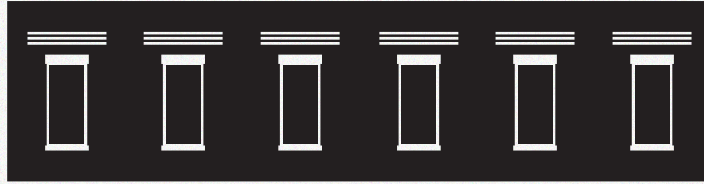


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On our cover:
 'Night at the Rock' by Willimantic
 artist Kerri Quirk. Her latest work,
 'Tree Farm' is above. See more of

Kerri's art and read about her on
 page 42. Kerri's studio is at 861
 Main Street in Willimantic.

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The Purpose of Neighbors:
 -To encourage reading
 -To provide a place where ideas, writ-
 ing, 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 environ-
 ment of our region

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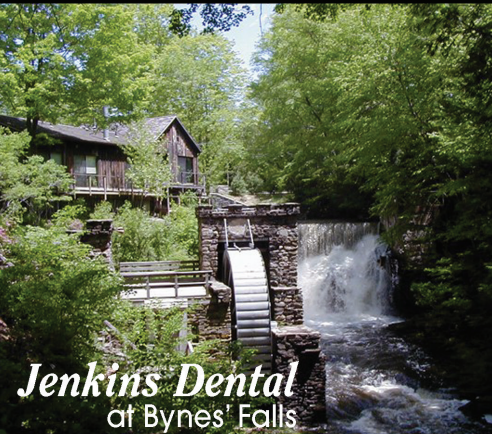
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At top: Ashford native Mindy Lodge looks on as her child waves flags. At bottom: Shown in traditional dress (l-r) are Avery Gratton of Willimantic and from Ashford, HSCA President Esther Jagodzinski, and Jaylee Stomberg. Photos by Winter Caplanson of Connecticut Food & Farm.

Hungarian Club of Ashford Remembers the 1956 Revolution

By Carol Davidge

On October 23, 2022, the Hungarian Social Club of Ashford commemorated the 1956 Revolution of Hungary against occupying Soviet Union forces with an authentic Hungarian dinner for 80 people of all ages. Among the Hungarian refugees from 1956 who attended was Lazlo Tutto of Lebanon CT, who was shot at while he escaped on foot to Austria. He came to USA Camp Eisenhower, where he was given a train ticket to Hartford and \$1. Many Hungarians sent to Hartford worked in the factories because they were skilled tradesmen. Mr. Tutto was a graduate of Budaapest Polytechnic and was given a bakery job until he found work at CL&P. The Freedom Toast was given by Mr. Ron Pal of Vermont, whose grandfather was killed along with hundreds of other Hungarians in an American mining accident in Pennsylvania in 1907. The guest speaker was Dr. Cynthia Herbert Adams, retired UCONN professor and author of “The Red Toque”, a story of a

4 Neighbors



Slovenian family fleeing the ravages of war in World War II Europe. Dr. Adam’s popular books are on sale on Amazon and a portion of sales benefit veterans, see: (<https://a.co/d/aWX44tA>). The kindle edition is free. The Annual Hungarian Freedom Dinner will be held in April 2023 with authentic foods including stuffed cabbage.

The Hungarian Social Club of Ashford is a public charity since 1935 that supports local causes while promoting the culture and food of Hungary. In addition to its many activities, members

of the Hungarian Social Club organized dinner for dozens of seniors on November 22 at the Ashford Senior Center, led by HSCA President Esther Jagodzinski. During 2022, the HSCA has donated \$1,200 to veterans and other causes. “These actions are part of many services that the Club undertakes throughout the year,” said Esther.

For more photos of the dinner and information about the HSCA: go to facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/hungariansocialclubofashfordconnecticut>.

His Day

Snowflakes fall from the sky;
dusting the ground;
frosting the barren branches.
Beauty blankets the earth.

Silence is the night;
calmness everywhere.
Only stillness stirs;
Your presence is near.

I'll watch. I'll listen.
I'll open my heart
to God's wishes
on this silent night.

It's Christmas morning.
The world rejoices.
We celebrate His Birth
as daybreak appears.

May we take time
to discover, to understand
the true meaning of Christmas
on this, His day.

This day, we'll remember
the words we once knew.
They'll come into focus
as we pray to You.

Christ is with us
within our hearts.
He'll keep us safe
as we follow His path.

We might rush off to church,
Bow our head in prayer.
We know that Christ
knows that we care.

We who believe in You,
will spread Your Word,
Rejoice in the season!
Merry Christmas, my friends!

- Jeanne Esterquest



Enjoy Artists' Open Studios of Northeastern CT

December 3, 4 - 10 am to 5 pm

Submitted by Suzy Staubach

Sculptors. Woodworkers.
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Sixty-six talented artists will share
their work during the second weekend
of the annual Artists' Open Studios of
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and Sunday December 3, 4 from 10
am to 5 pm. The public is invited to
enjoy this self-guided tour through the
beautiful Quiet Corner of Connecticut.

Thirty-four of the artists will
open their individual studios. See
antique and state of the art looms. Step
into art filled painting studios. Listen
to artists talk about how they make
their work and what inspires them.
Along the way, visit the many group
shows, some in individual studios with
guest artists, others in public buildings.
Art will be offered for sale at all the
venues.

Brochures with maps and
artist descriptions are available at area
restaurants, post offices, and shops.
They are also online at aosct.org.
Online, you can read bios and artist's
statements for each participant. Specific
dates for each location are listed in
the brochure and online.

Artists' Open Studios of
Northeastern Connecticut has been
celebrating the arts and connecting
artists with the public for more than
three decades. A beloved tradition, it is
a fun way to see the artistic and scenic
richness of the farming towns and
rejuvenated mill towns that make up
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For more information: aosct.org.

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Looking Up

Composting Time

By Bob Grindle

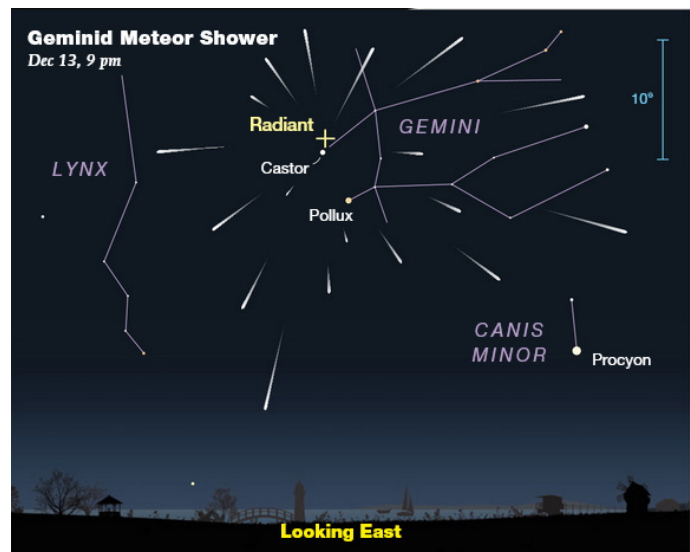
As our journey around the Sun brings us seasonally closer to our very own solar central heating system this late autumn of our Planet's four-and-a-half billionth (or so) rotation on its well-worn orbital track through the Solar system...all the while tipping ever so slightly away from the Sun allowing the warming rays of the stellar furnace to strike the Earth just obliquely enough that convective physics can start cooling the entire northern half of this speeding solar coaster that carries all of us; all of human life as a very small part of its cargo—round and round and round we go and where we stop... we have only just begun to know...or have we(?).

Seems a very long time ago that, as a young boy, I understood quite fiercely that life would clearly go on forever and there would be time aplenty in days ahead to poke about in the composted remains of youthfully wasted days looking for misplaced dreams and maybe even answers to questions that were just beginning to occur to me. Lying on my back at night, awake and drifting through the universe of youth, I was willing to bet my life that the tales and myths so artfully crafted and narrated by those who had gone before me were more than just yarns spun from bits of fantasy and wish and fear, sewed together perhaps with a thread of truth and maybe a colorful patch of good intention. It is safe to say that, back then, I believed what I was told and was not quite ready to leave the safe-room that advanced societies often provide for their well-behaved pupae.

Are we all, on some level, products of our upbringings? The Hindu epic the Bhagavad Gita (circa 5th century BCE) repackaged for today's higher speed audiences as "The Lion King" and Mufasa's Circle of Life would suggest that we are and that it is not a new idea...with ceilings too high or too low, unmarked pitfalls and rabbit holes, unfortunate encounters with self-proclaimed authorities, righteous(less) restrictions on the frenzies and energies of our youth, and often overprotected from the storms of growing up only to be fed without mercy to incomprehensibly self-inflicted storms by the adults of a species trying to sort out what is true and what is make-believe—kicking down the cobblestones, as it were, with the knowledge and the power to achieve almost any goal, but not the will. In the Cosmic instant that is the lifetime of any species on our humble planet perhaps a tear is too human a sign of weakness or a sign of failure to fight hard enough to save...not the Earth, the Earth will be just fine, but our place on it.

As our journey around the Sun ever so slowly lengthens the northern hemisphere's daytime shadows, and creates an eerily quickening sense that this cosmic ride is slowing, and a deep and ancient mood of winter solstice... *sol* (Sun) + *sistere* (to stop)...creeps out of those shadows curling up and into our very veins; into the sapient brine we carried as a species out of the oceans...oceans created from material hurled into an almost

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infinite void when stars burned the last of their fuel, convulsed and died... this journey we are on—all of us, every single living thing on Earth—often seems so clearly un-captured and in need of leadership that I find myself unwilling to bet my life any longer on the tales and myths and fables and rituals, however artfully crafted, of those who have gone before me. The Cosmos has no sense of time and no sense of humor; the allegory of "The Lion King" may be fine for lions and warthogs and meerkats but it is time for our species—or at least those who have either been born to privilege or stepped into it along the way—to set aside the hocus-pocus that someone is going to come along and save us from ourselves...that role is entirely ours. Perhaps those who spend time outside on a clear December night looking up into what seems a still and quiet sky, braced against the often stinging and core-chilling cold will feel more than just a chill from the cold, but a chilling sense of community with every other member of our species who ever stared into the dark face of the Cosmic night and pondered a question.

But clear nights in December are some of the best nights for meteor watching and this year's annual Geminid meteor shower on the night of December 13-14 should be the most productive of the year. It is also the only one you don't have to stay up super late to enjoy...if you get out shortly after dark at 6 p.m. there will be 3 or so good hours to enjoy the meteor show before the Moon rises at 9:30. If you happen to miss that performance, the night of December 14-15 should be equally good. Cold nights outside cry out for mittens and boots and handwarmers and the warming company and chatter of family and friends, perhaps a fire and the sounds of our neighbors in the night. Be well, enjoy the coming season and always keep a pair of binoculars close at hand.

To All our Contributors-
Thank You!

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

Records on the Stereo

By Judy Davis

I listened to her records on the stereo,
that sweet voice from long ago;
the music is all I know.

She sang about day's been rough;
And times when life was tough.
Crying's not so bad if we do it right –
Just let the melody fill up the night.
And Patsy Cline would sing, and I
loved the emotion she would bring.
Tough the times may change, the
songs stay the same. So, remember
her music – remember her name.

Listening through easy times, and all the
lows; taking life on the chin while on the go;
into the shifting sands of endless time –
staying on the highways, up and down
the line.

Flavored with the seasons that bless
us all; listening to the witness of another's
call. Life gave Patsy Cline the gift of
singing to the crowd, and she did it
right, and she did it proud!



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Stay True to Your Roots

By C. Dennis Pierce

How many farms are there in Connecticut? Bucking the national trend, Connecticut farming has been growing for the past two decades. Connecticut now has nearly 6,000, which may not seem like a lot, but it's a staggering 60 percent increase from the 3,754 farms that were in the state in 1982. In fact in 2021 the USDA reported a count of 5,500 farms operating on a total of 380,000 acres.



I share this data with you since it is that time of the year my column is dedicated to my annual pitch in supporting our regional community by purchasing local. By purchasing local produce, you can be eating foods that are unadulterated with pesticides like organic fruits and vegetables, or free from hormone disrupting compounds like grass-fed meats, pasture-raised eggs, and dairy, all of which contribute to a healthier diet. Also, when you are purchasing at a farmer's market and if you don't see a sign that states "certified organic", ask if they grow without pesticides. Most, if not all, local farms do not use pesticides. These farms do not seek out external certification because of the cost involved and the record keeping, but in theory their produce is often grown using organic methods.

Buying locally reaches beyond better health practices and has a positive economic impact. Shopping from local farms promotes the local economy by boosting community wealth and jobs. A recent study found on the internet stated that for every \$100 spent at a local business, \$68 remained in the community compared to only \$43 of each \$100 at a national chain retailer. Buying from local vendors means the product has less travel time from the farm to your table. All the energy that is used to transport food via planes, trains, trucks, and ships contributes to global warming and unhealthy air quality.

The local resources for buying local are not limited to the area farmer's markets. You can plan this winter to grow your own food at a communal garden or start your own patch in the back yard. The benefits are numerous as you get to learn something new and provide for your family at the same time. You can also go picking in season! There are many areas in our local area where you can pick your own apples, berries, pumpkins, tomatoes, and more. Not only do you know you are getting the freshest food possible, but it can be a fun, family activity.

So here it is December. I do not know about you, but for me it's that time of the year that I update my master calendar for the upcoming year and set a few goals that I hope to accomplish. In the upcoming year I set a goal to receive a Master Gardener certification from the UConn Extension Program. I applied and was accepted and now I am eager to begin meeting



At the Coventry Winter Farmers Market. Christine and John Whitney from Phoenix Farm in Cromwell, CT.

Dennis Pierce photo.

in January. If you are interested in this program, you might want to check it out on the Extension's website. Unfortunately, the deadline has passed for this year, but you may want to put it on your calendar for next August when applications begin.

With the holidays upon us most of us will be very busy and on the go. My recipe for this month contains kale. Kale is a late season vegetable and can still be found at local farmer's markets. It is amazing what you can find when you start researching information on kale. Kale is of the brassica family. Brassica oleracea is the Latin name or kale. Brassica, the genus name, meaning cabbage family, and oleracea, the species name, meaning without a head. It has a bitter and smokey, pungent and slightly sour taste. Kale was originally found growing in the sandy soil in the Eastern Mediterranean, though some researchers say Asia Minor was kales first home. Kale comes in several colors, sizes, and leaf styles. All can be used interchangeably in recipes. For those who prefer tender, mild tasting kale, opt for bunches with smaller sized leaves. Many variations cropped up as time went on and many individuals saved the seeds from these variants which came to be known as collards, cabbage, broccoli, rutabaga, turnip, kohlrabi, and Brussel sprouts – all grandchildren of wild kale.

Christmas in the Village

Submitted by Paul Manzone

Christmas in Coventry Village
12-4 P.M. on Dec. 4th

Welcome in the holiday season throughout the historical section of Main Street as vendors, businesses, community groups offer a variety of activities, events and specials throughout the afternoon.

The Lions Club will host its annual Festival of Trees at the Community Center.

Santa pays a visit with the children! Pony rides! Refreshments!

Giveaways! Holiday Music! Great shopping ! And so much more.

A schedule of events will be available at local businesses as the day nears.

Visit the Lions Club of Coventry Facebook Page for ongoing updates.

A fire truck "Torch Light Parade" will take place at 4:30 ending with a tree lighting at the First Congregational Church.

Chickpea And Kale Sandwich Spread

Ingredients:

- 4 medium kale leaves, ribs removed
- 1 tbs. of prepared mustard
- 2 tbs. of olive oil
- 1 to 2 tablespoons of fresh dill or 2 tsp. of dried dill
- 1 scallion, white and light green portion. You may also substitute any other onion on hand. I prefer a red onion.
- 1 to 2 tbs. of lemon juice
- ½ tsp. of curry powder
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- Fresh ground pepper to taste
- 1 can of chickpeas, drained (15 to 16 ounce can)
- Slices of cucumber
- 1/3 cup of shredded carrots.

Directions:

In a food processor, add all ingredients except the chickpeas, cucumber slices and shredded carrots. Blend ingredients in food processor until smooth. Add chickpeas to mixture in processor and slightly chop. You want a chunky mixture. Remove mixture and store in covered container in refrigerator. I like to let it sit for an hour or so before using it. You can add the mixture into a pita with the cucumber slices and shredded carrots or serve on crackers. This

would be a perfect dish to bring to a holiday gathering.

Kale is a nutrition powerhouse. It contains: Vitamin A, Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B, Vitamin B6, Vitamin B9, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Vitamin K, Carotenoids, Flavonoids, Glucosinolates, Fiber, Omega -3 Fatty Acids, Calcium, Iron, Manganese, Phosphorous and Tryptophan. Now you can see why kale was all the rage a few years ago. I know many were turned off by this fibrous plant but I have found that if using it in a salad or steaming it, remove the ribs and slice the leaves into super thin slices.

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. I hope you had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends. Take time over the upcoming holidays to count your blessings. Sometimes our lives are moving in such a rapid rate that we do not take time to observe the world around us.

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!



it's a great day for a subway!

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Individual Freedom vs. Community Safety

By Loretta Wrobel



I had started to write about the upsurge of mass shootings in America when I heard the alarming news of yet another shooting, at a Walmart in Virginia, just as Americans were preparing to celebrate Thanksgiving. I was overcome with sadness and despair for those individuals who were killed. My heart went to all their loved ones who will have an empty seat at their table this Thanksgiving. This epidemic of resorting to violence needs to be addressed. The sides are drawn--the right to own all the guns you desire as a fundamental freedom, and the right of Americans to feel safe and protected.

I had not totally recovered from the tragedy of the assault at the gay establishment, Club Q in Colorado Springs, when the breaking news of the attack in the Walmart store pounded my ears. How do we as a country absorb these appalling ongoing mass murders?

I wanted to pause and examine my own feelings. Why is it becoming more common to reach for a gun, especially an assault-style rifle, when we are upset, angry or feeling hopeless? How many times must we be shocked and horrified by a confused and desperate person grabbing lethal weapons and invading a crowded bar, shopping mall, or any place in our country? These unsettling events are escalating, and the list of the dead keeps rising. This cannot be the new normal in our lives. We cannot become so distraught by the news of another mass killing that we accept it as a sign of the times or the way the world operates now in 2022.

The outbreak of shots at a gay bar in Colorado Springs was particularly excruciating for me. My first reaction was that we are not safe. As I reel from the trauma of hearing another young man armed with an assault-style rifle, bursting into a crowded space and quickly killing innocent people because they are queer, I weep tears of sadness, despair and fear. When will it end?

I scan our world in 2022 and see violence everywhere. We use aggressive language when we speak with each other, peppered with derogatory expletives.

Every expression regarding our

beliefs, sexual orientation, or political views is subject to retaliation by threats and intimidation. On our cell phones, which are permanently affixed to our hands or back pockets, we witness mega abuse, aggression and violent scenes. We are inundated with cruelty, intimidation and bullying.

We are coming out of a few years of being isolated because of fear and threats of severe illness or death from viruses that refuse to go away. We are warned that new threats can be erupting. We are attempting to return to our normal lives; however, we have no clue as to what that is.

We carry enormous stresses and are trying to keep ahead of impossible deadlines. We relate mainly through texting. We even fight via text. Our lack of social connections hardens our hearts. We are social beings and need others to enhance our humanity and help us cope with the sharp edges of being human.

Our communities are no longer strong. I feel the isolation and aloneness as I examine my life over the past few years. So many of us are in our homes and are unaware of what is happening in our community and/or with our neighbors.

The disconnect is not acknowledged, as we relate by cell, zoom, facetime or our preferred social media. I ask, is that a healthy, affirming connection, and do we feel the energy exchange as if we were talking on a park bench or at a coffee shop?

The lack of actual eye to eye contact is damaging to our wellbeing. We are off balance and off center. For many people they can manage OK, perhaps not thriving in grand style but doing OK. There are many others who need more and are not getting the support, help, protection or guidance they need. How do we reach these souls before they seize the moment and become murderers?

How do we turn away from our screens and pay attention to people in our communities? Do we know what is happening with our neighbors? Or do we choose instead to not invade their private space. We are so preoccupied with privacy and don't want to interfere; we keep our distance. We don't want to express concern, for fear of ... Maybe a person is struggling and not knowing how to reach out and ask for help. Or doesn't believe help is available.

Can we examine how we are living with each other and accept we all need support at some time? Many in our confused, disintegrated society are wounded, fragile and not able to cope. Our safety nets are unraveling at a time when we need a strong, supportive environment as we weather rapid change, constant stress, lack of credibility from our leaders, and financial upheavals.

We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers and we are all connected. When we operate from a place of tolerance, open-mindedness, and compassion, we add a bit more sanity and health to our neighborhoods, communities, and nation. Part of the solution involves breaking out of our isolation and being invested in shifting to a peaceful and harmonious society that values working out our disagreements, sans violence and aggression. It is not just about me. It is about us. As we work out our conflicts, it allows us to grow and appreciate the beauty of our precious lives. As we learn from deepening our ties to each other, it enhances us, expands our narrow views, and opens our hearts.

If we continue to shut down to protect ourselves, we stunt ourselves and stop our evolution as human beings. Changing our behavior requires tons of courage. To truly question our addiction to violence is shattering. Whether in our language or behaviors, the resort to aggression harms us. On a personal scale, it destroys our families. On a community scale, it sets us up for possible violent encounters. On a national scale, it breeds wars and killings.

We can get this right. Obviously, we need to strengthen our gun laws, and continue to examine regulation of our lethal weapons. However, by taking responsibility for our emotions and actions, we can move toward coexistence, paving the way for true listening, even when it is difficult.

We need to initiate these discussions with our loved ones, friends, neighbors and those we disagree with. We can contribute to curbing the violence only if we are willing to make ourselves vulnerable and reach out with genuine caring and support. We can only bring peace when we become peaceful and work to eradicate violence in all of its manifestations. The effort, although daunting, is worth it. Don't you agree?

December Is Festive at the Mill Museum

Submitted by Kira Holmes

The Mill Museum has “Decked the Halls,” invited “Jolly Old St. Nicholas,” and will be ringing our “Jingle Bells” because “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year”! December is a time of snowflakes and hot mulled cider, people and presents, Santa and story times, trees and traditions. And so we invite everyone to share in the good cheer!

Dec. 2-23: Holiday Gift Wrapping. Pick out a unique treasure at the Holiday Craft Fair or our Gift Shop, or buy an item from another venue. For a donation of your choice, volunteers will wrap it at The Mill Museum Gift Shop during our regular hours of operation, Fri.-Sun., 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. at 411 Main St., Willimantic, CT. For gift wrapping at other times, visit the Lions Club at East Brook Mall.

Closes Jan. 1: Special Exhibit. “Terese Ridgeway (1936-2022): A Retrospective.” A special pop-up exhibit celebrates the rugs and tapestries of acclaimed weaver Terese Ridgeway on the Mill Museum’s 2nd Floor, 411 Main St., Willimantic, CT. Free with admission to The Mill Museum.

Opens Dec. 9.- Closes Jan. 1: “Festival of Trees” exhibit. Vote for your favorite tree decorated by area businesses and organizations. The winner of the contest will be announced on January 1st. Free with admission to The Mill Museum 411 Main St., Willimantic, CT.

Dec. 9: “Festival of Trees” Opening Reception, 6 - 7:30 p.m. Come and judge the trees decorated by area businesses and organizations while enjoying hot mulled cider and sweet treats of the season. Exhibit runs through Jan. 1. Located at The Mill Museum, 411 Main St., Willimantic, CT.

Sat. & Sun., Dec. 3-4 and 10-11: Holiday Shop, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Come to The Mill Museum’s Dugan

Hall, 157 Union St., Willimantic, CT, and shop for the holidays among crafts made by local and regional artisans. Admission is free. Facemasks are required. Subject to change due to COVID.

Sat., Dec 17: Santa and La Befana will be at The Mill Museum for pictures and conversation, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m., 411 Main St., Willimantic, CT. This event and the Festival of Trees exhibit are included with Museum admission.

Sat., Dec. 17: Drop-in Spinning Bee with Peggy Church. 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at 157 Union St. Willimantic, CT. Stop by and bring your wheel. Vaccinations required. All skill levels and visitors are welcome. Free admission. For information, directions, or just to let us know you’re coming, e-mail peggychurch2@gmail.com.

Fri., Dec. 23: Holiday Story Time at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Please email director@millmuseum.org by December 22 to receive the Zoom link on December 23. An elf will read “’Twas the Night Before Christmas” and other holiday stories.

Sat. and Sun., Dec. 24 & 25: The Mill Museum will be closed for the holiday. We wish everyone a great holiday; please come visit us next weekend for the final showing of the Festival of Trees and the Terese Ridgeway exhibit.

Fri., Jan. 6: The Mill Museum will be closed for maintenance and other projects from Jan. 6 to Feb. 9. When The Mill Museum reopens, a new exhibit titled “Here All Along” will open, and the Museum will be participating in holiday events that weekend.

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Barbara Mason

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 Barbara Mason, a Philadelphia native who wrote and sang her biggest hit while still in high school.

She was born on August 9, 1947, and started writing songs when she was about ten years old. In high school, she belonged to a vocal group. Mason’s neighbor, Bill Oxydine, sang with a doo-wop group called the Larks, who made the national charts in 1961 with “It’s Unbelievable.” In 1964, he invited Mason to perform at some of the Larks’ weekend club dates. Weldon McDougal, the group’s bass singer, was producing acts at the Virtue Studio for a local record label, Harthon. There, he recorded Mason on her own composition, “Trouble Child.” It was leased to the Crusader label and quickly faded from sight.

Jimmy Bishop, one of McDougal’s business partners, started his own label, Arctic, with national distribution by Jamie Records. He also became Barbara Mason’s manager. Her first Arctic release, “Girl Have Feelings Too,” went top forty on the *Billboard* magazine Rhythm & Blues chart in early 1965.

It was her next single that gave Barbara Mason her signature hit. The self-written “Yes, I’m Ready” got to #2 R&B and #5 pop in the summer of 1965. An early example of the sweet, lush-sounding music that would be called Philly Soul, “Yes, I’m Ready” became a hit again when redone by Teri DeSario & KC in 1979.

By 1968, Mason had moved on to National General Records, where she stayed for two years. Run by a movie production house, NGR would release an album and four singles on her; but only Mason’s cover of the B.J. Thomas hit, “Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head,” did anything on the charts.

In the early ‘70s, Mason signed with the Buddah label and toughened up her image. She went from creating innocent ballads of teen-aged yearning to adult-themed songs about sexual relations and marital infidelity. “Bed and Board” and “Shackin’ Up” are good examples. Curtis Mayfield produced Mason’s 1972 take on his song “Give Me Your Love,” which returned her to the pop top forty for the first time in seven years. And 1974’s “From His Woman to You,” an answer song to Shirley Brown’s #1 Soul hit “Woman to Woman,” gave Mason her third of four top ten hits on the Soul chart.

In 1975, she did four songs on the soundtrack of the Pam Grier film, *Sheba, Baby*. Later that year, Mason left
12 Neighbors

Buddah, after which she turned up on various small labels. She would occasionally make the Soul charts again with songs like “I Am Your Woman, She Is Your Wife” and “She’s Got the Papers (But I Got the Man).”

In the 1980s, Mason shifted her focus to running her own publishing company, but still performed on occasion. She released a new album, *Feeling Blue*, in 2007. Barbara Mason was still performing as recently as 2016, the same year she was inducted into the Soul Music Hall of Fame.



Charted singles:

- “Girls Have Feelings Too” (1965) R&B #31
- “Yes, I’m Ready” (1965) R&B #2, Pop #5
- “Sad, Sad Girl” (1965) R&B #12, Pop #27
- “If You Don’t (Love Me, Tell Me So)” (1965) Pop #85
- “Is It Me?” (1966) Pop #97
- “I Need Love” (1966) R&B #25, Pop #98
- “Oh, How It Hurts” (1968) R&B #11, Pop #59
- “(I Can Feel Your Love) Slipping Away” (1968) Pop #97
- “Raindrops Keep Fallin’ On My Head” (1970) R&B #38, Pop #112
- “Bed and Board” (1972) R&B #24, Pop #70
- “Give Me Your Love” (1972) R&B #9, Pop #31
- “Yes, I’m Ready” (New version, 1972) Pop #125
- “Children of Tomorrow” (1973) R&B #79
- “From His Woman to You” (1974) R&B #3, Pop #28
- “Shackin’ Up” (1975) R&B #9, Pop #91
- “We Got Each Other” (with the Futures, 1975) R&B #38
- “I Am Your Woman, She Is Your Wife” (1978) R&B #14
- “I’ll Never Love the Same Way Twice” (1980) R&B #53
- “She’s Got the Papers (But I Got the Man)” (1981) R&B #29
- “Another Man” (1984) R&B #68

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

Dean Farrell hosts “The Soul Express” twice a week: Fridays from 7:00-10:00 p.m. on WECS, 90.1-FM (www.wecsfm.com) and alternating Saturdays from 2:30 - 5:30 p.m. on WRTC, 89.3-FM (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.

BOO on The BOX

ShaBOO Allstars perform @ Klaus Larsen BreadBOX for Covenant Soup Kitchen

Submitted by Colin Rice

The Foster Foundation and Klaus Larsen Roofing are teaming up to help the Covenant Soup Kitchen with an Emergency Funding Concert, Sunday December 18th, 2022.

Relive or discover the great Shaboo experience of the 70's. Enjoy the Shaboo All-Stars live in concert at either the 3PM or 7PM show on Sunday December 18th.

These two live shows will be in the Klaus Larsen Presentation Theater, North Ridge Drive in North Windham, CT.

So much live music, so much fun, WHY SO FAST? Covenant Soup Kitchen funds are significantly lower than last year. More individuals and families are asking for help, numbers grow larger while supply chains issues and inflation have cut into food stocks.

Outreach is underway to foundations and corporations who always do their part. But most of the Covenant Soup Kitchen budget is funded by small individual donations. These two concerts offer the opportunity to have some fun with your donations.

The holidays are the perfect time for giving to those in need and receiving wonderful entertainment.

Tickets are just \$20 each and available at [EVENT BRITE DOT COM](http://EVENTBRITE.COM). The quaint Bread Box theater is moving to Klaus Larsen's Presentation Theater for these two live shows, Sunday December 18th, 2022.

The greater Windham community is among the most generous in our state. Helping to feed our neighbors will be fun as we gather together and put a *Klaus on the Bread Box House*.

Some Thoughts on the 2022 Midterms

By Dean Farrell

- Let's stop calling them "election deniers" and call them what they really are: election liars.

- The Republicans honestly thought the overturning of Roe v. Wade would not be an issue. And they call *Demo-crats* out of touch?

- Voters aged 18-20 overwhelmingly went for the Democrats. The GOP's reaction: "Let's raise the voting age to 21." How tone deaf can you be?

- When you crack jokes about an 82-year-old man being attacked with a hammer, people just might decide not to vote for you.

- The same people who told Colin Kaepernick and LeBron James, "Shut up and stick to sports," never told Herschel Walker the same thing. Gee, I wonder why?

- "Arizonans know BS when they see it" may just be the biggest self-own in history. Drain the Lake!

- Donald Trump is like the leftover food in a Tupperware container at the back of your fridge. You keep it around and keep it around, despite knowing you should throw it away. Eventually you remove the lid, take a whiff, and try not to throw up.

- The so-called "Red Wave" was nothing more than a ketchup stain on the wall at Mar-a-Lago.

Finally: a plea to sane, reasonable Republicans—and yes, they still exist. I'm happy to have you as my ideological opponents, but please wrest control of your party away from its lunatic fringe. Otherwise, all the gerrymandering and voter suppression on Earth won't keep you from losing further elections.

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An Owner's Perspective on Solar Panels

By Delia Berlin

Almost five years ago we installed a rooftop solar system on our house. Our experience has been extremely positive and I only wish we had done it sooner. We did not, only because of misconceptions that I hope to dispel here. What follows is a personal account of my experience, and not a technical or complete up-to-date description of home solar systems.



We were fortunate to select a very good and experienced solar firm, Sunlight Solar. Our choice was easy because the town of Windham had vetted that contractor for town projects that year. We attended a local informational presentation and we were sold. Having made that selection, all our following choices sprang from the contractor's initial visit to our site.

The first thing a solar contractor must do is to assess a site for its solar generation potential. They visit the site with meters to determine the best roof exposure, depending on orientation, slope, and shading obstacles. Since we did not have a south-facing roof slope and there were several tall trees in the vicinity (that we did not own or would not part with) we were not sure that we were viable candidates for a solar system. But we were. That was our first misconception: a clear south-facing roof slope is not necessary. The section of roof selected for our system faces east-southeast and the nearby trees are fine. Fortunately for us, the best exposure was in the back of our house, posing no aesthetic problems for its front façade.

The second thing a contractor must do is to assess the condition of the roof. Roof beams must be deemed strong enough to support the weight of the panels. Roof shingles must have several years left of life. Rooftop panels are attached with brackets that preserve the integrity of the roof, but if they will need to be removed to replace the roof soon, it will make more sense to replace the roof first. Could solar panels harm a roof? When properly installed, solar panels actually extend the life of a roof by reducing its exposure. Solar panels also reduce roof heating by as much as 38%, making a roof an average of five degrees cooler during summer months.

Of course, one should be skeptical of a solar firm's determination of a home's adequacy for a solar system. A firm that needs to sell solar systems is not a neutral player. But our contractor also guaranteed that our system would produce at least 95% of our prior annual energy consumption. If the panels failed to attain that benchmark, Sunlight Solar would pay for all the shortfall of energy.

Because of this guarantee, the third thing our contractor did was analyze our electric bills to determine the size of the system we needed. Systems are built to that size and not any bigger for a reason. The utility company will buy any energy produced in excess of consumption, but only for a small fraction of the price that they charge to sell it. A system that is



too big does not do the owner any good—it is like building a solar generator to sell cheap energy to Eversource.

This point relates to another misconception. If a house has solar, it produces its own power. Why does it still need to be connected to the grid? The most obvious explanation is that houses need a constant supply of energy and the sun is anything but constant. There are nights, clouds, snow, and ice that may block the panels. These varied conditions require the installation of a two-way meter, for owners to send their generated power to the utility company, while receiving a constant power supply at the same time. During a sunny summer day, a system may produce several times the amount of energy consumed. That supply gets banked as credits in the owner's electric bill. During short, dark, winter days, those credits are used to make up for a deficit in production.

A cursory internet search indicates that the average monthly electric bill in Connecticut is approximately \$250. But an average home with a properly sized solar system will pay just around \$9 per month, the minimum charge to remain on the grid. Of course, it is important to understand that if you increase your electric consumption after a solar installation, your bills will be larger because solar systems are sized based on historical data. For example, if we now decide to buy an electric car and charge it at home, our solar energy generation

would fall short of our updated needs and we would have to expect additional billing.

I can only offer ballpark estimates of costs. All homes are unique and the price of solar energy, tax credits, and incentives are all moving targets. Some homes may require electric upgrades or repairs before a solar installation can be done. In addition, there are several ways to fund solar systems. These include purchases, loans, and leases.

Nothing beats purchasing a system outright, if you can afford it. The average cost of a system is \$13,400 minus tax credits, which can be significant, depending on the year. In our case, tax credits covered almost one-third of the cost of our system. Over its life of approximately 25 years, a solar system will generate two to three times its initial cost in energy. Depending on energy costs, it would take six to ten years for the investment to pay for itself. The returns are immediate, as the owner's electric bill practically vanishes. Clearly, if you have money in the bank, it will work harder for you on your roof. Interest cannot match the energy cost savings.

I don't know much about loans or leases, but for those who can't upfront the cost, they are worth considering. Loans advance you the cost of the system, which you pay with the system's energy production. The biggest energy savings don't start until the system is paid off, but I understand there is an immediate reduction. I heard that leases may be more problematic if you plan to sell your home. Apparently, some home buyers may be reluctant to assume that type of lease.

In general, solar panels have become desirable and may add up to 4% or \$14,000 to the sale price of a home. Given a good installation, I cannot see a downside. A personal recommendation I have for any local customers is a squirrel guard. This is

a tiny fence closing the gap between the panels and the roof. It protects the electrical wiring on the underside of the panels and it is well worth the expense. Ours cost \$800, but our decision was highly encouraged by direct knowledge of people whose panels had been disabled by squirrels. Although their system could be fixed, that was more expensive and inconvenient than the preventive solution that they hadn't been offered.

Another misconception that some may have is that solar can be a source of power during an outage. Sadly, that is not the case. To add insult to injury, during outages solar system owners also lose any potential of generating power. When the grid is down, the two-way meter stops until the power returns.

To monitor a system's performance, solar system owners can log in to a website to check the status of their panels at any time. The website gives access to historical production data and has many options for generating energy data reports. If one or more panels are down for any reason (i.e., squirrel damage) you would be able to detect it and troubleshoot.

What may be next for us? As a bonus, our solar contractor prepared our electric service for generator use and installed a generator hookup in our carport. However, after five years, we still did not get a generator. The reason for this delay is the evolution of electric battery storage. These batteries could store some of the excess power that we now send to Eversource, to be used in the event of an outage.

We would much rather have battery storage than a noisy, dirty generator. But batteries are still very expensive and require other considerations. It would take another article to explain just the little that I have learned so far. But since that picture is improving by the day, I will pause before tackling that subject.

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Digital Deals:

The 4 Best Coupon & Comparison Shopping Apps

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



Everyone loves a good deal, from a sale at the grocery store to a clearance event at a favorite clothing store. That's because people who are savvy shoppers know that saving a few dollars here and there can really add up. But people who are also savvy with their finances know how much those savings can do for their future when harnessed as part of a strategic financial plan. More on that later.

But first, here are four of the best coupon and comparison shopping apps to save you time and money that could better be spent elsewhere.

1. Rakuten (formerly eBates)

Rakuten has continued to lead the space regarding digital money-saving hacks. This app is so easy to use because it saves you money on things you're already buying. The app is full of coupons, but best of all, you earn cash back on all your purchases by depositing money into your PayPal account or receiving a check in the mail. Some of their top retailers include Target, Walmart, Sephora, and Macy's, and they offer discounts from many smaller retailers as well. Also, they often run promo events where you can earn up to 10% cash back on select purchases. You can use Rakuten on your mobile device or browser with its Google Chrome extension.

2. Honey

Gone are the days of visiting multiple coupon code websites only to discover that none of them are valid anymore. **Honey** does the legwork for you by automatically checking different promo codes when you're about to check out. The app pulls its codes from all over the internet and will automatically apply the ones that work. Honey is best used when shopping online through its browser extension.

3. Drop

Drop is a super handy phone app that will earn you cash back on items you're already buying. All you have to do is link your credit or debit card, and Drop gives you reward points by shopping at top retailers like Walmart, Amazon, Lyft, Uber, and Trader Joe's. Once you have a certain number of points, you can redeem them for gift cards at places like Amazon, Starbucks, and Walmart, which are as good as cash. If you don't want to link your payment card, you can also shop within the app and earn points.

Another Drop benefit is that it can work simultaneously with other coupon apps like Rakuten or Honey and works with your existing credit card rewards. So, realistically, you

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could save on the item's price in the first place (win), then you could earn points on Drop to accumulate in your account (win), and then you could receive 5% cash back through your credit card (win). It's a win-win-win!

4. SnipSnap

If you're a lifetime couponer, you know how rewarding it is to save money by presenting a stack of coupons at checkout. Luckily, **SnipSnap** makes it easy to bring that couponing experience to the digital age. Using the phone app, you can scan a product while in the store, and SnipSnap will pull up all available coupons and even tell you if it's better to buy the product online or in the store. SnipSnap will also let you scan in any physical coupons you have lying around and keep them organized in the app for you. SnipSnap is perfect for people who do more shopping in person and want to present their coupons at checkout.

Here's Where the Real Magic Happens

Couponing and finding the best deals doesn't have to feel like a full-time job with all the technology at your fingertips. Keep these apps in mind the next time you shop. But think beyond that, too.

Let's say you save just \$20 per week through thrifty shopping. If you invest that \$20 as part of a long-term financial strategy, you'll have accumulated more than \$18,600 after 10 years (according to the S&P 500® average annual compounded rate of return from January 1, 1970 to December 31st 2021 of approximately 11.3%).

This is just one example of why strategic financial planning is so important. Just like planning ahead for a purchase can help you buy what you want for less, having a financial plan in place will help you identify, prioritize, and achieve the most important goals you have for you and your family.

Ready to create your strategic financial plan? Get in touch with us at Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors, and we'll show you how our Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well™ strategic process can work for you. Learn more at our website, www.whzwealth.com, or contact us at (860) 928-2341 or info@whzwealth.com to get started.

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Christmas Moments

Twinkling lights set the street aglow
the crowd gathers in good spirit
and wait in anticipation
as night slowly appears.

Children, bundled in layers.
There's a chill in the air.
They can't hold still much longer
as the time draws near.

The sound of hoof beats
echoes in the air
Santa's sleigh, has now appeared.
He waves to all. We respond with
cheers.

Both young and old take delight.
The season of joy, fills our hearts.
As Santa flips the switch,
our tree blossoms with light.

As the lights appear,
we ooh, we aah,
setting forth the magic
of what our hearts feels.

We sing, maybe a little off key
the songs of Christmas.
We remember the past
and we look to the future.

We linger awhile
to embrace the moments
with those we hold most dear.
Our carols float through the air.

We'll soon be on our way
for Santa is already on his sleigh.
We give hugs and kisses
and wishes of good cheer.

Once home, we get into our Pj's
to read a Christmas classic.
We all know the words
they're in our hearts.

It embraces our youth
a tradition we've all shared
from Grandma and Grandpa
it shows that we care.

The kids are now sleeping.
We try not to laugh
as we ate Santa's cookies.
Were we naughty or nice?

We pull out the gifts
we have hidden so well.
I hope we won't miss one
only time will tell.

The presents are wrapped.
Toys and games are all in place,
for all to discover
the gifts that await.

We slip into bed.
Exhausted—it's true.
We drift off to sleep,
knowing that Santa would be pleased.

The morning arrives
the wee ones awake.
At the site of their tree.
Their eyes twinkle with glee.

They smile, they giggle
they are so grateful and pleased.
We hug and we prayed
for the gifts of this day.

May the joy of today
bring memories to cherish
each and every day.
Merry Christmas everyone!

-Jeanne Esterquest



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Ode to My Rocker

(Set in Windham Center, CT, Circa 2013)

By David Corsini

I see you trying to hide over there in the loft under an old blanket right next to your buddy who is also hiding. I am sorry to inform you that the time has come for another transition. Seeing you there brings back warm memories of our time together. But, truth be told, I have not had room for you in my life for many years and I should have released you long ago. I was too fond of you to let you go and the barn has provided sanctuary. You are not the only one to suffer the consequences of this holding-on-too-long characteristic of mine. Perhaps there is an aphorism that describes the situation. "Nature abhors a vacuum" does not quite fit. How about: "Stuff accumulates as space allows"?

Let me have a look at you. Oh my! The mice and squirrels have taken a few chunks out of you during your tenure here and there is no longer a seat cushion. Perhaps I should have kept you with my collections in the basement. But then again there are mice there too and I believe the happenings in the barn over the years were a lot more interesting than the cellar events.

I'm here to inform you of an imminent change in your circumstances. I too, with a sense of loss, am making a transition. I have hung on to the barn, yard, pond, and house as long as possible. I have come to agree with my wife, Delia, that with the change in our life circumstances and age, it does not make sense to remain living here. So, while I can imagine that a transition might make you a bit anxious, have a little sympathy for me. With just a quick look around in here you can get a sense of what I have to deal with. And what is under this barn roof that you can see is only the tip of the iceberg. I am sure you would be impressed by the accumulations outside the barn and in the woodshed and cellar.

At this point I know where I am going and I know that you and a multitude of other possessions are not coming along. I'm not sure what will happen to you. But before I become overwhelmed by the tasks I am facing with the move, let me reminisce a bit with you.

It has been 48 years since you came into my possession. I first spotted you when I was climbing the stairs in a barn in Maine where a yard sale was taking place. You were covered with what I took to be chicken poop. Maybe it was only barn swallow droppings. In any case, you already had a history of 18 Neighbors



living in a barn. I don't know if you could call it love at first sight, but the attraction was immediate. I remember it was the summer of 1968, when I was visiting relatives in New England. My home then was in Athens, Georgia, the place of my first teaching job, at the University of Georgia. As I had just begun teaching and was married with two young children, I did not have much money. I believe I only paid \$10 for you. You came back to Georgia in our newly purchased Dodge van.

One early memory of you is of sitting and rocking in the first house I rented in Georgia. It was not an elegant house, but there was good wildlife around. I remember I had a flying squirrel in my pocket. I don't remember how I came by the squirrel or what happened to it, but I believe it liked to rock. That memory elicits memories of other animals on that property, such as spotted skunk, possum, and many nesting birds.

You are a big, high-backed rocker that was unfinished when I found you. You came with an old seat cushion stuffed with horsehair but no longer usable. Early on, I spray-painted you black. In retrospect, that was probably a mistake. If I had known the craftsman Johnnie Walker at the time, you would have become a gem under his creative hands. In addition, I never invested in a proper seat cushion. Because of your size, a proper cushion would have required an upholsterer. Instead I made do with cheap commercial seat pads. So, while you were quite handsome to look at and rocked like a charm, I did not give you the care you deserved.

When I got a position at the University of Connecticut in 1971, you, along with three dogs and a goat, accompanied me to Connecticut in the Dodge van. I first lived in a large house in Hampton, where you fit right in the living room. During my divorce, you were on my side of the ledger—uncontested. I then got remarried and moved into a house in Bolton, where you hung out in my basement office, getting little use. When Delia and I moved to Windham Center, I could not find a place for you in the house. That is why you ended up in the barn.

Although you have not been of service for the 18 years we've lived here, there has been plenty of activity in the barn to keep you entertained. Did you know that you reside in a reconstructed tobacco barn? The opening between the top of the walls and the roof is to provide airflow for drying tobacco. These spaces also allow for bats and other animals to enter the barn even when the doors are closed.

I hope the twitter of the bats that roosted in the rafters of the barn during the summer was not a bother. I watched for the droppings on the barn floor each spring that announced their arrival. Do you remember the time when for several weeks there was a young possum sleeping the day away in an aquarium just over there in the corner? And do you remember

A rocker similar to the author's. Cont. photo.

the raccoons? What a mess they made. One raccoon caused so much trouble in the barn that I finally had to live-trap it. There was blood that indicated the raccoon injured itself trying to escape, and the trap needed repair. I was somewhat amazed that the raccoon and possum could climb up the outside walls to get into the barn. But they did with regularity.

There were many years when a group of red squirrels nested in a tool crib on the first level. I let them be for a while but then disturbed their nest, hoping they would leave. I think they just moved over to the woodshed. And do you remember those jungle fowl that roosted on that rope that was strung across the loft? Weren't they a handsome couple? I looked forward each morning to opening the barn, spreading some cracked corn on the floor, and watching them fly down to eat before going out to the yard.

The male had lost an eye in a fight before we bought him and that is why we called him "One-eyed Jack." We called his wife "Chicken Tikka." I was very sad when One-eyed got taken by a fox. It was distressing to watch Tikka alone in the bushes. When we decided to return her to the farm from which she had come, you probably remember the difficulty I had catching her in the net. Those are just some of the stories I'm sure you can recall. So, now I have to decide what to do with you. You have a lot of rocking left in you, and I hope whoever takes possession puts you to better use than I recently have.

I wish you could share with me some of your experiences—babies you have soothed with rocking, young children being happy when first learning how to rock, and the elderly being comforted by your rock. I am sure you have many tales, and more are in store. I am going to release you to a new life. Thanks for the memories. Write when you have the chance.

P.S. I put the rocker up near the road at the end of my driveway at 6:30 a.m. I couldn't wait to see what happened. When I went out to the store at 11:00, it was gone. I hope it went to a good home.

Windham Theater Guild Presents

'A Christmas Carol'

Read by 'Charles Dickens'

Friday, December 16th at 7:30pm

Submitted by Robin Rice

In 1853, Charles Dickens began public readings of his most popular work, *A Christmas Carol*. When he ended his performances in 1870, he had read it 127 times. From December 1867 to April 1868, he performed over 400 readings on an American tour in Boston, New York, Washington DC and other east coast cities, including Hartford. *A Christmas Carol* was his most performed reading on tour.

On December 16th, Mr. Dickens, portrayed by Ken Noll, will come alive again reading *A Christmas Carol*. It is the same shortened version of the story that Dickens performed. He removed sections for public readings so they would be about 90 minutes including a 10-minute intermission. Dickens was also a professional actor, so, like his readings, this reading will be animated and captivating and will include over 20 different voices.

Ken Noll is a Professor Emeritus of Microbiology at the University of Connecticut and has been performing in community theater for over 20 years. In addition to Mr. Dickens, he also portrays Charles Darwin in various locations and on-line.

A Christmas Carol will be performed on Friday, December 16th at 7:30pm at the Burton Leavitt Theatre, 779 Main Street, Willimantic.

Tai Chi Home

By Joe Pandolfo

In Deep

In late afternoon as the light disappears, the wind is dying down, but you can still hear a soft rattle of oak leaves. In the boughs where the birds shelter there's a brief flurry of wings; then there's just the deepening stillness. This is when winter comes, this time of day slipping into night.

An approaching winter night can feel like something deeply unknown, a fear you feel in the shoulders and pull away from. But as with any fear, the thing to do is meet it. Stand with it, releasing your shoulders and feeling the ground.



At the Ashford Senior Center

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

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

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 or 860-742-9498

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.

From the Front Lines of COP 27:

Listening to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color of the World!



The author, 2nd from left, with UConn students Maggie Singman (at left) and Lilly Adamo.

Contributed photo.

By Phoebe Godfrey

I came to COP 27 to say that we can not put a price on nature, and that we are, my people, we are nature trying to defend itself. With the acceleration of false solutions, we are starting to experience mass extinctions in slow motion... We are shooting our own foot... I'm here to say that nature can not be financialized, commodified, commercialized because these predatory industries are causing destruction and are using the programs [those claiming to reduce carbon] to give themselves license to continue destroying nature.

—Chief Ninawa of the Huni Kui people
in the Brazilian Amazon

In November, along with fourteen UConn students and a number of other faculty, I had the privilege to spend a week in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, attending the second week of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, or Conference of the Parties (COP), of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). This was my first experience of a COP, but as the number indicates, it was the world's twenty-seventh and certainly won't be the last, given how little has been and is being accomplished. In fact, after my week of listening to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOCs) from around the world, in particular from the Global South, I can assert with heartbreaking confidence that the global capitalist system and its maniacal robber barons have no intention of cutting into their bottom line, despite all the fanfare claiming otherwise.

As I maneuvered my way around the COP, a circus of frantic human activity, I celebrated the unique opportunity

20 Neighbors

to hear from those whose voices and stories have historically been silenced through violence and genocide. At the same time, I recognized that for most of the people there from our culture, even as they are no doubt highly concerned about the climate crisis, their solutions still reside in the existing system. These “solutions” that the Indigenous chief and many others refer to as “false solutions” are ones that focus on innovative technologies, such as so-called “green energy” or “carbon markets,” both of which continue to “put a price on nature,” as opposed to confronting capitalism's mandate to grow and increase profit exponentially regardless of the social and environmental consequences.

As such, except for the daily gathering of small groups of activists within the main courtyard and other small panels inside, for example, the Climate Justice Pavilion and the Indigenous Peoples' Pavilion, the words *capitalism*, *colonialism*, *racism*, and *militarism*, let alone *fossil fuels*, were, as far as I could tell, not being used. This created for me, and no doubt for others, including some of our students, a sense of unreality and delusion, which of course exactly defines it. In fact, when I first entered into the secured area, I came upon two ceremonial trees whose bases were encased in plexiglass boxes engraved “COP 2022 Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.” Having no doubt been put there before the event started on November 6, these two trees were now, due to lack of attention, both *dead!*

This summed up for me not only the COP, but also our culture, in that the trees were not seen as “beings” in their own right, but had instead been “financialized, commodified, commercialized” to give a green nature-based impression. However, once the event started, the frantic focus was placed on us, not on nature, and thus the trees were forgotten and left to die in the hot and dry desert climate. And yet, ironically or

not, our culture's creation of climate change has everything to do with our relationship with nature, hence our refusal to recognize, as the Indigenous chief does, that we too are nature. This connection has of course been at the root of our culture's construction of racism, as in our belief that BIPOCs are closer to nature and therefore are inferior to whites, who represent "civilization." Yet until our culture is willing to address this disconnection and in so doing change our culture and thus our economy to one that is in an equitable relationship with nature, as well as with other humans and other beings, climate change and its devastating impacts, particularly on those in the Global South, will continue.

Unsurprisingly, as a result you may have heard that at COP 27 nations did not reach an agreement to keep warming under 1.5 degrees Celsius, which was determined in the Paris Agreement of 2015 as essential to minimize the most significant harm from climate change. To do so would require a 45% reduction of emissions in the next six years, whereas the current national commitments will reduce global emissions by only 1%, thus prompting predictions that the Earth's temperature will increase by 6 degrees Celsius, leading to unlivable conditions, particularly again for those in the Global South and those in the Global North who lack social and economic privileges. These numbers may seem hard to grasp and their real-life implications may seem somewhat removed from those of us who live privileged lives, but hearing testimonies from BIPOCs around the world made it all too apparent that climate catastrophe is happening now and will continue to happen.

It is hard not to grab onto the glittering promises of technology as our salvation, as they seem to be the only lifeboat available. And yet, as the economic anthropologist Jason Hickel argues in his 2020 book *Less Is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World*, even "once we have 100% clean energy, what are we going to do with it? Unless we change how our economy works, we'll keep doing exactly what we are doing with fossil fuels: we'll use it to power continued extraction and production, at an ever-increasing rate, placing ever-increasing pressure on the living world, because that's what capitalism requires" (p. 21). Moreover, as I all too bluntly learned again from listening to BIPOCs particularly from the Global South, to create 100% clean energy requires the intensive extraction of minerals mostly from their lands and homes, and so again, these are false solutions, as they merely continue business as usual, business that is ever booming with increasing profits.

In fact, a study by Aviel Verbruggen of the University of Antwerp found that every year since around 1970, the oil and gas industry has made \$2.8 billion in "pure profit" (<https://www.greenmatters.com/news/oil-company-profits>). Additionally, a new study by Oxfam found that "[t]he investments of just 125 billionaires emit 393 million tonnes of CO_{2e} each year—the equivalent of France—at an individual annual average that is a million times higher than someone in the bottom 90 percent of humanity" (<https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/billionaire-emits-million-times-more-greenhouse-gases-average-person>). These carbon billionaires "have a collective \$2.4 trillion stake in 183 companies." Such inequality is mind-blowing and may make us think that we who are not billionaires

are innocent, but our own nation is responsible for 40% of global emissions (which of course is not distributed evenly when we allow for social class differences), and collectively the Global North is responsible for 92% of the damage caused by climate breakdown. Thus, the prevailing theme at this COP was the need to reimburse the "loss and damage" incurred on the Global South by wealthier countries, and that was written into the agreements, but they are of course not legally binding. Furthermore, the causes of this loss and damage will not stop, so even if payments are made, the symptoms will continue exponentially.

Given these realities as we approach the end of another year of climate-related records in terms of heat, fire, flood, and drought, as well as ever-increasing extraction, logging, and mining of the Earth's resources, let us be courageous and listen to our hearts. In so doing, let us face the fact that our culture and its social, political, and economic systems—which are all inseparable from neo-colonial racist capitalism—cannot, and will not, give us the *real* solutions we not only supposedly seek, but need. We are, as the Indigenous chief stated, shooting ourselves in the foot, albeit unequally, and will continue to do so until we in the Global North recognize that we too are nature and that without a living Earth we cannot survive.

And so, I end as Hickel does in his book, with a story the Buddha apparently told as a warning, just as the dead trees at the COP were a warning: "A couple were travelling across the desert with their only child. Their food supply ran low, and they grew hungry. But driven by an insatiable ambition for their destination, they refused to change course. As if in a trance, they decided to kill and eat their child to sustain them. When they arrived at last on the other side, when the destination lost its allure and the trance lost its grip, they were utterly hollowed with grief and regret" (p. 291).

Of course, the Earth is not our child, we are hers, and yet we in our culture are in a trance, ever focused on the destination of profit, of progress, of power and glory, not stopping to question our wake of destruction to ourselves, our children, to others, and ultimately to all life. Therefore, my wish for now and into the next year(s) is that more of us wake up, as so many of our young people are doing, including those who came to the COP with me, and recognize that unlimited economic growth so that a few billionaires can continue to plunder and pillage their futures is not a system that can ever be sustainable, let alone "just." And the key to more of us who are white and/or privileged and/or living in the Global North waking up is to stop and listen with our hearts to the BIPOCs of the world. For despite what we may think, they are speaking loud and clear, demanding not only restitution for "loss and damage," but, even more challengingly, debt cancellation for their nations, reparations for hundreds of years of exploitation and theft, systemic change as opposed to climate change, and demilitarization and degrowth in opposition to business as usual.

In short, as I chanted with so many different BIPOC groups at COP 27, and may you also join us in chanting: "What do we want? Climate justice! When do we want it? Now!" Anything less is a false solution.

The Rise and Diminishment of Oak Forests in CT

By Emery Gluck

Oaks have been in Connecticut for thousands of years. It is hard to overstate their importance to the forest ecosystem. Their acorns provide a highly nutritious source of plant-based protein for over 80 animals. They host the greatest number of species of caterpillars (462 in Connecticut) which provide the most important source of protein for birds to feed their nestlings. One study found that it took 6000 to 9000 caterpillars to raise a brood. The abundant caterpillar resource is a major contributor to why oak forests have a greater abundance and diversity of birds when compared to maple forests. Unfortunately, red maple has surpassed red oak as the most abundant tree in Connecticut. This is part of a downward trend that oaks have been experiencing in most of the eastern U.S. for at least a half century. Younger oaks are usually scarce as oaks are not sustaining themselves under current natural conditions except on very sandy or shallow soils.

One key factor in their inability to sustain new generations is that the forest has grown shadier, mainly due to the large influx of birch, beech, maple and shrubs in the absence



Oak overstory with typical dense black birch and ironwood understory. Photo by author.

of fire. Though their seedlings can survive in the shade for a while, oak seedlings will stagnate or die if they do not eventually get a fair amount of sunlight. Even with global warming being beneficial to oaks, the shadiness of the forest and other impediments will likely still stymie young oaks from growing into the overstory.

Oaks have historically seeded in after fires, and after fields were abandoned, or both. Most of Connecticut was once cleared for farmland. As the fertile farmland of the Midwest became available, most of Connecticut's rocky farmland was abandoned in the last half of the 19th century and first part of the 20th century. Fires were also prevalent in days gone by. An average of over 30,000 acres reportedly burned in Connecticut annually from 1905 to 1925. For a point of reference, the size of the average Connecticut town is around 21,000 acres. The fires often killed or severely damaged thinned-bark birch, beech and maple and sometimes even the thick-barked oaks.

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Thick bark provides some protection from the lethal heat to the tree's cambium, the living layer of cells under the bark. Recently, only a few hundred acres usually burn annually and the fires are generally much less intense than those a century ago as the shadier forest does not dry out as fast and is transitioning to less flammable vegetation.

Historically, clearcuts have increased the proportion of American chestnut and oaks as both are prolific sprouters after being cut or top-killed by a fire. Since the chestnuts outgrew and overtopped the oaks, the chestnut blight was boon for the latter. A large portion of the state was repeatedly clearcut for firewood and charcoal, especially from the late 19th to early 20th century. These products were in high demand as they, in addition to water power for mills, were a major sources of energy at that time.

It was often more efficient to produce charcoal in the woods, as it was lighter than firewood to transport. The slow burning of wood in piles covered with dirt without much oxygen drove out the moisture, leaving a pure form of carbon.



CT Colliers on charcoal mound circa 1905. Photo courtesy of Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

Charcoal was used by the iron furnaces in northwest Connecticut, and by gun manufacturers, as wood fires were not hot enough to smelt iron. It is estimated that over 20 square miles of forests were clearcut annually to provide charcoal for the iron furnaces at their peak production. Some forests would be clearcut again every 20 to 40 years once the trees reached a 4" to 6" diameter. The extensive amount of logging slash likely increased the size and intensity of wildfires. The high frequency and severity of wildfires was a disincentive for forest landowners to allow their forest to grow for a longer time as it increased the risk of their assets going up in smoke. Widespread overcutting and excessive fires led to the beginning of Connecticut's State Forests in 1903, as the Legislature authorized the State Forester to purchase land for up to \$4/acre under "An Act to Reforest Barren Lands". Some cutover land was purchased for \$.50/acre.

Many of today's forests were born from the widespread farm abandonment, clearcutting, and fires that occurred 100 to 140 years ago. This gave rise to a relatively uniform forest landscape, as most of the overstory trees are roughly the same age and relatively evenly spaced out. It wiped out the patchwork and mosaic of different-aged forests that arose after

thousands of years of natural disturbances on multiple scales. These included blowdowns from severe storms, mortality from droughts and infestations, flooding by beavers, and Native American fires. It is worthwhile to note that some ecologists consider Indigenous land management techniques, such as their burning, as part of the natural disturbance regime.

Today's oak forests face many aggregating challenges that deter new generations and are causing the deterioration of the old guard. Deer preferentially browse on oak seedlings, allowing other species to grow taller and cast more deadly shade on the oaks. This wasn't a problem a century ago when today's forests were getting started, as deer were then very uncommon. In some places, ferns have formed a dense carpet keeping out or inhibiting oak seedlings. Exotic invasive plants exacerbate the problem of the killing shade that dense shade-tolerant native plants cast on oak seedlings. Successive Spongy moth (previously known as the Gypsy moth) defoliations, drought, and the two-line chestnut borer have killed many oaks. Selective harvests often select mostly the valuable overstory oaks for removal, accelerating the transition to less ecologically valuable and shade-tolerant birch, beech and maple forests.

For oak forests to be sustainable, new trees must at least occasionally be recruited to the overstory as replacements for the fallen ones. This is not happening, as historic events that gave oaks the breath of life are rarely occurring today. The crucial disturbance that is now effectively absent is fire. This has opened the floodgates for fire-sensitive shade-tolerant trees and shrubs to seed in, making the forest much more dense than it has historically been.



Oak seedling after small trees cut.

Photo by author.

The thoughtful cutting of small trees can serve as a partial proxy for fire. This will allow extra light to existing oaks seedlings and may promote oak germination. When oak seedlings are an adequate size and number, some to most mid-story and overstory trees generally also need to be harvested to allow a new generation of oaks to start their journey to the upper canopy. Cutting a substantial amount of medium and large trees can usually provide some revenue. It is usually best if a forester plans a treatment to meet the landowner's objective and works in conjunction with a logger. Additional cutting of small trees is usually needed after a commercial harvest to free up young oaks from faster growing hardwoods that will likely overtop them. This may need to be repeated until the oaks are likely to outgrow their competitors in height or when they



Thriving oak saplings after a group of overstory black birch was cut.
Photo by author.

are "big enough to make it on their own". Unless done by the landowner, cutting small trees can be a substantial expense, but necessary to sustain oaks. Federal cost-sharing funds might be available to do such work.

Connecticut Audubon's publication "Managing Forests for Trees and Birds in Connecticut" views the logging slash as beneficial to many insects, birds, and other animals. To improve habitat quality, the publication encourages "leaving it messy" by leaving at least 2 cords and up to 12 cords per acre of down wood at least 5" in diameter clustered together. Leaving enough tall logging slash can provide oak seedlings shelter from deer browse.

Even though seemingly counterintuitive, forest management can promote old growth characteristics into the tree cutting process. These characteristics include canopy gaps; multi-layered forests; large live, large dead standing and fallen trees that are left. Significant development of these characteristics have historically accumulated from natural disturbances over time when the trees are about a century older than today's forest.

Among the methods suggested in the publication "Restoring Old Growth Characteristics to New England's and New York's Forests" is cutting the main competitors of healthy overstory trees to accelerate their diameter growth. This reduces the time for them to reach old-growth-like sizes. Some or all of these trees can be retained in perpetuity as legacy trees. Cutting and leaving sizable trees would increase the large down wood trait. This would create small gaps and eventually multiple canopy layers. Creating sizable gaps (at least an acre) in the canopy potentially allows tree species that require substantial sun for their development (oaks, cherry, ash, poplar, white birch) to be part of the mix of the future forest. The subsequent cutting of small trees overtopping young oaks would still likely be needed. Reserves or skips where no tree cutting occurs on part of the forest is also an important trait when managing for old growth characteristics.

It is not easy to be a young oak. Most die before they make it too far. With so much ecological value at stake, the current trend of slowly losing our oaks makes thoughtful action essential.

The Frontlines of Our Local History

By Bill Powers

This past year has provided important new perspectives for me about the role of local historical societies and town historians who are preserving our local history for posterity. The path to discovering more about Hampton, Connecticut's fascinating history provided the most recent example of this. Almost a quarter of a century ago, The Hampton Antiquarian and Historical Society wrote a grant and received funding from the Connecticut Humanities Council for a project to research and to write a manuscript about Hampton's history. The mission of the Council was "to provide continuing opportunities for the people of Connecticut to rediscover the joy of lifelong learning, to see ourselves in the full context of our history and heritage, and to explore the infinite varieties of human thought and experience contained in our literature and our art that give coherence and direction to our lives."

The project resulted in a captivating book titled "Discovering Hampton: A Connecticut Town". It was researched and written by a Hampton resident, Janice Law Trecker. The project was originally the idea of the late Leila Ostby who was a President of The Hampton Antiquarian and Historical Society. The manuscript that resulted was actually a creation of many people in town, who wrote the grant, served on an editorial board, contributed artwork, copy-edited, contributed photographs and maps, were interviewed for the project, and those sponsors who supported the project. Clearly, it was a community affair in both effort and spirit.

Recently, it is my good fortune to have been able to speak with Janice Law Trecker, the author of "Discovering Hampton", not only about her book but also about how the community-wide process that included so many of her neighbors in Hampton. She told me: "The book was designed to fit in with other sources of information like "Hampton Remembers" (by Alison Davis) but with more history. It was needed to provide a comprehensive perspective of Hampton's history but neither as big or as detailed as "All Our Yesterdays: A Century of Family Life in an American Small Town" (by James Oliver Roberson and Janet C. Robertson).

Janice Law Trecker describes herself as a "self-taught historian who was a philosophy major at Syracuse University with enough English courses to teach middle school when I graduated. Later, I got my MA and doctorate from UConn in English. I taught a variety of courses over 20 years at UConn, both literature courses and a publishing course. Oddly enough,

my scholarly work was almost all in history. I wrote "Preachers, Rebels and Traders" for the Series in Connecticut History." This is a five-volume series published by the Center for Connecticut Studies of the Eastern Connecticut State University and the Pequot Press in 1975.

Janice Law Tracker has also written scholarly articles mostly on women's history and the treatment of women in U.S. history texts – the later was reprinted by UNESCO. She also wrote a school text on the British women's suffrage movement: "Women on the Move". Otherwise, her writing has been chiefly mystery fiction under her own name, Janice Law.

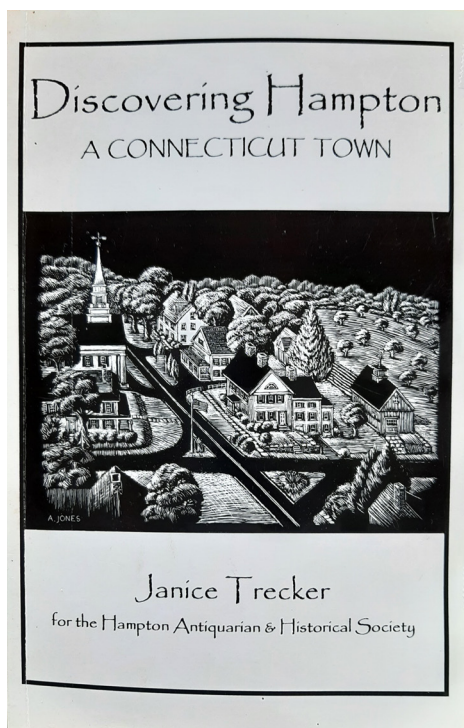
"Discovering Hampton" received the Betty M. Linsley

Award from the Connecticut Historical Society. The people of the small town of Hampton, Connecticut put together a project to assure that those who followed would have a well-written and comprehensive history of the place in which they live. Together, they developed a successful process to make that happen. They, fortunately had the right person living in their town, the talented writer and researcher - Janice Law Trecker, who was up to the task. All of those who contributed to the project a quarter century ago, should be proud of their contribution to history. They are a worthy example who form the frontlines of those who stepped forward in a great effort to preserve and enhance our understanding of our local history.

Many thanks to the staff of the Fletcher Memorial Library in Hampton and members of the Hampton Antiquarian and Historical Society who assisted me with finding the resources for this story.

"Discovering Hampton" is available for purchase at the Fletcher Memorial Library.

Bill Powers is a retired Windham Public Schools Teacher who volunteers at the Windham Textile & History Museum in Willimantic. He also writes a weekly local history column for the Willimantic Chronicle titled "The Threads That Connect Us."



Willington Craft & Bake Sale

The Friends of the Willington Public Library are holding their annual craft and bake sale on Saturday, December 10, from 9-2. Local artisans, local honey, gift baskets some containing Polish pottery, and delicious baked goods will be for sale. Proceeds from the gift baskets and baked goods benefit the Friends to support library programs. Free admission!

Hallowgivingsmas: Light in the Darkness, Peace in the Night

By Jesse R. Clark

Over the years, I've heard about the battle between "The Big Three"—Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. There are people who say you can't play a single Christmas song until December and there are others who start playing Christmas songs the second they wake up on November 1st. People say you need to separate these holidays, that one gets in the way of the other. To which I say, do they? Halloween is about lights shining in the darkness to keep monsters and evil away. Well, isn't that the story of Christmas? A light coming down to Earth to save us from evil? Christmas probably didn't occur in December, but there is a reason that we celebrate it then. Around the winter solstice, the darkest part of the year, a light shines in the night. Not unlike jack-o'-lanterns, which started out as carved turnips in the Celtic tradition.

Now, a big reason people separate these holidays is because of the weather. Living in New England, we associate certain types of weather with certain holidays. If it's cold, it's easier to think of it as being close to Thanksgiving or Christmas. But what do you do when it's November and 70 degrees? Or when it snows a week before Halloween? One year, I was listening to a Christmas cantata I was practicing; I remember it was a week before Halloween, and there was a light dusting of snow on the trees. The chorus that was playing was about it being a time of darkness and light and that hope was going to come. Was that Christmas or All Hallows' Eve? Both have their own decorations, parties, and a sense that there is magic in the air, a connection with the great beyond. Both are the light in the darkness. The light that we all need this time of year. Like Hanukkah, or Diwali, the fall Hindu holiday celebrating light overcoming darkness, a prince defeating an evil demon king, along with community and loved ones.

Think of all the holidays in November: Day of the Dead, All Saints' Day, All Souls' Day, Veterans Day, World Kindness Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, and, of course, Thanksgiving, all during Native American Heritage Month. These holidays are a strange mixture of sadness, grief, anger, and positive feelings like gratitude, hope, and love. (Something that can get lost among these other November events is Election Day, which can create even more negative feelings around the Thanksgiving table.) These days come from times of war, times of darkness, a loss of hope. They are times to remember why we are thankful, why we can still love and care for each other. That is the salvation—the love, the light shining in the darkness. "Should old acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind?" Honoring the dead, loved ones, finding joy and love with the living.

Think of classic Christmas stories. *It's a Wonderful Life* has someone thinking of suicide; *Meet Me in St. Louis* has Judy Garland singing a beautifully sad version of "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," saying this year "we'll have to muddle through somehow." This is certainly relatable. Sometimes you can't bring yourself to "hang a shining star on the highest bough" and just get through it with all that uncertainty. The verse about myrrh in "We Three Kings" is about Jesus' death: "...its bitter perfume / breathes a life of gathering

gloom; / sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, / sealed in the stone-cold tomb." *A Christmas Carol* literally has the subtitle "A Ghost Story." All of these are sad, morbid tales that have an uplifting ending celebrating friends, family, and loved ones. The salvation that awaits. The magic of Christmas, I've discovered, does not have to do with Santa being able to travel the world in a single night, giving presents without ever being seen, but with God. Realizing that Santa doesn't exist doesn't mean that the magic doesn't. It reveals a far greater gift. Is it Santa's sleigh we see in the night sky, or the Star?

We try to have a great holiday season that both recreates our childhood memories and makes us feel good. But we stress ourselves out too much trying to accomplish this. We go so crazy preparing for Thanksgiving and Christmas that we can't be present to enjoy it. Even worse, we may make ourselves sick trying to plan "the perfect holiday experience." The two complaints people make this time of year are that there's not enough time and everything is too commercialized. You want to relax by the fire, drinking cocoa with a loved one, looking at your Christmas tree, but all you can think of is the stress of Christmas shopping, where you were called a Grinch by a sales clerk because you reacted with disgust to a "Jesus Claus" ornament. This is an ornament of Jesus dressed as Santa coming down a chimney, and the sales clerk said in her sugary sweet voice that it's the only way you can feel the true spirit of Christmas, and if you voice your disdain of it, you are a Scrooge or a Grinch.

Then you remember that down the street, people are singing Christmas carols, holding candles to keep warm. You get so happy that you grab your coat and go outside. Then you remember—it's cold, you're tired, and as much as you want to be part of a Christmas community event, you really just want to stay home and rest. But just as you turn to go in, you stop and see the moon shining through the trees. The cool air now feels like a blanket as you hear angelic voices in the distance sing "*Still, still, still.... 'Tis the eve of our Savior's birth....*" Your muscles relax as you breathe out all the stress. Ahhhhh... "*Hope is like a candle burning in the night....*" You realize *this* is the reason for Christmas, to serve as a reminder of the gift of peace, the gift of love, the gift of hope and grace in a cold, dark world. "*In the dark streets shineth the everlasting light; / The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight....*" The spirit is alive in the night.

No matter what you believe, we all struggle with the idea of death, the need to be grateful, the desire to experience joy. That's what Hallowgivingsmas is, along with holidays like Hanukkah and Diwali: a way to shine a light and warm the cold, dark nights. Light your jack-o'-lanterns on Christmas Eve, or have a Thanksgiving meal with loved ones on the Day of the Dead. Whatever you feel in your heart, do it. Don't let a calendar tell you when to feel the spirit of a certain holiday, that spirit resides in you and comes out when it's time. *Be* that light in the darkness, making people smile like those jack-o'-lanterns. Don't blow that candle out. Keep that spirit alive, and then you will have a wonderful holiday. Happy holidays to you all!

Global Funk

By Gary Bergquist

Our changing climate, seemingly worsened by global warming, was a lot easier to ignore a decade or two ago. Now we are daily besieged with images of hurricanes, torrential rains, floods, heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, and melting glaciers. The images and implications can be overwhelming. We may feel as if our planet and our futures are spinning out of control. Small wonder the incidences of depression, suicide, homicide, and mass murder are up. We seem to be in a global funk.

Recognizing this situation, the daily network news inevitably offers up warm, fuzzy pieces at the end of their broadcasts. The aim is to keep us, their viewers, from becoming more depressed by the news. They want us to tune in again the next day.

While the causes and ramifications of global warming have been discussed ad nauseam, the causes and ramifications of global funk have not.

Since the moment humankind evolved the intelligence to control its surroundings, global warming was inevitable. Members of the homo sapiens species have been tinkering, learning, inventing, developing, teaching, writing, and moving forward relentlessly. The whole while, we were standing on top of an easily tapped and nearly limitless supply of carbon-based energy. Naturally we were going to burn it. And sooner or later we would have burned enough of it to bring us to where we are today.

There is a common notion these days that we are responsible for this outcome. We, our parents, our grandparents, and so on, are the cause of the problem. We should have had keener foresight. We could have judiciously curbed our use of carbon-based energy. The angry Swedish activist Greta Thunberg is quick to point the finger at us, and elsewhere, as if her clothes, her food, her transportation were not products of the same eventuality. Greta's anger is understandable, but not productive. While her words of blame may have some small, positive effect on our future motivations and actions, thereby slowing the pace of global warming, they also have a significant negative effect on exacerbating global funk.

It will help in our discussion if we can better understand the funk. Consider that the common portrayal of the warming consequences of climate change is a corruption of the natural order. If not for climate change, we could continue to live blissfully in our Garden of Eden. However, due to changes in climate, the Garden is wilting. Entire species of plants and animals have and will become extinct. Whether our species can endure these extinctions and revisions is the great unknown. This question of survival is in all our minds and is the main source of the funk.

When presented with a diagnosis of death, it is natural that we experience the five stages of grief (according to the Kübler-Ross model): denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and

acceptance. So too do we experience these stages as we watch our planet die around us.

Denial of global warming is the stage many people cannot get past, even though the increasing frequency of extreme weather events makes it harder to keep our heads in the sand. **Anger**, as professed by Greta, is certainly justified but helps little and may hinder level-headed cooperation.

Bargaining, as in driving electric cars, installing solar panels, and eating less beef from methane-emitting cattle, may ease the guilt we feel from the angry finger-pointers, but scientists agree these relatively minor measures won't slow the warming process to any significant degree. **Depression** is the gathering place for those who have made it through denial, anger, and bargaining, only to find themselves face to face with funk.

Acceptance, the logical and unavoidable endpoint, is not, as one might fear, the acceptance of death, but is the acceptance of reality. The reality, as stated above, is that we are at the very point where we were destined to arrive. Now that we are here, what comes next?

Let's take stock of where we have gotten and where we are headed. With the air and sea temperatures going up, storms, hurricanes, and tornadoes seem to be more common and more tenacious. Wildfires are becoming bigger and more damaging as droughts increase in frequency and duration. As the glaciers melt and the sea levels rise, coastal flooding and storm surges make coastal living more difficult or lethal. As rain and snow patterns change and the levels in some reservoirs go down, the existing and stable water supply network is being challenged. As weather patterns shift, geographies ideally suited for agriculture become less so.

In short, humanity's technological prowess is exacting a toll. Until now, there has never been a species on this orb with the power to alter nature. However, there has likewise never been a species so capable of adapting to change. We are the only inhabitants who understand the meaning of the phrase, "the only constant is change." It is no accident that the human intelligence that has evolved to the point of causing the change has also evolved to the point of addressing it. Even as we continue contributing to the change, the finest minds in our species are working overtime to address its implications. This is an exciting time to be alive, to witness the evolution of our Garden of Eden, and our adaptation to that evolution.

Acceptance.

Yes, the changes will be immense. There has already been and will continue to be migration on a massive scale, from coastal areas and from areas prone to drought and other extreme weather events. There has already been and will continue to be extinction of species on a massive scale. Many species are not as adaptable as ours. Our concepts of normal daily life and the plans for ourselves and our offspring have changed and will continue to change. As individuals and as a group, we will find ourselves necessarily editing our script of life's aspirations.

The time is here to push back against the Denial, the Anger, the Bargaining, and the Depression. It is time to reject

the global funk that is eminently reasonable but completely unproductive, and to Accept that the rules are changing. The fairness of those changes is simply not open to discussion.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.”

Within a few pages of the words that begin the Bible, the Book takes us to the Garden of Eden, a paradise of God’s making. Now, we find ourselves in a Garden of our own making. The journey from there to here was never in doubt; only the path was unknown. Now it is known, and now is the time to stop whining about the past and move forward. As John Greenleaf Whittier penned in his poem “Maud Muller”:

*For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: “It might have been!”*

Acceptance.

Mindful of our past, but looking to the future, we see that we got here in tiny steps, driven by the motivations and capabilities of individuals, no different really from those of other animals struggling to survive on planet Earth. Indeed, it is in our nature to continue with our tiny steps, everyone, each family, each community, each country doing what serves its specific interests, without concern for others. This is, and has always been, the natural approach, the approach taken by ordinary animals. It is naïve to expect anything more from our fellow journeymen; self-interest is in our nature. This, then, becomes the challenge, planning for self-interest and global interest at the same time. In a way, this is Nature’s test of our character, the character of the Homo sapiens species. It is a test of our worth. Will we pass this test, the inevitable byproduct of our advanced evolution? Or will our bones occupy the display case next to the dinosaurs in the museums of the future?

Be grateful to be alive now, as we bear witness to the unpredictable history that will be written as we venture into the future. The honor of rising to challenges is nothing new for Homo sapiens. Our futures have always been under our control, as has been our funk.

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

The 2023 Writing Challenge

By Nicole T. Smith, L.Ac

Whether you’re looking to journal your day, improve communication skills, let out steam, debut your work, or hone your craft, writing is an invaluable asset to express ourselves. I picked up the pencil at age five, wrote my first little book, and haven’t stopped since.

Many are interested in trying writing. What about you? Has anything held you back? We can be our own greatest critics, and this can impede embarking on new things. As for me, I can’t stop writing. My laptop is an appendage. Characters chatter in my head at all times. Story ideas stack up like books on a shelf.

I’d like to help others experience the joys of writing. Beginning in January, I will write one article every month with a different writing tip, benefit, or idea.

Below is a list to get started with. Some of the points may feature in future articles. Why not start with number one? Write something every day.

The word ‘journal’ is derived from an Old French word which meant ‘daily’ – the French word for ‘day’ is *jour*. Journal writing does not have to be done every day, but some type of writing daily is a great idea. If you are already doing that, pick something else from the list.

1. Write something every day (grocery list does not count)
2. Try your hand at a different style or genre
3. Edit something you have written one week after writing it
4. Practice free association– writing without editing or judgement
5. Pick ten words at random and make a poem with them in it
6. Create a character – name, career, likes, dislikes, quirks, habits
7. If you have kids, create writing projects with them

This writing challenge is open to anyone, all ages, all levels of interest. You can do it anonymously, or, if you’d like to be part of a group, please send an email to: nicole@shadows.group.

Let’s make this upcoming year stuPENdous!

Nicole T. Smith, L.Ac. is a five-time published author. Her latest book, We Have Shadows Too will release at the end of January. For more information, please visit www.shadows.group.

Union Station Angel

By Felix F. Giordano

They say you know exactly when you're touched by an angel. It may be when we face danger and someone or something not of this world influences the outcome. It may be as subtle as a twisted ankle, a red traffic light, or a squirrel crossing the road causing us to delay our activity for a few seconds or it may be as profound as a missed taxi, train, or plane. Whatever it is we can explain the 'what happened' but the 'why it happened' is lost in our attempt to orderly rationalize events.

The following is a true story. In December 2006 we suffered a loss in the family and the holidays' were unhappy times as were the following months. It was a windy, overcast mid-January morning, the type of weather inherent with winter's bone-chilling influence. That Saturday morning, the drive into Hartford was uneventful. My wife planned her trip to Maine by long-haul bus and had not forgotten a thing. She's like that, always prepared, never a wasted thought or action. I admire her purpose.

"Think the house will be all right?" I asked.

"I'm sure the girls will protect it," she answered.

In our case 'the girls' were two German shorthaired pointers and one boxer. Unflinchingly loyal, they would bark whenever anything appeared out of the ordinary. As large as they are their intimidation level rises along with their exuberance. They were excellent watchdogs as well as wonderful companions.

"Oh, I missed the road," I said as I stared at the left turn I should have taken into the train station parking lot.

"That's okay. Pull onto the next road and go around the block," my wife said.

I should have listened to her. Instead, I slowed our Toyota 4-Runner to a crawl and took a left onto Union Place, a one-way street. Unable to turn around, I looked for another left to loop back to the parking lot. Then I noticed several metered parking spots in front of the large brownstone building that was Union Station.

"Think this will be all right?" I asked.

She looked at her watch. "The bus leaves in an hour. I'm sure this is fine."

I pulled into a parking spot and we got out. After throwing a half-dozen quarters into the parking meter, I then went to the back of the car. Grabbing her Spartan sum of luggage was a breeze. A one week's visit with her aunt in Old Town Maine wouldn't require much. Most of their time would be spent sitting and reminiscing, maybe an evening bite to eat at one of the many family restaurants in the area. Old Town was a blue-collar community. No fancy night spots, no hobnobbing with celebrities.

My wife's aunt was mourning the loss of her husband just a month earlier in December. Although standing six-foot-four and being the spitting image of actor James

Arness, he had a soft heart for those he loved and cherished and fiercely defended them.

A heroic figure, he carved out an extraordinary career in law enforcement. He joined the Maine State Police in his twenties after a stint in the US Navy. Upon graduating from the Police Academy, he accepted a troop assignment patrolling from one city to another. A few years later he was promoted to detective and transferred to a different troop where he remained a detective until his retirement. He took great pride in his work as an investigator and was known by many as a legendary State Police detective. He was involved in solving numerous murder cases and was also known by some as a rebel due to his outspoken nature and his decision to sometimes do it his own way, of course within the confines of the law. During his career, he trained at Harvard University's Associates in Police Science, the United States Narcotics Bureau, and at the U.S. Department of Treasury and Organized Crime Investigation Training. He was the senior intelligence officer with the New England Organized Crime Intelligence System and retired from the Maine State Police with the rank of detective sergeant. Upon retirement, he began a career as a private investigator and quickly became known as a premier investigator. In fact, when Stephen King was struck by a hit-and-run driver, he hired our uncle's private investigating firm.

His interrogation motto was "Kill 'em with kindness." His scowl alone, his gruff, deep voice, or even the sight of his meat-hook hands could force an adversary into compliance. When I first met him years earlier, I knew he was intimidating. But he was really a jokester and liked to pull the wool over people's eyes and have a laugh over the most mundane and common things. Perhaps it was his way of lightening the air. Letting others know not to take life so seriously especially when with friends and to be happy with what you have and with those around you. All I knew was that I respected him and felt comfortable in his presence. He took an interest in my novels about a Native American sheriff. To honor him, I chose to use his last name for my novels' protagonist.

I believe that he truly loved his niece, my wife, and was happy that we had each found one another. I remember the jokes they shared especially regarding moose sightings. "Come on up to Maine and I'll show you a real live moose," he often boasted to her. So, she did. He drove her out into the backwoods of Millinocket one year looking for moose but none were to be found. Then as if to counter his infectious humor, my wife would mail him anything resembling a moose. Greeting cards, stuffed animals, buttons, anything with the face of a moose would get mailed to him for a laugh.

Looking at Union Station's gallery of front windows with the clouds reflected in their glare, my wife and I climbed the steps, walked inside, and crossed the expansive lobby. My mind photocopied the marbled walls and maroon-tiled, uncluttered shiny floor. Down a few steps to the bus terminal, we approached the desk and ordered the round-trip ticket. Then we waited. The crowd of travelers ebbed and flowed

with the arrival and departure of busses associated with various destinations. When the bus to Bangor, Maine finally pulled into one of the dozen or so parking spots outside the bus terminal, I led the way carrying my wife's lone piece of luggage.

"I wish you a safe trip," I said.

My wife laughed. "My angels will take care of that."

She believed wholeheartedly in angels and although I also believed in spiritual forces, the fact that they can interact with us on this earthly plane in an ongoing, daily basis seemed like a stretch to me. I always felt that if we placed ourselves into situations then it was up to us to get ourselves out. Nothing else would or could do our bidding. We controlled our own destiny.

There were dozens of people lined up against the outside wall of the building, all presumably waiting for their bus. Then the door opened to the Bangor bus and the driver stepped outside and took his position. Passengers approached and one by one were admitted onboard. My wife took the carryon luggage from me, hugged and kissed me goodbye. She boarded the bus and found a seat by a window. Most people who had waited along with us left when their friends or relatives boarded. I stayed longer, until the bus was ready to leave. Close to thirty minutes must have elapsed. I stood alone against the wall of the building. When the bus left, I breathed a sigh and made my way back into the terminal.

I remember passing the front desk and then up the steps toward the lobby. My peripheral vision caught a glimpse of someone to my right. I dared not look, not in the city. As I crossed the lobby, I caught sight of the person following alongside me in stride as we both headed for the glass front doors. Opening one of those doors, I entered a tiny vestibule. Noticing a young man who appeared to be in his late twenties leaning with his back against the wall, I reached for the door knob to exit the station.

Then the young man said, "Excuse me sir, can you give me a ride to my car. It's stuck on the Interstate."

In a matter of a few seconds, I surveyed him more closely. Scruffy, sandy hair, a blemished face, a tattered gray sweatshirt, and beat-up blue jeans with random holes here and there telegraphed more than I needed to know. An emphatic 'no' was all I said and then bounded down the stairs.

As I headed for our Toyota 4-Runner, I looked back. The sandy-haired youngster had left the station and was making his way down the steps. Another person, a bit older, exited the front doors and joined his companion. I then realized what was happening. Reaching the car, I pulled the keys from my pocket and tried to unlock the car door. I fumbled with the lock and then looked back. The two men had taken a few steps toward my car but then stopped, turned back, and stood at the bottom of the station steps. One pulled out two cigarettes, lit them, and they shared a smoke break.

Then I heard the squawk of a two-way radio. I glanced up and caught sight of two EMT officers sitting in a parked emergency van across the street within a stone's throw of my car. Their windows were partially rolled down and the red flashing lights on their roof reflected off the windows of nearby buildings. The officers seemed to be reviewing a

clipboard and speaking via radio with their command center. I opened my car door, got in, turned on the ignition, and pulled out of the parking spot. As I drove away, I looked through my rear-view mirror and noticed the two young men, eyes peeled on my car as I drove off.

Why did it happen like that? Why wasn't I attacked? Why was the EMT van there at that very moment in time? You see, on that windy day in mid-January, on a mostly barren street in Hartford Connecticut, my wife's special angel was watching over me. An angel that stood six-foot-four, resembled James Arness, and had a soft heart for those he loved, cherished, and fiercely defended.

Felix F. Giordano is a local author with books sales in excess of 7,500 and has had more than 5 million pages of his books read by Amazon Kindle Unlimited subscribers. His website is jbnovels.com.

Celebrate 300 Years of Henrietta House

Submitted by Jasmine Lewis

On December 11th from 10 - 2, come by for an intimate tour of one of the most historic homes in Ashford, CT. Henrietta House Bed and Breakfast was originally built in 1722.

Over the last ten years it has been remodeled as a charming bed and breakfast that is surrounded by three acres of native plants, shrubs, fruiting trees and a small vegetable garden as well as goats, pigs and chickens that all play a role in our growing homestead.

This house has many original features from the 18th century and we pride ourselves on highlighting these characteristics. Please come visit, we will be serving light snacks and drinks and sharing many stories. Limited parking is available at the house but some parking can be had at the Byles trailhead adjacent to the house and at North Vet Clinic.

Concert to Benefit Refugees

Submitted By Barbara Comstock-King

A winter a cappella concert will benefit a local organization, The Quiet Corner Refugee Resettlement (QCRR), which provides support to resettled refugee families in the local area.

Take Note! performs Sunday, December 11, at 3:00 p.m., at Storrs Congregational Church, 2 North Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT. Tax deductible donations will be accepted at the door and will benefit the families served by QCRR. Checks should be payable to WAIM, with "QCRR" written in the memo line. The concert features songs of the holiday and winter season in various musical styles, including jazz, traditional, and multicultural. Note that for this event masking is optional but encouraged. For more information, visit www.take-note.org, email take-note@earthlink.net, or call (860) 228-2390.

CT Green Energy News

Submitted by Peter Millman

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



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

Connecticut's high electricity costs are a nagging problem. What will it take to fix it?

CT Insider. "As we've gotten more reliant on natural gas in New England, we are at the end of a pipeline that has significant limitations," said state Sen. Norm Neddleman...In explaining the rationale for raising prices last week, Connecticut's power utilities — Eversource and United Illuminating — pointed squarely at the global spike in natural gas prices caused by Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine...Reigning in the long-term costs associated with New England's electric grid, however, will likely require a mix of regulatory changes along with investments in infrastructure and renewables that could take years to produce results... "If we had more pipelines into the region, which is something we may need to consider someday, that would I think help to stabilize prices," said Frank Reynolds, the president and CEO of United Illuminating. Several of the state's top officials, including Gov. Ned Lamont and his commissioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Katie Dykes, have instead pointed to the state's efforts to transition away from fossil fuels entirely by 2040 as a vital component to reducing energy costs.

Avangrid, Eversource call for more efficiency, DR to avoid New England outages amid potential fuel crunch

Utility Dive. "Avangrid, Eversource Energy, National Grid and other utilities are calling for expanded energy efficiency and demand response programs as a near-term step to help keep the lights on in New England during winter cold snaps at times of low natural gas supplies. In the long-term, ISO-New England should work with states and transmission owners to build out the region's transmission system to tap into emissions-free resources such as offshore wind and to increase power imports... To address the "deteriorating" winter reliability situation, Potomac Economics in June recommended that ISO-NE transition from a three-year forward auction to a prompt seasonal capacity market. Under the proposal, ISO-NE would hold capacity auctions before each summer and winter. Among its benefits, a prompt market would make it easier for generators to contract

for firm fuel and reflect those costs in their capacity offers, according to the market monitor."

New solar array will offset almost 100% of Connecticut manufacturer's energy usage

Solar Power World. "Greenskies Clean Focus has completed the installation of a 698.87-kW rooftop solar array for Lyman Products headquarters and manufacturing facility in Middletown, Connecticut. Lyman anticipates this solar installation will satisfy an estimated 96% of the facility's annual electricity needs. Lyman partnered with Greenskies to develop, finance, construct, own, operate and maintain the system under a 25-year PPA. Under the agreement, Lyman pays no upfront costs and benefits from reduced energy rates, saving more than \$328,000 over the term. Greenskies also financed a partial reroof for around 40% of the facility. The 1,442 panels on Lyman's rooftop will generate around 739 MWh of clean, renewable energy each year."

Lamont scores some wins on environmental issues, but luck had a hand

CT Mirror. "Coming out of the 2021 legislative session and heading into a reelection year, Gov. Ned Lamont's record on the existential issue of climate change threatened to be painfully thin...But then Lamont — and pretty much every other governor in the nation — got lucky. The bipartisan infrastructure bill, downsized though it was, finally made it through Congress, and President Joe Biden signed it on Nov. 15, 2021. It provided a cascade of funding to states, some for the kinds of transportation projects that the revenues from TCI were designed to fund, A month later, Lamont issued a massive executive order — 23 multi-part items — to make up for the earlier legislative failure, and then some. Since then, the governor has scored large climate change policy wins in the legislature with initiatives built specifically to capitalize on the federal infrastructure funding, many of which were plucked out of the executive order. The zero-carbon grid by 2040 finally made it into law."

New Federal Funding Helps CT Get Electric School Buses

Public News Service. "Connecticut school districts and bus companies will be receiving more than \$8 million in federal funding for electric school buses. The grant is being awarded through the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus Program, as part of the bipartisan infrastructure law...And the new funding is just the beginning. The EPA's efforts will split \$1 billion a year into grants among school districts across the country, over the next five years. Harris added he is glad to see it, and feels it is an opportunity for kids to learn about a growing industry." Plus: Ridgefield environment task force pushes schools to switch to electric buses

Repair Cafe News

Submitted by Virginia Walton,
Mansfield Recycling Coordinator

REPAIR CAFÉ, January 14, 2023

What do you do with a dress that has a tear or a lamp that no longer works? Bring it to the Repair Café on Saturday, January 14, 2023 from 10 am to 2 pm, at the First Congregational Church, 199 Valley Street, Willimantic.

The Repair Café is a FREE event open to the public. Skilled volunteers will repair – or teach you to repair – your broken item. Visit the Willimantic Repair Café, Facebook page (@repaircafe.willimantic).

Dear Readers, Writers and Advertisers-

I hope you like this ‘mini-tab’ edition. It is more expensive to publish and more time-consuming to produce, but I think it makes *Neighbors* a better publication. I also need to tell you about another change. We will now publish ten issues per year. The next *Neighbors* will be January-February 2023 with another bi-monthly edition for July-August. If you are a member of an organization having an event in January, February or early March please email information before December 23rd. The next issue will be printed the first week of January. Thank you for your support. Tom King, Publisher.

CT Municipalities Cleared to Use No Cost U.S. DOE Home Solar Permit Tool to Cut Staff Approval Time and Speed Home Installations

CT Solar and Storage Association. “The recent passage of new Connecticut building codes now allows state cities and towns to integrate free software developed by the federal government called SolarAPP+ that relieves local building office staff from processing routine, code-compliant home solar systems permit applications and cut the time it takes homeowners to get solar... Solar permitting can be a major bottleneck for residential solar installations, adding weeks, and in some cases, months to adoption timelines. SolarAPP+ eases the permitting process and speeds those timelines. To date, SolarAPP+ has approved close to 10,000 projects across the U.S. and saved many thousands of hours in municipal building office plan review time...“The SolarAPP+ online permitting tool can make it much easier for us to quickly and safely approve solar projects, while benefiting local taxpayers at the same time,” [Guilford] First Selectman Matt Hoey said.”



After slow start, Massachusetts sees more interest in incentives to mix solar with farming

Energy News Network. “A Massachusetts incentive program for projects that blend solar energy and agricultural production shows signs of finally gaining momentum after a slow rollout that has at times frustrated solar developers and farmers alike. In 2018, Massachusetts became the first state to offer financial incentives for “dual-use” or “agrivoltaic” solar projects built above active agricultural land. Since the launch, however, just three projects have gotten up and running. Another eight have qualified for the incentive but not yet been built...Supporters of the concept say it has the potential to simultaneously alleviate two problems: the need to build more renewable energy facilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the need to preserve agricultural land, especially small, local farms... Current climate and economic conditions may also help push more farmers to consider agrivoltaics. As hotter, drier summers

become more common, the shading provided by the panels might actually be beneficial to some crops...”

EVs are Connecticut’s future. Will there be enough juice?

CT Mirror. “There’s no doubt that electric vehicles are our future. The question is, are we ready for them?...One of the big concerns of potential EV buyers is “range anxiety:” can I get a charge if I’m away from my usual neighborhood? That’s why Eversource is gearing up to install hundreds of new EV charging stations, both at home and work...The bigger question is ... with 13% of all cars in Connecticut expected to be EVs by 2031, will there be enough electricity on the grid to charge all them all, let alone all the electric trucks, buses etc.? The short answer is yes... given that most charging of EVs is done overnight and with the expectation that we’ll all be conserving electricity at home and work. So turning off lights will mean there’s juice for your EV.”

Editorial: Utilities’ price hike will be painful for CT

Stamford Advocate. “Nothing unites politicians from opposing parties like utility rate hikes. Republican leaders, as one might expect, criticized planned rate hikes from Eversource and United Illuminating this winter as if they were the product of state government leadership. But the state’s actual leaders, including recently reelected Gov. Ned Lamont, were just as harsh in their criticisms. “This is a massive increase that will be unaffordable for many Connecticut families and businesses,” Attorney General William Tong, also reelected earlier this month, said...Eversource and United Illuminating are not publicly run. They are (or are subsidiaries of) profit-making companies, with shareholders to worry about and a bottom line to protect. But they don’t function like most companies — it’s not like a competitor can jump into the market and string up its own power lines. Consumer choice is severely limited when it comes to turning on the lights...The best we can do in the short run is make sure the companies are properly regulated and give customers help when it’s possible.” Plus: State utility regulator says old law prevents them from stopping giant electric rate hike.

Not in My Black Yard!

Resistance to the Truth about the History of Local Slavery

By Donna Dufresne

I don't need to tell you that the NIMBY (not in my back yard) movement, a white, suburban phenomena of pseudo environmentalism, made headlines throughout the 1980s and '90s in the outrage over toxic industrial waste. Those of a certain privilege, including myself, protested and made sure that our pristine rural and suburban neighborhoods remained unscathed by nuclear waste and coal plants. Armed with data and statistics, we pressured the petrochemical and nuclear industry to get out of our communities. It was a noble cause for Mother Earth. However, we didn't realize (or chose not to) that the toxic waste, the power plants, and petrochemical industry did not go away, but were, in fact, dumped into poor, urban, Black, and Latino neighborhoods and on Native American reservations where the disenfranchised were less likely to make such a fuss.

Bear with my analogy here, but NIMBY has taken on a new meaning in the twenty-first century with the continued white supremacist rhetoric of Trump and the uber-right Republican Party. The denial and suppression of African American and Native American history has been litigated in some states thanks to false narratives about critical race theory (CRT) being taught in elementary schools and damaging the souls of white children. God forbid we encourage critical thinking and look to the past to learn from our mistakes. The real issue is the wall of denial around the fact that slavery existed, especially in the North. I have bumped into that wall and its many layers of racist narratives while researching slavery in northeast Connecticut. Racism is *not* just a Southern problem.

As a local historian who has been researching slavery in eighteenth-century Connecticut, I have encountered the wall on more than one occasion. It is appalling how many seemingly intelligent people are resistant to the simple truth. On the one hand, I find myself walking on eggshells to protect the feelings of the descendants whose ancestors owned slaves, while on the other hand shielding them from a rampant cancel culture that has no interest in research or trying to understand the social structures that allowed slavery to remain in place. Instead, the uber-left cancel culture has ruffled the white feathers of the uber-right, leaving folks such as myself with a genuine research query in a no man's land between the two sides of the divided American zeitgeist.

The far-right rebellion against CRT is just one example of the undercurrent of white supremacy that drives our national narratives. Like the undertow along a sunny beach, it drags us all down into the murky waters of a big lie. Telling the truth about the past is an act of patriotism. If we do not understand our past, we cannot move forward and live up to our American ideals. New England, the seat of the abolition



movement, liberalism, and enlightenment, is decidedly uncomfortable with the inconvenient truth that our wealth, derived from the East and West India trade merchants, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and our textile industry, was deeply dependent on and embedded in slave trafficking. New England financial and educational institutions created a structure of institutional racism that has far outlived slavery. This is exactly why we must tell the historical stories and counter the false narratives of those who wish to silence the truth.

The resistance to truth is real and particularly prevalent among those who have bought into the Trumpian nationalistic version of history. They either refuse to accept the fact that slavery existed here in new England, or believe it is unpatriotic to talk about it. Whether driven by the fear of reparations or their political agenda, they have told me: "We didn't have slaves here"; "They were servants, not slaves"; "They were indentured servants"; "My Irish ancestors were treated just as badly"; "My Italian ancestors were called 'black'"; "Slavery was invented in Africa"; and, my favorite white supremacist and anti-Semitic trope, "The Jews in Newport were responsible for New England slavery."

I'm not making this up. Perhaps it's because I'm a good listener or seemingly benign, being white and all, but I have also found myself privy to conversations which can only be explained as a rehearsal of whites condoning racism. People seem to have no problem telling me that Blacks are inherently violent, athletic, or musical, as if racist tropes are an excuse for police brutality, institutional racism, and the denial of historical truths.

And yet the evidence is clear. A brief reconnaissance into land records reveals the emancipation of a slave in the marginal note "for her freedom" in 1795; the last paragraph in a will nonchalantly notes "[T]o my son, Simon, I give my Negro Boy, Peter...and to my daughter, Mary, I give my Negro Girl Tabb, now residing with my daughter-in-law, Martha, widow of Samuel"; an inventory reveals the worth of "one negro boy at 40 lbs. and one negro girl at 30 lbs. lawful silver" in 1770. Who knows how old these "boys" and "girls" actually were. The paternalism of slavery kept enslaved Africans in an eternal state of childhood, referred to as "my" Negro boy or girl in wills and inventories even if they were approaching old age. Possessions by law, they were farmhands, skilled laborers, wet nurses, house servants. The relationships are complex. Black and white on paper, shades of gray in reality.

These are not the relics of an antebellum cotton plantation. Nor are they quotes from Southern slave narratives. Instead, they are the bare threads of a tapestry deliberately unraveled—the story of New England slavery and the wealth generated through human trafficking and free labor. Unfortunately, we do not know what slavery really looked like in northeast Connecticut. Few first-person accounts exist of enslaved Africans in eighteenth-century Connecticut and Rhode

continued on next page

Island. The remains of their stories are buried deep, requiring meticulous and courageous research, even though the fragile evidence that once existed has been deliberately omitted from tax records and census data. One gets the impression that the number of enslaved people owned in the late 1700s was underreported in order to evade taxes. The enslaved were a property of convenience in the marketplace when funds were needed to pay a debt or buy the Missus a new silk gown. Yet the worth of their labor is invisible in the otherwise meticulous bookkeeping of the era. Perhaps their existence was erased by descendants who were embarrassed that their ancestors owned human chattel. Whatever the reason, the erasure of people of African descent from history has done us all a great disservice. We are left with only half the story, the very white tip of an iceberg in the murky waters of denial. On the surface is the well-rehearsed narrative that slavery was a Southern problem, while the truth is conveniently submerged.

Rummaging through the understory is a risky business. By choosing to be a white ally and give voice to those whose stories were systematically repressed and omitted from history, I have become a pariah in certain social sectors, shunned by the descendants of the owning class who do not want these stories to be revealed. They do what they have always done, pitting class against race and sucking all the oxygen out of the room, in an effort to delegitimize my work and intelligence. Yep, it's insulting. But I am not begging for a place at a table where I was never welcome in the first place. I am claiming my rightful and legitimate place as a historian and meticulous researcher who just happens to be a white, working-class girl from a rural community, an ally and a warrior for truth and justice.

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Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

This month I would like to talk about safety and ask all of you how safe is the vehicle that you are driving? I really do not need a study to tell you that 1 out of 3 vehicles that come into our repair facility has some sort of safety issue. The torn wiper blade, the headlight lens so distorted that you cannot see 10 feet in front of you, if they work at all, fabric worn tires, bad brakes, suspension issues, and my favorite, leaving a trailer hitch draw bar in the receiver. The trailer hitch companies designed their hitches so the draw bar would be removed when not in use for safety. I saw a driver pull into a parking place and have a draw bar on a truck that was backed into the space in front go right through the radiator of the car pulling in because it was dark and the driver could not see it. This draw bar was a good foot into the space behind it and created a very costly repair for the driver. With winter upon us you need to be sure your vehicle is safe for the road. Often there are signs that our vehicles give us that need attention

If you take the time, your vehicle will talk to you. This only happens if you are not distracted by electronic devices. The daily driver of the vehicle knows how it handles, performs, and any sounds that are not normal. The grinding noise you are hearing may be a small issue like a stone caught in a brake rotor or it may mean some sort of brake service is needed. The annoying check engine light you see could be causing poor fuel mileage or just a loose gas cap. Please take the

time to make your vehicle safe for your well-being, your families well-being, and for other drivers. Paying attention to the noises your vehicle makes could save on costly repairs down the road. The manufacturer has gone one step further by having messages pop up on you screen or instrument panel. These are designed to head off problems before they leave you stranded on the side of the road. New vehicles and used ones can have issues and what used to be taken care of through the registration process is no more.

The State of Connecticut Motor Vehicle Department has changed their policy for registering a vehicle. If you take the time to look at the Willimantic Motor Vehicle Department you will notice a large garage door to the left of the building. This was a safety lane for pre-registering your vehicle. An inspector would check your vehicle to see if it was safe to operate on Connecticut highways. The current policy, however, is just a vehicle VIN check and that is all you need to register the vehicle. The Connecticut licensed seller of a vehicle, by law, must make sure that the vehicle is safe for Connecticut highways. The current demand for used vehicles has opened the door for non-licensed people to sell an unsafe vehicle. We suggest that you have a vehicle inspected by a Connecticut licensed facility before you purchase it. This could really save you money in the long run.

The holiday season is here and the family here at Franc Motors wishes all of you a very Merry Christmas and a safe New Year.

From Lyndale Farm Stand

We are working with two churches - Bolton United Methodist Church and St. George Church, both on Boston Turnpike (Route 44) in Bolton. We are collecting non-perishable foods and unwrapped toys when people come visit Santa every Saturday in December between 10:00 and 4:00. Visitors will also see our local meats, produce and baked goods. 1207 Boston Turnpike (Route 44) Bolton, Connecticut 860-987-2402 Robert Sherwood



Language, Dialects, Phrases, and Idioms

By Felix F. Giordano

Language, Dialects, Phrases, and Idioms are used in creative writing as a means to draw the reader into the story. When used correctly they can reveal not only an individual character's background but also the prevalent culture of the entire society in which your story takes place. Let's cover each one individually.

Language:

We can use language in our stories to identify our characters' education, where they grew up, and even their mood. The use of double negatives, uncommon words, and pronunciations can show things to the reader rather than tell things about the characters or the locations you're writing about.

Check out these examples:

"Do you know where the post office is?"
A man answers, *"No, I don't know where no post office is."*

The use of double negatives by the man can indicate a difficulty with the English language.

"When we saw the comedian at the club, that's when I learned you're hopelessly agelast."

Agelast is a word that describes a person's inability to laugh at anything. In this example its use can reveal that the character who is speaking is snobby and condescending or that the other character may be sociopathic.

"Can I take your order?"
"Yes, I'd like an espresso."
"You mean, espresso?"

The correct spelling and pronunciation is espresso. By spelling espresso incorrectly using an "x", it can show the reader that the customer is either unfamiliar with the beverage or is not used to being in an upscale neighborhood. In other words, the character may be *"out of his element"*.

When I did research for my novels in Montana, I was taken aback when a sheriff said to me, *"Yesterday, I went fishing with my son down by the crik."* I had to look that up and discovered that in certain parts of Montana, a creek is pronounced crik unless the specific name of the creek is added to the conversation, such as Ninemile Creek near Missoula, then its pronounced creek. In either case, it's normally written as creek but as a writer I needed to spell it as crik to show the reader how the character is pronouncing it. Sometimes, editors and readers will try to correct my spelling of crik but local Montanans will know exactly why I spelled it that way. If I had a Montana character pronounce it as creek in conversation, the story would not ring true to Montanans. Using local pronunciations

shows the reader that the author is being accurate in describing the people and places they're writing about.

I also found out that in Montana, people greet each other with the word, *"howdy"*. A grilled cheese sandwich is *"toasted cheese"*, and an upright vacuum is a *"sweeper"*.

Using these local words can add much character and authenticity to your writing. It's easy to find out about local phrases. Just do a Google search for *"_____slang"* and insert the location you're writing about (such as *"Montana slang"*) before the word slang.

In my novel, *The Killing Zone*, I wrote about a hardened outlaw motorcycle gang. The problem was my writing professor said to me that my motorcycle gang sounded more like fraternity brothers at a 20-year college reunion. So I needed to revise their conversations to show them using poor grammar, like in the following passage:

Videl, assured that he had captured the man's confidence, asked, "Where can I find Patton's Locker and Military Surplus?"

Dough Boy spat on the floor and replied, "That'd be on East Broadway."

"They got a good variety of stuff?" Videl asked.

"Anything you want, as long as you got ID and no record. You got a record fella?"

Videl didn't hesitate and lied through his teeth, "No, I ain't got no record."

A few negative Amazon reviews were posted regarding my grammar usage in that novel. However, remember that being true to your characters and your story is more important than any criticism you may receive.

Dialects:

When writing stories about a different country or people from a different country, it's always important to use words and dialects that are common to that country. When I write my novels, I've used many Native American words and phrases to help immerse the reader into the Native culture. I often refer to my character's people as Apsáalooke which is the name of the Crow tribe in their own language. I've also used the word Baaiisdúukualitdeete which is a phrase that means *"no respect"*. For instance, in explaining that Apsáalooke word, Baaiisdúukualitdeete, a passage in my novel reads:

"Then she spoke in perfect Apsáalooke dialect, "And Louis is a Baaiisdúukualitdeete."

Barbara asked, "What does that mean?"

A sly smile erupted across Anna's face. "It means Louis has no respect."

In writing about an Icelandic character in one of my novels, I needed to research Icelandic names. In Iceland most people's last names end with the same letters depending upon whether

they are male (son) or female (dóttir) and are based on paternal naming conventions utilizing the father's first names and are government controlled. Suppose two children, one male (Lars) and one female (Anna) are born to an Icelandic family whose father's name is Jon Ericsson. The son would be named Lars Jónsson and the daughter named Anna Jónsdóttir. When Lars has children of his own their last names would either be Larsson or Larsdóttir. Suppose Anna Jónsdóttir marries Gunnar Stefánsson and has two children (Aron and Helga) their names would be Aron Gunnarsson and Helga Gunnarsdóttir. Without completing this research, if I wrote about an Icelandic family and used the last name Ericsson for everyone in Jon Ericsson's family including his children and grandchildren it would have been grossly incorrect. Also, since Jon is the most popular male name in Iceland, there became so many people named Jon Jónsson that the government began granting some people the ability to abandon their paternal naming conventions. Aren't you glad we don't do that here in America?

It's important to research these expressions of language and culture that are unique to the people we are writing about and not stereotype them according to our own culture. In this way, it makes our writing more realistic and believable.

Phrases:

We all use phrases to describe things and situations. Phrases can be fun to use in a story and often will help us define a character's personality. Phrases such as "I slept like a log", "I won't get involved in a cat and mouse game", or "I'm so hungry I can eat a horse" each tells us something about the character and often in less words than if we didn't use these phrases. When we have characters using phrases in our stories, you can say they "cut to the chase" (another phrase).

An interesting phrase that's used in Montana is "a couple three". It sounds contradictory to use couple and three in the same phrase but it's used instead of the word few.

Here's "a couple three" links that can offer some unique cultural phrases:

<https://www.rolcruise.co.uk/blog/phrases-from-across-the-world>

<https://leverageedu.com/blog/phrases-with-meaning/>

<https://englishstudyhere.com/sentences/50-phrases-with-meanings-in-english/>

Idioms:

Idioms are phrases that are used to describe something but literally don't seem related. An example would be, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." First of all, what would you be doing with a bird in your hand? Trying to literally understand this idiom is a lesson in futility. Of course it means don't go after something greater than what you currently have or else you may end up with nothing.

The important thing about idioms is that if you want your characters to utilize them to make a point in conversation, use them sparingly. If you overuse idioms your story will not only sound

unrealistic but unless it's a comedy about idioms, you'll lose the interest of most readers.

A few links for idioms:

<https://blog.pimsleur.com/2020/01/10/idioms-around-the-world/>

https://www.fluentu.com/blog/idioms-from-around-the-world/#toc_1

<https://www.bhlingual.com/idioms-from-around-the-world-blog>

<https://blog.ted.com/40-idioms-that-cant-be-translated-literally/>

<https://www.ef.edu/english-resources/english-idioms/>

<https://leverageedu.com/blog/idioms-with-examples/>

We defined "Language, Dialects, Phrases, and Idioms" 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 7,500 and has had more than 5 million pages of his books read by Amazon Kindle Unlimited subscribers. His website is jbnovels.com.

Next Month's Topic: How Short Stories, Poems, and Novels are related

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A Rockefeller Christmas

By Angela H. Fichter

This is a true story of events that transpired years ago to a family in Windham County, Connecticut. The names have been changed to protect the guilty.

It was a great day (from a child's point of view) to cut down the family's Christmas tree. On this Saturday, a week before Christmas, the sky was overcast, and a fine, light snow was falling. There were already a couple inches of snow on the ground. Just enough to easily drag the freshly cut tree to the van, but not so deep that small boots would sink down into the snow over the boot tops. Of course, there was the endless argument over which tree was the best tree to cut down. John, who was 13 years old and already knew more than both his parents and his teachers (or thought he did), criticized every choice made by Mom, Dad, and his sister, Amy, who was age 5. Crocker, the family's cocker spaniel, wanted to vote too, and he almost did so by way of his own unique doggy sign language, but Dad quickly dragged him back to the van.

After the family had walked up one hill of their favorite tree farm and down the other side, and up and down a few other hills, they were all cold and cranky. If Mom liked one tree, Amy found a big hole near the bottom. If Dad liked another tree, everyone found fault with it. After all, Dad thought the first tree they looked at was great. And the second. And the third. And any tree whatsoever as long as he didn't have to stand out in the cold another single minute. If John thought he'd found the best tree, Amy was sure to find some unforgivable flaw. They all agreed on a tree at about the same time that they did so every year: when it was starting to get dark.

Their final choice looked wonderful. John cut it down, and John and Dad carried it back to the car. They grumbled that it was awful heavy, but they said that every year. When they got back to the house, John and Dad struggled to get the tree into the tree holder on the back porch. Then they triumphantly dragged the tree into the house, while Mom kept warning them not to knock off any branches. Once into the living room, they

found that the tree was bigger than they realized. Much bigger. The easy chairs had to be removed as well as the side tables and lamps. In fact, everything was removed but the couch and the TV, and the poor couch was jammed up against the wall with the TV about 30 feet away on the other side of the room. Which meant that you couldn't see the TV from the couch because the tree was in the way. They had forgotten the old maxim that a tree always looks smaller on the farm than it does in your living room. The tree was so big that they named it Rockefeller, after the huge tree cut for Rockefeller Center. But no matter, they all had great fun decorating the tree while listening to Christmas music, and as usual they ate all the popcorn that they had planned on stringing around the tree.

Whiskers, the family cat, took great interest in the tree and the decorating. He chose a perch halfway up the staircase, where he would occasionally comment on the progress of the decorating by mewing and switching his tail back and forth. Once the decoration was complete, Dad turned on the tree's lights and turned off all the house lights. That's when it happened. It's said that cats can see in the dark much better than people. Whiskers launched his assault on the tree from the staircase, and he made it in one mighty leap. The tree came crashing down. Dozens of glass lightbulbs and glass decorations breaking does make rather a lot of noise. So does the screaming of four people at top pitch. But Whiskers was undeterred. This was his moment. He fought his way into the center of the tree, past the wires of tree lights, past tinsel, past glittering metal chains of stars, until he pulled out of the tree the mouse that had been hiding in there all along.

Mom swooned once she realized they had driven home in the van with that mouse in the tree, because the treetop came close to her head in the front seat. Dad frowned at the expense of all those broken decorations. The kids moaned. It took much sweeping to clean up. Years later, they could all laugh about it. But Whiskers knew from the second that Rockefeller entered the house that Christmas is what you make of it, and he had a wonderful time.

EC-CHAP
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"Songs for Ukraine" A Benefit Event to support the people of Ukraine EXTENDED

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EC-CHAP
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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 to learn more and to apply online. Questions may be addressed by email to: info@ec-chap.org; or by calling: 518.791.9474.

WWW.EC-CHAP.ORG

Solar Today:

“Questions and answers about solar in our community and beyond”

By John Boiano

Honor Earth Day every day!

Greetings all,

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

Do rising electric rates get you down?
If so, get your CBD out!

You may have seen or heard that for the 7th year in a row, Eversource and UI are raising their rates January 1st! What a surprise, right?

This time, it's a whopper! They're saying to get ready for a 50% price increase on the standard service rate this winter! Last month I mentioned a 30% increase. That's because within the month, they raised their amount by another 20%.

You may have seen recent Eversource ads, or radio spots like the one on NPR interviews, Facebook ads, direct emails and more.

11/17/22 – NBC CT said: *“Eversource files Electric Rate Increase Request; Eversource has asked the state Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to approve an increase that the company said could increase the electric bill for an average customer by nearly 50 percent, or \$85 per month, on the supply portion of the bill.”*

11/18/22 – CT Monitor said: *“Average CT electric bill could jump about \$80.00 a month in January!”*

11/18/22 – CT Mirror said: *“As Eversource, UI propose big rate hikes, regulators and lawmakers say that they can't do much about it.”*

Wait, what? Regulators and lawmakers can't do much about it? Don't the utilities have to get approval by the energy commission for the increased prices?

The Utilities are really getting smart about softening the blow by seeding marketing announcements for price increases. In prior years it was a surprise when the rates went up. We usually found out about it if we were tuned in to very specific news casts or if we happened to notice it on our bills. Now, they preach it loud and clear and here's why. With announcing an increase ahead of time and putting out really big numbers, it has statistically curbed the amount of upset customer calls coming into the customer service lines once the new price goes into effect. So, by letting you know how much you're going to get gouged, before they gouge you, they're softening the blow. Now, That's some Smart marketing!

You know where I'm going with this, right?

Yupppp , Solar - it's a proven solution to locking in your electric rate!
And if solar works for you, you'll have a great ROI and save money right from the start.

Here's a little reiteration from last month's article;

People often ask me, “When's the best time to go solar”?

When you're ready to look into it and when it feels right for you!

When is the best time of year to go solar?

November through February is the best time to get the most out of your first years production! This way the system is up and running by the time the sun starts to produce the most usable energy in the springtime. *With that said, ANYTIME, and as soon as possible is the best time!*

Additionally: There are numerous ways to finance a residential solar project. Most have no upfront cost and payments start approx. 60 days after solar is installed. The concept is that you take the SAME money that you would spend with the electric company and invest it in yourself. In most cases, the monthly payment for solar is less than what you are currently spending for electricity.

If you are at least a little bit curious to see if solar could offset utility price increases, *please give me a call and we can discover it together. A complimentary, no commitment 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!

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www.zensolar.net



The Packing House in Winter!

By EC-CHAP

December

"How did it get so late so soon?"
 - Dr. Seuss

As we escort 2022 away to the archives, we finish the year with new and returning artists, a new Showcase of Talent, and an EC-CHAP Holiday Tradition! We hope you will join us for the start of winter and a Season of Magic!

“SONGS FOR UKRAINE” – A BENEFIT EXTENDED:

As indicated last month, EC-CHAP is extending our “Songs for Ukraine” Benefit Event to reach a goal of \$10,000 to support the people Ukraine. The nightly news continues to highlight the ongoing destruction to the country’s infrastructure and civilian suffrage as the winter sets in.



We’re over halfway to our goal and hope you will consider joining us and give what you are able. We hope to offer a video stream of the “Songs for Ukraine” Concert (held on September 24th) in the near future. Tickets will be offered as a free will donation. Please visit <http://thepackinghouse.us/upcoming> for ticket availability.

To learn more about how you can help, and to donate to this cause, please visit: <https://www.ec-chap.org/benefit-for-ukraine> or click the “Songs for Ukraine – Extended” QR Code. 100% of all funds raised go directly to the people of Ukraine through our Charitable Partner, Direct Relief.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

EC-CHAP ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES: ASH & ERIC (Folk/Indie) – Saturday, December 3rd – 7:30pm (Doors Open 7:00pm)

Ash & Eric, a fresh creative Massachusetts based acoustic duo debuts at The Packing House on December 3rd! Their thoughtful lyrics and sweet melodies will make you wanting more.

ASH & ERIC (photo above) have never shied away from life’s hard edges. The married couple’s new album “Sure” (May 2022) is “a tale of love... [with] some heartaches and a pinch of disputation along the way” (Americana UK). Hailing from the gritty heart of New England (Worcester, MA), the two find consolation in discovering beauty in the challenges of life.

Their musings reflect the hope and pain we all experience, sung in voices as vulnerable and honest as their lyrics. Their songs feel like a warm welcome, a shoulder to lean on and a hand to hold at the end of a long day. No Depression says their writing will leave listeners “...coming away from many of these [songs] cleansed”. Their warm harmonies, swirling acoustic guitars, and easy stage presence have earned them a dedicated following in the emerging US folk scene, performing with folk legends like Livingston Taylor, Mark Erelli and Vance Gilbert. Tickets \$20.00 Online / \$25.00 at the Door.

EC-CHAP ACOUSTIC ARTIST SERIES: SOLO ARTIST TRACY WALTON (Folk/Indie) – Saturday, December 10th – 7:30pm (Doors Open 7:00pm)

TRACY WALTON wears many musical hats: Singer songwriter, bassist, producer, author, and studio owner. He has toured the country with various groups including most recently the duo Belle of the Fall. Tracy has also played bass with David Bromberg, and Vernon Reid among others.

Tracy’s 4th solo album, “Small Town America”, was released summer 2021. He also produces albums for artists at his studio, On Deck Sound Studio, in Northfield CT. Tickets: \$20.00 online / \$25.00 at the door.



EC-CHAP MONTHLY TALENT SHOWCASE – 2nd Wednesday of the Month – Wednesday, December 14th, 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 Film Series – 2nd Thursday of the Month:
“It’s A Wonderful Life”. (PG) 1946. December 15th, 7:00pm
(Doors Open 6:30pm)**

This seasonal classic has been an EC-CHAP tradition with a screening each Holiday Season since 2016 (unfortunately we missed 2020 due to COVID-19).

It’s A Wonderful Life (PG) was written by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett; and directed by Frank Capra. Starring James Stewart, Donna Reed, and Lionel Barrymore. “An angel helps a compassionate but despairingly frustrated businessman by showing what life would have been like if he never existed.” (IMDb).



Join us for the 6th annual showing of this Holiday classic “It’s A Wonderful Life” (1946) at The Packing House. Suggested Donation \$5.00

SAVE THE DATES – JANUARY 2023!

- Wednesday, January 11th, 2023 - 7:00pm – EC-CHAP Talent Showcase (2nd Wednesday)
- Thursday, January 12th, 2023 - 7:00pm – EC-CHAP Film Series: “Girl With A Pearl Earring” (PG-13) 2003.
- Saturday, January 14th, 2023 - 7:30pm - EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series: Ramblin’ Dan Stevens (Blues).
- Saturday, January 28th, 2023 - 7:30pm - EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series: Sperry Creek (Bluegrass).

Neighbors
Locally Written
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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.

Soft drinks and snacks available at all events. Unless otherwise noted, we are pleased to offer our exclusive “BY-OB&F” TM model - Bring Your Own Beverage & Food TM (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). You can also bring your paid ticket to Willington Pizza House (or WP Too) for eat-in or take-out the night of the show and receive 15% off your meal purchase. Ask for “The Packing House” pizza! Click [HERE](#) for secret recipe.

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).

We leave you with the following:

*“As we look to the new year,
hold on to what is good.
Let go of what is bad.
It really is that simple.”*
- Mandy Hale

Wishing you a safe & healthy Holiday Season!
EC-CHAP Board

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History, Art, and Performance, Inc.

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 to learn more and to apply online. Questions may be addressed by email to: info@ec-chap.org; or by calling: 518.791.9474.

WWW.EC-CHAP.ORG

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Connecticut Arms Industry During The Civil War

By Ryan Elgin

Previously in the *Connecticut Industry During Times of War* series, we discussed how Connecticut earned the moniker of “The Provision State” during the Revolutionary War for its steady supply of food, clothing and ammunition to the Continental Army. Connecticut would maintain its earned nickname in the Civil War, once again due to its industry and ingenuity. A clear departure from the Revolutionary War era, Connecticut had advanced considerably in manufacturing and industrial capacity by the early-mid 19th century. This can clearly be seen with the topic of our previous article on the Hazard Powder Company. While gunpowder manufacturing was small-scale during the Revolutionary Period, mostly taking place in small mills with a handful of workers, by the Civil War Connecticut was home to one of the largest gunpowder manufacturing facilities in the United States that spanned hundreds of buildings and provided nearly half of all the Union’s gunpowder.

The firearms industry saw a great deal of advancement in Connecticut. At the start of the war, Connecticut was home to: The Sharps Rifle Manufacturing Company, Whitney Armory, Colt’s Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company, Savage Revolving Firearms Company, New Haven Arms Company, and the Joslyn Firearms Company. All would provide their manufacturing capabilities to the war effort in either assisting with production of an established military arm or providing their own models, such as the Colt Model 1860 Army revolver, the Sharps rifles, and the Joslyn rifle. Various other businesses with the capacity to help supply the Union turned to rifle manufacturing as well. Norwich Arms and Eagleville Manufacturing Company, both textile manufacturers of Norwich, were contracted to build rifled muskets. Parker Snow & Company of Meriden switched from making kitchen utensils and sewing machines to firearms. Eli Whitney’s original idea of interchangeable parts for his rifles made in New Haven in the late 1700s, in a time where most rifles were individually hand fitted, had made great strides in the decades after his passing. It was this idea of interchangeable parts that allowed Connecticut to expand so rapidly in firearms manufacturing at the start of the war. Both the main armories and subcontractors of the standard Union rifle could produce parts to the same specifications, leading to synergy between Connecticut companies, ease of production, and later repair of the rifles if needed. By the end



of the war in 1865, Connecticut had produced 43% of all the rifled muskets, breech loading rifles and carbines, and revolvers purchased by the War Department.

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History

A notable figure in ammunition procurement was Benjamin Hotchkiss. Working at Hotchkiss and Sons in Sharon Connecticut, he was awarded multiple patents for artillery projectiles and the fuses to be used in them. His design of a cast iron projectile, often made of iron from North-West Connecticut, joined by a band of lead in the middle section allowed the shell to better engage the grooves of a cannon’s rifling, creating a more accurate projectile. The various artillery shell designs created and produced by Hotchkiss and Sons would be among the most commonly used during the war.



With Connecticut manufacturing mass quantities of rifles and pistols along with the ammunition to go with it at the Hazard Powder Company - the bayonet or sword was the missing component. Oftentimes the armory or contracted manufacturer would make bayonets in addition to the rifles they were already producing. However, the extremely well regarded Collins Company of Canton, Connecticut used their experience in edged tool and agricultural equipment making to manufacture swords and bayonets for Union forces. Angular bayonets were then sent to Sharps, Whitney, and Colt companies of Connecticut to help supplement their own production. Collins Company

catered to officers or wealthy cavalrymen directly with swords or custom highly polished blades featuring elaborate etching.

The photo included in this article is sourced from the Library of Congress. It shows an unidentified Union Cavalryman sporting a Colt Army revolver and a Sharps Carbine - both made in Connecticut. The saber he holds could possibly be Collins made as well, but there’s no way to know with any certainty. This ambrotype portrait serves as just a small example of how Connecticut helped arm the Union. Just as in the Revolutionary War, Connecticut industry proved again to be a symbol of America’s industrial might and a vast wellspring for the Northern States to call on when needed.

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.

When Trees Shed Their Leaves On High

When trees shed their leaves on high
and days have grown short and cold,
their bare limbs reach up to the sky
when trees shed their leaves on high.
Days of summer, we've said goodbye,
round the fire now, stories to be told,
when trees shed their leaves on high
and days have grown short and cold.

This poem is a Triolet, which is an eight-line poetic form. Within a Triolet, the 1st, 4th, and 7th lines repeat, and the 2nd and 8th lines do as well. The rhyme scheme is simple: ABaAabAB, capital letters representing the repeated lines.

Felix F. Giordano © 2007

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Our Neighbor's Art



Ed. note: This issue of Neighbors features the artwork of local artist Kerri Quirk. Above is 'A Walk in the Park, 2018.' Thank you to local photographer Randy McMahon for posting Kerri's work on FB. Visit her studio 861 Main Street, Willimantic. The following bio was taken from her website.

Kerri Quirk is an artist with a remarkable gift for color, design, and pattern. She works primarily in the acrylic medium, often on very large canvases. Her art is infused with magical threads, colors that ignite and daring perspectives. Kerri's distinctive signature is a work of art in itself.

Kerri has been a working artist since 1988 and like most artists had very humble beginnings, working in a shared studio space in Mansfield, Connecticut. She is a person with autism who is deaf. Her art is truly her voice.



Kerri's work is not influenced by the conventions of the art world but instead seems at times to spring or gush directly from her soul. Often it appears that Kerri feels the need to harness a specific image or make some exotic sense of the colors she sees in the world around her.

At times she works quickly with dots and dashes to create canvasses that seem to shimmer. During one period in the late '90s Kerri produced art very slowly, adding layer after layer of color creating very rich, dense paintings.

Friends and family have tried to influence Kerri's choice of subject or medium, but generally she selects the subjects that interest her. She often creates multiple works on a common subject.

Art world insiders instantly recognize Kerri's work. She has become a favorite of collectors, critics, and curators. Kerri's work is consistently featured in Chicago and New York Outsider Art Fairs. The recipient of numerous awards, Kerri was chosen by the Connecticut Very Special Arts Council to present one of her paintings to Senator Christopher J. Dodd.

Kerri's paintings have been exhibited at galleries and art exhibitions throughout Connecticut, as well as Boston, New York, Chicago and Washington, D.C. Her work has been featured in art brochures, calendars, concert tickets and book covers.

Outsider Art is synonymous with "Art Brut," French for "raw art," referring to art that has not been "cooked" by the traditional art world of schools, galleries and museums. Instead, it is art that is pure and unaffected by concerns with competition, fame or financial reward. No one influences Kerri's art. It is the result of her own brilliance.

Kerri opened her new gallery and studio in Willimantic in May 2010, which serves as an inspiration for the expanding art world in Eastern Connecticut. Here Kerri paints five days a week in a restored 1890 Main Street storefront. Artist Tom Menard and the non-profit agency Horizons empower Kerri to share her sharper view of reality.

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Windham Arts News

Submitted by Bev York

Windham Arts

Dec. 3 and 4 Artisans Emporium at East Brooke Mall. Sat 10 to 5 and Sun. 12 to 4. See artists and crafters displaying their art for sale. Painters, Photography, Jewelry and more. 95 Storrs Road, Mansfield.

The Coffee Break Gallery at the Eastern Connecticut Veteran's Community Center will feature the art of local veterans during December. The center is open daily and staffed by volunteers. The center is located at 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic.

Jillson House Museum

Dec. 7 Tavern Night: Pearl Harbor Day with FDR and Eleanor Roosevelt 5 p.m. Discover fascinating facts and the president's favorite food and drink. Jillson House 627 Main Street, Willimantic CT Suggested donation to the museum \$10.

Dec. 17 "A Christmas Carol" Meet Scrooge and the other characters. Tours of the presentation occur every 20 minutes between 1 and 4 p.m. Jillson House Museum 627 Main Street, Willimantic CT Suggested donation to the museum Adults \$5, Children \$1.



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"Best Little Blues Club in the Country"

The Shaboo Inn

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

THANKFUL this holiday season for the resilience of American democracy and the festive hopeful spirit of **Woodstock** (the NY festival) and Connecticut's **Shaboo Inn**. The **Shaboo Stage** is a great outdoor space in Willimantic, and a reminder of the remarkable historic venue that was north of town fifty years ago, thanks to teenager **Bruce John** and friends.

1847 The Shaboo Inn was first a wooden silk mill on Conantville Road off the Natchaug River in Mansfield. Over the next century, it devolved into a "run down hotel" ... briefly rejuvenated with Woodstock spirit... and is today a forgotten site somewhere in East Brook Mall. For nearly a dozen years, however, it was the "*Best Little Blues Club in the Country*" wrote Scott St. John (MUSIC, 23 October 2011).

The term *Shaboo* is "a long story" describing a euphoric state says Mr. John; also a Muslim name for girls meaning "*The Name Of A Flower.*" **Big Mama Thornton**, **Bonnie Raitt**, **Emmylou Harris**, and **Odetta** sang there. And

many male musicians rocked the room in this Quiet Corner of northeastern Connecticut.

1969 The legendary *Woodstock Music & Art Festival* was August 15–18 on Max Yasgur's dairy farm in Bethel NY, 40 miles southwest of the town of Woodstock. The "*Aquarian Exposition: 3 Days of Peace & Music*" attracted an audience over 400,000. Thirty-two acts performed, an extra day in sporadic rain, in a generation's defining event.

Woodstock (1970) is the documentary film and soundtrack. **Joni Mitchell's** song -- *By the time I got to Woodstock* -- became a hit for **Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young** and a touchstone for the Hippy generation. She wrote the countercultural anthem at a pivotal moment in music history, but missed the festival and "*had to watch it on TV.*"

*I'm going on down to Yasgur's farm
I'm going to join in a rock 'n' roll band
I'm going to camp out on the land
I'm going to try an' get my soul free.
By the time we got to Woodstock
We were half a million strong
And everywhere there was
song and celebration.*

*We are stardust
We are golden
And we've got to get ourselves
Back to the gar—den.*

- Joni Mitchell

1970 Willimantic teenagers **Bruce, Gary** and sister **Kerry John**, with **David "Lefty" Foster** and his brother **Mark**, managed to buy the old building at the edge of Mansfield, near Storrs and the University of Connecticut. The Shaboo Music Club opened in **1971** with college crowds from UConn and nearby Eastern Connecticut State College (as then known). Bruce John's Wall of Wonder of photos and posters is a home museum of Shaboo's days.

Way Out Of The Way some thought, but the Shaboo Inn was actually well located as a music venue — halfway between Boston and New York, Hartford and Providence. Many acts toured then, playing clubs to build a following and sell records.

Interviewing Foster, FOX61 reported, *"Some of it was luck. In order to get **Iggy Pop** to play, Foster had to make a deal. Pop's manager also managed his brother's band, and this would be the second stop on their first tour of America. The manager was Ian Copeland. The brother, Stewart Copeland, was the drummer for **The Police**. Their single, "Roxanne," hadn't been released yet and they were unknown. They got \$1 for every person in the club, which amounted to \$12."*

BLUES The "Best Little Blues Club in the Country" was the hottest spot for live music in New England for over a decade wrote St. John. *"I was 13 years old the first time I saw 24-year-old **Bonnie Raitt** play to a packed house on a Tuesday night for a \$2.00 admission."*

A thousand people could converge on Shaboo's 15 by 30' stage only one foot off the floor. Close to the adoring audience, Artists felt the love. For eleven extraordinary years, the Shaboo Inn welcomed the world's best blues performers: **James Cotton, Muddy Waters**, then they all came from Chicago's Southside and the Mississippi Delta.

Buddy Guy and his "Chicago blues" came. **Bobby Blue Bland** mixed blues with gospel, rhythm & blues. **Howlin Wolf** and **Hound Dog Taylor** came with **John Lee Hooker** and **T-Bone Walker** ... **BB King** and **Freddie King, Willie Dixon, James Montgomery** and **Junior Wells** ... they all came to the Shaboo.

COTTON James Cotton's blues and Shaboo's mill history reminds us that the South's "Cotton Kingdom" had a huge local role. Mansfield had several mills on the Fenton, Mount Hope and Natchaug Rivers, and Killingly may have manufactured more textiles, but cotton created Willimantic, Connecticut!

1820 Western Windham was mostly "scrub oak forest" with a few pre-industrial mills grinding grain, some subsistence farms, two turnpikes and a tavern. But 40 years before the Civil War, the sparsely populated village of Willimantic Falls was able to profit on slave-picked southern cotton -- as many other northern towns with waterpower.

The Willimantic River was a waterpowerful gorge of steep hills, dropping nearly 100 feet in less than a mile. By **1826**, Willimantic ("Falls" deleted) had four cotton mills and a post office. A turnpike -- and railroad after **1849** when Willimantic became a railhub -- connected the mill village to an ocean port city only 15 miles away, Norwich at the head of the Thames tidal basin. Thus to the Deep South cotton fields. According to the Windham Textile & History Museum, *"Cotton was 'King' in New England as well as in the South."*

'The Cotton Kingdom' was published in **1853** by Frederick Law Olmsted, a young journalist from Hartford who revealed the South's dependence on cotton. (By **1886**, America's first landscape architect would design Boston's Emerald Necklace and Arnold Arboretum.)



"Painted Lady" Victorian house in Willimantic.

Photo by author.

Cotton mills brought prosperity to Willimantic, evident in its colorful Victorian houses, the "Painted Ladies" north of town. America's Victorian Age had many successive architectural styles during Queen Victoria's long British reign (**1837-1901**).

Similarly, **Rock & Roll** was an amalgam of many musical styles, a genre of popular American music that evolved from Black music in the **late 1940s and 50s**... blues, rhythm and blues, gospel and soul, all blended with white country music.

continued on page 46

Shaboo continued from page 45

ROCK brought dozens more performers to the Shaboo Inn: **Aerosmith, Hall & Oates, Journey, Little Feat** and gravel-voiced **Tom Waits** came ... **Dr. John, Lou Reed** and soul men **Sam & Dave** ... **Blood, Sweat & Tears** with **Al Cooper, Taj Mahal** and **Tower of Power**... **Cheap Trick**, the **Animals, Cars** and **Police** ... even poet **Leonard Cohen** ... they all came to the Inn.

Jazz greats **Dave Brubeck, Miles Davis, Les McCann** and **Weather Report** came. Breaking artists **Elvis Costello, Robert Palmer, Dire Straits** and the **Talking Heads**, and the “Godfather of Punk” **Iggy Pop** came. British legends, the **Byrds** with **Roger McGuinn, Cream** with **Jack Bruce**, and gritty **Joe Cocker** came with **Manfred Mann** and **John Mayall**. Woodstock acts **Arlo Guthrie, Richie Havens, Johnny Winter** and **Canned Heat** “made you feel like it was 1969 all over again.”

Notable exceptions: Not ‘King’ Elvis who left the earthly room in **1977**; nor Dylan.

However, the times they were a-changing. The music industry had become more corporate, reducing local influence,

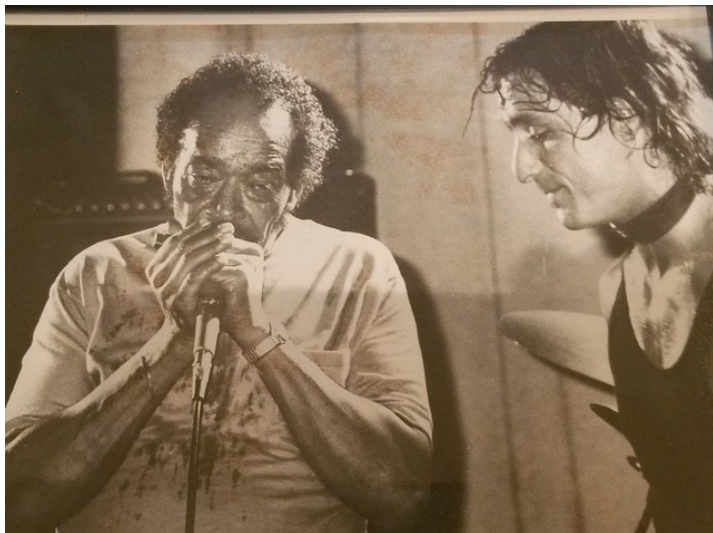


The Shaboo Inn, circa 1971.

Contributed photo.

*“I can’t remember if I cried
When I read about his widowed bride
But something touched me deep inside
The day... the music died.”*

- Don McLean



James Cotton playing blues harp, and James Montgomery.
Contributed photo.

Foster said. MTV was coming and people watching videos at home easily adapted. Changes in tax laws lost the financial support of “parents (who) used to back their children with record deals and could take a write off.”

1982 The music came to an end on May 13th when the Shaboo Inn closed. Three months later, before closing with new owners, fire destroyed the building.

“So bye bye, Miss American Pie” (**Don McLean** 1970). With paperboy memories learning of Buddy Holly’s death in **1959**, “American Pie” also alluded to America’s idealized postwar **1950s** and the bleak wartime **1960s**.

46 Neighbors



Buddy Guy and Junior Wells, the first real blues legends to play at Shaboo.
Contributed photo.

Wish I’d been here. But I was here for the **Canned Heat** Salute to ‘**Woodstock 50**’ at the outdoor Shaboo Stage in August **2019**. A rocking pre-pandemic show featured their iconic hippy hymn, “*Going Up The Country*.” My partner and I had just come “up the country” from Boston to Chaplin. In fact, she hitchhiked to Woodstock from Boston in **1969**. (Still audacious, but anonymous) Willimantic still rocks and Woodstock spirit abounds at the **Willimantic Co-op**.

Take your Chevy to the levee in Mansfield Hollow, and the levee’s not dry.

continued on next page

Make Daylight Savings Time Permanent

By Dean Farrell

In the spring of 2022, a bill passed the United States Senate to make Daylight Savings Time permanent as of next spring. When last I heard, the bill hadn't yet passed the House. Here's hoping it did or does.

I'm a 3rd-shift worker. This time of year, I often go weeks at a clip without seeing daylight. It's depressing as hell! So just this once, can we please accommodate the people who don't wake up each day before even the chickens do?

2020 The newly-founded **New England Music Hall of Fame** inducted **Bruce John** and **David Foster** as musician-cofounders of the legendary **Shaboo Inn**. John is also co-founder of the **Bread Box Theater** that benefits Willimantic's **Covenant Soup Kitchen** to limit hunger.

FILM? *'Shaboo Inn'* might also be a "Rockumentary" film of the small venue with big acts. Fifty years later, this epic American music story is being celebrated by Netflix. Twenty-five years of music history with 170 musicians, a promo claims. "For tens of thousands of people who were lucky enough to be around New England forty years ago," noted St. John in 2011, "it was a magical and sometimes mystical place in an amazing era in music."

A screening on the riverfront? Dancing in the aisles? Yes, please.

Save me an aisle seat.

THANKS to **Bruce John** and his Wall of Wonder photos; a FOX61 newsletter-interview with **David Foster** (May 2022); and the **Windham Textile & History Museum / Mill Museum**.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, Chaplin

Lunch with Santa

Submitted by Elaine Wilson

Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp on Sunday, December 4, 2022 from 11 AM to 1 PM at 326 Taft Pond Rd in Pomfret.

Have lunch upstairs in the lodge or just come for a photo with Santa and avoid the lines at the mall.

Made to order Pasta Bar, salad, drinks and desserts (gluten free pasta available).

Join us in making holiday crafts, cookies, S'mores and more and shop our selection of silent auction baskets.

Tickets available ahead of time by calling 974-3379, email registrar@4h-campct.org or at the door. \$8.00 for children up to age 8, \$12.00 for those 9 and older for lunch, **5 x 7 Photo with Santa \$8.00.**

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www.tranquilityaesthetic.com

Instagram: Tranquility_aesthetics FB: Tranquility Aesthetics and Wellness Center

ATTRIBUTES: NEW LOCATION!!!
New clients: 10% discount for 30 days
WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS

We specialize in.....

- Botox • Dermal Fillers • PDO Threads (non-surgical face lift)
- Skin Resurfacing and Rejuvenation • Chemical Peels
- Microneedling • Medically-supervised Weight Loss Program • Wellness Visits

We have medical-grade skin care products including- SkinMedica® and PCA SKIN® products



Happiness is key to **Living Well.**

If your passion project is more satisfying than your career, it might be time to make it full-time. Leverage our *Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well* process to make a smooth transition to greater professional meaning, without sacrificing your lifestyle.



Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™

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