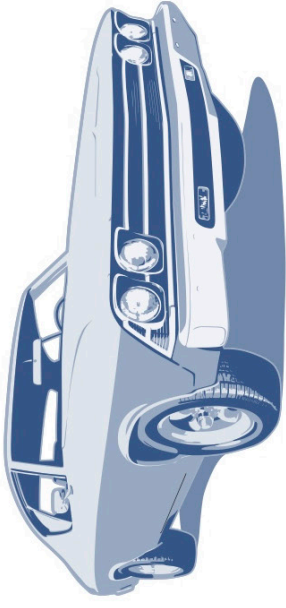


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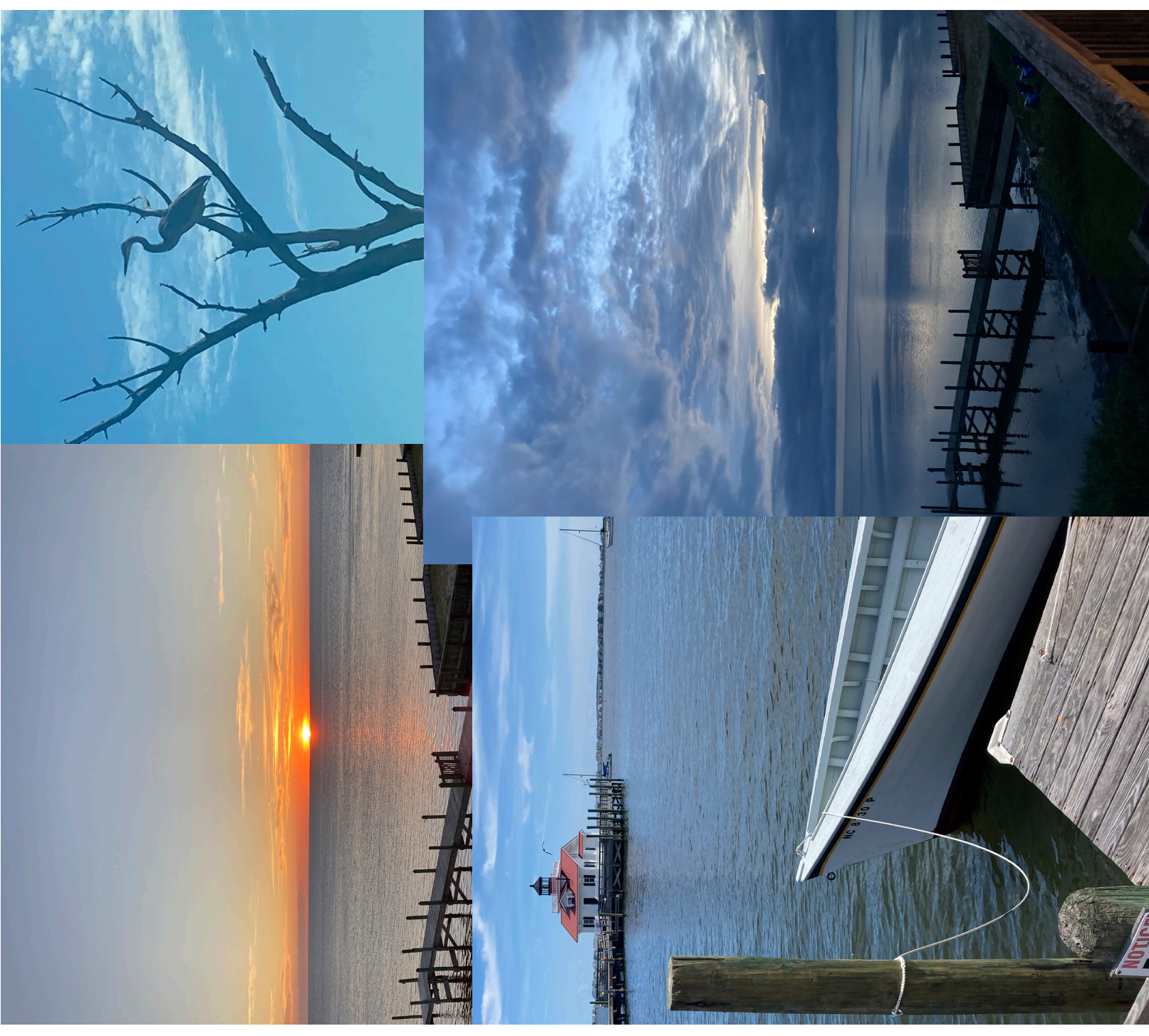
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# NEIGHBORS

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No. 211 Serving the inhabitants and environment of northeastern Connecticut and beyond

Looking Up

# Tangled Hedges and the Struggle of Promise

By Bob Grindle

Our nearest neighbor when my wife and I first moved to eastern Connecticut back in the very early 70's was—by anyone's measure—an old woman. Widowed a decade earlier when her husband had died while building the house we were buying, Ada would often appear through the tangled hedge of lilac, forsythia, burning bush, rugosa rose and weigela that she had long ago planted between our properties and she would offer opinions, observations and occasionally advice about things she felt we newly-weds might not yet know about country living. Her husband had been an independent builder of small, European style bungalows and they had planned to retire into the house we had just bought so Ada's presence often came with a rather "deus ex machina" sigh and the clear assumption that she was there to help clean up the mess we were making of her husband's legacy.

Ada's years nested into her sturdy and textured features like a well-trodden path through an old growth forest, timeless...a large woman with a somewhat garish voice and a not always well adjusted wig to hide her thinning hair, there was a sort of easy comfort about her independent loneliness and complete lack of concern for social tidiness, and my wife, Lin and I became very fond of her visits. Sometimes, after I would mow her lawn or move something too heavy for her to handle we might talk and Ada would often share stories about her and her husband's escape from their Estonian homeland just before the Russian takeover in the early 1940's. They had grown up in a small farming village outside of the Estonian capital, Tallinn; left for New York City in 1940 and then on to Chaplin, Connecticut a few years later when big-city life wasn't working out. It was during one of our conversa-

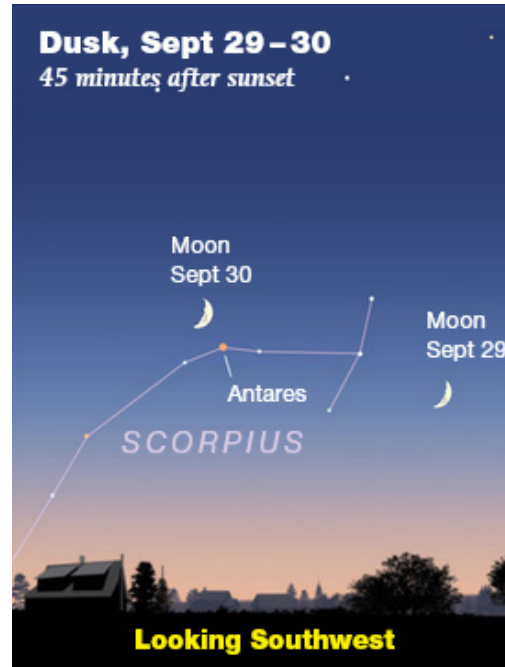
tions that Ada brought out an old cigar box—her husband Walter would often end the day with a cigar and a glass of vodka—a cigar box full of old photographs. One of those pictures lingers in my memory still: a strikingly attractive young couple that Ada identified as her and Walter shortly after they were married...a young man wearing overalls and gloves is lifting a young woman, wearing a housedress and babushka, down from a hay wagon.

As simple as that, a well-trodden path through an old growth forest became a sunrise over an alpine meadow, and an aging, sometimes difficult, frequently disheveled but always lively old woman became an image of the promise of youth. There is no question that the passage of time is a never ending struggle, but we humans have the gift of also being able to see it as a promise of what is to come and as an incredible journey, and it is clearly both, without dichotomy... as anyone who has ever struggled up a steep slope for the simple pleasure of either a great view or a sense of accomplishment knows. On the occasion of the inauguration of our current President a young poet, Amanda Gorman, recited a poem, 'The Hill We Climb', that opened with a question: "When day comes, we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade?..." and ended with the stunningly simple observation: "For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only

we're brave enough to be it."

It is an open question whether our old neighbor Ada Heinz would have found as much wisdom and promise in that poem as I do. The struggles she'd had to deal with and hills she'd had to climb were simply part of the path she'd traveled; there was no going back. Ada was just as happy an old woman as she was as the young bride in the babushka, and somewhere in my psyche I harbor the hope that there is resonance between the challenges of yesterday and those of today and while the players may be different, the stage is pretty much the same.

And for those brave enough to be up in the wee hours before daylight on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September—Labor Day when most of us can sleep a bit later—you'll be treated to the bright and shining Venus making one of its last morning appearances...it's been with us since mid-January...and on this occasion it will be so close to the brightest star in the constellation Leo, Regulus that the star will look almost like a satellite of the planet. Grab your binoculars and find a location with a good east/northeastern view and enjoy. A few weeks later, after the autumnal equinox, and as daylight hours take a seasonal backseat and the longer, cooler nights chaffer us into Fall, the waxing crescent Moon will pair up with Antares, the brightest star in Scorpius—its heart according to



legend—and form a pretty after-dinner picture.

As we all settle into the Fall season and one of the finest reasons to live in New England give a nod of respectful understanding that the ground we stand on has been well trod on by the many neighbors that have gone before. Stay well this season and look up often.



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On our cover: My wife Karen and I took an August road trip to one of our favorite places, the Outer Banks of North Carolina. The photo of a Great Blue Heron was taken at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge in Delaware and the lighthouse photo at Manteo N.C. T.K.  
Karen King photos.

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

Neighbors No. 211, September 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  
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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

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# Slow down - Degrowth Will Save Us

By Loretta Wrobel



Why are we all running so fast? What will happen if we slow down? Take a short trip on Route 84. The average speed is well over 70 and the speed limit is 65. How fast is safe? How much more pollution are we pouring into our environment by going top speed every time we jump into our vehicle? What if we did not cram as much as we can into one day as if we have to do everything as rapidly as possible? Go faster. You are too slow. You are falling behind. More is better. These are the mantras of our time. Why are we so focused on these unhealthy and destructive cultural mind sets?

What if we decided to slow it down? What if we made a pledge to ourselves that we savor each day and not rush through our day so we can accomplish more and more? We are obsessed with doing whatever it is we are doing in the quickest way possible so we can push along to another task. This is endless. The pressure to measure up to some inhumane standard is rapidly accelerating in our world. This only adds to our stress, anxiety, judgement and decreasing mental health.

Slowing down applies to our unsustainable economic system. Why do we use GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as a measure for progress? Why not focus on achieving successful ways to live within the boundaries of our planet to prevent ecological and social collapse? Imagine the goal being to improve the human condition because we reside in a world with limited resources.

We all know that unlimited growth can only lead to climate collapse. When are we going to stop dancing to the tune of the patriarchy and our capitalist system that trains us to see value in uncontrolled cancerous growth? Why do we accept gobbling up all our limited resources to satisfy the lure of constant and larger profits? When we slow down, we have the chance to ponder what is best for ourselves, our families, our towns and our world.

Degrowth is a strategy to look past economic growth and concentrate on improving the human condition. The goal is not to measure growth. The idea is to concentrate on wellbeing and sustainability, ensuring basic needs for all without jeopardizing the vitality of our planet. The importance of maintaining a stable climate, a healthy biodiversity, protected oceans, and an intact ozone layer is top priority. What we don't need is uncontrolled investment and growth, pollution, land grabbing, and continued expansion by the rich nations. We do need sustainability and community solidarity and an opportunity for poorer nations to have the ability to provide for basic rights for their citizens.

Recently I was struck by how much I missed rain. The two days that we had rain after the lengthy drought felt so nourishing and normal. To go for many weeks without our precious and essential rain was horrifying and disturbing. We need water to survive, and although we humans love a sunny day, a day of rain soothes our spirit. To smell the rain, to feel the wetness on our skin and to hear the patter on our windows and roofs is a simple delight. When we are overtaken by our busyness, we fail to notice these elemental events. We miss out on the sensual experiences that as humans we are privileged to experience only when we pay attention.

Why is it so hard for us to acknowledge what is happening? We are trained to scream for more and to believe if we don't grab all the brass rings on the merry-go-round of life that we have missed out. Ironic, isn't it, that by not paying attention and driving ourselves, we miss the priceless quintessence of our life!

We have to work at slowing down and experiencing our lives. Taking the time to honestly explore what is meaningful to us is paramount. Whose dream are we pursuing? Is it ours, our culture's, our friends', or simply what we think we should be pursuing? Or is it the messages from the powerful and wealthy?

We live on a dazzling planet. We have an obligation to appreciate the wondrous environment around us. However, if we are unaware, we can easily not see it all. We drive fast, we throw litter out the windows and don't seem to understand we need to pick up after ourselves. Just look at the enormous amount of trash on our roadsides.

Have you had the experience of hiking on a forest trail and coming across human detritus? What will it take for us to slow down enough so we readily leave a place better than when we found it.

If we took the opportunity to examine what is happening in our world, wouldn't we all be aware that climate change is rapidly thrusting our planet towards unimaginable chaos? People say, "I can't do anything." "It is beyond me." It is not. Much can be done if we shift our consciousness to repairing and healing our abused planet. Our planet is very forgiving and will respond with great vitality and health. I was astounded by how quickly the grass turned from a dried-out brown to a captivating green when water fell on the dried-up blades. As I observed the miracle of the grass springing to life almost before my eyes, I was awed by the power of nature to rejuvenate itself.

Look at what is happening to our country this summer with excessive rain, drought, heat, wildfires, and water shortages. Addressing these mighty issues can help us, whereas operating with a more business-as-usual approach only increases the trauma. There are many people from diverse fields working on solutions to the climate catastrophes facing our world in 2022. Mushrooms are unbelievable healers and are prime cleaner-uppers. There are super worms that eat and digest plastic, and birds that live in the desert and don't need to drink any water. In Queens, NY there will be weekly compost pickup starting in October. People just put their organic waste outside at the curb in a bag. Answers to climate change are all around us as mother nature is determined to create solutions. We of the rich nations need to stop creating more excesses and curtail our destructive, unsustainable practices, and invent products that are not deadly to ourselves and our neighbors downstream. "We are all connected" is a simple yet profound statement.

By each of us doing a little to contribute to the health of our beloved planet, we heal ourselves and all that we love. We can keep this planet thriving when and only when we stop long enough to consider what Mother Earth needs. When we shift from accumulating to bringing our actions in line with saving/healing our natural world and all peoples inhabiting our precious planet, we will thrive. Remember it is the earth that sustains us, not Amazon, Bank of America, Apple or Walmart. Together we will succeed!

## Willington September Events

Submitted by Julie Engelke

Friends of Willington Public Library Annual Book Sale to be held on September 10th 9 am to 2 pm at Willington Public Library. Most books, cds and dvds are \$0.50 to \$2.00. All are welcome.

Willington Historical Society is honored to present an evening with Doug Harris on September 20th at 7 pm at Willington Town Office Building at 40 Old Farms Road, Willington, Ct. Mr Harris is a Tribal Preservationist whose ancestry includes the

bloodlines of Nansemond, Cherokee, Tuscarora and others. He has been involved with identifying and preserving indigenous ceremonial and sacred stone landscapes for over 20 years. A few of his past positions and achievements include Retired Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer at the Narragansett Tribal Historic Preservation Office; former photographer at Smithsonian Civil Rights Exhibition; former Producer, Director, Narrator and Cinematographer for "Speaking in Tongues" a ZDF German TV production; former lecturer of Motion Picture Production at The City College of

New York; photographer and cinematographer at PBS channel 13 in NYC, ABC TV; Former Secretary and field Staff Supervisor/ staff photographer at Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee and many more.

Come and learn about the sacred stone landscapes in this area. Further information on the Willington Historical Society can be found at: willingtonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

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# Boot Pond Memories

By David Corsini

My grandfather, who was born in 1880, liked to fish and had a fishing buddy with a cottage on Boot Pond, in Plymouth, Massachusetts. My mother told me that this fishing buddy was a doctor and an “odd duck” who had spent time in jail for performing an abortion. My mother offered no details, but I now wish I had asked for more. It turns out that the doctor’s mother owned the cottage and the land around it. My grandfather convinced her to sell him a piece of land to build his own cottage. She sold him a parcel on a hill overlooking the pond. Boot Pond is a 76-acre pond, one of many kettle ponds in Plymouth. It is called Boot Pond because it is shaped like a fireman’s boot with a heel and toe.

My mother remembered that the cottage was built when she was in junior high school. Since she was born in 1911, it must have been in the early 1920s. The cottage, without water or electricity, had a central room with a Franklin stove, three small bedrooms, a kitchen with a wood-burning stove, a covered porch overlooking the pond, and an outhouse.

My mother, her two sisters, and their parents would spend summers at the cottage. My grandfather was a poultry and egg wholesaler who had a stall at the Faneuil Hall market in Boston. He would take the train into Boston from Plymouth. My Aunt Muriel remembers that my grandfather would get up early to go fishing and bring back fish he would clean on a special board outside the cottage. My grandmother would then fry them up on the wood-burning stove. My mother told me that there was a horse-drawn cart that would deliver ice to cottages around Boot and surrounding ponds. There were other carts that brought produce.

I never went fishing with my grandfather and don’t remember any conversation I had with him. The only shared activity was when I was 14 and he was 74 and he took me to a series of nature movies on Saturday mornings. He was a quiet man and I believe I exhibit a good deal of this characteristic. When questioned about how quiet I am, sometimes it is handy to blame genetics.

I don’t remember the first time I visited the cottage, but I estimate that it was when I was 9 or 10. At the time of my first visit, the cottage had not been used for several years and was in need of attention. It had been built on pine posts that were then rotting. To stabilize and preserve the structure, the pine posts were replaced with cinder blocks and the roof was reshingled. It was rescued just in time. After this, the cottage began to be used more frequently by various family members. But up until the late 1980s there was no running water, inside plumbing, or electricity.

When I first visited, there were fewer than ten cottages around the pond. No one had electricity or lived there year-round. There are now many houses around the pond where some people live year-round. Even though there has been development, it doesn’t seem crowded. And, since no motorboats are allowed on the pond, it is usually very quiet. One exception was a night in 1981 when a helicopter with a searchlight was circling above the toe of the pond. Later we learned that a man had drowned. We now call that part of the pond Dead Man’s Toe.

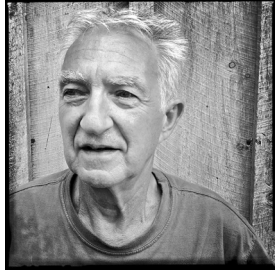
I have visited the cottage for about seventy-two years. During the summers in the 1970s and into the 2010s, I would spend a few days at the cottage with family, with friends, and sometimes alone. There have been lots of changes. For example, with respect to water, I remember originally there was a hand pump that had to be primed but brought up good water. Then that pump broke and we had to bring water up from the pond for many years. Then a well was drilled and a new pump secured. However, this pump didn’t last long. My uncle, who had paid to have the new well drilled, had a dispute with the company that had drilled the well, and the company came and ripped up the piping. It was back to carrying water from the pond.

It was a steep hill up from the pond, so getting the water was a bit of a workout. When I was young, it was fun and I remember thinking that carrying water up from the pond in old age would be a good way to maintain health. However, now at 82, I have enough trouble carrying water to keep the birdbaths full, and carrying water up a hill does not sound like a good idea.

There were some other changes. The wooden icebox on the back steps fell apart and was replaced by a metal icebox kept in the kitchen. A problem with this was that people didn’t always remember to empty the drip pan under the icebox.

The outhouse, down the driveway, became a bit wobbly and had to be replaced. Sitting down in a wobbly outhouse is a bit disconcerting. By the time the outhouse was replaced, most of the surrounding dwellings had indoor plumbing. The spanking new outhouse was an anomaly in the neighborhood.

For many years there was no electricity, so light was provided by kerosene lamps, Coleman lanterns, and flashlights. Cooking was done on a Coleman stove and outside on charcoal grills. I did use the wood-burning stove a few times, both to cook and to take the chill off. My sister baked biscuits in the oven.



When my grandparents died, their assets were divided between their three daughters. Mary, the youngest, who had never left the nest, got the Dedham house. Muriel, the middle sister, who loved the cottage, got the cottage. Ruth, my mother, got some money. My Aunt Muriel and I shared enthusiasm for the cottage and often talked about events there and around the pond.

Particularly salient to me are the wildlife memories. On my first visit of the year, typically in early spring, as a boy and as an adult, I checked out the status of the phoebes. Phoebes built nests that were within reach on the rafters of the porch. I had to check whether the nests had eggs, babies, or nothing. Then it was down a steep path to the pond to check the water level and edge of the pond for wildlife.

Soon after arriving, a canoe trip around the pond was in order. There were always belted kingfishers and great blue herons and sometimes gulls, ospreys, and mallards. And I would check the tree trunks that extended into the water for sunning turtles. There were usually painted turtles and sometimes there were the endemic Plymouth red-bellied turtles. These turtles are bigger than painted turtles and their head is black. It is usually not possible to see their reddish plastron when they sit on a log. Ancestors of these turtles probably came originally from the mid-Atlantic states via the pet trade and were able to establish a population in Boot and surrounding ponds. Boot Pond also has snapping turtles and musk turtles.

Until about eight years ago, whippoorwills were a reliable sound at night from across the pond. The other animal that used to be reliable at night, to help bring on sleep, was a bullfrog calling “jug-of-rum.” I have not heard either for many years. Red squirrels were present for many years, but not lately. Screech owls are present in the area, and one year I called them in with a rather pathetic imitation of their call. And one night, while sitting on the porch, a flying squirrel landed in a nearby tree. For many years I would hear the scream of the Fowler’s toad. The area around the cottage was renowned for having a large number of toadlets.

Early in our relationship, Delia and I brought bikes with us to the cottage and we rode on bike trails in Myles Standish State Forest. On one ride I spotted a snake on the trail and stopped in time to see that it was a hog-nosed snake. Hog-nosed snakes, which eat toads, are quite docile and even will sometimes play dead. It was easy to catch it, and both Delia and I held it for a bit. This experience was one of the ways I knew I was in the right relationship.

One time, when I was in my early fifties and could still carry a canoe, we brought my 16-foot, yellow Old Town canoe and our pet geese to the cottage. We took the geese to the pond and they followed Delia, Ana, and I as we paddled the canoe around the pond. And one year we brought our pet parrot, Eureka.

My Aunt Muriel loved spending time at the cottage, often by herself and with her black Lab, Houston. She and I shared an interest in the flowers around the cottage and pond. Around the cottage in early spring there were many pink lady slippers, and we sometimes found a special white one. Around the edge of the pond in spring there would be many blue flag irises and, as summer progressed, we could find highbush blueberries and huckleberries. In years when there was a little sandy shore, we could find the uncommon Plymouth rose gentian. And on a path through the woods, we knew where there was a stand of trailing arbutus (Plymouth Mayflower). Many times, after I had visited the cottage, I would give my aunt a call to report on the flora and fauna I had seen.

When my aunt got into her eighties, my uncle finally agreed to make some changes to make her stay there easier. So in the late 1980s or early 1990s, electricity, water, and indoor plumbing were added. These conveniences made visits somewhat easier for my aunt and uncle, but for me the cottage lost some of its charm. My uncle, who could be a bit ornery, would not include a shower in the renovation. My aunt, at considerable expense, had the wood stove electrified.

From 1982 until just a few years ago, Delia and I would spend a few days at the cottage each summer. But our advancing age, the uncomfortable beds, and lack of a shower made Delia reluctant to visit. Young love gladly puts up with some inconveniences that mature love will no longer endure. I have gone a few times by myself, but it is not the same. My cousin and his daughter’s family have recently made major additions to the cottage. There is now an outdoor shower, but it is not enclosed. Although some people might be comfortable showering in the all-together, I doubt it would appeal to Delia. So, the shower is a little too late for us.

One final memory: When I was 75, I was touring the pond in my small kayak and spotted a painted turtle sunning on a rock. I set the kayak to drift toward the turtle and sat still. I got within reaching distance without disturbing the turtle and made a grab. I missed and, in the process, swamped the kayak. I had a good laugh at my foolishness and wished someone had been around to laugh with me. It was very difficult getting the water out of the kayak and I sure could have used help. And so it goes.

## Spirits

By Judy Davis

When all is said and done, Irish Pagan wisdom begins, and ends, with being a shanachie - a storyteller.

It is about honoring the spirits which reside in the Earth.

This spirit is a path of poetry, song, and the visions of warriors.

The bards were the keepers of the past, and the druids were the keepers of the future.

And in the fields were the raths - circular enclosures with earth banks.

They are known as the place where the fairies, and the leprechauns live, who love music and dancing - and they love to come out at night to party!

## Columbia Student Receives Scholarship



Song-a-Day Music owner, Ruth O’Neil presenting annual scholarship to recipient, Abigail Levine.

Submitted by Ruth I. O’Neil

The Song-a-Day Music Fund is proud to announce that Abigail Levine of Columbia, CT, has been selected as the 2022 recipient of the Annual Song-a-Day Music Scholarship.

Abigail is a 2022 graduate of E.O. Smith High School in Mansfield. Abigail’s main instrument is the clarinet which she has begun playing while a student at Horace Porter School in Columbia. Abigail has had a busy musical career in high school, being part of the E.O. Smith’s Concert Band. Among her many musical experiences, Abigail has participated in the Eastern Regional, Connecticut All State and the New England Musical Festivals. She has been a member of the Hartford Youth Wind Ensemble, the University of Connecticut Symphonic Band and the Willimantic Orchestra.

This fall, Abigail begins her college studies at the University of Connecticut where she plans to major in Music Education ultimately earning a doctorate in the field. In addition to teaching, Abigail hopes to continue to perform in community orchestras.

Since 2002, The Song-a-Day Music Fund has awarded an annual scholarship to an area graduating senior who plans further study in the area of music. The Song-a-Day Music Fund is operated by the Song-a-Day Music Center located at 2809 Boston Turnpike in Coventry. The fund is committed to supporting the study and efforts of emerging and practicing musicians. To make a contribution to or for more information about the Song-a-Day Music Fund, contact the Song-a-Day Music Center at 860-742-6878 or songadaymusic.com.

# Reclaiming My Time

By Delia Berlin



Virtually everyone wants to live longer. Allow me to ask: what for? No, I'm not depressed or despondent. I'm simply curious, because the same people who appear terrified of death and desperate to lengthen their days on this world often seem perfectly happy wasting their precious time. The fact is that we are mortal and most of us have limited power to extend the length of our life. However, all of us have ways to make our life more enjoyable, meaningful, purposeful, and satisfying. Whatever brings us enjoyment, meaning, purpose, and satisfaction is different for each of us. But if we know what that is and work to increase it, we make our lives better.

Conversely, if we know what does not, in any way, contribute to our enjoyment, meaning, purpose, or satisfaction, working to eliminate it will also make our lives better. Sometimes it's much easier to start here, because we are quite adept at identifying what we don't like, even if we struggle to pinpoint what brings us happiness.

Things that we don't want to do steal time from our lives. I imagine that most people would make minor changes to their routine in exchange for living an extra year. But what if it had to be a year of colonoscopy preps? Thanks, but no thanks. So, forget about the potential length of life and start living it as if it may end tomorrow. Because (sorry to break the news) it really may.

Even in retirement, on most days I feel busy enough. But during my working years there were times when I felt completely overwhelmed. I got up very early, started rushing through "must-do" tasks that lasted all day, and went to bed exhausted, just to repeat the cycle the next day. The constant need to rush stressed me out and made me feel powerless and trapped. My driving to and from work offered me the only time for uninterrupted thinking.

During those years, I was baffled by my lack of ability to break that cycle. I had a relatively simple life, with a good job, no financial hardship, just one child at home, a husband and an ex-husband to co-parent with, and lots of resources. We had no health, legal, or relational issues to weigh us down. And yet, life felt like a hamster wheel.

Those thoughts alone were enough to fill me with great respect for the community college students I worked with. They juggled many more balls than I had to keep up in the air. For the most part, they did it with grace and generosity to spare. But that comparison was not enough to make me feel better about my own predicament. Something had to go.

Even though my commute offered me time to think, I didn't need to be driving to think. In fact, driving was one of those things that didn't give me any enjoyment, meaning, purpose, or satisfaction. We were living in Bolton and I was working in Willimantic, with frequent meetings in Danielson. I was driving 13 miles each way to work on most days, and close to 50 miles each

way about once a week. I figured that I could gain up to six hours a week by moving to an optimal location. Then, we moved to Windham Center and the relief was immediately palpable.

That move was a big time-saver but, over my life, there were also many others. Most didn't take me that long to figure out. For example, when I first set up home away from my parents as a young woman, somewhat mindlessly I equipped my house with what I was used to. Among the things I acquired were an ironing board and an iron. Did I ever use them? Maybe once. It must have been enough. There is no iron in my house now. I know that we are all different, but I always had been sure that ironing could not bring enjoyment, meaning, purpose, or satisfaction to anyone on this planet. However, upon discussing this with my husband, I learned that some find ironing relaxing and even enjoyable. He wasn't able to provide me with an actual example of such a person, but I'm keeping an open mind. To be perfectly clear, if ironing does it for you, by all means, iron away. I may even be able to provide you with extra enjoyment by supplying you with a steady flow of wrinkled garments. A mutually beneficial relationship may easily develop.

Another time-saving insight that I had from the very get-go was never coloring my hair. I started getting greys in my twenties and, since my hair was dark brown and always grew fast, I knew that coloring would mean a lifetime dedicated to covering roots. Did I want that? Nope. This goes without judgment. Unlike ironing, I can see that a head of not-grey hair may fill some with enjoyment, meaning, purpose, and satisfaction. It also may save them many split-seconds of wondering who is that familiar old lady reflected on the window.

It's easy to let our days roll by and sweep us forward, but it's good to make a habit of evaluating the worthiness of everything we do. We probably have to accept some unwanted tasks in our lives, to fulfill our obligations to others and to remain social, but there is a lot that can be trimmed. Much of our wasted time involves maintaining what we have. Once you acquire basic comfort and security, additional possessions don't result in increased happiness. Minimizing consumerism is not only good for the planet. It's good for us.

Another personal example of a recently ditched routine involves makeup. While I never used much of it, a little blush and lipstick always had been staples of my grooming. But during the pandemic, wearing masks and not socializing meant that the only benefit of makeup was staining the masks. Then, there was press about "forever chemicals" in makeup, terrible for our health, animals, and the environment. That was all it took to shave a few more minutes off my day for anything more enjoyable, meaningful, purposeful, and satisfying. I could go on and on, but I think I better stop before tackling pantyhose and bras.

# Arts on Main

Submitted by Ruth O'Neil

Music will fill the air in the upcoming Arts on Main event on Saturday, September 17 from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. in the Historic Coventry Village on Saturday, September. In addition to art workshops, art vendors, an art exhibit, children's activities, food, a collection of sculptures by world renowned local sculptor David Hayes, free face painting, and more, two sound stages will offer a variety of entertainment for all ages.

Located in the parking lot of the First Congregational Church, the Main stage starts with the area group November Sound. The local group Right Moment Duo will follow and the headline act, area group The Patty Tuite Band will continue the music until the end of the event. All three groups will play popular standards as well as some of their original selections.

Throughout the event, the non-profit organization, Coventry Cares, Inc. will host a Food Truck rally at the same location.

Further down Main Street, a second stage located at "1153 Main Street" will be devoted to entertainment for children (of all ages).

Visitors will have a chance to become part of an "On the Spot Jug Band", playing all kinds of rhythm instruments led by local musician and Song-a-Day Music Center owner, Ruth O'Neil.

At the same location, an "Instrument Petting Zoo", provided also by the Song-a-Day Music, will be set up for guests to have an up-close look at and try out various musical instruments.

Artisans and craftspersons will have exhibits and wares for sale in the municipal parking lot at the 1153 Main location.

More music can be heard at the Mill Brook Place by area group Dulcimers and More. The group will provide Celtic and traditional music from 11 to 1 during the Coventry Arts Guild Annual Members Art Show being held at Mill Brook place.

Main Street merchants and restaurants will be open, showcasing their specialties. The several antique and collectibles shops will be a particular draw.

A Carnival Mask Making project is planned along with an interactive Ribbon Construction activity. Sidewalk chalk art will be created on the sidewalks up and down Main Street.

This day-long event is meant to bring public attention to the historic part of Main Street and to find ways to continue to support the local business community as well as showcase visual and performing arts.

"Arts On Main" is free to attend and open to the public. Shuttle buses will be available at the GH Robertson School.

Please visit the Coventry Arts on Main Facebook Page or CoventryArtsGuild.org for more details leading up to the event. For further information, sponsorship opportunities, or ways to be involved, contact Eric Trott at 860-742-4062.

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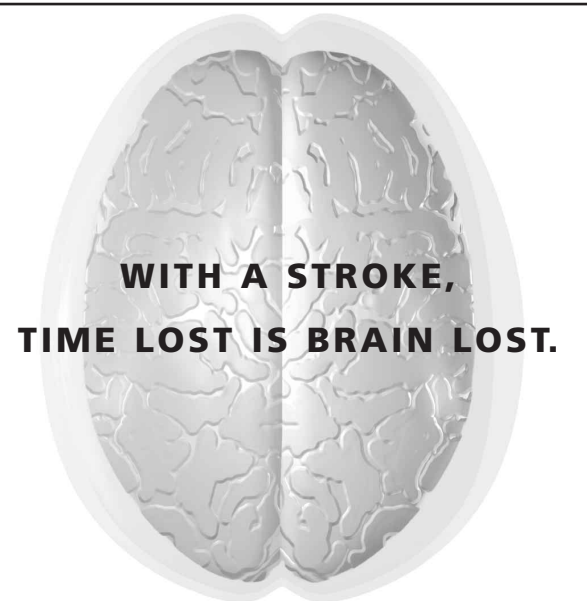


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From the Ground Up - Buying Local in Connecticut

# Tales of Fairs & A Market

By C. Dennis Pierce

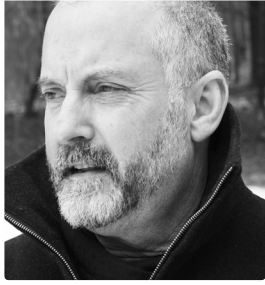
Yesterday morning, while letting my dogs out, I was greeted by my first harbinger of fall. A single crimson, maple leaf was sitting on top of a patch of brown grass in my back yard as if to say, "yes, let the cycle begin. I am the first of many." These are the times when you begin to look around you and notice that geese, with their V-formation, are heading south, the garden is dying off and my thoughts are where can I find a great deal on wood.

Late August, while the warmer, dry weather prevails, there is still a bright side. It is Fair time! As a

child growing up in New Hampshire it always was an annual outing to the Hopkinton Fair. I am sure it was probably no bigger than to the upcoming Woodstock Fair but to me, as a child, it could have been the Eastern States Exposition. As I grew older and attended college in Maine, my fix was the Fryeburg Fair. Maybe it was the smells from the many vendors the sounds that came from the various amusement rides or the strong odor of hay and urine in the cowbarns to me it was the "bookend" of summer and the beginning of fall. This past week I attended the Brooklyn Fair. I am a creature of habit. I walk the tented aisles where the main ingredient of many of the offerings was sugar (of course), walk through the Exposition Building, briefly listen to the musicians that are performing on the various stages and finally cap it off with lunch at the Scout's BBQ chicken tent. As always this is the best deal for money spent. A half of grilled chicken, a wrapped baked potato with butter packets, a full ear of local corn, a soft roll and a beverage of choice, all for fifteen dollars (plus tax). And, it is a great cause, supporting local. This year I asked how many chicken halves do they order to get them through the weekend and the answer from the grill masters was from eight hundred to a thousand. Depending on the weather and attendance the actual number prepared varies. Of course, I also asked what do they do with the extras that are not prepared and they shared that the chicken was then sold to the Scout's families. A win, win for everyone.

This was a busy month for me since I attended the Lebanon Fair, Brooklyn Fair and spent a Sunday morning at the Coventry Farmer's Market. The trip to the market was well worth it. I have not been to the summer market in several years and the variety of farms, crafts people, and food offerings / food trucks provides a great place to not only shop but also to bring guests if they are visiting with you. Every week the focus or theme changes so if you are looking to pay them a visit check it out at, [www.coventry-farmersmarket.org](http://www.coventry-farmersmarket.org)

As summer comes to an end, I am sure we would all like to look into our crystal balls to see what the next few months of weather will look like. Sure, we can check on our phone or computer but before technology New Englanders looked around them and observed what nature offered. Here are some signs that the Farmer's Almanac are listing as they are predicting a hard winter ahead of us. (1) Thicker than normal corn husks, (2) the early departure of geese and ducks, (3) the early migration of the Monarch butterfly, (4) heavy and numerous fogs during August, (5)



the propensity of mice trying to get into our house, (6) higher than normal hornet's nests - "see how high the hornet's nest, 'twill tell how high the snow will rest.", and (7) the size of the band on the Woolly Caterpillar. If the orange band is narrow, the winter will be snowy.

There are still a lot of blueberries at the local Farmer's Markets. I have bought mine at the Willimantic Market which is every Saturday morning. I bring them home, wash them, let them dry on paper towel and then put them on a baking pan and pop them into my freezer. Once frozen, I place them in a freezer bag so this winter I can add them to pancakes, smoothies or muffins.

Blueberry – Sage, Corn Muffins

Pre heat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease a 12 – well, muffin tin.



At the Lebanon Fair. Dennis Pierce photo.

Ingredients:

1 ¼ cups of all - purpose flour  
¼ cup of yellow cornmeal  
¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon of sugar  
2 teaspoons of baking powder  
Pinch of salt  
1 cup of milk  
¼ cup of vegetable oil  
1 large egg  
¼ cup of finely chopped fresh sage leaves or two tablespoons of dried sage  
2 cups of fresh or frozen blueberries, rinsed, dried and an additional tablespoon of sugar sprinkled over them

Directions:

Mix together the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and salt in a large bowl.

In another, bowl, whisk together the milk, oil, egg and sage.

Add liquid ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix thoroughly without beating.

Fold in the sugared blueberries.

Spoon the batter into the muffin tin and bake until the muffins spring back when pressed and the tops are lightly golden, about 25 minutes.

Cool enough to handle them the remove muffins from the tin and cool on a rack.

Serve warm with butter and honey.

I want to thank all who reach out to me and send suggestions and warm notes regarding my monthly column. That means a lot to me and of course a thanks to others who graciously craft their columns so that Neighbors can be the best community paper around. If you have a suggestion for a farm or a local grower or even a recipe that would feature a local ingredient, please let me know. I will do my best to share your suggestions in a future column. Drop me a line at [Codfish53@Yahoo.com](mailto:Codfish53@Yahoo.com).

...Peas be with you. 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!

## Pickleball – Release Your Inner Barbarian

By Bob Lorentson

We humans are such a sports obsessed species that we have never even considered calling a time out. Early on, sports like wrestling and archery were an important part of the preparation for war. Then as our leisure time expanded, so did the world of sports, with all manner of sports being invented to fill every niche in our competitive natures. In fact, there were over 8,000 at last count, though I'm sure to be challenged on this. Even talking about sports is practically a preparation for war these days. Which brings me to pickleball, the new sport that could be pushing our niches to the breaking point. As nobody wants broken niches, this deserves a closer look.

From what I can tell, pickleball has no shortage of cheerleaders who insist that the sport is good, healthy fun, even for those on a low sodium diet. Reading Thorstein Veblen's influential 1899 book *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, however, gives me pause. In it the noted economist and sociologist opined that sport is no more than an expression of the barbarian temperament, and marks an arrested development in man's nature. This dichotomy makes even my niches feel like they're in a pickle without a paddle.

Now truth be told, I have only recently started playing pickleball, but I have yet to witness any Viking, Hun, or Mongol Horde type displays of aggression or temper. Paddles, not swords, are the weapons of choice, and so far everyone has kept their heads. What Eric the Red, Attila, or Genghis Khan might have done with a paddle in their leisure time is for others to wonder about, not me.

But if pickleball is for people with arrested development, count me in. While I have never been arrested, many have viewed my development with suspicion for years. As for the game's developers, you be the judge. In 1965 they created the sport by stealing the best parts of tennis, badminton, ping pong, and whiffle ball and the worst part of the dictionary. Calling the game pickleball alone should have gotten them sentenced to hard labor in a Vlastic factory. There are no pickles in pickleball. Some say the sport was named for the family dog, Pickles, clearly the most mature member of the family.

Maturity of age is another thing entirely. Sixty-eight percent of the game's players are over the age of 60. What this means beyond the facts that the average pickleball player has a shelf life exceeding that of the average pickled cucumber, has less need of preservatives, and is far more active, I can't say. But it has vaulted pickleball past walking and gossiping as the favored sport of retirement communities everywhere. Less you get me wrong however, pickleball is not only for those who like to compare arthritis remedies while swinging a paddle. It has, in fact, recently become the fastest growing sport in all segments of America, and unlike 68 percent of its players, shows no signs of slowing down.

There's a reason a pickleball court is one third the size of a tennis court, and it's not just to give tennis players a place to retire. Have you ever noticed that sometimes you're just not hungry enough for a full meal, so you settle for a small plate and a glass of wine or two instead? Well, pickleball may be less filling than tennis, but that just makes it all the more intoxicating. And if you still have room for desert, try the ping pong. If you're playing to lose weight however, lay off the wine. Besides, wine is not the source of the "pickleball high" you may have heard about. Neither is it sanctioned by the USA Pickleball Association. The USAPA is fine with endorphins though, but cautions moderation. They don't wish to be responsible for anyone's development being arrested.

The health benefits of pickleball are said to be numerous, and possibly go a long way in offsetting all the injuries. Improved cardio health, stress management, muscle activity, and hand-eye coordination are just some of the benefits players can experience. Doctors say it even has tremendous therapeutic value for those afflicted with Parkinson's disease. It is also said to help improve cognitive function, but with the frequency I hear players ask, "Who's serve is it?" and "What's the score?" I have to wonder.

As far as injuries, "pickleball elbow," and "pickleball leg cramps" are nothing to laugh at. Neither are ankle and wrist sprains, shoulder strains, or your injured pride when you've lost, or been "pickled." But they say there is no crying in pickleball either, so maybe the barbarians aren't far from the gate after all.

The Neighbors Paper  
Locally Written  
Locally Wread

## Unsung Heroes of Soul:

## Johnny Adams

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 Johnny Adams, whose multi-octave range and swooping vocal mannerisms earned him the nickname “The Tan Canary.”

Lathan John Adams, Jr., was born in New Orleans on January 5, 1932, the oldest of ten children. He began his musical career singing gospel with two different groups, the Soul Revivers and Bessie Griffin’s Consolators. At the urging of his neighbor, songwriter Dorothy LaBostrie, he switched to secular music in 1959, recording LaBostrie’s “I Won’t Cry” for Joe Ruffino’s Ric label. The session was produced by 17-year-old Mac Rebennack (later known as Dr. John). The song became a local hit and would break nationally when Adams recut it in 1970.

The success of “I Won’t Cry” allowed Adams to play gigs outside of New Orleans. Ric put out several additional singles on him over the next three years, most of them also local hits and produced either by Rebennack or Eddie Bo. In 1962, Adams made the national Rhythm & Blues chart for the first time with another Rebennack production, “A Losing Battle.”

After the 1963 death of Joe Ruffino, Adams’ contract was picked up by the Watch label. He subsequently recorded for regional outfits like Pacemaker, but his records did very little. In 1968, Adams signed with Shelby Singleton’s SSS International in Nashville. His first release for Singleton was a reissue of one of Adams’ Watch recordings. “Release Me” had been a hit three times before: in the country market for Ray Price (1954), in the R&B and pop market for Esther Phillips (1962), and in the pop market for Engelbert Humperdinck (1967). Adams’ falsetto-laden performance became his second charted single, reaching #34 R&B and #82 pop.

His next release, produced by Singleton, became his biggest. A country-soul ballad that allowed Adams to show off his vocal gymnastics, “Reconsider Me” hit #8 on the R&B chart and crossed over to the pop market at #28. It also ensured Adams’ place in *The Billboard Book of One-Hit Wonders* (Wayne Jancik, 1998).

Adams left SSS International in 1971 and again recorded for a series of new labels, including Atlantic and Ariola. It was on the latter that Adams made the Soul chart for the last time, with 1978’s “After the Good Is Gone.” He also started performing regularly at Dorothy’s Medallion Lounge in New Orleans and touring the southern nightclub circuit.

In 1983, Adams signed with Rounder, a Boston-based label known for its eclectic artist roster. There, he recorded a series of critically acclaimed albums, starting with 1984’s *From the Heart*. His Rounder recordings featured a range of styles and earned Adams a number of



accolades, including the W.C. Handy Award. He also moved from New Orleans to Baton Rouge (where the golfing was better) and frequently toured Europe with artists like Aaron Neville, Harry Connick, Jr., Lonnie Smith, and Dr. John.

Johnny Adams, 66, died of prostate cancer on September 14, 1998.

Charted singles:

“A Losing Battle” (1962) R&B #27

“Release Me” (1968) R&B #34, Pop #82

“Reconsider Me” (1969) R&B #8, Pop #28

“I Can’t Be All Bad” (1969) R&B #45, Pop #89

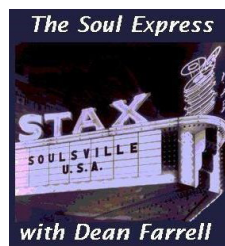
“Proud Woman” (1970) Pop #121

“I Won’t Cry” (Re-recording, 1970) R&B #41

“After the Good Is Gone” (1978) R&B #75

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](http://www.wecsfm.com)) and Fridays from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. on WRTC, 89.3-FM ([www.wrtcfm.com](http://www.wrtcfm.com)). 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](mailto:soulexpress@gmail.com).*



## Free Children’s Art Activities in Coventry

Submitted by Barbara Timberman

On Saturday, September 17th, the Coventry Arts Guild and the town of Coventry will be hosting our annual Arts on Main Festival from 11 am until 4 pm. Music, art exhibitions, food, arts and craft vendors, street performers and fun await you.

All young people in the region are invited to help create a large-scale art installation on the grounds of Coventry Arts and Antiques at 1140 Main Street, adjacent to the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library. This event is entirely free and open to all. All art materials will be supplied by the Guild.

We will be painting giant carnival-style masks and creating a colorful environmental sculpture. All



levels of skill and all ages are welcome to participate. Guild members Barbara Timberman and Kathy Lepak will support the young people in the creation of our beautiful sculpture. This has

been a joyful and creative experience for kids and teens during our previous years’ arts festivals and we look forward to welcoming you. To RSVP or to ask questions email Barbara Timberman at: [Barbara.timberman@gmail.com](mailto:Barbara.timberman@gmail.com)

As well, there will again be a Sidewalk Chalk event all day, open to all ages sponsored by the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library. Colored chalk will be supplied or you may bring your own special colors. Plan your art ahead of time or be spontaneous! Create a picture of your choosing (a portrait, landscape, still life or other) on the sidewalks in Coventry Village.

Mark September 17th on your calendar—we’ll be looking for you!

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## 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.

# Enduring Memories Often Result from Episodes of Extreme Fear or Excitement!

By Bill Powers

There has been a large amount of research devoted to why it is that people who have encountered life or death experiences vividly recall memories of an event in great detail. It is as if the indelible memories of the event are “engraved” in their minds. Recurring memories that are associated with long-lasting negative emotions can be intrusive and pervasive later in life. Human memories evoked in this manner provide an advantage that is linked to one’s ability to survive in similar future situations. In other words, the details for both a threat and the method of survival have to be accurately remembered in the future. In such situations, memory appears to focus on important details as they were encoded in the brain for future reference. An important cause for this process appears to be intimately involved with *fear* and is mediated by neuro-biochemical processes via our endocrine and nervous systems. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a mental health condition, can be a result of frightening, distressful events or prolonged traumatic experiences, all associated with memory.

However, experiences, when extreme *excitement* occurs, can also be responsible for long lasting memories that are indeed detailed and vivid. The physiology associated with *fear* and *excitement* is similar. The variables that dictate the extent of a human’s response to both are related to the frequency, duration and intensity of experiences. I am sharing four experiences in my life when *fear* was *not a prominent factor* but for which a salient element of *excitement* was involved; and for which I have vivid and enduring memories, and one experience that involved more than a usual dose of fear and came out okay.

1) I remember the event as if it happened just yesterday, even though it occurred 60 years ago. My American Legion baseball team had traveled to Windsor for a game against an unbeaten club. I was playing center field when their catcher came up to bat. I knew him well. He was my cousin, the son of my mother’s sister. I had seen him play a number of times, and I knew he was capable of hitting the ball “a country mile.” With that in mind, I moved farther back and motioned to the other outfielders that they might want to do the same. Sure enough, on the second pitch my cousin Tommy took a big swing and connected with the ball. I saw the ball as it left his bat and then heard the crack of his bat as the ball quickly headed in my direction, a bit to my right. It was more of a line drive as opposed to a high fly ball. I needed to sprint a dozen steps farther back; and as I stretched my arm and raised-up my glove, somehow I caught the ball. Or did I? When I looked into my glove, to my shock and dismay, the ball was gone! It rested on the ground just a few feet away. Scooping up the ball, I quickly fired it into our shortstop which prevented my cousin from attempting to try for third base. When I examined my fielder’s glove, it was apparent that the web’s lacing had snapped which allowed the hard hit ball to pass through it. When play had stopped, I ran to our bench to show the glove to my coach and borrowed another player’s glove. Amazingly, the next hitter drove a fly ball to center field that I easily gathered in for the third out of the inning, providing me with a chance for redemption. Adding insult to injury,

Tommy’s coach was his father and my uncle. Uncle Adam had previously played professional baseball as a left-handed pitcher in the Phillies organization reaching the AAA level; and, he and his son simply lived for baseball. After the game, they shook my hand and my cousin said “Tough break!”; and, my uncle, while examining my glove, smiled and commented: Looks like it’s time for a new glove.” To my relief and to their credit, the incident was never mentioned again. Tommy went on to play baseball for Springfield College where he prepared for his career as a physical education and health teacher.

2) Belatedly, while in my late 40s, I discovered that nature’s wild spaces provided a place to escape and heal in the fresh air, peace, and solitude that was there just for the asking. Over 2000 years ago the Roman Titus Livius wrote: “potiusque sero quam nunquam” or “better late than never.” Since age 50, those words, more than any others, have advised and guided me on this journey during this latest quarter century of my life. The new experiences afforded by hiking and paddling my kayak, and encountering nature first hand have provided me with a way to stay

better grounded and to periodically reenergize, especially during challenging times. Along this path, a most welcomed distraction, whether it be on a hike or paddling, has been to discover ripe wild blueberries, black raspberries or wild grapes growing along the way. Just have to take a few moments when I have to stop, gather and enjoy the taste while embracing the essence of life!

One autumn day, twenty years ago, during a long kayak outing, it was my good fortune to spot a large number of vines full of ripe wild grapes growing along the shore and hanging over the water. They begged me to be plucked and devoured. Their sheer abundance was amazing and could not be overlooked, especially since my mouth had spontaneously begun to water. What a find! As I maneuvered my kayak to the shore, the best position to pick grapes meant steering the vessel’s nose into a slight inlet and reaching over to my right to pick a low hanging cluster. This was where the lake and the forested shore met. The water was seven or eight feet deep. The first cluster of grapes was easily reached and very tasty. To gather more, it was required that I carefully stretch farther out to reach other nearby fruit. Unfortunately, I leaned too far and the boat began to flip. For a second it teetered on its edge. Frantically, I attempted to lean in the opposite direction, but that failed correct my problem. The boat and I were upside down. Previously, I had practiced how to exit my boat under more controlled circumstances, but this was a complete surprise and a cause for great excitement, especially as I hit the cold water. Wearing my life jacket, even though taken by surprise, I felt in control and prepared, but not afraid, although my adrenaline had kicked in. Today I remember that situation and all its details as if happened the other day.

3) My wife and I were hiking in the Canadian Rockies. We were on a ridge that afforded spectacular views, overlooking splendid high alpine meadows. At a point where the trail curved drastically and started down into a valley, my wife, who was in the lead, suddenly stopped and pivoted around to face me. Her piercing eyes were wide and fearful. With a trembling voice she managed to softly say one word –“BEARS!” Immediately, her cause for concern was evident. Just ahead a Grizzly sow and her cub were foraging at the trailside. As I looked, my wife managed to slowly and quietly wriggle her way around me on the narrow path and headed away. I quickly grabbed her shoulders from behind and whispered “Wait!” She replied in an alarmed whisper, “What are you doing? We gotta go! I said, “Just one second, the camera is in your pack.” As I removed the camera from her pack, she responded, “You’re crazy. I’m going back.” Quickly, I snapped a couple of photos before catching up to her.” My wife’s experience with bears in the wild had been limited to briefly seeing a Black Bear and her cubs from a good distance on the trail, as we climbed Mt. Katahdin in Maine; whereas, I was privileged to have spent time in the field learning about bears and their behaviors with Dr. Lynn L. Rogers. (He has been called the “Jane Goodall of bears”). I felt comfortable in our situation since it was breezy and the bears were upwind from us. Additionally, they were not showing signs of alerting to our presence. While excited to see the Grizzlies in the wild, I didn’t experience fear at all. I wanted to photographically commemorate the experience that is still permanently etched in my memory.

4) Recently, some of our relatives and friends who read the story of an adventure shared with my eldest son, Rob, 24 years ago, have asked: “Were you at all afraid?” or “Were there times when you thought you might not survive?” The story appears in the Winter/Spring 2022 issue of *Appalachia* and is titled “Light Snow in the Whites: A close call.” It is the story of how the weather forecast for our climb to the summit of Mt. Washington called for “light snow and moderate winds”; and, actually, turned into a ferocious blizzard during our climb and descent. It details how we managed these immediate conflicts. We were not fearful, even as we, for hours, faced whiteout conditions at wind speeds exceeding 50 mph and a wind chill factor of negative 40 degrees Fahrenheit. We previously had trained at a winter mountaineering school in New Hampshire, fortunately had the appropriate clothing and equipment with us and were familiar with the area due to hikes in other seasons of the year. Our focus was always on only the very next few “steps” toward our objective. It was an exciting experience and not one that involved fear. Rob and I easily recalled the details 23 years later. We had perceived the

situation as a challenge that we together shared. Writing together we are glad to have been to be able to share our story in the journal *Appalachia* with mountaineers from far and wide.

For all the experiences described thus far, I have fond remembrances for which I cherish. Certainly, they were not interpreted by me as frightening, distressful, or prolonged traumatic experiences. However, they were exciting at the time and resulted in memories that are vivid, detailed and enduring. They were the kind of experiences that my nervous system perceived as intensive enough to warrant special attention and afforded priority storage in my brain cells.

Like other humans, I have had my share of frightening experiences. A couple of them might be akin to what a qualified clinician would describe and consider as meeting the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder criteria. Additionally, there were other very frightening experiences that at the time *scared the hell out of me!* In one case, even though I was a respiratory therapist, a firefighter /EMT, a CPR instructor and trainer of CPR instructors, I needed to perform a lifesaving procedure for youngest son, who was an infant. At ten months old, he was very fond of a finger food consisting of canned sliced peaches cut into small pieces. He was sitting in his highchair in the dining area busily chewing his peaches while I chopped up a few more slices, when our kitty was clearly working to deliver a fur ball onto our oriental rug. Distracted, I was able to persuade the cat to move onto the adjoining kitchen floor only a dozen feet away. When I returned in a few seconds, I saw that my son was clutching some larger slices of the peaches that I had not yet finished slicing. Then to my horror, I found him in acute respiratory distress and completely unable to exchange air. His eyes were bulging and his chest walls and sternum retracted as he attempted to breathe. I immediately scooped him up and administered several back blows that failed to dislodge the obstruction. Placing him on his back, compressions were next forcefully thrust onto his sternum with two of my fingers. Instantly this maneuver caused the piece of peach that had been lodged in his airway to be launched into the air. This was immediately followed by deep inhalation of air and a period of screaming. Then we both cried together as I hugged and comforted him. Thank God, I knew what to do and was able to follow through successfully. It turned out okay! Otherwise, this might have been one of those frightening, distressful, and traumatic events with horrific symptoms that could last for a lifetime.

The human brain is wired in such a way that it creates lasting and detailed memories of experiences that are extremely threatening to us. These memories can be useful for future survival. In some cases dreadful and lasting consequences, including intrusive memories and nightmares, may result from experiencing extreme fear during traumatic events. To me, it is fascinating that the same brain using the same wiring and triggered by extremely *exciting* experiences can also create enduringly fond memories that may be cherished for the rest of one’s life.

*Bill Powers is a retired teacher and resides in Windham.*

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# Why Hybrid Retirement May Be The Answer

By Laurence Hale, AAMA, CRPS®  
Principal/Managing Partner,  
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Officer



Retirement isn't what it used to be. Far from sitting in a rocking chair on the front porch, retirees who've planned well for their future are busy living well in retirement, whether that means pursuing their passions, travelling, or even starting up the dream career or business they'd always wanted to try. But retiring early can also pose some significant risks.

By saving and investing from as early an age as possible, some people can build up enough money to leave the workforce in their 50s, 40s, and even 30s. Early retirement may seem like the ultimate goal and a sign of wealth, but it can also sometimes result in retirees having to live off of a much smaller amount of money than if they were to keep working just another five or ten years.

Others experience a loss of purpose along with a sense of loneliness and isolation. Quitting your job early can be fulfilling if you know others who've done the same, but it can be hard to find people to pass the time with when the norm is to work 40 hours each week.

This is where hybrid retirement can help. Rather than leaving the workforce completely, many people look for new sources of income that prevent them from eating into their savings or dying from boredom before they get to spend it all.

But before you hop into a hybrid retirement, here's what to consider.

## 1: Find a Job You're Not Desperate To Retire From

If you're eager to venture down the early retirement route, question whether quitting work completely will actually solve your problems. This is important whether you work a 9-5 office job, do long shifts in a hospital or you're a stressed-out business owner looking to sell your company and have nothing more to do with it. Is there a chance you're simply in the wrong industry?

## 2: Don't Sacrifice Everything For a Future That's Not Guaranteed

Sacrificing everything in the short-term to save for early retirement could turn out to be one of the biggest mistakes of your life. Retirement saving is crucial, but it's important to live in the present and make use of the time we have now. Nothing is guaranteed and postponing all enjoyment for a later date can be extremely risky.

Try to find ways to live in the present and spend money now, even if it means adding a few more years onto your career. Surely the whole point of money is to spend it on positive experiences, rather than hoarding it for decades?

## 3: The Hybrid-Retirement Model Can Be Molded To Suit You

The best thing about hybrid retirement is that you can mold it around you and your goals. It can look different from one person to another. All you need to do is identify the aspects of your work that you love, while getting rid of the parts that make you long for the day you can flip your desk and leave for good.

Perhaps you love the industry, but you hate the commute? Maybe your boss drives you up the wall, but you love working as part of a team? These are just a few factors to consider when working out what your future will look like.

If you're a business owner, achieving hybrid retirement might simply be a case of stepping away from the office and outsourcing your day-to-day tasks without selling the company completely. This could provide you with passive income which allows you to focus on other projects.

Some people want to keep working in their later years without having the stresses and responsibilities that can come with traditionally well-paid work. Working in a coffee shop or decorating your neighbors' houses could keep you busy without forcing you to think about work when you're trying to unwind each evening.

## 4: How Achievable Is It?

If you'd like to explore the hybrid retirement route, working through your options can provide you with a sustainable and realistic action plan. You can take the date you'd like to retire along with your income and expenses to help you determine how much you need to save, and how much you'll need to earn once you're semi-retired.

With the help of good financial planning, you can mold your life to look exactly how you want it to, while making sure you live in the moment and don't miss out on memorable experiences today. Here at Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Financial Advisors, we can help you make this retirement plan a reality using our Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well strategic financial planning process. Contact us at (860) 928-2341 or info@whzwealth.com, or visit our website at www.whzwealth.com to get started.

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## Tai Chi Home

### Kind of Calming

By Joe Pandolfo

Dusk in late summer is an enchanting thing. Heat slips off the day like a robe. The colors of the sun going down change in such a soft way. Even when it's flying the heron uses hardly any movement, floating on air and gliding along the water at the same time, noiseless.



In old texts some ancient daoyin exercises are said to "release the heart fire", and it's true. It's a kind of calming we can always use. You can feel a late summer sundown on the inside.

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# Agbotic Update

By Judith Lovdal

Preserved agricultural land isn't what you think it is! The donation, bargain sale, or sale of development rights are programs designed to enable young farmers who cannot afford the high cost of land or taxes to gain entry into their chosen profession. They are *not* intended to allow a cheap land purchase with tax exemptions for an international venture capitalist to build an industrial-scale series of greenhouses. Agbotic boasts that its Browns Road greenhouse project will not use any prime soils but rather truck in "amended" dirt from somewhere else. The preservation programs initially gave careful consideration to the amount of prime soil that would be utilized/disturbed, as this was a key consideration for approval. Prime soils are supposed to be used for farming, not developing!

The rubber often hits the road upon the resale of these supposedly protected properties, however. The initial sale usually undergoes more scrutiny by the funding agencies and is monitored for compliance by several agencies after approval. Upon resale, however, the scrutiny seems to disappear, and a few glossy PowerPoints can sway even the best of officials! Suddenly economic development overshadows agriculture, environment, health, and wellbeing. The original owner of the property, who sold the rights with the intent of preserving rural agriculture, may have been misled. Homeowners were told by town officials that we were so lucky to have purchased property across from a farm that had been "preserved in perpetuity" for the benefit of the community! That was misleading and is a betrayal.

The commissions and agencies that declare their dedication to health, safety, and protection of the environment in their mission statements have failed us miserably in several ways.

## 1. The Town of Mansfield's response:

- The town did not order an independent additional water study as they have with other properties. Even though a highly regarded engineer's report contradicted the developers' report, it was ignored. Several members of the Planning and Zoning Commission voted against the proposal due to water consumption concerns and suggested that additional research and testing be performed. Their request was ignored, and approval proceeded.

- The town said they had no jurisdiction regarding a *boundary* stone wall removal. Removal of boundary markers is covered by state statute.

- No alternate site—one that might use public water and septic and be a better fit—was explored.

- The town did not thoroughly research the effectiveness of the light, noise, and odor mitigation proposals. Subsequent research indicates the odor mitigation proposal will not be effective and, according to several manufacturers, no product exists that can handle the volume being proposed.

- No one addressed the "bait and switch" on solar energy (that "condition" was removed by the Department of Agriculture). The existing grid will have to supply the power for robots, lights, and all operations. Impact: unknown.

- Town agencies and commissions enthusiastically focused on rushing through approvals before residents were even aware of the impacts and plans. Information obtained from research after the hearings were closed was not allowed to be discussed or to impact the town's decision—even falsification of facts regarding water availability was not taken into consideration.

- No cost-benefit analysis was compiled by the Economic Development Commission, even after a well-known financial planner documented why Agbotic is not a viable business. P&Z went further, stating that economics are

not part of their concern.

Clearly, this is not due diligence.

2. The Department of Agriculture approved the sale and had to extend the approval timeline for the past two years due to legal suits and failure to close. They claim the town is responsible for all other issues of concern that were presented.

3. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection has their hands tied. Although an area previously documented as a natural wildlife preservation area has already had destruction occur, they claim they can only set up mitigating requirements and the town would need to take action.

4. The town's Conservation, Economic Development, and Agricultural commissions approved the project before having all the information and facts.

5. Joshua's Trust, dedicated to preservation (and adjoining the property), claimed neutrality, although a member of the trust spoke favorably at the hearing.

6. The project is touted as local and sustainable. It remains unclear how processing and packaging greens into plastic containers and shipping them out of state fits either of these goals.

7. Legal teams and courts focus on statutory and procedural "correctness." Concerns posed to developers' attorneys were dismissed as "waxing and waning" over aesthetics, and it was argued that only the statute mattered.

8. Of the five candidates holding state positions, only one responded to our requests and inquiries, and that was with a "boilerplate" memo on all he'd accomplished and that had nothing to do with the site in question. Good luck at the polls, folks!

So who is protecting the citizens on Browns Road or anywhere else?

It appears that private citizens must stand up and pay legal fees to try to protect the health and well-being of their neighbors, the environment, and the wildlife that existed prior to the activity that has occurred and will occur on the subject property. Further, to any party considering offering their precious land to an agency or department or entity that declares it will preserve it: think carefully and do your research. It is obvious that the original program needs a great deal of modification, with clear definitions and distinctions between urban and rural agriculture depending on resource consumption and the size/impact of proposals.

If we continue down this path, we will truly not have farms and open spaces anymore. If Agbotic passes the legal hurdles before it, who knows what the future will bring for this property and others. If we can't prevent this kind of devastation now, we will continue to have the same controversies going forward. We have learned that the word of the developer is not to be trusted and when he indicates he won't develop across the street, or grow marijuana, or impact energy use but will instead install solar...hold onto your hats, folks! Why did the State of New York indicate Agbotic couldn't expand their operation without investing millions into a new power grid? If they don't plan on growing marijuana at their facilities, why have they advertised in a pot publication for a head grower at their New York facility? If they don't plan on developing the acreage across the street, why buy it?

Food for thought, I hope!

# Second Annual Eastern CT Children's Book Fair

Submitted by Bob Hasenfratz

The Willimantic Public Library and the Friends of the WPL invite you and your families to attend the second annual Eastern Ct. Children's Book Fair. The Children's Book Fair will be held at Jillson Square in Willimantic on October 1, 2022 from 10 – 4 in connection with the Downtown Country Fair. This event aims to get children of all ages and backgrounds interested in reading and introduce them to some of the local authors who write children's books. The fair will feature five Connecticut children's book authors reading from their works as well as a book seller, River Bend Bookshop of Glastonbury, offering these and other books for sale. The Friends of the Willimantic Public Library will also be giving away free children's books including books by the featured authors. This event continues our efforts to revive the popular Children's Book Fair that the UConn Co-op ran for years but which was discontinued after the Co-op shut down. It will be advertised throughout Eastern Connecticut and the Hartford region.

The Book Fair has goals of supporting our community, getting local citizens and children more involved with the Willimantic Public Library or their local library, and inviting children to become life-long readers. Partnering with the Willimantic Public Library and the Friends of the WPL are Windham Public Schools, Eastern Ct. State University, Dodd Human Rights Impact of UConn, and the Windham School Readiness Council. In addition to author talks/readings, there will be children's activities staffed by volunteers who speak Spanish and English.

This year five Connecticut authors of books for children and young adults will read from their works. They are Talia Aikens- Nuñez, Jamie L. B. Deenihan, Rebecca Podos, Cindy Rodriguez, and Nancy Tandon.

Talia Aikens-Nuñez originally wanted to be a meteorologist, a politician and a lawyer, and she never thought she would be a writer. The birth of her daughter, though, drew her to writing, and she wrote lyrical children's books while she was raising a bilingual child. These "first experience" books introduce Spanish to children and parents as well. Talia's family loves nature so much that she and her husband vowed that they will always try to live close to water. They live on a river in Connecticut with their kids. She will be reading from two of her books: *Small Nap, Little Dream* (Nancy Paulson Books) and *Escucha Means Listen*. Both are in English and introduce readers to Spanish vocabulary. Her other books include *OMG... Am I A Witch?* As well as *OMG... Is He also a Witch?*

Jamie L. B. Deenihan is a former elementary school teacher and certified reading specialist turned picture book author. Her debut picture book was *When Grandma Gives You a Lemon Tree* (Union Square Books), illustrated by Lorraine Rocha. Her next picture book, *The Tooth Fairy VS. Santa* (Penguin Workshop), illustrated by Erin Hunting, will be coming out soon. She will be reading from *When Grandma Gives you a Lemon Tree*, and *When*

*Grandpa Gives You a Toolbox*. Her books have been released in Spanish and English.

Rebecca Podos is a graduate of the MFA Writing, Literature and Publishing program at Emerson College, and her debut novel, *The Mystery of Hollow Places* (Balzer + Bray), was a Junior Library Guild Selection and a B&N Best YA Book of 2016. Her second book, *Like Water* (Balzer + Bray), won the 2018 Lambda Literary Award for LGBTQ Children's and Young Adult. Her latest releases are *Fools in Love* (Running Press Kids), a co-edited YA anthology with Ashley Herring Blake, and *From Dust, a Flame* (Balzer + Bray). By day, Rebecca is an agent at the Rees Literary Agency in Boston.

Cindy Rodriguez earned degrees from UConn and Central Connecticut State University and has two teaching certifications. Her most recent books are *Three Pockets Full: A story of love, family, and tradition* (Cardinal Rule Press 2022), a story about a Mexican wedding, and *The Doomed Search for the Lost City of Z* (Capstone 2022). She is a U.S.-born Latina of Puerto Rican and Brazilian descent and a founder of Latinxs in Kid Lit, which has been celebrating children's literature by/for/about Latinxs since 2013. She is the author of the YA novel *When Reason Breaks*, (Bloomsbury 2015) and the essay "I'm a Survivor" from the anthology *Life Inside My Mind: 31 Authors Share Their Personal Struggles* (Simon Pulse 2018). She has also written *Volleyball Ace* (2020), *Drill Team Determination* (2021), and *Gymnastics Payback* (2021), which are all part of the Jake Maddox series published by Capstone/Stone Arch Books.

Cindy lives in Connecticut with her family. She will be reading from *Three Pockets Full*.

Nancy Tandon is a children's book author who loves sharing all kinds of stories. She has worked as an elementary school teacher, a speech-language pathologist, and an adjunct professor of Phonetics and Child Language Development, all of which helped plant seeds for stories about awesome kids doing brave things. Her debut middle grade novel, *The Way I Say It* (Charlesbridge, 2022) was the winner of the American Booksellers' Association *Indies Introduce* and *Indies Next* competitions, and was a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection as well. She is also the author of *The Ghost of Spruce Point*, forthcoming from Aladdin/Simon & Schuster (2022). Born and raised in Michigan, Nancy now lives with her family in Connecticut. She will be reading from *The Way I Say It*, a book about a child with speech challenges.

The Dodd Human Rights Impact program will host a Malka Penn Award for Human Rights in Children's Literature section at the Book Fair. It will feature current and past winning and honor books. *Defiant* by Wade Hudson is the 2022 recipient of the Malka Penn Award.



## A Dog Story

He never bought a paper anymore  
 But on that day he grabbed one at the store  
 Little did he know he soon would see  
 A picture that would change his destiny

A dog named Lucy with a sad expression  
 The emotion in her eyes made an impression  
 "I want that dog" he said with certainty  
 And that is how the friendship came to be

At the pound he saw her in her pen  
 He lost his heart to her right there and then  
 He had to take her with him right away  
 So Lucy got to leave the pound that day

For years she had been in there growing old  
 A lonely pit-bull with a heart of gold  
 She was old - they'd have a short time only  
 But he knew he'd never leave her lonely

In return she healed his broken heart  
 Always by his side never to part  
 He hoped that taking walks would keep her strong  
 And love and happiness her life prolong

Three years or more she loved to walk the trail  
 But slowly her great strength began to fail  
 Came the day she wanted just to rest  
 She felt that laying down at home was best

She knew her weary body wouldn't last her  
 She knew that death would take her from her master  
 Even the mighty must lay down and die  
 He knew that it was time for her to fly

Death was slow and hard, then in the spring  
 In Easter week her gentle soul took wing  
 The ground had thawed; he dug a noble grave  
 Worthy of the love that Lucy gave

He'll grieve for Lucy 'til his dying day  
 The best dog in the world has flown away.

Kathy O. LaVallee, North Windham

## Print and Punk at UConn



Submitted by Graham Stinnett

*Days and Nights of Print and Punk* exhibition on display at the Schimmelpfeng Gallery, UConn Archives & Special Collections, Dodd Center for Human Rights. August 30 - October 16th, M-F 9-4pm.

The UConn Archives & Special Collections presents *Days and Nights of Print and Punk*, showcasing the roughly four decades of punk rock aesthetic documented through the Alternative Press Collection. Through show flyers, riot grrrl and skate zines, t-shirts, stickers, vinyl, cassettes, and posters, the evolution of the scene has demonstrated its adaptability for youth movements from the late 1970s to the present day. This exhibition also features selections of performance photographs from the traveling exhibition *Live at The Anthrax* from the Joe Snow Punk Rock Collection. The photographs were selected and reprinted with the intent to highlight the primacy of analog at that time as well as the aesthetics of the not-so-distant past illuminated by a sweat tinted flash bulb.

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## Classes Starting Soon at Thread City Classical Dance

Submitted by Mary Ann Daly

Thread City Classical Dance is a nonprofit community dance school that provides affordable, accessible dance classes for people in the greater Windham region. The school was founded in 2016 by a group of parents and offers ballet, pointe, tap and jazz classes for children as well as adult ballet instruction. All are welcomed. To ensure that all children have the opportunity to dance, Thread City Classical Dance provides scholarships for families.

At Thread City Classical Dance, students will experience the art of ballet. The tap and jazz classes are other fun ways for kids to express themselves.

As a nonprofit community dance school, Thread City Classical Dance is operated by the Board of Directors, comprised of family members and dancers.

Dance is a discipline that works on coordination, rhythm and flexibility, but most of all it is fun. Classes start in the beginning of September and are listed on [www.threadcityclassicaldance.com](http://www.threadcityclassicaldance.com).

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Part One:

# Delightfully Functional Weeds

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

## 'JUST WEEDS'

Pamela Jones' 1991 book **'Just Weeds'** countered America's disdain for weeds with fascinating pharmacopoeia, facts and folklore, and with mystical myths, even witchcraft, about thirty intemperate plants on our circumtemperate Earth. Just as relevant now.

Weed vigor and persistence -- what Jones calls *"the inexhaustible inventiveness of Nature"* -- amazes me !!! And what is a weed really? *"A plant whose virtue has not yet been discovered,"* thought Ralph Waldo Emerson. Every plant is a weed at heart, first appearing in nature.

ALL wild uncultivated plants, however, are undesirable weeds for herbicidal eradication in corporate agriculture, on a golf course, or anywhere near a perfect American lawn.

**QUIET CORNER** Moving from the compact yards of Boston's metro area to a few woody acres in the Quiet Corner, I have a newfound appreciation of weeds. First, fuss doesn't matter unless it matters to you (as many clients and my dear Mother). Age reduces stamina, however, and less fussy work is easier. It's also more ethical to coexist with the natural world than to command and corrupt Nature.

My biodiverse lawn is mowed high, and wild plants go wilder, often in fine flower. An old barn foundation is habitat for pollinators and bunnies..

Less toxic chemicals.  
Less physical work.  
Less is more.

As Halloween approaches, some weeds are quite scary! I love colorful **Pokeberry** (*Phytolacca*)... *but don't eat it !!!* (Let the birds) **Witchgrass** (*Agropyron*) spreads at an alarming rate! Maddening (sic) crowds of itchy poison plants (*Toxicodendron*, *Urtica*) are best removed. (See Part Two)

Many weeds have remarkable herbal qualities. Some have horticultural value in function and flower; many are hybridized to produce ornamental *cultivars* (*cultivated varieties*). Some have garden benefits such as yarrow warding off Japanese beetles. All have a place in the web of life.

Condensing Ms. Jones' thirty to my favorite dozen yields two parts. Part One is my *Fab Four* delightfully functional weeds:

**1 GROUND IVY** (*Glechoma hederacea*). A delightful ground cover in shade, ground ivy is very hardy and ever-green except in harsh winters. Known as **Creeping Charlie** in the Upper Midwest, I let it clamber in a sheltered Minneapolis backyard. Stems crept along shady ground, rooting efficiently at every node with enough moisture, blooming blue in May with small tubular flowers attracting bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

Ground Ivy releases a *"tart minty fragrance (like citronella, pine woods, or rosemary,"* Jones relates, when crushed or walked upon. Steep a teaspoon of leaves in one cup boiling water, as an English country tonic, a *"popular remedy for coughs and consumption."* It cleansed lungs, kidneys, stomach, bowels and privy parts. Saxons clarified their beer before hops by steeping the leaves in the hot brew, enhancing bitterness and preventing sourness.

Long encircling stems were woven into dancers' crowns around French bonfires celebrating Saint John's feast day. I once paid some Minneapolis neighborhood kids to remove *Glechoma* from a property by hand, offering more money for longer intact lengths of the creeping stems, but they had too much fun to effectively eradicate it, only pulling up bits here and there. Little success -- but some might have become gardeners.

**2 MULLEIN** (*Verbascum thapsus*) is a towering herbaceous biennial that commands attention. First year foliage is a low, gray-green rosette of large furry leaves -- aka **Bunny's Ears**. The second year produces 5 to 6

foot spikes with small, bright yellow flowers that open irregularly from the bottom up from early to late summer. Still useful to the web of life, it goes to seed and bugs love it. Woodpeckers mount my unsightly stems to get to the bugs.

Native to the Mediterranean Basin, Jones relates, majestic mullein spread around the world with magical, mythical powers to treat pulmonary and hemorrhoidal matters... cramps, convulsions, and coughs, warts and tumors. Torches for ancient kings were stalks *"stripped of leaves, then dipped in suet, pitch or resin, and lighted."* Beggars found warmth in the large woolly leaves that reportedly increase blood circulation. *"Girls in Wisconsin often rubbed their cheeks with mullein leaves to make them rosy."*

Medicinally, the roots, leaves and flowers were boiled, infused, decocted and used as

a poultice *"against laxes and fluxes of the body."* Navaho Indians smoked *"big tobacco"* for mental distress and sore throats.

Mullein flowers predicted weather in Austria's Tyrolean Alps. Early snow was expected if blooms were low on the stalk; flowers at the high end of the stalk foretold a long winter with heavy snow. .

**3 OXEYE DAISY** (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* thirty years ago) Few flowers are cheerier than a great clump of bright white and yellow daisies in sunny fields and roadsides. As diverse geographically as the related clan of true chrysanthemums, or mums, the daisy is now awarded its own genus-species, ***Leucanthemum vulgare***.

Weeds haven't changed much in the last 30 years except the vagaries of human classification and the shifting ranges of human-caused climate change.

The young tender leaves still provide balsamic bitterness in a salad, as Jones advised.

Blossoms still yield a daisy wine and a *"decoction of the fresh herb boiled in ale to cure jaundice."* As an herbal remedy, it is *"both tonic and diuretic, as well as antispasmodic,"* similar to chamomile tea, a *"wound herb of good respect"* and an insect repellent.

As a romantic remedy, pluck its ring of petals, one by one... *loves me, loves me not.*

**SHASTA DAISY** Luther Burbank hybridized one of America's beloved garden flowers, the Shasta Daisy, from the wild Oxeye a century ago. As a child, he was fond of the daisies in front of his Massachusetts home. Oxeye daisies had naturalized throughout New England after Pilgrims brought them from England.

The quadruple-hybrid started in northern California with seed of the New England **Oxeye Daisy** and 17 years of pollen dusting with three other field daisies ... **English field daisy** (*Leucanthemum maximum*) with larger flowers than the oxeye ... **Portuguese field daisy** (*Leucanthemum lacustre*) yielding large blooms on sturdy, free-flowering plants, perfect, but not white enough ... and **Japanese field daisy** (*Nipponanthemum nippon-*

*icum* aka Montauk Daisy) with smaller, but pure white flowers.

Named for California's glistening white Mount Shasta, the Shasta Daisy hybrids are an entirely new plant species, now known as ***Leucanthemum x superbum***.

Names come and go, but white goes with anything.

**4 YARROW** (*Achillea millefolium*) Magic and witchcraft have been associated with yarrow for centuries. Medically, Jones notes, *"tannins in yarrow are astringent, its essential oils are antiseptic, and its action is hemostatic,"* stopping the flow of blood. But I was first attracted to its beauty.

Described as "ferny," its delicate bright green foliage is actually a finer scale than fern fronds, more like feathers. The species *"millefolium"* is Latin for *"thousandleaf."* Many tiny white flowers are in a flat cluster of miniature daisy-like florets. One of many common names is Bunch o' Daisies.

Yarrow blooms May to November, full sun in poor sandy soils. Ms. Jones notes a toxic soil excretion that retards growth, and suggests thinning, transplanting every few years. I'm removing pavers and adding compost around the glorious clump volunteering in my patio.

Yarrows comprise some eighty plants native to temperate Eurasia. Carbon-dating puts pollen in Neanderthal caves in Iran over 60,000 years ago, and yarrows were probably used by ancient Indian and Egyptian medical practitioners 5,000 years ago.

The Chinese Book of Changes, *'I Ching'*, used yarrow to divine the future 1,000 years BC. Bundles of dried yarrow stalks in specific sets of six apparently random numbers, ranged from 6 to 9. Each of 64 possible sets corresponded to a hexagram *"interpreted"* to guide moral decisions. Its cosmology relates to *'yin and yang,'* the philosophy of coexisting opposite forces.

Achilles, hero of Homer's *Iliad*, stanced his Greek warriors' wounds with yarrow during the Trojan War (1200 BC), hence the Latin genus *Achillea*. Anglo-Saxons called it a *"wound herb"* and *"knight's balm"* during the Crusades. Settlers brought yarrow to New England, and it spread throughout Native American cultures, called *"life medicine"* by the Navaho.

English herbalists had a select group of *"All-heal"* herbs including yarrow, which was even a remedy for melancholy in bleak coastal Scotland. French bonfires were lit with yarrow on Midsummer Eve to honor the herbalist Saint John and to ward off evil spirits. Saxons wore charms stuffed with yarrow to protect against blindness and highway robbers.

It does ward off evil-spirited Japanese beetles in our gardens. I'm going to plant yarrow with my true lilies (*Lilium*) to perhaps thwart red lily beetles.

One early English incantations was a romantic spell inducing a vision of the great love of one's life to appear in a dream. Sew an ounce of yarrow in a piece of flannel, Jones advised, and place under your pillow, repeating:

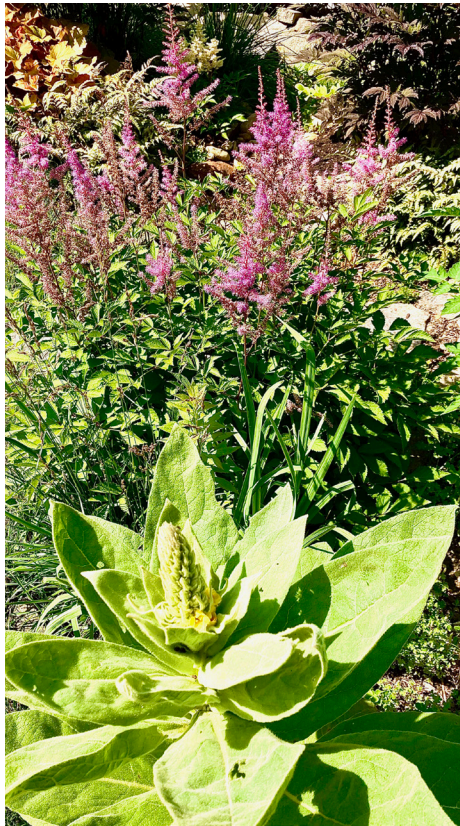
*Thou pretty herb of Venus' tree,  
Thy true name is Yarrow;  
Now who my bosom friend must be  
Pray tell thou me to-morrow.*

**NEXT MONTH, Part Two: Delightful & Scary Weeds**

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, Master gardener / designer, Chaplin



Majestic Mullein in writer's garden.



Mullein volunteer in front of pink Astibe.



Shasta daisy.



Yarrow volunteer in patio.



Dear Reader -  
 This photo appeared in last month's issue, but due to a production problem it didn't print properly. I really like this photo. I can feel the vitality, the caring and the power of these women. Our communities need more groups like the AWG. Tom King

**Ashford Women's Group gathers in-person**  
 By Carol Davidge

On Sunday, July 17, the Ashford Women's Group held its first in-person meeting since the pandemic began.

"We called it a 'Soiree' because we wanted to celebrate the joy of gathering. We also learned about programs that assist victims of domestic violence and collected over \$500 in gift cards plus supplies for homeless women," said Jill Marie Ianniccheri, founder of the Group.  
 "The mission of the Ashford Women's Group is 'Women Empowering Women.' That means lifting all women wherever they do and wherever they are in their lives - business women, artists, farmers, home makers, moms, grandmothers, retirees. Major services of the AWG are collecting for a the food pantry

and for a women's shelter. If we even assist just one woman, then our mission is accomplished," said Jill.  
 The meeting on July 17 featured guest speaker Karen O'Connor, Executive Director of The Network Against Domestic Violence in Enfield, which provides free services to residents of central Connecticut.  
 Meetings of the Ashford Women's Group are always free. For information, go to Ashford Women's Group on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/979051055773625/?ref=share>

Photo by Katelynn Sherrell.

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# More Adventures in the Canadian Rockies

By Dennis R. Blanchette

*The mountains are calling and I must go...*  
—John Muir

The Canadian Rockies adventure travel story in last month's issue was intended to be a one-off, but several readers asked what happened after Janet and I landed in Calgary. A valid question, since the Canadian Rockies cover such a large area. We visited Banff National Park, Yoho National Park, and Jasper National Park. These three parks comprise over 4.5 million acres, with thousands of miles of trails, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to cover seventeen days' worth of activities in a 1,000-word article. Besides, there is a plethora of data online and in books regarding accommodations, sights, activities, and hikes. This article recounts some interesting experiences to provide the flavor of the trip.

## Banff National Park

From Calgary it's a couple of hours' drive to Banff National Park. On our first afternoon we did a short hike around Lake Minnewanka and checked into Canalta Lodge in downtown Banff.

"Would you like to park in our garage?" the desk clerk asked.

"Sure," I responded.

"I'll have to charge you \$7.00 per night. Is that OK?"

I paid you \$300 a night to sleep here and now you want to charge me \$7 to park, I thought, but she was so nice and polite that all I could say was, "Sure, no problem."

There were some free newspapers in the lobby and the front-page story in both of them was the bears. Canada had gotten more snow than usual during the winter and it was taking longer to melt, so the bears waking from hibernation were coming down to the valleys in search of food. There were many reports of grizzly bears coming into Banff and becoming nuisances and having to be relocated. Both papers reiterated the recommendation of the Park Service to carry bear spray at all times. If only they had communicated that to the Customs officers at the airport (see last month's story), the trip would have been perfect.

Cascade Mountain is the most prominent mountain one sees from downtown Banff, so we hiked the Cascade Amphitheatre Trail to see what was on the other side. The hike begins on a dirt road through the Norquay Ski Area before becoming a trail. The higher we got, the more snow we encountered and we had to scout around to find the trail several times. The trail ended at the tree line and extruded us out into a gargantuan amphitheater covered in three feet of snow. Snow-streaked mountains gleamed all around us. We ate lunch while watching mountain goats frolicking on the nearly vertical slopes and listening to avalanches thundering down the mountainsides.

## Yoho National Park

The Trans-Canada Highway crosses the Continental Divide at Kicking Horse Pass and enters British Columbia. On Sunday we drove to Emerald Lake for an 8-mile round-trip hike to Yoho Lake. The hike begins on a series of wooden plank bridges spanning the alluvial fan created by glacial meltwater. Then it ascends steeply, at an angle across the mountain. After an hour or so, we began encountering snow on the trail and started post-holing. There was no snow in the drainage lines above the trail, so

we foresaw no avalanche danger. The trail disappeared at the top, but there was a set of footprints in the snow and we followed them to Yoho Lake.

We ate lunch and three-quarters of the way back down encountered the first other hikers we saw, a couple and three teenage women. They asked about trail conditions and we told them all that we had found out. A little further down, a macho man in spandex shorts and T-shirt, with a female companion and a dog, asked if we had made it to Yoho Lake. I replied affirmatively and they asked for no further information about the trail conditions, apparently assuming if old people like us could do it, no problem. They did not have hiking poles, microspikes, or any sign of food or water. Good luck, I thought. Even if you make it, you will be carrying that dog.

On a drab, gray, cloudy day we drove to the town of Golden on the Trans-Canada Highway along the Kicking Horse River, for which the eponymous coffee is named. The road is fenced completely on both sides to prevent wildlife from crossing. To assist with animal migration, overpasses are constructed every few miles to allow animals to safely cross. It seems to be working, as we saw not a single roadkill.

On the way back from Golden, we stopped at an information center to see what we could learn from the ranger about Lake Louise trail conditions. We only had one day there and wanted to make it count.

He advised us, "Stick to the trails around the lake. Don't go up, there's avalanche danger. Avoid the Plain of Six Glaciers trail and the second tea house." (Tea houses are small restaurants built by the Canadian Pacific Railway to entice people to use the railroad.) He added, "Also, do not hike up to Yoho Lake."

"Why?" I asked. We hiked up there two days ago."

He looked disgusted.

"You could have been caught in an avalanche," he said.

"There was no snow above the trail."

"Well, I had a guy from Florida here..."

"We're from New England and had poles and spikes."

His attitude softened, but he stood firm. "Well, I can tell you guys like adventure, but it's not recommended to go up."

It was unclear whether his data was out of date or he was used to discouraging tourists like macho man.

On the veranda in front of the 539-room Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, people were packed in like logs on a Maine river drive. Some of the fanciest hiking gear was in evidence. Top-of-the-line brands and brands so obscure I had never heard of them. There was enough spandex clothing to pollute every ocean with microplastics for years and increase global warming another couple of degrees. Everyone was taking the obligatory lake picture, so we immediately set off uphill, to the Lake Agnes Tea House. A woman in leather dress flats, sans socks, went racing by, practically running. As she passed, she looked at me and said, "Is this the way to the top?" Many possible responses flowed through my brain, none of them appropriate, so I muttered, "We just got here." But she was already 10 feet ahead of me.

The Lake Agnes Tea House had a line to get inside. We eschewed the line and went up to the mountain called the Big Beehive for fantastic views of the Bow Valley and the turquoise waters of Lake Louise, and just in time to see a couple getting engaged. From there we headed for the Plain of Six Glaciers Teahouse. The tea house

was not open, but we had a great conversation with several young women who were organizing the supplies that had been dropped off by helicopter that morning. This was the longest hike of the trip, 11 miles in 8 hours. And I realized I never saw any of the people in the fancy, expensive gear on the trail.

## Jasper National Park

It was too soon, but it was time to check out Jasper. Before leaving on our trip, I had asked the well-known Connecticut writer Bob Lorentson for tips, since he had visited Jasper in the 1970s. The two things that impressed him the most were Mount Edith Cavell, which he called the most gorgeous mountain in the world, and the glaciers along the Icefields Parkway. The Icefields Parkway runs north 147 miles from Lake Louise, through Banff and Jasper National parks, to Jasper, with hundreds of scenic vistas along the way. We stopped many times to take in the sights: Bow Lake, Peyto Lake, and Athabasca Falls, to name a few. The final stop was the Athabasca Glacier. The leading edge used to reach up to the road, but now is over several hundred feet away and receding at the rate of 30 feet per year. The signs marking its location in years past felt like a kick in the gut from Mother Nature.

The next day's destination was Mount Edith Cavell, named after a British nurse who was executed by the Germans during World War I for helping Allied soldiers escape. Partway there, the road was closed, so we turned around and improvised, leaving Mount Edith Cavell for the next trip. On our way to Patricia Lake, we saw a grizzly bear grazing by the side of the road, only a few feet from the car. We parked at the stables and some horseback riders there said they had spotted a black bear on the trail to the lake. As I was carrying the bear spray, it was decided that I should be in front. It was an interesting trail through meadows, very buggy but no bears. Back at the road, Janet passed me and the parking lot driveway and stayed on the trail. Suddenly stopping in midstride beside a large white pine, she turned around and whispered, "There's a black bear behind that pine." She backed slowly away and we went back to the road and up the driveway to the parking lot. On reaching the car, we saw two more grizzlies grazing next to the stable.

The high season in the Canadian Rockies is July and August—the best weather, but also the most crowded. So crowded, in fact, that there is a lottery system to gain access to some of the premier locations. We opted to go in June to avoid the crowds, knowing there was a risk of snow in the higher elevations, limiting access to several of the more famous trails. However, there are so many trails that one could spend years hiking them all, so it was a worthy trade-off for a first visit. The restaurants, shops, and views from Jasper were just as nice as Banff's, but it seemed more open and the vibe was mellower.

The Canadian Rockies have it all: lush green vegetation contrasting with white snowcapped peaks, teal-colored lakes, waterfalls, glaciers, and an abundance of wildlife. You often read about the abundance of wildlife at a given destination but rarely see any without significant effort. On this trip we saw black bears, grizzly bears, mountain goats, elk, caribou, deer, and grouse with no effort at all. The next trip is already being planned.

*Dennis R. Blanchette is a semi-retired civil engineer and travel writer. For pictures of the Canadian Rockies, visit his travel blog, Tripping with J, at [www.dennisblanchette.com](http://www.dennisblanchette.com). Feel free to email any specific questions from there.*

# Lebanon's Outdoor Antique Show

Submitted by Grace Sayles

It's a tradition, fall colors, antiques, chowder and pie all enjoyed outside on the historic Lebanon Green as the Lebanon Historical Society celebrates 55 years of its outdoor antique show.

For more than half a century, rain or shine, antique dealers and collectors gather on the Green in Lebanon, CT. Once a common sight in Connecticut towns, outdoor antique shows are now almost gone from the landscape. The show on the Lebanon Green offers a bit of nostalgia for everyone. Now in its 55th year, the Lebanon

Historical Society's Outdoor Antique Show is open 9:00 to 3:00 on Saturday, September 24th 2022.

Up to 60 dealers will offer antiques and high-quality collectibles to buyers who come from around the state and through-out southern New England. The event started in 1966 as a money-making effort to fund Society programs and, eventually, to help pay for the land needed to build a Museum. Today, the Antique Show is still the Historical Society's largest and most important fund raising event with proceeds supporting school programs, exhibits and historical presentations.

Some dealers have been participating for many years, but new-to-the-field dealers are added every year. Visitors can expect to find everything from 19th century furniture to vintage tools and from traditional pottery to textiles, glassware and jewelry.

For the \$5 admission fee visitors can spend the day wandering the field, talking with dealers and finding a bargain. Lunch and snacks are available for purchase all day including home-made chowders, sandwiches as well as grilled burgers and dogs and end it all with a slice of home-made pie!



Parking is free.

For more information contact the Lebanon Historical Society 860-642-6579 / [museum@historyoflebanon.org](mailto:museum@historyoflebanon.org) or visit us on the web at [www.historyoflebanon.org](http://www.historyoflebanon.org).

# The Truth About Lies

By Gary Bergquist

On February 24, 2022, after months of amassing troops, the Russian army invaded Ukraine. The unprovoked attack, directed by President Vladimir Putin, was immediately condemned by countries around the world. Over the course of the next several months as news of Russian war crimes and atrocities spread, the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Canada, and others responded with sanctions on Russia to dissuade continued aggression. International corporations moved their operations out of Russia, and the financial community severed Russian access to the SWIFT network that facilitates international commerce. Because of these actions, the value of the ruble dropped, stores and restaurants within Russia closed, and supplies of common items tightened.

As we received news of the atrocities being committed daily by the Russians in Ukraine, we shook our heads at Putin's audacity and wondered how the citizens of Russia could tolerate this behavior in their leader. That was when we learned his popularity within Russia had gone up—had skyrocketed, in fact.

The reason for his popularity, of course, is that he shut down the free press in Russia and was carefully controlling the narrative being fed to its citizens. While the common term for mass disinformation is *propaganda*, the practice also goes by the name *lying*. Propaganda is nothing more than lies. Lies, being simply a fabrication of reality, require three traits to be effective: they must be palatable, believable, and pervasive.

To be *palatable*, the fabricated reality must resonate emotionally. The narrative must scratch an itch. In this instance, Putin claimed the Russians had invaded Ukraine to fight the scourge of Nazism, growing like a threatening wildfire just across their border. Because of World War II, Russians have a deep-seated hatred of Nazis.

To be *believable*, truths and half-truths must be woven into the lies so the lines between what is true and what is false are blurry. Yes, troops are being sent into Ukraine. Yes, many are returning in body bags. Yes, there has been bad blood between Russia and Ukraine along the border for decades. Yes, other countries are imposing sanctions on Russia as they blindly side with the evil Nazis.

To be *pervasive*, lies must be stated and restated and restated and restated. They must be widespread, so they come from every direction. When bombarded by a fabrication, the inevitable conclusion of the listener is that it must be true. If there's smoke, there must be fire. How could all these sources be wrong?

Palatable. Believable. Pervasive.

In a culture of lies, control of the media is essential. This playbook is standard in the communist countries of North Korea, China, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam. No less censored are nations ruled by an iron fist, like Iran and Afghanistan. In these countries, leaders control the people by managing the perceived reality of their carefully scripted lies.

We sometimes simply view a lie as an untruth. We tell white lies to protect the feelings of others. Or we hear our children tell opposite stories about how the lamp broke. A lie is no big thing, just a slight blip in our perception of reality.

However, as Putin understands, a lie is far more than an untruth. A lie is entirely about control. When you fabricate reality, when you use your brush to repaint that canvas, the effect is to alter perceptions, convictions, and actions. When you control someone's actions, you control them. The desire to control is at the heart of every lie, even those of the kids staring down at the broken lamp, hoping to avoid punishment.

We hear of the miserable living conditions endured by those living in North Korea and marvel that they can tolerate it. The lies propagated by the state control their minds, their actions, and their lives. Believing what they hear, they imagine no alternative. By some measure, they may even feel contentment. The same is true wherever the media is tightly controlled by the state. Issues arise only when truth accidentally spills out and blurs the carefully crafted fabrication. But the embers of truth can quickly be stamped out with new lies: Palatable. Believable. Pervasive.

At the end of World War II in Europe, as the Allies entered Germany, we learned that many Germans had no idea of the atrocities being committed by their leaders. The people believed the propaganda, the fabricated reality, and were controlled by the lies.

These days in America, we hear terms like "fake news" and "the big lie." Lying has infected our culture like an epidemic. In our divisive culture, we have split into two camps, each side fabricating a reality based on the truths and lies that conform to its respective worldview. Lies, as

is their nature, have succeeded in controlling our minds and our behavior. While believing the other side is lying, it does not occur to us that we may all be thriving on a diet of lies.

Here is the biggest lie, one in which most of us now believe: We are a country divided.

Like any big lie, this lie is palatable, believable, and pervasive. Its key weakness, however, lies in its ignorance of our humanity. If there is an undeniable truth written in our DNA, it is that we need one another. Our daily contact reminds us we are more alike than different, as we witness people setting aside their supposed ideologies to help one another with acts of kindness.

From whence, then, does the lie spring, and why does it persist? Who are its authors? What motivates their desire to control our minds in this way?

If we take two minutes to stop yelling at each other, blaming each other, and calling each other morons, we can begin to answer these questions. The fabricated reality to which we are exposed comes from three primary sources: social media, the "news," and our leaders. It does not originate from us. It does not come from the 300 million Americans who are arguing with one another.

Let's look at these sources.

*Social media.* The corporations that control social media have a single motivation, to keep us clicking. Their algorithms implement what they have learned, namely that a country divided generates more clicks. They have no vested interest in the truth.

*The "news."* The corporations that present news programs are motivated to get us to tune in and stay tuned in long enough to watch the commercials. That's how they make money. This applies to Fox News, to MSNBC, and to all the supposedly objective network news programs. They profess to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, but financially they have no vested interest in the truth. Divisiveness sells.

*Our leaders.* In a Senate split 50-50 between the red and the blue, it is not uncommon to see a vote recorded along strict party lines, 50-50. To a statistician, a vote is a binary decision, not unlike a coin toss. The notion that you could toss a coin 100 times and be able to predict the outcome all 100 times has a likelihood of one-half raised to the 100<sup>th</sup> power. This is a number so infinitesimal that events deemed as miracles are vastly more likely. Yet it happens regularly. This tells us that a senator voting is not like a coin toss, and that the impression we have of thought being exercised and decisions being made is a mirage. We could instead fill the senators' seats with chimps. When a vote is called, the chimps could be trained to turn around to see the color of their seats. If blue, they pull the blue lever; if red, they pull the red one. These chimps would work just as well in the House of Representatives, in the Supreme Court, and in the Oval Office. These officials have painted themselves blue or red and have retired the cognitive portions of their brains.

It's no wonder the popularity of our government officials is at the lowest point since our nation was founded. We are being controlled by chimps and we don't like it. Our leaders have no vested interest in the truth. They are driven by the prospect of getting reelected. If they can convince the voters to paint themselves a particular color, and that they are the same color as their constituents, and that the other color is evil, they will be reelected. Though their popularity numbers are in the cellar, they are correct. We routinely reelect them. We oblige them.

We wonder how the citizens of Russia can tolerate the behavior of their leader. Perhaps we are worse. At least we can vote our leaders out. It's time to sign off social media, turn off the news, gather a group of our friends and relatives, regardless of their registered party, and head to the polls.

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

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

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## The Packing House – A New Season Awaits You!

By EC-CHAP

### September

*“All the months are crude experiments,  
out of which the perfect September is made.”*  
- Virginia Woolf

We're back – and ready for a brand new season with new and returning artists!

#### **TWICE AROUND – Acoustic Duo Tradition is Born – Saturday, September 17, 2022 – 7:30pm (Doors Open 7:00pm)**

We begin the 2022-2023 Season with returning artists Louisa Tanno and Frank Veres who make up the acoustic duo, “Twice Around”. We are excited to have them return as part of EC-CHAP's Acoustic Artist Series. These two exceptional human beings and creative artists have opened The Packing House Season for the past three years (excluding the pandemic), and we plan for this tradition to continue! We suggested they consider changing their name to “Thrice Around” (however, if I were a betting man, I wouldn't count on it...).



Twice Around is an acoustic duo equipped with a couple of guitars, their voices and a grand love of music. Since 1996, their self-crafted songs tell stories of the heart (sometimes broken, sometimes full) and walking your own path.

Over the decades they have gone through cycles of performing every weekend and cycles of performing a few times a year, but never have they been away from audiences, and each other, for this long. Like all of us, they've missed the singular connection that happens when sharing the experience of live music. An evening with them includes original music, stories in between songs and a real affection for their audience.

Please join us on September 17th with Twice Around as we begin a new musical experience at The Packing House. Tickets \$20.00 Online / \$25.00 at the Door.

#### **SONGS FOR UKRAINE – A Benefit Concert to support the people of Ukraine – Saturday, September 24, 2022 – 6:30pm (Doors Open 5:30pm)**

EC-CHAP is collaborating with the Acoustic Artist, Julia Autumn Ford coordinate and produce “SONGS FOR UKRAINE”, a Benefit Concert at THE PACKING HOUSE - September 24, 2022 to support the People of Ukraine. 100% of ALL proceeds from Ticket and Merchandise Sales, Donations, Sponsorships, and Raffles will be donated to this cause through our Charitable Partner Direct Relief.

We will host three performances during this special evening from 6:30pm to 10:00pm. Performances will be provided by acoustic artists Xavier Serrano, Frank Critelli, and Julia Autumn Ford.

Visual artists, Christopher Gunderson and Carol Mackiewicz Neely will each create a painting “live” during this event which will be raffled to guests along with many other interesting items. Doors will open at 5:30pm to allow viewing of raffle items, purchase snacks and beverages, and socialize with friends. Scot Haney, Meteorologist for WFSB Channel-3 will serve as our Master of Ceremony.

We invite you to join us for this Benefit Concert. Now more than ever, the people of Ukraine need our support. 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 purchase



tickets, provide a tax deductible donation, or become a sponsor, please visit: <https://www.ec-chap.org/benefit-concert-for-ukraine>.

We invite you to visit EC-CHAP's (<https://www.ec-chap.org/benefit-concert-for-ukraine>) or The Packing House (<http://thepackinghouse.us/upcoming>) for information, tickets, and details on how you can help. Tickets \$30.00 Online / \$35.00 at the Door.

#### **GREG ABATE QUARTET – Saturday, October 1, 2022 – 7:30pm (Doors Open 7:00pm)**

We're thrilled to have the Greg Abate Quartet back at The Packing House this fall as part of EC-CHAP's Jazz Series!

Soon after graduating from the Berklee College of Music in the mid-seventies, Greg began his rich musical career playing lead Alto Sax for the Ray Charles Orchestra. From there, the rest was history.

As an internationally recognized Jazz Artist, Greg Abate is on the road plying over 200 engagements a year across the US and abroad. His unique Bebop style has bodies swaying and feet tapping across the room.

Greg has recorded a number of live and studio albums since his Live CD at Birdland in NYC under the Candid Jazz label. He is currently a Whaling City Sound recording artist; adjunct professor of Jazz Studies at Rhode Island College; and is also a very active jazz clinician with co-sponsorship from the Conn-Selmer Instrument Co., conducting workshops and master classes.

Greg will be joined at The Packing House with exceptional CT based jazz musicians including Matt deChamplain on piano, Lou Bocciarelli on bass, and Ben Bilello on drums. Tickets \$25.00 Online / \$30.00 at the Door.



#### **AN EVENING WITH THE BLUES PROJECT – Wednesday, October 5, 2022 - 7:30pm (Doors Open 7:00pm)**

We are excited to present this Special Program featuring The Blues Project! Steve Katz, one of the founding members shared stories of his time with The Blues Project and Blood Sweat and Tears at The Packing House last April. He now returns with original member Roy Blumenfeld and the entire band.

In the fall of 1965, The Blues Project played alongside the likes of Big Joe Williams, Son House, Bukka White, Skip James, John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters and Otis Spann, to name a few. It was these legendary sold-out performances at the famed Cafe Au Go Go in Greenwich Village that eventually led to the release of their phenomenal debut album, Live at the Cafe Au Go Go. The Blues Project made a musical revolution, turning many people on to the American blues heritage.

Straight out of New York, the Blues Project soon toured all over North America. Back then, California, was the place to be, with San Francisco and Los Angeles as the two epicenters of the new age of rock and roll. The five New Yorkers played there and conquered the West.

In 1967, at the peak of their success and after the release of their third album, Live at Town Hall, the band

appeared at one of their last gigs - the legendary Monterey International Pop Festival which featured Otis Redding, The Byrds, Jimi Hendrix and many more soon to be legends. The Blues Project then split up in two different directions, with Kooper and Katz forming Blood, Sweat & Tears, and Kulberg and Blumenfeld keeping the Blues Project name and carrying on for another year and for another album, Planned Obsolescence, before changing the name of the group to Seatrain.

At the dawn of the 70s, for the joy of their old fans, Danny Kalb and Roy Blumenfeld put together a new version of the Blues Project with which they released two new albums, Lazarus in 1971, and Blues Project in 1972. The good reception eventually led to what their fans really wanted and waited for a long time, i.e. the reunion tour of the classic lineup which culminated with their widely acclaimed appearance at the 6th Annual Schaefer Music Festival in Central Park in June of 1973, and with the release of a live album, Reunion In Central Park.

After a few sporadic reunion concerts through the 80s and 90s, the “original” Blues Project disbanded for good. Despite it all, even in the new millennium, the band maintained a diehard fan base of old and new fans, so it was mostly for them that at least Danny Kalb, Steve Katz, and Roy Blumenfeld, did a new reunion tour in 2012.

The shows were well received and their fans asked for more so, in 2021, here we go again. The Blues Project is alive and well, with Katz and Blumenfeld leading a new powerful lineup that also includes three young and talented “pupils”: Chris Morrison on lead guitar, Scott Petito on bass, and Ken Clark on keyboards and vocals.

Join us for trip back in Rock & Roll History! Tickets \$30.00 Online / \$35.00 at the Door.

#### **EC-CHAP MONTHLY TALENT SHOWCASE – 2nd Wednesday of the Month – Beginning Wednesday, October 12, 2022 - 7:00pm (Doors Open 6:30pm)**

Acoustic musicians, film makers, poets, comedians, jugglers, puppeteers, and creative artists of all ages are invited to perform at The Packing House. Here is an opportunity to showcase your work in an intimate historic setting before a live audience. Test ideas and concepts and solicit feedback. PA / sound reinforcement, video projection, and up to 3 microphones provided (Please - No full drum kits unless prior arrangements have been made).

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

#### **EC-CHAP MONTHLY FILM SERIES – 2nd Thursday of the Month – Beginning Thursday, October 13, 2022 - 7:00pm (Doors Open 6:30pm)**

We're feeling sassy - and trying something different to launch our new film series this Season!

Have you ever gone to the theater to see a film and had no idea what film was being screened? We haven't either; but thought it might be a cool idea for those risk takers out there. Kind of like a cultural version of “Storage Wars”.

If we remain true to this concept, we can't give you a hint; nor can we state a genre or film category. However, we may slip a little and give a snippet of information in our monthly newsletter and next issue of the Neighbors Paper... Tickets – Suggested Donation of \$5.00 at the Door.

#### **EC-CHAP SEEKING MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS**

EC-CHAP continues to seek new Members and Volunteers! To learn about various Membership opportunities and benefits, please visit our website at: <https://www.ec-chap.org/membership-information>; or call 518-791-9474.

We need volunteers 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](mailto:info@ec-chap.org).

We leave you with the following:

*“Live your beliefs and you can turn the world around.”*  
-Henry David Thoreau

Keep the Faith!  
EC-CHAP Board

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](mailto:info@ec-chap.org)).



# Ceramics in the Expanded Field Is A Sight To Behold at MASS MOCA

By Cate Solari

Last week I had the pleasure of experiencing *Ceramics in the Expanded Field*, an exhibition on display at MASS MOCA in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. I have been anticipating this show for months and it did not disappoint.

*Ceramics in the Expanded Field* brings together a group of eight innovative artists who are reshaping the way we think about clay. A medium once segregated from mainstream contemporary art, ceramic has been enthusiastically - even feverishly - embraced over the past decade. This exhibition provided a small snapshot of the current state of the field, bringing together artists from different generations as well as from different backgrounds, some having been formally trained in traditional ceramic methods and others who have come to the medium from other disciplines. All use clay as one material and one language among many, integrating the once-siloed category of ceramic work with photography video, painting sculpture, and performance (paraphrased from *Ceramics in the Expanded Field* exhibition catalog).

Upon entering the space, you are confronted with the massive, over 10-foot tall, "Caryatids" of artist Francesca DiMattio. I have shown my students photographs of this work countless times and a photo cannot capture the impressive decoration that adorns DiMattio's work. Inspired by, and named after the carved female figures used as columns in classical architecture, her tall totem-like assemblages are built with the same disregard for usual cultural hierarchies between low and high, East and West, that are combined with historical artifacts of the everyday - which she builds from clay. There are three "Caryatids", to describe one (my favorite), beginning at the bottom a figure begins to emerge from the head of a teddy bear, complete with fur and all, growing into a pair of swimming trunks, up to a sweater (appearing to be crocheted with clay) and complete with a head of an ACE Hardware watering can.

DiMattio's "Caryatids" push the boundaries of ceramic work not only in scale but in concept. DiMattio foregrounds motherhood and domestic labor - from setting the table to picking up Legos (a decorative element in all the "Caryatids"). Made during the pandemic, the figures are both monstrous and majestic, with toys, rugs, and floral motifs mimicking those of German Meissen porcelain that spread like a virus. The totemic hybrids turn standard notions of beauty and taste on their heads.

In the same vein, across the hall, is the work of artist Jessica Jackson Hutchins. She merges the everyday into her art-making, bringing objects from her own life - even her own home - into her work. Combining old furniture with clay vessels, Hutchins injects her sculptures with the familiarity and humanity of lived experience. This is personified by the performers that interact directly with the objects and vessels of Hutchins creation. One can witness this performance through video. Four dancers improvise and move



about the space with gesture and animalistic anarchy - spilling liquids, flinging orange peels to the floor - embracing the messiness. All while one performer plays the cello as if nothing is happening around them. Hutchins' work aims to connect us to the roots of civilization, the cello keeping time, the fluids, the bulbous vessels bring to mind the abjection of bodies, of sex, of babies, the fullness and imperfections of family life and its relationship to making and existence.

The last work that I will describe that struck a chord within me, is a video piece *El Descanso en la Gloria (Rest in Glory)* (2017) by the artist Armando Guadalupe Cortés. This video documents Cortés performing with clay vessels tied to his long braids. There are three video screen panels that play in unison, the two on either end, Cortés as one braid with one vessel. The artist moves his head and body to maneuver his burden as he spins the stoneware vessels in circles, dropping them thudding and crashing into the floor. In the middle, Cortés has two braids and two vessels, but these he does not swing around. Instead, he holds both vessels in each hand, arms spread out to a T-shape. I stood, waiting for Cortés to drop these two vessels, to hear them crash and smash together. Watching his arms shaking, quaking, feeling his exhaustion within my own arms, but to my surprise, he never dropped the vessels. For the 6:25 minute video performance, Cortés stands astutely in that center frame.

Personifying the many histories of clay and ceramics, Cortés was inspired by a story handed down from his mother about the first church built in his natal village. It is a tale of a devoted widow named Eneclita who carried water for mixing adobe from the river up a steep hill to the workers. Cortés' performance, which reflects endurance and gendered labor, is also a homage to the ability of the mundane to become not just myth, but a sacred ritual of devotion.

If you can, I highly encourage you to see this show in person, MASS MOCA is an excellent day trip for all ages. For further reading, and to see where the show's title originates from, you can check out "Sculpture in the Expanded Field" by Rosalind Krauss (a prolific writing on the emergence of sculpture).

A reminder, The Dye and Bleach House Community Gallery will be hosting the opening reception for *Dood from the West* a solo exhibition by Nathanael Read on September 3rd from 5-8pm, please see our website [www.ec-chap.org/dye-and-bleach-house-community-gallery](http://www.ec-chap.org/dye-and-bleach-house-community-gallery) for more information.

The Dye & Bleach House Community Gallery and adjoining history Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum are open Saturdays 10am-Noon or by appointment. For more information or a request to display your original work, please email [info@ec-chap.org](mailto:info@ec-chap.org) or call 518-791-9474.

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](mailto:communitygallery@ec-chap.org).



# Connecticut Industry During the Revolutionary War

By Ryan Elgin

This is the first entry into my ongoing series, Connecticut Industry During Times of War. The American Revolution (1775-1783) is a topic we are all familiar with. For us growing up in New England, history teachers never seemed to shy away from spending a few extra days on this topic while glossing over some later topic in order to still meet the curriculum. To oversimplify and ignore the contributions of other European powers assisting the US colonies for the time being, the Revolutionary War pitted the industrializing power of the British Empire against the agrarian society of the newly formed United States.

The industrial revolution was well underway in Great Britain by the time of the Revolutionary War. The United States' own industrial revolution would not start until the 1790s, decades after it began in England in 1740. The completion of the Slater Textile Mill in Rhode Island and the Beverly Cotton Manufactory in Massachusetts generally mark this period in American history. Industrial activity in Connecticut was dominated by commercial farming up until the mid-18th century. Arguably the most important fixture in every community was the grist mill, used to grind grains into flour or meal. These were not what we think of as industrial mills, but smaller mills run by a handful of individuals at most or just one miller. So imperative were grist mills to the success of the town that they were built preceding town halls or incorporation. Interestingly, Connecticut's farming practices were quite wasteful and resulted in land shortages throughout the colony. This wasteful use of land was one contributing factor towards Connecticut's agricultural specialization. For instance, Windham and Litchfield County focused on dairy and meat production due their hilly topography and poor soil compared to the valley regions.

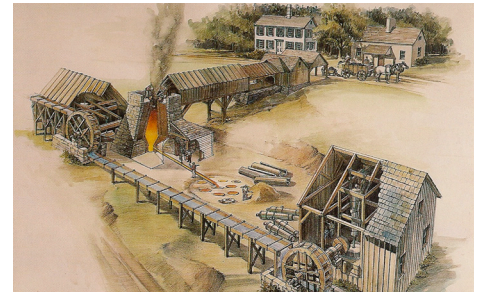
Connecticut had a large merchant class at the outbreak of the war but was limited in external trading partners for its farmed goods. Roughly half of the colony's trade was with other colonies, with the other half going to the West Indies. With embargoes on external trade at the start of the American Revolution, Connecticut sought to supply the Continental Army and soon became the largest contributor of food to George Washington's Army compared to any other state.



Shipbuilding was Connecticut's other major and well established industry during the Revolutionary period. In the years leading up to America's revolution, towns with access to Long Island Sound were producing an average of fifty ships per year. The effects of the war also opened up production and acquisition of new ships to be outfitted for privateering. Essentially, these would be pirates that get a commission from their state government. This form of raiding on British commercial and military shipping provided more supplies for America's own fledgling army and navy. The towns of Essex, Groton, Glastonbury, Norwich, and New London were just a few of the many towns contributing to this commercial,

and now wartime, industry. Connecticut had begun building its state navy which soon counted fourteen vessels. Alas, it would lose all of them by 1779 to either destruction or capture. One of the most impressive ships built during the war was the USS Confederacy, a 36-gun frigate built in Norwich and brought to New London for fitting before entering the war in 1779. It would join the Trumbull, built in Chatham, now East Hampton, as Continental Navy Frigates until their capture in 1781.

Embargoes on English imports in the 1760s pushed Connecticut to increase its own manufacturing industries and the outbreak of war hastened this advancement with its high demand for material. The Salisbury Iron Furnace, supported by the ore-rich region of Northwest Connecticut, more than doubled its production during the years of the war and provided



almost all of the cannon and shot used by the large ships built in Connecticut. The contribution of this Salisbury Iron Industry was crucial for the war effort, producing over three-fourths of all of the cannon made in America at the time. Glastonbury helped supply gunpowder with the Stocking Gunpowder Mill even through tragedy. It immediately began production with the Revolution but suffered a catastrophic explosion, killing most members of the Stocking family and two additional workers. In a show of true courage and patriotism, the matriarch of the family, Eunice Stocking, along with her son and financial help from Howell Woodbridge, rebuilt the mill and continued to supply the army with gunpowder through the end of the war. The towns of Norwich and East Hartford emerged as Connecticut's leading factory towns in the beginning of the war. Indeed, by 1774 Norwich already hosted a chocolate factory, papermill, a felt-manufacturing plant, multiple fulling mills, a nail factory, a bookbindery, and a clock factory. Once the war was underway, more entrepreneurs opened their own manufacturing businesses in the same area. East Hartford had the Pitkin family, owners of several cloth mills, who used the State's assistance to manufacture gunpowder, paper, and iron for the war effort.

All of these industries played a part in Connecticut earning the nickname, "The Provision State" as the leading steady supplier of food, clothing, and ammunition to the Continental Army. Even in the beginnings of the country, Connecticut held a major role in the Union for its industry and ingenuity. Over time, Connecticut's moniker of being a supply state would continue to ring true. Connecticut would again prove instrumental to the survival of the Union during our next stop on this historical timeline: The Civil War.

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.

Ryan Elgin serves as EC-CHAP Assistant Director, Curator of the Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum, and Volunteer Coordinator. He may be contacted directly at [ryan@ec-chap.org](mailto:ryan@ec-chap.org).

**EC-CHAP**  
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History

## Background - Developing a World Apart

By Felix F. Giordano

When we compose a story, the most import aspect of relating that story to our readers is believability. As writers, we have an innate drive to not only entertain the reader but to convince them we are both knowledgeable and expert in what we've written. To do that, we either have to write about what we know and have experienced, or have completed countless hours of research on the subject.

If we're writing a story that takes place in any locale, unless it's a sci-fi story set in the future or in an alternate universe where we have license to write about whatever we want, we need to ensure that the story's timeline, background, and characters blend in with historical events. For instance, if you're writing a turn-of-the-century story set in San Francisco, you need to either include the 1906 earthquake in the story or avoid it altogether by setting the story prior to that event. You would also have to do the same if you wrote a story set in Chicago in the latter half of 1871 or soon thereafter. You can't ignore the ferocious impact that the Great Chicago Fire had upon the residents of that city and state.

During its era, the San Francisco earthquake and the Great Chicago Fire only deeply affected most people if they lived, had friends, relatives or business associates in those cities. However, today's digital age has brought our world closer. Many local events of a profound nature have a great influence on ordinary people's lives all across the globe. The tragedy of 911 had an impact that was felt in every country on this Earth.

Of course, writers should not get carried away and mention every minute historical fact that has no bearing on their story. However, the examples I provided are so profound and earth-shattering that to not include them in your story if it is set in that locale during the time they occurred would be disingenuous to the psyche of the inhabitants of those cities and the emotional crisis they experienced. It would render your story implausible. So please bear this point in mind when deciding what to write about.

However, where you can sometimes get away with writing a story that takes place during times of great local upheaval is to set your story in a town thousands of miles away or fictionalize the locations. When brainstorming ideas for stories set in locales of your own making, you have much greater license to write what you want without fear of misstating historical facts. This is where we "develop a world apart". Say that you set your story in a fictional United States location. It can still take place in an existing state and even in an existing county. Where it gets tricky is if you're writing a fictional story in an existing city or town. You can create fictional families, neighborhoods, streets, schools, places of worship, and businesses but your readers may still try to compare your fictional creations to objects and events in real-life. That could leave your story vulnerable to analytical criticism.

Some writers, such as Stephen King create a fictional world to such an extent that it actually seems real-to-life to the reader. J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth is an example of a complex creation born out of a genius mind. Millions of readers have become so immersed in the story that it almost seems plausible for a moment to consider that perhaps it could have actually existed sometime during Earth's history. With different races and creatures, cultures, languages, and terrains, Tolkien has truly outdone himself. In this case, he has literally captured the imagination of the reader, convinced them, and sent them to a place where ownership of time and space literally belongs to Tolkien.

I can't speak for other authors but in my novels, I've created a fictional world for Native American Sheriff Jim Buchanan. My novels' setting is in western Montana and in

my early novels I struggled to describe just exactly where they take place. Spending time in Montana and interviewing county sheriffs, police chiefs, coroners, Montana Highway Patrol officers, and local residents provided me with the necessary information to develop a world apart.

What was critical to my novels was to include a Native American reservation in the county. I accomplished that by encompassing the Flathead Reservation of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes within the county boundaries. The next important component was to have the county's name describe the lay of the land. Because of the vast old growth cedar forests along Montana Highway 56, Cedar County was the name I decided upon.

Finally, the county seat needed to be located on an important highway with a somewhat navigable waterway and freight rail service. On my trip to Montana I visited Thompson Falls along the Clark Fork River. Mile-long freight trains rumbled through the town every day, parallel to Main Street (US Route 200) on their eastward journey in the morning and westward in the afternoon. So as not to have people believe that Thompson Falls was really my fictional town, I selected a location further westward, along the Clark Fork that was topographically conducive to a county seat of 13,000 residents just a few miles east of the Idaho border.

I carved out sections of three existing counties (Sanders, Lincoln, and Lake Counties) in western Montana to create fictional Cedar County. Within Cedar County, I created the fictional towns of Taylor (county seat), Mallory, Spaulding, and Trout Hollow. That provided me with the basis for an ongoing descriptive narrative of interpersonal and bureaucratic interactions within the county and between the towns. Once I did that, I set up governmental institutions that have varying degrees of reporting responsibilities to the county government along with social and recreational organizations and locations.

I developed other components to the county that I refer to on an ongoing basis so that my novels have a certain degree of continuity.

If you're interested go to: [jbnovels.com/fictional-cedar-country](http://jbnovels.com/fictional-cedar-country)

There, you will see how I've created the fictional world that forms the basis for my novels. It not only helped keep my references consistent while I wrote multiple novels but it also serves as a reference point in developing plots for future novels.

In creating the background for your ongoing fictional stories, no matter what genre they're in, and developing a world apart, you can form a strong foundation if you take the time to structure where your stories take place. If nothing else, during those times of writer's block you can refer to your fictional "World Apart" and further develop it while you work through a plot hole, conduct research, or just need a break from writing. I've found that developing my world apart brings added enjoyment to my passion for writing.

We defined "Background - Developing a World Apart" 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](http://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: Supporting Characters

## Yale Develops Autism Spectrum Ethnography Project

Submitted by Dawn Prince-Hughes

Well known for its more clinical offerings and genetic research in the field of autism spectrum studies, the Yale School of Medicine is lending its support this year to a new area of inquiry, of an expanded social nature. The Yale Spectrum Ethnography Project is emerging within the framework of the Child Study Center's Project CASY (Community Autism Socials at Yale), under the direction of Dr. Roger Jou, with the support of CASY's Michelle Baughman.

Project CASY, founded in 2014, is a university-organized program dedicated to promoting a high quality of life for autism spectrum individuals through opportunities for social and cultural enrichment. As their mission statement asserts, CASY uses an organic, collaborative approach, where community members meet in order to nurture relationships and share ideas and experiences, while benefiting from the knowledge of clinicians and researchers at the Yale Child Study Center and other organizations.

This fall, the Yale Child Study Center welcomes interdisciplinary anthropologist and long-time autism advocate Dr. Dawn Prince-Hughes as she develops and facilitates a unique new project to collect and archive the voices of spectrum people. The project seeks to inspire and gather all possible forms of autistic self-expression, including writing, art, music – even movement and mathematical formulae – any means of expression that verbal and non verbal people on the spectrum can contribute toward a burgeoning "autistic culture."

Dr. Prince-Hughes began her work in autistic ethnography when she received her own spectrum identification the early 2000s, well into her own academic career, and put out a call for essays by other autistic people about their experiences in higher education. The result was Aquamarine Blue 5, a first of its kind anthology. Initially invited for review through Yale University Press, reviewers at the time were skeptical that autistic people could be so self aware, reflective, and articulate. But after its eventual publication, the anthology became a seminal reference for colleges and universities seeking to support autistic students.

Dr. Prince-Hughes' work in spectrum cultural studies continued, and was complemented by her years of work in the area of ape communication and culture. Working with the Jane Goodall Institute over many years, she was inspired by the reality that social beings of all kinds have so many points of common experience and an innate desire to connect. She believes appreciating the intellectual, communicative, and expressive capabilities of all social animals enriches lives across the board. "Assuming competence, constantly looking for ways to meaningfully connect and uplift, is a joyful responsibility all of us share." She says. "The insights we are gifted from those often overlooked can offer vital new ways of thinking about the challenges we are all facing in the world today."

The hope is that this open approach will allow the Yale Spectrum Ethnography Project to reveal the real "soul" of autism spectrum, and dispel persistent prejudices, leading to a more empowered community. The project aims to act as a repository that will be

developed into a searchable archive available digitally, and also physically curated on campus, making Yale a global hub of autistic culture. With such a growing database, new frontiers of interface will provide actionable new opportunities for academic research, designing better support programs, even new and unique forms of art and self expression as autistic people begin to feel seen, heard, and understood.

Two CASY-facilitated groups will act as pilots for collecting ethnographic material this year. First is a 7-week guided group that focuses on autistic sensory, emotional and philosophical engagement with the environment, as well as the living things within those environments -- which spectrum people so often have an unusual rapport with. Each week, participants will have the opportunity to share their expressive endeavors with the group as they respond to creative prompts. At the end of the 7 weeks, participants will select all or some of their material for the archive. The second pilot module will follow the same outline, but will focus on the sacred/spiritual/moral experiences of autistic people. The modular design of each unit can easily be tooled to address a plethora of ethnographic inquiries, and Dr. Prince-Hughes anticipates many units in the areas of family, school, work, relationships – every facet of lived cultural experience, providing a never-before-seen gestalt of the richness of autistic life.

Dr. Prince-Hughes feels that the Yale Spectrum Ethnography Project will get to the roots of how people on the autism spectrum can truly thrive and become indispensable parts of the greater community. "In so many instances, good programs fall short of their goals not because of the vision of advocates and community builders," She says, "But because of unconscious assumptions and prejudices. Autistic people and the programs supporting them, particularly, have been hamstrung by this fact. We know that the best way to empower people on the spectrum is to validate their reality. As they begin to speak for themselves, their voices will inform the surrounding culture and form a positive feedback loop of experience, value, integration, respect, and cultural enrichment. Such engagement replaces prejudices with a feeling of value and creates an environment where everyone is uplifted."

### Annual Chicken BBQ

September 10, 2022, 5 - 7pm  
Hampton Congregational Church,  
263 Main Street, Hampton CT  
Meal includes homemade potato salad, coleslaw, corn on the cob, rolls and delicious desserts  
tickets adults \$12; children \$6;  
children under 5 are free  
dine in or take out

### Quiet Corner Contra Dance

1st Friday of every month  
Patriots Park Lodge.  
172 Lake Street, Coventry  
Dance 8:00 - 11:00;  
beginner workshop 7:45.  
Live caller and band. Partner not necessary. Soft-soled shoes, light layered clothes & water bottle. Snacks are also welcome. For more information contact Dennis at [knowdj@frontier.com](mailto:knowdj@frontier.com) or 860-742-9498

# 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](mailto: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).

## Questions about heat pumps? Connecticut offers free experts to help

**Energy News Network.** "Electric heat pumps are moving front and center in Connecticut's energy efficiency program as the state seeks to speed adoption with a free consultation service and significant rebates. EnergizeCT has contracted with Abode, an energy management company, to operate the consultation service and develop a statewide network of trained heat pump installers...Ratepayers can sign up for a virtual chat session with a heat pump expert on the EnergizeCT website. Since the service started in late May, Abode has conducted more than 100 consultations lasting an average of 45 minutes each, Haringa said. 'Homeowners are terrified of making the wrong decision, especially when they're going to be spending \$10,000 or more on their install,' he said."

## CT enacts clean air law to shift state vehicles to electric

**Middletown Press.** "We are a small state and people ask me all the time, 'What can a state of this size actually do to solve climate change?' But what we do here when we lead in Connecticut, we demonstrate the possibility," DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes said. "We show how these technologies can be adopted. We develop the models. We spur the industry to be investing. We help create the market, the early adoption of these technologies, including electric school buses, electric transit buses, providing for equitable, affordable access for electric vehicles and bikes across the state." Plus: **Connecticut adds more electric vehicles to rebate program**

## Connecticut calls on utilities to evaluate non-wires alternatives

**Microgrid Knowledge.** "Non-wires alternatives [NWA] — which include microgrids and other distributed energy resources — can help save money by avoiding construction of expensive new distribution systems or upgrades. Because non-wires alternatives are generally local, clean energy, they can also be more environmentally friendly. They can either reduce electrical loads or boost energy production at a specific location...As proposed, Connecticut's program would require that utilities compare distribution investments they plan to undertake against competitively bid non-wires alternatives. The goal is to recommend the option that maximizes net benefits while meeting grid needs..." Based on the information gathered in this docket to-date and the examples of NWAs from other jurisdictions, the [PURA] finds that the potential for cost savings, improved service and greater environmental protection as a result of a successful NWA program is significant."

## Your gas stove is dangerous to your health

**Commonwealth Magazine.** "THERE ARE ABOUT 43 million gas stoves in the United States. We don't typically think of them as harmful to our children, communities, and environment, but a growing body of evidence shows we should...A new study by Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, PSE Healthy Energy, Boston University, and HEET deepens our understanding of the problem. Researchers collected unburned natural gas samples from 69 kitchens in the Greater Boston Area, and identified 21 different hazardous air pollutants, including volatile organic compounds like benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene, and hexane that are known to be toxic. Some of these chemicals are linked to asthma and cancer. The American Medical Association recently joined the Massachusetts Medical Society in recognizing the association between use of gas stoves, indoor nitrogen dioxide levels, and asthma."

## Avangrid works to turn electric vehicles into a grid resource in Connecticut, New York

**Utility Dive.** "Avangrid subsidiary United Illuminating expects to have 3,000 electric vehicles in its Connecticut territory by 2024 and has been working with Bidgely to

utilize them as a grid resource and avoid driving higher peak demand when they are charging, Avangrid officials said... 'The biggest challenge is obviously integrating that load' ... Avangrid's demand response managed charging program in Connecticut helps with that, but other challenges include accommodating varied customer technology preferences when it comes to vehicles and chargers, and ensuring investments and incentives are properly sized. 'Making sure that we're not paying people too much, but on the other hand, [they] aren't being paid so little that they're not interested in participating.' "

## Connecticut's Largest Solar Power Plant Completed

**Clean Technica.** "Terrasmart surveyed the site, designed a system to stand up to New England weather conditions, manufactured the racking, and executed the mechanical installation of the 66.5-MWAC fixed-tilt system in just seven months, 75 percent faster than the industry average for a system of this size. Working closely with the project's partners, Terrasmart quickly converted 270 acres of forest, farmland, and reclaimed gravel mining to renewable energy production."

## CT is falling behind on its climate change goals. What's being done to change that?

**CT Mirror.** "The Connecticut Clean Air Act sets up many of the same programs TCI would have — but got lucky, to some extent, on the funding component. The federal bipartisan infrastructure law will provide nearly \$5.4 billion to kick-start most of the initiatives — so no pressure on gas prices, which most folks figure are high enough at the moment. Most of the focus is getting electric vehicles to more individuals across a broader socio-economic spectrum and getting a bigger bang for the buck by getting EVs into public and commercial fleets...The law sets deadlines for moving school systems away from diesel-powered school buses with special focus on environmental justice communities...What are some of the new climate change policies in the law? Authorizes DEEP to adopt the more stringent California emissions standards for medium- and heavy-duty motor vehicles. And it allows DEEP to establish a voucher program that supports zero-emissions medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. Sets requirements for EV charging infrastructure in new construction."



## How will the Inflation Reduction Act benefit Connecticut? Green-energy industry could see a boost

**Stamford Advocate.** "How much will the bill impact the economy of Connecticut, which generated gross domestic product of \$309 billion last year? Until the U.S. Department of the Treasury gets its hands on a final law to parse out details, that is anyone's guess. But the state is home to several companies at the intersection of renewable power spanning wind and solar that could benefit, as well as other niches like hydrogen and battery storage. The Inflation Reduction Act is expected to boost a number of incentives for clean energy, including in the solar industry. The sector employed nearly 2,300 people across 135 companies in Connecticut as of 2021 according to the Solar Energy Industries Association."

## Blumenthal, Larson Tout Energy Investments at East Windsor Solar Array

**CT News Junkie.** "A 29-acre solar panel array and nearly 50 sheep served as the backdrop for two members of Connecticut's congressional delegation on Thursday to tout clean energy investments included in the recently-passed Inflation Reduction Act...The rows of shiny black panels were meant to illustrate the legislation's more than \$60 billion investment in manufacturing incentives meant to accelerate the creation of things like solar panels, batteries and wind turbines — all part of an omnibus bill, which Democrats have hailed as a historic step to address climate change...However, for Will Herchel — CEO of Verogy, the Hartford-based company that runs Solar One — the legislation's passage means predictability. Among the bill's provisions is an extension of an investment tax credit for projects including solar and wind power or fuel cells on construction that begins before 2025."

To all our contributors—  
**Thank You!**

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

# A Slice of History

Submitted by Bev York

The final "Slice of Life" historical event in the Windham Area will be held on Saturday, September 3. This event will feature history from 50 years ago in Willimantic, known as Thread City", and is titled: The Slice of Life: 1970s "Hey Man, Nice Threads."

One of the main attractions is the annual Railroad Day at the CT Eastern Railroad Museum, 55 Bridge Street, from 11 to 3 (fee.) The day will feature rail exhibits, train rides, music, kids' activities and more.

At the Jillson Square and Shaboo Stage there will be the Jillson Park Art and Music Show (Windham Regional Arts Council) 10 to 4. The art show and sale is free and will feature art, photography, sculpture and more. The music will include 1970s oldies.

Also, at Jillson Square at the Jillson House Museum there will be free tours and hands on tie dying. An exhibit of gilded age fashions and a display about natural wool dying will be available from noon to 4. This is the final day of the CT Summer at the Museum program admitting children with one adult for free, a program funded by the CT Humanities.

At the Mill Museum, 411 Main Street, there will be a slide presentation of "End of an Era: Decline of Connecticut's Textile Towns" at 2 p.m. (fee.) The program will be presented by Jamie Eves: In the 19th century, Connecticut was the "cockpit of the American Industrial Revolution."

Renowned worldwide for its textiles and precision machines, Connecticut — along with the rest of southern New England — led the nation in industrial production. Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee, mysteriously transported to preindustrial Britain, symbolized Yankee ingenuity and know-how. Yet soon it would come to an end. As early as the 1880s, Connecticut's vaunted textile industry began to move away, relocating to the Southern Piedmont. The decline was slow, but by the 1970s it was clear that Connecticut's days as an industrial leader were over.

Why did this happen? And what did industrial decline mean for Connecticut? How did Willimantic, CT, respond to the loss of its signature industry in 1985? What lies ahead for Connecticut's former textile mill towns?

The Slice of Life is a collaboration of local groups known as the Partnership of Arts and Culture in the Windham Region, For more information about the Slice of Life email [director@windhamarts.org](mailto:director@windhamarts.org).



**Artist-In-Residence**

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

EC-CHAP offers an Artist-In-Residence (AIR) program and will have an opening effective **February 1, 2023**. Artists of all disciplines are welcome to apply. The term of the residency is one (1) year, with possible renewal.

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

**WWW.EC-CHAP.ORG**

156 River Road, Suite 2106A, Willington, CT 06279 | 518.791.9474 | [info@ec-chap.org](mailto:info@ec-chap.org)



**Seeking New Board Members**

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

EC-CHAP is positioning its Board of Directors to ensure we have the capacity to oversee a **major facility project**, and respond to a **changing environment**. We embrace diversity, and invite individuals with a broad range of creative and analytical skills to apply.

Please visit [www.ec-chap.org/board2022](http://www.ec-chap.org/board2022) to learn more and to apply online. Questions may be addressed by email to: [info@ec-chap.org](mailto:info@ec-chap.org); or by calling: 518.791.9474.

**WWW.EC-CHAP.ORG**

156 River Road, Suite 2106A, Willington, CT 06279 | 518.791.9474 | [info@ec-chap.org](mailto:info@ec-chap.org)

# Before Time: A Prologue to the Understory of Local History

... the lay of the land and its bedrock and soil resources affect the course of human events. There is a connection between people and land, and it is just as important today and tomorrow as it was in the past.

—Michael Bell, *The Face of Connecticut: People, Geology, and the Land*

By Donna Dufresne



There is no understory here. The last glacier, which receded some 10,000 years ago, has left the Mashamoquet uplands scoured and seemingly barren. There are no green velvet clad hayfields on the drumlins where we gallop our ponies at full speed. It will be eons before Connecticut vineyards dress the long slopes that overflow into our cups. Yet the seeds and spores that will become the understory of the future are finding their way from distant Pleistocene lands as the rivulets of the glacier carve bedrock into the steep-sided ravines and gentle valleys of northeast Connecticut. Spores and pollen, seeds and rhizomes are waiting to have their DNA cracked open by the coming warmth and the residue of fertile silt and soil nestled among the glacial till. The Paleozoic horsetail, *Equisetum arvense*, will emerge from spores cradled by an icy nursery along with the dormant rhizomes of princess pine, *Dendrolycopodium obscurum*. Both will become demure representations of their former tree-sized selves and grace the boggy roadsides and coniferous forest floors of New England. Broken fronds of fern, harvesting capsules of spores, will be released by the melt and wakened by the sun. Ancient versions of the seeds, nuts, and berries which will become the deciduous and coniferous forests and their understories in the future are deposited in their own cryogenic capsules cracked open by a new dawn.

The soundtrack for this timeless era can be found in the constant flow of water. It is an eclectic playlist, ranging from the slow drip of ice on the edge of the glacier to the sculpting torrents cascading from the north and carving a bedrock pathway to the sea. In this case, the sea is actually a large freshwater lake that was formed by the drift of the terminal moraine we now call Long Island. These water sculptors will chisel the ancient metamorphic bedrock of the Eastern Uplands into sharp ravines and gentle valleys. It will be several millennia before the First People hunting for game and other food sources will make their home here, and even longer before the lake will be named *Connecticut* by modern geologists. Connecticut is the Algonquian word for *long river*, referring to the Connecticut River that empties into Long Island Sound. By the time Lake Connecticut is baptized in the scientific world, it will have been long gone. Rising seawater from the

Atlantic Ocean will eventually breach the natural dam near Fishers Island, forming Long Island Sound. The freshwater lake will become the coastal estuary of salt and brackish water that will protect the Connecticut shoreline from the harsh Atlantic Ocean. This fecund nursery will build the great fisheries and refuges for birdlife that will attract the First People to make this their home.

It is hard to envision the barren landscape scoured by the last glacier and sculpted by water and wind. Perhaps the bald mountains of the Mahosuc Range in western Maine or the craggy Rocky Mountains in Canada will lend a reference to an imagination that cannot thrive outside the borders of time. But consider the Eastern Uplands with cranky knobs of bedrock soon (in geologic time) to be whittled down. At first the gneiss and mica schist are jagged and edgy, an inhospitable knife edge before harsh wind, rivulets, and streams take them down a notch. Some of the edges will be smoothed into streambeds while others will be broken into rubble strewn across the landscape to mix with the glacial erratics seemingly dropped from the sky as the glacier made its way southward. Eventually, the landscape takes shape into the familiar topography we know today. Eons will pass before the first seed sends its tiny roots into the new, mineral-rich soil. Prehistoric grasslands and forests will emerge from the evolutionary shift, nudged and nurtured into a climate perfectly balanced between sun and rain. The temperate zone, with its seasonal changes, will unlock the ancient genetic codes of plants and animals in their ever-persistent adaptation to life.

Sometime in the distant future, a wink of the eye in geological time, humanoids will emerge on the continent, the ancestors of the Wabbaquasett Nipmuc people. They will settle in seasonal migratory patterns, manipulating their environment to harvest berries, deer, fish, and plants. Eventually, their trade routes will bring corn, beans, and squash grown in the open areas created by controlled burning. The hardwood forests will grow tall with chestnut, oak, maple, hickory, and walnut. Pine forests will take root in the sandy edges of the former glacier. One day they will become the masts of a great fleet of ships for the King's Navy. The brook tumbling over the glacial till of the Eastern Uplands will be named Mashamoquet.

By the early 1700s people of English descent will arrive. They will clear the forests of the tall pines, which will be shipped to the coastal areas to supply masts for the King's Navy. The chestnuts will be harvested for beams, shingles, and floorboards in colonial houses, and the other hardwoods put to use in the building of houses and barns. Small quarries will emerge in the ledges of granitic gneiss, the local bedrock used in fireplace hearths. Soon there will be gristmills and sawmills on the tiniest of tributaries, serving clusters of settlements in what is thought to be a wilderness in need of taming. It is called the Mashamoquet Purchase and eventually named Pomfret.

In 1778 a young man from Cranston, Rhode

Island, will seek respite in the Mashamoquet Purchase. He is fleeing Rhode Island and the watchful eye of the British along with Jonathan Randall, Joseph Nightingale, and others who may have been involved in privateering and the burning of the *Gaspee*, a British Customs schooner, in Pawtuxet. They will help to plant the seeds of the American Revolution before the Boston Tea Party. The presence of the Rhode Island "New-comers" in Pomfret during the Revolutionary War will rouse the suspicions of the first proprietor families. Rumors of Joseph Nightingale's privateering escapades will morph into folktales about pirates and Blackbeard's treasure being buried on the Nightingale farm. Jonathan Randall's arrival in 1776 with his wife, Patience Bowen Randall, and their "many" slaves will raise the eyebrows of those who are teetering toward the *Rights of Man* and abolition. The secretive alliances between the Randalls, Higginbothams, Nightingales, Greens, and Arnolds will breed family lore about Jonathan Randall and Obadiah Higginbotham jumping ship from the British navy and absconding with the bursar's gold, explaining why they fled Providence and Cranston in 1776. Although Randall and Higginbotham were not enrolled in the British army or navy, there may be some truth to their having to hide out if they had anything to do with Joseph Nightingale's privateering and the burning of the *Gaspee*.

Obadiah Higginbotham, born and raised in Lancashire, England, the seat of the British Richard Arkwright's Industrial Revolution, will use his skillset as a millwright and "mechanic" to construct dams, flumes, and waterwheels for several small mills on Mashamoquet Brook and its tributaries. Although much of the stonework will be completed by enslaved Africans, the hard-boned Mashamoquet uplands, shaped by the glacier, will usher in a new dawn in commerce, ensuring self-sufficiency, independence, and a way out of the moral dilemma tied to slavery. Those who once invested in merchant ships, sugar, rum, and slaves will turn their eyes to a greater power harnessed in the tiniest of brooks and tributaries, which will eventually turn the wheels of manufactories throughout New England. The shift from importing textiles to producing them on American soil will change the economy and generate unfathomable wealth for those with grit rather than pedigree.

The myth of the American Dream, born in the pristine waters that trickled down from the last glacier, will eventually sour. Pollution, greed, and shortsightedness will become the undoing of our industrious dreams. And yet, the forests will return. Horsetail and princess pine still poke through the soft edges of time as the untold stories of Native Americans and people of African descent emerge from the understory of history. Their lives and those who came to shape the land will in turn be shaped by the land from the past into the future.

## Ashford Area Arts Council's Annual Members' Meeting Public Welcome!

Submitted by Debra Gag

September 21st 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Knowlton Memorial Hall (Babcock Library), 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford.

Enjoy refreshments

7:00: Babcock Cornet Band  
7:30: Keynote Speaker 2022 Pulitzer Prize winner- Josh Adams, comic artist/editor.  
8:00 Short business meeting and membership renewal/sign-up

The Babcock Cornet Band, under the direction of Vinnie LaMonica, will kick off the evening. It was founded in 1862 through a bequest from the estate of Archibald Babcock. A local resident with a sense of humor described the formation of the band: "Soon after the acceptance of the trust fund, everyone who could buy, borrow or hire a horn was invited to join." The band is the oldest continuing cornet band in the country!

Our Keynote Speaker will be 2022 Pulitzer Prize winner, Josh Adams.

We are so proud and excited for him. Josh joined the Ashford Arts Council soon after moving here from NYC. He will present his award-winning comic strip and tell of his pathway to become 2022 Pulitzer Prize winning comic artist and editor.

Josh, along with Anthony Del Col, Fahmida Azim, and Walter Hickey, received the 2022 Pulitzer Prize "For a distinguished portfolio of editorial cartoons or other illustrated work ... characterized by political insight, editorial effectiveness, or public service value."

Their award sites last year's Insider Comic, "I Escaped a Chinese Internment Camp" where they used comic media to tell a powerful yet intimate story of the Chinese oppression of the Uyghurs, making the issue accessible to a wider public. This is the first Pulitzer in Insider's Comic's history.

Adams and his father have used comics and the platform it gave them to discuss serious topics and to fight for people in need."

### Ashford Arts Council Workshop Opportunity

#### Tea & Calligraphy: The Italic Hand

Saturday, October 22nd, 2-4pm  
Ashford Senior Center, (Earl W. Smith Building) 25 Tremko Lane, Ashford

Come join Kathy Lepak for a two-hour excursion into the art of the calligrapher. Included in the student package is her booklet, "Notes on Calligraphy", basic materials used and a listing of online or local sources for materials.

A \$5.00 fee for nibs and pen holders will be requested. Please make certain to indicate when you register if you are right or left-handed, as it makes a difference in the pen nibs that she will supply to each student.

Register by 10/3 to allow time for the purchase of materials. \$5.00 registration fee for non-members

Email Kathy at [kathylepak@charter.net](mailto:kathylepak@charter.net)  
Website: [www.kathleenlepek.com](http://www.kathleenlepek.com)  
Instagram: [instagram.com/kathleenlepek](https://www.instagram.com/kathleenlepek)

### Night

And when the sky was dark enough  
I swam out just so far  
and floating softly on my back  
I drank in moon and star

The dipper stretched across the sky  
the gibbous moon was there  
I swam in liquid silver  
drinking in September air

-Carol J. Macy

### From our readers-

"Government can help the economy only by protecting you and your property. A free market economy, limited government and the rule of law are the keys to prosperity and peace."

-I came across this saying in a book I'm reading. Thought it would be good in your paper.

James D. Balkus, Windham

Read. Love. Neighbors.

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 info on the new net metering laws and new utility price increases.**



Before I go into this month's topics I am giving a gentle reminder that the beauty of fall is around the corner and with it comes spectacular changes in the weather and foliage. I encourage you to be mindful that the Earth and it's tiny creatures thrive on the warmth and cover that fallen leaves provide for them. PLEASE do not rake every leaf as it falls or worst yet chase every leaf daily with a gas powered leaf blower. I won't go into the destruction they cause here but if you are curious, please google it and find out for yourself. There's a good chance I will get more into this next month. I notice yearly that so many people in the area are either uneducated on the topic, or generally just care more about a squeaky clean lawn than they do for the Earth and it's inhabitants.

## CT New Net Metering

Net metering simply explained: Currently if you do not have solar, you have a meter that tracks the amount of energy you consume and purchase from the utility company. When you go solar, a two-way meter is exchanged for your current meter that now tracks any excess energy that solar produces.

With solar, your home is always first use and if your system is producing more than your home is using, it is tracked by the net meter. This meter also tracks any energy that you get back from the grid at night if you're on the net metering program or through low production solar months along with any energy that you need that was not produced and net metered from your solar system.

When CT announced the new program, myself and a few other industry professionals were on way too many roll out meeting with PURA, The Green Bank, Eversource and UI. Many questions were unanswered and most of us in the solar industry were baffled as to why they were making the program more complicated than other program across the country that any of us were familiar with. Short answer, because it's CT! We all had to take multiple trainings to get it right! That's a whole other story.

Connecticut changed our net metering laws and options this past Jan. 1, 2022. Earlier last year they set the table by saying Net Metering was going away. This had everyone in the solar industry curious to why they would announce the extinction of net metering rather than extend the current program. Well as usual, it was about greed and ulterior motives. It turns out that the CT Green Bank, a privately held company that managed CT's retired rebate program and their relationship with energy audit company's was in jeopardy of going out of business. They somehow influenced the energy commission and utility companies that they needed to stay involved, and unfortunately they found a way!

CT is the only state that I know of that requires a home energy audit for a home to qualify for simple net metering credits. BTW – this has nothing to do with what Governor is or is not in office. It has to do with greed... period! Every other states net metering program is overseen by the state's energy commission and then managed by the utility company.

BTW- the audit company gets to try to sell you items that you never thought you needed.

*With that said, Thank goodness that we do still have a net metering program! This benefits solar consumers tremendously!*

## Here are the new options explained:

### Option 1= Buy-All (SREC) Program-

*Beware of any solar company leading with this option!*

This program does not benefit a homeowner and there are MANY solar companies touting this as a lead in to get solar companies saying to them that they are going to get paid and make money by going solar! Marketing garbage in my opinion! This is where the homeowner does not keep any net metered credits and any energy your solar

system produces that is in excess of your homes usage, you have to BUY from the utility company at whatever rate they are at, at that moment. IE: You will still have to buy energy ever night and all winter.

Now, you do get a check twice a year for a locked in rate of .293/kwh. Our current rate of energy is averaged at .275/kwh with the new price increase. The .293 stays locked in and as energy prices go over .293/kwh you as a homeowner loses. Plain and simple. At the current price increases we have seen over the past 5 years even this year, it will be less than 2 years that you will be upside down in this. *So, who benefits from this option? You guessed it.*

### Option 2: Net Metering-

*Super simple and the one I always offer.*

Any kilowatt that is net metered from your system is tracked as a credit on your bill that you get back at night and/or through the winter months. It is a monetary trade where a credit shows up on your bill with the kilowatts that you have banked. You will get these credits back as a monetary value that you save and use up as needed. There you go!

*So, who benefits from this option? YOU do!*

You actually benefit from both programs but **you will have a much greater benefit with option 2.** Fancy sales language and non-disclosure of the entire programs offering by slick sales people make you think you are getting paid to go solar where in fact, in most cases you will start losing money in year two and continue to even more money annually as the years go on.

### Oh yes, I was going to mention Eversource's 2<sup>nd</sup> price increase this year.

Well, they just went up again in July, your last bill reflected it! *Enough said there.*

*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 and let's make every day Earth Day!*

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

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The Neighbors paper  
A little paper  
Big on community

# Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

Yes, it's a sign of the time, readers, if you've been to any store lately you've seen prices on groceries, clothing, gas, and fuel on the rise. Well, the repair business is no exception. The motoring public has gotten the idea that electric vehicles (EV's) are a one-time buy and that they will not have to be maintained or repaired. That would be nice if it were true, but we are back to the old cliché of if it moves, sometimes, it will need repair.

The EV is much heavier than an ICE (internal combustion engine) vehicle due to the weight of its batteries. We have already started replacing our vehicle lifts in the shop from the current 9,000-pound capacity to ones with 12,000-pound capacity. The price of these new lifts averages around \$11,000. The transporting of an EV that does not move needs a special wheel dolly system. This dolly system costs around \$2100. Just these two new pieces of equipment will be added to our cost of doing business. Unfortunately, these costs will need to be passed along to the consumer.

Labor charges and how you bill labor per repair has also changed. Today an ICE or hybrid vehicle can easily have a 3-hour labor charge just to change spark plugs. The word tune up has is now replaced with the word engine-maintenance. Flat rate labor guides or the amount of time it should take to make a certain repair still exists. The big change is the charge for diagnostics to discover a vehicle's problem. This type of repair is still billed at an hourly rate. This rate varies from shop to shop. Here is an example of how we address a common check engine light or ECM light. Here are some of the questions we ask the customer to get started. 1) Has the light been on for a long length of time? 2) Has the light been cleared? 3) Do you experience a drivability problem? The first 2 questions determine how we are going to address their concern. The 2<sup>nd</sup> question is very important because if you cleared the light, you have now lost the code and freeze frame. Freeze frame can tell us what caused the light to come on. Time, engine temperature, the gear you were driving in, and the speed of your vehicle are very important when diagnosing a check engine light. The 1980's were the beginning of an onboard computer. The theory was whatever the code was, replace the sensor. You would be surprised how many people still feel that way. This is where hourly diagnostics come into play. Another good example is a vehicle that was towed in from another shop recently. The repair facility told the customer that his vehicle needed an engine computer costing \$1000 plus dollars. The vehicle had a throttle positioning sensor code and someone had already replaced the sensor, but the light with the code stayed on. Engine computers rarely go bad unless somehow the elements cause a failure or the vehicle was jump started and it caused a surge on the computer. We diagnosed the vehicle's problem as a broken wire. The repair took 3 hours of labor and a repaired wire. The diagnostics were a large part of the bill, but the outcome for the customer was positive. The vehicle was repaired and the customer saved money.

The point I am trying to make is that repairs are very costly with today's vehicles. Be aware of what you are paying for and always have an itemized bill. Be sure to find out what the warranty on the repair covers. Does it cover parts and labor or just parts? How long are you covered for? Be sure to keep accurate records of when the repair was done and what was done.

The last thing I want to talk about this month is finding 19-inch wheels and a 40 series tires on a standard Honda sedan. This type of tire and wheel combo is becoming more common on a mom-and-pop vehicle instead of a sport model. The problem with low profile tires is the stiff sidewall and ride. We have found more damaged and bent wheels than ever before. The wheel absorbs the road condition more than the tire used to, so the wheel can bend or crack. This type of tire has a softer rubber compound to perform better but needs replacement more frequently. 20,000 to 30,000 miles is normal for this type of tire. The cost is much higher also, and if you add a run flat option you could be paying 15 to 20% more per tire.

I hope this month's article helps you to understand some of the reasons why vehicle repair costs have risen. Hopefully the government will get inflation under control and some of the prices will begin to drop. Until next month...Happy motoring, Rick.

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

# Letter and Emails

To the editor-

Lisa Thomas, Democratic candidate for Connecticut's 35th State Senate district, is the advocate students in our district need to ensure that our schools are fully funded and attract a diverse array of talented teachers and staff. Lisa has spent 37 years teaching in Connecticut's public schools and has a deep and personal understanding of the challenges students and staff encounter. Lisa knows that the more resources a school has, the more opportunities there are for students to succeed and develop their unique talents. Because of this, she is committed to ensuring effective student-social worker ratios at the pre-K to 3rd grade level so that children are given the support they need during their most critical developmental years. This commitment to students will extend from pre-K to the postgraduate level where Lisa plans to strengthen our vocational-agricultural-technical programs at all grade levels as well as establishing debt free community college. Whether you are a parent with children in our schools or a resident looking for Eastern CT to stay economically competitive with a skilled and thriving workforce, Lisa's insight, expertise, and integrity will be a benefit to our students and our district.

Keith Conroy, Coventry

To the editor-

The recent halt of both inpatient and outpatient surgeries at Johnson Memorial Hospital in Stafford and the shortage of staff at other hospitals across northeastern Connecticut has become a full-blown crisis in our district. Despite the urgency of this issue, our district has not received the statewide attention it needs to address this crisis. This problem will not be fixed until we have a vocal and experienced advocate for us in the state legislature. That is why we need Lisa Thomas as our next state senator in Connecticut's 35th district to make the voice of the quiet corner heard in the General Assembly. Lisa has been in the forefront of efforts to restore critical hospital services, including labor and delivery care, to our region. She knows that the loss of services has placed an unacceptable burden and risk on our families. Until we have a leader who is forceful and persistent in demanding this healthcare crisis be addressed by the General Assembly, hospital staff shortages will continue to plague our district. Lisa is the fighter we need to give our district the quality of healthcare we deserve.

William Hall, Coventry

## The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Willimantic Downtown Country Fair Saturday Oct. 1, 2022 11am – 4pm

Submitted by Alice Rubin

On Saturday October 1<sup>st</sup>, Jillson Square – home of the Shaboo Stage – will be transformed into the site of a Country Fair! The Willimantic Downtown Country Fair! For the past 22 years The Willimantic Food Co-op has hosted this fair which celebrates our Community and the many talented people who are part of it. There will be vendors selling the goods that they make, right here in the Quiet Corner. There will be Music played by people who live in our neighborhoods. There will be information from organizations who, with the participation of all of us, work toward making our Community the great place that it is.

New this year, we will be partnering with the Willimantic Public Library and the Friends of the Willimantic Public Library to bring the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Eastern CT Children's Book Fair to the Downtown Country Fair. There will be readings by authors and a Book Bus.

Other activities for kids, including Mini Golf will be here along with a Clothing Swap and lots of great food!

Please come on down and spend the day, visit with friends, make new friends!

We hope to see you there!



## 2022 Summer Finale Poetry in the Park

Submitted by Suzy Staubach

Bruce Cohen and Karen Anderson will close this season's Poetry in the Park with readings in the Julia de Burgos Park, on Thursday, September 22 at 6:00 pm. The Park is on the corner of Curbstone Way and Jackson Street.

**Bruce Cohen** has published five volumes of poetry including *Imminent Disappearances*, *Impossible Numbers & Panoramic X-Rays*, awarded the 2015 Green Rose Prize, *Disloyal Yo-Yo* awarded the 2007 Orphic Poetry Prize, *Swerve*, *Placebo Junkies Conspiring with the Half Asleep*, and *No Soap Radio*. His poems have appeared in many literary periodicals including *AGNI*, *The Gettysburg Review*, *The Harvard Review*, *The New Yorker*, *Ploughshares*, *Poetry & The Southern Review*. A recipient of an individual artist grant from the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, prior to joining the Creative Writing faculty at the University of Connecticut in 2012, he directed, developed, and implemented nationally recognized academic enhancement programs at the University of Arizona, The University of California at Berkeley, and the University of Connecticut.

**Karen Leona Anderson** is the author of the poetry collections *Receipt* and *Punish honey*. She received her Ph.D. from Cornell University, an MFA from the Iowa Writers' Workshop, and an MA in Creative Writing from Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand. Her work has most recently appeared in *Little Star*, *Alaska Review Quarterly*, *ZYZZYVA*, *The Best American Poetry 2012*, and other journals and anthologies; her poems have been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and she is the recipient of a Maryland State Arts Grant. She is an associate professor of English at St. Mary's College of Maryland, an Aldom-Plansoen College Professor, and the director of the VOICES Reading Series.

*Poetry in the Park is a project of the Curbstone Foundation. Readings are free. Bring a blanket or lawn chair. Readings are usually followed by an open mic. In the event of rain, readings will be moved to Zoom. Check Facebook for updates: facebook.com/CurbstoneLiteraryProject*

**The Windham Free Library is proud to announce that, after a two-year absence due to COVID-19, Jazz in the Garden is returning for its 20th year!**

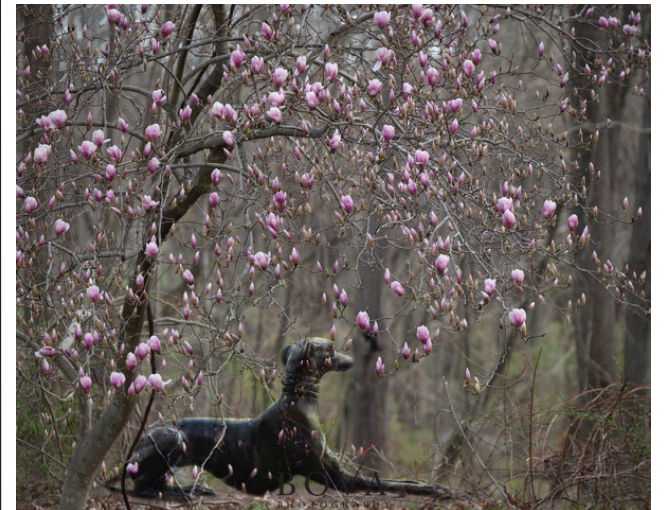
**Saturday, September 11, 2022 from 3:00 - 6:00pm**

**With a Roaring 20's theme, this formal-attire, outdoor affair offers -  
Drinks  
Passed Hors D'oeuvres  
Silent Auction  
Tom Brown 6 Jazz Band  
\$60 Pre-sale/\$65 at the Event.**

**All funds will go to support The Windham Free Library, Windham, CT.**

**For more information, please visit: <https://thewindhamfreelibrary.org/jazz/>**

# At the Top Shelf Gallery



Submitted by Janice Trecker

The September- October Show at the Top Shelf Gallery is Real and Imagined, featuring the color photographs of Kim Bova. Her show includes local land and sky scapes as well as still-life images. An artist's reception with a talk on the impact of cell phones on photography is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14 from 5-6 p.m. Although Bova was trained as a pianist with degrees from SUNY Purchase and the Eastman School of Music, she has been interested in photography ever since she was a teenager, when her father gave her his old Nikon camera. But it was only after she and her husband Peter moved to Mansfield, CT, that she trained in photography, eventually opening a wedding and portrait business.

Recently retired, Bova now focuses on her personal artwork. "I left the world of wedding and portrait photography to make photographs with my own feelings in mind", she says. "Photography for me is no longer a job - it has become a way to discover new things about myself and how I feel about the world around me."

Currently, Bova focuses on photographing landscapes and still lifes, as well as creating unique giclée print transfers with additions of gold mica and paint. She has won awards in local and regional exhibitions and from the International Color Awards and participates in the Artist Open Studios and the Art & Garden Tour in Northeast CT.

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

## Actors and Volunteers Needed- Nightmare on Main 2022

Submitted by Sandy Proctor

Nightmare on Main, 2022, will be held at the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum in Willimantic, which is a new location for the event. Nightmare On Main is a theatrical tour event, held during October, where visitors are guided passed several staged scenes and actors portray historical characters telling some creepy, haunting stories based on real history. The 2022 theme is "Ghost Town – Shadows of the Past."

Actors are needed to join our cast of characters. Some parts have scripted speaking parts, and some are non-speaking 'crowd.' Actors must commit to all the events plus a few rehearsals and work sessions. Volunteers are also needed for backstage jobs, parking cars and more. Anyone interested in joining the cast or crew should call Sandy Proctor at 860-944-4945. or email Sandra.jean.proctor@gmail.com.

# Windham Arts Events

Submitted by Bev York

September 3rd: Slice of Life: 1970s "Hey Man, Nice Threads"

Events around "Thread City" Windham

Jillson Park Art and Music Show (Windham Regional Arts Council) 10 to 4,

Railroad Day at the CT Eastern Railroad Museum 11 to 3 (fee),

"End of an Era: Decline of a Mill Town" at the Mill Museum at 2 p.m. (fee)

Tie Dye at the Jillson House 12 to 4, "Slice of Life" sponsored by the Partnership of Arts and Culture. director@windhamarts.org

## Saloon

Somewhere a fiddler is playing  
worn boots shuffle along with the song  
Whiskey laced throated expressions  
whispered where no one belongs

Twelve stepped two step edition  
Bull riding amusing the elite  
Crusty crunchy reminders  
Of sashaying with someone's left feet

Poem and photo by Wayne Erskine.



## Hampton Fest Returns

Submitted by Janice Trecker

After a two year pandemic hiatus, Hampton will again have its fall celebration.

Fletcher Memorial Library, assisted by the Town of Hampton, hosts The Hampton Harvest Festival, September 10, 10 am- 3 p.m., on the lawn between the community center and the town hall at 164 Main Street. The festival will feature exclusively hand grown and handmade products from the town of Hampton.

The offerings will include fresh produce, maple syrup products, breads and eggs from local farms, and nature photography, hand-knit toys, dried flower bouquets, T-shirts and more from Hampton artisans.

The Hampton Fire Department will be serving hot dogs and hamburgers, while the library will hold a bake sale and a silent auction. Audubon Trail Wood, Friends of Goodwin Forest and the Hampton Historical Society will be on hand to discuss their programs, while the Gazette will have the annual calendar, featuring local artists, available for sale.

There will be farm animals on

display for the children, as well as face painting, sack races and corn-hole, plus kid-friendly food.

Associated events include a tour of the town's new Hammond Hill/Little River property presented by the Hampton Conservation commission, and a chicken barbecue at the Hampton Congregational Church.

For information contact:  
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## Cunningham's Digitization Corner:

# Don't Leave Me This Way!

By Morgan Cunningham

Preserving memories and information stored on physical media by turning them into digital files is a process. The secret is: it starts with you.

Yes, you.

You have those video tapes of your wedding or baby's first steps. How about the audio tape of you and your family singing Christmas carols in 1967? Or, the photos from your honeymoon in 1983.

If you've stored these memories, regardless the occasion or the media type, you may want to enjoy them at a later time. If your media hasn't been stored properly, you may be disappointed when you go to re-enjoy your memories for the first time in years and years.

And, unfortunately, given the hustle and bustle in most of our lives, we tend to throw all this media aside, without much thought, until it comes time to resurrect and/or re-enjoy them.

This is what I call "stupid" degradation. All physical media naturally degrades over time. But, good storage can minimize negative effects in the long haul.

While individual results may vary, here are some very general tips to consider...

Don't throw them away if you think they haven't been stored properly!!!! This is the first tip I have. You'd be surprised what can be salvaged. Just because you may have subject your media to the issues I'm listing below, you should always try to recover your

memories. But, without good storage, please realize the quality may be less than ideal—is all I'm saying.

Don't store any media in extreme temperature conditions for prolonged periods of time. Whether it's too hot or too cold, media can become warped—or audio and/or picture quality can be greatly reduced.

Don't leave audiotape-vid-eotape-or film reels tangled. This can cause brittleness that leads to breaking, and it can also increase "dropouts" of information because of creases on the media.

Don't leave audiotape-vid-eotape close to magnetic or electric fields. This includes very close proximity to computers. Simply put, this can (very quickly) erase your media. There's little chance of much, if any, recovery at that point.

Don't leave media exposed to too much dust. The best proactive measure is leaving the media in its case, such as a VHS box or a CD/DVD case. However, if the case(s) are gone, a sealed box or container may be a good alternative.

I can tell you from personal experience, my mother asked me to scan a photo that had been sitting in a frame for about 45 years. It had too much exposure to the sun, and it's quite faded. I scanned it, but it's not as clear and colorful as it once was...and that cannot be recovered naturally.

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



These two audio reels were tangled and knotted together for decades due poor storage.

## Bread Box Theater

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### ~Fall 2022 Music Series~

~Sunday, September 25th~

**The Kennedys**  
**Jenner Fox**  
4:00 pm ~ \$25



~ Sunday, October 9th ~

**David Mallett**  
**Ash & Eric**  
4:00 pm ~ \$35



~Sunday, October 23rd ~

**Christine Lavin**  
**Sandy Bailey**  
4:00 pm ~ \$25



~ Sunday, November 6th ~

**Aztec Two-Step 2.0**  
4:00 pm ~ \$25



~ November 20th ~

**Amy Gallatin & Stillwaters**  
**Kate Callahan**  
4:00 pm ~ \$20



~ Sunday, December 4th ~

**Grass Routes Bluegrass**  
**Ramblin' Dan Stevens**  
4:00 pm ~ \$20



Tickets can be purchased at:  
[Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com)

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September 24, 2022

Doors: 5:30pm / Performance 6:30

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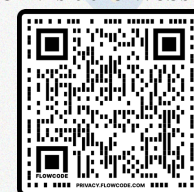
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**CLAUDIA SCHMIDT'S JAZZ FUNTET**  
12:30  
**CHRIS FREEMAN**  
1:45  
**BENTETU**  
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11 de la mañana hasta las 4 de la tarde



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11:15  
**CLAUDIA SCHMIDT'S JAZZ FUNTET**  
12:30  
**CHRIS FREEMAN**  
1:45  
**BENTETU**  
3:00

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