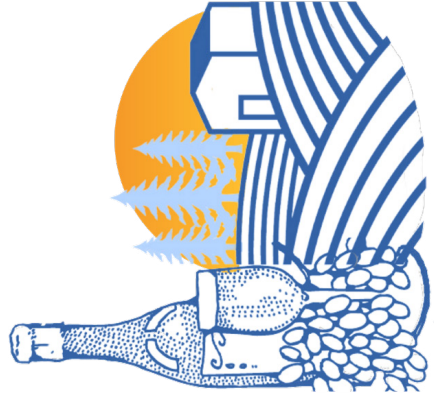


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Looking Up:

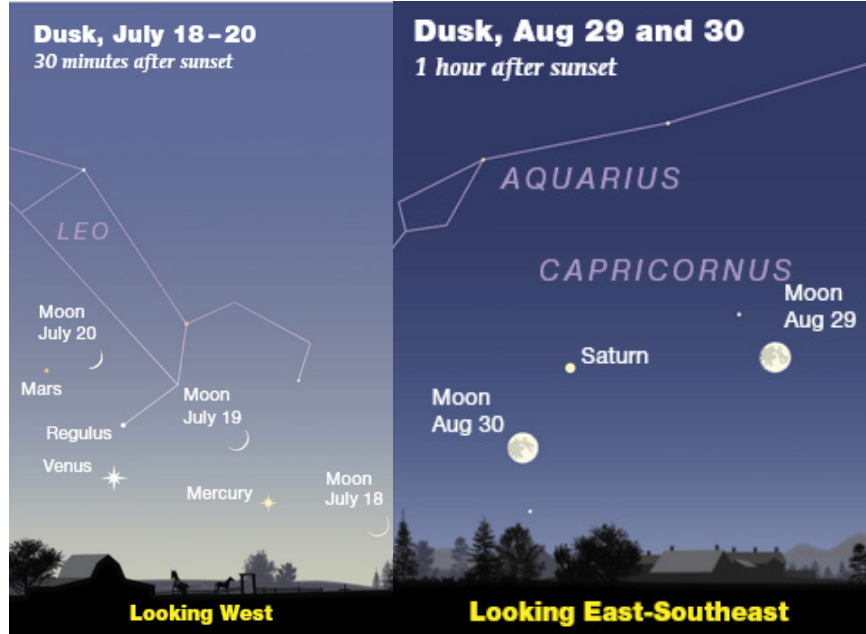
We Are All Storytellers

By Bob Grindle

There were moments when, as a young grammar school student, my attention would drift far from the lesson being taught. It didn't take much...a bird flying past a window, a cloud shapeshifting against a blue sky, the steady droning sound of the class's 20 gallon aquarium or the rainy day smell of a class of nearly 40 kids all trying to shake or shiver or stamp themselves dry, and sometimes just thinking about running across a summer field and down the hill to the old gravel pit. A fifth grade geography or history or English lesson didn't stand a chance against the fresh, youthful pull of an imagination in full wild horses racing across the high plains state of mind. Despite the teacher's concerns expressed to my parents that I was too easily distracted and not living up to some lofty, hoped for or imagined potential, thoughts about bicycle trips down to the river or an upcoming family vacation or some recent exploration of a nearby abandoned factory would still fill that enormous etch-a-sketch screen that lurks on stage in the theater of each of our minds. Such thoughts gently nudged our teacher, Mrs. Krammer's, curricular efforts off the stage...all but one effort, the class's daily trip to the school library.

The school library was a place where a young imagination could rope-swing out over the deep canyon of youthful optimism without hearing the gentle gasps of those who might prefer a bit less mystery in how their days, or lives unfold. I'd like to think that Mrs. Krammer grasped full well the pure magic of her sorcery as she led the class down hallway for a half hour of rather jittery library discovery time followed by another half hour of

always rapt and quiet story time. As I sit here looking out through an open window into an early July rainfall that transforms every perception of the surrounding woodland...at least to human eyes...I am reflecting on the 50th anniversary trip my wife and I just completed. There is a small part of me that knows that a fifth grade teacher—by guiding her classes to understand that they can learn from the stories of others—owns a tiny piece of the success of our story.



There is a relentless and inexorable edge and complexity to the passage of time. The voyage of life, as poets and writers and painters have described and depicted it, is far more beautiful and mysterious and frightening and filled with more wonders and danger than any charlatan's promise or travel brochure could possibly embrace, and as my wife and I take stock of the vessel that has carried us down this river of life these many years, we chuckle to note that perhaps the boat is in better shape than the sail-

ors. And so it is with humor and excitement that we both look forward to many more years of this journey, crossing summer fields and snowy roads, our minds always looking up while keeping our eyes focused on the path forward.

Looking up into the early morning and after sunset skies has been a test of patience and persistence through much of these last couple of months. If the skies weren't completely hazed by smoke blown in from forest fires to our north, they were usually cloudy and threatening rain. But perhaps July and August will bring better viewing, and the three full Moons that frame these two Summer months—that's right, three full Moons in two months—will have a way of shining through whatever nature puts in their way. In fact, the full Sturgeon Moon of August 1st and the full Blue Moon of August 30th will both be Super Moons because the Moon will be at its nearest to the Earth of the entire year. As twilight fades an hour after sunset on Wednesday, August 30, cast a look to the east-southeast and the full Super Moon, the second full Moon of August, will be rising with Saturn, slightly above and to the right. Of course, if you're anything like me, all full Moons are super.

But, while full Moons get more than their share of attention and romantic poetry, they tend to overwhelm the smaller details of night time sky watching. The nights of July 18-20, half an hour after sunset, a little before 9 pm, will treat sky watchers to a jeweler's case of small details as the young and delicate waxing crescent Moon passes by Mars, Regulus, Venus and Mercury as it sets into the western sky.

The rain has ended and the chorus of birds reminds me that our planet is full of communities, full of neighborhoods, full of promise and beauty and full of opportunity to help care for it. Be well, enjoy the next couple of summer months in our gem of a neighborhood...and maybe visit your local library.

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On our cover-
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Clockwise from upper left: Jean de Smet,
Bill Potvin, Rhonda Twiss, Bev York and a pair of
unidentified parade attendees.
Pete Polomski photos.

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

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P.O. Box 430
Ashford, CT 06278
phone: 860-933-3376
email: neighborspaper@yahoo.com
website: neighborspaper.com

Tom King, Editor & Publisher
Dagmar Noll, Calendar Editor
Steve Woron, Mac Guru
Marisa Calvo, Graphic Design
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Writers:
Delia Berlin, Gary Bergquist,
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The Purpose of Neighbors:
-To encourage reading
-To provide a place where ideas, writing, artwork
and photographs of area residents can be shared
-To encourage people to get involved in their
communities
-To begin to solve national and global problems
on a local basis
-To provide useful information
-To serve the inhabitants and environment of our region

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Thomas A. King, member

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SUMMER GALLERY HAPPENINGS

EXHIBIT
"Vantage Points"
Photographic Exhibition of
David Hayes Sculpture Fields
May 6, 2023 - July 17, 2023

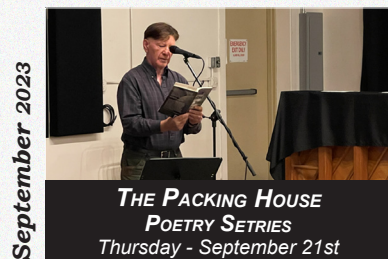


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September 2023

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What is Your Awe Quotient?

By Loretta Wrobel



The dictionary defines awe as “a feeling of reverential respect mixed with fear or wonder.” Another definition is “the feeling we get when in the presence of something vast that challenges our understanding of the world.” These descriptions evoke a deep emotional reaction in me. I was captivated by this concept as I read the book by Dacher Keltner, titled *AWE: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life*. A 2023 book that gives a new wrinkle on how to exist and thrive in our present world. The author of this book focuses on the wonder, creativity, and collaborative dimension of awe, not on the other side of awe that features horror and fear.

I believe I have always been aware of awe, and never paid conscious attention to how frequently or when I have been exposed to awe. Often, we brush that experience aside and continue rushing through our packed and frenzied day. What unlocked my heart and cleared my mind was the suggestion to pause and digest my awe encounters on a regular basis and remember the feelings the experience evoked.

We exist in a world that is crammed with awe events, if we choose to witness them. What I understand is that standing in the middle of a mind-boggling awe event, I can absorb and feel it or I can zoom past it totally, not acknowledging the depth of what I felt or how it changed my mood. When I remain unconscious as to what is before me, it is as if it has not occurred.

Dacher Keltner writes, “Awe begins in encounters with the eight wonders of life” and “the experience of awe unfolds in a space of its own,” where a person feels good. He believes that we as humans can witness occasions of awe in everyday life. Awe can be everywhere, such as in the arts, especially music, in nature, in birth and death, and in many ordinary happenings that leave us profoundly open, elated, and feeling connected to a larger community. Asking ourselves how we process this information gives us a start to open to the curiosity and beauty of awe.

What impressed me was Keltner discovered that people who are awake to awe experiences exhibit behavior that is more connecting, and demonstrate a greater sense of community! If we stop for a moment, we all have felt the body awareness of awe with chills, hair standing on end and/or goose bumps. We are all aware of the whoa or ahh moments. However, do we consistently pay attention and record these times in our consciousness?

If the awe moments were to become more conscious in our ordinary day-to-day lives, would our feelings, emotions, and mental health be positively magnified? Studies have shown that when we are surrounded by nature, our blood pressure is lower, we express feelings of happiness,

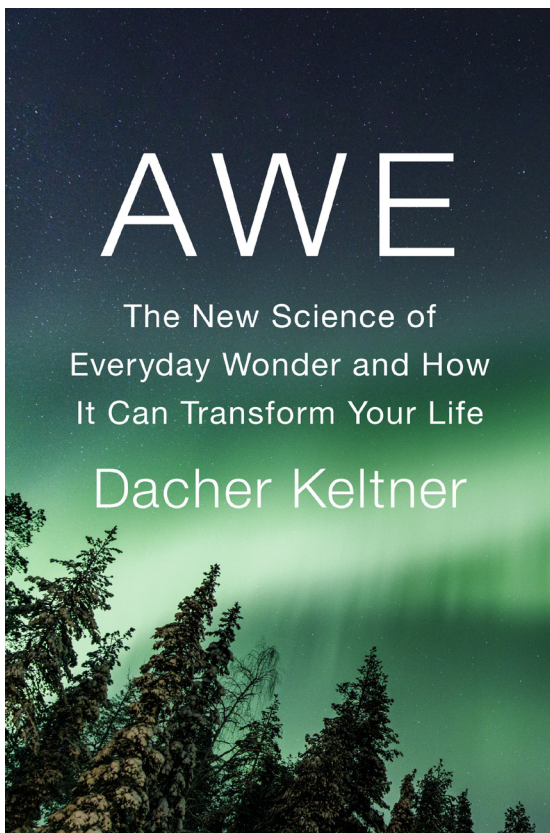
and we are more likely to engage in behavior that reflects kindness and a greater thirst for social connection. The author reports that after experiencing awe, participants are less depressed and not as lonely. Could we enhance our mental health by tuning in to the awe that surrounds us?

Keltner talks of the myriad examples of wonderment in our world, from witnessing acts of courage, strength and overcoming obstacles, to walking in a forest or standing next to the ocean. The health benefits of being in nature are well documented by many researchers. The Japanese developed forest bathing to promote mental stability and decrease stress. Forest bathing is simply being present in nature sans all our high-tech devices. The author discusses the biological need for awe. We are hardwired to be soothed by our awe exposure to guide us in feeling our joy at being alive on this mysterious planet. He quoted the poet Wadsworth as saying, “O there is a blessing in this gentle breeze.”

The author mentions the ability we possess to be awe-struck by music. Music provides an opportunity to be connected to each other as we move with the beat. Music can energize us, calm us, anger us, inspire us, or allow us to feel serene and at peace. As humans we can connect and bond in the musical experience and develop a powerful sense of connection and community. Social movements have coalesced through the strength of a song or march. The Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1970’s and 1980’s was propelled forward by women’s music that provided direction, permission, and joy, supplying the foundation for a radical life altering community of empowered women.

Who has not attended a sporting event and cheered along with the crowd for the home team? I remember being in Madrid at a bull fight and getting swept away with the ritual, celebration, and passion. I was shouting “Ole!” with all the other attendees and felt part of the group. I would not have guessed in advance that I would become one with the crowd at such an event. It was a magical time, as I felt like a Spaniard and cheered along boisterously with everyone else, being overwhelmed by feelings. I can still reminisce and be back there during that extraordinary event, although it is more than a half century ago. That is the ultimate awe experience.

How can we begin to integrate this awesome news so we can all benefit during these frustrating and scary times? We can increase our ability to love, operate from a humane perspective, and react with tenderness to our world. Awe can shift and shape our daily encounters and put deeper meaning in our lives. We can become better community members and more compassionate people in a world that continually challenges our patience, generosity, and sanity. Can we learn to develop our awe awareness so at the end of each day we are grateful for our astonishing, enhancing, mystical, beautiful, and breath-catching times? Let us become worshippers of celebrating and honoring awe whenever we feel, sense, smell, or see it.



Second Saturday Community Breakfast New Time for Summer!

Columbia Congregational Church
7:30am-10am Route 87 in the Parish Hall

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For information contact Michele at the Church Office: 860-228-9306.

Dear Readers, Writers and Advertisers

July 5, 2023

The six-month mini-tab ‘experiment’ is over. The magazine format was enjoyed by many readers including my wife, Karen. Unfortunately, I was unable to make it work financially. So, we are back to the tabloid format which should be sustainable for years to come.

Also, this is the second of our 2023 bi-monthly issues. We will be back to monthly in September. I hope you are able to enjoy the summer and continue to read, submit to and advertise in *Neighbors*. Your support is greatly appreciated. Please stop and say ‘Hi’ at our table at the July 20th Willimantic 3rd Thursday Streetfest.
Tom King

it's a great day for a subway!

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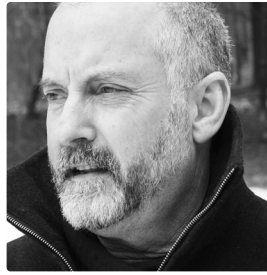
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Columbia's East Willow Farm

By C. Dennis Pierce

"I learned long ago never to wrestle with a pig. You get dirty, and besides, the pig likes it."

-George Bernard Shaw



There are times in your life when the unexpected turns your life around. Tom and Kyla Satkowski, current owners of East Willow Farm in Columbia, were living in Berlin and then Amston, Connecticut and were slowly outgrowing their residence and were in search of a larger piece of property. They had engaged a realtor who had introduced them to several options, however these were not quite right. Finally running out of viable options an opportunity arrived to visit a farm in Columbia. On the day of their visit, they were met by the current owner and to Tom's surprise it was an old classmate who he had not seen in many years. The farm had hundreds of apple trees and Tom's classmate, who was a former chef on the Cape, had come to conclusion that farming was not a career that was practical for him, and he offered Tom and Kyla a deal that they could not refuse. So, that all took place a few years ago, and now, several years later, Tom and Kyla have created a "one stop" shop farm that continues to take Columbia by storm.

Over the years while driving up Route 66, heading out of Columbia proper, while heading to Hebron, I have passed the farm sign on numerous occasions but never took the opportunity to stop in. If you are familiar with the area the entrance to East Willow Farm is right after the park and ride parking lot on Route 66. Visiting the farm, I was welcomed by an inviting avenue of trees that lined the road leading to the farm. While it was a warm day back in Mansfield, I was surprised to feel a fall-like breeze which brought a comforting coolness to the air. At the end of the road there was plenty of parking and a well-appointed farm store. Let me correct that. The "well appointed" description does not do it justice.

Perhaps this is the best place to stop and explain a trend that I see local farmers are adopting. If you look back many years ago our state only hosted a few farmer's markets. Now, most towns have a seasonal market that offers a wide variety of local fresh options. The farmers that are present at the market must spend a lot of time and energy to prepare for the market, load their trucks, set up and then tear down and subsequently unload, always hoping that the weather is conducive, and the market has a lot of customers that are interested in purchasing the farmer's offerings. The trend I mentioned earlier is that some farms are finding that the markets are not the best opportunity and subsequently have created farm stands on their own farms. In essence some of the local farms have almost made a 360-degree change back to what it was in the early days.

Now, let me take you back to Tom and Kyla's, East Willow Farm. Gone are the apple trees except for a few left standing while the land makes way for berry bushes and a field for the chicken tractors. You ask what is a chicken tractor? A chicken tractor is a movable chicken coop lacking a floor. Chicken tractors allow free range feeding along with a shelter, this allows chickens fresh forage such as grass, weeds, and bugs, which widens their diet and lowers their traditional feed needs. Unlike fixed coops, chicken tractors do not have floors so there is no need to clean them out. They support a natural, symbiotic cycle of foraging through which the birds eat down the vegetation, deposit fertilizing manure, then go on to a new area. Tom moves their "tractors" daily, so the chickens are always foraging in a new area.

Adjacent to the parking area is a greenhouse that provides an area to start the farm's vegetable plants as well as providing starter plants for sale to the farm's customers. The farm grows a variety of vegetables, raise pigs, chickens and soon turkeys as they prepare for Thanksgiving. While their produce is not certified organic, they do use organic practices and do not use synthetic fertilizers or pesticides. The farm also has a small apiary that is used to help pollinate their gardens. Tom and Kyla operating a

farm has become a labor of love and devotion. They started this farm because they found something worth sharing right in their own backyard.

As the responsibilities are divided up Tom takes care of the gardens and livestock, and Kyla operates the well-supplied farm store. Their two children are right alongside them pitching in whenever they can. Now their farm store is not an ordinary store since they sell their own meat offerings, eggs, candles that are made by Kyla and extensive line of locally sourced dairy, honey, and bakery items.

Back to the farm activities, Tom makes sure that the farm provides a stress-free setting for their animals. Tom has experimented with various strains of pigs in order to achieve a hybrid vigor, the best attributes of various pig species combined. The farm's pigs are pasture raised and they move from paddock to paddock as they go about clearing the land. Tom refers to them as his "construction workers". Were they happy pigs? I can honestly say when I was taking a photo, I swear I saw some of them smiling.



Tom and Kyla Satkowski, owners of East Willow Farm in Columbia.

So why does East Willow Farm operate with such a caring philosophy? Because their initiative supports healthier and happier animals that are raised ethically in open pastures, animals that deserve to be fed what they are meant to eat. The farm's efforts builds a stronger community which consists of the customers who wants to take back their control of the food they purchase, cook and eat in order to ensure a long term health and happiness for their friends and families. Lastly, the farm's efforts are part of the overall stewardship of the soil since it is one of our most vital resources.

Here is a recipe to try out utilizing East Willow's prized pork:

Maple Glazed Pork Chops with Roasted Corn Relish

Serves: 4

Prepare Corn Relish prior to cooking chops on grill. You can make glaze prior to making corn relish. You might want to place dishes or serving dish, if you are using one dish to serve from in a warm oven ahead of time.

Ingredients:
6 tablespoons of maple syrup
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Freshly ground pepper
4, thick sliced pork chops

Directions:
Combine maple syrup and vinegar in a small saucepan and bring to a gentle simmer over medium heat. Simmer until reduced by half and just thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. About 4 to 5 minutes. Season with several grindings of fresh pepper and set aside.
Pre heat grill to medium high
Oil the grill rack with an oil spray.
Place pork chops on grill for a few minutes and then turn over and do the other side. This should have made grill marks on the chops.



Brush maple glaze on one side of pork chops and then turn the chops over and do the other side.

Cook until the internal temperature is 145 degrees.

Roasted Corn Relish

Ingredients:

4 ounces of thick bacon diced.
½ cup of finely chopped red onion
3 scallions, white and light green parts coarsely chopped.
2 cups of fresh corn kernels (from about 4 ears). Substitute frozen if necessary.
6 tablespoons of maple syrup

1 red or orange bell pepper, stemmed, seeds removed and diced.
2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Directions:

Cook the bacon in a large skillet over medium heat until crisp. Drain all but 1 teaspoon of fat from the pan. Add onion and sauté until lightly cooked. Stir in the scallions, corn, and bell pepper. Raise the heat and add balsamic vinegar. Bring to a boil, scraping up any browned bits. Sauté over high heat, stirring constantly until vegetables are warmed but barely cooked, one to two minutes. Remove from heat and season with salt & pepper. When pork chops are done gently reheat corn mixture by either returning it to the stove or placing it

Dennis Pierce photo.

briefly in the microwave.

Place corn mixture on plates and place pork chops on top of corn mixture.

I would highly recommend stopping by East Willow Farm in Columbia. They are open Tuesday through Friday from 10:00am to 5:00pm and Saturday and Sunday from 9:00am to 4:00pm. I would suggest a visit not only because of the variety of options they offer but because their farm meats and their farming philosophy make this farm differ from others. Pasture raising their animals is an extremely rewarding process for them. It's a way to connect their animals with the earth in a healthy and stress-free environment. When they can almost eliminate some grains and introduce high quality grasses and nutrient rich soils, their efforts produces an amazing tasting meat. When grains are being used for their livestock, they are purchased with a specific diet mix from a farm in Scotland.

When animals can roam free, it generates more oxygen in their bloodstream and creates what's called myoglobin. Myoglobin is a mixture of water and proteins, which move oxygen to muscle cells. You will find their pork is of a finer quality than store bought. You will also taste the difference in their chicken. Since they are pasture raised it is a tender and more favorable meat like no other. Interested in being part of their meat CSA? You can join anytime during the year. Their CSA runs in 6 month increments. Pick-ups are the first Saturday of each month during normal store hours. For more information give them a call. East Willow Farm's phone number is 860.538.2747. They also host a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/eastwillowfarm/

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. So, 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!

Unsung Heroes of Soul:

Erma Franklin and Mable John

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 features two acts about whom I found relatively scant information.

Erma Franklin

Erma Franklin was the older sister of Aretha and the originator of "Piece of My Heart."



She was born in Shelby, Mississippi, on March 13, 1938, and grew up in Detroit. Her father was the Reverend C.L. Franklin of the New Bethel Baptist Church. When Erma was ten years old, her parents separated. Her mother, Barbara, took Erma's half-brother Vaughn with her to Buffalo, New York, while Rev. Franklin kept their daughters: Erma, Aretha, and Carolyn. Barbara died in 1952.

During her childhood, Erma and her sisters sang at their father's church. While attending Northern High School, she formed a Rhythm & Blues vocal group called the Cleopatrettes. She spent two years after high school touring with her father's gospel group and later studied Business at Clark College (now known as Clark Atlanta University). On the weekends, she performed in an Atlanta nightclub. Erma later married one Thomas Garrett and had two children with him.

Her recording career began in 1961, when she signed with Epic Records. She had several singles out on the label, as well as an album, *Her Name Is Erma* (1962). When Aretha Franklin became a recording artist, Erma frequently sang back-up vocals on her songs—most notably "Respect."

By 1967, Erma was on the New York-based Shout label, where she worked with songwriter-producer Bert Berns. Her 1967 recording of "Piece of My Heart" hit #10 on the *Billboard* Rhythm & Blues Singles chart and crossed over to the pop market at #62. In 1992, it was used in an ad for Levi's jeans in England. This led to the song's reissue in that country, where it got to #9. Still, the best-known "Piece of My Heart" is the 1968 version by Big Brother & The Holding Company, with lead vocals by Janis Joplin.

While none of Franklin's subsequent Shout releases duplicated her initial success, the label did release an LP on her, 1969's *Soul Sister*. It graced *Billboard's* Top 200 Albums chart at #199.

By the middle 1970s, Erma Franklin had left the music business. She spent twenty-five years working at the Boysville Holy Cross Community Center in Detroit, helping homeless and disadvantaged minority children. She died of lung cancer on September 7, 2002, at age 64.

In 2015, the RockBeat reissue label put out the CD, *The Electric Flag Featuring Erma Franklin—Live 1968*.

Charted singles:

"Piece of My Heart" (1967) R&B #10, Pop #62

"Gotta Find Me a Lover (24 Hours a Day)" (1969) R&B #40

Other notable Erma Franklin recordings include "What

Kind of Girl," "I Don't Want No Momma's Boy," "Abracadabra," "It's Over," "Big Boss Man," "Open Up Your Soul," "I'm Just Not Ready For Love," "The Right to Cry," "Saving My Love For You," and "Whispers (Gettin' Louder)."

Mable John

Mable John was Motown's first female recording act.

She was born in Barstrop, Louisiana, on November 3, 1930, the eldest of nine children. Her siblings included the 1950s Rhythm & Blues star, Little Willie John ("All Around the World," "Fever," "Talk To Me"). When Mable was quite young, the family moved to Cullendale, Arkansas, where her father worked in a paper mill.

When the man found a better job, the Johns moved to Detroit in 1941. After high school, Mable worked for the Friendship Mutual Insurance Company. It was run by Bertha Gordy, mother of Motown founder Berry Gordy, Jr. John would end up leaving the company and spending two years at Lewis Business College. She later bumped into Mrs. Gordy, who told John that her son Berry was writing songs and looking for singers to record them. Gordy became John's coach and accompanied her on piano at local gigs.

In 1959, John performed at Detroit's Flame Show Bar in what would prove to be Billie Holiday's last show. Also that year, John began recording for Gordy's fledgling Motown operation. Her singles came out on the Tamla subsidiary, but none of them sold. As a result, Gordy started using John mainly as a background singer before he ended her contract in 1962.

After Motown, John spent several years with Ray Charles in his back-up group, the Raelettes. In 1966, she signed with the Memphis-based powerhouse, Stax. Her first release on the label proved her biggest. "Your Good Thing (Is About to End)" went top ten on *Billboard* magazine's R&B chart but was her only hit. She left Stax in 1968 and went back to being a Raelette. John ended up leaving secular music in 1973, managing gospel acts and making the occasional recording.



By 1986, John was living in Los Angeles, where she founded Joy Community Outreach, a charity that feeds the homeless. In 1991, the UK-based Motorcity label issued a single on her, "Time Stops." In 1993, John earned a Doctor of Divinity degree from the Crenshaw Christian Center. In 1994, she received a Pioneer Award from the Rhythm & Blues Foundation. In 2007, she played a blues singer in the John Sayles film, *Honeydripper*. And in 2014, she appeared in the Oscar-winning documentary, *20 Feet from Stardom*.

Mable John, 91, died in Los Angeles on August 25, 2022.

Charted single:

"Your Good Thing Is About to End" (1966) R&B #6, Pop #95

Other notable Mable John recordings include "You Are My Only Love" (1960), "Actions Speak Louder Than Words" (1961), "You're Taking Up Another Man's Place" (1966), "Same Time, Same Place" (1966), "I'm a Big Girl Now" (1967), "Don't Hit Me No More" (1967), "Able Mable" (1968), and "Running Out" (1968).

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

Dean Farrell hosts "The Soul Express" 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.

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These Words of Wisdom Might Have Been Useful

By Bill Powers

For millennia humans have recognized the existence and value of the notion of wisdom. A dictionary definition of *wisdom* states: it is “the ability to use your knowledge and experience.” It is often acquired as one ages. Leonardo Da Vinci proclaimed: “Wisdom is the daughter of experience.” Albert Einstein said: “The only source of knowledge is experience.” Ancient philosophers such as Laozi addressed the importance of wisdom when asserting: “Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom.” The Greek philosopher Sophocles professed: “Wisdom outweighs any wealth.”

As a child and growing up in Hartford, the older kids in my neighborhood attended Hartford Public High School and I was always intrigued by their mascot, the owl. I was told that the owl represented wisdom. So, the connection in my mind for wisdom and schooling was established early on. Indeed, the association of wisdom and owls was reinforced by the advertising for Wise potato chips, where the owl was their mascot.

A popular concept in our society is that age and experience bring wisdom. I wondered: Why not tap into the wealth of experiential wisdom from some of my older neighbors, to gain further insight into this. So, on a random basis I asked people the following: “*What is one important thing that you wish someone had told you when you were young?*” Here is what they replied when they were at the Windham Senior and Community Centers, the Veteran Center in Willimantic, or Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church in Windham Center.

Jean age 85 – At a certain point as you age increases, your physical strength begins to decline. The older you get the more quickly that happens. Stay active and exercise frequently.

Marilyn age 71 - How devastating smoking tobacco, excessive use of alcohol, and abuse of drugs can be and can ruin lives.

Robin age 68 – Two things – 1) The importance of

participating in sports can have significant positive effects on the physical and mental health and well-being. Girls need to appreciate the importance of Title IX and make use of the opportunities it has provided for female athletes. 2) What is important in life is ½ knowing what you want and ½ is asking for it.

Jevana age 63 – Get to know what makes you happy and strive to keep that happiness in your life.

Bill age 77 – Don’t wait too long to thank people who helped you when you were young, because when I tried in my fifties, I found that half of them were already dead and I had missed that opportunity.

Ethel age 81 – Listen to and respect your kids’ needs and plans for the future.

Rosemary age 80 - Begin early on to save for your future, even if at first it is only a dollar a week.

Frank age 77 - Plan on having many careers during your lifetime.

Paula age 67 – Embrace each day with joy, no matter what difficulties you may be experiencing.

John age 70 – Don’t count on the government to help vets when they return home.

Margarita age 74 – (with the help of an interpreter) I had many life lessons from my family as I grew up. I would tell children today to respect their family and value religion.

Joellen age 75 – Bloom wherever you are planted.

Kerry age 61 - Always do the job right and with no short cuts.

Ruth age 67 – Become self-sufficient and try to get along with everyone.

Caroline age 73 – Love yourself and care for yourself first. You can’t pour from an empty cup if you want to care for others.

William age 81 – (with the help of an interpreter) I learned many life values growing up from my family. What I would say to young parents is that discipline is very important for raising children. It helps them learn right from wrong.

Karen age 65 – Stay healthy – just keep moving

and take time for yourself.

Judy age 64 – To breathe before I talked.

Bernie age 76 – Turn over the stone to see what is under it.

Al age 75 – That girls have different emotional/sexual awakening times.

Mitch age 56 – I wish someone had educated me on how to invest in stocks that generate passive income when I was 18.

Candice age 78 – I am in control of my own destiny and other people are not.

June age 89 – Love everyone no matter who they are.

Patricia age 74 – Everybody deserves to be loved.

Ann age 60 – Be kind to yourself.

Rosario age 74 – Don’t get old in mind and spirit.

Elizabeth age 75 – Facts of life.

Dave age 79 – Life is more enjoyable than you may think. Don’t take yourself so seriously.

Michael age 62 – Start saving when you are young.

Steve age 65 – Take as much time as you can with your family – especially your children.

Priscilla age 80 – You are what you eat.

Wayne age 90 – Keep the faith.

Don age 77 – Aim high in life!

Gerhard age 84 – Emphasize the role of human language.

Lynne age 65 – Learn how to type.

Murphy age 81 – When you meet somebody new, ask them more questions than they ask you.

Rob age 80 – Learn to calmly and respectfully say no! To help you stay on your very own path.

Patty age 83 – Be sure to nurture yourself by keeping people in your life who have a positive attitude.

Arlene age 78 – People are the most important things – more than things or projects.

Jake age 70 – To maintain a balance between a focus on your future but also on your future life.

Mansfield BOE Names CABE Award Winners

Submitted by Margaret Chatey, Communications Specialist, Town of Mansfield/Mansfield Public Schools

The Mansfield Board of Education presented the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) Student Leadership Awards to two outstanding Mansfield Grade 8 youth. Margaret Owen and Theodore Cormier were recognized for their achievements at the June 15 Board of Education meeting.

Mansfield Middle School (MMS) Principal Larry Barlow introduced the award recipients to the Board of Education.

He recognized Maggie for her support of peers and eagerness to learn. “She has been a leader at MMS in both the classroom and in her extracurricular activities. In the classroom, Maggie is thoughtful in her classwork,

eager to learn, and a supportive peer to her classmates,” says Principal Barlow. “She has also been a leader in Chorus, Chamber Choir, and Unified Physical Education, and she has been a member of each of these all four years at MMS. Maggie is recognized for her compassion, empathy, and inclusivity with all students, and was a model representative of Mansfield Middle School while on the school’s exchange trip to Sarstedt, Germany.”

Outside of school, Maggie is a competitive swimmer and has devoted her time to Girl Scouts and volunteering at the soup kitchen with her church.

Mr. Barlow introduced CABE Award Recipient Theodore Cormier, citing that “Theo has emerged as a quiet leader, one who leads by example. Theo submits quality work and offers thoughtful reflection

on the content. He competes on two of our athletic teams: cross country and track, and plays cello in our school’s orchestra.” Mr. Barlow added, “Theo enjoys a challenge, too, taking on projects with enthusiasm, such as History Day where he placed at both the regional and state level.



Margaret Owen and Theodore Cormier.

Photo by Margaret Chatey.

“In his spare time, Theo enjoys playing the cello, kayaking, running, hiking, and numismatics (coin collecting). We have no doubt that Theo will continue to shine as a well-rounded and hardworking young man,” added Mr. Barlow.

Students are nominated to receive the CABE Student Leadership Award by their school principal. Students are selected based on their leadership skills including willingness to take on challenges, capable of making difficult decisions, concern for others, ability to work with others, willingness to commit to a project, diplomacy, ability to understand issues clearly and the ability to honor a commitment.

Both students will be attending Edwin O. Smith High School in the fall.

A Patriotic Windham Son

Submitted by Bev York
The America Museum

Northeast Connecticut raised many patriots who fought for independence on the battlefield and in the meeting room. Colonel Eliphalet Dyer did both!

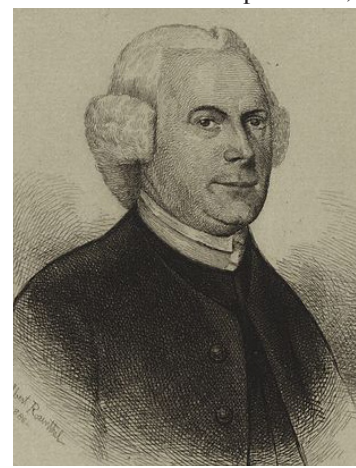
Dyer (1721- 1807) was a Windham Center resident of many talents and interests. But he is most noted for representing the Colony of Connecticut in the first and second Continental Congress’ in Philadelphia. In 1774 he was a delegate to the First Congress with Silas Deane and Roger Sherman.

Dyer, a Yale graduate, was an attorney but his livelihood included owning grist, saw and fulling mills, selling real estate, farming, trading and owning a country store. His public service in Windham included tax assessor, Town Clerk, Selectman, Moderator, Captain of the Militia, and Justice of the Peace. He and his wife, Hulda, had six children of which three lived long into adulthood.

The Susquehanna Land Company, 1753, was a project that Dyer was active in founding and later hired as the agent. The company organized the migration of Windham County residents in search of farmland for growing populations to settle in the colony’s western lands (Pennsylvania.) The complicated story of conflicts over land ownership and attacks by the Indigenous residents halted the efforts. Around the same time in 1754, Dyer, and his neighbor Elderkin, are mentioned as being present when the Windham frogs made a ruckus at Follet’s mill pond.

The Colonel’s military service included Captain in the Militia; and promoted to Colonel of the 3rd CT Regiment. In

1775 Dyer declined the rank of Brigadier General in the Continental Army because he decided he was needed more in the halls of Congress and the courtroom. He was a Superior Court Judge and later Justice from 1776 to 1793. Through the War for Independence, Dyer served on the Council



of Safety with Governor Jonathan Trumbull which met at the War Office in Lebanon. The Committee held hundreds of meetings discussing provisioning of the troops.

It was not uncommon in 18th century Connecticut, for professional men to own slaves. The enslaved members of his household chopped cordwood with hand tools, farmed, managed the stables, and

worked in his various mills. According to the 1790 census Dyer owned eight slaves. President John Adams described Dyer as “...longwinded and roundabout, obscure and cloudy, very talkative and very tedious, yet an honest, worthy man; means and judges well.” Dyer lived to age 85 and is buried in the Windham Center Cemetery. Sheldon Dyer of Mansfield, a veteran and historian, is a direct descendant.

The Colonel is on exhibit in the America Museum at the Eastern CT Veteran Community Center at 47 Crescent Street in Willimantic. Through articles, programs and exhibits the America Museum will present many Americans who dedicated their lives and fortunes for freedom and democracy. The Windham Regional Partnership of Arts and Culture is forming a committee to collaborate on projects for the Semiquincentennial celebration - 2026. An organizational meeting will be held soon. Please join us! info@windhamarts.org

What Are Foo Fighters?

By Tom Woron

“That was ‘The Pretender’ by the Foo Fighters,” said the DJ on the radio as a song ended. The Foo Fighters? Yes, there is a rock band called the Foo Fighters.

Back in the early 1990s a popular American band called Nirvana from Aberdeen, Washington, was the key band promoting a type of rock music called grunge. Nirvana dominated the airwaves for a while, but the untimely death of lead singer and songwriter Kurt Cobain in 1994 spelled doom for the band. Without its frontman Nirvana could not carry on, and the band became defunct.

After the demise of Nirvana, the band’s former drummer, Dave Grohl, began a project by himself in which he recorded 15 songs that he wrote. With only one exception, Grohl played all of the instruments himself and sang all of the vocals on all 15 songs. When the recording was completed, Grohl handed out cassette tapes of the project to friends for their opinions of it. Desiring to keep the identity behind his songs a secret, Grohl named his project “Foo Fighters” so as to lead listeners to believe that there were multiple musicians behind the music, not just him by himself. The recording got the attention of record companies. The Foo Fighters went from what was supposed to be a one-time solo project by Grohl to becoming a highly successful rock band.

Grohl at the time did not know that the Foo Fighters would become a huge success and that the band would become his full-time career in music after Nirvana. Had he known what was to come, he has said, he would have come up with a different name, because he thought that Foo Fighters was the dumbest name ever for a rock band. How did Grohl come up with the name? What are “foo fighters”?

While it is unclear why Grohl chose the name for his project, foo fighters in reality were unidentified flying objects (UFOs) or unidentified aerial phenomena (UAP) that were seen by numerous pilots and airmen during the Second World War. Although Allied airmen had seen what they believed were UFOs earlier in the war, it was from November 1944 onward that Allied airmen flying over Germany and German-occupied territory frequently noticed strange, rapidly moving lights that seemed to pursue their aircraft. These objects glowed red, orange, white, and green at times, and behaved as if they were controlled by some intelligence. They sometimes appeared as a single fiery object and at other times as many in a formation.

The astonished airmen witnessed these objects maneuvering in ways that no known aircraft could at the time. One pilot, believing that the unknown objects were a new type of Nazi weapon, decided to challenge them and turned his plane toward them. The objects immediately disappeared. A short time later the mysterious lights reappeared, but at a much greater distance from his aircraft. Apparently they were not made of any kind of solid material since they did not show up on either ground or airborne radar.

Reports of strange glowing objects buzzing around Allied aircraft came in more frequently as the war wound down in its final months. Although descriptions of the unknown objects varied, the pattern of the encounters was similar in many respects. Mysterious fiery lights would suddenly show up, appear to pursue Allied aircraft for a while, sometimes getting up close, and then they would suddenly veer off and disappear. The objects maneuvering around the aircraft were never reported to



take any hostile action nor in any way cause damage to the aircraft; however, the airmen who encountered them found the experience to be nerve-racking. One American airman, a radar operator, who saw the strange lights following his aircraft named them “foo fighters.”

Single-engine German aircraft approaching Allied aircraft with the intent to shoot them down were called “fighters.” It is widely believed that a U.S. 415th Night Fighter Squadron radar operator, Donald J. Meiers, gave the name “foo fighters” to the mysterious lights approaching and seemingly chasing the airplanes. The name came from *Smokey Stover*, a popular American comic strip of the time. The strip featured the silliness and mishaps of the title character, a firefighter who referred to himself with a nonsensical phrase, “foo fighter.”

The phenomenon was not limited to the European Theater. American airmen in the Pacific Theater also encountered mysterious “balls of fire” that hovered in the sky and, at times, pursued their aircraft. They, too, noted that these balls of fire never fired upon nor damaged their aircraft. They ultimately decided that the objects were a secret Japanese psychological weapon designed to distract them and drive them crazy. After the war, the Americans asked Japanese airmen about the flying objects that their country sent out to buzz around our airplanes and drive our pilots insane. Surprised at being asked the question, the Japanese replied that they too had seen the objects, had noted that they took no hostile action against their aircraft, and had come to the conclusion that they were a secret *American* weapon designed to mess with *their* minds.

Likewise after the war, thirteen high-ranking officers of the Luftwaffe (Nazi Germany’s air force) were questioned about the unknown glowing objects observed by British and American airmen on night missions over Europe. All thirteen claimed they knew nothing about any secret German weapon or anything else that could explain the mysterious sightings.

As 1945 began, a news reporter who had spent time with the 415th published a story about the foo fighters that ran on the front page of newspapers all across the United States. Because of the number of reports of foo fighters and the impact they were having on aircrews—and, more shockingly, the fact that a reporter had interviewed the airmen and published their story—the military decided to investigate the matter.

Many theories were offered to explain the foo fighter sightings. Among them was that they were hallucinations due to battle fatigue. Another theory was that they were the Nazis’ newly developed V-2 rocket, a ballistic missile, many of which were being launched from Germany against Great Britain and the Western European allies.

The airmen who observed the foo fighters rejected the hallucination theory. They were there, and they knew what they saw. The V-2 rocket explanation seemed plausible at first since the tail of the rocket would glow with a flame as it burned fuel. However, this theory was also dismissed by the airmen and by military aviation historians because descriptions of the foo fighters’ maneuverability—such as “turning on a dime” and sudden accelerations—were not consistent with the speed and course that a ballistic missile would take. Other theories offered to explain the foo fighters witnessed during World War II have also been dismissed due to the lack of any credible evidence. They were never identified or logically explained.

Although the foo fighters seen during the Second World War remain an unexplained mystery to this day, they sure gave us a great rock band!

Your assignment: If you’re not familiar with the Foo Fighters band and/or their song “The Pretender,” Google it and watch the YouTube video.

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Tai Chi Home

Steady Rhythm

By Joe Pandolfo

Around now many green things out in the fields and woods and streams are taking their first bow, feeling their first fruit, crowns full of grains and blossoms. Real July fullness. The ripening sun in the sky. You can feel it in the beat of your own midsummer heart.

This is the season of the Heart meridian and the Fire element, and the Chinese medicine classics say our summer energy sometimes will get away from us. You might feel your heart jump like a flame.

With a nice low bow, a sway of the head and swing of the tail and deep, deep breath can release heart fire. You transform into a steadier rhythm... a kind of love that’s calm and warm and wise.



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Masinda's Button Shop in Willington.

Photo by Chris Gayson.

Water-Powered Mill Sites

By Richard N. Symonds Jr.

After an early retirement in 1992, I was looking for something to keep me active. With a background as a planner and geographer, I was always intrigued by how settlements occurred in Connecticut. Starting as an agricultural society, settlement occurred slowly at first, with individuals having to fend for themselves, filling their need for food, shelter, clothing and footwear, and tools and implements. Early on, these resources were obtained by hand. To address these inefficiencies, people quickly turned to Connecticut's rivers, streams, and brooks to power mills to perform these functions in a more efficient manner. Due to Connecticut's hilly geography, many of the waterways had more than enough flow or fall to support both small and large mills.

Given my fascination with these early mills, I set a goal to identify and evaluate all the water-powered mill site locations in Tolland County towns and selected towns in Windham and Hartford counties. Each time I had evaluated all the mills in a town, I prepared a manuscript suitable for publication. In most cases, the publications were part of my Lost Mill Site series. Publications about mills in the *Neighbors* readership area include *A Glimpse of Lost Mill Sites in Ashford, Connecticut*; *Lost Mill Sites in Willington, Connecticut*; *Lost Mill Sites in Union, Connecticut*; *Lost Mill Sites in Tolland, Connecticut*; and *Lost Mill Sites in Coventry, Connecticut*. I also created companion documents for Vernon and Ellington. I have prepared manuscripts for Pomfret and Mansfield, but publication is still pending. A draft manuscript has been prepared for Stafford.

Initially, with undershot wheels, all that was needed for power was stream flow. But later, more sophisticated millwrights dammed the waterways to provide water in storage, which increased the volume of available water supplies, and to obtain additional power from falling water. Overshot wheels, pitchback wheels (the reverse direction of overshot), and breastshot wheels were used until the mid-1800s, when the more powerful iron or turbine-style wheels were used. Most Connecticut mills continued using water power until they outlived their usefulness or were converted to turbine power, steam power, and, even later, internal combustion engines or electrical power.

For the most part, as development progressed, mill construction in each town was similar to that in surrounding towns. Grist mills ground corn, rye, and the like for food, and products of the bone mills and clover mills were used to enrich the soil for growing crops. Single-purpose cider mills existed in some towns, while in other towns cider mills were secondary to other mill operations. Saw mills provided timber for framing, lumber for siding, shingles for roofing, and other construction materials. Many had specialty items such as boxes, miter boxes, caskets, spools and bobbins, and even railroad crossties.

Early mills were often fulling mills, used to clean, align, and prepare fiber for future processing. Cotton and wool mills produced cloth for clothing, while others produced thread. Silk mills were prevalent in Hebron, Mansfield, and Tolland. Blacksmith shops, forges, and blast furnaces were often associated with mills, and helped maintain the mill machinery.

Even with all the similarities from town to town, there were unique mill activities in many towns due to the abundance of water resources and skilled workers. The larger mills were located in Rockville, Stafford, South Coventry, South Willington, and Turnerville, now part of the Amston section of Hebron. Many of these mills processed wool and cotton as well as a range of other products. The ocean pearl button industry was concentrated in Stafford and Willington. The little town of Willington had as many as twelve button mills, with some starting as a home industry. Czechoslovakians brought their skills with them when settling in the area. The Masinda Button Mill in Willington has been refurbished and is now making buttons again (see photo).

Many of the millwrights were innovative people who developed and patented high-quality processing technology. Wooden and metal plows and rakes were manufactured in Stafford and Pomfret, water turbines and related equipment were manufactured in West Stafford, and leather belts for transferring power were made in Tolland. The Underwood belts made in Tolland were often the preferred belts of millwrights and were used in many of the large mills in Rockville and Vernon. In addition to seven silk mills in Mansfield, quality optical equipment was manufactured along the Natchaug River.

While many of the mills were small single-purpose mills and sometimes short-lived, the larger mill sites were often multi-purpose, with many converting from one purpose to another. During the Civil War, many of the mills were converted to make ammunition, cartridges, and uniforms. Many of these mills were also converted for such purposes during World Wars I and II, but by WWII they had switched to other sources of power.

There was a total of 256 water-powered mills, or an average of about 28 mills per town, in Ashford, Pomfret, Mansfield, Willington, Coventry, Hebron, Tolland, Stafford, and Vernon/Rockville. Descriptions of many of these mills may be found on my Facebook page, Lost Mill Sites of Tolland County (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2407048356264466>). The page was active during the pandemic, with a new mill posted each day using a question-and-answer format. While the site is no longer monitored on a daily basis, it is an information source for specific mill sites that I also use occasionally to post related information.

For further information, contact the author at msjr2@gmail.com.

Jude Robert Emmet

By Judy Davis

Robert Emmet was born in Dublin in 1778. When he was at Trinity College, he distinguished himself in the Historical Society. A bright future was predicted for him.

For the next several years, he threw his heart into the cause of Irish nationalism to such an extent, that an arrest warrant was issued for him.

He developed a network consisting of rebels, recruiting, and established arms depots, in and around Dublin, as well.

One of his staunchest allies was a young woman, Anne Devlin, who shared his dream of Irish independence. Anne masqueraded as his housekeeper,

while carrying messages to fellow rebels. Plans went awry, sending him scrambling. He fled to the Wicklow Mountains and went into hiding.

He was shielded by the faithful Anne Devlin. When she was caught by the authorities, she refused to say where Robert was. For that, she was thrown into prison.

Robert was eventually caught.

He knew he was to be executed, and made the following statement:

“Let no man write my epitaph; for as no man knows my motives dare now vindicate; let not prejudice or ignorance asperse them. Let them and me repose in obscurity and peace, my memory in oblivion, and my tomb remain uninscribed until other men can do justice to my character. When my country takes her place among the nations of the world, then, and only then, let my epitaph be written.”

On 20 September, 1803, Robert Emmet was hanged.

He was 24 years old.

Hop River Chamber Music at UConn

Submitted by David H. Vaughan

If you want to witness high-quality performances of chamber music, please come to von der Mehden Recital Hall at 7:30 p.m. on three consecutive Thursdays – July 20, July 27, and August 3. This marks a major change in venue for the 45th season of the Hop River Chamber Music Series, formerly held at the First Congregational Church (UCC) in Andover, CT.

The works to be performed include the following:

July 20: William STILL Incantation and Dance, Benjamin BRITTEN Temporal Variations, for Oboe and Piano, and Johannes BRAHMS Quartet in A Major, for Piano and Strings.

July 27: Antonín DVOŘÁK Terzetto in C Major, for Two Violins and Viola, Ingolf DAHL Concerto a Tre, for Clarinet, Violin, and Cello, and Johannes BRAHMS Clarinet Quintet in B Minor.

August 3: J. Louis von der MEHDEN Fuga, for String Quartet, Alexander BORODIN String Quartet No. 2, and Felix MENDELSSOHN String Quartet in D Major.

Hop River performers are professional musicians based in Connecticut providing live performances of chamber music. They strive to present a wide variety of styles and instrumentation, often coupling performances of well-loved standards with exciting works new to audiences in Eastern Connecticut. Importantly, the piece by J. Louis von der Mehden is likely a world premiere, let alone new to von der Mehden Hall, which was named for him.

Located off Rte. 195 in the Fine Arts Complex on the Storrs campus at the University of Connecticut, von der Mehden Recital Hall is handicapped accessible and offers outstanding acoustics. It also features an amazing Steinway grand piano, a generous stage for our musicians, and good audience sightlines. Additionally, air conditioning, easy access to restrooms, and ample parking behind the building are valuable amenities that enhance the overall concert experience for both the performers and the audience.

Although admission is free, donations are gratefully accepted. For more information, call 860-429-0865. Visit our website: <https://hoprvrmusic.com> and Hop River Chamber Music on Facebook.

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Worried About Your 401k and Other Investments? Learning About Systemic Risk Can Help

By Laurence Hale, AAMA, CRPS®
Principal/Managing Partner,
Co-Founder, & Chief Investment
Officer



With the current market volatility and economic stressors putting everyone on edge in recent months, many investors are reminded of the 2008 financial crisis and recession, when millions of people lost their jobs, homes, and ways of life. While a lot of factors contributed to this economic disaster, one term can cover nearly all of them: systemic risk. Understanding what systemic risk is and how it can impact your behavior as an investor can go a long way toward helping you to weather this most recent period of economic uncertainty.

What Is Systemic Risk?

According to the CFA Institute, systemic risk is “the risk of a breakdown of an entire system rather than simply the failure of individual parts.” This could mean a lot of different things, but in finance, it refers to the risk of a cascading failure in the financial sector.¹

Any financial system has some level of systemic risk, but policymakers seek to limit this risk by closely monitoring the market, analyzing global trends, and creating reforms to help protect people and their finances.

For example, the Obama Administration signed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act into law in July 2010 as a response to the 2008 financial crisis. The idea behind this legislation was to make the US financial system safer for consumers and taxpayers by establishing new government agencies to oversee our financial system. While it’s impossible to limit all systemic risk, there are steps that the government and consumers can take to prevent something like the 2008 financial crisis from happening again.²

How Systemic Risk Impacts You As An Investor

While individual investors can’t protect themselves from systemic risk completely, looking at the concept does teach us a lot of important lessons about investing and risk tolerance. For example, you can use current events or your personal research to diversify your portfolio and hedge against potential risks (or rely on a trusted and experienced fiduciary financial advisor to do that for you).

In addition to analyzing current trends and market conditions, we can use systemic risk as motivation to diversify our assets. Most financial professionals will always recommend a diversified portfolio that’s aligned with your personal risk tolerance.

How to Know When The Risk Is Too Great

Systemic risk and market risk aren’t equivalent, but they do raise the question, “How much risk is too much?” The answer to this question depends on your own personal risk tolerance.

Looking at systemic risk also makes us more skeptical of companies that are “too big to fail.” For example, Lehman Brothers’ “size and integration” into the US economy made it a source of systemic risk. When the firm collapsed, it “created problems throughout the financial system and the economy.”³

This risky “too big to fail” ideology is one of the reasons why the financial crisis of 2008 happened, prompting individuals to do research on their own investment decisions. It’s dangerous to blindly trust any company, big or small, without doing the proper research.

As an investor, it’s important to understand our economy as a whole and how things like systemic risk impact our daily lives and investments. The 2008 financial crisis was a big wake-up call for Americans and politicians, as we realized that without the proper checks and balances in place, things can go horribly wrong.

But with diligent oversight, responsible companies, and educated investors, we can begin to protect ourselves from systemic risk. Understanding systemic risk is a good way for investors to understand the overall impact of risk on their portfolios. At WHZ, we do a detailed evaluation of goals versus risk tolerance for all our clients as the first step in our strategic [Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well™](#) process to help our clients create a financial plan that’s tailored just for them. [Contact us](#) at (860) 928-2341 or schedule a [complimentary consultation](#) on our website at [whzwealth.com](#) to get started on a strategic financial plan of your own.

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1. <https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/advocacy/issues/systemic-risk>
2. <https://www.cfainstitute.org/en/advocacy/issues/dodd-frank-rollback>
3. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/systemic-risk.asp>

July Events in our Neighborhood

Submitted by Bev York

AMERICA MUSEUM

July 6 Summer History Camp for kids ages 6 to 14. The camp features a different topic with activities and art projects each Thursday morning from 10 to 12. July activities include natural dying, weaving, clay pots, and Flag Day and U. S. symbols. The camp sessions will be held at the Eastern CT Veteran Community Center., 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic. Some projects may require a small fee for materials. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Please bring a snack. The program is sponsored by the America Museum, Windham Arts and is funded in part by Leo and Rose Pageau Trust and CT Summer at the Museum Program. Register at info@windhamarts.org.

WINDHAM ARTS

July 5 “Land of the Free and the Brave: America the Beautiful” Art

Exhibition and sale will be at the Coffee Break Gallery during the month of July. Opening reception is Monday, July 10 from 5 to 6:30. The show includes landscapes and art about our country. The hours are daily Mon through Fri from 9 to 5. The Gallery is managed by Windham Arts and is open located in the Eastern CT Veteran’s Community Center, 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic Director@windhamarts.org

July 7 Painting Party “Creative Juices” Create a finished painting of the Statue of Liberty Face. \$25. 6 p.m. Includes materials. BYOBeverages and snacks the Eastern CT Veteran’s Community Center, 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic register at Director@windhamarts.org

July 11 Painting Party “Creative Juices” Create a finished painting of the Frog on Spool. \$25. 6 p.m. Includes materials. BYOBeverages and snacks the Eastern CT Veteran’s

Community Center, 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic register at Director@windhamarts.org

JILLSON HOUSE

July 6 Kids are Free at the Jillson House Museum Free Ice Cream and a history mystery on Thursdays. Drop in between 4:00 and 7:30. Kids must be accompanied by an adult. Museum Open every Thursday and some Saturdays 627 Main Street, Willimantic. Funded by the CT Summer at the Museum program and the CT Humanities. 860-208-5723

July 26 Tavern Night Meet Buffalo Bill Discover some fascinating facts about William Coty who visited Willimantic with the Wild West Show in the 1800s. Sample Bill’s favorite food and drink. 5:00 to 6:30. Program starts at 5:30 \$10.per person. Jillson House Museum, 627 Main Street, Willimantic.



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To all our contributors- Thank You!

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

In Summer's Lull, Think Autumn Planting

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

Our temperate climate's change in seasons decided my career path decades ago. I liked the rhythm of seasonal work. Busy, not busy, busy again... then dormant.

Explosive growth in spring has many garden needs, surging again in fall. Physical and spiritual restoral comes in summer's reprieve and winter's rejuvenation. Winter is time to read, research, write and plan for next year's garden.

This winter was different.

A Boston client wanted a "microforest" designed for spring planting, and a Northborough, grower (Brian Lewis of The Natural Landscape) wanted a list of the showiest trees and shrubs for New England.

Such as Cary Award-winning plants named by the Worcester County Horticultural Society. All are proven reliably hardy to USDA Zone 4 with exceptional pest and disease resistance and are adaptable to the range of cultural conditions across New England.

Michael Dirr, Ph.D / University of Georgia horticultural professor, is my go-to authority. His Manual of Woody Landscape Plants is an old-school botanical bible. With two decades of hort experience in the northeast, seven with Weston Nurseries, I have my favorites.

TREES Three species of native deciduous trees for temperate New England (that I have planted in the Quiet Corner) were used in Boston: redbud, serviceberry and whitebarked birch.



Birch in early spring.

- **Redbud (*Cercis*)** Dark red buds open to purple-pink flowers in early spring before leafout at every node along ascending wide-spreading branches -- best at edges of tree plantings to reduce crossing branches. Likes part shade to full sun. Mature height of 20 feet.

One is planted in Chaplin to screen a view.

- **Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*)** AKA Juneberry and Shadbush because it blooms when the shad (herring) run. Pure white flowers cover the tree in April with tasty berries in June -- but birds beat you to 'em. Orange-to-red fall color; 'Autumn Brilliance' is a brilliant red. Often available in multi-stem clump form. Height 25 feet.

Allegheny Serviceberry (*Amelanchier laevis*) is a native tree that naturally hybridizes with twenty species of small trees and smaller shrubs like Shadbush (*A. canadensis*).

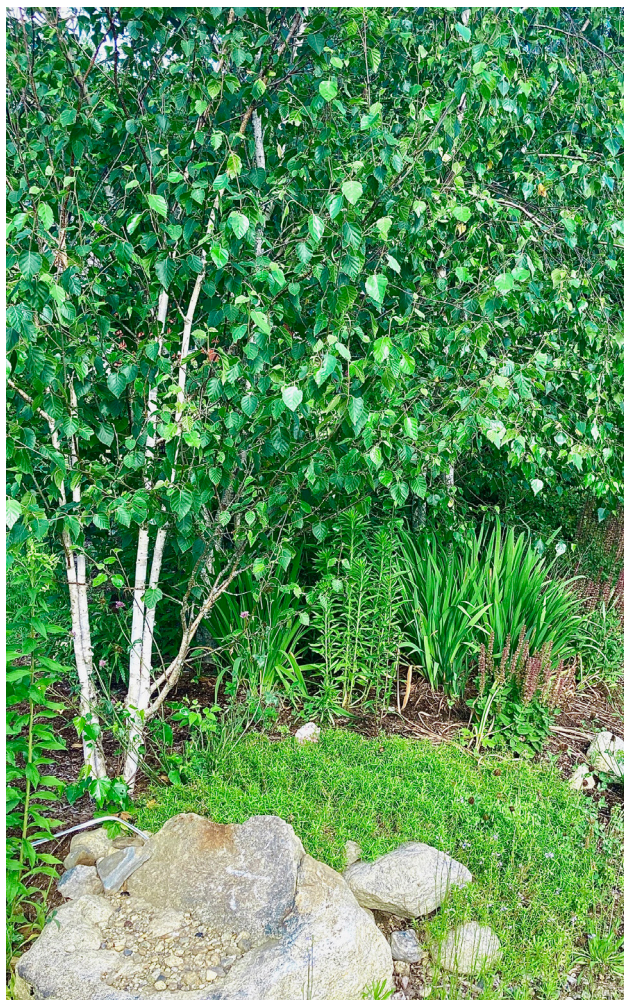


Serviceberry flowers overhang the creeping Phlox.

Photos by the author.

Masses of showy, slightly fragrant white flowers last a week or two in early spring before leaves appear. Shadbush blooms a few weeks later. Then fruit for excellent blueberry-like pie, but birds beat you to 'em. Yellow-orange-to-brick-red fall color.

Orange fungal galls can mar fruit if near host junipers for Cedar Apple Rust. Spores can form on eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) a mile away, but the cosmetic damage doesn't harm the apple-family tree.



Birches in early summer.

Found naturally in woodland borders, full sun to part shade. Vulnerable to caterpillars that I remove by hand or with a jet spray of water or least-toxic pesticide; systemics are not used to protect birds. Grows fast to 25-feet.

Three native *A. laevis* are planted in Chaplin with one *A. canadensis*.

- **Whitebarked Birch (*Betula spp*)** Striking white bark in all seasons, more so in multi-stem form. Native cultivar (nativar) 'Whitespire' (*Betula populifolia*) resists native bugs. Height 35-40 feet in full sun.

Smaller nonnative **Himalayan Birch (*Betula utilis var. jacquemontii*)** is the purest white, but suffers caterpillars and borers more than native trees, especially in the country.

TIP Improving horticultural conditions helps all plants survive pests. I use copious compost and kelp, and pay very close attention.

Three 'Whitespire' and one Himalayan Birch are planted at my Chaplin "Chapel of the Birch" Others are **Paper / Canoe Birch, Sweet and Yellow Birch.**

Japanese plants are also suited to our temperate coastal climate, such as colorful **Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*)** and evergreen **Umbrella Pine (*Sciadopitys*)**. Also planted in the Quiet Corner.



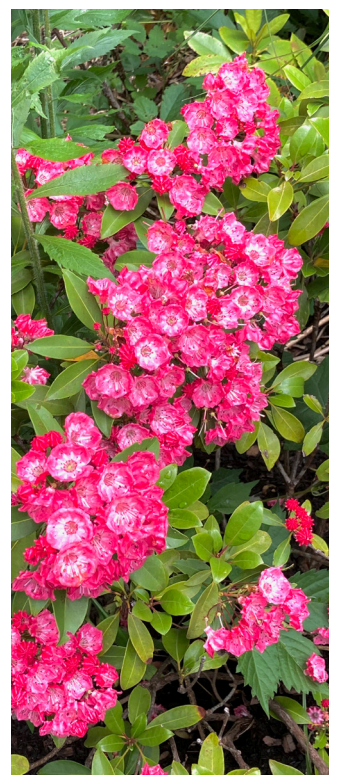
Azalea ablaze in spring sunset.

SHRUBS Deciduous **Azalea (*Rhododendron*)** shrubs completed the woody planting in Boston. Flower, fragrance and fall color! Other native shrubs planted in Connecticut are **Redtwig Dogwood**(formerly *Cornus*, now *Benthamedia*), and evergreen **Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia*)** and **Rosebay (*Rhododendron*)**.

SUMMER is a welcome lull to consider fall planting. Less plant material is available in autumn but prices are discounted by October. September is a great time to plant and establish roots before the stress of next summer's heat, perhaps drought.

Large sizes have visual impact, but small plants cost less and adapt better. Both can be planted in naturalistic groups to mimic nature. Dry-tolerant plants are better in global warming. Best using plants native to the conditions of your site's microclimate -- they establish sooner to thrive not simply survive.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, Master gardener/designer
 Briankarlssonbarnes@gmail.com
 KB garden design, Chaplin CT Text 617.957.6611



'Sarah' Mountain Laurel in late spring.



Photo at left is Baby before his illness and at right in his final month, when he wanted to be held most of the time.
 Photo of Delia and Baby by Susan Harrod.

On the Loss of a Master

By Delia Berlin

On June 3rd, our 29-year-old Senegal parrot, Baby, died peacefully in my arms after a month-long illness. Since the death of our other parrot, almost two years ago, he wallowed in his role as our household's only bird. He was instrumental in helping us overcome our companion's loss, insistently and frequently bringing new joy into our lives. Now, with him also gone, an eerie silence is constantly reminding us of his absence.

As we still wait for full results of Baby's necropsy at UConn, I am not ready to write about his life, his illness, or the huge void that he has left in our home. That will come, at some point.

For now, I share an appropriate passage from "The Parrot Who Owns Me" by Joanna Burger, offered as a warning, near the end of her book:

"There is no such thing as owning a parrot. You can't have a parrot as a pet. A dog, certainly, a cat, maybe, but a parrot, never. On the contrary; you are the pet, and parrots vary on their ability to make good masters. Be warned – being owned by a parrot is not for the faint of heart."

Baby was an extraordinary master. Without him, we will be lost for some time.

Tipper

Text and photo by Diane Rutherford

One morning Tipper was eating some food that I had put out for the night critters. The next morning, I put out some dry cat food just in case she appeared. She did. I then picked her up and took her to the vet and they said she was 18 months old and healthy. Her ear had been clipped to let us know she had been feral. However, she knew house living. Don't know where she came from and how she found us. She instantly fell in love with me. We now say - you have never been loved until you have been loved by Tipper.

Tipper is in front of Buddy.



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Witnessing Cuff Fellows

By Donna Dufresne



Reconstructing the *story* in history is never easy. We dance upon the tightrope of evidence from the past and the social lens of the present, hoping the current zeitgeist and our own experience doesn't cause us to fall into a net of false tropes and assumptions. This delicate balance is especially necessary when trying to unveil the stories of people of African and Native American descent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their lives were rarely documented, often omitted, underwritten, and sometimes whitewashed from the usual channels of history. Their stories were swept under the heavy carpet of the American Dream, a dark stain reminding us we haven't always lived up to our ideals of freedom and justice. And yet, the voices from the past will not be stilled. Like dormant seeds on the forest floor, they push their way toward the light, claiming their rightful place in the rich and diverse narrative of the *understory* in American history.

This past June, the seventh graders at Woodstock Middle School installed a Witness Stone at the First Congregational Church of Woodstock for an enslaved man named Cuff Fellows. The site was chosen because Cuff's children and his wife, Dinah, were baptized there in 1810.

Cuff Fellows left a larger footprint than other enslaved people I have researched in northeast Connecticut. The abolitionist Henry Bowen, founder of Woodstock Academy, left several anecdotes about Cuff in his memoirs. Apparently, Cuff Fellows worked in Bowen's Woodstock summer home, Roseland Cottage, as a handyman. Henry remembered him as having an extraordinary double set of teeth, and Clarence Bowen recounted some of his father's stories about Cuff in *The History of Woodstock, Connecticut*, published in 1926. Their anecdotal information about Cuff Fellows is a colorful addition to primary documents including Cuff's manumission papers, vital records, church records, land records, and census data. Although he left no diaries or letters, Cuff's strong presence and reputation help us to construct a snapshot of his life.

Cuff Fellows was bought by Isaac Fellows in Bellingham, Massachusetts, and brought to Woodstock "as a rickety babe" around 1765, where he remained enslaved until Leah Fellows emancipated him in 1798. He was born enslaved to a mother of African descent in 1763. The "rickety babe" description implies malnutrition, which could have been caused by separation from his mother at birth. There are no documents from Bellingham, but we know that Isaac Fellows acquired Cuff for a "pistareen," less than half a Spanish silver dollar. It is unclear whether Cuff's mother was alive or if he had been orphaned. Isaac Fellows was a land speculator and was probably passing through Bellingham on his way back from Orange County, New Hampshire, where he had bought and subdivided hundreds of acres in Vermont and New Hampshire along the Connecticut River.

There was already an older enslaved couple in the Fellows household in Woodstock. Their names were Cuff, later referred to as "old Cuff," and Dinah. They helped to raise "young Cuff." Bowen recollected that Isaac Fellows liked to tease young Cuff by pulling his hair, so his adoptive mother, Dinah, kept his hair short.

Ironically, young Cuff married a woman also named Dinah, who was the slave of Mrs. Malbone. They became one of several couples named Cuff and Dinah in northeast Connecticut. The name Cuff is West African in origin, and Dinah was a popular name given to enslaved women by the English planters in the West Indies. It is unknown how Cuff met his bride. Perhaps he had accompanied the Fellowses on a visit to the Malbones in Brooklyn, Connecticut. In 1769, Godfrey Malbone built the Old Trinity Church, where Cuff and Dinah were married in 1793. They had a son, Charles, who was born in 1792 in Brooklyn, indicating that Dinah was still living in the Malbone household at that point. By 1795 they had settled in Woodstock, where Dinah was baptized in the First Congregational Church.

According to census data, Cuff and Dinah lived in South Woodstock between Samuel McClellan's house and the Holmes estate. They had five children including Charles, who died of a scalding in 1806 at age 14. In 1810 the remaining children, Abigail, Nancy, Mary, and Gustavus, were baptized, along with their previously baptized mother.

Sometime between Cuff's emancipation in 1798 and 1807, he was attacked by slave catchers who intended to sell him in the South. *Twice!* Slave catchers were rare in Connecticut before the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. However, there were complications involving Cuff's emancipa-

tion and the heirs of Isaac Fellows. In Leah Fellows's will of 1801, she stipulated that under no circumstances should her daughter Charlotte's husband, Dr. John Tucker, have access to her estate or her daughter's inheritance. Tucker had abandoned his wife and children, leaving them with no support. Disappointed by his omission from Leah's will, he may have employed the slave catchers, hoping to reap at least some of the estate even though Cuff was legally free.

The first slave catcher, who was from Stonington, approached Cuff at the end of a long day in the fields when he and the other laborers were walking home at dusk. They struggled, and Cuff fought ferociously; he was on the verge of choking his assailant when the other workers separated them. Cuff immediately ran to Samuel McClellan to file a suit against the would-be kidnapper for assault. The slave catcher employed a young lawyer from Pomfret to file a countersuit, but when they went to Judge Lemuel Grosvenor, he informed them it would be best for them to pay the fine to Cuff than to have to fight the whole town, which would rally to defend him.

The second attempt is recounted in Henry Bowen's memoirs. This time, the slave catcher was from Norwich. He seemed to know exactly where to find Cuff working in a field, which implies this was an inside job planned by someone familiar with Cuff's work habits. The slave catcher, in a fancy carriage, wielded a large whip with a hefty handle and pointed at Cuff, claiming, "I want you!" He then used the whip handle to knock Cuff on the head, but Cuff fought back by biting the fellow with his double set of teeth on the head, arms, and wrists until the would-be abductor gave up. As he ran back to his carriage, Cuff cried out, "Next time, I'll bite your head off!"

These are remarkable anecdotes relayed by well-meaning white men who viewed Cuff as a character in the theater of their abolitionist lens. In many ways Cuff was beloved by the fledgling but enlightened society of Woodstock in the early 1800s. However, Cuff's experience with slave catchers is a painful reminder that even a free Black man in Connecticut could be stolen from his family and friends and sold under the charge of being a fugitive slave from the South—nearly fifty years before the Fugitive Slave Act. Had Cuff been a weak and mediocre person, he might have escaped people's notice. But he stood out. The selectmen stated in his manumission that Cuff was of strong mind and body, personable, communicative, and able to support himself. These very attributes, and a family grudge, made him a prime candidate to have his freedom stolen and to be reinstated into slavery.

After his manumission, Cuff was able to find employment as a farm laborer to support his growing family. From 1800 to 1830, Cuff Fellows appeared in the Woodstock census as head of household, living next to Samuel McClellan. But in 1827, James Arnold deeded a lifelong indentured lease to Cuff and Dinah Fellows for one-third of an acre of land at \$1 a year. The lease stated that Cuff and Dinah could build a house and outbuildings on the land and that their heirs would have first refusal on the property should Arnold's heirs wish to sell. I was able to locate the exact location on Sawmill Brook by using land deed descriptions and the 1856 census map of Woodstock. Cuff was still living there in 1840, but Dinah must have passed away. Cuff died in 1848, at the age of age eighty-five.

The surviving children whom I was able to trace were Abigail (Nabby) and Gustavus. Abigail married David Daily, born ca. 1792 and baptized in Trinity Church in Brooklyn. The Dailys must have known Dinah Fellows, who also attended Trinity Church while she was enslaved by the Malbones. Abigail and David lived in Woodstock. Their son, Lewis Daily, fought in the 29th Connecticut Colored Infantry Regiment in the Civil War and applied for his pension while living in Douglas, Massachusetts. He is buried in Oak Grove Cemetery in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Cuff's youngest surviving son, Gustavus, never married. He worked as a farm laborer in the region and may have lived with his father. On the 1850 census, Gustavus was living on the Henry Wells farm in West Quassette, a short distance from his father's former house. By 1860, Gustavus was working and living in the Andrew Bowen household in Woodstock.

Somewhere in Brooklyn, Connecticut, and Springfield, Massachusetts, there may be living descendants of Cuff and Dinah Fellows and their daughter, Abigail Daily. I can only hope that they will want to learn about the rich heritage of their ancestry, beginning with a "rickety babe" enslaved in Woodstock who worked hard, raised a family, and did not succumb to the whitewashing of African American history.

To learn more about the Witness Stones Project, go to <https://witnessstonesproject.org/>.

Fletcher Memorial Library News

Submitted by Deb Andstrom

Top Shelf Gallery, July & August

Landscapes by Jennifer Zern

Artist Reception, Saturday, July 8th @ 11:00 a.m.

The Top Shelf Gallery's featured artist for July & August is Jennifer Zern. The show features intensely colored acrylics on canvas depicting untouched landscapes with high, vivid skies. There will be an Artist Reception on Saturday, July 8th at 11:00 a.m. All are invited to attend.

Summer Reading Program at the Library
Wednesday Afternoons from 1-2 p.m.
July 5 – August 16.

Our Summer Reading Program will begin on Wednesday, July 5th from 1-2 p.m. and will run each Wednesday until August 16th. This year's slogan is: ALL TOGETHER NOW! Our activities and crafts will be centered around Kindness, Friendship, and Unity. Some of the activities planned include crafts, such as making Friendship Bracelets and Kindness Rocks, various games like hula hooping, Lego fun, and more. Don't forget to pick up your Summer Reading Challenge Log at the circulation desk to become eligible for a prize at the end of our program in August. All ages are welcome! Any questions call or email 860-455-1086 or fletchermemoriallibrary@gmail.com.

Summer Music at the Fletch

Wednesday, July 5th @ 6:00 p.m.
Claudia Schmidt and Friends

Claudia Schmidt & Friends will perform outdoors at the library on Wednesday, July 5 at 6 p.m. Schmidt, a folk, blues and jazz singer/songwriter with a rich catalogue of original music, has been touring nationally and performing for over 40 years. She will be joined on several numbers by her friends Mark and Beverly Davis, well known in the area as a guitar duo. All concerts at the Fletch are free, but donations are gratefully accepted. Bring lawn chairs, blankets, and perhaps a picnic dinner or snacks. Rain Date: Saturday, July 15th at 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, July 26th @ 6:00 p.m.
The Faux Nellies' Band

The Faux Nellies' Band will perform outdoors at the library on Wednesday, July 26th at 6:00 p.m. The acoustic band combines traditional country blues and folk songs with the country-tinged rock of more recent Americana artists such as John Prine, Bob Dylan, Steve Earl, Radney Foster, and Alison Krause. Rain Date: Saturday, July 29th at 10:30 a.m.

FML Book Discussion Group, Wednesday, July 12th @ 6:00 pm

We will be discussing *The Black Count: Glory, Revolution, Betrayal, and the Real Count of Monte Cristo* by **Tom Reiss**. Stop by the library to pick up a copy of the book. New members are always welcome.

Baby Story Time Song & Play (Birth - 3), Friday mornings, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

This is an interactive program using a variety of musical instruments, rhymes, songs, finger plays, puppets, as well as a story or two. Our goal is to encourage a lifelong love of reading and learning. Older siblings are always welcome. Call or email with any questions, 860-455-1086 or fletchermemoriallibrary@gmail.com

Mah Jongg 101 – Thursday Mornings, 10-12 am

Mah Jongg is a popular tile game currently taking a foothold with older people. It's a terrific brain teaser, it's addictive, it's fun, and it's social. Try it out on Thursday mornings, 10-12. All skill levels are welcome.

Mexican Train - Friday Mornings, 9-12 am

Join us for free classes on a modern version of Dominoes called Mexican Train on Friday mornings, 9-12. All skill levels are welcome.

Tai Chi at the Hampton Town Hall
Thursday Mornings @ 9:00 a.m.

continued on page 19



What to the [fill in the blank] Is the Fourth of July?

I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common. The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn.

—Frederick Douglass, July 5, 1852

By Phoebe Godfrey



It is July 4, 2023, and I am called to revisit the powerful and poignant words of the great orator and former slave Frederick Douglass. In his speech “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” he was able to both honor the Founding Fathers “for the good they did, and the principles they contended for” (no doubt a necessary political stance) while nevertheless still calling attention to the dire contradictions embedded in their words due to slavery (which included their ownership of humans from Africa as slaves) and its justification through legally based racism. As Douglass points out so contrastingly, “The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me.... You may rejoice, I must mourn.”

Yes, he must have mourned, for what else could he, or any others who were still or had been enslaved, have done? Of course he/they struggled and still are struggling as slavery’s legacy continues and thus, I am sure, Douglass would still be mourning, as should any of us be who have ever been moved by the aspirations of the Declaration of Independence and contrasted them with our failure to make them a reality. For the Declaration unequivocally states, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness,” and yet we still have not achieved these lofty goals. In fact, it can be stated that because of the so-called “highest court of the land,” the Supreme Court, we have been going backwards. So, for me, if today is to mean anything, it must be a reminder of how far we have yet to go and how, until we get there, we too must also mourn, even as we continue to struggle!

Therefore, today I am not marching in our local parade (as I usually do while engaging in some manner of protest), I am not having a bar-b-q, I am not socializing, but rather I am mourning by writing this piece and listing all the things for which I am mourning.

In presenting what I am mourning, I want to affirm that my inclusion of other reasons to mourn besides slavery are not in any way intended to question Douglass’s focus on those people who were, or whose ancestors were, once enslaved. Rather my goal is to recognize that in our collective mourning we are stronger. Even if my list does not include all your reasons, it is nevertheless an attempt to give you permission to voice your own. For the words of the Declaration, I think, can only be viscerally understood by those who still have not been “included within the pale of this glorious anniversary.” As such, on this day we must continue to listen to the least powerful among us, as opposed to allowing those for whom these words have

delivered Rights, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness (tragically, most often at the expense of others) to declare them a done deal for the rest of us.

“You may rejoice,” usually epitomized by the waving of the stars and stripes as if the flag speaks for all, “I [we] must mourn.” Today I mourn...

-that Douglass’s descendants still do not enjoy what he called “the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence” (see video made by NPR of his descendants reading his speech in 2020).

-that the Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action in universities will further impact the exclusiveness of the Declaration (while the members of the Court make sure they enjoy their own Rights, Liberty, and pursuit of Happiness, even to being above the law).

-that the tyranny of the British monarchy was merely exchanged for the tyranny of capitalism and corporate control over all aspects of government, never for the people—always for profit.

-the Supreme Court’s ruling that separation of church and state does not extend to website design for LGBTQIA-2-Spirit people and that selective prohibitions from the Old Testament can once again become law. (Why focus only on those who are “homosexual” when meanwhile designing websites for those who commit adultery, talk back to their parents, eat unripe fruit, and work on the Sabbath, who are also on God’s kill list and thus should also be on the plaintiff’s list of unworthy customers?)

-the Supreme Court’s unpopular, unrealistic, and sexist ruling on reproductive rights. What have we done since to support the Life and Liberty of those who can get pregnant? Nothing! This ruling was merely about misogyny, patriarchy, and control, with nothing about loving the born—only the unborn!

-the Supreme Court’s ruling on student loan debt. Even the God of the Old Testament dictated in Deuteronomy 15 that every seven years there should be a release of debts...so much for the Court’s consistency!

-that there are daily reports of fires, heatwaves, floods, and species extinctions, and yet the focus remains on whether the Dow Jones is up or down, as if as long as somebody is making money somewhere, it justifies the destruction of Life (isn’t that one of the Declaration’s promises?) on earth.

-that daily shootings in this country continue to be a leading cause of death of young people—and this isn’t just about the mass shootings, but the ones in our impoverished cities that go mostly unreported.

-that Indigenous voices are still not being respected, let alone lands being returned, nor are the Indigenous being seen as holding key insights into practices that could help us address the toxicity of our own culture, which is resulting in climate collapse for all.

Add yours...

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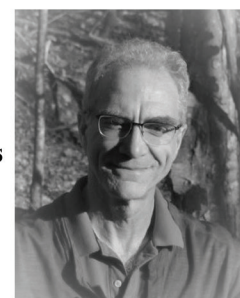
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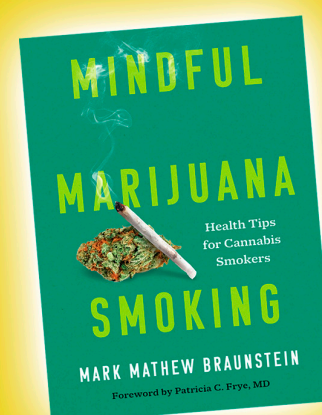
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www.MarkBraunstein.Org

Regional Media and Arts News

By John Murphy

Mark Twain Quote of the Month (from Tom Sawyer Abroad, Chapter 11)

...You know the more and more you join with people in their joys and their sorrows, the more nearer and dearer they come to be to you.

Hi folks, I hope our summer is treating you well. Twain provides me with daily inspiration and I'm glad to share one with you each month.

I hope you are wading through the daily news in one piece these days. Wherever you go for it, whatever your flavor, wow, what a shitshow we are living through! The sense of humor and fair play is being tested! Money is just out of control in our political arenas with no fix for that available yet. Imagine what old Samuel Langhorne would say if he read the Hartford Courant today. Who would print it? Who would pay for it?

As Neil Young said, don't let it bring you down, we need positive energy in every nook and cranny we can find. Everyone can make a difference – after decades of local radio I can tell you it is out there! I do not think we are that much farther apart from one another in reality; it is unreality that gets in the way, and the continuing noise with the silo walls very high. That is why we live in the Quiet Corner....

Two things for this month:

1. *On the Homefront* radio monthly program log—did you miss any recent shows?
2. New series covering maternal and child health care in our region, systemic changes

ON THE HOMEFRONT IS ON RADIO AND YOUTUBE ANYTIME!

The *On the Homefront* series is available on YouTube for 24/7 access anywhere. Subscribe and you will automatically get every new program in your inbox. Guests get links for their own media sharing!

Programs air live on Wednesdays from 5-6 pm on WILI AM 1400 and 95.3 digital FM. They are videotaped and posted on the radio station's YouTube channel. To share information or be a guest use email to plan the best date for your event calendars—the studio doors are wide open at john@humanartsmedia.com.

WILI YouTube Channel for all Monday-Friday local talk shows:
<https://www.youtube.com/@wiliradio7000>
Subscribe and you will automatically get every new show!

JUNE 7, 2023

1. Ashford Arts Council—A Summers Palette June 24 + Members Show/June/Vanilla Bean Cafe Deb Gag, Dan and Jane Rackliffe
www.ashfordarts.org
2. Coventry Arts Guild
Richard White, Board President, Artist
Ted Timberman, Board Member, Artist
www.coventryartsguild.org
3. The Side Door Jazz Club at Old Lyme Inn
Chris Beaudry, GM
www.thesidedoorjazz.com

JUNE 14, 2023

1. Arts Center East
Liz Bologna, E.D.
www.artscenrest.org
2. Windham Textile and History Museum
Kira Holmes, E.D.
Justice-Michelle Thomas, artist re exhibit "Here It Is."
www.millmuseum.org
3. Coventry Arts Guild [edited highlights from previous week]
Richard White, Board President, artist
Tim Timberman, Board Member, musician



John Murphy at WILI in Willimantic. Contributed photo.

www.coventryartsguild.org

JUNE 21, 2023

1. Willimantic Public Library
Dan Paquette
www.willimanticlibrary.org
2. Windham Textile and History Museum
Kira Holmes, E.D.
Justice-Michelle Thomas, artist re exhibit "Here It Is" July 1 opening!
www.millmuseum.org
3. Arts Center East [edited highlights from previous week]
Liz Bologna, Executive Director
www.artscenrest.org



JUNE 28, 2023

1. CLiCK—business classes, Pulguero de Willimantic, Pride Festival
Dianisi Torres & Maria Torres
Fermine – food business that started at CLiCK—Taco Truck at Rec Park
www.clickwillimantic.com
2. Maternal Health and Health Equity in Eastern Connecticut
Susan Johnson 49th House District/Windham/Deputy Majority Leader
Brenda Buchbinder LCSW/Windham United to Save Our Health Care
<https://www.facebook.com/WindhamUnitedtoSaveOurHealthcare/>

NEW SERIES COVERING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES

Our June 28, 2023, program launched a new series that will provide an open forum for information sharing and conversation about the current state of how the health care system in eastern Connecticut is serving the needs of mothers and newborn. Several years have passed since systemic changes were made to the delivery of local and regional services, levels of support, and access. A legal process for public review has been underway but it is incomplete to my knowledge, and it remains open and currently unresolved.

The first program featured the Windham State Representative and a member of a coalition of 13 groups across our region who share health care concerns. I will share a copy of that radio/TV program with the managers at Windham Hospital and invite them to the studio to join me in the conversation during July. Since I will be tracking this story, I want to provide every opportunity for the hospital or anyone else to participate.

This new series is my fifth effort to provide increased coverage and understanding of issues of critical public importance to our region that are receiving less-than-adequate coverage from the traditional channels. The first four series included:

- The status and prospects for local journalism in eastern Connecticut
- A profile and tour of all services from WRCC—The Windham Regional Community Council

-A town (Ashford) trying to balance democracy, local control, and the need for economic development
-The post-Covid recovery and growth of the arts community and the arts economy in all its forms

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR REGIONAL MEDIA NETWORK

The following link will take you to the WILI Radio YouTube channel, where the local weekly programs are posted—airing live on Monday through Friday from 5:00-6:00 pm. *Subscribe* to get all the new shows!
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFY4_TDRh_jING-5Z0k6pmKg

To access our regional network—to learn more or be a guest:

- WILI Radio 1400 AM and 95.3 Digital FM—my home base on Wednesdays at 5-6 pm
- WILI YouTube Dedicated Channel = search on WILI Radio or open email links (subscribe!)
- Neighbors Newspaper (www.neighborspaper.com) (monthly reviews and guest/topic previews)
- WECS Radio 90.1 FM and www.wecsfm.com (rebroadcasts on Wednesdays between 12-3 pm)

I want to send out a special 4th of July shoutout to all my program guests for their contributions to our community and for joining me in the studio! Your good work in the everyday of Life is the glue that keeps it all together through all the challenges we are facing today.

Thank you for reading *Neighbors* and for your comments and suggestions from past columns. I appreciate your interest and support for local media and hope you will stay connected with this project.

Always keep the faith,
John Murphy
john@humanartsmedia.com

August Events in our Neighborhood

Submitted by Bev York

WINDHAM ARTS

August Art Exhibit-- "Superheroes!" in the Coffee Break Gallery at 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic, Gallery Hours Mon - Fri. 9 to 5 sponsored by Windham Arts, to enter art work in the show email director@windhamarts.org
Aug 17 Ribbon Cutting for Mural Project 6:30 QR videos and Brochure Interpretation of The Mural Series of Old Postcards Views of Willimantic, During 3rd Thursday Street Festival. Grant funding from CT Humanities sponsored by Windham Arts and the Windham Regional Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

AMERICA MUSEUM

Aug 3 Summer Learning Camp Free history class and activity/craft every Thursday 10 to 2 Eastern Ct Veteran Center. register at director@windhamarts
Aug 15 Partnership Meeting for all Windham Region museums and cultural organizations 3 p.m. 250th committee meeting 4 p.m. Collaborations and Marketing. Vet Center
Aug 28 Liber Tea Topic: Supreme Court Superstars Discovery and Discussion 4 p.m. Veteran Center, 47 Crescent St, donations welcome. Willimantic sponsored by the America Museum

VETERAN COMMUNITY CENTER in Willimantic

Aug, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Coffeehouse every Wednesday Morning for vets, active service, and their families: comradery, announcements, program 9 to 11 Vet Center. 47 Crescent St.
Aug. 13 Car Show Classic 10 a.m. -4 p.m. Jillson Square, 627 Main, Willimantic. All proceeds go to Eastern CT Veteran Center
Aug. 24 Medical Clinic Free and open to anyone 10 -2 Eastern CT Veteran Community Center, 47 Crescent St. Willimantic
Aug 25, 26 Tag Sale at Vet Center 47 Crescent St. Willimantic. Donations appreciated starting on Aug. 21. proceeds to benefit Veteran Center

Sinking

All manner of creatures salted by the oceans desires
 Deep diving adventures culminating in ways not understood

Impossible cries emerge in the dark waters far away from the kiss of the sun
 Where are they hiding, these behemoths and barnacles and barracuda?

Are we believers, grounded observers of things that wet our appetite beyond mere acknowledgement?

Submerged into the intoxicating drink, treading farther and farther away from those things that persist
 The silence beyond quiet, it is the absolute absence of sound

Time doesn't matter it is just a concept that balances the buoyancy
 This odyssey begins and ends without a measure of the soups vastness

Nothing resembles what you know, nothing else swallows you with each drowning breath
 Float beyond the ropes, find a waiting anchor,
 wake from this Titanical dream, no rescue boats await

Listen for the ring of the buoys or the absent knell of the diving bell
 Your name is in the paper,
 Read it while you sleep, are you among the ones now lost to the fateful endless seas?

Poem and photo by Wayne Erskine.



Exploring the Moment

By Jesse Clark

Ideas. Thoughts. Sounds. There seem to be so many in our heads. These ideas, though, can inspire. They can lead to actions beyond our wildest dreams. But overthinking? That's a killer. So many times, we overthink instead of just closing our eyes and hearing. We have to go blind before we can see.

Too many distractions.

I like to go for walks, but, occasionally, they turn into dances.
 Anyone can walk or run in a straight line, where their sights are on the destination,
 but I like to dance.
 Slowing down and exploring what is in front of me, now. Moving my body, like a self-possessed clay statue, exploring what is around me along with what *is* me.
 Like a bubble stuck in time, mine to explore and play in how I wish.
 Sometimes, when I feel anxious, it can feel like I'm on one side of a lake and I *have* to be on the other side *immediately*.
 But I don't. I'm not on that side of the lake. I'm here. And I can explore what is here on this side, instead of rushing to my supposed, preconceived destination.
 Wherever I am now, that's where I'm supposed to be.

When I'm listening to music in the car, sometimes something magical happens.
 Sometimes the chorus may start as other cars move,
 sometimes the tempo of the song matches the tempo of my driving.
 And, sometimes, the song slows to a stop as I do.
 I call this "car-eography" and it happens when I am in tune with everything around me.
 It can't be forced. I can try to change speed, but I can't let the music dictate my driving.
 All the variables have to be in sync with each other.
 And when it *does* happen, it's magic.

What do you desire? What are you devoted to?
 Putting it out there, saying it aloud to yourself or in prayer can open your eyes.
 God talking to you *through* you.
 What do you find beautiful? Can you see the beauty in the world?
 In others? In you?
 Stop and feel the rose that is you.
 Be your own paintbrush, moving gracefully through this Earth.
 Feel your own presence as you move through it.
 This wonderful world that was created for us. For you.
 Feeling the wind wrap you in a hug.
 Then, run, or dance, or sing for joy with that spirit.
 For here, right now,
 where you are standing, or sitting, or lying,
 that is where you should be.
 And when you realize all that you have to be grateful for,
 all the amazing love and joy and potential to keep it going,
 that's the real magic.

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



'Reflecting on change'. Chameleon lizard from ALL PETS CLUB in North Windham, CT. Photo by Ophelia Marino.

"All you need is love."
 -John Lennon

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Bicycling in Massachusetts



A view from the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail.

Photos by author.

By Dean Farrell

In previous issues of *Neighbors*, I discussed the bike trails I've ridden in both Connecticut and Rhode Island. Our next stop is the Bay State.

My bicycling experience in Massachusetts is far from complete. For example, I've yet to ride a single path in the Boston area—mainly because I hate driving in that town. I'll need to further explore the state and one day write "Bicycling in Massachusetts, Part 2."

Ashuwillticook Rail Trail. This paved path shows off the Berkshires in all their grandeur. When I was there in 2021, it ran 12 miles through the Hoosic River Valley in Lanesborough, Cheshire, and Adams. However, a new section has since been added which extends 1.5 miles south to Crane Road near Pittsfield. The trailhead there includes a dirt parking lot and toilet facilities.

My journey began at the Lanesborough trailhead. You ride through the woods between the Hoosic River and MA-8. You'll see little of the highway, as an abundance of trees shields it from the path. In the first mile, you encounter Berkshire Pond, followed by the breathtaking Cheshire Reservoir and its 2.4-mile shoreline. At its northern end, you can stop for snacks and beverages. There is also an old railroad station, which now houses a business.

As you proceed the next four miles into Adams, you'll pass wood lots and farms. From there, the area's manufacturing history becomes visible in the form of old mill buildings along the Hoosic River. The pathway abuts the town's main street, which boasts old-timey stores and restaurants. The former passenger depot still stands, as well.

Also in Adams is a visitor's center with a bike rack, bathrooms, maps, and other amenities. From there, the trail continues another mile or so to Lime Street, where it currently ends. A further extension is planned into North Adams.

Cape Cod Rail Trail. Completely paved and mostly flat, this trail proceeds 27.5 miles between Yarmouth and Wellfleet. It begins at Peter Homer Memorial Park in Yarmouth. You'll cross Station Avenue on a pedestrian bridge and ride through 2.5 miles of woods to a 160-foot bridge spanning the Bass River. You'll then cross a second pedestrian bridge over MA-134 to the South Dennis trailhead.

During the next three miles, you can stop for ice cream, have a picnic, or visit other trails and towns. At a bike rotary in Harwich, the Cape Cod Rail Trail meets the Old Colony Trail, which proceeds seven miles through the Hacker Wildlife Sanctuary and terminates in Chatham.

As you head north on the Cape Cod Rail Trail, you'll pass kettle ponds and quaint general stores. At the 14-mile mark, you'll be in Nickerson State Park, whose

1,900 acres include swimming pools, picnic areas, walking and biking trails, bathrooms, and camping grounds. The park also has an eight-mile path, which offers a pleasant bike ride through the forest.

About 1.5 miles after the park, the trail briefly joins a road. It then crosses a bridge and enters the town of Orleans. This one-time whaling seaport is an ideal place to eat lunch, do some shopping, or visit historical sites. About 3.5 miles after Orleans, you'll see signs directing you to the Cape Cod National Seashore, about one half-mile off the trail. It's well worth your time! The remainder of the path has public campgrounds and coastal overlooks. It ends in Wellfleet.

Manhan Rail Trail. At six miles in length, this paved path incorporates parks, neighborhoods, business centers, and other points of interest. The northwest section leads into the city of Northampton. At its northern end on King Street, it connects to two sections of the Mass Central Rail Trail (see below).

Going south, the trail abuts (but is separate from) an active railroad line. Union Station boasts a number of restaurants, cafes, and shops. As you leave Northampton, the trail passes Veterans Field, which offers parking, restrooms, and a skate park. Once you've crossed the trestle over the Mill River, the path takes on a more rural ambiance.

The Manhan Rail Trail is shaped like a Y tipped over on its side. When you reach the junction of the Y, you have the option of continuing south into Easthampton or riding 2.2 miles northeast to the trail's North Street terminus. If you take the latter route, you'll parallel the Manhan and Connecticut Rivers. You'll also have access to the Old Pascommuck Conservation Area. This path ends shortly after you go beneath Interstate 91.

As you head south at the junction into Easthampton, you'll come across neighborhoods, trailside businesses, and community gardens. There's also the Little Free Library, where you can pick up or drop off books. And you'll see a gorgeous mural across from the old railroad depot. The trail proceeds south for another mile and ends at Coleman Road.

Mass Central Rail Trail (Norwottuck Branch). The 104-mile corridor that once was the Massachusetts Central Railroad is being remade into a bike path. As of this writing, the 50-mile stretch between Boston and Northampton has been converted. However, it is broken up into separate sections.

To date, I've only ridden the 12-mile Norwottuck Branch through Belchertown, Hadley, Amherst, and Northampton. For the most part, it's a shaded path surrounded by trees—a most welcome

dividend in the summer heat. And though I haven't been there in the autumn, I can only assume the foliage is spectacular.

The journey begins at the easternmost trailhead on Warren Wright Road in Belchertown. From there, you'll proceed through wetlands abutting the Lawrence Swamp Conservation Area. You're afforded pleasant views of streams and water-lily-filled inlets through the forested corridor. There are also a number of hiking paths in this section, including the Robert Frost Trail. You'll further ride through Lawrence Station, which offers picnic benches, a portable toilet, and an information kiosk.

The paved pathway then proceeds under a leafy canopy. You'll see the Fort River access point, which leads to the Emily Dickinson Trail (for hiking, not bicycling). There is a parking area south of the path at Mill Lane. About four miles in, you'll pass the sports fields of Amherst College. As you proceed southward, the pathway intersects with the Art Swift Bike Connector, which leads to the UMass campus.

The route proceeds west into Hadley through a combination of farmland and busier places—including the commercial areas surrounding the Hampshire and Mountain Farms Malls. Heading into Northampton, you'll cross a lattice-truss bridge, which offers a sensational view of the Connecticut River. You'll see a park with docks and river access at the bridge's western end. At Woodmont Road, the Norwottuck Branch connects to the Francis P. Ryan Bikeway. That's also where the Manhan Rail Trail begins (see above).

Shining Sea Bikeway. This 10.7-mile asphalt path is the only trail on Cape Cod with a seaside segment, if you can believe that. I recommend starting your ride at the Depot Road trailhead in Falmouth, as



A view from the Mass Central Rail Trail (Norwottuck Branch).

you'll want to save the best for last—namely, the breathtaking Woods Hole terminus.

At 0.6 miles, you'll cross Winslow Road, at which point the path enters a wooded area and goes through an underpass with bike-themed murals courtesy of AmeriCorps. At the four-mile mark, the trail crosses the Great Sippewissett Marsh. After an additional 1.3 miles, you'll be at the Little Sippewissett Marsh. ("Sippewissett" is Wampanoag for "little river.") From there, you'll proceed through a wooded area, followed two miles later by Depot Avenue/Highfield Drive in Falmouth, and a bus station on your left. From there, you'll cross the road to enter a trailside parking lot. The path continues into Beebe Woods and occasionally intersects lightly trafficked streets.

The trail next goes through a wooded area with businesses sprinkled throughout the vicinity. At 8.5 miles, you'll encounter a breathtaking view of the Atlantic Ocean as you ride past Surf Drive Beach. Next, you'll traverse a final wooded area that passes through a suburban neighborhood with houses to the left of the trail. Here, you'll cross a short bridge and pass through a lengthy parking lot, where you'll inevitably encounter cars.

Once you've crossed the Church Street overpass, you'll see Little Harbor to your left. In 0.3 mile, you'll ride beneath the Crane Street overpass and come to the end of the trail in Woods Hole. The view will *not* disappoint you!

Old Age Walking

We wiggle, we wobble
our steps, ever so tiny.
We walk like a baby
then fall on our hineys.

We teeter, we totter
we walk in great fear.
Standing up, straight and tall
risks a flattened ear.

We quiver, we tumble
and end up on the street.
We try not to fumble
walking on our own feet.

With every misstep
bumps, bruises now appear.
Our world turns upside down
as we land on our rear.

Our time is flying by.
Our balance is fleeting.
The challenge of walking
is slowly defeating

As we shuffle along
a prayer leaves our lips
that we won't fall down
and break both our hips.

Now, that we have grown old
we may start to teeter,
we're no longer so bold
and feel quite defeated.

We're out of balance.
We might giggle with tears
as we try to adjust
to our own private fears.

At times we're obsessed
with every step we take.
Yet, we have been blessed:
we're not at our wack.

As we lived our own life,
we have laughed and swore.
We have explored many sites
with our ass on the floor.

From our porch rocking chairs,
we have many tales to tell.
I hope that you will listen
and in time retell them well.

Created by Jeanne Esterquest

Catbird

How it cheers my heart to see
The returning catbird in the tree
How very glad I am to hear
His soft sweet singing full of cheer
Tweeting and warbling from above
Springtime songs all filled with love
With now and then thrown in a flat meow
It must seem funny to the bird somehow
To interrupt his pretty ditties
With the sour sound of kitties
Laughing in the face of fear
Though his enemies are near
There's a stalking cat somewhere
A hawk waits in the tree up there
I hope my gay and fearless friend
Lives his full days out to their end
Because I love to see them in the spring
For pure joy in life, the catbird is the king!

Kathy O. LaVallee, North Windham

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Pipes Are More than Pipe Dreams

Health Tips for Pipe Smokers of Cannabis

By Mark Mathew Braunstein

Smoking pipes have been unearthed in archaeological digs throughout the world. The earliest were sculpted from stone during the late Stone Age. In our present Stoned Age, traditionalists who smoke cannabis in pipes are reenacting ancient rituals first practiced by our prehistoric ancestors. Time now to revolutionize this ritual for the 21st century.

Put This in Your Pipe and Smoke It

Smoking a pipe provides several advantages over smoking a joint. The act of smoking a pipe can be less hurrying, less wasteful, less toxic, and less irritating.

Less Hurrying: Different herbs combust at differing rates. Pipe tobacco is treated chemically to stay lit. Untreated, cannabis tends to snuff out between tokes. So you can let your mind wander and can daydream some pipedreams.

Less Wasteful: Once you light up a joint, you tend to stop only after you've smoke it down to a roach. Between tokes, the joint continues burning, wasting that sidestream smoke. With a pipe, you can cap the bowl between puffs to conserve your precious cannabis. This holds especially true when your smoking session is solo rather than social.

A pipe transfers 40 to 50 percent of the cannabinoids in cannabis, but a joint only 10 to 20 percent. Measured in THC, a joint loses up to half to sidestream. Smoke one pipeful, and get one free. Expressed as an automotive metaphor, with a joint you need two fill-ups, while with a pipe you need only one. Your own mileage may vary.

Less Toxic: Pipes spare your lungs from smoke from rolling papers. Yet not even papers made from hemp add any relief or high. Still, the load is less toxic only if you avoid inhaling fumes from matches or butane lighters. (See the November 2022 *Neighbors* for "Safer Ways to Fire Up Your Cannabis.")

Less Irritating: Smoke is hot and dry, which parches your throat and mouth, leading to gum disease and tooth decay. By absorbing the heat, a pipe's stem cools down the smoke before you take a hit.

The Tunnel at the End of the Light

A pipe's stem is the tunnel at the end of the light. When short, non-wooden stems can get too hot to handle and burn your fingertips and lips. Numerous studies have proven that burns are not conducive to good health.

Accustomed to feeling the heat in their raspy throats from smoking joints or short-stem pipes, first-time smokers of long-stem pipes fill their lungs to the point of bursting into a coughing fit. Be kind to your lungs by lengthening that stem. The longer the stem, the cooler the smoke.

A British name for a long-stemmed pipe is the "churchwarden pipe." Popularized by the *Hobbit* book and film trilogy, they have been nicknamed "Hobbit pipes." Unfortunately, these are not segmented for easy cleaning. You can piece together long stems from several short metal stems sold at smoke shops. But metal imparts a tinny after-taste to the smoke. Wood, a natural fiber, is lightweight and imparts a pleasant aroma or none at all. Despite a multitude of pipes in the marketplace, segmented long-stemmed wooden pipes are rarities.

If you and your friends gather to pass a peace pipe, the honorable notion of sharing should be indulged with caution. You will also be sharing your bacteria and viruses that can transmit a host of contagious respiratory diseases. Prudence calls upon you to sanitize the mouthpiece with an antiseptic wipe before passing the peace pipe.

Alternatively, you can distribute among your friends the segments of your long-stemmed pipe. As you pass around the bowl, each person can insert their segment into the communal bowl, much like octopus-like hookahs with one single bowl but several tubular stems.

Life is a Bowl of Cherries and Cherrywood

While wood is ideal for stems, it initially poses risk for use as bowls. New wooden bowls burn ever so slightly. Wood thus requires an initiation in which an empty bowl is puffed upon but not inhaled. Because where there's fire, there's smoke.

WOODEN bowls made of hardwood, once initiated, will not scorch again because they require higher temperatures to ignite than does the cannabis flower. Wooden bowls are usually carved from native hardwoods. In Connecticut, that could be oak, maple, beech, walnut, or cherrywood. Native to Europe and Africa, briarwood is the most heat-resistant of all hardwoods.

CORNCOB pipes ignite too easily. The outer shell, sometimes shellacked, is especially flammable around the rim. The most hazardous are miniature pipes intended to be discarded after use. Discard them *before* use.

METAL bowls, even when too hot to handle, remain non-flammable. Smoke shops sell them piecemeal, so you can accessorize metal bowls onto wooden stems.

CERAMIC, STONE, and TURKISH MEER-SCHAUM are among the coolest and safest bowls.

SOAPSTONE and SANDSTONE pipes consist of bowls and stems sculpted as one small piece, but their stems are too short.

GLASS pipes also are made of one piece, but if their stems are too short, their bowls are too hot to handle. Small glass pipes do provide one redeemable feature. Rather than ignite the cannabis through the top of the bowl, you can heat the underside of the bowl. In drug lingo, these are called crackpipes. By heating the cannabis rather than burning it, you have effectively created a primitive but pocket-size herbal vaporizer.

DIY: Consider constructing a hybrid of your own of a segmented long wooden stem with a small stone or ceramic bowl. Heads up, headshops! Are you listening?

The Apple of My Eye

In a pinch, you can always improvise a pipe from the legendary apple of the Garden of Eden. Select an apple with a level bottom. Carve out an eyelet at the stem and continue halfway down the core. Next, hollow out a second eyelet from the side, also halfway into the core. The two tunnels should meet, forming an L-shape. Insert a screen at the top as your bowl. When you're done smoking, remove the screen, and eat the rest of the apple, which replenishes moisture to your parched mouth and throat. As smoking depletes Vitamin C, eating the apple will compensate for vitamin C loss, though not as much when you compare apples with oranges.

Screening for Drugs

The bowls of pipes intended for tobacco often are larger than those needed for cannabis. To reduce the depth of the chamber and to block bits of bud or ash from reaching your mouth, insert a screen. Smoke shops sell coin-shaped screens made from brass or steel in various diameters. Some screens are coated with plastic or wax thinly applied to assure a grip for the punch press that cuts the circles out of the metal mesh sheet. Burn off that coating before inserting the screen into the pipe. Holding it with tweezers, toast the screen with a lighter, match, or candle flame. If asked why you are toasting your screen, just say you are screening for drugs.

Good Clean Fun

To keep your pipeline flowing, replace that screen regularly. Whenever you replace the screen, also clean out the gunk from the rest of the pipe. Stems and bowls are tar traps, which is a good thing. If your pipe's airflow becomes clogged, you've waited too long before cleaning. After each smoking session, take apart the pipe to expel any loose ash or bud by blowing into each chamber. Also, peek into each segment to ensure you can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

To clean stems, your ideal drug paraphernalia are, no surprise, pipe cleaners. The standard length is six inches. Pipe cleaners for long stems come twice that length at one foot. Also, bamboo skewers used for cooking can be useful for cleaning.

To scrap out bowls, sandwich picks, blunt-tipped knives, or utility are handy. Avoid soiling your hands with toxic tar by wearing vinyl or nitrile exam gloves. When donning gloves, just remember that two lefts do not make a right.

Cleanup can be a drudgery, but find joy knowing that any goopy tar you've removed is better on your tools in front of you than inside of you.

Ashes to Ashes, Smoke to Smoke

One last health tip concerns the last step in the smoking process. Refrain from smoking a bowlful down to just ash. Otherwise, on your final toke, you risk inhaling lots of ash with the smoke. Dump that ash into an ashtray, not into your lungs.

Mark Mathew Braunstein is the author of six books, including Mindful Marijuana Smoking: Health Tips for Cannabis Smokers (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2022), from which this article was adapted. You can read his many editorials and articles about medical marijuana and recreational cannabis at www.MarkBraunstein.org

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Please visit www.ec-chap.org/board2023 to learn more and to apply online. Questions may be addressed by email to: info@ec-chap.org; or by

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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).

Grid operator dials back electricity concerns

Commonwealth. "After years of cautionary warnings about the risk of winter-time electricity shortages and possible brownouts, the operator of the New England power grid is putting that message on hold for several years. An analysis by ISO New England indicates supply and demand for electricity should roughly balance out in the region through 2027. The analysis credits stronger than expected growth in solar power, fewer retirements of existing power plants, and flat demand for electricity. At an all-day conference of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in Portland, Maine, on Tuesday, the analysis stunned many participants and prompted outright skepticism from many of them. The analysis also triggered a major policy shift by the grid operator in regard to a liquefied natural gas facility in Everett..." "We were here last August and the message was slightly different, some would say dramatically different," said Willie Phillips, the chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission."

Climate change all but ignored by the CT legislature in 2023

CT Mirror. "It's downright depressing. It's deeply concerning," said Nathan Frohling of the Nature Conservancy, calling the session a failure on climate. "The fires and the smoke remind us that climate change is not just something that's abstract..." "The main [climate] bill never made it out of committee. It would have given DEEP the power to designate greenhouse gas emission targets for specific sectors of the economy and levy penalties if they weren't met. Opponents, largely from the ranks of Republicans and the fossil fuel industry, called the penalties a tax... Many legislators objected to concentrating so much power with the DEEP commissioner for that and other bills. But Dykes and others pointed out that Connecticut is an outlier among states in the lack of authority its executive agencies can wield without constantly going back for legislative approval... Climate bill Plan B would have started the process of developing a statewide so-called decarbonization roadmap, as other states have done... After lengthy debate that included comments that climate change wasn't important to constituents or even real, it made it through the House with only one Republican vote but never made it to the Senate floor."



CT House passes bill to reform energy regulation

CT Mirror. "A complicated and heavily lobbied bill that embraces the adversarial stance adopted by Connecticut's top regulator in utility rate cases won final passage Monday in the House of Representatives... The bill offers [PURA Chair Marissa] Gillett a measure of protection: Her position as chair no longer will be subject to a vote by the commissioners; effective this month, the selection of the chair will be up to Gov. Ned Lamont... The bill also strengthens Gillett's hand in limiting the use of settlements to set electric, gas or water rates. Gillett says only full rate cases provide PURA with an accurate view of a utility's finances and operations... the bill would require the state's publicly traded electric utilities, Eversource and United Illuminating, to assess the significant costs of preparing or appealing rate decisions on their shareholders, not customers. An overall thrust is to disincentivize regulated utilities, particularly electric companies, from relying on increasing sales for profits..."

Neighbor dispute risks souring a Connecticut community on solar energy

CT Mirror. "...when the 29-acre project on East Road went into operation in late 2021, Van Steenburgh immediately heard a constant ringing in the air from electrical equipment at the site. What he describes as an "annoying high-pitched tone," audible whenever it was sunny, followed him into his front and back yards... The simplest, least-cost way to ensure that noise is not audible to neighbors of a solar development is to site the equipment on a non-noise-sensitive property line, such as away from houses... If that isn't possible, developers can install a noise barrier, which is "a one, two, three or potentially four-sided wall around the equipment... Van Steenburgh thinks the siting regulations ought to be revised

to ensure that a situation like the one he's in doesn't happen again."

Legislature's inaction on food waste leaves towns holding the (trash) bag

CT Mirror. "Connecticut legislators have been told for years that a key to solving the state's waste crisis and lowering costs is to get food scraps out of the waste stream going to the platoon of plants burning it to make energy. Experts told them. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection told them. Even some in their own ranks told them. Most of all, local officials told them... But when the 2023 legislative session ended earlier this month, money to expand the successful residential food waste diversion pilot project — included in legislation at the start of the session — was nowhere to be found. This means municipalities that had been begging for help to deal with food waste will now have to pay the price for that legislative failure — literally... "I'm extremely disappointed," said Sam King, owner of Blue Earth. "There was momentum in this direction and an industry built around this and in infrastructure. We were poised to bring Connecticut into — really — the 21st century."

CT offering vouchers for residents to buy e-bikes

CT Mirror. "Eco-minded New Haveners, and other Connecticut residents looking to get out of their cars and onto two battery-assisted wheels, will soon be able to apply for up to \$1,500 in state-subsidized vouchers to help cover the costs of purchasing a new electric bicycle... The state's program offers a \$500 voucher to all Connecticut residents aged 18 years and up. It offers an additional \$1,000 incentive to those who also reside in Environmental Justice communities or distressed municipalities, including New Haven. Residents who participate in certain income-qualifying programs such as Medicaid or Head Start, or who have an income less than 300 percent of the federal poverty level, which currently translates to \$90,000 for a family of four, can also apply for the extra \$1,000."



Teslas for Police: A Better Deal Than Ever

EV Club of CT. "In 2019, when the Westport Police purchased a Model 3 for use as a patrol car for \$52,000 vs. \$37,000 for the incumbent gasoline-powered Ford Explorer, it was a good deal. But it had to be proven, as some were skeptical that the savings would be significant enough to overcome the \$15,000 purchase premium. In our analysis, we found that when factoring in savings in fuel, maintenance, customization, and expected vehicle life, the Model 3 is projected to save over \$50,000 over a 4-year period... Fast forward a few years, however, and things have really changed. The law-enforcement version of the Ford Explorer... is now \$47,000. The Westport Police expect delivery next month of their third Tesla and second Model Y, purchased this year, for which they paid \$53,000. This new Tesla is eligible for Inflation Reduction Act incentives of \$7500, making the acquisition price lower than the Ford... Three years into the use of the Model 3, the police feel it is quite possible that the 6-year projection may be too conservative."

Is a mileage-based usage fee in CT's highway future?

CT Mirror. "A gasoline tax is also a user fee... unless you're one of the 21,000 Connecticut residents driving an electric car. Sure, they pay for their "juice" but nothing for driving on our roads. And with electric car sales projected to soar, that leaves gasoline-powered motorists paying for the Tesla-crowd. That's not fair... All of the alternatives for funding the state's transportation future were studied in 2015 by Gov. Dannel Malloy's blue-ribbon Transportation Finance Panel... But one of the funding ideas they wanted to include was blocked by the Connecticut legislature: a Vehicle Miles Tax (VMT). The idea is simple: the more miles you drive, the more you pay... the "No Tolls CT" folks saw a VMT as just another kind of toll. And the No-Tollers threatened to unseat any lawmaker up for re-election that defied them. Their threats worked... But guess what CDOT is about to undertake? That's right... a study of VMT!"

Delaware Gets Direct Sales; Not So Connecticut

EV Club of CT. "As the legislative session inches towards its conclusion on June 7th, we have been through another year without enactment of legislation that would permit electric vehicle manufacturers using a direct sales business model to open stores in CT... These are companies such as Tesla, Rivian, and Lucid, with others on the horizon... To quote former State Senator Will Haskell (D-Westport) when he previously raised direct sales, this bill is only controversial in Hartford. The way the bill was killed this year is the way it is always defeated — without being called for a vote. The legislators well know that their constituents support this bill. Many legislators are afraid to cross the dealerships, an entrenched and well-funded special interest... This blog sees this as a larger issue of consumer choice, EV adoption, and economics. It is the single most effective thing that can be done to accelerate EV sales."

Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

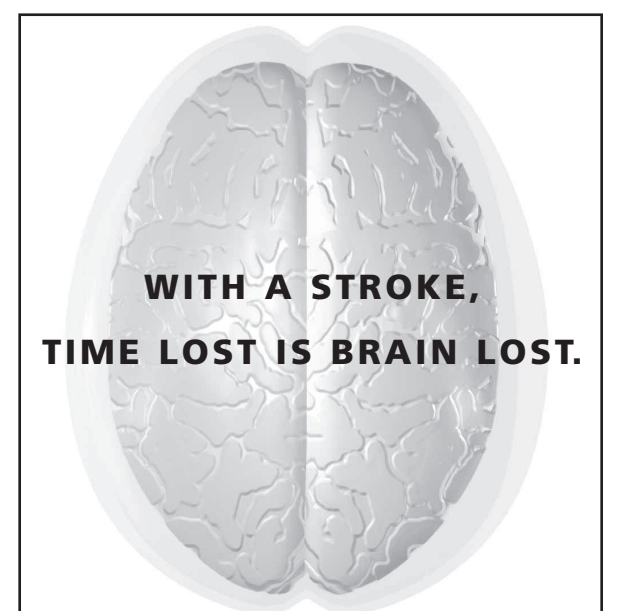
The demand for used and new vehicles has really grown over the last couple of years. The consumer needs to be aware of the condition of the used vehicle they are purchasing. We have found large and expensive repairs on used vehicles that should have been inspected before they were bought. Most repair facilities offer a vehicle inspection. The inspection will check for rust of the undercarriage, brakes, tires, suspension, belts, and hoses. The onboard computer will be checked for current or history information. This will help to head off costly repairs for the consumer. I am mentioning this in the name of safety.

Speaking of safety, how safe is the vehicle you are driving? I do not need an expensive study to tell you that 1 out of 3 vehicles that come into our repair facility has some sort of safety issue. Torn wiper blades, headlight lenses that are so distorted that you cannot see 10 feet in front of you, if they work at all, worn tires with exposed steel belts, bad brakes, and suspension, and my very favorite, leaving a trailer hitch draw bar in the receiver. The trailer hitch companies designed their hitch so that the draw bar would be removed when it was not in use for safety. I saw a driver back his truck into a parking place and put the draw bar through the radiator of the car behind it because it was a good foot past the vehicles bumper. This resulted in a very costly and unnecessary repair for the driver of the truck.

If you take the time and listen your vehicle talks to you. Of course, this only happens when you are not distracted by electronic devices. The person who drives the vehicle all the time knows how it handles, performs, and any sounds that are not normal. The grinding noise you hear may be as little as 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 the road. Do it for yourself, your family, and other drivers on the road.

The Connecticut Motor Vehicle Department has changed a lot from years ago. The new registration of a vehicle in Connecticut used to require a safety inspection at the DMV by a Connecticut inspector to make sure the vehicle was safe for the road and passed all registration protocols. If the vehicle had issues, then repairs had to be performed and the vehicle would need to be reinspected to receive a Connecticut registration. Today a VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) verification is all you need to register your vehicle. This means that heavily rusted frames, bald tires, and bad brakes mean nothing when registering a vehicle in Connecticut. We have seen used vehicles purchased by people who spent their savings just to purchase the vehicle never mind making the costly repairs after they registered the vehicle. The Connecticut licensed seller of a vehicle, by law, must make sure the vehicle is safe for Connecticut highways. The great demand for used vehicles has opened the door for non-licensed people to sell an unsafe vehicle. That is why we recommend that you have a vehicle inspected by a Connecticut licensed facility before you purchase it. This could save you a lot of money and heartache in the long run. Wishing everyone a happy and safe motoring summer!!

Rick Ostien is the owner of Franc Motors in Willington.



Solar Today - Honoring Earth Day Every Day

Greetings all,

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

As mentioned last month, Electric Bill Relief is coming July 1st: Connecticut Residents to see price cut on the supply side rate and a small increase on the delivery side. All in all should be about a 22% decrease from the current delivered cost of electricity. We will know more once the new bills come rolling in after the rate change!



Here's an interesting twist on energy production!

Excerpt From: *The New Haven Register* 6/7/23 staff writer, Collin Atwood

Cow poop turns to natural gas at this Connecticut farm: 'farm of the future'

ELLINGTON — Despite the unbearable odor, more cow poop in town is better now that Oakridge Dairy's methane digester is operational and its bovines are happily in the process of creating renewable natural gas for residents across New England. The largest dairy farm in the state already produces 18% of the milk in Connecticut with its 3,000 cows, CEO and fifth generation farmer Seth Bahler said. Now the cows will also help Bahler create "the farm of the future" by producing manure for the two million gallon methane digester on site. "For the industry we're becoming part of the solution for sustainability," Bahler said. "We're taking a waste product and turning it into energy." Bahler started working at the farm that his great-great-grandfather created in 1890 about 10 years ago. "I came in on the business side and saw a huge opportunity in our location to produce safe and healthy food for our community and be a part of the solution," he said.

For eight years he has been trying to facilitate the creation of a methane digester on site. In October 2021 construction of the enormous \$15 million concrete tank began. The project developer is South Jersey Industries, and the main funding partner is REV LNG, a renewable energy service company in Pennsylvania. Nothing changes for the cows now that the machine is operational. They still consume their 100 pounds of food daily and dump their waste. A vacuum truck then goes through the barns, sucks up all the manure and drops it in a pit where underground pumps funnel it to the digester.

Around 70,000 gallons of manure is pumped into the digester every day, Bahler said. The manure stays in the tank for 21 days, kept at 101 degrees Fahrenheit, while methane bugs inside consume and create natural gas. Bahler said the tank is a more efficient replication of a cow's stomach. Once the gas is available it goes through a series of steps to take the impurities out and compress it to gas pipeline quality. The manure in the digester now should be pipeline ready in about four to six weeks, Bahler said.

For the next six months, the gas will be pumped into a 53-gallon gas compressed tank every other day before it's shipped to an injection point in Albany, New York. Bahler said the end goal is to have the processed methane go directly into an Eversource Energy network pipe in Ellington that can direct the flow of natural gas into local homes and cars. Bahler added that the renewable energy created at the dairy could power 800 to 900 cars for one year's worth of gas.

There is also a digester in Thompson that turns manure into renewable energy by taking raw gas and putting it through an engine to create electricity. Bahler said that Coventry is in the process of building a similar machine. In 2022, Hytone Ag-Grid, also in Ellington, was successful in launching a converter that turned methane gas into renewable electricity.

Oakridge Dairy is the first farm in the state to construct and go online with a manure digester that produces gas. "We're taking it several more steps to get all of the impurities out to put it in, so it can be ran as natural gas," he added. The methane digester is just the most recent project at the farm that maximizes the cow's production. Oakridge Dairy produces around 25,000 gallons of milk everyday with its rotary milking machine. The machine takes 72 cows at a time and milks each one three times a day. Bahler said it takes about 6 hours to milk every cow on the farm once. Each cow also has technology around its neckband that measures the vitals of the cows to make sure they are happy and healthy.

How do you get off the utility roller coaster? Well, you can either buy a bunch of cows, or reach out to a local solar expert!

If you'd like to know more about Solar and how it could possibly help you to save money, please reach out to me directly.

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Thanks for reading my article and let's make every day Earth Day!

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Fletcher News continued from page 12

Neighbors 19

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'He's Bach in the Garden' – with classical guitarist Mark Davis

Classical guitarist Mark Davis, who almost single-handedly kept Music at the Fletch alive during the early pandemic with his weekly 'Bach in the Garden' series of 2021, returns with a benefit garden concert Wednesday August 30 at 6 p.m. The concert will close out this season's Music at the Fletch series, and all donations will go toward supporting next year's offerings. The Grammy-nominated guitarist will focus on works by Bach but will include well-loved works from Spanish, Latin-American and contemporary composers.

Although the baroque master never wrote a note for the guitar, Davis found many of J. S. Bach's works for unaccompanied violin congenial for his own instrument. "I find that many of Bach's original works for lute and unaccompanied violin work marvelously well on the modern guitar, which brings a freshness and intimacy to the sound of these pieces," he said.

Local music fans will be familiar with Hampton native Davis thanks to his work with the Mark and Beverly Davis Duo (Fletcher Library Outdoor Series opener 2018), The Faux Nellies, and the Big Jump Band, as well as with The Providence Mandolin Orchestra.

Music at the Fletch, Honky Tonk Moon

Music at the Fletch presents a free concert, Honky Tonk Moon, August 16th at 6 p.m. The group plays an eclectic mix of folk, blues, rock and more, aiming for a friendly "front-porch" feel.

The eastern Connecticut group features Peter Magrane on guitar and ukulele, Sherrill Owen Farkas on fiddle, Carl Garbe with bass, banjo, and mandolin, and Donna Tommelleo playing percussion. The group came together earlier this year through mutual friends and open mics, and each member contributes a different aspect to their music.

The daughter of professional musicians, fiddler Farkas brings a deep musical background to the quartet. Magrane, a songwriter, likes tell a good story musically. He teaches ukelele and has been playing in bands since his teen years.

Garbe is master of several string instruments and is active in some Connecticut shoreline bands. Tommelleo, a relative latecomer to the music scene, took up drums in 2015. She says that she has been having a blast ever since.

Fletcher Memorial Library is at 257 Main Street, Hampton, Info: 860 455 1086. Fans should bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating. In case of rain or excessive heat, the concert will be rescheduled for August 19th at 10:30 a.m.

Tai Chi Classes for Health and Balance

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Call or text Sarah Winter: 860-931-8636

Ashford Senior Center: Tue, Fri 9:30-10:30a

Chaplin Senior Center: Thu 1-2p

Columbia Senior Center: Tue 1-2p

Coventry Senior Center: Wed 9:30-10:30a

Lebanon Senior Center: Tue 4-5p, Thu 6:30-7:30p

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Students recently visited the America Museum in Willimantic to learn about Uncle Sam and the Statue of Liberty. Here Miah from Willimantic models Lady Liberty. Text and photo by Bev York.

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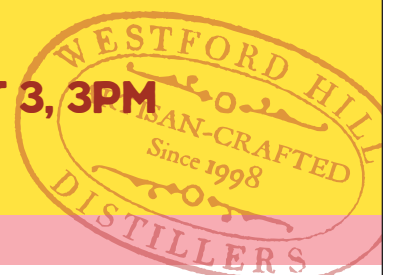
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SUNDAY, JULY 2, 3PM
 Eclectica

SUNDAY, JULY 23, 3PM
 Orpheus Guitar Duo

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 3PM
 Flamingo

SUNDAY, SEPT 3, 3PM
 Concinnity



Tickets \$10

Reserve by calling **860-429-0464** or email info@westfordhill.com
 Limited tickets available at the door.

Enjoy our outdoor cocktail bar!

Please do not bring any beverage except water.
 Please bring your own chair.
 We encourage you to bring a picnic or snacks!

Westford Hill Distillers
 196 Chatey Road, Ashford, CT

info@WestfordHill.com



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