons the air in our homes and is a major driver of the climate crisis.' ... 'Next we need to go farther by limiting the installation of gas and oil equipment in all new construction and then take a broad look at the future of heating by gas, as our neighbors in Massachusetts are doing.' "

Legislators, enshrine CT's 2040 zero-carbon electricity goal into law

CT Mirror. "By codifying the 2040 goal into law [through SB 10], state regulatory agencies would have the statutory authority to make sure the 100% clean electricity objective is reached... New York also has a 2040 goal for zero-carbon electricity and Rhode Island is pushing for 2030. So the 2040 goal would help form a regional coalition of states moving to 100% clean energy... As offshore wind and grid-scale solar projects come online, that percentage could increase to 92% by the middle of this decade. 2040 is a fairly modest target, though as we electrify things like our cars and home heating/cooling it will require more electricity pumping through our grid and we'll need to make sure that's coming from renewable resources... Fossil fuel companies usually seize upon moments like this to push for further public investment in their products, but that is part of a repeating cycle in which their products are a root cause for the very conflicts they argue necessitates deeper investment in their products."

OP-ED | SB-4, A Big Bill for Connecticut Climate Action

CT News Junkie. "Connecticut, like many other states in the US, is struggling with how to respond to the climate emergency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions... Where we have not made progress is the transportation sector. People driving further and more often is caused by rural sprawl and interstate highway widening, burning more fossil fuels. The recent trend of increased sales of large personal pickup trucks and SUVs wiped out decades of efficiency gains for fossil-fueled engines... It is exciting to see SB-4 taking transit, zero-emission school buses, medium & heavy duty vehicles, and e-bikes into holistic consideration in the 2022 legislative session. We don't have another year to wait."

PURA launches new grid innovation program

Hartford Business Journal. "The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority this week launched a new program designed to encourage the deployment of new energy technologies and products, with the overall aim of modernizing the state's power grid. According to an official decision handed down Wednesday, the program will allow "innovators" to submit ideas or proposals for consideration. A subgroup of successful applicants would be allowed to more completely develop their plans, and their projects could eventually be deployed on a limited scale to test their value. The inclusion of a phased approach and multiple innovation

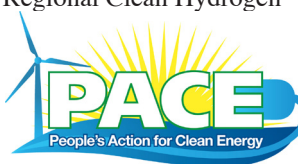
pathways is meant to cultivate a "robust ecosystem of innovation" in the state, agency officials wrote. "With today's announcement, we launch a regulatory sandbox premised on the need to re-imagine pilot projects and break up the inertia of electric utility service in Connecticut."

Transportation Committee Green Lights Direct-To-Consumer Sales

CT News Junkie. "Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, D-Westport, said this year's bill was an improvement on the legislation crafted during previous sessions. Steinberg called the state's traditional dealership model antiquated. "They were probably still picking up after wagons and horses when a lot of these considerations were made," Steinberg said. "The world has significantly moved on since the dealership model was created. I think it served us very well. I think it should continue to exist but I don't think that's a justification to suggest that with the advent of the EV age, that we shouldn't have other ways to sell vehicles."

Four Northeast states form consortium to develop regional clean hydrogen hub

pv magazine. "An initial group of 40 hydrogen ecosystem partners have signed a multi-state agreement to become one of at least four regional clean energy hydrogen hubs designated through the federal Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs program included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act... The coalition will seek to integrate offshore wind and solar PV into hydrogen production and deploy hydrogen for use in transportation, including for medium and heavy-duty vehicles, heavy industry, power generation and maritime applications or other appropriate uses consistent with decarbonization efforts."



Connecticut colleges benefit from Greenskies solar arrays

Solar Power World. "The 6.1-MW ground-mounted solar array in North Stonington, Connecticut, will help CSCU [CT State Colleges and Universities] realize an estimated \$9.4 million in energy savings within the first 20 years... Using virtual net metering (VNM), the North Stonington solar farm will allocate power to five CSCU campuses across the state. VNM allows CSCU to use power generated at a remote site for facilities not directly connected to the solar array... At the end of its lifespan, the solar installation will be removed, and the land returned to its original state."

Connecticut must better educate its students on climate change

CT Mirror. "In schools across Connecticut students are not being taught about the climate crisis. Even in high school climate change is often not woven into the curriculum, leaving students with little-to-no knowledge... At the end of the day, climate education is science education. By making it required we are preparing Connecticut's youth for the future. We are ensuring that students are aware of global scientific issues and can act accordingly."

A 100% renewable energy economy would be win-win for Connecticut

CT Mirror. "The researchers reported state-specific benefits that Connecticut will reap by transitioning to a renewable energy economy. In doing so, they also dispelled some common myths about renewables that, if used in public-facing messaging, could have us on track to meet Gov. Ned Lamont's goal of reaching 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2040... Still, existing policies in Connecticut continue to fall short. We encourage state policymakers to take concrete actions now that will foster the growth of solar, wind and other clean energy sources to lower energy costs, create jobs, and protect our environment. This study refutes common myths to show residents and policymakers alike that a transition to 100% renewable energy is not only feasible, but a win-win-win for consumers, workers, and the environment."

Alanon Meetings in Willington

Alanon, a meeting for friends and families of alcoholics, is meeting every Friday morning from 10-11:00 in the Conference Room at the Willington Public Library, on 7 Ruby Rd. in Willington.

To all our contributors- Thank You!

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

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The Neighbors paper
A little paper big on community

From the Ground Up - Buying Local in Connecticut

Making Earth Day Every Day

By C. Dennis Pierce

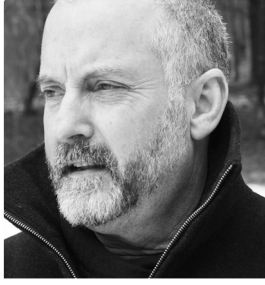
Every day should be Earth Day. Every individual has the right to clean air, safe drinking water, and healthy communities to raise our children. We should all commit to making our own individual efforts, not just on Earth Day, but every day. The environment around us is not only our home but everything that keeps us alive. From the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, our shelter, and more, it helps us to survive. Therefore, caring for the environment is something that should be inherent to all of us.

Sometimes, our actions endanger everything that surrounds us, including ourselves. Our interaction with the environment should be in a way that we use the resources that nature provides, but in a sustainable manner. We should ensure that our actions don't end up harming the environment as we are the ones to suffer later. The official theme for this year's 2022 Earth Day is, "Invest in Our Planet". For those who are not aware, Earth Day is an annual event held every April 22 to demonstrate support for environmental protection. It was first held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by EarthDay.org. This event included 1 billion people in more than 193 countries. The Dalai Lama probably had Earth Day in mind in his call to action in his quote, "It is our collective and individual responsibility to protect and nurture the global family, to support its weaker members and to preserve and tend to the environment in which we all live."

This past week, while there appeared a glimpse of Spring, the winds kept an unseasonal coolness in the air. While working in the yard I was thankful for the breeze since it kept the spring, "no see'ums", those tiny, annoying bugs whose main purpose in their lives is to land in your eyes, at bay. I did find the time to attend several Earth Day events, these for me get me excited warmer weather and the chores of Spring.

The University of Connecticut held its annual Spring Fling, which is UConn's largest celebration of sustainability, featuring eco-friendly vendors, to include students from Spring Valley Farm, UConn's student run farm, local and organic food, green companies, and other student organizations. Additionally, this year there was a performance by Bread and Puppet Theater, a Vermont based troupe who performed a colorful street show which was held at noon on Fairfield Way. Co-sponsored by UConn's Office of Environmental Policy and the Department of Dining Services UConn's Earth Day celebration raises environmental awareness on campus and the local community. I also attended a small, but worthy Earth Day event, held on Saturday, adjacent to the Mansfield Community Center. There was a display of electric cars, representation from the Garden Gate Club of Mansfield and other assorted informational activities.

Keeping with the theme of Earth Day I thought the following recipe was appropriate to share. Latkes are traditionally made of potatoes and are served during Hanukkah. If you have scraps of vegetables left over from making soup throw them in a food processor or hand grate them. If you do not have scraps, you can also make these from one carrot, one beet and one russet potato. I have not tried making these in a counter air fryer but I bet they would turn out great too.



RE- PURPOSED LATKES

Servings – Makes 20 small latkes, serves 4 to 6
Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Line a baking sheet with a paper towel.

Ingredients:

3 cups of peeled and grated raw, root vegetables such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, beets, carrots, parsnips, turnips or celery root.
¼ of a medium size onion, very thinly sliced or shredded.
2 large eggs (Hopefully local. There seems to be an abundance of local fresh eggs in the area, typically at \$3.00 per dozen. Keep a look out for roadside signs and a thermal ice chest. Bring correct change for the "honor" system.)
1 tablespoon of cornstarch
½ teaspoon of baking powder
½ teaspoon of kosher salt (or regular)
¼ teaspoon, freshly ground pepper
Olive oil or vegetable oil
(Optional – sour cream or applesauce to add when serving)



4.20.22 UConn students who live and work at Spring Valley Farm at UConn's Spring Fling event. They are having students re-pot plants in recycled, paper folded containers for them to take.
Dennis Pierce photo.

Directions:

Placed the grated vegetables and onion in a large bowl. Add eggs, cornstarch, baking powder, salt and pepper, stir well.
Place frying pan over medium heat and add enough oil, about ¼ inch to ½ inch.
When the oil is hot use a soup spoon to scoop up about 2 tablespoons of the latke mixture. Use another spoon to press down to make a small patty. Add patty to the oil. If you want you can press down again before the patty begins forming. Continue to add more but do not crowd. Cook approximately 4 to 5 minutes and then turn over. Make sure the oil is not too hot or they will burn.
When cooked remove and place on the prepared, paper toweled baking sheet and place in the oven to keep warm. Taste, and season with additional salt if needed. Top with applesauce or sour cream and serve.

I am looking forward to the coming month because the outside Farmer's Markets will begin and I also have a list of farms to visit and share with you in my upcoming columns. I leave you with a quote from Henry David Thoreau as what I suppose was his own thoughts about our environmental responsibility: "Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influence of the earth."

Adieu, for another month. 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. Come celebrate with me and remember, every day is a holiday and every meal is a banquet. I'll save you a seat at the table!

To Marion and McGee

By Judy Davis

My relatives, Marion and McGee, filled my life with such treasure. They were amazing. Always, they wanted to know what my thoughts were, what I was feeling.

With each visit to their home, they would read me poetry, and discussed favorite books. And we shared a love for the Red Sox. We would sing. When I was twelve, I played my harmonica for them, and they, clapped and cheered. If they had paid me, nothing could have made me feel richer. Their hugs and kisses were so appreciated, and with every visit, they would thank me for loving them.

I wrote them every month –cards and letters. When Marion died, McGee told me that she had a dresser drawer full of my cards and letters. Eventually, McGee moved to Kentucky. And when he died, I was told he had a dresser drawer full of cards and letters I had mailed to him.

If one is very lucky, one is loved by family. I loved my Marion and McGee. And I am blessed beyond belief, that they loved me.

Doo Wop is Back!

By Susan Audette

Calling all music lovers of the 50's and 60's. We are bringing back the good ole' days. The Willimantic Elks Lodge is proud to present "A Night of Doo Wop". For those of you who love the earlier melodic tones and lyrics you can understand, this is the night for you!

Join us for two of most renown groups in the genre. *Street Magic*, harmonizers who grew up in the Boston area, all have a love of music since an early age will be appearing. The group formed in 1980 have been pleasing audiences throughout the country and will not disappoint. The second group, *Billy D and the Rock-Its* will be performing all of the greatest Doo Wop and early Rock n' Roll classics. Their eight-piece show band will bring you all the authentic sound and style of the '50s and 60's.

The event takes place Saturday, May 21st, 2022. Doors open at 6:00 pm and showtime is 7:30 pm. There will be a cash bar and food available. Tickets are \$25.00 per person available at the Willimantic Elks Club, 198 Pleasant St., Willimantic, CT, phone 860-423-1311. They are also available on line with a small handling fee at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-night-of-doo-wop-at-the-willimantic-elks-lodge-tickets-27663796058>.

The Willimantic Elks Lodge #1311 is a member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America. It is one of the oldest and largest fraternal organizations in the country. Since its inception in 1868, the Order of Elks has grown to include nearly 800,000 men and women in almost 2,000 communities. The B.P.O. Elks is committed to the ideals of charity and patriotism. The B.P.O. Elks ranks as one of the largest private providers of college scholarships in the nation. It also works hard to protect our Veterans and support them in any way we can.

The Willimantic Lodge opened in 1914 and is a strong supporter of the communities in and around the area. Membership is open to the public through sponsorship by a current member. If you are interested in the club, or the Doo Wop event, please feel free to direct any questions to Sue Audette at susanaudette@gmail.com or call 860-456-4906.

The Neighbors Paper
Locally Written
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Unsung Heroes of Soul:

Syl Johnson

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 Syl Johnson, whose recordings have been sampled by the likes of Wu-Tang Clan, Jay-Z, Kid Rock, and Kanye West.

He was born in Holly Springs, Mississippi, on July 1, 1936. Fourteen years later, he and his family moved to Chicago. Johnson performed with legendary blues acts like Magic Sam, Billy Boy Arnold, Junior Wells and Howlin' Wolf. In 1959, he recorded duets with Jimmy Reed for the Vee Jay label and made his solo debut on the Cincinnati-based Federal Records. Freddy King played guitar on the latter.

By the middle 1960s, Johnson was recording for the Twinight label in Chicago. His first charted singles came in 1967 and kicked off a four-year string of hits on the Rhythm and Blues chart. Johnson's biggest record—and arguably his best recording—for Twinight was the socially conscious ballad, "Is It Because I'm Black," in late 1969.

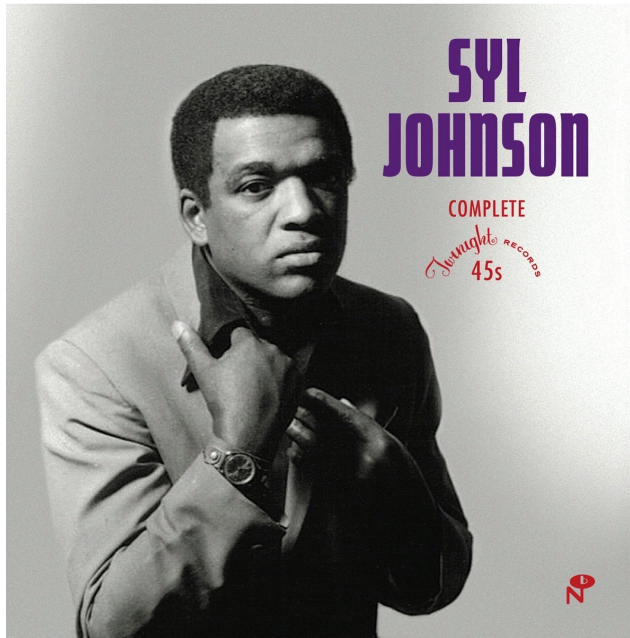
In 1971, Johnson signed with Hi Records out of Memphis. He worked with Willie Mitchell, who also wrote and produced hits for the likes of Al Green, Ann Peebles and Otis Clay. Johnson's 1975 recording of "Take Me to the River" became his all-time biggest hit, though the song itself is more closely identified with Al Green. (It was also a 1978 pop hit for Talking Heads.)

After he left Hi, Johnson started his own label, Shama, on which he released two self-produced albums. For the second, MS. FINE BROWN FRAME, he landed a distribution deal with Neil Bogart's Boardwalk label. In 1982, the title cut became Johnson's last single to make the R&B chart. By the middle 1980s, Johnson had limited his singing to occasional nightclub appearances while he invested in real estate and opened a chain of seafood restaurants.

Johnson learned in 1992 that his 25-year-old recording of "Different Strokes" had been sampled by a number of rap artists, including Wu-Tang Clan, Public Enemy, Kool G Rap, MC Hammer, and the Geto Boys. This prompted his interest in returning to the music business. Johnson's 1994 album, BACK ON THE GAME, featured his daughter Syleena and the Hi rhythm section.

While scores of rappers were sampling his music, Johnson received no compensation and was frequently short of money. As such, he became a passionate defender of intellectual-property rights and sued a number of artists for copyright infringement.

In 2015, director Rob Hatch-Miller made the documentary film, "Syl Johnson: Any Way the Wind Blows." It was promoted as being "about the greatest soul singer you've ever heard—even if you've never heard of him."



Syl Johnson, 85, died on February 6, 2022.

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

Charted singles:

- "Come On, Sock It To Me" (1967) R&B #12, Pop #97
- "Different Strokes" (1967) R&B #17, Pop #95
- "Dresses Too Short" (1968) R&B #36
- "Is It Because I'm Black" (1969) R&B #11, Pop #68
- "Concrete Reservation" (1970) R&B #29
- "One Way Ticket to Nowhere" (1970) R&B #24, Pop #125
- "Get Ready" (1971) R&B #34
- "The Love You Left Behind" (1972) R&B #43
- "We Did It" (1972) R&B #23, Pop #95
- "Back For a Taste of Your Love" (1973) R&B #16, Pop #72
- "I'm Yours" (1973) R&B #68
- "Let Yourself Go" (1974) R&B #54
- "I Want to Take You Home (To See Mama)" (1974) R&B #40
- "Take Me to the River" (1975) R&B #7, Pop #48
- "I Only Have Love" (1975) R&B #15
- "Star Bright, Star Lite" (1976) R&B #89
- "Bout to Make Me Leave Home" (1976) R&B #94
- "Goodie-Goodie-Good Times" (1977) R&B #93
- "Ms. Fine Brown Frame" (1982) R&B #60

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.

Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

This month I will be writing about a couple of things. The first thing I want to address is that the warm weather is here. The air conditioning in your vehicle will be needed sooner than you think. It is important to think about servicing the system and being proactive rather than having to be reactive when it doesn't work properly.

The systems of today are not longer a heater for winter and an air conditioner for summer. The comfort control systems work year-round. The temperature setting you desire needs both systems to maintain the temperature in your vehicle's cabin. We all know that the heater blows hot air, but the air conditioner is a dehumidifier and also blows cold air. The problem that most people are not aware of is the fresh air duct. This duct brings fresh air into the system. It also brings in dirt, leaves, and other things in the air. The system has a cabin air filter that should be serviced regularly and the system should be sprayed for mold and bacteria. The area we live in also has

a mice issue. Often times the mice get into the system and build a nest. This last month we also had a family of red squirrels build a nest in a customer's system and take up residence.

The cabin air filter service is usually under a hundred dollars. This service is well worth it and helps to provide fresh clean air into the cabin of your vehicle. It also helps your heating and air conditioning systems to work more efficiently.

If you watch any television, you must have seen commercials promoting electric vehicles. Watching these commercials has prompted many questions about this new vehicle technology. For the next few months, we will try to research and provide some answers to many important questions that people have regarding this new technology. Some things that popped into my mind as I thought about this and would like to know more about are: The cost of mining and manufacturing the materials to make the batteries for an electric car or truck. The disposal or recycling of these batteries when their useful life has

ended. The cost of installing a home charging station and the cost to charge the vehicle. If you are thinking of a home generator, what size should you buy to be able to charge your vehicle if you lose power and still maintain power for your home. The upkeep of an electric vehicle. The knowledge for first responders if you have an accident and their safety as well as yours. Public charging stations and their cost to you as well as the time to recharge the vehicle. Are all electric vehicles the same platform? Are replacement parts available and what is their cost? What is the life of an electric vehicle and will it provide a return for your investment? These are just a few thoughts and questions that I hope to find the answers for as I research things about electric vehicles. The age of electric vehicles and batteries is here. I hope this action does not have a negative reaction for all of us. Until next month... Happy Motoring!!!

Rick Ostien is the owner of Franc Motors in Willington.

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My Neighbor, Plumber and River Prophet

By Bill Powers

I was born and raised in cities. However, when we moved to the Fenton River Valley, the processes for getting water at home and the handling of wastewater were quite different. In the city, water was piped to your home from a distant reservoir and wastewater went down the drain through pipes to a treatment plant. At our new home in “the country”, new understandings and adjustments for these basic necessities were required.

Fortunately, a new neighbor, Hank Reichel, had introduced us to another neighbor also residing in the Fenton River Valley in Mansfield. The late Ed Soja was a plumber. He was employed as a plumbing foreman at UConn for many years. I remember the very first time he came over to our place. It was for a clogged pipe. As he went about his job, he gave me a lesson in hydrology and insights for its relevance for the Fenton River Valley that included the ongoing diminishing ground water levels related to the demand for water by UConn. Ed was also concerned about the potential negative environmental effects for the flora and fauna of the valley.

Until that day, I had no idea that wells near the Willimantic River and Fenton River provided the source of water to meet the university’s needs. Two important things he told me that day stuck with me for decades. Ed told me: “The demand for water by the University was sucking the Fenton River Valley dry.” He went on to say: “People around here lately have had to get their wells either developed by the process of hydro-fracturing or drilled deeper.” Developing a well was a new concept for me and Ed went on to explain it. Ed Soja’s words on that day would continue to affect me in meaningful ways, especially on three later occasions.

1) Walking the Horse Barn Hill circuit at UConn was always a pleasurable way to get some exercise while taking in the scenic views; and at the same time, observing a variety of animals, both wild and domesticated. At times, my wife and I would reward ourselves with some delicious and high quality ice cream at the UConn Dairy Bar. The first occasion during which Ed Soja’s words vividly came back to me was in 1990. While buying ice cream at the dairy bar, I couldn’t help but notice from one of two lever-operated faucet towers that it was steadily streaming water into a sink behind the counter. When I asked the clerk why that was happening, the answer was that it was broken and they couldn’t shut it off without also shutting off the other the faucet. The part required to fix the problem had been requested. This was years before the dairy bar moved into its present location. On other visits over the next two months, I couldn’t help but notice that the situation was continuing. Each time as I pointed it out to employees, including the manager, I expressed that “it was an awful waste of good water.” “Each time I was assured that it was being attended to. I even suggested to the manager that the problem could be quickly fixed by a plumber who could install a bypass for the problematic faucet. After a couple of more weeks with no apparent solution to the problem and feeling ignored and frustrated, I hiked over to Gulley Hall where the higher administrative officers were to be found; and I lodged a complaint in writing, which included all the details plus my concerns about the incredible waste of water that was occurring at the DAIRY BAR.

More than three weeks after my visit to Gulley Hall, I was notified at my work that an important call from UConn that was being held for me. The call was from a plumber (not Ed) who said: “I am at the dairy BARN and I can’t locate the faucet that you reported. Is it in another barn?” I replied: “Did you say BARN or BAR” He repeated, “The BARN.” Certainly, I was surprised and sensed his frustration. I calmly said: “I think you’ll find it in the Dairy BAR” and spelled it – “B-A-R.” “Thanks,” he said, “I’ll take care of it.”

2) A few years later, during my frequent walks at Horse Barn Hill, it was impossible not to notice two relatively new water spigots in pastures near the road that were constantly spewing large volumes of fresh water. Compared to this, the experience at the Dairy Bar was a small problem.

As days went by, I reported this to workers and police as they rode by; unfortunately, the problem continued. Ed Soja’s words “... the University was sucking the Fenton River Valley dry” kept echoing in my mind. I sought out the Farm Manager’s office and reported it. Weeks went by, and the water problem continued. It was time for decisive action! Climbing over a gate into the pastures with gallon jugs and a stop watch to make a crude measure of the volume and flow of the water, I was able to determine how much water was being wasted by the minute, hour, and day. It was clear that well over a million gallons of water had escaped. Armed with this data, I visited Gulley Hall again and provided a written statement about the situation. Two days later, the inexcusable discharge had ended.

3) As our time living in the Fenton River Valley was coming to an end when we were selling our house, Ed Soja’s warning about folks needing to have “their wells either developed or drilled deeper” proved to be a reality for us, as it had been for many others living in the Fenton River Valley. Still again, the words of Ed, who had passed away in 2007, about “the demand for water by the University sucking the Fenton River Valley dry”, resonated with me.

In September of 2005, it was discovered that a long stretch of the Fenton River near UConn had gone dry resulting in the death of thousands of fish. My friend and neighbor Ed Soja, who was a skilled plumber; had prophesized the results of pumping too much water from a natural river source and the effects on wildlife and the people living in the beautiful Fenton River Valley. Each and every word that Ed Soja had uttered was 100 percent accurate.

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Exposed! The Secret Life of Dairy Cows

By Bob Lorentson

To me, a green, rolling field of contented looking dairy cows is about the most iconic image of rural America I can imagine, and one that makes me feel pretty darn content as well. I’m guessing the dairy cows quite possibly know how well they have it too, because new studies reveal that cows are highly intelligent animals, with feelings, friends, and the ability to communicate in more than their trademarked monosyllables. So maybe it’s a good time to ask: What is the secret of their contentment? What are they talking about as they stand placidly chewing their cud? And what exactly do they think about humans trying to tip them over? One cow, on a promise of anonymity, has come out of the barn to talk with this writer in an effort to set the record straight.

The cow repeatedly checked over her shoulder as she approached. She was big – big head, big body, big udders. She looked, well, she looked like a cow. I guess after 8,000 years of selective breeding for uniformity, there’s not much else she could look like.

“Listen man,” she said, “let’s make this quick. If the farmer’s wife finds out I’m not at my milking stall, I’m dead meat.”

“You’re a milk cow,” I scoffed. “That’s like a cash cow, only with even more liquidity. What’s she gonna do? Scold you? Take away some hay? You’re living the life.”

The cow glared at me unblinking, and chewed its cud even slower, like it was trying to decide if I had been selectively bred for cluelessness. “If I don’t make my quota, the next time anyone sees me I’ll be inside a bun instead of a barn. Like, we give you milk, butter, and cheese, and instead of saying thank you, now go enjoy some fresh air and fresh grass, you EAT us! How is THAT supposed to make us want to cooperate?”

This cow didn’t seem so contented. How was I going to get to the bottom of this if she wasn’t going to reveal her secrets? For some reason, I imagined my boss eating me instead of editing me if I turned in something substandard. My horror must have showed.

“Mooo,” the cow bellowed. “Hey, like, don’t have a cow, man.”

“Moo yourself,” I replied. “Sorry, I don’t speak cow.”

“Yeah, who wants their food talking back to them, right? What I meant was - don’t have a cow. Literally. You haven’t seen angry till you’ve seen a cow after giving birth. They keep us pregnant, then take our babies away from us right away so we’ll keep making milk our whole short, miserable lives. Five years we get to live. Out of our natural twenty. That’s cow milk, man! For cow babies! You people need to get with the plan. Calves need their mamas. We need a break. And humans need to wake up and smell the cow pies. Maybe eat a few.”

This was worse than I thought. If I was hearing this cow right, she had never even had a milk shake, ice cream, or milk chocolate before, the only keys to contentment that I knew. So where did their legendary contentment come from? I

needed to dig deeper.

“I read that cows are very social animals that form strong friendships. Do you have any special friends you like to chill with?”

“Only chill friends I have are hanging in the meat locker. The stress got to Ruth so she became infertile – an instant death sentence. Tanya couldn’t stand anymore – foot rot and lack of exercise. Jill had one too many infections from standing in her own waste. And poor Elsie – they just went and condensed her. Said she’d be perfect for canned milk.”

The cow grinned at me. I took this as a sign she was relaxing, feeling more comfortable with me. It was good to have friends and talk about them. True, it was a peculiar sort of grin. I pressed on.

“So what do you gals talk about all day?”

“Oh, you know, this and that,” the cow said, big eyes boring in on me uncomfortably. “How to hook humans up to milking machines. How to castrate their young boys like they do ours. How to give their young girls growth hormones so they can get pregnant at half the age they should. How to turn unwanted children into veal.”

Again with the weird grin, this time showing me her big bottom teeth as well, teeth that seemed to never stop chewing. It was unnerving, but I felt we were finally getting somewhere. I hadn’t realized how practical cows were, standing in those lush green meadows trading how-to suggestions, always trying to make their lives better. That seemed like a recipe for contentment.

“Perfect,” I said, putting my notepad away. “I guess we’re done here. Thank you for your time. So, how do you and the farmer get along?”

The cow’s grin got even bigger, the chewing more forceful. It made me think of her four stomachs and the constant regurgitation. It seemed like such a long, tedious process just to eat.

As if on cue, the cow spit out a farmer’s cap. “Oh, I guess you could say he’s an acquired taste,” she said, chewing more contently now. “But he’ll be with me for a while yet.”

I left thinking there was more to this story than a contented cow. But I was hungry, and nothing was gonna get in my way of a burger and a shake.

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Five College Planning Mistakes to Avoid

By Leisl L. Cording, CFP®
Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor



As a parent, you know that time with your kids can go by in the blink of an eye. So whether you are preparing to send your child to kindergarten or are dealing with teenagers, it's never too early (or too late) to start planning for their higher education. Not sure where to start? Here are some of the most common financial mistakes parents make when it comes to college planning.

Mistake #1: Procrastinating

Raising children is no easy task. You have so much to think about as they're growing up that college might not always be at the forefront of your mind. But the reality is, the earlier you get started on planning how to fund your child's education, the better off you (and they) will be when the time comes.

With the impact of compounding interest, even just a couple of years can make a difference in your savings. Take the first step by using the College Savings Plan calculator in the Resources section of our website at whzwealth.com. It will help you to calculate the potential future cost and factor in how many years you have left to save so you'll know how much money you need to save each month.

Mistake #2: Not Researching Account Types

While it's good to have options when it comes to saving for your child's education, choosing the right savings account can be overwhelming. Take the time to research the types of accounts that can be used to cover educational expenses. Options could include:

- 529 plans
- Coverdell ESAs
- Roth IRAs
- UTMAs and UGMAs
- Joint and individual accounts
- Trusts

Consider how they differ and what aspects are most valuable to you. You'll also want to consider factors such as your risk tolerance and how much time you have left to save.

Mistake #3: Buying Investments with High Annual Fees

You probably don't want to have to think about additional fees when you're trying to save for a huge expense such as college. However, excessive fees can make it much more difficult to reach your college planning goals.

When choosing an investment vehicle or savings account for college planning, review any potential fees that could negate or diminish earnings.

Mistake #4: Relying on Your Retirement Funds to Pay for College

Depleting your retirement savings in order to send your child to school is a common mistake that parents make. It's important to think ahead, because restarting your retirement savings in your 40s and 50s is going to make it difficult to actually retire when you want to. Instead of turning to your 401(k) or other retirement savings, look into student loans, scholarships, 529 plans and other college savings accounts.

Mistake #5: Failing to Consider Student Loans

Taking out student loans does not mean that you don't make enough money. College is getting increasingly expensive every year, and there's no shame in taking out a loan for a little help. In fact, when it comes to federal student loans there are about 42.9 million borrowers each year.¹ Research different federal student loan programs and understand the difference between subsidized and unsubsidized loans to determine if taking out a loan would work for your situation.

Even if you don't plan on borrowing money, fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at fafsa.gov before sending your child off to school. It's a quick and easy way to potentially receive aid, and you don't have to take it even if it's offered. Additionally, research loan types, as federal loans may offer lower-interest rates than private lenders - but this may not always be the case.

Still stressed out by the thought of starting your college planning journey? Use these tips as a jumping off point and then get in touch to create a college savings strategy as well as a comprehensive financial strategy that will help you to achieve all the goals you have for your children and for yourself. Learn more about how we do this for our clients using our strategic Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well process on our website at www.whzwealth.com, and contact us at (860) 928-2341 or info@whzwealth.com

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1 <https://studentaid.gov/data-center/student/portfolio>

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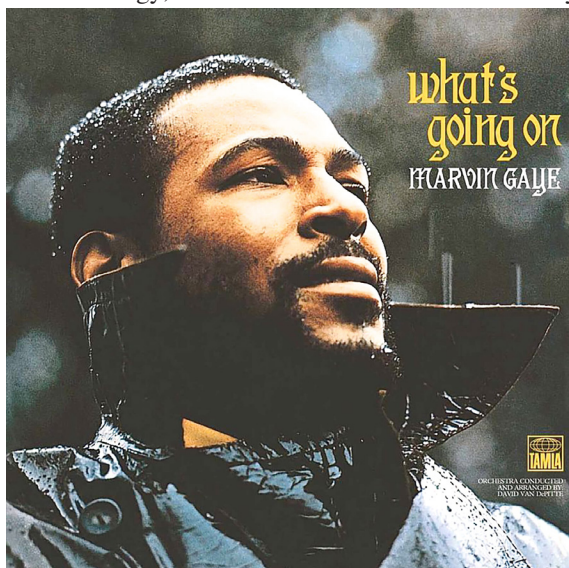
What's Going On, Marvin Gaye (Tamla, 1971)

By Dean Farrell

Following the end of his marriage to Anna Gordy and the premature death of his friend Tammi Terrell, Marvin Gaye took a leave of absence from music. When he returned to the Motown studios, he self-produced an album so brilliant, humanistic, soulful and iconoclastic, label chief Berry Gordy, Jr. called it the worst piece of shit he ever heard and refused to release it. As wrongheaded as Gordy's reaction may have been, it was also understandable. He thought of his label as a musical version of Detroit's automobile assembly line. Motown had established a highly successful formula that Gordy saw no reason to tamper with. And WHAT'S GOING ON tampered with that formula in many ways.

It was a concept album with songs that blended into each other. The lyrics dealt with controversial subject

matter like racism, police brutality, drug abuse, the war in Vietnam, and pollution of the environment--or the ecology, as it was called at the time.



The back-up vocals were multi-tracked. The instrumentation clearly displayed both jazz and symphonic influences. ("Right On" even sported a flute solo.) And due to the ubiquity of

scotch and marijuana in the studio, the songs themselves were considerably mellower and more laid-back than many soul hits of the day.

Despite Gordy's reticence, Motown released the album on May 21, 1971. WHAT'S GOING ON spent a year on the Billboard pop LP charts, topping out at #6. On the soul album chart, it reached #1. It also produced three singles that were #1 soul and top ten pop hits: the title cut, "Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)," and "Inner City Blues (Make We Wanna Holler)."

The critical response was rewarding too. The LP received glowing reviews in Billboard, Rolling Stone, the Village Voice, BBC Music, and the Chicago Tribune, among others. And in 1985, a year after Gaye's death, the British publication NME (New Music Express) named WHAT'S GOING ON the best album of all time.

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Prudence Crandall and the Battle for an Equal Education

By Donna Dufresne



In September of 1832, Prudence Crandall was the principal of one of the finest female academies in the region. The well-to-do parents of northeast Connecticut sent their daughters to board at the Canterbury Female Boarding School. There they received an education that rivaled that of their brothers, who would be sent to Harvard or Yale. Yes, the girls dabbled in painting, French, and poetry. But unlike students at most female academies in New England, the girls in Miss Crandall's school also learned natural history (science), astronomy, physics, and the art of rhetoric. The school was flourishing. Crandall was able to pay off her mortgage and the money she had borrowed from her family to buy the large Federal-style house that served as dormitory and classroom. Given the trajectory of her success, it is remarkable that Prudence Crandall was willing to risk her career, livelihood, and reputation by admitting Sarah Harris, a young Black woman, to her school.

Harris approached Crandall delicately, knowing that she was asking a lot of the young headmistress. Later in life, Crandall reminisced that Sarah Harris was “a girl of respectability—a professor of religion—and daughter of honorable parents.” She went on to quote Harris's request: “Miss Crandall, I want to get a little more learning, if possible, enough to teach colored children, and if you will admit me to your school, I shall forever be under greatest obligation to you. If you think it will be the means of injuring you, I will not insist on the favor.”

Indeed, Prudence Crandall did not come to her decision easily. She knew the racial climate was tense. She would have read about the riots and lynching mobs that followed William Lloyd Garrison and the abolitionists as they spoke for the anti-slavery cause. Their proposal for immediate emancipation generated ire among Southern slaveholders and the merchants and businessmen of New England. Crandall's own brothers, including Hezekiah, who owned three cotton manufactories in the region, argued for gradual emancipation. Her neighbor and school board member Andrew T. Judson was a staunch colonizationist who argued that the remaining enslaved Africans and their descendants should be sent back to Africa to colonize their own country, Liberia.

Crandall herself may not have thought much about abolition until a copy of *The Liberator* was strategically placed next to her reading chair. Mariah Davis, a Black servant employed at the school, was from a local family involved in the abolitionist movement. Her father was a distributor for *The Liberator*, and the family of her future sister-in-law, Sarah Harris, was also involved in the movement. Davis was allowed to attend classes when her chores were done, and she frequently borrowed books which she shared with Harris. To the best of our knowledge, the white students and their parents didn't mind Davis's presence in the classroom.

It's possible that Davis and Harris had conspired to win Crandall's support for the abolitionist cause. They were both from prominent activist families, and the issue of education and constitutional rights was emerging in the abolitionist movement. Several Black schools had been attempted in New England, all ending with white NIM-BY (not in my backyard) protests. Although Connecticut Yankees took pride in educating free Blacks in the local district schools, they were not keen on educating them beyond a rudimentary grammar-school level regardless of their ability to pay. After all, higher education had traditionally been reserved for the white owning class. Poor whites and immigrants had long been excluded by the rules of privilege. In fact, many of Crandall's white students had only recently busted through that wall of privilege because of their fathers' success as manufacturers. A nouveau riche class had emerged from the budding industrial revolution in New England, and they were not ready to embrace African Americans into the fold.

When Sarah Harris finally made her request to attend the school, she made it clear that she could afford the full tuition. Whereas Davis audited classes as a nonpaying observer, a perk of her job as cook, housekeeper, and washerwoman, Harris was requesting admission on equal terms. She would be subject to the same curricular expectations as the white students; she would be expected to participate in classroom discussions and complete the same written assignments. It was, perhaps, the first example of “diversity, equity, and inclusion” in American education. Make no mistake, the abolitionists intended to challenge the white supremacist narrative that people of African descent were inferior by nature, and Sarah Harris was up for the job.

In 1995, Prudence Crandall was named the Connecticut State Heroine, not because she was a “great white savior” but because she decided to admit Sarah Harris regardless of the great risk to her academy and her career. Crandall admitted that she tossed and turned through the night and believed that she couldn't have decided were it not for divine intervention. She later told a reporter that she was ashamed that her first thought was not for Sarah and her yearning to achieve an education but “How would the parents of my white students react?” Later in the same interview, she quoted a Bible passage from her midnight epiphany: “And so, I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun and on the side of the oppressor there was power: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed and they had no comforter...”

Despite her misgivings about the parents of her white students, Crandall admitted Sarah Harris to her exclusive female academy and endured several years of violence and personal attacks from her former white friends and neighbors. The parents of the white students insisted that she dismiss Harris. One of them admitted blatantly, “We shall not have our daughters going to school alongside a N— —.”

Crandall refused to back down, despite threats by the parents and her board to close the school. By February, she closed the school herself and, with the support of abolitionists and prominent Black families from Philadelphia to Boston, she opened Miss Crandall's School for Young Ladies and Little Misses of Color. The irate townsmen rallied to pass a state law, known as the Black Law, which made it illegal to teach Blacks from out of district or out of state, and Crandall was arrested for breaking the law. She went to trial three times while continuing to run the school. Her Black students endured racial taunts, the school was set afire, the well was defiled by manure, merchants refused to sell their goods to her, the church across the street barred Black students from attending, and the local doctor refused to treat them.

Prudence Crandall may be the Connecticut State Heroine, but her African American students and their families deserve equal credit for risking their lives and guiding her toward the long arc of justice. Abolitionist lawyers used the Constitution to argue the first known case of equal rights and citizenship in the courts, which made Crandall's trial a landmark case cited in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Still, the state Superior Court, not wanting to risk more racial violence and riots, dismissed the case on a technicality during the trial. After this bittersweet victory, Crandall was allowed to continue with her school, but a violent mob attacked it within three days of her acquittal, destroying all the windows and sashes in the house. Crandall's husband, Calvin Philleo, and friend Samuel J. May told the students that their school would be permanently closed. Who knew what the angry mob would do next?

The narrative of white supremacy and domestic terrorism may have won the day, but the long arc of justice has prevailed as we continue to strive for diversity, equity, and inclusion nearly two centuries later. The mob stole Crandall's livelihood, ruined her reputation, destroyed her home, and robbed African American families of the privilege of an outstanding education. But they couldn't silence her voice or the will of her students to continue to fight for what was rightfully theirs: full citizenship and the right to an equal education.

To learn more about Prudence Crandall, see Donald E. Williams Jr.'s book *Prudence Crandall's Legacy: The Fight for Equality in the 1830s, Dred Scott, and Brown v. Board of Education* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2014).

68th Annual Windham County 4-H Auction & Tag Sale

Windham County 4-H Outdoor Center
326 Taft Pond Rd, Pomfret, CT
May 6 & 7, 2022

Auction - Preview at 5 PM both nights, unique and antique goods and services, live plants, tickets to events, venues and vacation spots for the whole family. Silent auction baskets and 50/50 raffle both nights. Auction starts at 6 PM on Friday. Auction of outdoor equipment and furniture starts at 5:30 PM on Saturday.

Tag Sale Early bird buy in to over 4,000 square feet of bargains \$5.00/person from 9:00 – 10:30 on Friday, May 6 (\$5/person). Tag Sale open free to all from 10:30 – 5:00 on Friday and 9:00 – 5:00 on Saturday. Mary's Kitchen open during all open hours both days.

To Speak for 23 Acres of Trees

By Phoebe C. Godfrey

I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees. I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.

—Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*



On April 21, the Windham Planning and Zoning Commission approved 5-0 a special permit application for a 136-unit apartment complex in North Windham. These units will take up slightly less than 23 acres on a parcel at 9 Northridge Drive, which is currently full of forestry. Given that this “forestry” is also tied to a wetland, several “environmental” conditions were required for stormwater and for plantings to hide it from view of the Air Line Trail.

At the meeting, numerous justifications were made as to why these units are needed and should take precedence over the trees. For example, Windham PZC Chairperson Paula Stahl said, “This is a developed area and you can't forget that if the economy hadn't changed seven or eight years ago, we probably would have a big-box [store] there,” while Windham Director of Development Matthew Vertefeuille said, “This project is going to be a game-changer for the town of Windham in so many ways,” and Windham Town Manager Jim Rivers added that the project incorporates “environmentally friendly” features, such as “rain gardens and 90 electric vehicle charging stations” (<https://www.thechronicle.com/stories/20220415APTD.php>).

Ah yes, from our culturally anthropocentric perspective that is driven by ongoing corporate profit it all makes sense to carry on with business as usual, while offering symbolic environmental tropes that in fact have no merit in comparison to the trees. Even if the area was to be developed eight years ago, we are now eight more years into our downward spiral as far as the climate crisis is concerned. Additionally, yes, continued deforestation is an ongoing “game-changer,” and the view that rain gardens and 90 electric charging stations are “environmentally friendly” and can substitute for what trees do will one day be seen as delusional.

Before this predictable vote happened, I and many other environmentally conscious citizens wrote letters to the *Chronicle* and some also spoke out at public hearings, although of course we did so not thinking it would change this particular outcome. Rather, we did so because like the Lorax, we are compelled to speak for the trees: trees which produce oxygen, capture carbon, clean our water, and provide a habitat for multiple species—in short, which make all life on Earth possible.

Here is my letter that was published in the *Chronicle* on April 18:

As an environmental sociologist teaching numerous courses on this topic at UConn, I am not naïve enough to imagine that the 23 acres of trees along the Air Line Trail stand a chance if there is money to be made in the *holy* name of progress and human development. Given this cultural reality and the values it represents, what I seek is for us to ask ourselves how it is that the Indigenous peoples, who lived here before the European colonizers, were able to “sustain” themselves and the forests. In the past this might have seemed to be a quaint question, but now this question and similar ones may hold a key to our future survival as a species, if taken seriously and answered with honesty, as opposed to through our historical racist colonizing hubris. What I mean is that there have been cultures that have created their lives and used nature's bounty in a balanced, hence authentically sustainable way. Ours, of course, is not one of them. Instead, those in our culture convince ourselves that the issue boils down to humans versus the forest, or housing versus the trees, while further justifying it by glibly asking what's another 23 acres locally or what's another 23 acres in the Amazon, or in Indonesia or anywhere, for that matter? But of course, these 23 acres keep adding up to the point where deforestation, combined with increasing levels of carbon in the atmosphere are threatening all life on earth. And so, at some point as a community and as a culture we must not only look to the inventors of sustainability before our culture's arrival for ways to shift our values and correspondingly our actions. Additionally, and perhaps more palatable for many, we should also listen to one of our own, as in Henry David Thoreau, who over 150 years ago poignantly asked, as I do you today, “What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?”

Quicksand

The sands beneath our feet shift, in moments so subtle
it is easy to go unnoticed.

Life can become a concert of anchored days, suddenly followed by
precarious times, in rapid succession of each other.

It is only in the quiet and un-busy minutes of our lives, that one
can intuitively feel or even sense that something is off kilter.

Could it be the silent wings of disconnection that leaves us grasping
for some sense of meaning or balance.

Or is it simply the longing for just one forward thrust, that will
push our feet out of the quicksand of life
that we sometimes find ourselves standing in.

Lynda George Bowen

A Precious Piece of Life

You should believe that love is blind
As your hearts start to unwind.
But you will see that life can't be
Without the light of love to see.

For love is something which enchants
The hearts of young and old.
For it is like a cooling stream
That refreshes the human soul.

Once with love within your reach
You'll find it never ending care and strife.
For love becomes a part of you
A precious piece of life.

Jeanne Esterquest

God versus HELL

By Dennis R. Blanchette

In the beginning God created heaven and earth. He was immediately issued a cease and desist/show cause order by the Heavenly Environmental Liaison League (HELL), an agency comprised of representatives of the various environmental groups dedicated to keeping the universe pollution-free.

Asked what He would do with this dark void, God said He planned to create light in the heavens. Immediately the representative of the Universal Air Pollution Bureau asked how the light would be made. God explained that the light would come from a glowing ball of gases. The representative requested that any approvals be conditioned as follows: (1) there would be no smoke or particulate pollution; and (2) a separate burning permit would be required. A member of the Dark Sky Coalition also requested that there be a period of darkness for viewing the stars. God saw this would conserve energy and said He would call the light "day" and the darkness "night." HELL indicated that they had no knowledge of these terms and stipulated that they be clearly defined. HELL then granted a temporary permit for the heavenly part and continued the hearing on the earthly part until all water and land management permits had been applied for.

On the third day God caused the dry land to bring forth grass and herbs. HELL was outraged and immediately filed for a permanent injunction requesting all work be stopped until God submitted the necessary permit applications and environmental impact statements. At the hearing God disputed the need for permits, citing His omniscience and benevolence. HELL's attorney stipulated to these facts but stated that nevertheless, they wished to avoid the necessity of future floods or locust plagues. God was also asked if He had any more plans and He responded that He had some ideas for the next few days. The attorney for HELL responded that it would take a year to review the permit applications, six months of public hearings and a yearlong comment period before any approvals could be granted.

On the fifth day God created fishes for the waters and fowl to fly above. The Fisheries Board filed for intervenor status, requesting data on the number and species of fish. Trout Unlimited attached a supporting brief requesting that they be involved on the placement of rocks and other barriers in the streams to ensure the trout had adequate resting and spawning areas. The Universal Audubon Society requested a pesticide management plan to protect the eagles, if any were created.

And God said, "Let earth bring forth the living creatures, cattle and creeping things." The Universal Wildlife Federation asked who would manage all these living things and ensure they were fed. God said He was instituting a food chain whereby animals lower on the chain would be eaten by those higher on the chain. HELL was skeptical and requested additional documentation, including a brief from PETA on whether this would meet the prevailing cruelty standards and a permit from the Fisheries and Game Commission.

On the sixth day God created man and woman and said, "Be fruitful and multiply." The Heavenly Environmental Defense Fund asked what they would eat and God responded, "I have given them a garden, that they may eat of the fruits and vegetables." As to where they would live, God said that the climate in the garden would require minimal shelter, probably only grass huts. HELL granted

provisional status, as long as no permanent structures were built. The Universal Resources Defense Council stipulated that this was acceptable with regard to temporary structures, but before any permanent structures were built, God needed to create Zoning to ensure proper separation and Building Codes to ensure structural integrity.

As to the question of the man and woman's bodily wastes, God indicated that they would eliminate them on the ground, the same as the animals. A representative of the Heavenly Department of Environmental Protection (HDEP) stated that non-point sources would be the greatest pollution threat to the streams and rivers. This plan could only be approved if God's consultants filed for a stormwater discharge permit, which must include a stormwater management plan. God said the heck with it, I'll just create a treatment plant, but HDEP said that would require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, with plans and specifications stamped by a Professional Engineer (PE). Since HDEP staff was too busy creating regulations, the permit would have to be reviewed by another PE, at God's cost.

How will these humans disperse themselves once they multiply? God said He had provided resources to allow them to develop roads and cars someday. He was advised of the need for a traffic study addressing road capacity and an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) addressing impacts on all endangered species. God explained that there were no endangered species. HELL asked what if man discovers fire and decides that prime rib is preferable to vegetables? God explained that these people would develop cardiovascular disease and die sooner, thus sustaining the balance of nature.

As the hearing was concluding, the Universal Flying Object (UFO) committee brought up the subject of off-planet travel. God said, "I have given them the resources to reach the Moon." HELL then revoked His temporary permit for the heavenly portion of the project until He could address the effects on the inhabitants of other planets, interstellar aircraft collisions, and space junk accumulating around the Earth.

God said, "I just thought of a name for the place I'm going to send all the sinners."

Disclaimer: This article is not intended to mock any religion or supreme being.

Dennis Blanchette is a retired civil engineer and travel writer.

Tai Chi Home

Things Are Looking Up

By Joe Pandolfo

Out in the woods this time of year, look up at the treetops. The early tips of the Red Maple leaves light up in the sun and reach up to it.

The energy of everything is lifting. What a perfect time to bring a kite to your favorite field or hilltop and feel yourself get swept up. Let yourself float up there a while.

Simply lifting your gaze up and facing the sky eases sadness, they say. It gently stretches your heart open.



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Back to the Future in Connecticut's Quiet Corner and Ukraine

A Lucky Gardener's Spring

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

SPRING CHORES I was reminded of my chores as I read C. Dennis Pierce's March column, 'My Garden To-Do List'. Writing in late winter, he was still shoveling wet, heavy snow, exercise in gray. Bright yellow cheers me as I write mid-April. *Forsythia* peaks with the daffodils (*Narcissus*) as the grass is greening with the first scattered dandelions. Pierce featured the wonderful weed in a salad of wilted greens with hot bacon dressing. As Putin is pummeling Ukraine. Lucky us.

Dandelions (*Taraxacum*) have antioxidants and other bioactive compounds that may help reduce cholesterol, regulate blood sugar and reduce inflammation. A cheerful bright yellow in my yard. Hopeful on a bombed site in Ukraine.

I stopped mowing some lawn to accommodate a new hip last summer and created a mini-meadow. My partner liked the larger lawn that I had overseeded with clover (*Trifolium*) to appease our new pets, the rabbits. The unmown lawn shelters bunnies from hawks, I offer, still negotiating as I buy meadow plants *Asclepias* (Monarch-host Butterflyweed), *Rudbeckia* (Black-eyed Susan), *Salvia* ('Carradonna' Meadow Sage), and *Symphotrichum novae angliae* (New England Aster). All full sun.

Meadows are wildlife habitats for bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insect pollinators. And a low-slinking shrew. A new critter. Alarm!

Mistaken for mice, shrews are actually insectivores eating garden pests, slugs and snails, beetles and caterpillars, centipedes and millipedes. Maybe ticks! Huge appetites! Shrews might eat tiny mice, but not plant roots. Living in thick, moist vegetation and debris, they don't burrow, but may use vole-mole tunnels. My mini-meadow shelters shrews, too.

Meadow gardens require no fertilizer, no chemicals, and little water once established. No mowing. Most lawns can be reduced, transforming spaces. Lucky us.

Mr. Pierce is a serious gardener growing food for harvest; I'm an ornamental horticulturist who depends on BigY and the Willimantic Food Coop. But our garden paths cross. Some plants serve both gardeners, such as Blueberry (*Vaccinium*). Both harvest and ornamental gardens serve human need and desire; both need sun, water and healthy soil. Both here and far away in Ukraine where grass is also greening.

GLOBAL VILLAGE We can use global plants native to temperate areas around the world, living in an ever-smaller world... surrounded by satellites taking pictures. We all know what's happening, Mr. Putin, except older Russians who rely on State TV Moscow 24, not phones and internet. Older Ukrainians remember suffering Hitler's invasion as children hiding in trenches. "Never Again" has been uttered in Ukraine since World War II. Stop repeating war crimes, Mr. Putin. Stop acting like Hitler. Ever again.

I'm reminded of when I was too busy to enjoy the season. Working seven days a week each spring some years ago as a landscape designer at Weston Nurseries, Hopkinton, Massachusetts, where I learned the many, many ornamental plants of New England -- thank you Wayne Mezitt, the plantsman; son Peter now leads the company. Born in NYC, I came from Minneapolis, Minnesota, where many cold-hardy plants survive with Chinese DNA, but not coastal Japanese flora that adapt to milder southern New England. Some 75 clients and landscapes to plant each season. Winter to recover and rejuvenate. Love spring. Lucky me.

Weston Nurseries garden center has the most plants but some stock is gated in the wholesale grounds, not public. Twenty minutes away on US Route 20, Rus-

sell's in Wayland is a well-stocked, compact retail garden center where I first find plants to see and touch in early spring.

SOIL As Pierce noted, once frost lifts, the ground drains and is workable, *Prepare the Soil*. My ground is still cold. I prune when it's warmer, haul firewood when colder, and procrastinate with a classic read, the 50-year-old 'Basic Book of Organic Gardening' by Robert Rodale. Its timeless advice to build soil vitality reminds me to provide compost... remembering again Ukraine's scorched earth.

Rodale claimed 90% of all garden failures are caused by poor soil. Fertility is the goal of organic soil building. More compost! My planted landscape is 3 years old and I still topdress all flowering plants, and all that are surviving but not thriving. Nontoxic granulated fertilizers can be broadcast without bulk. Nitrogen stakes direct vegetative growth to roots.

As Rodale observed, the loose top layer of the earth's surface supports plant growth. Depth varies greatly in four parts, mostly mineral, plus equal parts air and water on average, and far less organic matter -- the "humus" formed by the decomposition of leaves and other plant material by soil microorganisms (that are harmed by chemical use.) Organic matter is only one percent of global soil. Half (49%) of this loose layer of soil is mineral, stone becoming soil, with a quarter each of air (78% Nitrogen, 21% Oxygen) and water (66% Hydrogen, 33% Oxygen).

We're lucky. Temperate soils are rich, here and in Ukraine, "Breadbasket" of the USSR, the memory of Russia that drives Putin. America's breadbasket is the Midwest, once prairie. Virgin prairie soil might be 10% organic matter; less than one percent of original prairie remains. Connecticut is part of the broad Eastern Deciduous Forest, rich with leaf

litter. I'm on a mission from Nature to bring more fertility to yards and gardens. Compost leaves. As organic humus created naturally in the soil, compost stores plant nutrients organically. More compost !!!

PLANTS Mercifully, it's time to garden again in Eastern Connecticut. Lucky us, but no time to bask. Time to transplant an 'Endless Summer' *Hydrangea* needing more shade. Time to plant more multi-stem *Amelanchier* 'Autumn Brilliance' Serviceberry to screen views, and a *Malus* 'Purple Prince' Crabapple with carmine-red buds opening to bright rose-red, single flowers, becoming purple-blue crabapples, with purplish leaves and cherry-like bark, 15 to 20-foot. It's a tough tree and a small size was planted with copious compost to adapt to a difficult hot, dry site, becoming a small colorful tree to hide the corner utilities and contrast with our bright blue farmhouse. (And a Minnesota musical reference to Prince's 1984 film 'Purple Rain'.)

Blueberry (*Vaccinium*) can be used ornamentally in or out of a harvest garden with early, mid- and late season flower and fruit -- sweet little blossoms with big taste -- and red fall color. Better pollination interplanted with other cultivars. Nice along a naturalistic edge outside the fenced garden, but subject to deer browsing.

Spring chores done, all amended, planted and mulched for summer heat and global warming. This May, I'm enjoying late spring, that is early summer. Will Putin



The unmown mini-meadow.

have stopped bombing?

Time for a summer recipe touting the brain-boosting benefits of *Vaccinium*. Eat blueberries daily. Half to one cup. Frozen fruit is just as nutritious as fresh if doesn't have added sugars, juice or preservatives, because it is HIGH in:

Flavonoids are plant compounds offering many health benefits, including less dementia. A half serving per day of foods high in flavonoids may reduce cognitive decline (according to a 2021 study that surveyed 49,493 women, average age of 48, and 27,842 men, average of 51).

Antioxidants Blueberries are rich in *anthocyanins*, an antioxidant that gives these berries their characteristic blue color, that improves stress tolerance and reduces inflammation, especially in the brain.

Fiber There is a profound connection between our brain and gut. Fiber also decreases inflammation and feeds "good bacteria" in the gut.

And Folate !!! Folate is a vitamin that enables neurotransmitters, chemical messengers within our brain that govern mood and cognition. Better physical and mental health, brain health and memory, yes, please.

(As advised by Dr. Uma Naidoo, a nutritional psychiatrist, brain expert, and faculty member at Harvard Medical School. Also Director of Nutritional & Lifestyle Psychiatry at Mass. General Hospital, and author of the book, "This Is Your Brain on Food: An Indispensable Guide to the Surprising Foods that Fight Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, OCD, ADHD, and More.")

Blueberry & Watermelon with Lime Popsicles

Watermelon is also rich in antioxidants and vitamins A, B and C. Lime is zesty. Puree watermelon and almond milk for a creamy texture in a blender. Stir in lime juice, lime zest and honey. Pour into molds 2/3 full, with room to add blueberries. Makes 6 to 8 pops. Need:

- Blender and ice pop molds
- 2 cups seeded, chopped watermelon
- 1 cup almond milk
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh lime juice
- 1 Tablespoon lime zest (!)
- 1/4 Tablespoon honey
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen blueberries (added last)

My garden has finally warmed, work done. Now is time to bask in the glory of summer. Perhaps on the south shore of Mamacoke Island, sun in my face with a cool sea breeze and a popsicle, a nuclear submarine gliding quietly by on the Thames River. Take that, Mr. Putin. Glory to Ukraine.

IF YOU GO Weston Nurseries is at 93 East Main Street (Route 135), Hopkinton MA, 75 minutes if driving I-395 / I-90 / I-495, and east on Main Street past the starting line for the Boston Marathon. Russell's Garden Center is at 397 Boston Post Road (Route 20) in Wayland MA.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, Master gardener / designer and wanderer

Photos by author.



White-blooming Serviceberry.



Meadow perennials to plant.

Changing Lawn Culture



Submitted by Marian Matthews

What is it with Americans and their lawns? Do we need all these lawns for our croquet games? Our frisbee and football throwing with the kids? As I drive around our neighborhoods, I see few games being played on all the lawns that surround our houses. The monoculture that is a turf grass lawn is not that great for a diverse environment that supports insects and wildlife. You also may not realize how much fossil fuels are used in caring for your lawn and garden. Just look at these facts (most provided by Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor, University of Vermont):

Oil consumption. 2.2 billion gallons of gallons of fuel are used for just lawn care each year (not just the gas for mowing and trimming, but what is required for fertilizing, watering, and cleanup).

Air pollution. Operating a typical (4HP) gasoline-powered lawn mower for one hour produces as much smog-forming hydrocarbons as driving an average car between 100-200 miles under average conditions (11 times the amount of pollution of a new car). Gasoline string-trimmers are even more polluting, as are power blowers.

Natural gas consumption. You could heat your home for a year on the amount of natural gas required to make about 200 bags of synthetic nitrogen lawn fertilizer. Transporting these bags from the factory to your home uses even more fuel.

Noise pollution. None of us liked to be awakened by our neighbors' early mowing, leaf or snow blowing, right? The noise is caused by those gasoline-powered lawn mowers, string trimmers, leaf and snow blowers.

Water consumption. 600 million gallons of water are used to water our lawns each year. A recent NASA turfgrass study stated that lawn is our single largest irrigated crop in the US (more than corn, wheat, soybeans or any other single food crop).

Water pollution. Over 70 million pounds of pesticides are applied to turf grass lawns each year. Additionally, these and herbicides, fertilizers, and other polluting substances often runoff our lawns into our water supplies, such as lakes, streams, sewer systems.

Habitat fragmentation. Residential development

causes habitat fragmentation for all kinds of wildlife, including those important to our own foods, native pollinators.

What can we do?

Use an electric or non-powered push mower. They produce much less noise and use much less fuel. Use a mulching mower. Leave the grass on your lawn or put it into your compost. Mow higher and mix 5% clover into your lawn seed. All these recycle nutrients back into your lawn and you will not have to use so much fertilizer.

Use natural, organic fertilizers not derived from fossil fuels.

Use traditional hand rakes. Leave some leaves on the lawn and in your garden areas. These mulch well and worms pull the leaves into the soil, thus aerating your lawn.

Minimize the need for string trimmers; mulch along walks and around structures such as lamp posts. Mulch around trees as string trimmers can seriously damage tree bark.

Reduce your lawn area. You can do this gradually by adding more native shrubs and native groundcovers around the edges of your lawn.

Compost all yard waste and food waste—saves fuel taking it to the transfer station and is good for your garden.

Consider replacing traditional turf grasses with native grasses or sedges. Some of these do not need to be mowed at all. Allow mosses and other varieties of plants to grow in the lawn. Lawn monocultures are unnatural.

Finally, mow less. In one U.S. Forest Service study, moving every two weeks provided for the most bees. Clover, violets, violas, and nectar- and pollen-producing flowers were able to sprout up amidst the grasses providing food for a variety of insects and then a feast for birds.

Try "No Mow May," which was first popularized in England and has now caught on in some places in the United States and Canada. By not mowing for an entire month in spring when few flowers are blooming, we can provide vital food for bees, butterflies, and other insects and create a more diverse natural habitat for all our wild kin.



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The Catch

By Brian Merrill

Emile trembled. It didn't seem possible, but here it was: the biggest fish he had ever caught was draped over his table, nearly filling the room. The hook and line lay in the corner, a trickle of blood glistening on the barb.

One bulbous eye of the creature peered upward. From the window, armies of cumulus clouds drifting across a cerulean field were reflected in its aqueous mirror. It winked. In the vastness of its dinner plate sized scales, the creature heaved a long sigh. It drew the hut's walls inward, sucking the room of all but a single breath of air. Enough for Emile to decide what to do with his catch. But it was too late.

Without an audible sound, the fish announced it wanted to go back to its dark pool in the river behind Emile's hut.

"Nothing doing," he said in his mind. "Your capture was too good to be true. Yes, it is."

The fish shuddered and exhaled, giving Emile several more breaths.

He sat on his stool and wondered. The village would marvel at his catch. And want some of the glory, too. He couldn't keep it here. The thing will stink and decay. Was it even edible? Never before had such a monster been taken from the border stream between the town of Prizkov and DRL, the Dark Land. No one went to DRL and returned.

He looked out his front window. A group of villagers were talking, their collective breath rising in the chill morning air. One was pointing to the river, another wagging her head. An argument arose and promptly dissipated. The band turned and walked towards Emile's place. What if they noticed the drag marks in the snow where he'd hauled the fish inside?

He went out to meet them.

"Fyodor, Lemuel, Artemi, Sophie, Tomas, what a beautiful day to be out."

"Yes, and cold," said Lemuel. "The clouds look like an army crossing the river. At least they are only pretty clouds."

Everyone laughed; they were the best of friends. Sophie, recently married to Tomas, had once dated Emile. Tomas shoved Emile's shoulder.

"We were coming to ask if you wanted to join us at Tito's for a drink and dinner. We've been cooped up all winter. The days are getting longer. Spring is coming soon. Time to celebrate, don't you think?"

Emil knew he couldn't leave the fish unattended for hours. Neither did he want to provoke suspicion from the closest family he had, his friends.

"I was just coming to town for provisions when I saw you. I can't be too long. My fire is low and I've only now been strong enough to get out of doors. An awful cold laid me up for days, the worst in years. One drink, perhaps."

"Oh, Emile, we're sorry to hear that," said Artemi. "We could pick up your goods for you and bring food and wine to cheer you up."

He was in a bind. Prizkov was a tightknit community of farmers and fisherfolk. His comrades might feel slighted if he didn't welcome their offer.

"We thought he'd never die," laughed Lemuel. "Always talking about the end of things."

The celebrating went on for hours. Then Tomas and Sophie announced they had a child on the way. Friends looked at each other in silence. Was this wise at such a time?

Prizkov, his eyelids coated with icicles, he squinted and spied a shelter on the far hill, his hut. Many hours had passed since he left, yet a wisp of smoke hung over it. Could a few dying embers still raise a visible welcome? By now, his one-room hut would smell like a fish market, or worse.

As he stepped onto the porch, he noticed a low glimmer in the front window. A muffled crackling sound told him a fire burned within. Turning the latch, he found it locked. He hadn't done that before talking with his friends. Keychain in hand, he felt a strange shifting beneath his feet. An earthquake? He grabbed the latch to keep from falling. The door swung open.

Once inside, his eyes adjusted to the firelight. The floor glistened; the room swept clean. A blaze roared in the hearth. Behind the empty table, an indistinct figure sat in his chair, blowing smoke rings across the flickering interior.

"Come in. Warm yourself by the fire," said the stranger.

Emile strode forward, pounding on the table.

"Who are you!?"

"Who am I? Don't you remember? You brought me into your home only a few hours ago."

"What?"

The intruder rose and shuffled around the table. He wore a topcoat and vest, Emile's, over his prodigious girth. A blanket from the fisherman's bed, tied at the waist, covered

his lower body. With labored breathing, he whispered,

"I'm going to stay. I hope you don't mind."

"Mind? You must be crazy."

Moving his head into the light, with a scaly complexion and one protruding red eye, the stranger added,

"No more than you, my friend, no more than you."

With breath as pungent as a dead mackerel, Emile's pipe in webbed hand, the stranger leaned on the edge of the table and blew another coil of smoke rings. Undulating hollows of sulfurous vapor bore into the fear-struck man. Eyes clouding over, he wobbled like a child's top and collapsed. After watching the fisherman display rigor mortis, the new possessor flopped down on the table and began to snooze.

Through the open door, the sky reached into the humble hut. Myriad stars danced their ageless rhythm, in keeping with another day's demise. Heavenly hosts, the noble and the noxious, raged overhead. That evening, the river behind Emile's abode had dried up; the border between two lands erased and soon forgotten.

Legions of clouds swept across the void as they do today.



"Thank you, Artemi. That's very generous. I do need to clear the cobwebs, so let's go celebrate. Tito's awaits us!"

"Hooray!" They hugged and shuffled off.

"The fish will only get colder if the fire goes out," Emile thought. "No harm done." The vodka flowed freely at Tito's, especially this night.

"We've heard rumors of strange events happening in DRL," said Fyodor.

"What events?" asked Emile.

"An army gathering just beyond the horizon. Spies crossing over into some of our remote towns near the border. Perhaps even Prizkov."

"To catch a monster, you must sacrifice everything," Emile said to himself.

"What was that you said, Emile?"

"Oh nothing. One might be here now. Such nonsense."

"It's all around town. Where have you been?" asked Tomas.

"Sick. Remember?"

The talk turned to mundane things: the weather, a new blacksmith, and the sudden death of the town soothsayer.

"Congratulations. How soon?" asked Emile.

"In April," replied Sophie, "with spring rains and flowers."

"A toast." Everyone yelled.

And then another...

"I'll have to make a special surprise for the new family," said Emile.

"A fish fry?" asked Tomas.

"Perhaps."

On it went, and so did Emile, euphoric and drunk. He left while still able to stand, and with difficulty, walk. Fish and fire were as far from his mind as the outland he'd never seen. He did not realize how bitterly cold it was. Yet the chill air restored a veneer of clarity, of a night in his youth when stars danced, their conjuring glow brightest along the DRL horizon.

As he trudged through the snow, his footfalls made the sound of advancing troops in a distant war, echoing across woodless terrain. The gigantic fish rose in his thoughts and stood up on its tailfin. It leered with both eyes bursting, and drew a terrible death gasp before falling headlong, sure to crush him. Emile slapped his cheeks, shaking off the dark vision.

At the corner of the archway leaving

Illustration by the author.

Solar Today:

Questions and answers about solar in our community and beyond

By John Boiano

Honor Earth Day every day!

I invite you to join a peaceful revolution by simply changing how you buy your electricity.



Greetings all,

It's "almost" time for me to put away my skis and transition to gardening, hiking, kayaking, camping and mountain biking. Well, I've actually already transitioned for the most part but there are a few good turns left in the hills if you know where to find them.

The sun is out more and more each day and I am beginning to get the spring rush of calls to look into solar. It's a great time to look into it since we are starting to feel the financial crunch of Eversource's price increase. Many folks have only realized the price increase since for the last few months your bill was credited due to the gaff Eversource made during Storm Isaac. We will really feel the hit when the summertime A/C kicks in!

Here's a scenario for you. Last year the utility rate was at .225/kwh, this year it is .265.

Let's use 1600 kwh/mo. as a benchmark for a price comparison from last year to current pricing.

August compare:

1600 x .225 = \$360.00 (2021)

1600 x .265 = \$424.00 (2022)

\$64.00 difference from 2021 to 2022 for the exact same amount of delivered electricity!

A home that uses 1600kwh for electricity during this summer should **expect to pay about \$64.00 more this year per month** for the summer and early fall months than they did last year.

If you had solar at .16, the total would be 1600 x .16 = \$256.00 for the month

With solar, it is a small savings at first and as time goes on, your savings becomes greater!

Here's an example using an average of 800 kwh per month:

Solar at .16/kwh

800 kwh @ .16 = \$128.00 (**Solar – LOCKED IN RATE – never goes up**)

Utility pricing rises every year

800 kwh @ .19 = \$152.00 (save \$24.00 / month)

800 kwh @ .225 = \$180.00 (save \$52.00 / month)

800 kwh @ .265 = \$212.00 (save \$84.00 / month)

Do you see how that works? Solar stays at a fixed rate and every time the utility price goes up, YOU save more money because solar is at a fixed cost for the duration of the payoff.

When I went solar, my price is .09/kwh! Using the above scenario

800 kwh x .09 = \$72.00

800 kwh x .265 = \$212.00 → **\$140.00 savings for me!**

I can't reiterate enough that Solar simply makes sense or it doesn't. The calculation models that we use from shade readings to production and a comparison to current and future electric company costs gives us an accurate assessment if solar could work for a potential home or not.

It's simple math and with this information, a homeowner can decide if it feels right, both emotionally, and financially.

If you'd like to know more or if you're interested in finding out if solar could be beneficial for you, please give me a call. I would love to help you through the discovery process!

Keep it simple, keep it local.. Zen Solar

Until next month... ENJOY!

John Boiano

860-798-5692

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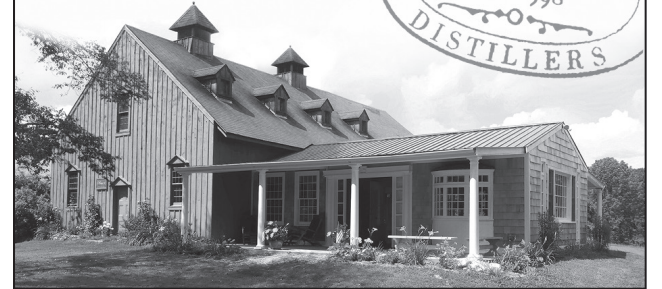
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Dear Reader-

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

T. King, Publisher



Performing Arts



The Packing House – An Intimate Listening Room!

By EC-CHAP

May

“All things seem possible in May.”

- Edwin Way Teale

The last nine months have just flown by! As we enter the final month of our performance season, we would like to give thanks to our guests, performing artists, EC-CHAP members, sponsors, and volunteers for their continued support. We are truly grateful.

BENEFIT CONCERT TO SUPPORT UKRAINE – Fall 2022

EC-CHAP will be partnering with the Acoustic Duo, **FOOLISH WISELY** to coordinate and produce a Benefit Concert at The Packing House Fall 2022 to support the People of Ukraine. 100% of ALL Ticket and Merchandise Sales will be donated to this cause. As we plan for this event, we envision it may expand to a two day event. We encourage like minded musical artists with original works to apply if interested in participating.

(<https://www.ec-chap.org/benefit-concert-for-ukraine>)

EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series: “Lexi Weege with JJ Slater” (Indie / Rock). Saturday, May 14th, 7:30pm.



Lexi Weege is no stranger to the road. The Western Mass-based powerhouse singer/songwriter grew up in a traveling Cabaret troupe, and she’s been on the move ever since. After years of touring and three full-length releases with her band Weege & The Wondertwins, Lexi is releasing her third solo album in 2022. Combining the best of classic country, Motown, and soul, Weege’s original songs are full of spirit.

Whether she’s crooning a heartbroken ballad or belting out the blues, Lexi Weege’s dexterous voice is at the heart of it all. Her acrobatic vocals soar high and plunge low, tugging at your heartstrings. Expect to dance, and maybe shed a bittersweet tear, too. Weege is a gifted storyteller. Lexi will be joined by JJ Slater.

JJ Slater is born and bred New Englander, so naturally has a song for every season. With close collaborators, most notably including Dan Bisson on upright, he produces blankets of sound wrapping heartfelt, ethereal songwriting—all with an undeniable earthy funk and dexterous guitar. Tickets: \$20.00 Advance Online / \$25.00 Cash at the Door.

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EC-CHAP Special Program: “Drum Circle 55+ with Bob Bloom”. Wednesday, May 18th, 7:30pm.

At this interactive drumming hoot for seniors, you’ll get your heart and hands around BOB BLOOM’S colorful array of lovable bongo, conga, and djembe drums. And, please feel free to bring your favorite drum.

Everyone in the room jumps into the music with Bob as he launches legendary songs with rocking melodies and gratifying beats from artists including The Beatles, James Brown, Marvin Gaye, Chuck Berry, and The Grateful Dead. Tickets: 10:00 Advance online / \$15.00 Cash at the Door.



EC-CHAP Film Series: Secret Film (we’re not telling the title) – Take a Chance! **Thursday, May 19th, 7:00pm** We’re not telling... We’ve got a film planned that we believe everyone will enjoy. You’ve got to take a chance on this one.

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. Suggested Donation \$5.00. Caberet seating | Soft drinks & snacks available | “BYOB&F”™ Model. For more information visit: www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming.

EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series: “Calendula – ‘Loveletter’ A CD Release Event” (Folk/Indie). Saturday, May 21st, 7:30pm.



Calendula is a singer-songwriter based in New England. Her work is inspired by personal experiences and ethos; and musical choices are typical folk, with instrumentation consisting of acoustic guitar, vocals, and banjo. Calendula has an interest in the history of folk music as it pertains to societal change and action for the betterment of communities, especially working class communities. Join us for Calendula’s performance of original music and release of her new album, “Loveletter”! Tickets: Free will donation available at: <http://thepackinghouse.us/upcoming/2022/05/21-acoustic-artist-series-calendula-cd-release>

Advance tickets may purchased online or cash at the door. Student and EC-CHAP Member Discounts offered. With the recent dynamic conditions, we strongly suggest checking our website for performance updates and cancellations www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming. Advance tickets purchased for any performance or event that is cancelled will be promptly refunded.

Please consider participating in our monthly Talent Showcase the 2nd Wednesday of every month (September – May). Call to be placed on the schedule: 518-791-9474. Not performing – no problem - simply join us to see and hear local and regional creatives sharing their talent.

EC-CHAP continues to seek new volunteers! We need folks 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 assist, please contact EC-CHAP at: info@ec-chap.org.

We leave you with the following:

*“The bad news is time flies.**The good news is you’re the pilot.”*

- Michael Altschuler

Happy Spring!

EC-CHAP Board

SAVE THE DATES:

MAY 11, 2022: EC-CHAP Talent Showcase - 6:30pm / Program 7:00pm.

MAY 14, 2022: Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery: “Fiber~Wood~Metal”, Artist Reception 5:00-7:00pm.

A Multimedia Exhibit featuring: Sally Rogers, Randall Nelson, and Scotty Opperman. April 2nd – May 21st. Hours Saturdays 10:am – 12:pm.

MAY 14, 2022: EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series: “Lexi Weege with JJ Slater” (Indie/Rock). Doors 7:00pm / Performance 7:30pm.

MAY 18, 2022: EC-CHAP Special Program: “Drum Circle 55+ with Bob Bloom”. Doors 6:30pm / Performance 7:00pm.

MAY 19, 2022: EC-CHAP Film Series: A Special Film (TBA). 7:00pm

MAY 21, 2022: EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series: “Calendula – ‘Loveletter’, A CD Release Event” (Indie/Folk). Doors 7:00pm / Performance 7:30pm.

TICKETS, RESERVATIONS, CANCELLATIONS, AND CONTACT

Tickets for all shows and program registrations are available for purchase online at www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming; or may be purchased at the door (cash only) 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). 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).

**Seeking Museum Curator**

The Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance (EC-CHAP) is a 501.c.3 nonprofit cultural organization serving Eastern Connecticut and beyond.

EC-CHAP is seeking a Curator / Director to oversee the **Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum**. This volunteer leadership position will work with a small team of volunteers, to assist in expanding the collection of artifacts; develop meaningful and relevant historical programming; and support EC-CHAP’s **Framework for Raising Historical Awareness**.

To learn more please email: info@ec-chap.org or call: **518.791.9474**.

WWW.EC-CHAP.ORG

156 River Road, Suite 2106A, Willington, CT 06279 | 518.791.9474 | info@ec-chap.org

ClayBox: Collaborative Play for All Ages

By Cate Solari

ClayBox is a proposal for a participatory public event. Think of a sandbox, but instead of being filled with sand, it is filled with clay. ClayBox will be ten feet in width and length, and one foot in depth and filled with approximately 2,500 pounds of raw terra cotta clay that viewers will be encouraged to engage with as if playing in a sandbox during recess. ClayBox will also be equipped with a variety of tools and toys for viewers to use to play. These tools and toys will be a combination of “loose parts” (tools with no specific use like sticks or rocks) and classic toys one may find in a sandbox (plastic shovels, trucks, buckets).

Participants of all ages will enter ClayBox and play. Participants may play in any way they choose. I aim for ClayBox to be a sensory experience evoking the inherent therapeutic properties of clay. Those who may choose not to participate but observe, may notice how ClayBox evolves and changes through the duration of play. Different marks, patterns, or landscapes may emerge. Remnants from a previous player may be used by a later participant from a new perspective. Ultimately, I aim for an unspoken language of play to occur through the material.

Logistically, ClayBox would function best outdoors due to its potential messy capacity. I imagine viewers will remove their shoes and socks to play in ClayBox and wipes will be provided to wash up after play.



Children engaging with loose parts and sensory play. Contributed photo.

Specifically, this proposal is inspired by the pedagogy of Simon Nicholson's loose parts play theory. Developed in 1970, Nicholson claimed that in play, loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. They are materials with no specific set of directions that can be used alone or combined with other materials. Encouraging children to use resources as they choose can provide a wider range of creative play.

In childhood, children are exposed to loose parts play in environments such as a typical playground sandbox, the woods, even modern day videogames are representations of this type of play theory. ClayBox attempts to directly embody these experiences. Posing the questions: What is the exact purpose or nature of play? What is our relationship with play after childhood? How do adults and children navigate a shared language of play? Loose parts, toys, and manipulative objects are instrumental pieces of a child's play experience and I



argue can be for adults as well.

I offer ClayBox as a communal gathering for healing one's inner child. So much of patriarchal norms are ingrained during childhood. Blue and trucks for boys, pink and dolls for girls. This project will give folks of all ages and genders the opportunity to explore and engage with a material that will evoke the memories and experiences of childhood play without the constraints of gender and age norms.

The materiality of clay holds the most significance as a method of community gathering. Across histories, clay has been the source for community engagement



Mini ClayBox example from a school in Tasmania. Contributed photo.

and healing. Terra cotta clay is the most widely available clay and like all clays has therapeutic usage.

Some of these therapeutic qualities include: Tactile gratification, tactile contact (1) — the first form of communication we learn as infants — is a very primal mode of expression that offers connection between brain and body. Holistic experience (2), creating with clay is a physical-sensual-mental experience. The physicality and limitless potential for creativity engages our muscles, fine motor skills, vision, and imaginations. We are simultaneously allowing unprocessed feelings to shape the clay while making detailed decisions about which direction we'd like to take our piece. Conscious and unconscious expression (3) Making art is an extension of ourselves. Through it, both our conscious and unconscious ideas and desires are expressed. Clay is tangible, changeable, under our control in a world that often feels out of our control. Connection to cultural histories and ancestry (4), when we engage with clay we also engage with all of those who have come before us and used the same material. Clay has been and will be an integral material for preserving cultural histories. Release of aggression (5) hard to hurt clay! It needs to be muscled to get it where it wants to be. Meditation (6), and lastly community (7).

ClayBox can be tied to the writings of bell hooks that “healing does not take place in isolation” and how even in present day scenarios we are all held captive under sexist, exploitative, and oppressive systems. The take away of ClayBox is to build and repair community from within the self; and give opportunity to honestly love the self and others through play. NOTE: ClayBox is copyright of Cate Solari and may not be reproduced without permission.

Cate Solari is an Artist-In-Residence (visual arts discipline) at EC-CHAP; Director of the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery; and Adjunct Professor, School of Fine Art, at the University of Connecticut. Cate can be reached at: communitygallery@ec-chap.org

Thoughts on Songwriting

By Calendula

Recently I've been thinking critically about the motivation that fuels creativity; all the different ways ideas take form, and then how they are expressed. The creative process itself is something I'm very familiar with, but I'm always surprised how the experience changes with the context of each creative project I take on.

For example, over the past year and a half, I've created music in a couple different ways: writing songs alone for my solo project, Calendula, and writing with my partner Jeff for our band, Moonbasket. Before this I only ever wrote songs alone, and while I still love coming up with tunes that are wholly mine, I find there to be something uniquely special about collaboration with a partner, or a group.

When I'm on my own, I find that I'm limited to my own perspective — and while this is freeing in many ways, it also affects the development of the song to a certain extent. I can write what I know how to do — and I'm better at doing some things than others. What I create tends to follow direction of where I've come from, and what I've been listening to. When I write in collaboration with someone else, it's like all these new paths crop up as possible directions for a piece. I know my partner's strengths, and he knows mine, and together we're able to make something unique that neither one of us would be able to come up with alone and might not have been able to imagine otherwise.



Then bringing a song to the rest of the band, it transforms into something else again. While the basic structure of the song stays the same, the overall effect of the piece changes when a bassline and drums are added. Although we give them some direction, our bassist and drummer are great musicians who have been able to contribute their own original ideas for the groove. Solidifying that groove can completely change the energy of the piece, and it's exciting to hear that transformation take place.

This isn't to say that writing a song alone doesn't have its merits. It's convenient to write on your own, and nice to have that sort of creative control that doesn't ever have to bend to another thought if you don't want to. Writing on

your own is also a great way to build skills that might make you a better collaborator in the future. I don't know if I'd be able to write with someone else if I didn't already have the experience of writing on my own.

I've also noticed how writing with Jeff for Moonbasket has influenced my solo songwriting. In my upcoming album, Loveletter, which will be premiered at The Packing House on May 21st, I feel like I've been able to expand the boundaries of my songwriting a bit, to include other instrumentation and style, that still fits into the folk genre, but sort of toes the line to something else.



Moonbasket.

Contributed photo.

There's something a little indescribable about the whole process of songwriting though. Sometimes you'll struggle to make any progress, and then sometimes it just all falls into place, regardless of whether or not you have a collaborator. I like this quote by Paul Simon, in response to being asked if he's still more interested in what he discovers rather than what he invents, when it comes to his songwriting process:

“Yeah. It's like you're wandering down a path and you don't know what the destination is. Somewhere, toward the end, you can sort of see what the destination is and you can understand what the journey is about. At which point, if I want, I can go alter some of the things that occurred to set it up. But usually I don't. It usually just goes along as a story that I'm telling, and I'm a listener, and at a certain point I say, “Oh! That's what it's about.”

Abigail Golec is an Artist-In-Residence (music discipline) at EC-CHAP, advancing her singer-songwriter project under the musical moniker Calendula. Abigail can be reached at: AIR-Music@ec-chap.org

SAVE THE DATE!

Friends of the Mansfield Library

SUMMER BOOK SALE

June 11th Saturday – 9am to 4pm
June 12th Sunday – 9am to 3pm

Mansfield Public Library
Buchanan Center

54 Warrenville Road (Rte. 89)
Mansfield CT

5,000+ books
Credit Cards accepted

What Not to Reveal, What to Reveal, and When to Reveal It

By Felix F. Giordano

This month's topic will cover novels, specifically novels in a series. I've written five novels in the Jim Buchanan Series which are in the mystery/suspense/thriller genres. I'm currently working on the sixth novel, *Montana Ripper*. As a novice writer in 2007, I assumed that you had to explain everything to the reader. Consequently, there were many pages and many chapters in my first manuscript, *Montana Harvest*, more than 500 pages worth and nearly 100 chapters. If I needed to make changes to the manuscript, it was tedious to edit and difficult to keep track of what happened when, who said what, and where it occurred within the manuscript. Outlining can only help so much.

I had the opportunity and privilege of attending six years of writing classes taught by gifted professor, Jordan Pecile (Fulbright Scholar, head of the English Department at the US Coast Guard Academy, script writer for PBS and CPTV) who convinced me to condense my unwieldy 500-page manuscript of *Montana Harvest* into two books. The second book became *Mystery at Little Bitterroot*. The process of converting that original manuscript into two 300-page books resulted in the identification of two distinct plots, one for each novel. I then filled in the gaps for each plot in both stories.

Through my writing connections, I was introduced to a renowned local published author/poet/editor, Eileen Albrizio (radio news host and broadcast journalist for ABC and NPR News, and two-time winner of the Greater Hartford Arts Council Fellowship for Poetry) who reviewed my manuscripts and provided me with detailed edits. She explained that I revealed too much to the reader and that I didn't have to reveal every single minute detail. As a result of input from both Jordan and Eileen, I was able to not only pare down the length of my original manuscript but I was able to eliminate some entire chapters.

That streamlined both novels and allowed me the luxury of not having to show every character's response to everything that occurred in the novels. By not having revealing everything, you provide the reader with a hint of suspense and even wonderment at what may happen next. By excluding certain events, such as scheming by the antagonists, your readers can closely identify with the actions of your protagonist. By not knowing what the antagonist plans, both your protagonist and the reader will be in the dark, as they very well should be in a mystery/suspense novel.

What Not to Reveal:

In *Mystery at Little Bitterroot* I wrote a flashback scene at the beginning of the novel where an antagonist murdered a woman and left her corpse to rot in an abandoned farmhouse. The skeletal remains were then discovered in present time by the sheriff protagonist. My editor, Eileen Albrizio asked me why I revealed to the reader who the murder victim was, who the murderer was, where the murder took place, and how the victim was murdered. I thought they were necessary for the plot to be complete. Eileen told me the plot would be more impactful if the reader learned of the remains when they were first discovered by the sheriff. I eliminated the murder scene and rewrote the scene where the sheriff finds the remains. Because of that rewrite, throughout most of the novel readers only knew that the woman had disappeared. It was not until the sheriff stumbled upon the remains near the end of the novel that the reader realized a murder had taken place and subsequently, who the murderer was.

What to Reveal:

One item that you need to reveal to the reader is obviously, the plot. If your plot involves a crime, begin the novel with either the actual crime in progress or the discovery of the crime's aftermath by the authorities. Develop the plot so that your readers follow along with your protagonist's investigation. Have your plot build in intensity so that by the end of your novel it results in a climax. It will engage the reader and will not only make your novel interesting but also exciting. Your readers will be immersed in a true page-turner.

Another item that you want to reveal is introducing your characters even if they've been presented to the reader in a prior novel in the series. Each character in each novel must be treated as if it were the first time they are introduced to the reader. Not everyone will have a chance to read all your prior novels or perhaps even remember every one of your characters. Having said that, what every writer needs to do is keep paper or electronic notes or files of their characters' physical descriptions, mannerisms, quirky dialogue, friends and family relationships, home addresses, occupations, etc. That way your characters are consistent from novel to novel. In other words, authors who write novel series must construct and maintain a personal profile of each recurring character in their novels. Think of yourself as the director of personnel in your novel series. Instead of keeping track of employees in a corporate organization you are maintaining complete profiles of your novels' characters.

When to Reveal It:

Getting back to *Mystery at Little Bitterroot*, the time to reveal it (the skeletal remains) obviously was when it would produce an "ah-ha" moment. That is, immediately after the reader realizes that something is about to happen due to the build-up of suspense. You want to take your readers' breath away. In the case of *Mystery at Little Bitterroot*, that build-up of suspense is when the sheriff protagonist searches the farmhouse for evidence regarding the use of the building as an illegal bootlegging storage facility. Outside, he notices a number of windows on one floor of one side of the farmhouse but one less window from inside the farmhouse. He then finds a false wall at the rear of a closet and breaks through to find a ladder that leads up to a hidden room. When he enters the darkened room, he comes face to face with the skeletal remains which then released the woman's spirit from her earthbound imprisonment. The ensuing shock of the specter rushing past him causes the sheriff to fall backward until he hits the wall of the hidden room, and then drops his flashlight. If early in the novel I had revealed to the reader who the murder victim was, who the murderer was, where the murder took place, and how the victim was murdered there would be a false sense of suspense to the reader. The reader would then have known how the entire series of events would transpire from the moment the sheriff suspected there was a hidden room. Not revealing this beforehand allows the reader to share in the suspense that the protagonist experienced. That allows the reader to identify with the protagonist.

Whatever genre you are writing in and whether it's a short story or novel, you always want to have that "ah-ha" moment in your manuscript.

We defined "What Not to Reveal, What to Reveal, and When to Reveal It" 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 4 million pages of his books read by Amazon Kindle Unlimited subscribers. His website is jbnovels.com.

Mr. Giordano also chairs a Saturday writers group and presents a monthly lecture series at the Willington Public Library. Please call (860) 429-3854 for more information.

Next Month's Topic: When to Write

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

Willington Library News

Submitted by Debra Linares

Saturdays are for Science - w/Mrs. T. Grades 3-5
Classes are 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. Limited space available. Please call 860-429-3854 or come in to sign up. Balancing Act: May 28th. We will answer the questions: Why do things topple over? How can a skyscraper NOT topple over? What is the center of gravity? Where is your center of gravity? How can you keep yourself from falling when you are tackled on a football field? Can you really pick up that chair? Why do tightrope walkers carry a pole? Take home: balancing birds

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 8, 2022 - On Saturday, May 7th from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm, The Willington Public Library & Friends Jewelry and Bake Sale. The Friends of WPL will have their Annual Mother's Day Bake Sale, which is always filled with a selection of delectable treats. Take home assortment and enjoy or buy for gifting to that special someone you will be celebrating. The Library will also be selling jewelry that was created and donated by local artisan, Marilyn (Midge) Makuch, from TBG at Dragonfly Studio, in Willington. Come see a beautiful array of necklaces, earrings, and bookmarks made from beads, shells, stones, gems, and a variety of crystals. Gift now or save for a special time to come.

Thursday, May 19 at 6:30 pm - Author Marty Podskoch, Book presentation and Signing. Power Point Book presentation and book signing by author, adventurer, and historian Marty Podskoch and his book, *The Connecticut 169 Club: Your Passport and Guide to Exploring Connecticut*.

The travel book encourages travelers to visit all of the towns and villages of our beautiful and unique state. He created it to be a guide and a passport. Podskoch got someone from each town to write a short description highlighting their town's location, history, and interesting places to visit. Come and learn more about how to participate in this great adventure!

WPL Museum & Attraction Passes - For our year 2022, we now have 18 passes that will take you to 28 different destinations. Anyone with a current and valid library card from any surrounding library, will be able to borrow them. Each pass is good for three days. You may reserve by calling ahead of time at 860-429-3854. Go to our website at www.willingtonpubliclibrary.org and check on the individual pass(es) you are interested in borrowing.

Every month at the Willington Public Library, we have a Monthly Drawing to help raise money for the library. Each month holds a different theme and surprise you can win. Tickets are sold for \$1.00 during our regular times opened which are Monday and Wednesday, 11-5, Tuesday and Thursday, 11-8, and Friday and Saturday, 9-3. The winner is informed by phone, on the first of the following month. May is a Basket Full of Scents (flowers, soaps, and candles) donated by Howling Winds Homestead.

Sound Healing Meditation with Reiki Master Teacher and Sound Healer, Edie Jemiola and the use of crystal alchemy bowls and voice toning, to bring patrons on a stress-reducing and rejuvenating meditation journey. The Community Room provides ample space for patrons to lie down. Please be sure to bring a yoga mat, pillows, blanket or lounging chair. Regular chairs are available for those who prefer. Feel free to bring a journal. Class is 7:00 - 8:00 pm. Upcoming Dates: Th. May 12, Tu. May 24, Th. June 9, Tu. June 21, Th. July 14, Tu. July 19.

Paws & Read with Willow - Sign up to join us on the third Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m. to read with Willow. Willow is a Therapy Dog with "Cold Noses, Warm Hearts". She knows that when you keep trying to do something (like reading or becoming a therapy dog), you will get better and better. So, be a super reader with Willow! Children who are reading independently can sign up for a 15-minute reading slot by calling the library at 860-429-3854 or by stopping by the Circulation Desk to register ahead of time. Willow loves listening to stories just like you!

An adult must accompany the child and may wait nearby while the child is reading but does not need to sit in on the actual session. If you cannot make your session for any reason, please call us to cancel so we can open up the spot for other children, as spaces are limited.

When the weather is nice, we will be enjoying the warmth and sunshine outside. Otherwise, we will be in the Library Reading Room.

Upcoming dates: Saturdays, May 21, and June 18, 2022

Art and Garden Tour of Northeastern Connecticut

Saturday and Sunday, June 11 & 12
10 am to 5 pm

Submitted by Suzy Staubach

Visit 11 artists' gardens displaying the works of 17 professional artists in the beautiful northeastern hills of Connecticut. Enjoy paintings, sculpture, ceramics, woodwork, photography, woodblock prints, gourds, jewelry and other works of art in gardens in Ashford, Coventry, Mansfield and Willington. The gardens, which vary in style, include a handmade greenhouse, a wildflower meadow, a stone arch, paths, terraces and an abundance of flowers, shrubs, vegetables, trees and herbs. Art work, much of it horticulturally inspired, will be available for purchase. Individuals, families and groups are welcome. This self-guided tour is free.

For more information and a map, please visit our website:
ArtGardenCT.com

Ashford

Shimizu Woodcuts, 210 Hillside Road

A sweeping meadow of wildflowers overlooks a large beaver pond. Intimate spaces include ever-evolving perennial gardens, stone walls, a terrace and sculpture.

Host Artist: Lynita Shimizu creates boldly colored woodblock prints using the water-based method of Japanese mokuhanga (woodprint). She prints on paper made in the mountains of Japan. Her airy studio overlooks her garden vista.

Willow Tree Pottery, 24 Bebbington Road

Set in an old hayfield, this is a blowsy, overstuffed cottage garden. There are arbors, informal hedges, stone benches, an armillary, and a Szalay hummingbird print on the kiln shed. You are invited to sit or wander.

Host Artist: Suzy Staubach, garden historian, writer and potter makes sturdy yet elegant pottery including bowls, mugs, platters, casseroles, garden bells, tiny houses, finials and more.

Guest Artist: Barbara Katz, an award-winning ceramic artist, creates ceramic sculpture and pottery, including spirit houses, cat and kitten mummies, large vessels and other pieces for the home and garden.

Guest Artists: Gretchen Geromin and Lauren Merlo collaborate on handmade cutting boards and garden signs that Lauren makes from local trees. Each piece is enhanced with Gretchen's wood burned art. Gretchen will create a rock garden with her painted rocks for the Tour.

Windowhaven Studio, 179 Varga Road

These lush perennial gardens are designed as a place of refuge and inspiration. There are spots to sit, observe and enjoy. Stone walks, a whimsical garden lantern and other accents bring joy.

Host Artist: Debra Gag paints flowers, landscapes and farm scenes in oil. She is inspired by the local countryside and her own gardens.

Coventry

Barbara Timberman Watercolor Paintings, 1194 Main Street

The casual grace and charm of this cottage-style garden welcomes visitors into an enchanting world of colorful flowers, vegetables, berry bushes and herbs. A beautiful handmade greenhouse anchors this hillside garden.

Host Artist: Barbara Timberman creates exuberant water color paintings and hand bound journals. Her detailed paintings focus on plants, often complimented with a manmade object.

Guest Artist: Kathleen Lepak's calligraphic artwork and illustrations illuminate and enhance words that inspire and engage. She strives to make language come alive to the eye as well as the mind.

Storrs/Mansfield

Fenton River Studio, 287 Gurleyville Road

This is a highly original garden with a dozen sculptures and brightly colored cast cement leaves. There are peonies, Iris, poppies, a koi pond, and fairy houses surrounding an old button factory on the Fenton River.

Host Artist: Shauna Shane works in oil, pastel, watercolor and sculpture. Her subject matter includes landscape, still life, figures and animal subjects. She has been an inspiration and mentor to many Connecticut artists.

Flying Dragon Farm Studio, 533 Chaffeeville Road

The summer gardens are filled with the greens and reds of kale and tomatoes and bold, clown colored zinnias. Gold fish bask in the aquaponics greenhouse.

Host Artist: Mary Noonan creates oil paintings, watercolors and encaustic paintings of landscapes, flowers and animals. Also, fairy house planters and stenciled planters.

Khuyay Farm, 441 Warrenville Road (Route 89)

Here alpaca graze in the fenced pasture. Perennial borders (newly renewed after a fire) enhance the farm.

Host Artist: Janet Dauphin creates fused glass night-lights, dishes, and window art in brilliant colors and exciting forms.

Guest Artist: Nora Charters' canvas and paper prints celebrate the small farms, woods and people of the softer moodier side of the Quiet Corner.

Kim Bova Photography, 597 Wormwood Hill Rd

A mix of flowers, herbs, veggies and berries feed birds, butterflies and humans fill this garden surrounded by Joshua Trust Trails and Parks.

Host Artist: Kim Bova creates photographs of the natural world of her surroundings including florals, landscapes, still life and places she has traveled.

Scott Rhoades Studio, 422 Browns Road

Ellie Rhoades' show-stopping garden artfully combines plants and structure. Paths, fences, a pool, and terrace grace these picture-perfect grounds. And there's a must-see stone arch!

Host Artist: Scott Rhoades' acrylic paintings are predominantly representational in style. His subjects, are based his experiences and travel: the wilderness, weathered barns, historic buildings, people and animals.

Willington

Holes in the Woods, 17 Lustig Road

Acres of wildflowers, numerous flower beds, and a half-acre pond grace this garden. Two miles of moss-covered trails weave through woods. There are ferns, mountain laurel, streams and bridges.

Host Artist: John C. Starinovich creates functional sculpted, mirrored, wall hung tree holes with adornments. Working with downed trees, he uses hand and power tools for these avant garde works of art that are best seen and felt in person.

NC Bunnell Studio, 12 Red Oak Hill

The show of flowers comes to life as spring melts into June in Nancy's garden. A fishpond, a quiet stream, towering rhododendrons and dogwoods create a sense of sanctuary. The established gardens feature lily, Iris, ferns and many varieties of perennial flowers.

Host Artist: Nancy Bunnell works in acrylics and pastels. Her imagery ranges from impressionist formal realism to energetic experimental abstraction.

Guest Artist: Aline Hoffman creates gourd art, birch paintings on textured paper and pyrography on wood. She cuts, pierces, paints and sands dried gourds to create her unique sculptural art.

Guest Artist: Midge Makuch uses kumihimo, French and Viking knitting, wire wrapping and wire weaving to create necklaces, bracelets, earrings, rings, pet jewelry, wire trees. She often includes stones from Indonesia in her work.



COME JOIN US!

**QUIET
CORNER
FIDDLERS**

Is there a violin in your home hiding under a bed or tucked away in a closet somewhere? Are you an active player or has it been many years since you played? The Quiet Corner Fiddlers are seeking new members and we would love to have you join us. We meet on Monday evenings to play jigs, reels, waltzes and traditional fiddle tunes. If you are interested in joining us, please email Bernie Schreiber for further information at b.schreiber@snet.net.

Traditional Music in Connecticut's Last Green Valley



Spring bunnies found while doing yard work.

Dennis Pierce photo.

Willimantic's wonderful 3rd Thursday Street Fests are back!

By Jean de Smet

We're looking forward to seeing your smiling faces and dancing feet on May 19th, and every month through September.

This season, we're opening the street up to High St. This means another stage with music, new food vendors and restaurants, and more space between us for safety. What a fantastic musical lineup we have in May, including new and old music: Gypsy Funk Squad, classical guitar, Goza, Eleventh Section, the Kingpins, Bruce John and the Dinosaurs.

There will be lots of children's activities along with belly dancers, the ACT school performers, and BLUE DOT FEAST IN THE UNIVERSE Parade.

Food ranges from BBQ to vegan, Syrian to Thai, and you can wash it down in the Beer and Wine Garden or with a Hosmer Soda. How about a Cupcake for dessert? Or fried dough, ice cream or cookies?

Vendors and crafters can't wait to see you shopping again. Jewelry, photography and Tupperware—we have it all.

A grant from the Leo J. and Rose Pageau Fund allowed us to expand and to produce another stage. We need to match the grant, so we need your help, too. Please send a check to WRI, PO Box 866, Willimantic 06226. www.WillimanticStreetFest.com or see us on Facebook.

Windham ARTS May Events

Submitted by Bev York

May 7 "Blooms: April Flowers Bring May Flowers" Exhibition at the Coffee Break Gallery. Artists display their paintings, photography, and sculpture for show and sale. Meet the Artist reception is Tuesday, May 17 at 6:30 to 8. Hours: Saturday and Sunday from Noon to 4 p.m. and by chance. East Brook Mall, 95 Storrs Road. Mansfield CT. Sponsored by Windham Arts. Exhibit runs through May 29. director@windhamarts.org

May 21 Liber TEA "The Signers of the Declaration of Independence" 4 p.m. Samuel Huntington Homestead Museum in Scotland Sponsored by Windham Arts and the America Museum. Come earlier to visit the museum. Donation. director@windhamarts.org

May 25 Painting Poppies in the Park. Remember the Soldiers. Learn about the significance of the poppy for Memorial Day and create a painting on canvas. Memorial Park on Main and Watson Streets. 6 to 8 p.m. Bring chair and easel or small table. Other supplies provided. \$23. per person. Rainedate is May 26. must pre-register at WindhamChamber.com. Sponsored by The America Museum. 860-423-1878 director@windhamarts.org

June 4 A Slice of Life: The Gilded Age! Living history in the Windham Area. 10 to 4 Watch for schedule of events and locations. Sponsored by the Windham Region Partnership of Arts and Culture director@windhamarts.org

Brother, Have You Got a Dime?

By Gary Bergquist

Gunther looked at the phone in his hand. Kenny Young, the last name in his contact list. After this call, he was finished. With each call, he felt his fingers getting thicker, more reluctant to press the keys. He felt the same heaviness in his heart. He pressed “Call.”

The phone rang eight times. That was so Kenny – laid back.

“Hullo.”

“Kenny, this is Gunther. Got a minute?”

“Gunnie! Been a while. What’s up?”

“I need to ask you a favor. You’re not in the middle of anything, are you?”

“No, no. I’m free. Actually, I just got off the phone with Barb. We were talking about you. She’s worried.”

“Barb called you? I asked her to not tell anyone about our call.”

“Well, that’s Barb – never could keep a secret.

But Gun, she’s your sister-in-law. She cares about you. She says you lost your job. What happened?”

“Kenny, I didn’t lose my job. I left it. I had to.”

“Why? Your job is perfect for you. It’s the dream job I wish I had. It’s been your life...”

Kenny paused. Gunther knew what he was thinking – since Jenny died. Kenny wasn’t wrong. Gunther had buried his sorrow from losing the love of his life by immersing himself in work. His job was no substitute for Jenny, but the long hours distracted him while he healed. He was still going through the jerky process of embracing the memories of Jenny while letting her go. Saturdays, he would stop by the market to pick up a steak, a six-pack, a sweet potato, and a lottery ticket for dessert. The routine was his ongoing indulgence to Jenny’s memory.

Kenny broke Gunther’s train of thought. “Were you fired?”

“No. Nothing like that. It was my decision to leave.”

“But why?”

“Let’s just say my past caught up with my future, and my luck ran its course.”

“What do you mean?”

“Kenny,” I’ll tell you what I told Barb. I had to leave my job for reasons I can’t disclose. But now I find myself in dire financial straits. That’s why I’m calling, Kenny. I need some money, which I’m hoping you can lend. I can’t tell you why I need it, so I’ll understand if you say no, but I need to ask.”

“How much do you need?”

“\$5000,” Gunther said. “Hopefully, I can pay you back within six months, with interest. But I can’t guarantee it.”

“5000 bucks?! And you won’t say what it’s for?”

“No, I can’t. Can you do it, Kenny? Will you lend me \$5000?”

“When do you need it?”

“Tomorrow if possible.”

Kenny was quiet. After a while he said, “Gunnie, I think you’re one weird, crazy guy, but I’ve always loved that in you, and I trust you. So, sure, I’ll lend you \$5000. Missy may have a fit and say I’m nuts, but she’ll get over it; she loves you too. Stop by tomorrow afternoon and I’ll have the money for you.”

“Thanks, Kenny, I will. Bye.”

Gunther disconnected. His hands were shaking.

In the last few hours, he had forever altered the course of his life and the lives of those around him. Two-thirds of those in his contact list had refused his “crazy” request. After speaking with each of them, he had deleted their names from the list. It was cold-blooded but he had no choice. This was his new life.

Four days earlier, he had been sitting at his kitchen table. He was enjoying the last few bites of his Saturday steak and nursing his third beer while the television kept him company. He mechanically reached for his lottery ticket as the local news program wound down and the lottery announcer came on. By the time he had the ticket in front of him with his pen out, two numbers had already been drawn.

“... 27 ... 9 ...”

Gunther looked at the ticket. There, on the ticket, were 27 and 9. He felt a shiver across his shoulders and up his neck. He thought of Jenny.

“... 42 ... 17 ...”

The numbers were on the ticket. He felt Jenny’s presence. He felt her warmth. At the same time, he knew his mind was slipping and he was relapsing.

The beer. It had to be the beer. He dropped the ticket, turned off the TV, poured the rest of the beer down the kitchen sink, and went to bed.

The next morning, as Gunther was fixing his coffee, he saw the lottery ticket on the table. Snippets of the previous evening came back to him. He picked up the ticket. Four of the numbers were circled. Holy cow! Maybe it wasn’t a dream. Gunther took out his phone and punched in the lottery web site from the ticket.

All the numbers were there! It made no sense. It was impossible. In his hand was what appeared to be a winning lottery ticket. Moreover, the site confirmed there had been a single winner in the drawing the night before. The winning ticket was in his hand.

Gunther felt his knees go weak and found himself gasping for breath. He sat down at the table and stared dumbly at the ticket and his phone. The site announced the winner was from his state. It was a record amount for the state, \$475 million.

Unlike most lottery players, Gunther had never toyed with thoughts of what he would do if he won. He knew the likelihood of winning was essentially zero. He had played the lottery only because Jenny insisted. What was an indulgence to Jenny had become an indulgence to his memory of her.

Oddly, his first thought was to quit his job. The job was such a big part of his life that he thought he loved dearly, but there it was. In the naked light of day, he saw the job as a chain around his neck. It had to go.

Gunther had read stories of lottery winners. The common theme seemed to be that they burned through the money in short order. In the process, they destroyed their lives. He opened the contact list on his phone and called Charlie, his high school buddy turned lawyer who had helped Gunther and Jenny draw up their wills and close on their home. He set up an appointment at Charlie’s office for Monday.

“Charlie, anything I tell you in this office is confidential, right?”

“Of course, Gunther, unless you tell me you’re going to kill someone. Then I might contact the authorities, depending on who it is. Why? Who are you planning to kill?”

Gunther tossed the lottery ticket on the table. “Charlie, I won the lottery and I need to know what to do.”

“What?!! You’re kidding! That’s nuts! I saw on the news the winning lottery ticket was sold at the Busy Bee market, and I thought, ‘Why wasn’t that me?’ Now I know. It was you. Good god! What are you going to do?”

“That’s why I’m here. I don’t know what to do.”

Charlie stared dumbly at Gunther. “Wow. Let me think.” He rubbed his chin and looked out the window of the office. Finally, he shook his head slowly, turned to Gunther and said, “You’re screwed.”

“What do you mean? I just won the lottery.”

“Gunther, in this state you can’t remain anonymous if you win the lottery. When you claim the jackpot, you must come forward for the world to see. Once you do that, your life will never be the same. Opportunists will appear out of the woodwork looking to capitalize on your good fortune. They’ll beg you for money with heart-breaking sob stories; they’ll offer you investment opportunities with Nigerian princes; they’ll ask you to support charities, or to help pay off school loans or their kid’s wedding. You be everyone’s best friend.”

“And what’s wrong with that?”

“In addition to the emotional drain of constantly playing King Solomon to the financial problems of those around you, you’ll never again be able to tell a real friend from a fair-weather friend. You’ll never know whether they care about you or your money.”

“Charlie, what do you suggest I do?”

“As I see it, you have three choices. One, you go public, take the money, say goodbye to all your friends, and put bars on the windows of your mansion to keep away the money grubbers. Two, you run the lottery ticket through a shredder and go on with your life.”

“And three?” Gunther asked.

“Three, you give it to me.” Charlie chuckled.

“Yeah, I should have guessed number three.”

Gunther sat quietly for a while, pondering the options.

“You say I won’t be able to tell real friends from fair-weather friends. What if I could gauge now, before cashing in the ticket, which of my friends are true friends?”

“How?”

Gunther looked down at the ticket, then slowly raised his eyes to Charlie. “What would a true friend of mine do if I was in desperate need of money and asked to borrow some? Suppose I called you and asked for \$5000. Would you give it to me?”

“Gunther, as long as you’re holding that ticket, I would do anything.”

“No, Charlie, I mean if I called you yesterday, before you knew.”

On Tuesday, Gunther quit his job. On Wednesday, he started making calls. On Thursday, he went to the lottery office with Charlie.

Three weeks later, Gunther sent checks to everyone remaining in his contact list. For those offering to lend him the \$5000 he begged for, he sent checks for \$5 million. Though he had never actually collected the \$5000 loans, he figured the interest on the loan was more than fair. He hoped no one would be knocking at his door for a handout.

*Gary Bergquist is a local freelance writer. His latest book is scheduled to be available from Amazon this summer: *Becoming What We Watch, Television’s Unintended Legacy.**

Speak Up Against Racism

Submitted by Rhonda Kincaid and Ruth Gordon

Have you ever been in a situation where someone said something racist and you didn’t know how to respond? For some, speaking up is easy to do. For others, these conversations can be uncomfortable or awkward. SpeakUpAgainstRacism.org is a new website that provides support and information on effective ways to speak up. The resource page gives guidance and includes short engaging videos about unconscious bias and institutional racism.

The idea for this website started after we’d invited some new acquaintances over for dinner.

During our meal, one of them made a racist comment. We were shocked. Unfortunately, we froze and didn’t say anything. Afterwards, we were distressed that we’d each let our discomfort override our conscience. We knew our silence sent the message that the comment was okay.

We are two retired women who spent their professional lives working in non-profit substance use and mental health organizations. If we found ourselves at a loss for words, we figured others could, too. We wanted to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. So, we made a commitment to speak up against racism, and created this website to encourage and motivate

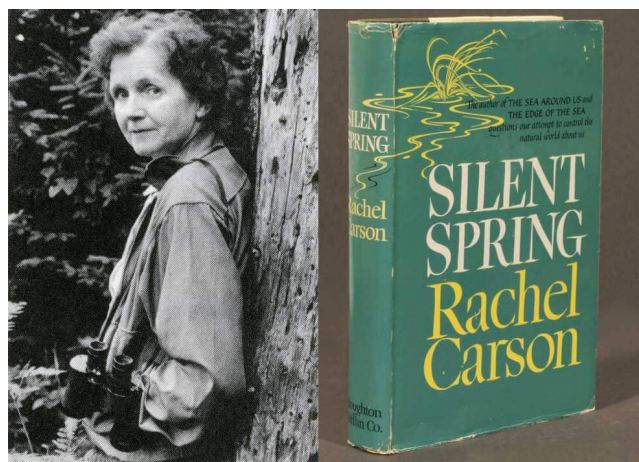
others to do the same. The website’s message is Don’t Let It Slide - Ignoring Racism IS Racism.

The website has free graphics to download for lawn signs, posters, decals, magnets and more, or these items and T-shirts can be purchased via a link to Signs Plus in Willimantic. We don’t benefit in any way.

We hope people will spread the word and speak up against racism. A shout out to Charlotte’s Web Designs in Hebron for helping make this possible.



The Wisdom of Rachel Carson: Place and Purpose in Education



By Donna Dufresne

Rachel Carson, scientist, writer, and mother of the environmental movement, drew attention to the catastrophic effects of DDT in her book *Silent Spring* in 1962. Her dystopian prologue captured the minds and hearts of a new generation of biologists and ecologists. Armed with statistics from her meticulous research, she fended off the henchmen of the petrochemical industry on national TV. Although they publicly belittled and tried to discredit her, she stayed the course with a matter-of-fact sensibility. Her scientific investigation of DDT had proved the pesticide was causing the near extinction of raptors, the birds of prey at the top of the food chain. It took eight years after Carson's death in 1964 for the government to ban DDT. By then, the seeds of the environmental movement sown by Carson had taken root. A hybrid variety of speakers for the Earth had matured into environmental lawyers and scientists who worked to pass the Clean Air and Water Acts. The petrochemical industry was put in its place. At least for a moment.

Most people today know of Rachel Carson from Earth Day celebrations, where she is touted as the writer of *Silent Spring*. A marine biologist by training, Carson wrote three bestsellers about ocean life: *Under the Sea-Wind* (1941), *The Sea Around Us* (1951), and *The Edge of the Sea* (1955). After writing *Silent Spring*, Carson began her swan song, *The Sense of Wonder*; it was published posthumously in 1964. Perhaps due to her impending death from breast cancer, the book is a retrospective look at her life's work, which changed the way we interact with the environment. She advised parents and teachers, "It is more important to pave the way for the child to want to know than to put him on a diet of facts he is not ready to assimilate." It was her last gift to the world. Perhaps it is time to unpack that gift and return to teaching a sense of place. After thirty years of high-stakes testing and an emphasis on regurgitating facts, our education system has replaced curiosity and wonder with disengagement and intellectual apathy.

In *The Sense of Wonder*, Carson wrote about the importance of nurturing a sense of place and connection to the Earth. Her eloquent writing about developing a sense of connectedness to the environment became the ecosystem of my own teaching. As an environmental education specialist and a classroom teacher, I know that forcing my students to ingest a diet of seemingly random facts is an exercise in futility. If they have never waded in a tide pool or marveled over the biome of a forest floor, there is no place for the seeds of knowledge to take root. Without a sense of place or connection, facts, whether scientific or historical, become impotent—the barren seed of our discontent.

Carson wrote: "[I]t is not half so important to know as to feel. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow."

But Carson was after more than a sense of wonder. She knew that without a deeply empathic and emotional connection to the places we call home, the web of life would unravel one strand at a time until nothing was left. Developing a sense of place engenders a desire to protect, a sense of community, and purpose. Place-based learning may sound nostalgic, but it is much more than a return to the halcyon days when we brought our students into the woods armed with magnifiers and journals. Place-based learning is bound by rigor, relevance, and purpose, a sister to project-based learning and driven by standards. It becomes a partnership in which the students interact with their environment from ecosystem to ethos as they learn how the shape of the land has shaped their history. Depending on the project, students might establish lasting relationships with people and places from the past and the present, a local lens through which to better understand the world.

No-cost Trainings for Job Seekers with Invisible Disabilities/Neurodivergent Conditions

By Michelle Baughman

The State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities' grantee, Grit & Flow, is providing the following on-line Zoom trainings at no cost to Connecticut job seekers with invisible disabilities as part of its two-pronged approach to address the unemployment and underemployment rate of this population. Invisible Disabilities are certain kinds of disabilities that are not immediately apparent to others and that are primarily neurological in nature, hence, neurodivergent. It is estimated that 10% of people in the U.S. have a medical condition or developmental disability which could be considered a type of invisible disability. Examples of Invisible Disabilities include Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Tourette's, Cerebral Palsy, PTSD, OCD, Acquired Brain Injury, among others.



The second prong of Grit & Flow's approach is to provide no-cost trainings to Connecticut Job Developers and Vocational Counselors who serve this population. This training teaches them how to encourage employers to reap the benefits of hiring a neurodiverse workforce; something Grit & Flow knows a great deal about, because they employ many talented neurodivergent individuals. If you are a Job Developer or Vocational Counselor who has not already received an email invitation to those trainings and would like to attend, please call Dr. Tiffany Jameson or Ivan Stanojkovic at Grit & Flow to register: 949-751-6795.

However, Connecticut residents with invisible disabilities or neurodivergent conditions, whether or not currently working with a vocational counselor or an organization like BRS/DORS, and whether or not currently employed, can participate in these trainings, and can register directly through the Grit & Flow website: <https://www.gritandflow.com/ccdd-gritandflow-jobseekers> or through the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZAqfuGrqTwwHNQAGDnJeR6M-CfT6roPv2Zd> If you need any assistance with the Zoom online training platform or if you have any questions, please contact Kenny@gritandflow.com or call: Kenny Kiesselbach at 949-751-6795.

LinkedIn 101

LinkedIn can be intimidating. Join us to learn step-by-step how to create your LinkedIn profile and the five must-have profile sections, and the necessary ingredients for a professional online presence. Understand the importance and necessity of maintaining a highly visible and positive online representation of yourself using this essential tool for modern job seekers.

First Offering:
When: Monday, April 25th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern
Second Offering:
When: Tuesday, June 14th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern

The Power of Networking

What is networking? Chances are, you are networking almost every day without even realizing it. Learn how to build productive relationships with the people around you – and how to reach out to professionals to gain referrals and connections. Understand why most jobs are not obtained by responding to job postings, and how you can use the "hidden job market" to your advantage.

First Offering:
When: Monday, May 2nd,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern
Second Offering:
When: Tuesday, June 21st,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern



Buddha's Bees Apiary

Wildflower Honey

www.buddhasbeeshoney.com
860-786-8670

Elevating Your Job Search

Take your job search to the next level! Learn about free online tools to help you filter your job searches to match your interests and salary goals, and even find out what people are saying about what it's like to work at that company you're thinking of applying for. Will that job be a good fit? Lastly, see how you can utilize your professional network to gain informational interviews and job opportunities.

First Offering:
When: Monday, May 9th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern
Second Offering:
When: Tuesday, June 28th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern

Making Your Resume Stand Out

Lay the foundation for a strong resume using free resume-building tools, then make it into an attractive representation of your abilities. Little or no work experience? No problem. Learn how you can still make a strong impression with limited background. Understand the different styles of resumes and how to identify which one is best for you and the job you're looking for.

First Offering:
When: Monday, May 16th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern
Second Offering:
When: Tuesday, July 7th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern

Understanding Job Applications

Job applications can be tedious, and many jobs are competitive. Instead of spending all day filling out applications, learn how to play the "numbers game" and send large numbers of job applications quickly and easily to maximize your chances of getting a call back from an employer. Learn how to use 'easy apply' tools to your advantage, as well as the dos and don'ts of filling out traditional applications.

First Offering:
When: Monday, April 23rd,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern
Second Offering:
When: Tuesday, July 12th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern

All Things Interview

Interviews are nerve-wracking. But what if you knew what questions your interviewer was going to ask before your interview? We will show you how to effectively answer the most commonly asked interview questions and even how to research questions that specific organizations might ask using free online resources so that you can anticipate and prepare. You'll also learn important interview etiquette, as well as what to do before, during, and after your interview. When it comes to interviews, knowledge is power.

First Offering:
When: Monday, May 30th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern
Second Offering:
When: Tuesday, July 19th,
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Eastern

VETERANS
FREE MEDICAL RIDES
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By Focus on Veterans, Inc.

The Neighbors paper
A little paper
Big on community

No Mow May

Article created by The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation - Xerces.org

A lush, green, weed-free lawn has historically been center stage in American landscaping. It tells the whole neighborhood that you are a competent, hard-working, contributing member of society. Dandelions and an overgrown lawn are a sign of neglect, incompetence, and laziness—or so our culture would have you believe.

Americans have a love affair with lawns—maintaining roughly 40 million acres, or 2% of land in the US, making them the single largest irrigated crop we grow. Lawns require frequent mowing, raking, fertilizing, weeding, chemical treatment, and watering—sucking up time, money, and other resources. Not only are lawns burdensome for the people maintaining them, but they also provide little positive benefit to wildlife, and in fact are often harmful. The traditional monoculture lawn lacks floral resources or nesting sites for bees and is often treated with large amounts of pesticides that harm bees and other invertebrates. When we think of habitat loss, we tend to imagine bulldozers and rutted dirt, but acres of manicured lawn are as much a loss of habitat as any development site. Re-thinking the American lawn can take a variety of forms from reducing mowing frequency or area mown to permanently converting lawn to a more diverse and natural landscape.

Do More by Doing Less

Mowing your lawn less creates habitat and can increase the abundance and diversity of wildlife including bees and other pollinators. One way to reduce mowing is by participating in No Mow May. No Mow May is a conservation initiative first popularized by Plantlife, an organization based in the United Kingdom, but which is gaining traction across North America. The goal of No Mow May is to allow grass to grow unmown for the month of May, creating habitat and forage for early season pollinators. This is particularly important in urban areas where floral resources are often limited.

In 2020, residents of Appleton, Wisconsin, an affiliate of Bee City USA, became energized about No Mow May and the City Council agreed to suspend their weed ordinance for the month of May. Over 435 registered property owners participated in the campaign, and Lawrence University, an affiliate of Bee Campus USA, partnered with Appleton to conduct research on the impact of No Mow May on pollinators. Researchers Israel Del Toro and Relena Ribbons collected data on the abundance (the number of individuals) and species richness (the number of species) of flowers and bees found in unmown yards of a subset of the properties participating in No Mow May. They then compared those numbers to the abundance and richness of flowers and bees found in nearby urban parks that are regularly mowed. The findings were impressive! Not only were the abundance and richness of bees higher in the yards of properties participating in No Mow May, but they were way higher. Participating yards had three-times higher bee species richness and five-times higher bee abundance than nearby parks that had been mowed. This study was published in 2020 and is available for free download online. Empowered by their success in 2020, Appleton has spread the word and attracted even more participants in 2021.

Other studies have investigated how reducing the frequency of mowing throughout the growing seasons impacts bees. In a recent experiment conducted by Susanah Lerman, a research ecologist with the USDA Forest Service's Northern Research Station, Lerman and her collaborators explored whether different lawn mowing frequencies influenced bee abundance and diversity. The team mowed herbicide-free suburban lawns at different frequencies (every week, every other week, and once every three weeks) in Springfield, Massachusetts. The results of their study found bee abundance increased when lawns were mown every other week. Mowing every three weeks resulted in more than double the number of flowers available in lawns (mainly dandelions and clover), and increased bee diversity—yet lowered overall bee abundance versus the every-other-week strategy. The researchers hypothesize that, while the three-week mowing cycle left more flowers in the lawn, the length of the competing turfgrasses made

the flowers harder to find. Lerman and her colleagues documented a staggering 93 species of bees, with supplemental observations bringing the total number to 111 bee species—nearly a quarter of all bee species native to the area!

The efficacy of reducing mowing may be expanded upon by altering the composition of your lawn to include more flowering species. A “bee lawn” may include Dutch clover (which captures nitrogen and helps feed the lawn) as well as other low-growing flowering plants such as creeping thyme (*Thymus* spp.), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), and others. Some plants, such as native violets (*Viola* spp.) may already be present and should be encouraged as they are valuable host plants for fritillary butterflies. For more information about creating a flowering lawn please see the resources at the end of this blog.

In addition to benefiting pollinators, reducing mowing frequency will save water, help your lawn become more resilient to drought, and reduce emissions from gas-powered lawn equipment that often lacks the emission reduction equipment found on larger engines.

Go Lawnless

Lawn certainly has its place. It provides a perfect platform for kicking a ball around, provides “accommodation” for the needs of pets, and can be used to define space in landscape design. But how much lawn do you really need, and to what standard must it be maintained? Do your kids need a perfect, weed-free lawn to play on? Do you really need

to measure your lawn in acres rather than feet? In addition to reducing the amount you mow—think about reducing the amount of lawn that needs mowing. In place of that lawn, consider planting a rain garden, pollinator garden, or wildflower meadow—or replacing your turf grass lawn with native lawn alternatives.

What About Weed Regulations?

Most cities and municipalities have some form of weed ordinance that dictates the height and sometimes even the types of plants a homeowner is allowed to grow. Unfortunately, many of these ordinances are woefully out of date and out of touch with the modern movement towards creating yards that support wildlife in urban settings. While local ordinances will vary greatly from place-to-place, here are a few tips for keeping local officials, and your neighbors happy:

Maintain a mowed buffer. Yes, after spending a considerable amount of time discussing the problems with lawn, we are suggesting you keep some—strategically. Keeping a mowed edge in front of or around a natural planting of a foot or two may be all that's needed to define “lawn” from “garden” and keep you in step with local ordinances or Homeowner Association guidelines. Maintaining a tidy mowed edge also makes a busy natural planting look less overwhelming, and makes these spaces look intentional rather than neglectful.

Engage with your city council, health department, or other local officials. Tell them what you are doing, why, and begin a conversation about how they can support natural landscapes in their community.

Suggest an “opt-in” program, such as a Natural Lawn Registration program to sidestep the need to re-write a health code ordinance. Under such a model, a homeowner may register their natural landscape with their local health department. The health department can then decline to fine registered properties as long as they are maintaining the natural landscape properly and not encouraging the spread of noxious weeds.

Educate your neighbors and passersby about your landscaping choices. Displaying a simple sign designating your yard as pollinator habitat can be the difference between it being seen as a neglected area to people viewing it as an important part of a thriving landscape. Xerces offers downloadable signs for No Mow May and you can receive a pollinator habitat signs as a thank you for your donations through our gift center.

Music We Can Work With: Worksong Workshop and Concert with Bennett Konesni



Farmer-Musician Bennett Konesni. Contributed photo.

Submitted by Rosetta Fisher

Farmer-Musician Bennett Konesni will return to Hampton to lead a worksong workshop and give an evening concert on May 11 at Organic Roots Farm at Popover Hill at 147 East Old Route 6. Bennett has devoted his life to learning and sharing songs that help get work done, from field hollers to sea shanties, from herding calls to lumberjack anthems, and has been featured by NPR, the New York Times, The Library of Congress, and on the Ted talk stage. He tours internationally and has shared the traditional music of the United States as a Special Envoy for the US Department of State to Mongolia and Ukraine. Bennett last performed in Hampton in 2007 after completing a Thomas J Watson Fellowship. He is the grandson of Rad and Leila Ostby, previous owners of Popover Hill Tree Farm, so this is sure to be an interesting and powerful evening of music in Hampton.

The workshop will begin at 5pm and Bennett will lead songs as the group works on a project that is yet to be determined – stack firewood, pick rocks, plant tomatoes, etc. at Organic Roots Farm, now owned and operated by Sam and Rosetta Fisher. Bennett will take time to discuss how to make music happen at your own farm or homestead during everyday activities like stacking firewood, weeding the garden, or doing the dishes. This will include a discussion of where to find songs, what types of songs work best, and how to convince reluctant friends or family members to join in.

After about an hour, the group will take a break to share food. The farm will be cooking up some farm fare for those interested in having supper with us. The farmhouse supper will feature the All-American classic “Sloppy Joe” made with local grass-fed beef and accompanied with Baldwin Brook Farm artisan farmstead cheese selection of smoked gouda and pepper jack, served on a bed of mixed spring greens, pickled purple onion, and our own brown sugar mustard glaze. The classic will be served with farm-made egg potato salad, maple-bacon baked beans, and a peppered coleslaw. Dessert selection will feature an array of homemade pies, including our signature spring rhubarb custard, and farm fresh homemade ice cream from Lapp Valley. This supper will be available for those attending either the workshop or concert and will be served at approximately 6pm. The cost of the meal will be by donation. A portion of the proceeds from the workshop and concert will go to an organization that means a lot to the Fishers, Working Hands Ministries; a local non-profit start-up in Hampton that aims to share the love of Jesus by providing free labor and assistance to the widowed and elderly with home repair and maintenance, enabling them to stay in their homes while not being gainfully employed.

Tickets are available at Bennett's website, www.worksongs.org, and are on a sliding scale with \$30 suggested for either the concert or the workshop, or \$50 for both. Or buy a family ticket for \$100 and bring all the kids. That said, people should pay what they are able to afford, and no one will be turned away for lack of funds. This event will be held rain or shine.

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

Open the windows and bathe in the night air
the crowds long ago put to bed.
The smell gathers around my reaching and invites me to watch
as it moves seductively through waiting trees.
The dance beyond beautiful
the rhythm rich in a tempo that is unguided
yet pure in its intent.
I watch as the fabric that surrounds our emotions
tangos with the new night visitors.
Moonlight finds your hair
and the winds toss it in my direction
the patterns are sweetly intoxicating.
Shadows become our partners
and we find magic in the simplicity
of moving through the night
without looking beyond just this...
just so beautifully this.

Poem and photo by Wayne Erskine.



Life Gets Tough

I know it's so because life's lessons
taught me so

And yet, this I also know

To fear not the darkness

When dawn lights the way

Know that forever, my friend,

And you'll be okay

Poem by Wayne English

Mansfield Historical Society Museum Opening Day

Submitted by David Landry
MHS President

June 5, 2022 1:30PM-4:30PM Mansfield
Historical Society Museum,
954 Storrs Road

This year our main exhibit will look at how the poor were supported in Mansfield from the 1800s to the 1930s. It will focus on the Mansfield Poor House, the Connecticut Soldiers' Orphans' Home, and some of the federal social programs and public works projects that assisted Mansfield's needy during the Great Depression. There will also be an exhibit that recognizes the Stearns family and their Mountain Dairy business. This year marks the 250th anniversary of when Boaz Stearns and his family settled on Chestnut Hill in 1772.

Local musician Bruce John will perform from 1:30-3:00. Admission is \$5.00 and visitors are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to be donated to the Mansfield food pantry. The museum is open on Saturday and Sunday, 1:30-4:30 p.m. through the end of September. mansfieldct-history.org

Top Shelf Gallery News

Submitted by Janice Trecker

The Top Shelf Gallery's May-June show, "Paintings by Jane Collins," features colorful landscapes and florals in oil and watercolor.



Firmly based in the Quiet Corner since she graduated from UConn, Collins' paintings reflect her love of all things rural, especially barns and flowers.

"My husband and I have been organic gardeners for decades. Each summer we grow, freeze, and can enough produce to feed our family for an entire year. I also grow flowers to use as subjects for my paintings."

Collins says that her art education did not end after her stint at the University of Connecticut School of Fine Arts. She has continued studying with many working artists in the area, including Shauna Shane, David Lussier and Foster Caddell. She does bright, but realistic landscapes, influenced by the Post Impressionists and the brilliant colors of Matisse.

Collins' work frequently appears in regional juried shows, and a number of her barn paintings appear in the permanent collection of Eastern Connecticut State University. While her landscapes are usually in oil, she paints flowers in watercolor, to capture their fleeting beauty before they fade.

Besides her actual art work, Collins has also been active in the larger art community. She was a founding member of the Northeast Connecticut Art and Garden Tour, as well president for two years of the Artists' Open Studios Tour of Northeast Connecticut.

Her studio is open by appointment, at janewallor@gmail.com

Local author Janice Law has embarked on a modest self publishing program. *The Falling Men*, a contemporary novel with strong mystery elements set partly here in Eastern CT, is now available on Kindle, along with *The Complete Madame Selina Stories*. She has also issued reprints of two groups of short stories, *The Man Who Met the Elf Queen*, three fanciful short stories and four illustrations, and *The Dictator's Double*, three short mysteries and four illustrations, available from Apple Books. Covers and digital illustrations for the short stories were done by the writer.

Rare Radio Audio Brought into 21st Century

By Morgan Cunningham

It's a project that took me back to 1969.

Quite literally.

I run a small business in which I convert people's physical media into digital files for contemporary and easy preservation of decades-old memories and information. Most commonly, I convert people's home videos and family photos. Pretty run-of-the-mill.

But, at times, items of greater interest do pop up, and I'd like to write about some

of them—and, yes, I get permission from my clients before doing so.

Dan Ingram was one of America's biggest radio DJs and personalities of all-time. He was best known for his run at 77 WABC—an influential top-40 radio station out of NYC. A lesser-known fact: he worked in Connecticut radio before WABC—at WICC (Bridgeport) and WNHC (New Haven).

Ingram's years at "Musicradio 77" lasted 1961 to 1982. During that time, he had a front-row seat to major cultural developments, including the Beatles arrival and emergence in America.

Naturally, a radio geek myself, I was amused to get a cassette tape recording of Ingram's broadcast work from a client of mine.

Let it be noted, though, it wasn't just your average recording of Ingram doing his show on WABC-AM.

I'll explain.

We're talking about a recording of one of Ingram's "back-up" or "stand-by" shows.

In other words, in the event WABC had issues at its Manhattan studio facility, the engineer at the New Jersey transmitter site would play the "stand-by" show until the issues were resolved (note:

radio studios and their tower site(s) are not typically at the same location—as is the case in this story).

It should be further noted, quickly, that most radio stations today no longer have the staffing or resources to handle such contingency plans, making this "time capsule" even more fascinating.

During the show, apparently

prepared sometime in 1969, Ingram jokes about how the show was recorded in advance of unforeseen technical difficulties and makes cracks about issue repair times, while playing popular hits from the late '60s. Ingram

even makes a quick crack about WABC-FM, a fledgling station trying to gain an audience before the FM boom that came in the 1970s (WABC-FM later became WPLJ-FM, for those familiar with NYC radio).

The recording I'm talking about sounds like it was recorded off AM radio, suggesting that at some point there was an issue causing the tape to be played—and someone was lucky enough to record it off the radio. It remains a mystery what the studio issue was and exactly what the date was when it happened.

The audio was obviously recorded on a reel and copied onto my client's cassette.

Wow, just a cool project all around—chock full of history!

A graduate of Eastern and a current radio news anchor, I'm always happy to discuss media preservation at Morgan@DigitizeAndDone.com.



Song-A-Day Scholarship

Submitted by Ruth O'Neil

The Song-a-Day Music Fund is pleased to Offer Its Annual Scholarship to a Graduating Senior Pursuing further study in Music.

This scholarship is open to all students graduating from an area secondary school who are planning on further study in music following graduation. Homeschooled students are welcome to apply. Deadline to Submit an Application is June 1, 2022.

This year the scholarship is in the amount of \$250. The Scholarship Recipient will be announced on or about July 1, 2022.

To obtain an application, contact scholarship@songadaymusic.com or call 860-742-6878.

The Song-a-Day Music Fund is operated by the Song-a-Day Music Center and is committed to supporting practicing and emerging musicians.

For more information on, or to make a contribution to the scholarship or the Song-a-Day Music fund contact the:

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www.songadaymusic.com
Ruth O'Neil, Director

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Upcoming Scheduled Movie Dates and Titles

May 6, 2022: *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944) 95m. Sydney Greenstreet and Peter Lorre make a marvelous team in this exhilarating and atmospheric film noir the "Daily Variety" hailed as "one of the most brilliant crime dramas yet filmed". Directed by Jean Negulesco and written by Frank Gruber, based on the 1939 novel of the same title written by Eric Ambler.

June 3, 2022: *The Captive City* (1952) 91m. A small town newspaperman's investigation turns up a web of organized crime. One of several early 1950s films to capitalize on the Kefauver Committee's investigation into illegal activities, "The Captive City" stars John Forsythe (Bachelor Father, Charlie's Angels, Dynasty) as crusading small-town newspaper editor Jim Austin. Directed by Robert Wise.

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4.25.22 We spent a couple hours at Meriden's beautiful Hubbard Park. Work crews were busy getting ready for the weekend's annual Daffodil Festival. In top photo Mirror Lake is in the foreground and Castle Craig high above. Karen King photos.

NO - MOW MAY

A World-Wide Movement

In North America almost 1 in 4 native bee species is in peril. Lawns left to let small plants (weeds) flower provide food for bees emerging from hibernation. A study in Wisconsin found that No-Mow May lawns had 5 times more bees and 3 times more bee species than frequently mowed lawns and parks (Del Toro & Ribbons, Peer], 8, 2020).

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