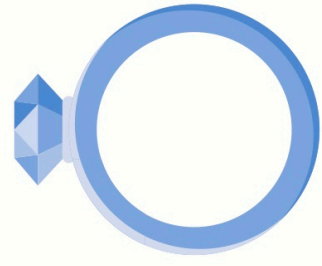


Fancy
date



Save the
date



Due
date

At every age and every stage, **Live Well.**

Change doesn't need to be scary. We are experts at guiding our clients in our *Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well* process. We're the strategic partner you need to move through every stage of life with confidence.

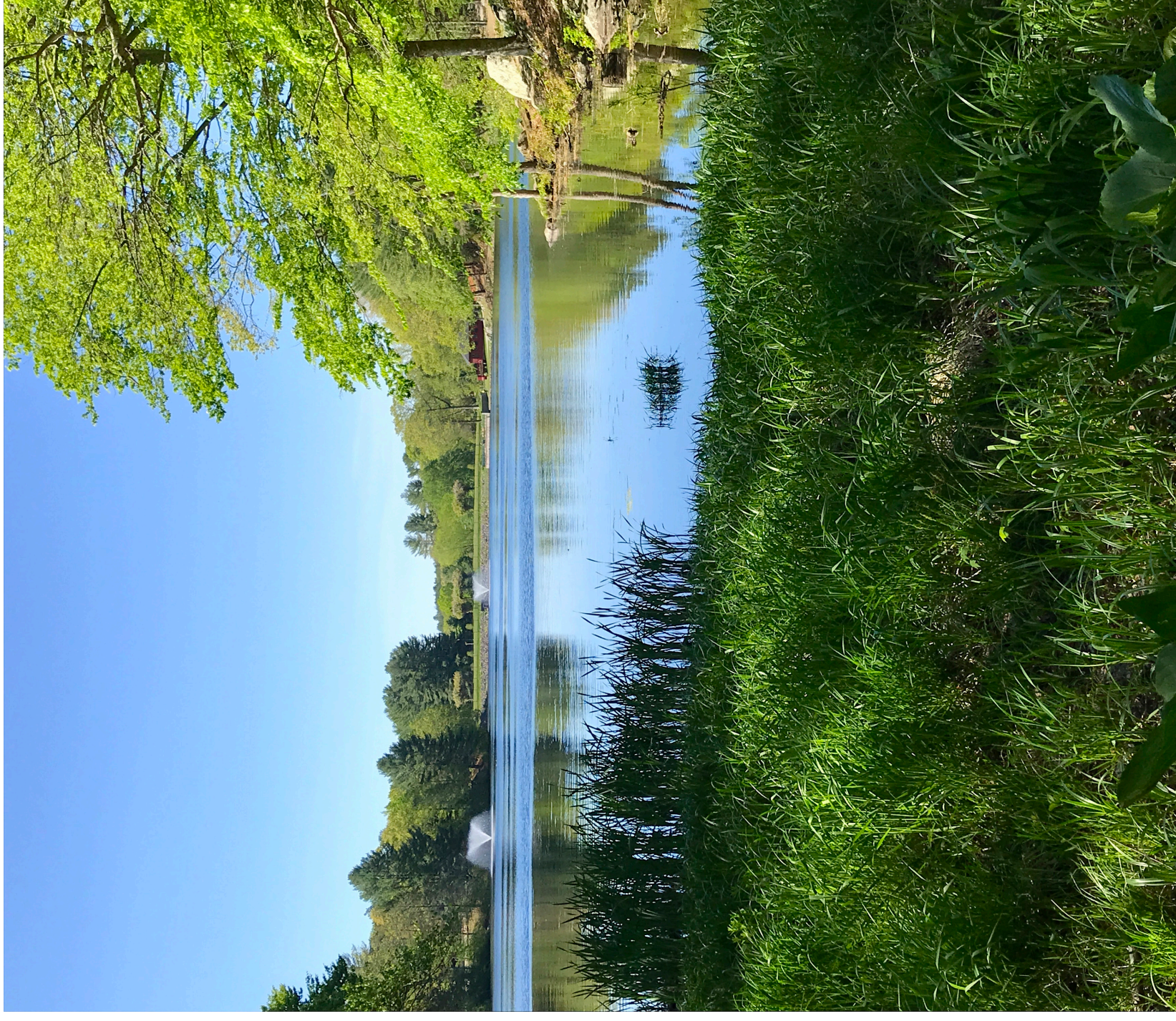


Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™

whzwealth.com | (860) 928-2341 | 697 Pomfret Street, Pomfret Center, CT 06259
Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network,[®]
Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Advisor.

NEIGHBORS

JUL
2022
FREE



No. 209 Serving the inhabitants and environment of northeastern Connecticut and beyond

Dear Readers-

It is with great sadness that I inform you of the passing of one of our most beloved writers, Mark Svetz. We are greatly saddened at his passing. This issue of *Neighbors* is dedicated to Mark. He was not only a great writer, he was a great human being. You could feel the love he had for his community and its inhabitants in every article he wrote. Mark loved us all and we loved him back. That's the way life should be. Please read Loretta Wrobel's beautiful article (opposite page) and two re-prints of Mark's articles in this issue. Mark may be gone from our midst, but through his writings, we can still hear his voice. T. King

Editor's note: Below is the obituary Mark's wife, Sarah Winter, provided.

Mark Svetz passed away on June 17, 2022, just a few days past his 70th birthday. He was born in Torrington, CT the son of Henry J. and Joan Duffy Svetz. Mark grew up in Harwinton, CT where he lived until his son Gregory was a year old, and they moved to Willimantic. In Willimantic, Mark graduated from the University of Connecticut with a degree in history and later attended Eastern Connecticut State University to earn his teaching certificate.

He is survived by his wife and the love of his life, Sarah Winter; His son, Gregory J. Svetz and daughter-in-law, Elizabeth and his most cherished granddaughter, Miriam J. Svetz to whom he will be forever Nonno. He is also survived by his brother, Michael Svetz and sister-in-law Betty Jo of VA; his niece Amanda and nephew Ross. He is grieved by his brothers- and sisters-in-law, Bob and Nancy, Hugh and Rosemary, Bill and Jean, Dan and Mary and their children.

Mark's heart was as expansive and loving as his brain was keen and quick. He was open to people, regardless of their station in life. His death leaves a hole in the fabric of life of Willimantic and beyond.

As a teenager, Mark saw value in identifying and living by an ethical code. Over the years he turned to his code as a template by which to shape his actions. Among other ideas his code included kindness and compassion. He wasn't afraid to speak his mind and considered his life an open book.

From 1974-81, Mark worked as a journalist for the Willimantic Chronicle and The Norwich Bulletin. He continued his journalistic work in publishing the Windham Phoenix (1985-87) with Mike Westerfield and was a regular contributor to Neighbors Paper. Mark worked as an ESL educator at the Center for English as a Second Language at Eastern Connecticut State University and Quinebaug Valley Community College.

In the community, Mark was active in many ways, often working alongside his best friend, Tony Clark. With the ACLU, Mark and Tony successfully sued the city of Willimantic winning a permanent injunction against a Loitering Ordinance. Mark and Tony worked with the Windham Land Trust to bring fair and secure housing to Willimantic residents. He worked with PROP (Puerto Rican Organization Program), organizing the Celebration of Differences in Willimantic. Mark also started the Willimantic Needle Exchange alongside Tony. Starting with a simple drive to Brattleboro to purchase clean syringes these steady friends saved countless lives in our town by exchanging dirty syringes for clean when the AIDS epidemic was rampaging through the state and

country. Their work was instrumental in bringing the CT legislature to legalize the purchase and possession of clean syringes by individuals in the state. In 1992, Mother Jones magazine awarded him the title "Local Hero" for his work.

Mark and Sarah moved to New York City in 1993 where he worked as Education Coordinator for Community Access, a consumer driven mental health agency. Moving back to Willimantic in 2004, he worked with Sarah as they ran Clothworks, manufacturing and retailing hemp clothing



Spring 2022. Leigh Duffy and Mark Svetz enjoy conversation at the Willimantic Food Co-op cafe. The cafe is open again after being closed for the pandemic. Photo by Sarah Winter.

and bags.

Mark was born with polycystic kidney disease. In 2011, a stranger, who would later donate a kidney, was introduced to him. Forever thankful for the gift of life, his gratitude ran deep.

Mark loved Sarah deeply. He was a shining example of how communication and respect can make a relationship glow with an astounding light. For all who knew and loved Mark, please hold his memory and actions in your hearts.

On our cover: Photo of Spaulding Pond in Norwich taken by Ingrid Treiss of Lebanon.

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

Neighbors No. 209, July 2022
P.O. Box 430
Ashford, CT 06278
phone: 860-933-3376
email: neighborspaper@yahoo.com
website: neighborspaper.com

Tom King, Editor & Publisher
Dagmar Noll, Calendar Editor
Steve Woron, Mac Guru
Marisa Calvo, Graphic Design
Gary Kass, Copy Editor
Julie Engelke, Donna Caplette, Tom King, Circulation

Writers: Delia Berlin, David Corsini, Phoebe Godfrey, Bob Grindle, Bob Lorentson, John Murphy, Calen Nakash, Dagmar Noll, Dennis Pierce, Bill Powers, Mark Svetz, Tom Woron, Loretta Wrobel

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

Neighbors is published monthly by Neighborspaper LLC. Thomas A. King, member

Neighborspaper LLC is a member of the Ashford Business Association.

Neighbors is printed by Rare Reminder Inc. in Rocky Hill, Connecticut.



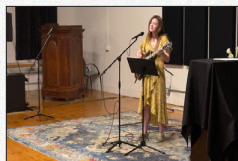
THE PACKING HOUSE
"An Intimate Listening Room"

Fall 2022
Save The Dates



MONTHLY EVENTS
Beginning October 2022

"TALENT SHOWCASE"



2nd
Wednesday

OCTOBER 12TH - 7:00pm
Call to Schedule: 518.791.9474

"EC-CHAP FILM SERIES"

3rd
Thursday

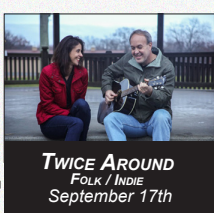


OCTOBER 20TH - 7:00pm

EC-CHAP
Eastern Connecticut Center for
History, Art, and Performance, Inc.

www.ec-chap.org

September 2022



WWW.THEPACKINGHOUSE.US/UPCOMING

THE PACKING HOUSE | 156 RIVER ROAD, WILLINGTON, CT 06279 | (518)791-9474

Remembering A Gentle Teacher

By Loretta Wrobel



This past month I was scattered about what to write. I jumped from subject to subject, as in my gut nothing felt right. When I heard the hard news of Mark Svetz's death, I knew that I had found the subject for my article. To me Mark was above all else a humble and gentle teacher. I decided to honor his beautiful soul and boundless heart by sharing some reflections. I felt compelled to discuss the ways his teachings have guided me.

Mark was a centered and loving presence who knew how to spring into action mode. Rather than stay in moaning and groaning about what is not happening, he used his creativity to devise solutions. He was not a man to look at an unfair situation and dismiss it with a flippant, "Too bad, but that is our world." He moved into action. I can visualize him thinking, Who can I talk to that will assist me in rectifying this situation or publicizing this inequality? He was not frozen in fear, consumed by anger and rage, or left overwhelmed by the immensity of the issue. No, he became energized.

This is an important lesson that I learned from Mark's life and the way he interacted with his family, friends and community. His bottom line was that community is essential and we have an obligation to do what we can to improve our connections to each other and our world.

How we view the world depends on where we look and how we gaze at our environment. If we allow all the horrible violence and traumas to close our hearts, and we shut down, we become a world of hopelessness and depression. I saw Mark as the ultimate activist who always was ready with a plan or idea or an eagerness to chat with someone about how to change it.

I always admired Mark's ability to move into the light and not stay huddled in the dark depths of despair. Certainly, there is a place for allowing what is happening to grab you. I am certain Mark got pulled down by all the suffering and pain in the world. However, he refused to stay there. It is so vital in our present world to not stay in that place. Staying only adds more negativity, and we shut down to what is really going on in our world, especially within our own local community.

Mark had the ability to engage and get you revved up about an issue. He didn't bear down on you and force you to shift your opinions. He just kept chatting with you and eventually you noticed you were excited and pumped up about the issue. You switched from disinterest, despair or nonchalance to beginning to grasp that much could be done about a particular problem. You may have walked away knowing you were no longer on the sidelines but had jumped into the fray. You were energized and involved, and most salient, you felt alive!

I can remember several of those chats with Mark at the Coop. I don't recall any arguing or defensiveness coming from him, just total listening. It wasn't always a shift of mindset for me; often it was gaining clarity. He frequently provided a missing piece or a different perspective that never failed to inspire me. As I write this, I realize it was an energy exchange that uplifted and enhanced my creative thinking. Talking is a simple act. Listening and engaging are true skills.

I understand how easy it is in these times to go down the rabbit hole. We have so much information and feel alone and lonely. When we are connected, all of that is transformed. The empty hole of feeling that all is lost and we can never get it back is a frightening place. When we move our gaze, we give ourselves the opening to see that all of the chaos becomes opportunities to engage with others. Engaging with others in concocting and developing innovative solutions allows us to feel worthwhile and motivated. No longer are we feeling alone, lonely or that it is all on our shoulders. We feel connected, part of a committed group, and mobilized.

As human beings we have unknown brilliance trapped in our miraculous brains. As human beings we are social creatures. We thrive on human encounters and sharing. If we don't receive enough human touch and interaction as a child, we fail to thrive. As adults we absolutely require meaningful connection or we fail to thrive. In addition to all of the aggression and craziness of our present world, we have endured the isolation and disconnection of COVID. All of us, desperately, are crying out for nourishing engagement with people who care.

Mark was one of those sweet souls who had endless energy to pour onto his community. I consider myself lucky to have been doused with that energy. I honor his ability to get past the roadblocks and move into helping others in a variety of ways. He had a bright smile and an ability to see you. When we feel seen, we have limitless possibilities. As a group of dedicated people, we know that anything is possible. When we are part of a larger community, we are stronger and able to achieve unbelievable results.

I was listening to talks by John O'Donohue, an Irish philosopher and poet, who spoke of the sun's generosity. The sun is not a prima donna, and easily shares its light with everyone and everything. The sun does not dole out more of its light for some and less for others. The sun shines without judgement. Anyone can receive the light, regardless of how rich they are, who they know, and how many degrees they have amassed. I see Mark as a sun. His light shone for everyone and it was there for all to take in to heal, help themselves and others.

It is now up to us to continue to share our light and to not be selective in hoarding our thoughts, strength, and creative energy. We have a fabulous role model who walked with us and gave us much wisdom. I will miss Mark Svetz. I am profoundly appreciative and grateful that he was such an integral part of our community and generously gave us so much. Thank you, Mark.

it's a great day for a subway!

2 STORRS LOCATIONS

125 N Eagleville RD & Storrs Downtown

EASTERN CAMPUS-WILLIMANTIC

33 High Street

To order ahead or get delivered to you by DoorDash

Go to SUBWAY.COM

and use the app

We also deliver through GrubHub & Uber Eats

Open late 7 days a week

LANDON TIRE... DOES MORE THAN JUST TIRES!

We specialize in...

- Brakes • Exhaust • Alignment Shocks
- C.V. Joint & Axles • Struts
- Front End Repair • Under Car Repair and More!

LANDON TIRE

39 Years of Hometown Service

YOUR INDEPENDENT TIRE DEALER

Just 2 Miles South of the New Thread City Crossing Bridge on Rt. 32, South Windham

RT. 32, SOUTH WINDHAM 456-0000 Mon.-Fri. 8-5:30; Sat. 8-1:30

SERVING YOU SINCE 1951

Largest Selection of Sewing Machines and Vacuum Cleaners in Eastern CT

Sales • Service • Parts • Accessories

WE TAKE TRADE-INS!

Schillers SINCE 1951

HOME TO ALL YOUR SEWING & VACUUM NEEDS

1088 Main Street
Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 423-6800
SchillersOnTheWeb.com

"Expert Repairs on all Makes of Vacuums and Sewing Machines."

"All Work Guaranteed-Free Estimates"

Try Our Famous 16" or Half 8" Grinders

Roast Beef	Cold Cut	Vegetarian
Capicola	Italian	Pepperoni
Tuna	Genoa	Liverwurst
Ham	Chicken Salad	
Turkey	Salami	

We Now Have Salads & Wraps

G.M. Thompson & Son's, Inc.

54 Middle Turnpike, Mansfield Depot

"Call Your Order In" 860-429-9378

Deli hours: M-F 9:30a-2:30p; Sat 10:30a-1:30p

Store hours: M-F 8:00a-5:30p, Sat 8:00a-3:00p, Closed Sunday

TRANSFER YOUR VIDEOS TO DVD

Update your audio to CD, and photos and video

COME AND SEE US!

THE GALLERY RECORDING STUDIO

All Work Done on Premises

860-528-9009

TheGalleryAudioVideo.com

Visit us.

8 Meadow Trail, Coventry

One block off South Street Behind the convenience store (cow painted on front)

Willimantic, Now and Then

The 4th in Willimantic - A Community on Parade

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

By Mark Svetz



Another summer is full upon us, and that means the Boom Box Parade, Willimantic's annual Fourth of July Celebration, will bring our collective community creativity and craziness out on the street for everyone to see.

Our Boom Box Parade, celebrating its 28th anniversary this year, has put Willimantic on the map all over the world. Eastern Connecticut has come to love this quirky parade where the people themselves are the attraction, and anybody with an idea can strut it publicly in the area's largest parade.

The parade always takes me back almost 30 years to an evening at the Victorian Lady, where a bunch of friends got together to make plans to avert another community crisis. We were all bummed; the Memorial Day Parade had been cancelled at the last minute because there were no bands available.

If memory serves me, the failed parade was organized by Jo Jo the Clown. Our community owes Jo Jo debt of gratitude, but we didn't feel that way at the time. Jo Jo the Clown was actually Joe D' Angelo, a local entertainer and a member of Democratic Town Committee. We used to joke that he was the only politician who admitted to being a clown! Jo Jo had lined up a few bands, but for one reason or another they didn't show up. I seem to recall that one of the bands marched in the Columbia parade. Why would they go to a small town for a parade instead of our wonderful City of Willimantic? Clearly something had to change.

My old friends Tony and Kathleen Clark had been members of a fife and drum corps for many years and they loved a parade. They also loved grass roots community action, and when the Memorial Day Parade fizzled, they had an idea the people could do a better job than the leaders.

Some nights later, over beer, stories and laughter, an idea was born. Kathleen had the idea that marchers in the parade could carry radios and WILI, our local radio station, could play marching music, letting our community march to its own tune. We were, after all, pretty much doing that already. Colin Rice, whose family owned the radio

station, and Wayne Norman, the popular and long-time morning DJ, loved the idea when we presented it to them.

This is where the words of Margaret Mead come into the picture. Starting with a handful of us at the Victorian Lady (a pub at the corner of Main and Walnut streets), and including the good folks at WILI, many people were caught up with the idea and worked hard to make it happen. Aside from giving permits and approvals where they were necessary, the "officials" of the town had little to do with making this parade happen.

Kathleen passed away in 2003 and Tony died in 2009. For me, the parade is an annual memorial service to these two extraordinary people whom I was fortunate to have as good friends for many years. I will miss them as I watch the parade and I will rejoice in having known and loved them through so many adventures.

Tony started putting together a tape, with marching music and other songs that could be played on the air and broadcast through many radios and boom boxes during the parade. I remember helping him find music for that tape, and how much fun Tony had making it. For many years Tony would ask only one question about anything I had done: "Did you have fun?" Well, this was a time when we all had fun, and the community is richer for it.

I can't remember all the people who were involved in getting this crazy idea off the ground. Certainly Kathleen and Tony were the main force. Colin and Wayne along with the rest of the WILI folks were instrumental in making it happen, which shows us how important locally owned media is. A lot of other people joined in; it was truly a grass-roots community event. And I am happy to say it continues to be that after all these years.

We were blown away by the turnout for the parade. I can say that I never saw the whole parade during those first few years because I was always marching it. Over the years I walked with a group of Union Street kids, the Willimantic Food Coop, various groups working in our community for peace and justice, and of course, sometimes, like many people I just walked in the parade by myself and waved to friends.

We worried at times there would be no spectators because everybody would be in the parade, which never really happened, although I think it might have been very cool if it had.

People sure did march in the parade, though. There was once a Cordless Drill Team. George Bush and

Dick Cheney were dragged down the street in a cage. Gov. John Rowland once pulled his suitcase in the parade. He was on his way to jail, I think. A shopper on stilts pushed a giant shopping cart down the street, heading for the Food Co-op, no doubt. There were the Traveling Fish Heads, mysterious legs under giant fish, growing through the years to include a school of baby fish and even a Fishwife. There is the giant gorilla with members of the Silverback Wrestling Club. There is always a wonderful array of creativity, sincerity and zany fun.

After some years I stopped walking in the parade because it was more fun to watch all the people go by. U.S. Rep. Sam Gejdenson threw potholders at us. People sprayed us with water guns. Many people threw candy at us. Main Street Café and Hosmer Mountain Beverage Company have given us soft drinks. Everybody, and I do mean everybody, has given us laughs, tears, inspiration and just plain fun.

In the weeks that followed that first Boom Box Parade (I think it was in 1986) I remember Kathleen showing us letters, with clippings from newspapers all over describing this unique, wacky parade in Willimantic, Connecticut. I recall one letter from New Zealand!

Mostly, what I love every year when I think about the Boom Box Parade, is this wonderful, wacky, ready-for-anything community! I have been involved in some crazy things here in Willimantic. From impromptu funeral parades in the middle of the night to celebrate the "death of the city" after consolidation with Windham, to selling pieces of torn up city sidewalks during the annual sidewalk sales, this community has been able to laugh at us and at itself through it all.

When I go to the Boom Box Parade this year, I will be enjoying my friends and neighbors. I will laugh at, and be inspired by, the wonderful people of this community. The parade has caught the imagination of the world, but it is the glorious human spirit that it represents that is unique and wonderful.

I will be celebrating that when I watch the parade.

Maybe I'll see you there. You're in for a treat if you haven't joined the celebration at the Boom Box Parade!

Editor's note: This article was re-printed from the July 2013 issue of Neighbors.

Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

The motor vehicle has been around for roughly 100 years. Many people were trying to build a motor-powered vehicle also known as a horseless carriage. Steam power was common because of the iron horse or locomotive. This was used in some of the first vehicles that people tried to build. I always remember seeing a picture of a sail boat with wheels. The 1920's is the time when the motor vehicle really took off. Roads were better and it gave people independence for their travel. The freight trains delivered to a freight yard where trucks continued the deliveries. The mail was delivered by motor vehicles and farmers delivered their products by truck. Yes, America moved on wheels and still does today. We all have seen what can happen when it doesn't.

Last month's article touched, I thought, on some interesting facts about EV's. The thing that bothered me was the meaning of charging stations. I keep on reading and hearing about charging stations. The fact is that the EV has its own charger onboard. The problem is that it needs a power source. This is where the plug in comes into play. Confused? I'll try to explain. Today's battery charger that some homeowners and repair shops have to charge a vehicle's battery has multiple settings, usually 2 amps to 40 amps. In the last article we mentioned that a 110 outlet can be used for a 24-hour charge to full 100% capacity this would compare to the 2 amps on today's battery charger. The higher the power source the quicker the EV's bat-

teries will charge just like the 40 amps on the battery charger mentioned above. This is where the word common sense comes into play. The 110 outlets in your house, apartment, condo, etc. has to have a 200-amp service. A qualified electrician should also inspect the wall outlet you plan to use to charge the EV to be sure that it is rated to be able to supply power to the charger on the EV. If you got past these 2 things now, we are up to the extension cord. You will have to have a heavy gauge extension cord. The length makes a difference too because the longer the cord the more resistance there is and the less power. The fourth thing is how many other people are drawing power off the electrical service in your area. Remember EV's are only one thing that you power with electricity. Your computer, phone, appliances, and anything else that needs electricity draws off your service.

The American people don't run their lives on a one shoe fits all theory. From the food we eat to the clothes we wear to our opinions on the directions of our future one size does not fit all. Please do the research on the next vehicle you buy. Remember the EV means the vehicle's power plant. This vehicle still needs tires, brakes, wipers, and the word maintenance.

Rick Ostien is the owner of Franc Motors in Willington.

Classic Soul Albums

I Never Loved a Man the Way I Love You
Aretha Franklin (Atlantic, 1967)

By Dean Farrell

By 1966, Aretha Franklin had a six-year recording history with Columbia Records. Though she occasionally waxed a number that presaged her Atlantic oeuvre (see "Lee Cross"), Aretha's Columbia sides were all over the place musically. Producer John Hammond seemed not to know what to do with his charge and had her record a little bit of everything. Some of it worked, but far too much was ill-suited to the young singer's churchy style.

But Jerry Wexler of Atlantic Records knew just how to play to Aretha's strengths. He signed her up in late 1966 and immediately sent her down south to record. The studio personnel included the always reliable Tom Dowd on engineering duties, King Curtis on tenor sax, Tommy Cogbill on bass, Chips Moman on guitar, and back-up vocals by her sisters Erma and Carolyn Franklin, along with Cissy Houston (Whitney's mother).

The Detroit-born Aretha mixed in with those Southern boys like gravy on biscuits. They hit the ground running with "Respect," a two-year-old Otis Redding song that Aretha converted into a feminist anthem. Next up is a gospelly take on the Ray Charles plaint, "Drown In My Own Tears," that challenges the original for

plunging the depths of human despair. Then we come to the album's title track, a heart-wrenching chronicle of destructive, cancerous love that plays out like a distaff answer to the Four Tops' "I Can't Help Myself." On "Dr. Feelgood," Aretha delves into Mississippi Delta blues. And the downtempo "Do Right Woman--Do Right Man" is as perfect a recording as was ever relegated to the B-side of a single. (The A-side was "I Never Loved a Man.")

On two tracks, Aretha pays tribute to her fallen friend and musical idol, Sam Cooke. She makes his party song, "Good Times," into a hand-clapper that would not be out of place at a Sunday-morning jubilee. And on "A Change Is Gonna Come," she uses the man's hopeful, introspective lyrics to create a secular sermon worthy of her father, the Reverend C.L. Franklin.

Atlantic released I NEVER LOVED A MAN THE WAY I LOVE YOU on March 10, 1967. Within weeks, it was #1 on *Billboard* magazine's Rhythm & Blues album chart and #2 on its pop survey. The title track was a #1 R&B and #9 pop single, while "Respect" hit #1 on both charts. Aretha had arrived and popular music would never be the same. Can I get an "Amen?"



Confessions of a Vegan Food Snob

By Mark Mathew Braunstein

As a teenager, I drove a Good Humor truck and spread joy throughout suburbia by selling ice cream to the little kiddies. Already a vegetarian, the day after I quit that summer job I became a vegan. That was 1970, when not even vegetarians knew the word “vegan” or its tenets. Fifty-two years later, I am delighted to be witnessing mainstream food products emblazoned with the word “vegan” on their labels. But I feel disheartened when that potentially nourishing food turns out to be nothing but junk food — for instance, cupcakes, which by omitting the dairy and eggs, then happen to be vegan.

Nearly two years ago, a cupcake bakery opened in my corner of Connecticut. I usually would have been oblivious to its existence because I studiously avoid consuming white flour and white sugar. As Marie A. meant to say, “Let them eat cupcake.” If people want to die by cupcake, that’s their choice, and not my concern. Yet, this particular bakeshop piqued my interest for four reasons. That it makes nothing but cupcakes. That so many people eat so many cupcakes. That it had remained in business during that critical first year when one out of four new eateries shuts down. And fourth and most remarkable, that all of its cupcakes are vegan.

Any omnivore who routinely patronizes this bakery may unwittingly be taking two steps forward — one for the planet and one for farm animals. In contrast, a vegan who typically shuns cupcakes but who makes an exception for this shop’s fare is consciously taking one nutritional step backwards. And for the vegan baker who instead could have been baking whole grain bread, hers was one tremendous step sideways.

Unless vegans keep tight-lipped about what passes their lips, they serve as ambassadors for a cause. While some vegan activists wear buttons or tee shirts imprinted with playful witticisms promoting their outlook on life, others betray their message by the pallor of their complexions or the width of their waists. Vegans who are passionate about their trendsetting diets have an opportunity to spread their message by presenting themselves as pictures of health. One potential path to looking and being healthy is to eat whole foods, not Good Humor ice cream bars. And not cupcakes laden with white flour and white sugar.

Eating out and ordering takeout are luxuries that I am affluent enough to afford and decadent enough to indulge. While I enjoy sitting home alone eating sprouts, I enjoy even more dining out with friends at vegetarian or vegan restaurants. Veg restaurants that serve only natural foods provide a special treat. Every time a new veg eatery opens or an old one expands, I rejoice for the veg movement’s success.

During the past decade, I have noticed a downward trend among some veg restaurants. I guess with increasing competition, to appeal to a wider audience they have allowed previously banished foods to creep into their kitchens. That should not trouble me, except that to make room in their pantries they have bumped the so-called health foods off the menu. In order of disappearance, the first to go has been tempeh. Whole grain breads and pastas were next. Even brown rice turned honkey white. As no restaurant can stuff food down their customers’ throats, they must bow to the whims of their patrons. If long lines form outside their doors, I am happy for their success. But with my favorite dishes dropped from their menus, I have dropped from their ranks. My absence is my loss, not theirs.

While salads may still grace their menus, I order dishes that I would never take the time to prepare at home, not dishes that I would never eat at all. At some veg eateries, deep-fried and pan-fried foods under clever codewords “crispy” and “seared” now predominate. Among those that serve alcohol, their wine and beer lists have grown longer than their lunch and dinner menus. Three years ago, a gargantuan vegan restaurant opened in nearby Providence. It hosts three separate dining rooms with three separate menus and, as though one were not enough, three separate

sit-down booze bars. But nary any fresh vegetable juices. It bills itself as the Matthew Kenney experience. I’m very content with just the unbranded vegan dining experience.

At some veg restaurants, mock meats have crowded out whole foods. Made with devitalized wheat gluten (whiter than white flour) or texturized vegetable protein (abbreviated and obfuscated as TVP that might as well be STP) or isolated vegetable protein (hexane-soaked bean derivatives that deserve to be isolated from your diet), mock meats are highly processed and fractured foods that have no place in any diet, whether vegan or not. Mock meats are alternatives not just to meat. They are alternatives to food.

For the sake of argument, let’s discuss just the nourishing aspects of food. From a strictly nutritional standpoint, real meat is more wholesome than mock meat.

Guided by my bias towards whole foods, I would prefer to eat meat seasoned to taste and look like soybeans than to eat soybeans manufactured to taste and look like meat. As a whole-foods vegan, I eat neither. What I do eat are soybeans that taste and look like soybeans.

By perpetuating the misbegotten myth that meat must dominate the dinnerplate, mock meats make a mockery of veganism. While it’s encouraging that some omnivores sometimes eat mock meat instead of the real stuff, it’s baffling when vegans imitate eating the very thing they profess to avoid. Mock meats are vegan foods for vegans who wish they weren’t.

Perhaps murky mock meats can serve as a transitional food for meat eaters who wish they weren’t. Brand new industrialized fake meats such as Implausible Burger and Beyond Beast and their several not-so-cheap imitations have gained footholds in some fast-food chains. Compared to its conventional Elsie-the-Cow Whopper at my local Murder King, the Impossible Whopper checks in at 31 extra calories and checks out at \$1.10 more. Despite prices higher than real meat, phony baloney meats are presently all the rage among curious foodies. As they hold the promise of weaning meat eaters off real meat, some food

journalists herald copycat meats as the dawn of a new age.

But wait! There’s another side to this con. For her recent PhD dissertation, “Swap the Meat, Save the Planet,”¹ Hannah Joy Malan crunched the numbers. At the dining halls of UCLA, where Impossible surrogate meats cost students on the prepaid meal plan no more than real meat, Ms. Malan’s research showed that while meat consumption dropped slightly, so did that of wholesome vegetables.² As a food fad, it had weaned almost as many students away from eating beets as from beef.

I hope that none of those former beet eaters were vegans. Eating facsimiles of meat that are not meat might be one step forwards for omnivores, but two steps backwards for vegans.

Notes

1. Hannah Joy Malan, “Swap the Meat, Save the Planet: A Community-Based Participatory Approach to Promoting Healthy, Sustainable Food in a University Setting,” *UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations*, 2020, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3pq4t2mz>

2. An edifying summary and commentary of Ms. Malan’s 326-page dissertation is provided by Open Philanthropy Project, “If We Build It, Will They Come?” *Open Philanthropy Farm Animal Welfare Research Newsletter*, March 9, 2021, <https://mailchi.mp/cf613c018ffc/if-we-build-it-will-they-come>

Mark Mathew Braunstein has contributed to many holistic health publications and twelve times previously to *Neighbors*. This article originally appeared in the Spring 2022 issue of *Spirit of Change*. Mark is also the author of six books, including *Radical Vegetarianism* (1981, Lantern Books 30th anniversary edition 2010). For a free PDF of *Radical Vegetarianism*, contact Mark at www.Mark-Braunstein.Org

Photo by the author.



HOLIDAY SPIRITS

Liquor • Beer • Wine • Lotto

HOLIDAY MALL

1733 Storrs Road
Storrs, CT 06268

860-429-7786

Visit us on Facebook and
at Untappd.com

HOSMER MOUNTAIN BOTTLING CO.
Since 1912
217 Mountain Street, Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 423-1555 • Fax (860) 423-2207
email: mail@hosmersoda.com • www.hosmersoda.com

CAD Marshall Framing
Professional Picture Framer
Art by local artists is not on cargo ships...
Stop in - Shop local
CONSOLIDATION SALE!
ALL KINDS OF DEALS & MARKDOWNS MUST STOP IN TO SEE!
860-617-5422
Tue.- Fri. 10-5:30 & Sat. 10-4
34 North Street. Wmtc., CT

Noah King, Realtor, ABR, SRS, SFR

Find Out What Your Home is Worth Today!



Contact me for a free, no obligation market analysis of your home.

The "King" in Real Estate



Ashford native and resident for 30 years
noah@homesellingteam.com

860-933-3432

860-450-8134

'Reforestation' Chaplin

By C. Dennis Pierce

If you are a regular reader of this column, you will know that I am a big fan of the author and philosopher, Henry David Thoreau. Thoreau, a naturalist, wrote several books such as *Walden*, *The Maine Woods*, *Cape Cod*, and others. He was a simple man who saw the impact of nature around him and the value of the seasons that we often take for granted. In the mid 1800's New England farmers were tearing down the forests to create more pastureland and fields to farm. This concerned Thoreau since he knew the ecological importance of trees that once thrived in the woods. You might say that Thoreau was way ahead of his time. He hated the loss of trees as they were cut down to make way for farms and towns. He wrote, "A town is saved not more by the righteous men in it, than by the woods and swamps that surround it." His dismay was evident in his quote, "Thank God, they cannot cut down the clouds." Today's recognition of trees as "carbon sinks" that reduce global warming makes his vision of their value seem clairvoyant.

I share the feelings of Thoreau with you because this past weekend I met the town of Chaplin's own, resident, Henry David Thoreau. On Saturday, I went back in time with a visit with Jack Collins who is in the process of "reforesting" the rolling fields on his rural property in Chaplin. Once living on a local busy road, he yearned to move with his wife, Jane to an area where he could build a woodworking shop and a large enough garden to provide fresh, local produce. Forty years ago, their dream came true. The original homestead that was on the property was built in 1917 and was constructed mainly from burnt lumber. Seeing that the resurrection of this farm house was not plausible he built a home that now overlooks an immense garden that if fortified with fencing to keep out the envious deer.

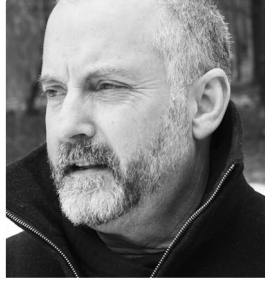
The property now exceeds over 150 acres of fields and forests. In an old barn Jack has built a snug and well-equipped woodworking shop where he occasionally works on fine cabinet projects when he bids his time during the winter months. Jack looks a little bit like Thoreau with a flowing beard, the intense knowledge and interest in nature and most of all the desire to maintain the land in a pristine condition. The Collin's property and his neighbors is surrounded by the Natchaug forest and parcels of Josuah's Trust. Jack has always felt strongly of preserving the natural area and with his neighbors applied through the Federal Legacy Program for funding to maintain over 450 acres.

Here is a summary of the Legacy Program and its vision taken from their web site:

"The goal of the Forest Legacy Program is to prevent the fragmentation or loss of environmentally significant forests which is an urgent issue. Every year, the United States loses approximately half a million acres of privately owned forest land to development. We all need to protect our forests in order to maintain clean water supplies, preserve wildlife habitat, provide recreational opportunities, preserve scenic landscapes, and produce timber. In particular, we need programs to protect private forest land, since 57% of the nation's forest land is in private ownership. The Forest Legacy Program, administered by the U.S. Forest Service, protects privately owned forest land through the purchase of conservation easements or land in fee. Landowners' participation in the program is entirely voluntary. By 2012, this program helped to protect over 2.25 million acres of forests in 46 states and territories. The forest Legacy Conservation Land is protected from current and future development. Working with the USDA Forest Service and the State Forester, the landowner is committed to conserving this land in perpetuity for the benefit of future generations. The land remains in private ownership."

If you are interested in additional information regarding the Legacy Program you may contact: State Forester's Office, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, 79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106, (860) 424-3630. Also, information can be found at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy>.

As mentioned earlier, as a woodworker, Jack has devout love of trees. His current undertaking is reforesting a rolling meadow. The day of my visit it was one of those days that was a perfect "10". Cool, fall like and one of those "glad you are alive" days. As I toured the fields,



that are now cut with paths that meander from one future "grove" of trees to another, Jack explained what was planted in each. From fifty walnut trees to cedar, one hundred larch and a sampling of planted basswood, each seedling was prepared for a great future under Jack and Jane's care. Thoroughly enjoying my visit, I was surprised by a sampling of this year's garden crop. There is no greater gift than a gift of fresh vegetables. As I toured the Collin's garden, I was given some freshly cut cabbages and beets. Jack was not aware I am fond of beet greens and was also was looking forward to preparing the Tiara cabbage he provided in the following unique recipe.



Jack Collins and just-picked beets. Dennis Pierce photo.

Asian Slaw
Servings – 6 to 8

Ingredients:

4 cups of thinly sliced or grated local cabbage.
2 cups of peeled and grated carrots.
¾ cup of diced red bell peppers
2 fresh, green chiles, seeded and minced. If you are using hot chilis make sure to wash your hands after preparing the chilis and most of all do not touch your eyes!
1 cup of diced onions
1 garlic clove, minced
2 tablespoons, chopped, fresh cilantro

Dressing:

2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
2 tablespoons of dark sesame oil
3 tablespoons of rice vinegar – add more if desired
2 tablespoons of orange juice
1 tablespoon of mirin or dry sherry
1 tablespoon of soy sauce
3 tablespoons of sugar or add more if desired
Pinch of salt. Before adding the salt, taste the dressing.
The salt in the soy sauce might be sufficient.

Directions:

Place the cabbage, carrots, peppers, chilis, onions, garlic in a bowl.

In a separate bowl whisk together the dressing ingredients. Pour dressing over vegetables and toss thoroughly. Add cilantro and lightly toss. Serve immediately or refrigerate until serving.

Hard to believe we are moving into July. Let's hope for great sun, enough rain and time in the dirt. Farewell, 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!

Horse Sense or Nonsense – The Great Debate

By Bob Lorentson

"The world is changing," the moderator began. "There's unrest everywhere. So tonight I'd like you to sit back and relax while we hear from two representatives of completely different worlds, the glamorous world of dressage, and the working world of horse pulls. And who doesn't love horses, right – they're smart, sensitive, strong – and obedient. They don't question authority. OK, maybe they're a bit skittish, but that's because they evolved as prey animals, and can sense when something's not right in their environment. Well, this is a new environment for them, so let's see if their horse sense can teach us anything. I give you Rudolf, and Bruno."

From the left came a light clippity clop, and all 16 hands of a beautiful Westphalian show horse pranced onto the stage, made a spritely pirouette, bowed, and took his place at the podium. Half the crowd roared, and Rudolf whinnied in appreciation. They hushed as an immense Belgian draft horse clomped into view from the right, the stage floor trembling. Bruno reached the podium, glanced at Rudolf, and snorted derisively. Hoots and whistles erupted from the other half of the crowd. Bruno stamped the floor once. They quieted and stamped their acknowledgement back at him.

"Look at you, think you're a big shot," said Rudolf, "because you can pull heavy weights. You shoulda stayed at the fair. You and your kind couldn't pull your weight in my world I tell you. Ya gotta have brains to make it." Nods and murmurs of agreement ran through those that sided with Rudolf.

Bruno's nostrils flared and his ears twitched. His big eyes narrowed. "You're a pretty boy," he said. "If you think that makes you smart, you got the horse sense of a cow. You're a poser is what you are. You shoulda stayed at the dance. Get your tail braided or something." Bruno's fans stamped their feet in unison. A voice from the back called out, "Make horses great again!"

"Shows how much YOU know," shot back Rudolf, his tail swishing. "Our MANES are braided and our tails are BANGED. Our masters even massage them after competitions. Sometimes we even get acupuncture treatments. What do you get – whips and harnesses?" Shouts of "Training, not harnesses!" and "Love, not hate, makes horses great!" rose above the wild applause, clashing with some boos and shouts of "Not my horse!" and "Lock him up!"

Bruno shook his great head from side to side, clearly agitated by something. "Well at least I don't have to wear shock collars and nosebands while I'm forced to learn some unnatural tricks," he said. "I don't have to dance for my supper, while some prima donna in white gloves treats me like I'm her puppet. I don't have anybody on MY back!" The stamping intensified, along with chants of "Freedom! Freedom!" this time mixing with catcalls from the other side and shouts of "Dressage horses matter!"

Rudolf's tail swished harder and his ears pressed against his neck. He shook his head and blew air forcefully from his nostrils. He watched in alarm as the shouts from the crowd turned into threats, and then punches. He looked over at Bruno, who was not only grinning now, but was holding his tail high and giving him a friendly whinny.

"Did you know," Bruno said to him, "there's only about ten stables that control our world. We all have to dance to their tune, and it ain't 'Wild Horses.' It's more like 'Back in the Saddle Again.' Anyway, that's where all the power is. We only exist for their amusement. I pull stuff. You dance." He paused, grinning again. "Look at them. Smart, sensitive, strong - and they don't question authority. They're just dancing to their puppet masters too."

Rudolf whinnied back as he watched the fight spill out into the street. His ears relaxed and his tail rose high. "If that's dancing, I'd say they need some more training. Maybe put a bit in their mouths – shut em up and rein em in."

"A yoke and harness."

"A saddle."

"Don't forget all the drugs they force on us."

"Anything to break their spirit. Whips, spurs, shock collars, nosebands"

"Man," said Bruno. "I'd say they're already broken. They just don't know it."

"Dumb animals," said Rudolf. "Something's not right in their environment, and they can't even sense it. Don't have the horse sense to band together before it's too late."

Unsung Heroes of Soul:

Steve Mancha

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 Steve Mancha, whose biggest hits were all with vocal groups.

He was born Clyde Wilson in Walhall, South Carolina, on Christmas Day 1943 (or 1945, depending on which source you believe). When he was five years old, his family relocated to Detroit. By 1960, Wilson was singing around town and befriended Fortune Records recording artist Melvin Davis. He teamed up with Wilburt Jackson as the duo Two Friends. They recorded “Just Too Much to Hope For” on Harvey Fuqua’s short-lived HPC label, but it did nothing. (Several years later, Tammi Terrell recorded the song too.)

Fuqua, formerly of the Moonglows (“Sincerely,” “Ten Commandments of Love”), then started the Tri-Phi and Harvey labels with his wife, Gwen Gordy. When the husband-and-wife team decided to join Gwen’s brother, Berry, at Motown, the Two Friends were included in the deal. Wilson and Jackson co-wrote some songs that didn’t do much, like the Monitors’ “Number One In Your Heart,” but Motown either never recorded the duo or never released anything on them.

Feeling neglected, Wilson left Motown in 1965 to work with songwriter-producer Don Davis, who felt that “Clyde Wilson” was too common sounding a name. When he suggested the singer change it, Wilson became Steve Mancha. His first single under that name, “Did My Baby Call,” came out on the Detroit-based Wheelsville label in 1965. It did well in some local markets but did not make the national charts.

After three additional Wheelsville releases that did little to nothing, Mancha recorded with fellow Detroiters Eddie Holiday, Edwin Starr and J.J. Barnes as the Holidays. Their 1966 recording of Starr’s “I’ll Love You Forever,” on Golden World Records, reached #7 on the Rhythm & Blues chart and #63 pop. Later that year, Mancha’s solo release, “I Don’t Want to Lose You,” made #34 R&B. In 1967, he hit #34 R&B again with “Don’t Make Me a Story Teller.” In 1968, Don Davis moved Mancha to his Groove City label, but “Hate Yourself In the Morning” and “Sweet Baby” were both commercial flops.

In 1969, Mancha was offered a golden opportunity by the writing and production trio of Eddie Holland, Lamont Dozier, and Brian Holland. They had left Motown over royalty disputes in 1967 and started the Hot Wax, Invictus and Music Merchant family of labels. H-D-H put Mancha together with Joe Stubbs (brother of the Four Tops’ Levi Stubbs) and Eddie Holiday as 100 Proof Aged In Soul. Their debut release, “Too Many Cooks (Spoil the Soup),” made the R&B survey in 1969 and grazed the lower rungs of the pop chart. Their next single, “Somebody’s Been Sleeping,” hit #6 R&B and #8 pop in the late summer of 1970.

In 1971, H-D-H formed a new group with Mancha on lead vocals. The 8th Day included his old friend, Melvin Davis, and had two major hits: “She’s Not Just Another Woman” and “You’ve Got to Crawl (Before You Walk).” Meanwhile, Don Davis leased Mancha’s old recordings to Stax Records, which resulted in the *Rare Stamps* album that also included tracks by J.J. Barnes.



When H-D-H relocated to Los Angeles and Steve Mancha didn’t, his career was essentially over. He switched to gospel music and, in 1998, hooked up with British producer Ian Levine to record “It’s All Over the Grapevine.” It became a Northern Soul hit in the UK. In 2000, Mancha did a concert in London with Edwin Starr and J.J. Barnes. He died in Detroit on January 8, 2011.

Charted singles:

“I’ll Love You Forever” (The Holidays, 1966) R&B #7, Pop #63

“I Don’t Want to Lose You” (1966) R&B #34

“Don’t Make Me a Story Teller” (1967) R&B #34

“Too Many Cooks (Spoil the Soup)” (100 Proof Aged In Soul, 1969) R&B #24, Pop #94

“Somebody’s Been Sleeping” (100 Proof Aged In Soul, 1970) R&B #6, Pop #8

“One Man’s Leftovers (Is Another Man’s Feast)” (100 Proof Aged In Soul, 1971) R&B #37, Pop #96

“90 Day Freeze (On Her Love)” (100 Proof Aged In Soul, 1971) R&B #34

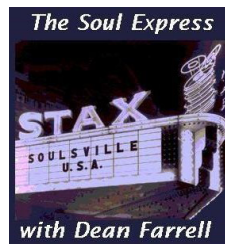
“She’s Not Just Another Woman” (The 8th Day, 1971) R&B #3 (1 week), Pop #11

“You’ve Got to Crawl (Before You Walk)” (The 8th Day, 1971) R&B #3 (2 weeks), Pop #28

“If I Could See the Light (The 8th Day, 1972) R&B #27, Pop #79

“Everything Good Is Bad” (100 Proof Aged In Soul, 1972) R&B #15, Pop #45

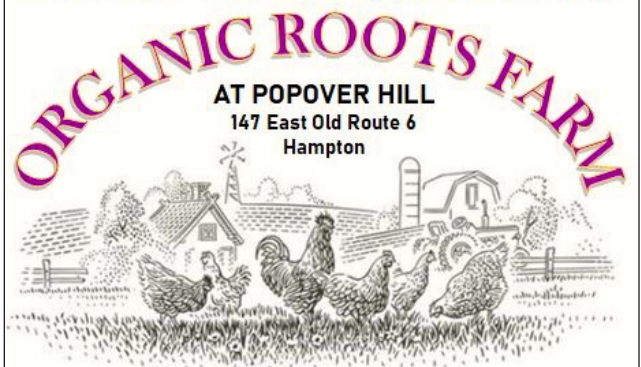
“Eeny-Meeny-Miney-Mo (Three’s a Crowd)” (The 8th Day, 1972) R&B #29



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

Dean Farrell hosts “The Soul Express” twice a week: Thursdays from 8:00-11:00 p.m. on WECS, 90.1-FM (www.wecsfm.com) and Fridays from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on WRTC, 89.3-FM (www.wrtc.fm). 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.

4th Annual Customer Appreciation Day!



Saturday, July 9, 2022 10AM–5PM

- Food & Refreshments
- Giveaways & Prizes
- Farm Tours on the hour from 11-4
- Local Vendors & more!



Join us for a fun-filled time and enjoy some:

- ★ Fresh Lemonade
- ★ Homemade Cookies
- ★ Hot Dogs
- ★ Homemade Donuts



WILLIMANTIC FARMERS MARKET

May 28th Thru October
EVERY SATURDAY
8:00 am - Noon
28 Bridge Street, Willimantic
We Accept SNAP!

Scan the QR Code to sign up for our newsletter!



Ashford Farmers Market



Our 16th Season!
Sundays 10am-1pm
Guest Vendors

Pompey Hollow Park
Route 44 Ashford across from Town Hall
Enjoy fresh Connecticut grown products
Meet your local farmers

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.

Pompey Hollow Senior Housing
Waitlist Open
49 Tremko Lane, Ashford, CT

Application Deadline July 29, 2022
Office Hours T, Th, F 9-12
Phone: (860) 429-8556
Fax: (860) 487-4500



Your New Home Awaits

Spacious one bedroom apartments in an idyllic rural setting, with shopping and services nearby.

To qualify you must be 62 years old or disabled and meet required income limits.

Applications can be found on our website or mailed by request.



www.ashfordhousingauthority.org

A Wordle a Day

By Delia Berlin

Do you play Wordle? Even if you don't, chances are you have heard about it. Wordle is a still-new free online game that most users play on their phones. It was released last October by software engineer Josh Wardle. As of November 1st, 2021, only 90 people in the world were playing the daily game. In just two months, Wordle grew to 300,000 users. Since, it continued to gain followers at an accelerated pace and today, Wordle has several millions of players. Overwhelmed by the game's success, in early 2022 Wardle sold his game to The New York Times for an undisclosed seven-figure amount.

But what is Wordle? The game is surprisingly simple. Each day at 12:00 am, the game generates a new secret five-letter word and gives you six chances to guess it. It is the same daily word for everyone in the world. There are no clues to start – just a blank grid with six rows and five columns. How in the world can you guess a word like that? It's actually quite easy. At least 95% of the words can be guessed in six or fewer tries. In fact, the average number of tries for guessing the daily word is closer to four. Most players take between five and ten minutes to solve the daily puzzle and there is no risk of bingeing because there is only one word per day. Here is how it works.

You start by typing any five-letter word in the first row. When you press "enter" the letters that are not present in the answer word will remain grey. But letters that are present in the answer word will turn yellow or green. They will be green if they appear in the correct position, and yellow if they are in a different position. So, for your second try you will have lots of clues. You will have eliminated all the grey letters from the answer word, dramatically narrowing down the field of possible solutions. You will continue using any green letters in the same positions, and you will change the position of any yellow letters to find their place.

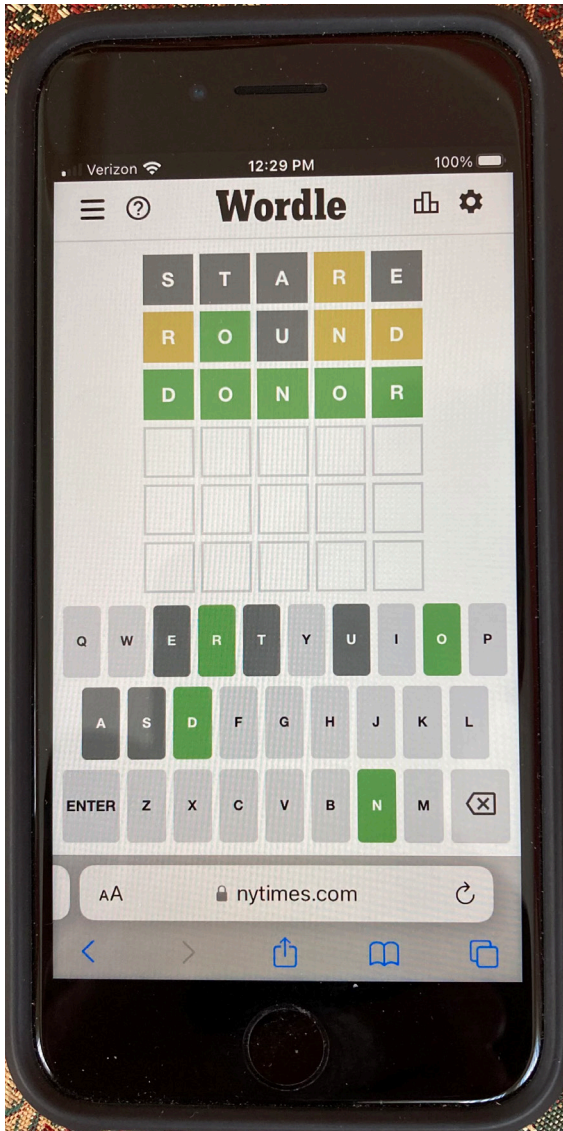
Using a good starting word is important. A word that contains several common letters will be generally more fruitful. But Wordle is not entirely a game of skill. It is also a game of chance, and there are situations in which all you can do is guess and hope for good luck. For example, let's say that by your second try you already have four green letters. That is, you have found four of the five letters in the daily solution, and you have them in their correct places. All you need now is to find the fifth letter. But the English language may still present you with a challenge. If your partial word is "S_ARE" your possible solutions could be SCARE, SEARE, SHARE, SNARE, SPARE, STARE. But since you only have four tries left, you have more possibilities than tries. You depend entirely on chance to win or lose the day's game. But in any case, nothing consequential will happen and there will be another new game tomorrow.

But what I find most interesting is what Wordle can expose about human nature. Wordle is not competitive. You play by yourself, against yourself, and nothing happens if you lose. Yet, amazingly, it is becoming apparent that many people are cheating in their game – imagine that! How can you possibly cheat? There are many



ways. Most obviously, I could solve my Wordle early, tell you today's solution, you could type it in your screen as your first try and voila – you won! Also, there are even new websites that can give you the answer before each puzzle expires. But why would anyone want to cheat?

A factor in the motivation to cheat may be the Wordle "Share" button. Once you resolve a Wordle, you can select it to easily share your results with others, via text, email or social media. Your grid is then shared with its colors, but no letters, to avoid being a spoiler for those who still haven't played that day. Some people may simply use this sharing as part of their daily routine of keeping in touch with others. My daughter and I tend to share our Wordle grids on a daily basis. But some may be more interested in bragging about their impressive solution records.



Interestingly, recent local news reported that a daughter sent police to her mother's house one day, precisely because she didn't get her mother's shared Wordle, couldn't get in touch with her and was worried. Lo and behold, police found the mother in trouble and Wordle ended up saving the day. So, I can see potential benefits to routine sharing, but selective sharing can become deceptive. Those who do it may also risk becoming addicted to bragging and tempted to "bend the rules" when the game doesn't go their way.

It is true that you may just luck out and guess the correct word on your first try. But since Wordle has 2,315 possible solution words, that would happen approximately only once every 2,315 times. Yet, social media postings show that almost 1% of players claim to have gotten the word on their first try. The fact remains that, according to information theory experts, it is theoretically impossible to consistently resolve Wordle in three tries or less. Unless, of course, you are a genius – a very stable genius.

Our Patriots

"Heroic Service: O Judge of the nations, we remember before you with grateful hearts the men and women of our country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy. Grant that we may not rest until all the people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines."

-The Book of Common Prayer
The Episcopal Church

By Bill Powers

Each year at this time in June, the patriotic blood in my body begins to surge. It starts just before Memorial Day, continues through Flag Day and well into July. During the Revolutionary War, the distinctions between patriots, loyalists and those who were neutral were much clearer. The patriots were those who rebelled against British control and felt they were being treated unfairly. Loyalists were those colonists who were loyal to the king, many of whom believed a rebellion to be the very last resort. To be neutral often meant embracing the beliefs of both sides and certainly not being willing to commit to fighting for either side. Those choices were not easily made for people. Commitment meant taking tremendous risks, including to one's life, since patriots could be hanged as traitors, loyalists being tarred and feathered and forced out of the colonies while leaving all that they owned behind, and neutralists facing harassment from whichever side happened to be in the majority in their region.

These days, making such delineations, are not so easy and ambiguities exist about who is a patriot and what the word "patriotism" means. The prayer giving thanks cited at the beginning of this article is a prayer not only of gratitude but also of hope; that the sacrifices of men and women will not be in vain and will continue to be appreciated. I am very grateful for their heroic and selfless service for others. I am inspired by them and their willingness to give of themselves for others, whether in their local community and for the entire nation, for causes greater than any of us. I cherish the liberties I now enjoy as a result of sacrifices of heroes and the generations of Americans whose actions and commitment served to preserve liberty.

Today there are challenges to our democracy and the values that the original American patriots fought for. Ironically, there are groups and individuals who somehow consider themselves to be true patriots, just as they deny other Americans their rights. Our original patriots espoused democratic principles such as self-government and "No Taxation without Representation". Today there are American right-wing extremists claiming to be "patriotic" and they are characterized by anti-democratic opposition towards equality. Their ideas are fraught with racist, exclusionary nationalist, xenophobic, authoritarian and conspiratorial theories.

Upon reflection, I can only think that today's true patriots would emphasize the part of the prayer at the beginning of this article that says: "Grant that we may not rest until all the people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines." It doesn't say restrict freedom for people of color, different religions, sexual orientation, or from other cultures; it says: "all people". "Gladly accepting its disciplines" relates to what is required for people to bring about changes in a positive, honest, and responsible ways.

The discipline needed in order to continue to enjoy our liberties, in addition to serving in our armed forces, starts right



here at home not only by respecting and obeying federal, state and local laws; but also by respecting the rights, beliefs and opinions of others; staying informed about local issues and participating in our local community, while participating in the democratic process. We have the opportunity to do these things today primarily because "The men and women of our country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy."

For centuries, at times of national emergency, our area of Connecticut has provided an extraordinary number of patriots, many of them heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice, dying for democratic values so meaningful and vital for future generations. Remembering them and what they did is fundamental to preserving our democratic values. 1) **Remember** Captain Nathan Hale, Connecticut's State Hero, from Coventry, who served in Knowlton's Rangers and **remember** his commander, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Knowlton from Ashford. 2) **Remember** seventeen-year-old William Hall from Chaplin, who died in 1862 at Antietam. 3) **Remember** Nathan Wales, Jr. from Windham, who together with Windham's Jedediah Elderkin established a much needed gun powder factory for the patriot cause. Elderkin also was assigned to convert a foundry in Salisbury, CT. to produce badly needed cannons. 4) **Remember** Eliphalet Dyer of Windham, a delegate to the Stamp Act Congress in 1765 and delegate to the First Congress, elected to the Second Continental Congress and member to the Confederation Congress in 1782. Wales, Dyer and Elderkin also served on the Council of Safety with Connecticut's Revolutionary War Governor Jonathan Trumbull. The Council of Safety assisted Governor Trumbull, "the commander in chief", in conducting the war effort. 5) **Remember** Governor Jonathan Trumbull from Lebanon, "who was responsible for provisioning and arming the Connecticut militia and thirteen navy ships. He commissioned and supplied over 200 privateers, who captured nearly 500 British vessels. Governor Trumbull supervised Connecticut's essential war industries. He was the only colonial pro-independence governor in office from the beginning of the conflict." (Alicia Wayland, late Lebanon Town Historian) 6) **Remember** our two local signers of the Declaration of Independence, Samuel Huntington who was born, raised and first practiced law in Windham (now Scotland, Connecticut) and Governor Trumbull's son-in-law William Williams from Lebanon. The signers understood only too well the substantial personal risks that they faced since they were viewed as traitors by the British. 7) **Remember** this quote from William Williams:

"I have signed The Declaration of Independence. I shall be hanged."

All of these patriots, our heroes, should be remembered through eternity.

Bill Powers is a retired Windham school teacher, volunteers at the Windham Textile & History Museum and writes a weekly column about local history for the Willimantic Chronicle.



8 Ways to Maximize Your Money Right Now

By Michael Baum, CFP®, RICP®
Vice President, Associate Financial Advisor



It seems like when summertime hits, time slows down. Why not use some of that downtime to make sure your finances are primed and ready for an upswing? Here are eight things you can do right now to help improve your finances over the weeks and months to come.

1. Analyze Your Budget

In early 2022, the Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that the personal savings rate is at only 6.4 percent.¹ An effective way to avoid spending more than you're earning is to step back and take stock of your monthly and annual budget. And if you don't have a budget at all, use this time to make one.

Many credit cards or banks will offer categorical breakdowns of your spending, which can be a great way to find out what you're spending the most money on and if there's room to cut back. To get the best look at your spending habits, you may want to evaluate your savings and spending record over the past six to 12 months.

2. Seek Out Tax Savings

Do you scramble to pull your paperwork together every March and April? This year, try taking a different approach to tax season by evaluating your tax-saving strategies early. The mid-year point is a great time to work with your financial planner or tax professional to create a mock tax return, as this can help you understand your withholding options and tax-saving opportunities such as 401(k) or 403(b) options, IRAs and HSA contributions.

Focus on filing any time-sensitive deductions and brush up on changes in tax laws. Reaching out to your tax professional now could mean you have more time to prepare and strategize together for next year's returns.

3. Tackle Your Debt

An alarming 62 percent of adults have carried over credit card debt in the last 12 months.² If you're guilty of putting off managing your amounting expenses, now's the time to start planning to pay it off. While most consumers have some amount of good debt on their plate (mortgages, car payments, etc.), it's the bad debt (credit card debt, student loans, etc.) that you'll likely want to focus on managing and eliminating.

While you could be tempted to simply pay off what shows up on the bills each month, you may want to create an annual debt summary to get a better idea of your total debt's big picture so you can better understand whether you're gradually working down the amount or falling farther into the hole. You can also use the credit card payment and debt elimination calculators in the Resources section of our website at whzwealth.com to help in your planning.

4. Revisit Short and Long-Term Goals

A lot can change in a year - marriage, death, divorce, growing your family and experiencing a major career change. Even seemingly small adjustments, like a job promotion or sending a kid off to college, can have a significant impact on your financial status. That's why it's important to regularly review your long-term goals and progress towards them while revisiting and evaluating your shorter-term goals as well.

5. Evaluate Coverage and Providers

As you're reviewing your budget and expenses, take the extra time to thoroughly evaluate your current providers and coverage options. This includes your internet, cable and wireless service providers in addition to your insurance coverage options. If you tend to set up auto payments and forget about your monthly bills, it's important to take the time now to revisit what it is you're actually paying for.

6. Reassess and Rebalance Your Portfolio

It's also important to visit your portfolio and risk tolerance regularly to help keep it in line with your tolerance, goals and market conditions. While most managed portfolios will be rebalanced automatically (as we do for our clients), it's important to take stock of your investments' big picture. Doing so can help you determine if you need to diversify differently or reassess your risk tolerance.

7. Review Your Retirement Savings

Whether retirement is decades down the line or within the upcoming year, reviewing your retirement savings on an annual basis is critical to assessing whether or not you're maxing out your retirement contribution options and how the savings you're making today will translate into retirement income later down the line.

8. Assess Your Estate Plan

It's not fun to plan for the worst-case scenario, but leaving your family with an outdated will, trust or estate plan can lead to some major issues if disaster strikes. As you assess your legacy plan annually, make sure you're accounting for any newly acquired assets (houses, cars, etc.) while checking that your designated beneficiaries are still willing and able to assist in the event of your passing.

So, while you're likely daydreaming of book reading, beach-going and backyard barbecuing this summer, don't forget to do yourself a favor and squeeze in some financial assessing as well. Performing your own financial checkup annually gives you time to prepare for tax season and acquire peace of mind knowing your family's finances are aligned with your future goals and current needs.

Don't have a strategy yet? We can help you build and manage one so that you can always be sure you're maximizing your finances to their greatest potential. Get in touch with us at Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors and see how our Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well process can help. Learn more at our website, www.whzwealth.com, or contact us at (860) 928-2341 or info@whzwealth.com to get started.

Presented by Vice President, Associate Financial Advisor, Michael Baum, CFP® RICP®. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. These materials are general in nature and do not address your specific situation. For your specific investment needs, please discuss your individual circumstances with your financial advisor. Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice, and nothing in the accompanying pages should be construed as specific tax or legal advice. 697 Pomfret Street, Pomfret Center, CT 06259, 860.928.2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com>

1. <https://www.bea.gov/data/income-saving/personal-saving-rate>

2. <https://www.nfcc.org/resources/client-impact-and-research/2020-consumer-financial-literacy-survey/>



**TERRY'S
TRANSMISSIONS**

WE KEEP YOUR REAR IN GEAR

Ashford, CT
Phone (860) 429-6571 • Fax (860) 429-0246
www.terrystransmissions.com • Email: terrys.trnsmssns@snet.net

Automatics / Standards / American / Foreign / Differentials / Transfer Cases



452 Storrs Road, Mansfield
860-456-SOLD (7653)
info@homesellingteam.com
homesellingteam.com



Hi! My name is Josh and I'm the owner of **All Sleep**. We take **Guaranteed Lowest Prices** very seriously here. But what does it mean? It means that we'll not only beat **ANY** lower advertised price, but we'll also adjust our pricing so the next person who comes in the store will also get the **NEW** lower price. It's the only fair thing to do!

WE ARE ALL YOU NEED FOR SLEEP!

Eastern CT's Highest Reviewed Mattress Store On Google!

885 Windham Rd Rt. 32 South Windham (860) 423-0234 www.allsleep.net



Lettering & Graphics

Banners • Magnetics • Decals
 Full Color Photo Signs, Carved, Electric & Neon
 Signs for Real Estate, Trade Shows, Site Signs, Window Lettering
 Cars • Vans • Trucks • Motorcycles • Boats

Signs Plus
OF WILLIMANTIC, LLC

Ph: 860.423.3048
 Fax: 860.456.3003
 700 Rear Main St. Willimantic

Henrietta House Bed & Breakfast
 Modern Living in a Historic Setting

Marian Matthews
 Proprietor

125 Ashford Center Rd
 Ashford, CT, 06278

(860) 477 - 0318

henriettahousebnb@gmail.com
historichenriettahousebnbct.com



Helping Hands
860-205-7008



Affordable home maintenance exclusively for Seniors and special needs people who want to live in their own home.

The Neighbors paper
 A little paper
 Big on community

Second Saturday Community Breakfast

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

Gather with us Saturday, July 9th 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
 For information contact Michele at the Church Office: 860-228-9306.

Read the Neighbors paper on your desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone.

Go to neighborspaper.com for link

to current and past editions. All in beautiful COLOR!

The Struggle over Abortion is a Struggle over Abrahamic Patriarchy

"I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you".

God, Genesis 3:16

"But if this charge is true (that she wasn't a virgin on her wedding night), and evidence of the girl's virginity is not found, they shall bring the girl to the entrance of her father's house and there her townsman shall stone her to death, because she committed a crime against Israel by her unchasteness in her father's house. Thus, shall you purge the evil from your midst."

Deuteronomy 22:20-21

Then I heard the LORD say to the other men, "Follow him through the city and kill everyone whose forehead is not marked. Show no mercy; have no pity! Kill them all – old and young, girls and women and little children. But do not touch anyone with the mark. Begin your task right here at the Temple." So, they began by killing the seventy leaders. "Defile the Temple!" the LORD commanded. "Fill its courtyards with the bodies of those you kill! Go!" So, they went throughout the city and did as they were told."

Ezekiel 9:5-7

By Phoebe C. Godfrey



When I look back over my life and identify my greatest fears as a young person there are two that continually haunted me, while they consequently also pushed me into political activism. The first one was the threat of nuclear war and the second one was to accidentally become pregnant and potentially have to bear a child. What was at the root of my fears in relation to both was the feeling of a lack of control over what would happen to my body, either as a result of radiation or pregnancy. In fact, I didn't draw much of a distinction between the two, in that I never (nor have I ever) wanted to be made pregnant, as the thought filled me with as much horror as did images from our country's use of nuclear weapons on the civilians of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Yet my fear of pregnancy was always somewhat palliated but the fact that if the worst happened, I could and would be able to get an abortion. As for nuclear war, the only remedy I had available was to sign up and become a conscientious objector. Thus, in both cases I knew that activism was essential to mitigating my fears by trying to stop both events (an unwanted pregnancy leading to being made to have a baby against my will and nuclear war) from happening and this tragically remains true today. However, we must not just focus on these two issues, but rather we must look more deeply at their roots and seek an end to the power of Abrahamic patriarchy, which still seeks to control this country's laws in the name of their very sexist, vengeful, and war-mongering God.

Since last Friday's [Un]Supreme Court's ruling to overturn Roe vs. Wade, I have read many poignant scathing criticisms, but I have not yet read anyone whose analysis has taken this decision back to its source, as in the Bible, and in particular the Old Testament. Therefore, I thought it would be useful to go look at some examples of both sexism and justified violence in order to fully contextualize what exactly we are dealing with when those who follow the Abrahamic religions have the power (and seek more of it) to 'rule' over the rest of us, despite the First Amendment's call to separate church and state. In begin-

ning with the quote from the book of Genesis by God to Eve, stated in reaction to her and Adam both eating of the 'forbidden' fruit (God's statement to Adam is for another day) it becomes appalling evident that preventing abortion is all about ensuring men can 'rule over' women, making them, their bodies, and their children into men's property (we have our father's last names). Increased pain in childbirth under this patriarchal God is punishment for 'disobedience', coupled with making women's desires be only for their husbands to ensure they can be easily controlled. However, once women (and others who can become pregnant) have access to birth control and abortions this power to 'rule over' them is diminished and thus patriarchy itself is threatened. Abortion has never been about babies- it has always been and will always be, about patriarchal control over women and other oppressed identities. This point is further supported by the next quote in Deuteronomy (again there are so many illustrative ones to choose from) about killing girls who are not virgins on their wedding nights. Of course, it is never about males being or not being virgins, but rather about the state of their property (as in the girl) who is going to be exchanged between two men (hence her father [owner] walking her down the aisle to her future 'ruler'), wearing white to prove her virginity. Killing women who are not virgins isn't too far off from what is predicted will happen in states that are already set on banning abortions.

As for the third quote from the Prophet Ezekiel who lived in exile in Babylon his visions were to bring judgement upon Israel, as well as revenge upon Her enemies. Of course, such a passage is most often interpreted to be taken spiritually, or as metaphor, or that we should not question God's wisdom, but nevertheless it remains important to recognize the intolerance and violence of this particular God, including towards children (who happen, in this case to not be Jewish). However, there are many passages where God does condone the killing His own as in for example those who commit adultery (Leviticus 20:10), who are mediums (Leviticus 20:27) who work on the Sabbath (Exodus 31:15), who dream dreams (Deuteronomy 13:5) or even children who talk back to their parents (Deuteronomy 21:18-21) or curse them (Exodus 21:17), all pointing to the absurdity that anti-abortion conservatives



who follow the Abrahamic religions are opposed to the actual killing of the unborn. No, in fact killing, including the killing of women and children, as well as the on-going self-proclaimed 'holy' wars, have never been problematic under the patriarchal teachings of the Old Testament. As such, ironically most Christians in this country do not practice the core teachings of the Prophet Jesus, but rather adherer to the violent messianic visions of the Old Testament and the Book of Revelations. For if they did, they would know that what matters most is to not judge the actions of the other, but rather to love them, to forgive them and to financially support all those who cannot support themselves. That said, the way forward at this time, as in the past, is for more and more of us put these ideals into secular action, for if we do, we will play a vital and fearless part in the centuries old struggle to dismantle the ruling power of Abrahamic patriarchy. May we one day succeed!

Celebration

By Judy Davis

Gay Pride shouldn't be for just one month.

And we cannot let the bigots rule the land. LGBT rights should be throughout this great country.

Look at the colors of the Rainbow flag, and what they mean. Red = light. Orange = healing. Yellow = sunshine. Green =serenity. Blue =art.

Purple = spirit.

And it's this beautiful spirit- the wonderful LGBT spirit- that should always be celebrated; now, and always!

Don't deny your right to raise your Pride flag, or to raise your arms in triumph and say, "I deserve dignity. I

I deserve to be heard. I deserve to be loved."

And remember, the last line of The Pledge of Allegiance is "WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL" !

A Summer's Palette at Westford Hills Free!

Come One, Come All!

Submitted by Deg Gag

The Ashford Arts Council is sponsoring an event called **A Summer's Palette** at the bucolic grounds of **Westford Hill Distillers**, 196 Chatey Road, Ashford, CT from 10:00 – 4:00 on July 9th (Rain date 7/10). Artists and Craftspeople will be displaying they works under canopies, and some will be drawing or painting en plein air (on site in the open air) and others, including you, may stop by to join in. There will be a paint and paper table for those who wish to try their hand at en plein air. The location is incredibly inspiring, with an over 100-year-old home and a lovely pond. The lilies and other flowers will be in bloom. There will be live music, and drinks and snacks will be available.

These artists will be displaying their work and offering some for sale:

- Debora Aldo, mosaics
- Lance Arnold, Glassware and Fairy houses
- John Boiano, Pottery
- Judy Doyle, original art
- Debra Gag, paintings
- Gretchen Geromin with Lauren Merlo, woodwork with woodburning decorative elements
- Freitha Lawrence, artwork and her book
- John Lott, photography
- Dan Merlo, woodturner
- Dana Monaco, fabric covered containers
- Charles McCaughtry, paintings
- Mike Metsak, HyHope soaps and lotions,
- Dan Rackliffe, pottery
- Jane Rackliffe, fused glassware
- Mike South, luthier
- Suzy Staubach, pottery, and author
- Kathy Weigold, weavings.

We appreciate the collaboration with Margie and Lou Chatey who operate the distillery and are kind enough to share their beautiful location. The Chateys will be creating a signature beverage for the event. Lou will be talking about the history of the local area and a little about the distillery.

The Neighbors paper
Black and white
And read all over!

Neighbors
a little paper
big on community

advertise
in
the neighbors paper
locally written
locally wread

Champ or No Champ?

By Tom Woron

Scotland has Nessie. Over here we have Champ. Or does Scotland really have Nessie? And for that matter, do we really have Champ?

Everyone has heard of the legendary Loch Ness monster, affectionately named Nessie, and usually referred to in the singular sense. Nessie is the alleged unknown water creature that inhabits Loch Ness, a long and deep lake in Scotland. Whether Nessie really exists or not has been the subject of much study and debate for over a century. The Loch Ness monster, if it does exist, is a cryptid.

Cryptozoology is not a recognized branch of true science. Rather it is more or less a separate cult

whose mission is to seek out creatures of hearsay, legend and folklore that have not officially been documented to exist in reality by mainstream science but rather *might* exist or might have *once* existed. Creatures large and small that mainstream science cannot prove nor deny the existence of are referred to as cryptids. The definition of cryptids can also be extended to include animals that existed at one time in reality but are officially recognized as being extinct.

The possibility that creatures officially considered to be extinct but may possibly *still* exist is one subject of cryptozoology.

The cryptid that allegedly inhabits Loch Ness, while eyewitness descriptions often vary, is usually described as serpentine in nature possibly resembling a sea serpent that existed during the time of the dinosaurs. Whether it's an unknown animal that hasn't yet been documented or really a creature that never actually went extinct, it's existence is very much disputed to this day.

In North America is Lake Champlain, a large natural lake that is located between the states of New York and Vermont but also stretches to the north into Canada into the province of Quebec. Lake Champlain is 107 miles long and 14 miles wide at its point of maximum width. The lake covers 514 square miles and has an average depth of 64 feet with a maximum depth of about 400 feet. Lake Champlain has also long been said to be the home of a serpent-like cryptid.

In 1609 the French explorer Samuel De Champlain, the discoverer of Lake Champlain, is said to have documented "a 20-foot serpent thick as a barrel, and a head like a horse." This quote by Champlain has been published repeatedly but its authenticity in describing a creature in Lake Champlain is in dispute. Historians and scholars who have read Champlain's writings seem to think that he was describing something that he saw near the St. Lawrence River. Champlain did however, describe seeing some fish in Lake Champlain that were five feet long, as thick as his thigh, with a double row of very sharp and dangerous teeth and with silvery-gray scales so strong that a dagger could not penetrate them. The native peoples of the area told him that some of them were known to be up to 10 feet long.

Earlier legends told by the native Abenaki and Iroquois tribes, both of whom long lived and hunted near Lake Champlain, spoke of a large horned serpent or giant snake that lived in the lake. The early French explorers were warned against sailing on the lake so as not to arouse the serpent.

Since the early 1800s up to the 1990s there have been approximately 200 reported sighting of a large, unidentified creature in Lake Champlain with over 600 witnesses claiming to have seen it in many different parts of the lake. In 1873 an article in the *New York Times* reported that a railroad crew working alongside the lake saw the head of a huge serpent, with silvery scales that glistened in the sunlight, rise above the surface of the water. The crew left the scene in a hurry.

The unknown or mythical creature of Lake Champlain, affectionately named Champ, is very often described as an unusually large snake or water serpent. The serpent is, at times, described as having a head like that of a horse. Sightings of Champ have sometimes occurred to multiple witnesses at the same time occasionally to groups of passengers sailing on steamships on Lake Champlain. A common size estimate of Champ



is between 20 and 40 feet long although historically there have been descriptions of a water creature in the lake that was estimated to be over 180 feet long.

In 1977 Sandra Mansi, a woman from Connecticut who was on a family vacation alongside Lake Champlain, supposedly took what is widely believed to be the first known photograph of Champ (like Nessie, Champ is usually referred to as a single creature). But just like with alleged photos of the Loch Ness monster, whether or not Ms. Mansi's photo shows a large, unidentified creature in Lake Champlain is a matter that is hotly disputed. It is pointed out that Ms. Mansi could not locate the original negative and could not later identify the precise location where she took the photo. Both would have been useful in further studies of the object in the photo. Does the Mansi photo really show a water serpent or a large partially submerged floating tree trunk? The debate goes on.

The 21st century has brought many additional reports of sightings of a lake monster in Lake Champlain including a video taken by 2 fishermen in 2005. Analysis of the video can be interpreted to show a snake-like creature or the long neck and head of a creature similar to a prehistoric reptile, but again, the video is a matter of much dispute. Although it is believed that the video is not faked nor tampered with, a retired FBI forensic image analyst who examined the video does not believe that any animate object is shown in it.

So what have people been seeing at Lake Champlain for the past few centuries? Are they seeing an oversized eel or multiple eels? Maybe a large sturgeon or muskellunge that grew way beyond the normal size that one would be. Is Champ possibly a giant northern water snake that grew to an immense size? Or is the Lake Champlain monster really a serpent that is undocumented by science or a prehistoric reptile long thought to have been extinct? One has to wonder what did the railroad crew see in 1873 that frightened them to the point of fleeing their worksite. Recently I talked with a fisherman who fished Lake Champlain frequently. He told me he's seen some weird things around the lake and definitely believes Champ exists. The search for Champ goes on.



The Mansi photo. Does this image really show Champ, Lake Champlain's legendary water beast?



LAWRENCE REAL ESTATE
 "WE CARE"
 Farms, Land, Estates & Horse Properties
 Buyers Agent
 Gary H. Lawrence, CRB, Owner/Broker
 www.glawrencesells.com • gary@lawrencesells.com
 Cell 860-428-9126
 126 Storrs Road, Mansfield Center, CT 06250

SUMMER CONCERTS on the SQUARE

THURSDAYS in JULY | 6.30-8.00 PM
 on PATERSON SQUARE in DOWNTOWN STORRS
FREE!

Info: mansfieldmusic.org

- 07.07 **DUST HAT**
Rock 'n' Roll | New Haven, CT
- 07.14 **JAKE KLAR**
Folk Rock | Turner Falls, MA
- 07.21 **THE LOST TRIBE**
Afro-Funk Fusion | Middletown, CT
- 07.28 **THE FUNKY DAWGZ BRASS BAND**
Funk/Jazz/R&B | Originally from Storrs, CT



To all our contributors- Thank You!

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

Because Home is Where the Heart is...

Since 1992, Community Companion & Homemaking Services, a local, non-profit agency, has enabled thousands of elderly and disabled adults to continue living at home. When living independently becomes a challenge, we can help.



COMMUNITY
 Companion & Homemaking Services

90 South Park Street
 Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 456-3626
 www.communitychs.org

Community Companion & Homemaking Services is registered by the State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection. HCA0000144

Gardens of the Last Green Valley

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

The Quiet Corner's 2022 Art & Garden Tour

featured many artists and gardeners -- fine arts and crafts amid showy ornamental and harvest gardens, and farms. Abundance !!! Weather was perfect, sunny in the 70s. Too many for me to visit on a weekend, but I found a delightful range:

- Oil-pastel-watercolor painter and sculptor with a whimsical garden,
- Oil-encaustic-watercolor painter with goats and a pony,
- Fused-glass artist with an alpaca farm,
- Fine art *giclée* photographer with a meticulous garden,
- Potter, gardener and garden writer with a quadripartite cottage garden.

TOUR The 2022 Art & Garden Tour was in our less-developed northeastern neck of the Connecticut woods known as the *Quiet Corner*, not throughout the *Last Green Valley* of many small river valleys. These gardens were

in the western highlands of the Willimantic and Natchaug Rivers, north of US Highway 6 and west of Scenic Route 198. None were in the Quinebaug Valley, nor south of Highway 6, the fall-line separating coastal Highlands from the Lowland.

All were close enough to be visited, given time. Only two days... *daze*?... the tour could use four. Friday through Monday would allow time to avoid bad weather, visit more gardens... to pause... and enjoy more. Perhaps buy more.

Pastel-acrylic painter **Nancy Bunnell of Willington** is the originator (I am told, and I regret missing her garden) of this artful adventure in a remarkable landscape that coincides with each **Second Saturday of June -- Connecticut Open House Day** -- that inspires *Connecticuters* to learn about their neighbors.

Dividing the gardens into two days, five Mansfield gardens with a Coventry outlier was a southern tier close to US Highway 6. The northern tier was a five-garden circuit in Ashford and Willington closer to Highway 44. Coming and going, I missed many gardens and artistry. Perhaps a Part Two next June.

LAND Europeans have been coming and going in Connecticut since the 1630s. I came from Boston in 2018, but born in NYC, grew up along the coast then mid-western Michigan and thirty years in Minnesota, land of traditional family farms and the Jolly Green Giant. Family farmers were already being displaced by factory farming, a familiar story of declining social fabric and land stewardship.

"We come and go but the land will always be here."

- Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!*

Land is precious. More important than *We, the People*, because it doesn't need us. We need it, but abuse it. Most important are the Stewards who preserve the land... the farmers and gardeners, the artists, environmentalists and community activists.

Artists and gardeners gravitate to nature's wonder. Land is another palette. Connecticut is a garden paradise (except the bugs), and I suspect another dynamic at play. The concentration of gardens in Mansfield suggests that the *UConn Fine Arts Program* at Storrs may be a tour generator. Students and staff often remain in their academic areas and UConn is nature-blessed in the Eastern highlands.

This other-educated landscape designer came for the spiritual community of trees. Except the bugs. We need a vaccine for Lyme Disease !!! *O UConn Where Art Thou?*

GARDENS

1 Fenton River Studio 287 Gurleyville Road, Mansfield.

Shauna Shane is a fine arts painter and sculptor with a studio in a former button factory, and a fanciful garden artist. Columns, plants and cast-cement leaves decorate garden rooms. A sculpted Lady in Blue greeted me at the top of the driveway in a green, pink and red dress of growing *Coleus* leaves (not perennial, but easily rooted in water so cuttings can sustain it over winter).

2 Flying Dragon Studio 533 Chaffeeville Road, Mansfield.

Mary Noonan is an oil-watercolor painter using encaustic pigments mixed with hot wax. Her garden featured clusters of bright red, pink and white Sweet William (*Dianthus barbatus*), a biennial or short-lived perennial flowering late-spring to first frost. Garden paths lead to harvest gardens and a meadow for goats and a pony.

3 Khuyay Farm 441 Warrenville Road (Hwy 89), Mansfield.

In Janet Dauphin's words: "*Glass takes on exciting new forms and colors when fired in a kiln. I create nightlights, dishes, and window art, working at home on my alpaca farm.*" The lucrative wool-fleece business is an example of the agricultural diversity that enables family farmers to survive, and towns to thrive. Buy local.

4 Kim Bova Photography 597 Wormwood Hill, Mansfield.

Kim Bova's meticulous approach to fine art photography is reflected in her garden of restraint. Tall cultivars of Columbine (*Aquilegia*, a native wildflower with spurred flower petals) punctuated the peastone mulch that obviates ticks. Raised beds offered perfect lettuce.

Bova's nature studies are stunning, especially the transfer prints. An image is first printed backwards using *giclée* ink on a clear sheet of special film, then transferred in reverse to the desired surface (such as wood, glass, plexiglass or yuppo, a synthetic paper) to make the final print by a wet transfer method that includes gold, silver mica or paint, a new dimension of the original image.

5 Willow Tree Pottery 24 Bebbington Road, Ashford.

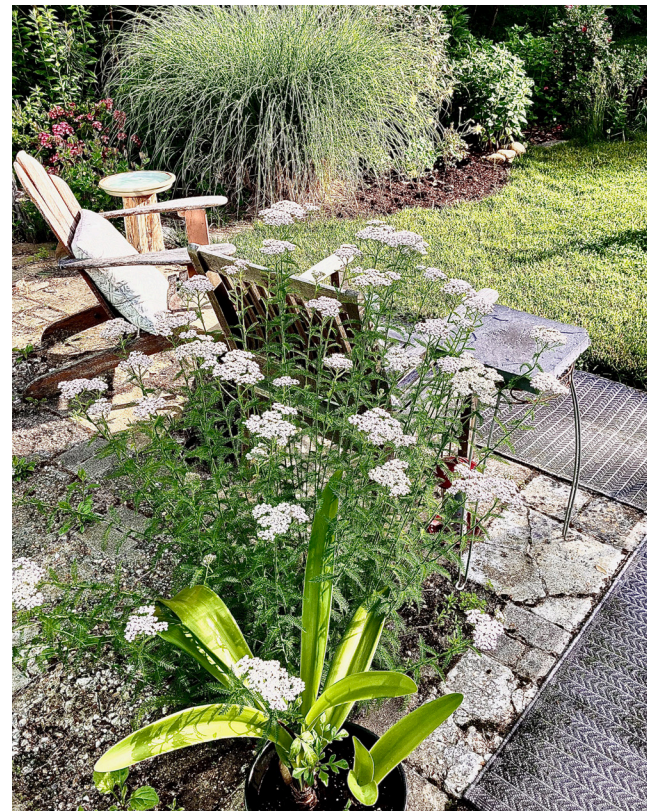
Potter-gardener Suzanne Staubach writes in her 2019 book that her "*cottage garden is a space of curves, but in the front, I have four beds in the universal quadripartite layout going back to Cyrus the Great, circa sixth century BCE.*" Others may not know such history underpins their gardens, but it's okay to juxtapose forms and styles in any case. IMHO. It's your garden. Plants have a "right place" (as Beth Chatto famously noted), but ideas are free to roam. Like weeds.

Staubach's elegant heavy pots are once-fired in a downdraft kiln, she explains, at "*2336 F in light reduction. This means I close the dampers a bit, so that the flames rob the oxygen from the pots and glazes, giving them the color I like... (with) ...the unexpected kiss marks of the flames.*"

Walking past her kiln, a towering and sweetly fragrant Mock Orange (*Philadelphus*) framed her hidden garden. The American cottage garden in quadripartite featured showy foxglove (*Digitalis*) spires of white, purple and a "rose color for late spring" as Louise Beebe Wilder suggested.

Late spring is the same as early summer, when severe drought is feared on the Massachusetts plateau from Sturbridge to Boston. Eastern Connecticut seems blessed with water. For now.

In "*A GARDEN MISCELLANY: An Illustrated Guide to the Elements of the Garden*" (2019), Staubach writes of "*The Border Ladies*" and our British garden origins, notably Gertrude Jekyll who admired the informal gardens around Surrey cottages. American Helena Ruth-



Yarrow in patio and Miscanthus fountain grass in writer's garden.



Columbine at Kim Bova Photography.

erfurd Ely observed (in "*A Woman's Hardy Garden*" 1908) that "the American climate is harsher, with summers hotter and winters colder than in England," thus plants perform differently.

I left Minnesota twenty years ago, harsher with summers hotter and winters colder than in *New England*. In another twenty years, will Storrs be harsher than Willimantic? Connecticut than the Cape? With climate change and diminishing rainfall, is the grass greener anywhere?

I suggest overseeding with clover (*Trifolium* from Latin tres 'three' + *folium* 'leaf'). It "fixes" nitrogen in

the soil, self-fertilizing the lawn, and was in premium seed mixes before WW2 chemical research developed herbicides that kill broadleaf plants, not blades of grass. Ergo, the Perfect American Lawn.

6 Last, an unlisted garden at 12 Cross Road in Chaplin. Mine. Perhaps on next year's tour, showing the work of a friend? My partner's watercolors? My neighbor's quilts? My trail toward Diana's Pool?

Offering another garden perspective, my Eden near-the-Natchaug allows many fine weeds to volunteer valiant form and color, and to feed the interconnected web of life. Such as yarrow (*Achillea*), mullein (*Verbascum*), pokeberry (*Phytolacca*) and many clumping grasses.

An amazing clump of species yarrow volunteered in my crumbling patio this spring and I'm feeding it compost. A cultivar of Chinese fountain grass was intentionally planted nearby three years ago, *Miscanthus* "Morning Light". Glorious when it glistens in the dew.

AKA Chapel of the Birch where five species of birch, four native, are planted with other trees, shrubs and herbs, many native, and some Japanese plants that are well-suited to our mild coastal climate. Where dear bunnies and the woodchuck play.

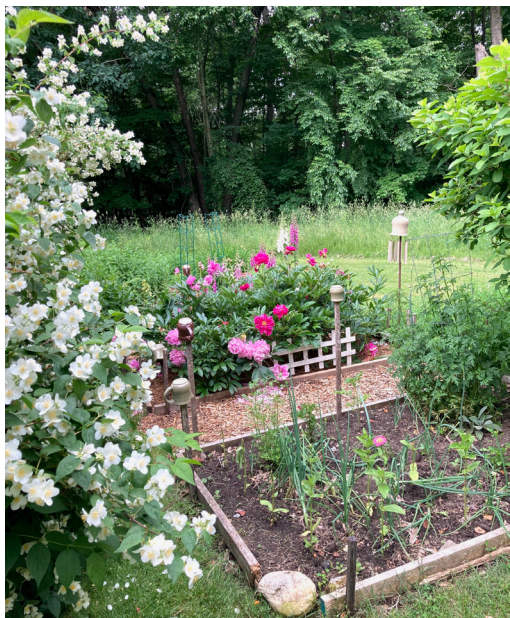
Where my serviceberries (*Amelanchier*) are dedicated to the memory of Mark Svetz (1952-2022). Willimantic writer, teacher, environmentalist and community activist. We are all connected.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, master gardener / designer, Chaplin.

Photos by the author.



Lady in Blue with growing Coleus dress at Fenton River Studio.



Mock Orange framing cottage garden at Willow Tree Pottery



Hardy cactus blooming in writer's garden (prickly pear/Opuntia).



Artwork by Lydia Viscardi: "Maybe Here".

'Imagined Places, Inhabited Spaces' at ECSU Art Gallery

Submitted by Michael Rouleau

The Art Gallery at Eastern Connecticut State University will present "Imagined Places, Inhabited Spaces" from June 27 - Sept. 2. The exhibition showcases the work of four artists who question the places we live in with a visual mash-up of "reality" and interpretations of the spiritual/metaphysical world.

"From exposing the demographics of race to exploring utopian worlds operating in cyberspace, the artists insinuate new ways of inhabiting both real and imagined spaces," said Julia Wintner, director of the Art Gallery.

Adrienne Chadwick was born in Toronto of Belizean ancestry, and lives and works in Hollywood, FL. Her mixed media installations utilize accumulation and repetition to resist the status quo from her BIPOC position. Chadwick is also an arts administrator who has dedicated 27 years to reimagining art museums and advocating for excellence in arts, culture and education. She is founder of Culture Conduit Consulting, providing arts education, public programming, community engagement and diversity, equity and inclusion resources to organizations across industries.

AdrienneRose Gionta is a south Florida-based multi-disciplinary artist from Brooklyn, NY. She self identifies as a "pop-culture consigliere," "VJ soothsayer" and "rose whisperer." She is a "digital ideation butterfly," an "extended reality evangelist," an "Internet of Things Svengali" and "50 Shades of Earl Grey." Gionta's work analyzes identity and cultural assumptions about fatness, beauty standards, embodiment and fulfillment on and offline. She works with avatars to create inclusive environ-

ments inspired by her obsession with HGTV in both real and imagined worlds where fat-bodied women have it all. Rod Faulds blends multiple digital images to create bold artworks that fuse figuration and abstraction. "The images I 'collect' are combined and constructed or formally designed into abstract compositions made from extremely pedestrian and certainly unromantic images," said Faulds. He is attracted to the moments of entering, passing through and leaving, and depicts these fugitive flashes through mundane elements that few people would consider worthwhile visual subjects.

Lydia Viscardi utilizes mixed media, oil and collage to create paintings that depict complicated layered scenes. The resulting textures and saturated color palette encourages the viewer to explore every nook and cranny to discover what hides within their compositions. Found textiles and images offer uncanny moments of legibility in otherwise chaotic scenes. All of this informs her fine-art creative life at her Newtown, CT studio.

The Art Gallery is open this summer Monday - Friday from 10 - 4 p.m. For more information, visit <https://www.easternct.edu/art-gallery/> or contact the gallery at (860) 465-4659, or the gallery director at wintnerj@easternct.edu. Eastern Connecticut State University is the state of Connecticut's public liberal arts university, serving more than 4,300 students annually on its Willimantic campus. Eastern offers students a strong liberal art foundation grounded in a variety of applied learning opportunities. Eastern has also been awarded 'Green Campus' status by the Princeton Review 12 years in a row. For more information, visit www.easternct.edu.



When The Time Is Right
renew,
redecorate,
rediscover
the excitement of living
in your home.

The right changes can make you fall in love with your home all over again. We have every element you need to create the home of your dreams, one affordable step at a time.

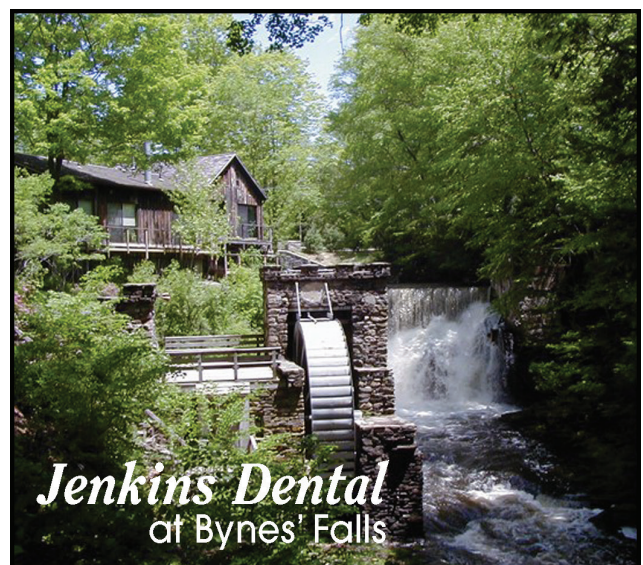
Cabinets - Counter Tops
Carpeting - Flooring
Come see our wool carpets

Stop by today for the best products, advice and inspiration to bring home a whole new look.

Design Center East LLC
Distinctive Cabinetry & Flooring
For Your Home or Office

27 MEADOW STREET, WILLIMANTIC • 860-450-8442

Hours: Mon.-Fri. 9 to 5; Sat. 9 to 2
Special Appointment Available Upon Request



Jenkins Dental
at Bynes' Falls

Cosmetic and Family Dentistry

Gentle and Effective Treatments

Open Evenings • Whitening
Relaxing Gas • Sedation Dentistry
E4D Technology/Crowns in One Day

860-742-6665

2991A South St., Coventry, CT 06238

www.bynesfallsdentistry.com
email: info@jenkinsdentalpros.com



Franc
MOTORS INC. ROUTE 32
WILLINGTON
(860) 429-2614 • www.francmotorsinc.com

Franc Motors is a general
automotive repair facility servicing
cars, trucks, trailers and RV's

We offer medium & light, and
heavy duty towing and recover.
Road Service is available.

Open Monday-Friday
8:00am-6:00pm



To all our contributors-
Thank you!

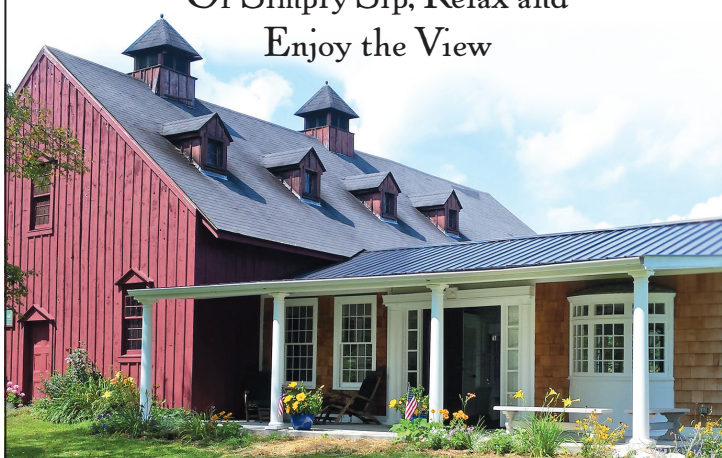
Without your submissions of writing,
poetry, artwork and photographs, this
paper would not exist. T. King, Publisher

WESTFORD HILL DISTILLERS

Tours & Tastings

Friday - 2 to 7 pm | Saturday and Sunday 12 to 5 pm
196 Chatey Road, Ashford, CT

Or Simply Sip, Relax and
Enjoy the View



In the Garden Series

"A Summer's Palette: Art and Flowers"

Saturday, July 9 - 10am to 4pm
(Rain Date July 10)

Art sale and demonstrations by 15+ local artists. see en plein air artists at work. There will be a paint and paper table for those who wish to try it themselves. Lilies and other flowers will be in bloom in the private daylily garden. There will be live music, drinks and snacks will be available.

Co-hosted by the Ashford
Arts Council - Ashfordarts.org
for participation details

No dogs please.



CALL 860-429-0464

INFO@WESTFORDHILL.COM



Witnessing the Past: Woodstock Students Pay Tribute to Slave

By Donna Dufresne

On June 7th, seventh graders from Woodstock Middle School shared evidence and insights about slavery in the dedication ceremony of a Witness Stone for a young man named Caesar, who was born enslaved in 1784 and raised with three other young men, Cit, Simon, and Prince in the Samuel McClellan home. In 1803, Caesar self-emancipated and his name never appears again in the Woodstock records.

The Woodstock Education Foundation and The Last Green Valley granted seventh grade English teacher, Christine Carter, and social studies teacher, Kyra Lit Schauer funds to research and place a Witness Stone in Woodstock. The Witness Stones Project™, “is a K-12 educational initiative whose mission is to restore the history and honor the humanity of the enslaved individuals who helped build our communities. The project provides archival research, professional teacher development, a classroom curriculum, and public programming to help students discover and chronicle the local history of slavery. The final component of the work in each community is the placement of Witness Stone Memorials, permanent landscape markers that honor enslaved individuals where they lived, worked, or worshiped. The award-winning program has spread to over eighty-six communities in five states and is rapidly growing throughout the Northeast from New Jersey to Maine.

The dedication ceremony, which took place at Roseland Park Amphitheater, included the flag ceremony and Pledge of Allegiance led by: Brendan Wright, Jacob Tworzidlo, Blake Kudzal and Blake Robida, of Woodstock Boy Scout Troop # 27. The Reverend Kevin Downer of First Church of Woodstock opened the ceremony with an invocation. First Selectman, Jay Swan, and Viktor Toth, Superintendent of Woodstock Schools gave remarks, commending the students for their hard work and dedication.

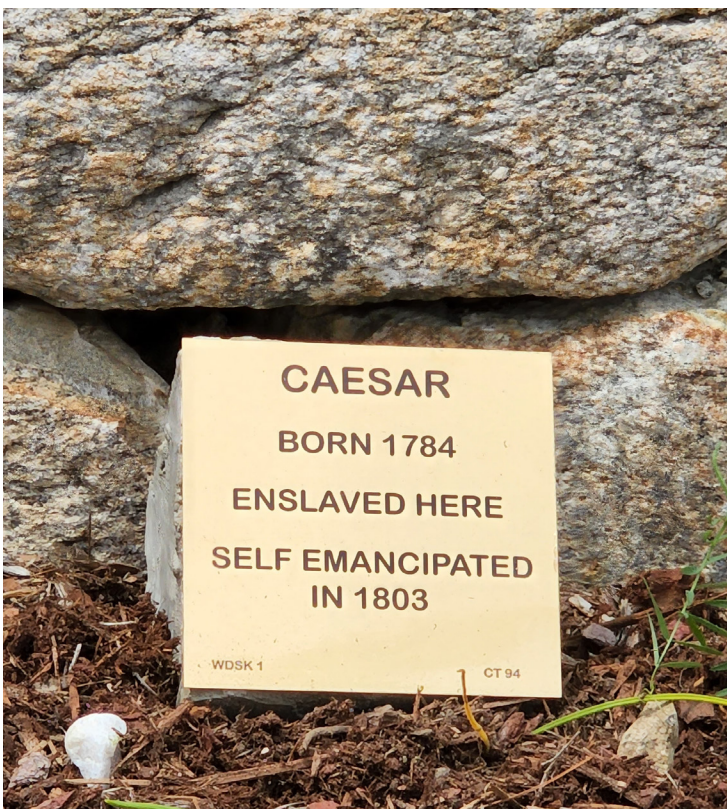
The following students read excerpts from their essays about Caesar: Robert Graham, Brayden Bottone, Lorelai Fish, Bella Stillitano, Kelsey McNeil, Maylie Ganas, and Brendan Lund. Izzy Crowley and Brendan Wright read Poems about Caesar. It was apparent through the student essays and poems that they learned about Woodstock history on their journey to uncover Caesar’s life. While examining primary sources, students gained a snapshot of the economy, industries, agricultural practices, the thriving commerce of South Woodstock, and Samuel McClellan’s contributions to Woodstock and the Revolutionary War, giving context to Caesar’s experience.

It’s not easy to find the stories of enslaved Africans who lived and worked in Northeast Connecticut when America was but a glint in the eyes of those who dared to dream. Vital records, land records,



wills, and probate records from the time of slavery in the 18th century left a scant trail behind those who were enumerated as “negro male or female” in census data or merely mentioned as possessions in wills, such as “my negro man Cuff”. And yet, students found evidence of their existence and the reality that even the smallest of New England towns were complicit in African slave trade whether they liked it or not.

Dennis Culliton, co-founder of The Witness Stones Project, introduced keynote speaker, Pat Wilson Pheanious, chair of the Witness Stones Project BOD. Ms. Pheanious, former State Representative from Ashford, and the daughter of a Tuskegee Airman, remarked on how empowering it was for her to learn from the Witness Stone research in Guilford, her ancestors’ place in American History. By saying their names, Pheanious felt for the



first time that she belonged to America as much as anyone else.

At the end of the ceremony, the Woodstock Middle School Chorus performed “We Shall Overcome,” conducted by Maria Wood. The students continued to sing the song while walking from Roseland Park to the Witness Stone site at the McClellan House where owner, Kevin Lewis, welcomed the group to unveil the stone where Caesar once lived. Reverend Kevin Downer gave a benediction that reminded students of the higher purpose of their project. He asked the whole group to repeat the following words:

“I am somebody. “You are somebody.” And now, in the spirit of the Witness Stone Project, join me as we declare that “Everybody is somebody!”

Reverend Downer went on to challenge the students who were part of the Witness Stones Project to share their experience with others so that we might have a “more hopeful, sustainable future.

According to teacher, Christine Carter, “students were very interested in discovering elements of Woodstock history that they did not know before. They felt a kinship with Caesar in his desire to be out from under the paternalism of enslavement as they dream of also growing up and having more choices. I am grateful to have been part of this project, and I hope it will continue to bring community members together”

Ashford Arts Council’s Artist Spotlight: Kathy Weigold

Submitted by Deg Gag

We are happy to announce that Kathy Weigold will be a presenter at our July 13th meeting at Knowlton Memorial Hall, the home of the Babcock Library on Route 44/25 Pompey Hollow Road in Ashford. She will kick off the evening at 7:00 with a show and tell of her journey to become the weaver she is today along with examples of her work. The public is always welcome to attend and can feel free to leave before the business meeting. Refreshments will be on hand.

Kathy Weigold has made a career of production weaving. Subcontracting work from designers of handwoven fabrics she makes their designs become a reality. Spanning 40 years plus, many miles of fabrics have been produced.

Kathy learned production weaving skills at The Marshfield School of Weaving in VT.

A lifetime of honing those skills, both in operating the loom and seeing how colors interact.

Kathy also developed her own

line of woven goods. First with rugs, having a practical bent and using things on hand. What better use for old worn-out clothes, sheets, blankets and the like than to make them into something usable again.



Dish towels that are 100% cotton and really work. Scarves that have their own personality, no two alike. Woolly ponchos, soft, light, and warm.

Color interactions that simply amaze. These are some of the things that comprise her work and life.

The Ashford Arts Council always has a presenter at the start of every meeting. We meet the 2nd Wednesday of every month and love to see fresh faces from the community come to these!

Old But Good

By Angela Hawkins Fichter

Surely, you’ve heard the expression, “old, but good”? The assumption in the expression is that if something is old, that means it’s out of date, or worn out, yet this particular old item is still good. Hah. Maybe we should change the expression to “good because it’s old.” I remember when we lived in South Killingly in the mid 1970’s, and I went shopping at a grocery store in the shopping center on Rt. 6 in East Brooklyn. The store had let some old women set up their table right in front of the store to sell their pies. It must have been autumn, because what they had to sell was apple pies. I walked up to the table and asked the oldest looking woman behind the table which pie she had made. She pointed to one, and I bought it. It was very yummy. Why did I ask the oldest woman? Because she would have made it from scratch from fresh apples, not canned apples. I asked the ladies which organization they were from, and the answer was the Brooklyn Episcopal Church. I had recently bought an apple pie from another church that had been made by a young woman. It had canned apples. Just not the flavor you get from fresh apples, and because the woman was young, she chose the quickest way to make a pie: buy an already made crust and put canned apples in it.

Another example that old can mean good, as in more knowledgeable, was when I lived in Greene, Rhode Island. We were renting what had been the chauffeur’s apartment, which was over a 5-bay stone garage built around the time of World War I. This was on the Arnold estate, which was over several thousand acres, and had been built by an obviously successful businessman as his summer home. I believe his other home was in Providence. I fell in love with a flower I had never seen before that was planted just along the low stone wall near the big white barn. I asked the name. The answer was, “Oh, that’s columbine, it was planted by the English gardener we had. His home was up there”, said by Mittie Arnold, the builder’s now elderly daughter, as she pointed up the

hill a bit. “And if you walk down that dirt road, you can see the cranberry bog we have.” The chauffeur’s apartment had hardwood floors, a clawfoot bathtub, and a soapstone sink. The view of the valley from the apartment windows was lovely. This looked over the area where Mittie and her friend Margaret Thomas had planted their gardens of herbs. They had run a successful business called Greene Herb Gardens, selling little jars of herbs that you bought at their small shop, or ordered by mail, or bought at various health food stores. In the 1950’s they provided the herbs to Pepperidge Farm for an herb bread that was sold at that time.

Once while we rented there, from about 1972 to 1974, I became very ill. I had a temperature of 102 to 103. I think it was the flu. I stayed in bed and felt weak and drained, plus had a fever. Since I had not been seen by the ladies for a couple days, they asked my husband if I was all right. He told them of my being in bed with a fever and not feeling well. A couple hours after he told them, Margaret showed up at my bedside with a mug of hot tea. She said drink this up, it will help you. I asked what the ingredients were. She said feverfew and explained it should reduce my fever. I obeyed and drank it up. Thirty minutes later I had no fever. I still had no energy. Took several days before I felt good again, but no more fever. Ever since then I have grown feverfew. It has small white blossoms with little yellow centers. It belongs to the daisy family. You snip off the blossoms when they are in full bloom and dry them on a paper towel in your home until they are bone dry. Then place them in a small bottle. If you get a fever, boil some water and add a spoonful of feverfew blossoms to a mug of hot water. Let them brew for several minutes. Then take the blossoms out and drink the hot tea.

Since the yummy apple pie and the effective feverfew tea were both provided by old women, who had years of experience, I think we should change the expression of old, but good into old and therefore good.

Solar Today:

Questions and answers about solar in our community and beyond

Greetings all,

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



This month I will share current day marketing strategies of the solar industry

Recently, an increasing amount of people have been calling me for solar advice after clicking an online solar ad. Between being bombarded by sales calls and receiving a variety of inconsistent information, they are confused on how to make heads or tails of solar options.

We live in a time where an overwhelming amount of both good, and bad information is at our fingertips. The solar industry has certainly had their share of struggles to obtain quality interested customers. Pre-Covid, door knocking and standing at Home Depot trying to interact with prospective customers yielded more quality leads than phone calls or mass mailings. Covid shifted to a whole new market of online lead generation techniques.

This new way of marketing is known as click-bait marketing. This is when you've been baited into giving up personal information in hopes of getting a great deal on solar.

WAIT.... Don't CLICK that BAIT!

You've probably seen "local" ads for solar on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, other social media and news scroll sites, these are Click-Bait ads. These ads are most often hosted by a national ad agency that specializes in mining "local" solar customers. Once you hit the ad and go to a landing page, the ad company will sell your information to a multitude of solar companies. The name of the game is, the first company in has a stronger chance to connect with you than the company that is the 5th, 6th, 7th to reach you. By the time you've been bombarded by 4 calls, you start hanging up the phone. Does this sound familiar?

Are you one of those who hit the click-bait button? How long did it take for your phone to start ringing? Minutes or hours? How long did it take to stop ringing? Usually months; That's because you stay in a robo-dial chain until their trunk fills up enough and your number finally falls out of their system.

So.. how do they get you to fall for it?



For the most part click bait ads for solar are misleading.

The process is that an ad agency creates an ad using a picture that grabs your attention; Often times the ads will show a picture with palm trees, a gazebo with fake solar roof tiles, some model looking at a battery, or in my opinion, worse yet - a hand help video that has nonstop back and forth motion while someone is yelling at you like Crazy Eddie used to.

They target certain zip codes, counties and demographics. A homeowner clicks the ad and brings them to the landing page that looks like a real solar company. The homeowner fills out their contact information. The ad company then sells the information to the highest bidding solar companies. Yes, you read that correctly, companies, typically up to eight! This then triggers an influx of marketing calls and emails by solar companies from all over the country.

The ads use language that will make you think you're getting something for free or you will actually get paid to go solar.

The ads usually state things like:
 "Free solar panels, Free battery, new Government rebate, we will pay you to go solar, NEW solar technology, No Cost, New incentives, No more electric bill, No out of pocket cost or

Our new program is looking for 50 CT homeowners to try our free new technology, enter your zip code to see if you qualify for the program". It goes on and on!

Solar is not free, there are NO new programs, technology or incentives and the government does not pay you to go solar. BTW - it's a credit, not a rebate! If any of these existed, I would know about it. I have a hawk's eye on the industry. Outside of residential solar, I am into Tiny Home design, off grid sustainability, battery backup technology, commercial building efficiencies and electric school bus initiatives. Do I know it all? Heck no, but I am deep into information pertaining to nationwide sustainable energy initiatives and technology on a daily basis.

Once in a rare occasion you will see semi-honest ads that state:

"No money down" or "No upfront costs".

These are generally true. However, the solar companies that contact you are mostly not local companies that will more than likely job out your install to a company that offers the lowest bid. There are a lot of variables when you choose to go solar. Most of the process is unseen by the customer, so there isn't a lot of public information out there on what happens between the time you say, "let's go solar", to when the solar install day comes. The pre-install steps, and install day, are crucial in having solar done right, and after solar is on your roof, you really want to make sure the company you choose will be there for you. Like, after install, they'll actually get your solar through final utility approvals and get your system turned on. That's a whole other story in itself.

Lastly, PLEASE read the reviews of the company; Find out where their main office is located, not just their satellite office, and look at the warranties on paper. Go on Indeed and LinkedIn and see how many ads they have for salespeople. In this day and age, constant ads for solar sales people equals a churn and burn way of doing business, it does not equate to a growing company.

OK, maybe now you have a slight understanding of why I am getting calls of confusion from people. There is simply so much information out there that it's often hard to decipher what is real honest information and what is not.

How do I personally get interested solar customers?

I have certainly been through my share of testing online leads that have never panned out. A few years ago I changed my marketing to simply writing education articles such as this one, being part of environmental commissions and I have joined a couple of professional groups where we refer trusted personal business referrals to one another. I also get a lot of new customers through happy past clients. *Ahhhh.. that feels so much more peaceful to me!*

If you'd like to see if solar would help save you money, please give me a call and we can discover it together. A complimentary evaluation of your energy bill vs the cost and potential savings of solar will determine if solar could be a good financial fit for you. With the proper information, you can make an educated decision and decide for yourself if solar is the right choice for you and your family.

Keep it simple, keep it honest, keep it local... Zen Solar

Thanks for reading my article. Until next month... let's make every day Earth Day!

John Boiano
 860-798-5692
 john@zensolar.net
 www.zensolar.net

WESTFORD HILL DISTILLERS

Tours & Tastings

Friday to Sunday ~ 12 noon to 5 pm
Gifts & Bottles to Take Home

196 Chatey Road
 Ashford, CT
 860-429-0464



INFO@WESTFORDHILL.COM



Your Local Potter since 1985

Susan Gerr

Birch Mountain Pottery

Studio- Gallery- Classroom

www.birchmountainpottery.com
 Rt. 195, 223 Merrow Rd,
 Tolland Shopping Plaza, Tolland
 (860) 875-0149

Tues. 10-5, Wed/Thurs. 12-5, Fri./Sat. 10-5,
 closed Sunday/Monday

NOW THAT'S LOCAL !

Swift Waters Artisans' Co-op

Whether you are looking for art, household goods, pottery, cards, jewelry, clothes or handwovens

THURS 12-5
FRI 12-5
SAT 10-5
SUN 12-4



WWW.SWIFTWATERS.ORG 860-456-8548

Song-a-Day Music Center

Coventry, Connecticut
860-742-6878 or songadaymusic.com
Lessons in: Guitar, Piano, Bass Guitar, Banjo, Mandolin, Ukulele, Dulcimer, Violin, Woodwinds, Brass & Drums
Instruments New & Used - Books, Gifts, Accessories, Instrument Repair
Buying used instruments! We pay cash!
Band Instrument Rentals & Supplies

Be Light as a Feather

Loretta Wrobel • Feminist Therapy

860-429-2629

297 Pumpkin Hill Road, Ashford, CT 06278

860-233-6076 (Office) Sliding Scale



Buddha's Bees Apiary

Wildflower Honey

www.buddhasbeeshoney.com
 860-786-8670

Neighbors
 a little paper
 big on community



Saturday, September 24th: Songs for Ukraine: A Benefit Concert to Support the People of Ukraine



The Packing House – Save The Dates!

By EC-CHAP

July

*“If I had my way,
I’d remove January from the calendar altogether
and have an extra July instead.”*

- Roald Dahl

We would like to thank all of our patrons, sponsors, donors, members, volunteers, and artists who have continued to support us during this challenging year. We are sincerely grateful for your continued belief in our mission.

The Packing House will be closed for performance during July and August. EC-CHAP’s Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery and the Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum will remain open with new exhibits and programs throughout the summer.

As we prepare for our upcoming season - September 2022 through May 2023 - we would like to inform you of the exciting events we have planned and hope you will “Save The Dates” and join us in the fall! We will provide additional details over the next two issues of the Neighbors Paper. We also invite you to visit EC-CHAP’s Calendar Tab (<https://www.ec-chap.org/>) or The Packing House (<http://thepackinghouse.us/>) for ongoing details.

SONGS FOR UKRAINE – A Benefit Concert to support the people of Ukraine – September 24, 2022

EC-CHAP is partnering with the Acoustic Duo, FOOLISH WISELY to coordinate and produce a Benefit Concert at The Packing House Fall on Saturday, September 24, 2022 to support the People of Ukraine. 100% of ALL Ticket and Merchandise Sales will be donated to this cause. We will host three performances during this special evening from 6:30pm to 9:30pm. We encourage like minded musical artists with original works to apply if interested in participating.

We invite you to save this date and join us for this benefit concert. If you are unable to join us in person, we ask you to consider donating what you can to this important cause. We are also seeking individuals and organizations to serve and be recognized as sponsors of this event. To apply to perform, donate or become a sponsor, please visit: <https://www.ec-chap.org/benefit-concert-for-ukraine>.

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:

*“If you hear a voice within you saying
‘You are not a painter’
then by all means paint
and that voice will be silenced.”*

- Vincent Van Gogh

Wishing you a safe and healthy summer!
EC-CHAP Board

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

SAVE THE DATES:

SEPTEMBER 2022:

Saturday, September 17th: EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series: Twice Around (Folk/Indie)



OCTOBER 2022:

Saturday, October 1st: EC-CHAP Jazz Series: Greg Abate Quartet (Bebop Jazz)



Wednesday, October 5th : The Blues Project (Rock)

THE BLUES PROJECT

CHRIS MORRISON STEVE KATZ ROY BLUMENFELD KEN CLARK SCOTT PETTIO

NOVEMBER 2022:

Thursday, November 3rd: An Evening with Tom Paxton and the DonJuans (Folk)



Friday, November 18th: Special Program: An Evening with Spiritual Medium Maura Geist

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).

Someone will place this feather there in the empty corner where the bureau of dreams once stood.
 Watch the hours pass and catch the dust that falls from aging rafters long neglected.
 The wooden floors talk back as all the yesterdays make their way toward the moments.
 Can you hear the laughter in the hallways?
 Or is there something else keeping us from finding the keyhole in the blackness and melancholy of doors that answer only to the wind?
 Find the feather, write my name beside your own in the dust that has gathered, and wait for time to just blow it all away.

Poem and photo by Wayne Erskine.



Step into your ALIBI: A Solo Show by EC-CHAP Resident Artist Cate Solari

By Cate Solari

I have been thinking about and preparing for this show for a year now, while in residence at the Eastern Connecticut Center for History Art and Performance (EC-CHAP). I came into my residency wanting to merge my interests in sculpture and art education through play. I have used my time to research, experiment, and play to ultimately put together the work for my solo show, *step into your ALIBI*, opening July 16, 2022 at EC-Chap's Dye and Bleach House Community Gallery. My show will feature ceramic and found object sculpture and an interactive collaborative play experience for all ages.



Each of my sculptures are made up of two parts, the ceramic vessel and a found object of play. The ceramic vessel is intended to be a stand-in for the human body and the found objects of play as the "ghosts of plays past."

I create my ceramic bodies completely intuitively. Purposely, so I am forced to engage with my playful side. I do not sketch or plan beforehand, I work in collaboration with the clay. The final body is a combination of what I want from my imagination and what the clay will allow materially. I use a coiling technique to coil up walls and the shifts, turns, and spines end up emerging as I need to adjust the work for structural support. When I feel like I have worked a body from one angle and it feels done, I immediately flip or turn the entire sculpture

Between now and its original inception my thoughts have shifted with a new sense of comfort and understanding. For so long I felt like my interests in the arts and in arts education and the myriad of other things I find exciting, we're all pulling me in different directions. However, now, with this solo show, I am starting to locate myself across these interests.

Step into your ALIBI is ultimately inspired by play and the relationship between play as an adult and play as a child. As we grow up, our relationships to things change. Amongst these relationships, the way we enact play changes. As an adult it is often difficult to find time for play, especially for play that is unstructured and intrinsically motivated.

Erving Goffman, a Canadian sociologist, theorizes that once the sense of childhood is lost, adults need an "alibi" to engage in acts of play. Goffman's theory of interaction unpacks conditions and strategies for non-embarrassing adult play. Once legitimized, the norms and rules of play themselves then provide an alibi for behavior that would risk being embarrassing outside of play.

Through my research in preparation for this show I have been questioning when this need for an alibi begins. Goffman believes it is as adults, but I argue it can happen much sooner.

I aim to embody this need for an alibi, perhaps a loss of childhood or thrust into adulthood, through my sculptures.



so that I can work it from another side. There are no bottoms or a "right way up" for the ceramic portions of the sculptures. That way they are not inherently grounded and I can play with them to make arrangements with the found objects of play.

The found objects of play are sourced from the local Mansfield, CT flea market and roadside bulk wastes. The slide was the first piece I came across. I had been dreaming about including a slide with this work and finally found one that was perfect. The woman who sold it to me told me it was a slide for goats, that it was broken on one side and she didn't want a child to get hurt. I told her I wasn't going to use it for goats but that I would make sure nobody got hurt on it.

It takes me about one month to complete each clay body, and then two weeks or so to fire the clay into ceramic. Throughout a month of building I work

on three large pieces and two small pieces simultaneously. I add coils to one piece for as long as I can, and when it starts to feel like it is going to collapse I support what I added and move on to the next sculpture in the rotation. By the time I finish the last sculpture in the rotation the first one has set up and is ready for more coils. When one is done it goes into the drying area and a new one takes its place in the rotation.

The act of care is crucial in ceramics. One wrong move and the entire piece can come crumbling down, or worse, crack! I love to baby my

work, keeping it at the perfect moisture for hand building. Clay is very finicky when it comes to moisture. Throughout the building process I keep my work covered in plastic and cushioned with foam to keep it from drying out too quickly.

Alongside my sculptures, visitors of the Dye and Bleach House Community Gallery will be able to participate in an interactive collaborative play experience. Picture this: larger than life crayons. That's it, that's all I want to give away for now! It will be fun, they will work like real crayons and it will put you back in the headspace of what the good old days of play were like.

Step into your ALIBI will be open July 16, 2022 with an opening reception from 5-8pm. The show will be up through August 20, 2022 on Saturday's from 10am-12pm or by appointment. I cannot wait to see you there!

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

The Dye and Bleach House Community Gallery is located at 156 River Road in Willington, Connecticut. The Community Gallery was developed to serve as a platform for local and regional artists of all ages to display their original work for public viewing. We welcome everyone to visit and view the artwork during open hours and encourage artists, students and more to participate and apply to have their work on display! For more information about the Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery and how you can be a part of our efforts to showcase regional artists, please email: info@ec-chap.org or call: 518-791-9474.

The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery and adjoining history Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum are open Saturdays 10am-Noon or by appointment. There is no charge for admission, but donations are greatly appreciated.

Like museums? Have some free time this summer? Become a DOCENT!

Submitted by Bev York

What is a docent? Someone who meets and greets guests at a museum or art gallery and gives them a tour while sharing some interesting stories. 'Docent' is the Latin word for to teach. This is a great way to learn about local history, get the inside scoop on some of your favorite museums in the area and meet cool people. Local museums need volunteer tour guides, gardeners, people to help with events and more.

A one-day training class for docents will be held in the Windham region in July. The class will provide valuable information for anyone who would like to volunteer in any museum setting. It will cover some historical content of the local area and also best practices for welcoming tourists, guiding various age groups, engaging visitors, and more. A packet of information will be distributed. The program is appropriate for new volunteers as well as veteran docents who want to join in to learn new content, trends and network.

Please register for the one day "class" to be held on Friday, July 8, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM. Tours of the Lebanon Historical Society, the Beaumont House, Jillson House and the CT Eastern Railroad Museum as well as manuals and lunch will be included. The cost is only \$20 (we are all volunteer and need your help to cover costs of the program) and a commitment to be a docent or volunteer at one of the local or partner museums. The Docent Class is sponsored by The America Museum. You can register at Windham-Chamber.com or by calling Bev York at 860-208-0790 or 860-423-1878.

WTG Announces Auditions for Playwrights Showcase

Submitted by Robin Rice

Thursday & Friday, July 21 & 22, 2022 at 6 pm at the Burton Leavitt Theatre

Performances: Friday and Saturday, September 16th and 17th

The WTG Playwrights Group has been meeting monthly and has 5 or 6 original works ready for their premieres on the stage of the Burton Leavitt Theatre.

We are looking for approximately 10 actors of varying ages to bring these playwrights' visions to life. Please join us and experience the excitement and creativity of performing in something brand new!

COVID Vaccination Required/Masks Required except while performing on stage

For More Information Contact Peter at phdene-gre@gmail.com

Advertise
 the Neighbors paper
 Locally Written
 Locally Wread

Writers' Block

By Felix F. Giordano

One of the persistent obstacles that a writer faces is when they stumble upon what is referred to as, Writers' Block. That's when a writer cannot proceed with a story they are working on for one reason or another. However, there really is no one set explanation for what causes Writers' Block. It could be that the writer did not properly develop an outline or that a new character pops up in the story or an unplanned incident suddenly takes place and dramatically alters the scope of the outline. Sometimes the root cause is not even the outline itself or lack thereof. It can be the result of a writer's newly found research or a fellow writer's recent valid critique which now imperils the story's plot or subplots.

It can be as simple as: you want to have a cool name for a minor character but can't come up with an acceptable one. Or: you've misidentified a character's habits based upon their medical condition, their job title, or their religious or ethnic background. Now you have to go back and fix everything that conflicts with what you've previously written. Or: you need to complete additional research before you can understand or explain a technical incident, device, or procedure in the story. It's enough to make you stop writing until you've corrected every flaw in your manuscript or browsed countless websites to ensure that your story feels as real and as accurate as possible. Authenticity is what can make or break a story. If you cannot convince your reader that you know what you're writing about, you may lose them before your plot becomes interesting.

I write mystery/suspense/thrillers about a Native American sheriff. My father-in-law loved to read my books and even enjoyed reading my first drafts. Once he said to me, "I have a problem with what you've written about firearms." And I thought, okay he's a WW2 vet and knows what he's talking about. He said, "You wrote that your sheriff is armed with a 50-gauge shotgun, why?" I told him that I wanted to impress my readers with my character's strength and ability to wield such a large weapon. He laughed and said, "There is no such weapon as a 50-gauge shotgun and even if there were, it would be so small that it would be useless." We both shared a laugh but then I had to go back and fix everywhere in the story where I referenced that weapon. That's an example of Writers' Block caused by my mistake of not conducting the proper research.

Say that you're writing a current day sci-fi novel about a couple vacationing in Eastern Europe. They accidentally stumble upon the Chernobyl exclusion zone and discover a tribe of zombies. You've researched every bit of detail about the Chernobyl accident, radiation poisoning, other zombie novels, the topography of Ukraine, even the language and customs of its people. Your novel is 90% complete and people have commented that it's a brilliant and entertaining story. Then in real-life the Russian invasion of Ukraine happens. Now what do you do? That's a potential Writers' Block. You can continue the story as if it doesn't parallel real-life but will your novel be accepted by readers who will always have the optics of "what happened to the Russian Army" in the back of their minds? If you want to make your story real you would have to edit your manuscript by either modifying the timeline to reflect an earlier period in history or go through the entire novel and insert the Russian Army into the plot.

These examples of Writers' Block were due to external influences, flawed choices, or inaccurate or incomplete research and not directly by the writer's inability to put pen to paper. Now let's talk about Writers' Block caused by when you're at a loss for words and don't know what to write.

You may be unable to arrive at a satisfactory plot, or you have the beginnings of a plot but don't know where it should go. This is when ideas are born and where our imagination takes over. Think of a story or film and modify the plot so that it's unique and then insert a twist. That's what most writers do. Every James Bond novel has different antagonists, locales, and technology but the plot structure is all the same. Bond has to thwart an evil organization, save the world from chaos, and end up with the woman of his choice. Scott Mitchell Rosenberg published a graphic novel in 2006 which was the basis for the 2011 major motion picture, *Cowboys and Aliens*, a unique concept combining two genres, westerns and sci-fi. How many times have we seen various combinations of drama, comedy, mystery and fantasy thrown into a creative stew? I keep returning to the film, *It's a Wonderful Life* for reference. In that film, Frank Capra inserted elements of drama, comedy, and fantasy all weaved together into a successful and integrated plot.

If you can't develop a plot, think of an event that took place, change the names of the people, modify the locale, and add additional events as subplots. Our dreams can be fertile ground for plot generation. Think of something as mundane as grocery shopping but while at the store your character meets someone famous. Another suggestion would be your protagonist is watching the news on TV and sees a "person on the street" interview and quickly realizes the person interviewed looks exactly like him or her. That can go many different ways depending upon the genre. The person on the street could be a lost sibling, someone from a parallel universe, or a cloned experiment gone awry. How many times have we read about true inspirational stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary things? Think outside the box. That's when good plots become great plots.

Maybe you're stuck in the middle of the story. You know how the story ends but there is that slight hump that your character needs to get over before your story can continue. Maybe you need to kill off a character but you don't know a plausible way to do it without the murderer being identified too soon. Don't stop writing! If you're using a computer, insert a placeholder at that point. The numbers 8888 will do nicely. Then continue with the next scene. After you figure out how to address the issue that caused you to pause, you can then search on 8888 and be sent right back to the spot where you were stuck. If you're writing by freehand, attach a paper clip to the page where you want to return.

Perhaps you need to make a change in the middle of your story but then you realize it's not compatible with or runs contradictory to everything that you've written up to that point. You know what needs to be done but to do so, you have to rewrite half the story and it can seem insurmountable. Sometimes it's better to extricate that incompatible part of the story, continue on, and save it for another time. I wrote a scene in *The Killing Zone* where a deputy rescues a young woman from a biker gang. I removed that scene from the novel but then used it as the basis for my next novel, *Missing in Montana*.

When you find no plausible method to overcome Writers' Block then the best solution is to ask for help. If you belong to a writer's group be candid and explain that you need help in overcoming your Writers' Block. Most members of writers groups are more than eager to assist a fellow writer and they can help us brainstorm and get over the obstacle. If you don't belong to a writers group, ask the help of a family member or a good friend with an honest opinion. I find that when a writer brings a non-writer into their sphere for creative consultation, good things happen. Some people have creative minds and relatable world experience but don't have the desire to sit at a computer for hours upon end to put their thoughts onto paper. But they are often eager to help an open-minded writer who is willing to listen.

We defined "Writers' Block" 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: How to Remember

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

Yale University's Adult Autism Community On-line Book Discussion Events

Submitted by Michelle Baughman

COME JOIN US for the reboot of our online book discussion group on Zoom led by CASY Sparks long-time member, Michelle Baughman! Every other Friday (excluding holiday weekends), Michelle will present on a different book and lead a thought-provoking discussion on relevant topics. Book authors frequently join the group to discuss their work. All books will have a connection to autism and that connection will be diverse. Come join us to find out more.



There will be no Book Discussion on Friday July 1st, due to the Fourth of July holiday weekend.

On July 15th (3-4pm EDT), we will be discussing the book *Is That Clear?: Effective Communication In A Neurodiverse World* (2022) by Zanne Gaynor, Kathryn Alevizos, and Joe Butler. Co-author Joe Butler will be joining us from the United Kingdom, via Zoom to discuss the book and answer questions. This book is aimed at allistic (non-autistic) people and offers tips, insights, and advice on how they can improve their communication to be more effective and inclusive for autistic people. It is a very respectfully written book with accurate insights which the authors were able to gain because they sought the advice and council of autistic individuals while they were writing the book. (I wrote a book review on this book for the February 2022 issue of Neighbors News which can be accessed via the online archives feature: neighborspaper.com/archives).

On July 29th (3-4pm EDT), we will be discussing the book *Songs Of The Gorilla Nation: My Journey Through Autism* (2004) by Dawn Prince-Hughes, Ph.D. Author Dawn Prince-Hughes will be joining us from the Seattle Washington, via Zoom to discuss her book and answer questions. In this book Prince-Hughes describes how she learned techniques to manage her autism from experiences observing and interacting with the gorillas at the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle, Washington, and how working with gorillas helped her escape her social isolation. She makes interesting and profound observations about how people and gorillas are subsumed emotionally, socially, and spiritually in similar ways.

Our online Zoom book club meets every other Friday 3-4 PM EDT with next meeting taking place June 17, 2022. There is no cost to participate. Sign up and RSVP at <https://www.meetup.com/ProjectCASY/> OR join our private group SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY FOR AUTISM

DISCLOSURES: CASY Sparks membership, activities and events are free. CASY Sparks is sponsored in part by The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation Adult Autism Research Fund, a generous gift from the Rosen family, and the research of Dr. Roger Jou, including Simons Foundation Powering Autism Research (SPARK) Clinical Site Network - Yale University (<https://www.SPARKforAutism.org/Yale>).

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

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).

As contentious net metering debates persist across the US, Connecticut and Hawaii show a way forward
Utility Dive. "In February of 2021, Connecticut's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority reinforced the importance of net metering in stabilizing and supporting distributed solar adoption, while also adding measures to support equitable adoption in low-income and disadvantaged communities. By ensuring a consistent, long-term price for exported energy, the new rules support continued growth in solar and battery adoption...Connecticut households with low incomes or in distressed communities are eligible for higher prices on the electricity they sell back to the grid, making solar energy more available to more communities. Low-income and distressed communities may still lack access to capital, financing, and home-ownership, all of which may still limit equitable adoption, but those are challenges that can (and must) be addressed outside the rate structure."

Tong: Connecticut homeowners should be aware of solar power contracts

The Center Square. "Residential solar may help reduce electric bills and dependence on fossil fuels to power our electric grid, but consumers must proceed with caution," Tong said in the release. "Solar power purchase agreements or lease agreements are often long-term, complex, and can be expensive. Any electric bill savings varies per household depending on many factors. While electric rates are high and we are all looking for ways to save money, consumers should never feel pressured into a solar contract or any other major home project." "Plus: Attorney General Tong, DCP Commissioner Seagull Urge Caution in Reviewing Residential Solar Contracts"

WATCH: Life on the EV Highway

The Sentinel Record. "We are driving from Connecticut to California to show people that there's no problem getting from point A to point B in an electric vehicle," Dixon said. "Research has shown that 50% of people who are interested in an electric vehicle don't purchase one because they're afraid that they're not going to make it. We just wanted to show people that it's no problem to have an electric vehicle and to really get wherever you want. We're traveling 4,700 miles across this beautiful country to show that no matter where you are that you can make it in an EV," she said."

State's first universal charging stations for electric cars installed at Madison service plaza

The Day. "Stonington — A group of neighbors, the Aquarion Water Co. and some town officials are criticizing a proposal by a Virginia firm to construct an energy storage facility off rural Prentice Williams Road in Old Mystic. They say it endangers the aquifer where it is located and the nearby Aquarion Water Co. reservoir, does not conform to the rural zoning in the area, and poses both a fire and safety hazard for neighbors. The state Siting Council and not the town, though, will decide whether to issue the required permit for the project."

Connecticut and Millstone say the deal keeping the nuclear power plant open looks even better now. Here's why.

Hartford Courant. "The agreement between Connecticut and Dominion secured nuclear power at a set price, helped achieve greenhouse gas emissions goals and kept the plant open at least until the end of the decade. Millstone was "challenged in a low-price environment," and a stable price helped the Richmond, Va.-based Dominion invest in the plant, said Kevin Hennessy, senior policy and media relations director at Dominion. He and [DEEDYkes say keeping Millstone operating helps assure the reliability of New England's power grid...With a fixed price agreed to in the contract, consumers avoid commodity price swings, she said."

Connecticut ready for energy demands this summer 'under typical weather conditions'

The Day. "The region currently has excess capacity. It would take several poorly timed contingencies (failure of major generation stations and transmission lines) in order for there to be an energy shortage'...Thus, while there is always a chance things can go wrong, DEEP expects Connecticut customers will not face rolling blackouts due to a heat wave. Storm-related outages remain a concern...Healey acknowledged that Millstone could shut down if a heat wave abnormally warms Long Island Sound waters. But: 'There are also protocols in effect that would require a unit shutdown if those limits were exceeded.'...Healey stressed the importance of renewable energy sources to make sure the state meets its energy demands this summer, including solar, wind, hydro and nuclear generation."

Middletown recreation center to use sustainable, resilient energy

Middletown Press. "This facility incorporates several different power generation and storage technologies that will be integrated and optimized to provide both parallel and back-up power for the community center,'...Clarke Energy's CHP units will supply 35kW of electricity and 204.1kBTU/hr of hot water at high efficiency. The CHP can provide black-start capability for the microgrid. In addition, there will be a solar photovoltaic array, providing renewable electricity from the sun. Surplus energy can be stored in a battery energy storage system for peak shaving."

The site of a now boarded-up Connecticut country club could be used for multifamily housing, a solar installation

Hartford Courant. "Some residents feel strongly the property [in Woodbridge] should remain a refuge for wildlife and passive recreation, and yet another group is interested in putting solar panels at the property. ... 'the former CCW is one of the few parcels with access to three-phase power where we could put a large-scale solar installation. It remains clear that the town needs additional revenue and diverse housing, and this parcel is certainly one way toward achieving those goals,' Heller said. A solar farm could also bring in revenue to offset energy costs on the site, she said."

Greenskies installs 137-kW rooftop solar project for Connecticut YMCA

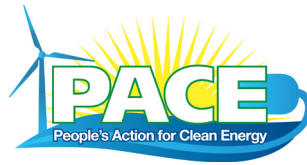
Solar Power World. "The YMCA of Greater Hartford has partnered with Greenskies Clean Focus, Titan Energy and Connecticut Green Bank to install a 137-kW solar energy system on the roof at the Hale YMCA in Putnam, Connecticut. The Y anticipates the array will provide up to 20% of its facility's annual electricity for a projected yearly savings of approximately \$10,500...'Implementing solar energy not only reduces our carbon footprint but also provides significant energy cost savings, savings that translate into valuable programs for our community.'" "

Massachusetts apartment retrofit offers model for multifamily energy savings

Energy News Network. "A Massachusetts apartment complex has nearly completed an extensive and challenging clean energy overhaul, a process that planners say helped create a playbook for tackling difficult multifamily retrofits. The owners of the South Winds Apartment Community in Fall River, a small city on the Rhode Island border, spent two years developing and executing a plan to tighten the envelopes of the complex's 39 buildings, replace climate control systems with heat pumps, and install solar panels on every available rooftop. The changes are expected to avoid more than 3,800 tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year — equivalent to taking 750 cars off the road — and cut energy costs by 80%."

A key rule on the New England power grid will end, but not for a while

CT Mirror. "It will be nearly three more years before a contentious rule ends that has made it difficult for renewable energy to get onto the New England grid. Late Friday night, days before its deadline that fell on the holiday weekend, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approved a plan from regional power grid operator ISO-New England to change how it acquires power for the grid in the future...The rule at the center of this controversy is known as the Minimum Offer Price Rule — or the MOPR. It is the backbone of the ISO's once-a-year auction that determines what generating resources will go into its Forward Capacity Market, the future power it plans three years in advance."



Willington Library News

Paws & Read with Willow

Join us on the third Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m. to read with Willow.

Registration is required. Come and earn a ticket!

Willow is an American Foxhound and a nationally registered 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. Willow loves visiting the library, loves company, is very patient and loves listening to stories, just like you! She would like to meet you, 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. You may register for multiple days, but only one slot per day, per person.

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 slot 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, July 16, August 20, and/or September 17

Willington Public Library, 7 Ruby Road, Willington, CT

860-429-3854, willingtonpubliclibrary.org

Friday Noir Movie Matinee Series FREE on the BIG Screen

Willington Public Library
7 Ruby Road, Willington, CT
860-429-3854
www.willingtonpubliclibrary.org

Are you a fan of the 40's & 50's noir films where sometimes everything is not always as it seems? Join us for a nostalgic afternoon into the world of classic Hollywood filmmaking and witness legendary acting from a bygone era.

Showings: First Fridays (unless otherwise stated) at 12:30 pm, in the Community Room.

Registration is required. Come and earn a ticket!

Upcoming Scheduled Movie Dates and Titles

July 1, 2022: Impact (1949) 111m.

Unsuspecting businessman Walter Williams is the target of a plot by his scheming wife Irene. She and her paramour Jim Torrance plan to dispose of her inconvenient husband by orchestrating a car "accident". Starring Brian Donlevy, Helen Walker, and Tony Barrett. Directed by Arthur Lubin.

August 5, 2022: Detour (1945) 67m.

Al Roberts' life takes an unexpected and unpleasant turn when he decides to hitchhike to the West Coast in pursuit of his girlfriend Sue. When the driver who gave him a ride turns up dead, Al decides that the police won't believe his innocence and decides to dispose of the body. Starring Tom Neal. Directed by: Edgar G. Ulmer.

September — NO FILM DUE TO THE LIBRARY BOOK SALE

VETERANS
FREE MEDICAL RIDES
to CT and RI
VA Medical Facilities
860.317.1025



By Focus on Veterans, Inc.

Magic Bus

By Mark Svetz



Public transportation has always been a lot of fun for me. I think it's the PUBLIC part that amuses me. I almost always feel better when I'm around people.

That was my experience last week when I got on the Storrs—Willimantic bus to go to the museum. A pleasant trip to the museum turned into an adventure.

My wife, Sarah, and I recently returned to Willimantic after living for almost a decade on Manhattan's Lower East Side. For me, every day in Manhattan was an adventure, filled with a thousand big and little encounters with people. In all their chaotic majesty, people tripped, stumbled, charged or danced gracefully through our lives, from that first step onto the sidewalk in the morning, to the weary slog up the stairs at night. Whew!

So when we decided to go and see the Benton museum's Kathe Kollwitz show the other day, it was nice to find the bus schedule fit into our day perfectly.

Sarah and I have always used public transportation: the WRD buses around here, AMTRAK, Bonanza Bus, Metro North. Any time we find ourselves in a strange city, we figure out how to ride the buses, and we feel at home. We once planned a whole day in Boston, just because it would involve three different forms of public transportation: Bonanza to Providence, AMTRAK to South Station, and the MBTA around the city!

We have built our life so we can leave our car in the driveway for weeks on end, which feels pretty good right now, watching the gas prices change daily. I think of it as a survival skill for this modern world. I also find it has changed my perspective, moving mostly at a walking pace, from home to our shop, to run errands.

As a case in point, our trip to the museum started with a walk across the footbridge into Downtown Willimantic. The river was a rushing torrent from the heavy rains, and it was a thrill to stand high above, while the river raged below. That is something I wouldn't have been able to appreciate from the window of a car.

And that was before we even got on the bus at Valley and Bank streets. It arrived on time, and we paid for the ride (\$1.30 for one person, from Willimantic to Storrs) with our 10-ride ticket. These tickets are available from the WRD offices at 968 Main Street, Willimantic. The 10-ride Ticket costs \$10, and you can get a monthly pass for \$40. Schedules and fares are posted at the web site for the Windham Region Transit District.

There were six or eight people on the bus when we boarded. It was enough to give me that “fly-on-the-

wall” feeling of being invisible in a crowd. It's a feeling I always get on buses and subways. I miss it since leaving the city, and it feels nice to get a little flashback whenever I board the bus. This, I think, is the adventure part. The part when I get to recharge my flagging batteries with some collective energy.

In New York, we spent many hours enjoying the quiet recesses of various museums. Which was a delight, without a doubt, but as in Willimantic, the bus ride home was as much a thrill for me. I loved to take the M15 bus home from the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian way downtown. This trip took us through the amazingly crowded streets of the Lower East Side, including East Broadway, with its incredible array of street merchants, truck drivers, fish mongers and tourists.

The trip to Storrs was comparatively uneventful, I suppose, but it seemed full of excitement to me. I don't get to the East Brook Mall very often, and it's nice to ride along the brook with the added height of the bus. I love seeing the people who use the bus for grocery shopping, something we might all be figuring out how to do soon! It's not always easy, but it comforts me to know others manage to avoid a car in this way.

It is always wonderful to arrive in Storrs without even having to think about where to park! It is a great walk from Rt. 195 to the Benton Museum, through the rare parts of campus that haven't changed that much since I was a student there!

The Benton Museum has changed. There is now a really nice coffee shop at the entrance to the museum at what used to be the rear of the building. The Kathe Kollwitz exhibit is up through May 6. It includes 30 prints and photographs from the museum's collection. I was hoping to see more of her drawings, but the current exhibit puts a powerful human face on the horrors of the war.

We had a cup of coffee and headed back for the bus. There was a woman at the bus stop I hadn't seen in many years. Sarah and I used to play with her kids when we all lived on Spring Street in Willimantic. Her kids now have children of their own. We got a chance to catch up on the ride back to Willimantic.

We got off the bus in Downtown Willimantic and walked about a block to the Wrench in The Works library and meeting place, where we did, in fact, meet with some friends. We talked over coffee, then Sarah and I walked home.

All in an afternoon, and all because we chose to be “on the bus”!

Ed. Note: This was the first article Mark Svetz wrote for Neighbors. It is re-printed from the May 2007 edition.

Cunningham's Digitization Corner:

Audio and Video Tape Surgery

By Morgan Cunningham

I'll have to admit up-front that I'm not a medical doctor or surgeon. Nor do I pretend to be one. But, I do consider myself a different kind of surgeon: a media surgeon.

Okay, that's a job?

Well, it's not a job that can be found in searching LinkedIn or Google. Perhaps that's one of the reasons why I started my own business! I offer “media surgery” along with my media digitization services.

One of my earliest clients handed me an audiotape reel from circa 1965. It was produced at a recording studio.

It's generally easier to work with audio reels pre-1972, because of the materials with which the tapes were physically made. But, this 1965 tape posed a challenge: it was rife with paper leader tape!

Leader tape, which can be either paper or plastic, is the same size of the audio tape but no audio can be recorded on it. It's intended to divide sections of audio on a reel, just like a track would do on a CD – for instance.

In short, you put the audio tape and the leader tape alongside

each other and put a piece of “splicing tape” behind the two to conjoin them, a “splice.” You then do the same for the other end, which usually reconnects to more audiotape.

The problem is that, in almost every case, the glue on the splicing tape dries up after decades of being against paper leader. (This issue is far less likely in instances when plastic leader tape is used). If you were to play an audio tape with paper leader that hasn't been repaired, chances are it would split in two, leaving the audiotape and the leader tape separate. Then what?! It must be repaired ahead of time.

The bigger problem is when you're working with a reel that has about 30-40 paper leader divisions!

That was the case with this 1965 tape. Over 30 leader tape divisions. And, oh, the client later gave more reels with this problem to me...so, not to toot my own horn, but I've got plenty of experience in this department!

Every splice where tape conjoins the audio tape and the paper leader tape must be replaced. It can take up to two minutes to do each repair properly.

The same principal applies when repairing audio cassettes, eight-



This reel shows paper leader divisions between audiotape on a 7" reel tracks (yes, people still use them—especially in older cars!), or videotapes (VHS, camcorder, etc).

After “media surgery” has been performed, the tapes can be played and digitized. For me, it's worth the time and effort, because it helps people preserve precious physical memories or data as digital files.

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

The Illusion of Freedom: The American Psychotic Obsession with Second Amendment

By Donna Dufresne

America, once the light and hope of the world, is choking on the dark matter shoved down our throats by the NRA. Some kind of evil lurks in the psyche of a nation obsessed by the second amendment, and the illusion that the emblem of democracy is a gun and the right to blow someone's head off. We are the only nation in the world where an ordinary citizen can legally get their hands on a military weapon and use it indiscriminately on fellow citizens. Shamefully, before we could even grasp the unfathomable truth of another mass shooting, political pundits on Fox News began to send out dog whistles to gin up the Trumpian base to protect the second amendment. They brazenly ride the coattails of our tears, manipulating the worst of who we have become – a nation of nincompoops obsessed with freedom without responsibility.

One week after a white supremacist murdered ten African Americans in a supermarket, we learned that over twenty families lost their babies in a senseless shooting rampage by an eighteen-year-old. He was able to buy two assault rifles in the republican wild west shoot- 'm-up and regulations be danged Texas. No background checks. Like the shooter in Buffalo, he simply walked into a gun shop and left with weapons of mass destruction. This is what terrorism looks like: young men groomed by white supremacists and the gun manufacturers whose marketing campaigns target the vulnerability of an immature brain. Surely, if we were able to get Joe Camel off the market and go after Big Tobacco companies for targeting children as the next generation of smokers, we can stop the NRA and the manufacturers of AR15's from putting young, white males in their marketing crosshairs. We must ask ourselves, “Is this what it means to be great again?”

Supposedly, a handful of republicans have agreed to pass a bill to address school shootings for which we are supposed to be grateful. There is no mention of age restrictions and background checks. The bill emphasizes school safety by imprisoning students and teachers in fortresses where children learn to duck and cover, but God forbid they learn about slavery, (just saying). And don't get me started on the hairbrained ideas about arming teachers. Really? Ted Cruz even suggested School buildings have only one entrance. Who needs to worry about kids being murdered in their classroom when they will most likely perish in a fire? Worst of all, the party of “no government is good government,” which totally dismantled the mental health system during in the Reagan administration, wants to throw a few breadcrumbs into mental health. An empty gesture without background checks and age restrictions. IT'S THE GUNS STUPID!

The NRA has successfully bamboozled Americans into believing that an assault rifle is the symbol of freedom. The intent of the second amendment was to ensure that the United States had a standing militia to protect the fledgling nation. It was written before there was a regulated army back in the day of the fife and the drum. The corruption of the second amendment is the madman scheme of successful marketing by the NRA on behalf of the corporate military industrial complex. Republican senators such as Ted Cruz are deep in the pockets of the ruse, for political gain if not monetary profit, and Fox in the Henhouse “News” is the propaganda machine doing the devil's bidding. Don't be fooled by their pleas for prayers while they arm up on promotional blasts about the second amendment. The real psychosis is that we live in a country where there is no funding for mental health, education, healthcare, and the wellness of women and children, yet plenty of money to support the corporate welfare of the NRA in promoting lethal weapons.

And yet we pray. We weep. We light candles and sing for the broken hearts of the families in Buffalo and Texas. But I, for one, will not be silent. If the Senate is too weak to stand up to the NRA, then we as citizens need to fight back through litigation against the gun sellers, the manufacturers, and even the parents who have bought assault rifles for mass shooters. Just as with Big Tobacco, gun manufacturers must be held accountable for their marketing campaigns, and, while we are at it, Fox “News” should be held accountable for a business model based on trucking hate, division, and the racist rhetoric of the extreme wingnut right. The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is to stop the NRA and get rid of the fox while we are at it.

The Backhand

By Gary Bergquist

“He’s back.”

“What do you mean?” I asked my roommate, Ken.

“Have you been eating my Oreos,” he asked, “including the package?” He held up the package so I could see the damage. Crumbs fell out of small holes around the edge.

“I don’t get it. We’ve never had any problem with mice in our dorm, and I’ve never heard of rats on campus; the college wouldn’t tolerate it.”

“I think it’s a squirrel,” Ken said. “Last week, when I got back from class and found the box of macaroni scattered on the floor, it was a hot day like today and I had the window open. Maybe a squirrel invited himself in.”

“We’re on the fifth floor. There are no trees near us. How would he get up here?”

“It’s the ledge. I’ve seen squirrels scampering up the side of the building. The ledge just below our window would make the perfect entryway into our room.”

“You think a squirrel would have the nerve to invite himself into our room for dinner? That’s crazy.”

“It may be crazy, but if I were a hungry squirrel and saw food through an open window, I’d go for it.”

“Fine, feel sorry for the squirrel,” I said. Maybe in the next life, you’ll come back as one. Meanwhile, just close the windows when you go to class. I don’t like the idea of buying extra food for rascally rodents.”

Two days later, coming back from class, I walked into our room and found myself face to face with the thieving squirrel. My heart skipped a beat. He was on the bookshelves where we keep our dry foods. Though he had no crumbs on his lips, he certainly had the look of someone who had been perusing the menu. The window was wide open. Dammit, Ken!

For a moment, the squirrel and I looked at each other. I can’t say what he was thinking but my own thoughts were not pleasant. A feeling of rage rose in me. Silly as it may seem, this thieving squirrel made me feel violated. What right did he have to come into our room and eat our food?

I headed for the squirrel not certain what I was going to do when I reached him. He didn’t wait to find out. With one bound, he was at the window. Since we had a corner room, there were two windows. In his panic, he jumped to the wrong one, the one that was closed. I didn’t make the same mistake. I darted to the other window and slammed it shut.

There. Now we could have it out, mano a mano. He looked at me and I looked at him and there was something in the terror I saw in his eyes that brought me back to earth. I realized I had just trapped myself in a room with a wild animal. I sprinted for the door, jumped through it, and slammed it behind me.

Now what? Once my heart slowed down, I formed a plan. Knocking on neighbor’s doors, I scraped together what I needed for my squirrel quest. I put on a heavy winter coat backwards, so my front was fully protected. A hockey mask from our team goalie covered my face, and a heavy winter hat with flaps covered the rest of my head. With a tennis racquet as my foil, I headed back, ready to do battle. The bloodthirsty spectators from the hall trailed behind, wagering on who would emerge victorious.

I slipped into the room quickly and shut the door to eliminate any chance of escape. The squirrel was perched at the window. I attacked head on. As I charged the squirrel, he leaped past me to the other window. I followed. Back he leaped to the first window. I followed. Back and forth. Back and forth. He was trying to wear me down and was doing a fine job of it on this warm summer day, dressed as I was for the Arctic. Finally, he made a fatal mistake and scurried up the side of the window under the shade. With tennis racquet pressed against the bottom of the shade, I had him trapped. I was victorious. If not for the tight space, I believe he would have unfurled a white flag of surrender. Feeling gracious at my success and lacking a recipe for squirrel stew, I did the next best thing. I opened the window with one hand as I held him in place with the other. Then I let go and ran for the door.

Flash Fiction

When I came back a few minutes later, he was gone. Presumably, he had learned his lesson.

Or not. A week later, on another warm day, I was sitting at my desk near the open window when I hear the tick-tick sound of nails on concrete. I looked outside and there he was, four feet away, looking at me. Did this fool have no memory, or was it his memory of Oreos that had blinded him to the memory of his inglorious defeat? I expected him to run when I looked at him, but he did not. Nor did he run when I slowly rose from the desk, though he did back-peddle a step or two.

I slowly reached to the bookshelf and pulled down the package of Oreos, removing a nice, juicy one. With my other hand, I reached for my squash racquet. It was clearly time for another lesson. I cocked my wrist as I was taught, at the base of the thumb, and pulled my forearm back across my chest so the head of the racket was next to my ear. My backhand was fully cocked and ready to uncoil. I bent my knees and leaned my racquet shoulder down. My body was a tightly wound spring ready to uncoil. With my other hand, I reached slowly to the windowsill and set down the cookie.

The squirrel, who had been carefully studying me, was now fully focused on the cookie. Still, something told him not to trust me. Maybe his memory was good after all. He looked at me, then the cookie, then me, the cookie, me, the cookie. I stood still, knees bent, elbow and wrist cocked, sweat beginning to bead between my eyes. The cookie, me, the cookie. Finally, the cookie won, and he darted for it. As he reached it, I unloaded my backhand, as I was taught.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright,

The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light;

And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,

But there is no joy in Squirrelville – the backhand did win out.

With apologies to Ernest Lawrence Thayer, the sweet spot of the racquet met the sweet spot of the squirrel’s body, and he was launched into space.

I suppose someone looking up from the ground at that moment would have sworn a squirrel was shot from a cannon out a fifth-floor window. I cannot imagine how they would have rationalized that vision. At any rate, I nearly followed the squirrel out the window as I quickly leaned out to get a ringside view of what would happen next.

Now here’s the thing about real life, as opposed to fiction. Real life throws you curveballs. You never see what’s coming. I don’t know what I was expecting but it wasn’t what I saw.

If I were in the squirrel’s predicament, I would have curled into a fetal position and screamed like a baby. Not so, the squirrel. He instantly adopted the posture of a parachuter. His arms and legs went straight out as if to maximize his surface area and to prolong his freefall descent. In hindsight, I suppose that makes sense given a squirrel is a tree rodent and must have fallen from great heights many times when jumping from branch to branch. Despite inevitable falls in his young life, he had managed to survive to live another day and to steal another cookie. Despite his attempt to emulate a parachute, he still fell rapidly, and I wondered if he would reach terminal velocity before he reached the ground, and whether terminal velocity would be terminal.

He held that posture all the way down, including when he hit the ground. A belly flop into a pool is painful enough. I can’t imagine a five-story bellyflop onto the ground. It turns out the most interesting thing, at least to me, was not that he survived the bellyflop without coughing up a single cookie crumb, but that he landed three feet from a dog. In a blink, that dog was after him and in a blink the squirrel had scurried under a car in the parking lot. Talk about a bad day. Still, after a masterful backhand and a five-story fall to the ground, the squirrel managed to escape the dog.

I think it was the sugar that gave him the speed. Despite what healthcare professionals tell us, Oreos can be good for your health.

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

Tai Chi Home

Over the Top

By Joe Pandolfo

Here at the height of the solar season, we can look back at the deepest winter night half the year ago and say, “Look where we’ve come”. Now over the top we go.



THIS POINT ON THE AGE-OLD CIRCLE IS like reaching the peak on a mountain hike, where the whole feel of the ground and view of the sky changes as you begin the way down. Like an ocean swim, when the wave finishes lifting you then slips away underneath.

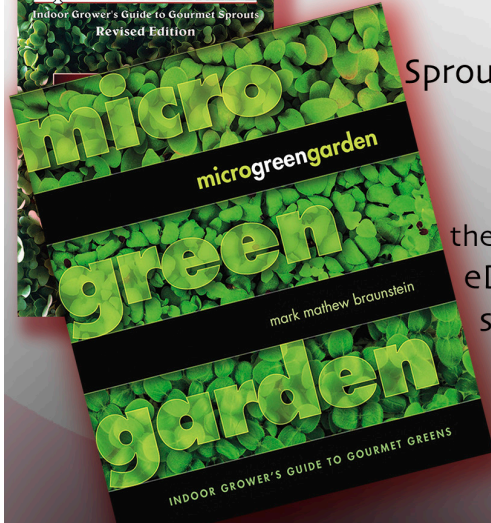
There’s a special energy here. The breath can be gripped by some fearful unknown thing, then you let the exhale go the moment you say, “At least now we know”.

At the Ashford Senior Center

Tai Chi - Tuesday & Friday 9:30-10:30am
\$15 per month for one day/wk; \$25 for two
Drop-in \$5

Low Impact Aerobics

Tuesdays 10:45-11:30am; \$2 per class
Programs not limited to Ashford residents.
Contact the Center at 860-487-5122
25 Tremko Lane, Ashford



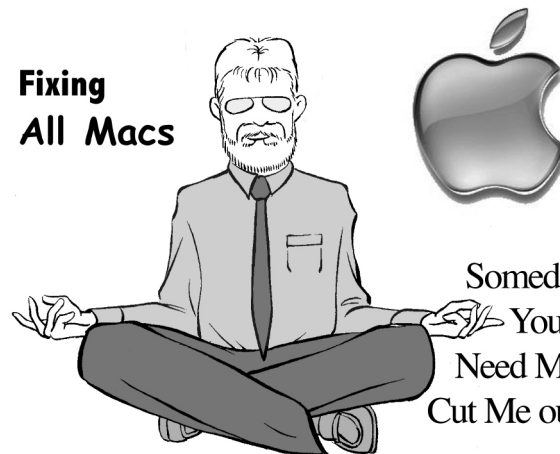
MicroGreen Garden
&
Sprout Garden

the Books &
eBooks are
sold by all
online
book-
sellers

free instructions, charts & photo tutorials at
www.MarkBraunstein.Org &
www.MicroGreenGarden.com

DR. MAC

Fixing
All Macs



Someday
You'll
Need Me!
Cut Me out!

Mac Running Slow??

Your mac should be maintained every 6 months!

I'm your Apple/Mac "Guru"

Repairs · Service

If it's Apple/MAC, I do it!

Call Steve for an appointment TODAY!

(860) 431-7080 10am-6pm M-F

email : illstudio@snet.net

Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum: Introducing EC-CHAP Assistant Director and Museum Curator

By EC-CHAP

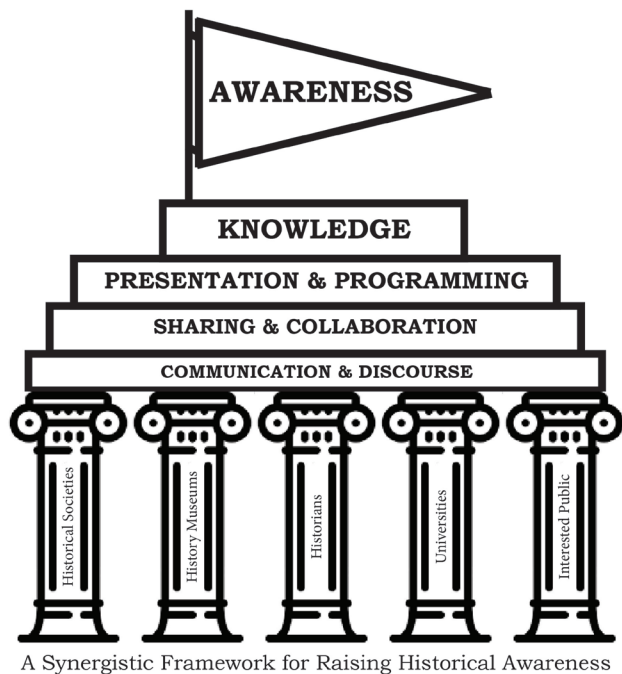
Please join us in welcoming Ryan Elgin who will be providing oversight and curation for the Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum!

Ryan is a recent graduate of the Eastern Connecticut State University with degrees in Psychology and Business Administration. He has previously served as a marketing intern at EC-CHAP, and is currently a member of the Strategic Planning and Marketing & Promotion Teams.

Ryan will begin his Board appointed position as EC-CHAP Assistant Director July 1, 2022. Among his duties, Ryan will oversee all Museum operations, collections, and programming.



You will be hearing more from Ryan through calls for artifacts, scheduling speakers for our Historical Lecture Series, and seeking collaboration through the post-pandemic reinstatement of EC-CHAP's "Synergistic Framework to Raise Historical Awareness".



The Gardiner Hall Jr Museum is open to the public Saturdays from 10:00am to 12:00pm. For more information, please call 518-791-9474.

New Law Protects Victims of Domestic Violence

By Attorney Kevin M. Tighe

On May 24, 2022, Governor Lamont signed into law Public Act No. 22-82 (the "New Law"). The New Law addresses several different subjects, including online dating, domestic violence training, employment discrimination and workplace sexual harassment. The New Law also adds persons who possess the status as a domestic violence victim as a protected class to a broad range of existing anti-discrimination laws such as laws governing discrimination in employment, public accommodations, housing sales or rentals, granting credit, and several other areas. This article will just provide a brief summary of some of the additions made by the New Law to the existing laws governing employment discrimination; which additions provide protection to those persons who possess the status as victims of domestic violence (which additions become effective October 1, 2022).

In the employment context, the New Law prohibits an employer or employer's agent, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification or need, from (1) refusing to hire or employ someone; (2) barring or terminating someone from employment; or (3) discriminating against someone in pay or in employment terms, conditions, or privileges because the person is a domestic violence victim. These new prohibitions apply to all employers, public or private, and all employees except those employed by their parents, spouse, or children. In addition, if you are a victim of domestic violence, the New Law prohibits the following kinds of employment discrimination: (1) employers refusing to provide a reasonable accommodation to an employee whom the employer knows is a victim of domestic violence unless the employee's absence would cause an undue hardship; (2) employment agencies failing or refusing to classify properly or refer for employment or otherwise discriminating against someone except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification or need; (3) labor organizations excluding someone from full membership rights, expelling a member, or discriminating in any way against a member, employer, or employee unless the action is due to a bona fide occupational qualification; (4) employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, or anyone else taking adverse action against someone because he or she opposed a discriminatory employment practice, brought a complaint, or testified or assisted someone else in a complaint proceeding; (5) any person aiding, abetting, inciting, compelling, or coercing someone to commit a discriminatory employment practice or attempting to do so; and (6) employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, or anyone else advertising employment opportunities in a way that restricts employment and therefore discriminates except when involving a bona fide occupational qualification or need.

Under the New Law, it is a discriminatory practice for an employer or the employer's agent to deny an employee a reasonable leave of absence for the employee to do the following: (1) seek attention for injuries caused by domestic violence, including for a child who is a domestic violence victim, so long the employee is not the perpetrator against the child; (2) obtain services, including safety planning, from a domestic violence agency or rape crisis center; (3) obtain psychological counseling, including for a child, so long as the employee is not the perpetrator against the child; (4) take other actions to increase safety from future incidents; including temporary or permanent relocation; or (5) obtain legal services, assist in the offense's prosecution, or otherwise participate in related legal proceedings. The bill requires an employee who is absent from work under these circumstances to provide a certification to the employer, upon request, within a reasonable time after the absence. The certification must be one of the following: (1) a police report indicating that the employee or the employee's child was a domestic violence victim; (2) a court order protecting or separating the employee or employee's child from the perpetrator; (3) other evidence from the court or prosecutor that the employee appeared in court; or (4) documentation from a medical professional or a domestic violence counselor, or other health care provider, that the employee or employee's child was receiving services, counseling, or treatment for physical or mental injuries or abuse resulting in victimization from domestic violence.

In addition, under the New Law, if an employee has a physical or mental disability resulting from a domestic violence incident, then the employee must be treated the same as employees with other disabilities.

Finally, the New Law also requires employers, to the extent allowed by law, to maintain the confidentiality of any information about an employee's status as a domestic violence victim.

If you believe you are being discriminated against because of your status as a victim of domestic violence, you should contact the Connecticut Commission On Human Rights And Opportunities, or an attorney or feel free to email me at AttorneyTighe@tighelawfirm.com.

This article and its contents are not intended to be a substitute for professional or legal advice.

Reunion of UCONN Inner College Alumni and Friends



Submitted by Rhonda Kincaid

On August 6th there will be a reunion of UCONN Inner College alumni and friends in Storrs.

The Inner College was a four-year experiment in alternative education that was initiated in 1969 by a group of UCONN students and faculty who were interested in establishing a community for learning. The Inner College encouraged independent study and self-directed education, and offered opportunities to develop unique courses, create new majors, pursue inter-disciplinary studies, and use individualized evaluation methods instead of standardized grades. The University Faculty Senate agreed to sponsor the Inner College and, after the first year, IC students and faculty successfully applied for a three-year federal grant to support its activities. This innovative community learning experience had a significant influence on the life paths of many of the Inner College alumni.

The reunion welcomes anyone who was in the Inner College, as well as those who, while not members, took Inner College courses and/or participated in Inner College activities. For more information, email uconninnercollege@gmail.com or call Rhonda Kincaid @860-933-2043 or Herman Stargardter at 860-377-1190.

Poetry in the Park

Submitted by Suzy Staubach

Poetry in the Park will feature Danielle Legros Georges and Sean Frederick Forbes on July 28 at 6:30 pm in the Julia de Burgos Park at the corner of Curbstone Way and Jackson Street in Willimantic. The readings will be followed by an open mic. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and, if you wish, a poem. The event is free.

Danielle Legros Georges is a writer, translator, academic, and author of several books of poetry including *the dear remote nearness of you*, winner of the New England Poetry Club's Sheila Margaret Motten book prize, *Letters from the Congo*, and *Maroon*. She is director of the Lesley University MFA Program in Creative Writing, and taught in the Joiner Institute for the Study of War and Social Consequences writer's workshop, at the University of Massachusetts, Boston for more than a decade. Her work has been supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Boston Foundation, the Black Metropolis Research Consortium, the Pen/Heim Translation Fund, and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art. She was appointed the second Poet Laureate of the city of Boston, serving in the role from 2015 to 2019.

Sean Frederick Forbes was born in Heidelberg, Germany, and raised in Southside Jamaica, Queens, New York City. He is the author of *Provincia*. Sean identifies as Afro-Latino and connects to the Afro-Caribbean diaspora. Recent poems appeared in various journals including *Chagrin River Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Long River Review*, *Midwest Quarterly*, and *Sargasso: A Journal of Caribbean Literature, Language and Culture*. On March 17, 2014, his poem "Cashel Man" was featured online through the Poem-a-Day program sponsored by the Academy of American Poets. In June of 2014, he appeared on WNPR with John Dankosky on a feature titled The Art and Power of Poetry, a conversation with four Connecticut-based poets on how poetry influences the writing life following the passing of Maya Angelou.

Poetry in the Park is a project of the Curbstone Foundation. In the event of rain, readings will be moved to Zoom. Check Facebook for updates: facebook.com/CurbstoneLiteraryProject.

Read the Neighbors paper on your desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone. Go to neighborspaper.com for link to current and past editions. All in beautiful COLOR!

News from Hampton's 'Fletch'

Submitted by Janice Trecker

The Top Shelf Gallery's July- August show, Scott Rhoades Art, featuring landscapes and genre scenes in acrylic by Scott Rhoades, opens July 6 with an artist's reception and demonstration from 5-6 p.m. outside in the library's garden. The precisely-done paintings, chiefly landscapes, include rural scenes of barns and livestock and woodland images with wildlife.

A retired art teacher, Rhoades has been painting seriously since he took his first art course as a junior in college. After graduating from Eastern Connecticut State University in 1973, Rhoades earned his Master's degree in Art Education from Central Connecticut State University. At that time his focus was on landscapes, a continuing theme in his work.

"[But] after producing paintings in the 1970's of rural landscapes and barns, I changed my focus," Rhoades says. "I enjoyed teaching art to children and explored many rewarding avenues with fun results." Those fun results included a lively 35-year art education career in Coventry. During that time, many of his K-8 students had drawings published in *The Chronicle*, and his school mural program was nationally recognized.

"Upon retiring from teaching art in 2010, I designed and built my own art studio in my backyard," Rhoades says, "and it has become an afternoon destination that I enjoy most every day." He still draws inspiration from regional rural life, but also enjoys travel, most recently to Baxter State Park in the northern Maine wilderness, one of his favorite places, and another source of inspiration.

"When I travel I take photos of anything I like," the artist said. Some of those photos wind up as his award-winning acrylic on-Masonite paintings that sell both nationally and internationally. Besides appearing in shows like *The Blanche Ames National Juried Art Exhibition*, his works have been reproduced in *The Richardson International 75*, a highly selective annual art publication, and his painting of birches was the cover image of *Ribbons*, a poetry journal.

The Top Shelf Gallery is at Fletcher Memorial Library, 257 Main Street, Hampton. Info: 860 455 1086.

Subliminals Concert

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, Fletcher Memorial Library will again host a free evening concert at "The Fletch." The Subliminals, a diverse group of instrumental musicians with a party jazz sound, will perform outside in the library garden July 20 from 5 to 7 p.m.

Led by drummer Mike Winslow, the Subliminals favor compositions by the likes of Herbie Hancock, Miles Davis, Roy Hargovem, and John Scholfield. Depending on the gig, the group's size varies, with a nine person lineup, including percussion, brass, guitar and keyboards, scheduled for *The Fletch*. Most of the performers are from downstate, but two well known local musicians will be part of the ensemble, Jan Jungden and Chris Beaudry, to provide the promised good time sound.

While there is some limited seating in the garden, attendees should bring chairs or blankets and are encouraged to bring picnics and drinks.

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

At the CT Audubon Center in Pomfret

Programs at the CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY

Grassland Bird Conservation Center
218 Day Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259
(860)928-4948 ctaudubon.org/pomfret-home

Summer Bike Camp

Open weeks are June 27-July 1, July 11-15 and July 25-29

Campership discount availability. Contact the Center at Pomfret 860-928-4948 for info.

Interested bike campers ages 9-13 are welcome. Bike and helmet are required.

View our brochure at ctaudubon.org/pomfret-camp.

Whip-poor-will Watch at Bull Hill Forest

Saturday, July 9 at 8:45 p.m.

We'll hike out to the scenic vista and call in Whip-poor-wills and Barred Owls. Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$20 members; \$30 non-members.

Pumpkin Hill Bird Walk

Monday, July 11 at 8 a.m.

An excellent bird watching location for nesting Cerulean Warblers, Worm-eating Warblers, Prairie Warblers, Indigo Buntings, and many more! Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$20 members, \$30 non-members.

Whip-poor-will Watch at Robbins Preserve in Thompson

Wednesday, July 13 at 8:45 p.m.

The best time to see Whip-poor-wills is during a full moon. We'll hike around this preserve that is known to have nesting Whip-poor-wills and owls. Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$20 members; \$30 non-members.

Natchaug State Forest Bird Watch

Monday, July 18 at 8 a.m.

One last chance to hopefully see Blackburnian Warblers in nesting plumage. This forest has many great bird species that nest here and we'll see how many we can find! Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$20 members; \$30 non-members.

Evening Bird Walks

Thursday, July 21 at 6 p.m.

Thursday, August 11 at 6 p.m.

Join Andy Rzenkiewicz as we look for different species of newly fledged young birds and mixed groups of post-breeding birds. Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$10 members; \$20 non-members.

Evening Bird Walk / Nighthawk Watch

Friday, August 26 at 6 p.m.

We will hike around keeping an eye on the sky for nighthawks and other birds as well. Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$10 members; \$20 non-members.

Plainfield Fish Hatchery Bird Walk

Tuesday, August 30 at 8 a.m.

Andy will guide you around the fish hatchery grounds. It's one of the top bird watching places in Windham County. Expect to see shorebirds such as sandpipers, early migrating songbirds, and raptors. Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$20 members; \$30 non-members.

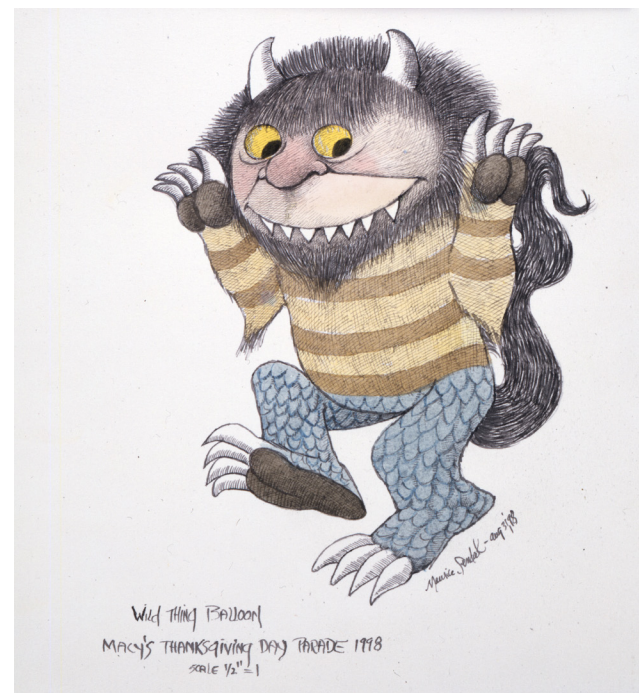
Programs at TRAIL WOOD, 93 Kenyon Road, Hampton, CT 06247 860-928-4948

Trail Wood Bird Walk

Wednesday, June 29 at 8 a.m.

Walk the paths of Trail Wood with Andy, searching for various bird species. Possibilities include Cerulean Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and many more. Please register by emailing your name, phone, and date of walk to arzenkiewicz@ctaudubon.org. Fee: \$10 members; \$20 non-members.

Ballard Museum Celebrates Opening of Swing into Action: Maurice Sendak and the World of Puppetry



Submitted by Emily Wicks

Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry at the University of Connecticut will present the grand opening of its new exhibition *Swing into Action: Maurice Sendak and the World of Puppetry*, curated by Ballard Institute director Dr. John Bell on Thursday, July 7, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. The opening will include in-person performances and an exhibition tour; the exhibition tour will be streamed on Ballard Institute's Facebook Live ([facebook.com/BallardInstitute/](https://www.facebook.com/BallardInstitute/)). All events will take place at the Ballard Institute, located at 1 Royce Circle in Downtown Storrs. The exhibition will be on display through Friday, December 16, 2022.

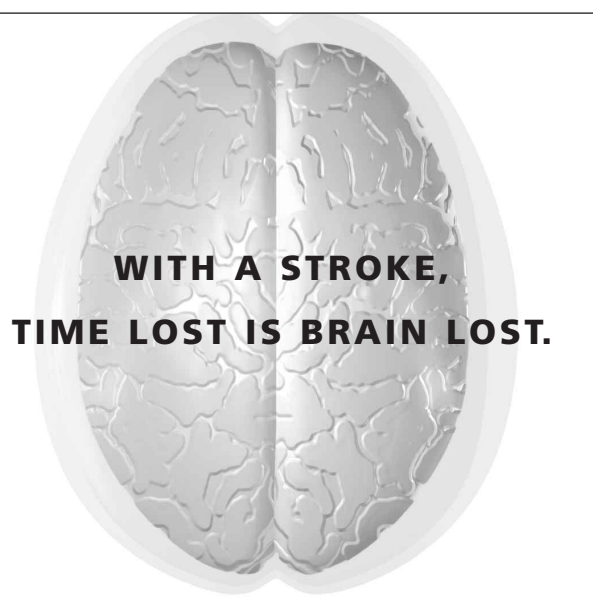
Although Maurice Sendak was not a puppeteer, he understood the nature of puppetry's never-ending fascination with objects, images, movement, music, and text, and how the creation of those combinations with a collaborative team of artists can make puppets come alive. This exhibition, created in partnership with The Maurice Sendak Foundation, will look at the various ways Sendak designed, collected, and collaborated with puppets and puppet productions, from his childhood days making mechanical toys with his brother, to his collections of Mickey Mouse memorabilia, his inventive collaborations with puppeteer Amy Luckenbach, his puppet designs for Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Mozart Opera *Goose of Cairo*, and the way Sendak's book inspired Sonny Gerasiowicz's creatures for Spike Jonze's film *Where the Wild Things Are*.

The grand opening of *Swing Into Action* will include live performances of a new toy theater spectacle by UConn Puppet Arts graduate students Abigail Baird and Jaron Hollander based on Sendak's 1993 book *We Are All in the Dumps With Jack and Guy*.

The Ballard Institute will be open Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Face masks are strongly recommended but not required.

<https://bimp.uconn.edu/2022/06/22/opening-sendak-exhibit/>

The Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry
1 Royce Circle, Suite 101B
Storrs, CT 06268
860-486-8580
bimp.uconn.edu
bimp@uconn.edu
Facebook: Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry



Read the Neighbors paper on your desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone. Go to neighborspaper.com for link to current and past editions. All in beautiful COLOR!



Barbara's Garden

By Kathy Lepak

Deep purple petunias against a field of glorious orange poppies, foxgloves, butterfly bushes and every shade of green imaginable.

These gardens are like a fairy tale, or so my daughter says. I agree.

Upon entering, I feel a bit like Alice in Wonderland, although these lovely blossoms keep their thoughts to themselves - even the canterbury bells remain silent.

No caterpillar smoking on the cushion of a large mushroom, but a flurry of bees and butterflies arriving to sup. The bees hide in the blossoms of the foxglove to dine in privacy.

A greenhouse made of discarded windows graces the start of a pathway into rows of lettuces, peas, onions and tomatoes.

Sheltered inside in it's warmth are seedlings yet to find their proper place outside. a flash of fur darts by - a chipmunk seeking lunch.

A second gate to the right leads to an infusion of strawberries bursting with flavor and waiting to be turned into a dessert of sorbet.

This is a garden to dream in, to enjoy the richness of nature's bounty in a brilliant explosion of color and beauty.

Writer's note: While exhibiting in the Northeast Art and Garden Tour in Coventry with Barbara Timberman, I had a short lull in visitors and wrote this poem about Barbara's luscious gardens. The photo was taken by my daughter, Cynthia Saccoman.



'Enter' by Mansfield artist Scott E. Rhoades. See page 23.



Sonya Maher, L.O. invites you to come into eyeTrade Optical Shop **SAVE TIME, SAVE MONEY** order your contacts on-line eyetrade.vision



Optical Shop in Coventry

**BUY ONE GET ONE
1/2 OFF**



With the purchase of Frames and Lenses
**Certain Restrictions Apply. See Store for Details.

ACCEPTING
HSA, HRA, HFA and Carecredit

Call Sonya for an appointment Today! 860-498-0717

A Portion of Every Purchase Helps Others See!

eyeTrade, LLC, Optical Shop
1197 Main St., Coventry, CT • eyetrade.vision



Hope and Wellness is a complete wellness and salon facility specializing in a variety of services.

FULL SERVICE SALON

Reflexology • Massage • Manicures • Pedicures • Reiki
Craniosacral Therapy • Cupping • Biofield Tuning • Facials

Come visit our gift shop for locally produced soaps, lotions, plants, jewelry, hand bags. Also pottery, candles and CBD products.

39 Nott Highway (Route 74), Suite 2, Ashford, CT 06278
[www. HopeandWellnessOnline.com](http://www.HopeandWellnessOnline.com) • 860-477-0994



Celebrate

**NATIONAL HEMP MONTH WITH THE CO-OP!
OVER 25 HEMP PRODUCTS ON SALE
DURING JULY
FROM CBD AND BODY CARE TO
GRANOLA, BREAD, BURGERS, AND MORE**

91 Valley Street, Willimantic

860-456-3611

www.willimanticfood.coop • Credit Cards Accepted

Open 7 Days A Week 8 AM - 8 PM