

NEIGHBORS

No. 222

October 2023

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GROUNDED

Faded words on a crooked marker
 One after another, lines that lead nowhere
 Names that have lost their meaning
 No one even slightly interested in who or what they were
 Chiseled hammered scratchings dated from then to when
 Silent reminders of living, lost forever in this forest of granite, limestone, and buried grief
 What would we talk about if they resurrected?
 Would we whisper in a language familiar to all
 or would we shout out in disbelief?
 The night full of sounds and shadows that may frighten
 Perhaps the darkness is the least of our fears

Poem and photo by Wayne Erskine.



Signs and Symptoms of Neurotypical Spectrum Disorder

By Dean Farrell

Neurotypical Spectrum Disorder is a psychological condition characterized by the following traits:

- A crippling fear of solitude;
- Cannot keep silent in social situations, even when they have nothing relevant to say;
- Prioritizes status over morality;
- Unable to form individual identity;
- Lack of curiosity;
- Obsession with socioeconomic standing;
- Weak to nonexistent sense of justice;
- Disconnected from nature;
- Manipulative tendencies;
- Lack of attention to detail;
- Obsessively reads meaning into words (or lack of words);
- Inability to communicate directly; would rather drop "hints" and send out "signals" than say what they mean;
- Unable or unwilling to acknowledge, much less understand, that not everyone has to be the same as they are;
- Anger over this article due to inability to recognize satire.

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

Leitrim Lad

By Judy Davis

Sean McDermott was born in 1883 near Kiltyclogher, County Leitrim. After school in Cavan, he settled in Belfast in 1905. After a job as a barman, he joined the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and the Gaelic League, fighting the British rule. This landed him in prison. Once free, Sean said, "The Irish patriotic spirit will die forever, unless a blood sacrifice is made in the next few years." He began to help lay the groundwork of the 1916 Easter Rising. On May 12, 1916, he and James Connolly, were the two of the Rising's leaders to be sentenced to death. Yet, before he was executed He wrote: "The executioners will create a reaction in this country that will wipe out the slavish pro-English spirit." A dream of Irish freedom is still there. So many rebels have followed his lead. The words of Sean McDermott live on. Not bad for a lad from Leitrim!



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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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How far have we traveled?

By Loretta Wrobel



As I perused the paper, a headline grabbed my attention. It was a news flash from the US Open on August 28th in New York. The opening ceremony was honoring Billie Jean King, as nearly fifty years ago, she defeated Bobby Riggs by outsmarting and outplaying the loud-mouthed Riggs who screamed that no woman was clever enough and sharp enough to beat him. Fifty years later, people still talk about that match that was witnessed by over fifty million in the US and millions more worldwide.

What those crowds witnessed was a shift in perspective. It became the birthplace of a societal shift that drew women not only to the tennis courts but also to the legal courts, board rooms and medical schools. Women began to see possibilities of all manner of success in fields not seen as realities for women. This life-transforming event happened in 1973.

It was during the era when women were beginning to crack the long-time glass ceilings in all fields, as they gained strength and inspiration from not only the women's movement, but all the mass movements of the 60's and 70's--civil rights, LGBTQ+ and antiwar demonstrations/protests. It was a grand time for women to dream their wildest fantasies and reach their highest goals.

I remember those open, free, and phenomenal years, when all possibilities were on the table. When in college at UConn, the sports arena was mainly for the male species with females confined to the stands to oooh and ahhh over the feats of their favorite male players. Part of the thinking during that era was that women had a hard time running the whole length of a basketball court due to their weaknesses. No one cared to bother with the reality of most female existence. Everything they achieved and accomplished was in addition to carrying and birthing a child, nurturing that child (children), maintaining a house, plus whatever they accomplished outside the home.

Along came Billie Jean with her star skill set and her brilliant strategies. She won the match, plus the admiration of millions of women who could now pursue their dreams. If Ms. King could do it, why couldn't they?

This amazing tennis star already had been instrumental in forming the Women's Tennis Association earlier in 1973. King recounts that throughout her life women have approached her, thanking her for the inspiration she provided. Just ponder that one special match proved life transforming for so many. It opened doors. Although those doors are still today not totally ajar, much progress has been made.

In Connecticut we have seen the success and popularity of the UConn Women's basketball team that has so many devoted followers, not just females. Young women have role models to emulate. They have opportunities to learn how to become better players when they are young. We have a successful WNBA team, The Connecticut Sun, that made the playoffs again this year. We celebrate this achievement. In my college years I never would have thought this could happen, even if 50 years had elapsed!

Billie Jean King will turn 80 in November, so she is just a bit ahead of me. She continues to be active, and is supporting the new Women's Professional Hockey League. Barack Obama told Ms. King that he saw the famous match and it influenced how he raised his daughters. What an endorsement for being in the right place at the right moment in history.



Grand Slam Champion Billie Jean King during the 2019 US Open opening night ceremony at USTA National Tennis Center in New York. Leonard Zhukovsky photo.

Who would have even imagined that this Battle of the Sexes still holds interest and is remembered after half a century! Truly this was a watershed moment. This one sports/political happening had a profound influence on not only women, but everyone who witnessed this out maneuvering of a boasting man by a crafty, talented, and courageous woman.

I am in awe of the lasting significance of this well publicized contest that led to such a dramatic shift of the mindset of people in recalibrating the societal expectations of what a woman can do and how competent she is. Billie Jean demonstrated that physical agility and smarts is not confined to the male sex. It reinforced the notion that women are equal to males in their abilities to accomplish what they dream. It validated the tenets that the second wave of feminism was shouting about, during those radically changing times.

I feel proud to clearly remember what a victory for all women Ms. King scored that fateful day in 1973. I am also aware that we are still working on achieving equality in so many ways, not just in the sports area. We have a long way ahead but we are moving in the right direction and must not lose our focus. Historical change crawls slowly forward and old patterns struggle to stay alive, even when they have surpassed their usefulness.

For example, in 2023, Black Women's Equal Pay Day does not occur until July 27th. That means that Black Women must work all those months extra in order to earn the same salary that white males earn. I see this as a very shocking reality that must be rectified in our country.

The next issue that Ms. King is addressing is aging. As a nearly 80-year-old woman, she is expected to slow down and be quiet and not raise any sand. Forget that one, this is not your average person who accepts what her fate is. She says, "We are not done yet. I'm not done yet." I love that response from this trailblazer, who knows that it is never too late to carve new paths. She continues to work for equality and to acknowledge loudly and clearly that her work is not done. She is busier than ever and knows there is still much to do and she is on board to do it. What a classy woman with such ferocity and ability to stay on target. Good follow-through on any court.

Coventry Lions Give Back to Community

Submitted by Paul Manzone

The Lions Club of Coventry, the premier service organization in Coventry, has provided funding in the past year to various community groups and projects.

Some of the groups that received charitable assistance from the Lions were: Coventry Scholarship Foundation, Human Services, Food and Fuel banks, Holiday Committee

for Thanksgiving and Christmas, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Coventry football, baseball, and softball, the Farmers Market, the Arts Guild, Patriots Park camperships, Lake Community Rowing, and Project Graduation.

Our motto is "We Serve" and through our service we are able to provide assistance to others. The Lions are appreciative of all the support the Coventry community has given for our fundraising projects such as our Chili

Fest, Christmas in the Village, Mothers Day Roses sale, and Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast.

The Lions are always welcoming new members. Interested individuals can get more information on our website or Facebook page, or call 860-888-5172.

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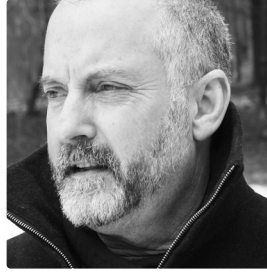
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From the Ground Up - Buying Local in Connecticut

"The garden year has no beginning and no end."
- Elizabeth Lawrence

By C. Dennis Pierce



The world of gardening is like drinking through a fire hose. You can never learn enough. For some time, I have considered myself somewhat of a gardener. Each growing season I had a simple relationship with the soil and I either introduced some seeds into my garden or, for lack of time and planning, relied on the local greenhouse's "starter" plants. I watered and, when necessary, at least at first, weeded, until the weeds ruined my rapport with my plants. I would also load up with a spray mixture of Dawn dish soap and water as I engaged in a war against undesirable insects, often losing the battle. As the summer progressed, the only reward I hoped for was a few tomatoes and basil leaves to make the essence of a fresh summer salad.

If you read my column on a regular basis, you will recall that last fall I shared that I had signed up for the University of Connecticut's Master Gardener program. Having retired, it was one of the many items that was on my "bucket list." I applied in October, was accepted, and began classes in January. From January to May, I trekked up to Brooklyn every Friday for classes, only to find that what I thought I knew about gardening was pretty much nothing at all. Now it is September, and classes and volunteer hours have ended. Graduation will be in mid-October, and I will have successfully transitioned from what I call a "sprout" to a certified "permanent nametag holder": Master Gardener.

You may ask, what is a Master Gardener? Certified Master Gardeners are members of the local community who take an active interest in lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers, and gardens. They are enthusiastic, willing to learn and to help others, and able to communicate with diverse groups of people that might have questions or challenges with their gardening activities. Master Gardeners receive extensive training and then provide information to the public via phone or email helplines, speak at public events, write articles for publications and the internet, and partner with other community programs, gardens, and educational facilities. The label Master Gardener isn't simply a designation for someone who is good at gardening, but rather a specific title achieved through skill, hard work, and a passion for people. It is a designation overseen by the U.S. government and land-grant universities. Many universities offer Master Gardener programs through the Cooperative Extension System of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Master Gardeners are distinguished by two main traits:

A commitment to being a community resource for gardening knowledge as well as a desire to teach and mentor other gardeners

A dedication to volunteering and community service

Applications have opened for UConn's 2024 edition of its Extension Master Gardener program, which blends educational instruction and hands-on volunteer work to instruct participants in the art of horticulture. The deadline for applications is Oct. 13, 2023, and formal instruction will begin on Jan. 8, 2024. The university has a long history of education through the Master Gardener program. It has been taught throughout Connecticut since 1978, at locations including Stamford, Norwich, Torrington, New Haven, and Brooklyn. Online, the UConn Extension Master Gardener program continues to engage individuals of all skill levels in the process of gardening. Participants do not just learn to build their own gardens but are also given a critical opportunity to spread their knowledge and enthusiasm with would-be gardeners and perform community outreach. The application and further details can be found at the official UConn Master Gardener website, <https://mastergardener.uconn.edu>, which also provides valuable resources and information on Advanced Master Gardener classes.

While my experience was worth the effort, potential interns should be aware of the time commitment. To

become a Certified Master Gardener, you must complete a 16-week course that meets once a week from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., starting in January and running through April. Individuals enrolled in the program receive training in botany, plant pathology, soils, entomology, pesticide safety, integrated pest management (IPM), woody ornamentals, herbaceous ornamentals, vegetables, tree and small fruits, turf grass, invasive plants, weeds, water quality, environmental factors affecting plant growth, and diagnostic techniques for the home gardener.

Following formal classroom instruction, you will complete a 60-hour internship program. Thirty hours are dedicated to hands-on training in the Extension offices, where interns are supervised in researching and determin-



UConn Master Gardener participants John Lorusso, Erica DuPlessis, and Katie Wilcock (left-right) at the Willimantic Food Co-op. Dennis Pierce photo.

ing the answers to a broad range of horticultural questions, including insect and plant identification, diagnosing plant diseases, and providing sound horticultural recommendations. The remaining 30 hours are devoted to organized community outreach projects. Internships include plant clinics, educational displays at local county fairs and farmers markets, presentation of educational lectures, and working in demonstration gardens. During this past year, I have volunteered with the Friends of Goodwin Forest, maintained information tables at various events such as the Coventry and Andover farmers markets and the Lebanon and Woodstock fairs. In mid-October I will participate in the "graduation" ceremony, where I will receive a certificate and name badge officially verifying my achievements as a University of Connecticut-certified Master Gardener.

In the end, you might ask, was it all worth it? The guy who thought he knew enough to grow a tomato plant realized he was only scraping the surface. This may sound corny, but in a biblical sense the scales fell from my eyes, and I now have a different perspective on the nature that surrounds me. I have a better understanding of the plants, trees, and shrubs in my yard that I took for granted, how they rely on each other and the challenges they encounter, and how the ecological system that surrounds me survives. So, if you ever had the inclination to obtain the certification, do so now. As mentioned above, the application deadline for this year is October 13.

No time to commit, but you are an avid gardener? Remember that whenever you encounter a gardening issue, you can email the Master Gardener program and you will receive a response that will help you in your time of need. And best of all, it is a free service brought to you by UConn's Master Gardener program and Extension offices: <https://mastergardener.uconn.edu/ask-us-a-question/>.

Some of you may be putting your garden to bed, others may still have a lot of squash as a result of a successful production season. On the culinary side, we have a tendency to move to preparing thicker soups, such as a bisque, this time of year. These tend to be a hearty, smooth and richly flavored earthy soups, such as the pureed butternut squash soup described below:

Curried Butternut Squash Bisque

Serves 6 to 8
Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Ingredients:

1 medium butternut squash (about 1¾ lb.)
1 tablespoon butter
¾ cup finely chopped onion
1 clove garlic, minced
1 large cooking apple, such as a Cortland or McIntosh, peeled, cored, and chopped into ¼-inch pieces
1 teaspoon curry powder, or more to taste
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 cups chicken broth
1 tablespoon tomato paste
½ cup half and half
1 tablespoon minced fresh sage leaves or
1½ teaspoon dried sage
salt and pepper to taste
whole sage leaves for garnish

Directions:

Wrap the squash in aluminum foil and bake for 1½ hours or until squeezable in the center. Remove and when cool enough to handle, remove seeds, scoop out pulp, and set pulp aside.

Melt butter in a large pot.

Add onions, garlic, and apple and cook over low heat until mixture is soft, about 10 minutes.

Add curry, nutmeg, and flour and stir until flour is mixed in.

Add this mixture, squash, and 1 cup of broth to a food processor and puree.

Return mixture to the pot and add tomato paste, half and half, minced sage, the remaining 3 cups of broth, and salt and pepper to taste.

Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly until beginning to boil.

Serve in pre-heated bowls with a garnish of whole sage leaves.

Preparing a homemade soup is a process. Unlike the convenience of opening a can and reheating the contents, each step is an effort that involves all of your senses and the result is a unique experience that is one of life's pleasures. There is nothing extraneous in any of the actions. That is what is called living. Life requires time and effort. If we eliminate time and effort, we eliminate life's pleasures. Enjoy the processes in life, and every so often experience the flip side of convenience.

Lastly, I leave you with a poem by Robert Frost that is so suited as we approach the season of autumn.

October

O hushed October morning mild,
Thy leaves have ripened to the fall;
Tomorrow's wind, if it be wild,
Should waste them all.
The crows above the forest call;
Tomorrow they may form and go.
O hushed October morning mild,
Begin the hours of this day slow.
Make the day seem to us less brief.
Hearts not averse to being beguiled,
Beguile us in the way you know.
Release one leaf at break of day;
At noon release another leaf;
One from our trees, one far away.
Retard the sun with gentle mist;
Enchant the land with amethyst.
Slow, slow!
For the grapes' sake, if they were all,
Whose leaves already are burnt with frost,
Whose clustered fruit must else be lost—
For the grapes' sake along the wall.

If you have a suggestion for a farm or a local grower or even a recipe that features a local ingredient, please let me know. I will do my best to share your suggestions in a future column. Drop me a line at Codfish53@Yahoo.com. Peas be with you. Come celebrate with me and remember, every day is a holiday, and every meal is a banquet. I'll save you a seat at the table!

Unsung Heroes of Soul:

Kim Weston

By Dean Farrell

As host of "The Soul Express," I play the biggest names in 1960s and '70s-era soul music. I also mix in the many great soul artists who did not necessarily become household names but were no less talented. This month's column is about Kim Weston, the Motown singer best known for the duet with Marvin Gaye, "It Takes Two."

She was born Agatha Nathalia Weston in Detroit on December 20, 1939. She started singing in her church's choir at age three. During her teenage years, she belonged to a touring gospel group called the Wright Specials.

Weston signed with Motown in 1961, scoring a minor hit two years later with "Love Me All the Way." In 1964, she recorded her first duet with Marvin Gaye, "What Good Am I Without You." It, too, became a minor hit. Weston then made a tactical error when she refused Motown's offer to record "Dancing in the Street," which instead became a smash for Martha & The Vandellas.

Weston's 1965 single, "Take Me in Your Arms (Rock Me a Little While)," hit #4 on the *Billboard* Rhythm & Blues chart but reached only a modest #50 on the pop side. Its relative lack of chart success notwithstanding, "Take Me in Your Arms" would garner substantial airplay on Oldies/Classic Hits radio in the decades to come. The song entered the charts again in 1975, when the Doobie Brothers remade it.

In late 1965, Weston and Marvin Gaye teamed up again. They recorded "It Takes Two" over three sessions: on November 27 and December 6, 1965, and on March 2, 1966. Motown released the single on its Tamla subsidiary on December 4, 1966. Early the next year, it shot to #4 R&B and #14 pop, giving Kim Weston her all-time biggest hit. Like "Take Me in Your Arms," "It Takes Two" would also become a staple of Oldies radio.

Weston left Motown in 1967 and would later sue the label over royalty disputes. She and her then-husband, William "Mickey" Stevenson (former head of Artists & Repertoire at Motown), signed with MGM Records. Her two most successful singles there, "I Got What You Need" and "Nobody," were not nearly as big as her Motown hits due to a lack of airplay and promotion. She also made two albums at MGM, *For the First Time* and *This Is America*. The latter included Weston's version of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," which came out as a single and was featured in the movie *Wattstax*. Proceeds from the record went to the United Negro College Fund.

Weston subsequently recorded for Stax/Volt, James Brown's People Records, and Johnny Nash's Banyan Tree label. She also made an album of jazz standards with the Hastings Street Jazz Experience. None of that material was commercially successful. In the 1970s, Kim Weston disappeared from the music business and reportedly moved to Israel.

In 1987, she became the first of many vintage Motown acts to work with the British producer Ian Levine at his Motorcity label. Weston re-recorded many of her old songs for the Northern Soul market, but also did some new material. She would make two albums for Motorcity, *Investigate* (1990) and *Talking Loud* (1992). The latter was unreleased, but all of her Motorcity tracks would later come out on the 1996 compilation, *The Best of Kim Weston*.



In 2013, she was inducted into the inaugural class of the Official Rhythm & Blues Music Hall of Fame at Ohio's Cleveland State University.

Along with Doobie Brothers, other acts who recorded "Take Me in Your Arms" include the Isley Brothers, Blood Sweat & Tears, Jermaine Jackson, and Phil Collins. In 1990, Rod Stewart & Tina Turner did a remake of "It Takes Two," which became a huge hit in Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. And rock critic Dave Marsh included "It Takes Two" in his 1989 book, *The Heart of Rock and Soul: The 1001 Greatest Singles Ever Made*.

Charted singles:

"Love Me All the Way" (1963) R&B #24, Pop #88

"What Good Am I Without You" (duet with Marvin Gaye, 1964) R&B #28, Pop #61

"Take Me in Your Arms (Rock Me a Little While)" (1965) R&B #4, Pop #50

"Helpless" (1966) R&B #13, Pop #56

"It Takes Two" (duet with Marvin Gaye, 1967) R&B #4, Pop #14

"I Got What You Need" (1967) Pop #99

"Nobody" (1968) R&B #39

"We Try Harder" (duet with Johnny Nash, 1969) Pop #135

"Danger Heartbreak Ahead" (1970) R&B #49

"Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" (1970) R&B #50, Pop #120

Other noteworthy Kim Weston recordings include "Just Loving You," "Wish You a Merry Christmas," "A Thrill a Moment," "Hurt a Little Everyday," "I'm Still Loving You," "I Know His Name (Only His Name)," "Another Train Coming," and "Any Girl In Love (Knows What I'm Going Through)."

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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A contra dance is a social dance that one can attend without a partner. The dancers form couples who form sets in long lines. Throughout the course of a dance, couples progress up and down these lines, dancing with each other couple in the line. The dance is led by a caller who teaches the sequence of moves in the dance before the music starts. This sequence is repeated as couples progress up and down the line. Since there is no required footwork, many people find contra dancing easier to learn than other forms of dancing.

Editing Posthumously – A Widow’s Tale

By Sarah Winter

The story beckons me. Opening the pages, I sink thoroughly into the book within the first few sentences. A good story can do that: grab your imagination, show you a few steps, and suddenly you are enthralled in the dance. This is the way it is for me when I re-read Mark Svez’s novel, *Endangered*.

The novel was started sometime in early 2000. It was finished in 2018 or so. In its infancy the book was titled *First Person Confused*, a title Mark loved as much as he loved grammar. It is written in first person, and the title character is not so much confused as brimming over. I won’t tell you about the book now though. This essay is about my relationship to the editorial process and what it means when one has the power to rewrite history. After the book is all spic and span, you can read it for yourself. I hope you will.

Illness and time both led to this moment – the moment when I asked myself to edit Mark’s unpublished novel and prepare it for printing posthumously. Mike Westfield, who has self-published many books -- *The Language of Crows*, *Road to the Poorhouse*, *Extinct and Endangered Animal Cookbook* among them -- is my guide to the process. He points me to a printer in Rhode Island and talks to me about ISBNs, the International Standard for Book Numbers. Having been one of the early readers of Mark’s book, I trust him to have some insight into the workings of the novel.

I have quite a bit of insight into Mark’s workings myself. After all, I lived with him as he wrote. And yet I hesitate to make changes? A year and a half after Mark’s passing the wound has not yet healed. I still beg for him to come back to me. I treat our relationship with reverence. I honor the man every day. How can I have the audacity to edit his work? I don’t want to change one single thing about our lives together. The novel is a part of “us.”

A good partner keeps you honest. A good partner challenges you in ways that you might not want to be challenged. A good partner is there for you when you rebuild your ego and start anew after the storm. All those cracks we try to hide from ourselves and think we are hiding from others.

When Mark was writing, I was also a first reader. I considered myself a supporter to his task. I might comment on the length of a sentence or the repetition of a word. As you, know, Mark was an excellent writer. He was professional, compassionate, able to see many viewpoints and fold them together to reflect our common humanity. Now in his absence, as editor, I look to make changes. Can I still be a good partner if I want to change the story?

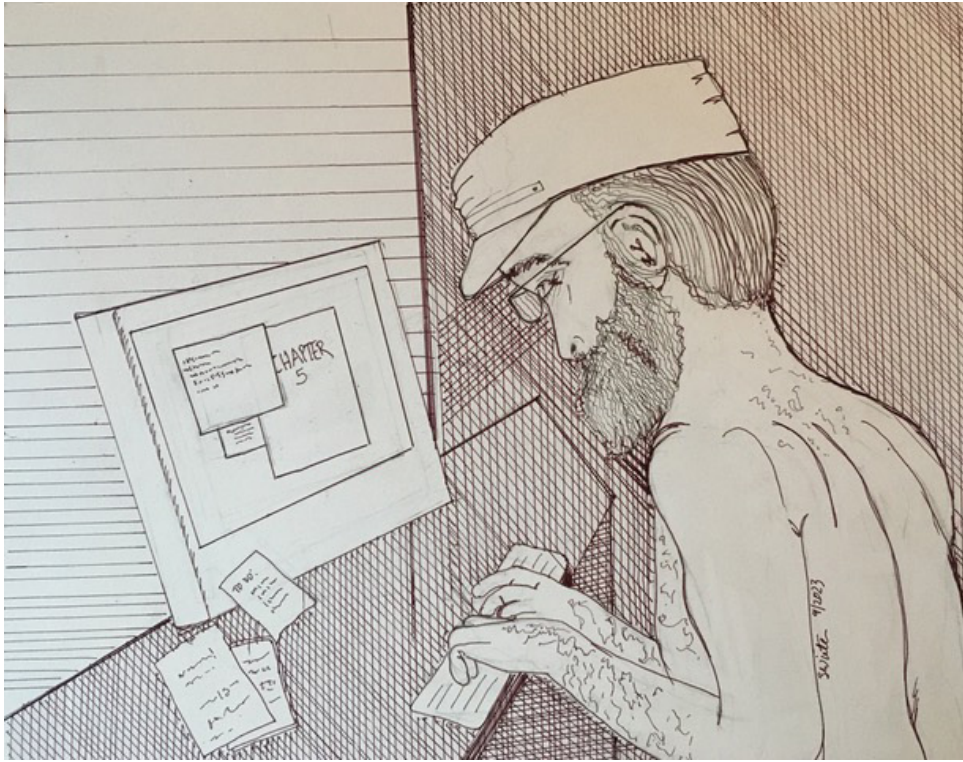
The novel follows two people, Hawk and Sula, as they negotiate a world where human greed and dominance are making it harder and harder for the natural world to thrive. On a bike trip in California, our main character is attacked and clawed by a bear while camping with his partner. He passes out and, when he awakens in the morning, confused and sore, he finds he is left with deep parallel scars along his arm and the spirit of the bear within him.

When Hawk and Sula return to their home on the Lower East Side of New York City, the bear stays with him. The story alternates between California and New York, weaving their experiences back and forth in time and place. Together they encounter the animals and spirits of the natural world everywhere they go.

Enter the new editor. I want to make the timeline contiguous. I want to rearrange his back and forth storytelling style and give the reader a linear story. I call Michael and ask him what he thinks about that. I release a sigh of relief when Michael tells me he had discussed that with Mark. And what did Mark say I ask? He doesn’t remember. That’s it, Mark heard the idea from Michael, they discussed it, and Michael can’t tell me today what he thought of it.

I know, I know, Mark is dead. He’s not in charge anymore. I’m reading different translations of the Tao te Ching. Lao Tsu is much longer dead than Mark. But still, each successful translator and editor had to learn what they could about the man and shape their translations to reflect his original meaning.

After a spouse dies, the remaining half of the partnership can change their story however they wish. There is no longer anyone there to disagree or to remember what happened differently. That’s a hard thing about losing your partner. All those stories you heard time and time again until you stopped really listening, well, you will hear them no more. Sometimes I try to tell Mark’s stories to friends. I find I can’t remember the punchline. I definitely lose the



‘The Writer’s Lines’ by Sarah Winter

nuance. The natural storyteller style that engages the listener: Mark had it. I don’t have it. I’m the audience in the exchange. A crucial role, but not the dominant one.

We used to sing together with our granddaughter, Miriam. We sang songs from Pete Seeger’s well-worn wire bound copy of *Rise up Singing*. Miriam would be on Mark’s lap as I held the cell phone up and recorded us. We all sang rollicking Irish tunes. Those were wonderful close times together.

One recording I have is of Mark telling Miriam the story of how he met his very good friend, Tony Clark. It happened because Mark knew the words to *Finnegan’s Wake*, and Tony and Kathy only knew the tune. They were all at Nature’s Place one evening, sitting and drinking at tables around the piano after the restaurant had closed.

“...well that night, I had decided to drink beer again. I had been in the pub all afternoon and I decided I wanted to go out and get a bite to eat. I went to my favorite restaurant which was Nature’s Place and by gosh and be-gory there was Mato (Tony) and his wife Kathleen in Nature’s Place. There were several other people around them too, I don’t remember who they were. Kathleen was sitting at the piano and they were singing songs. Tony was trying to sing *Finnegan’s Wake* and he couldn’t remember the words. I started singing and everybody was quiet. Tony just sat next to me and he sang along with me as best he could, but he just sang quietly and let me sing. And that’s why we became friends, ‘cause I know the words to *Finnegan’s Wake*. And that’s a true story. We ended up staying in that restaurant ‘til long after Bruce wanted to go home.”

And then Mark sang the song to Miriam and me and into the phone recorder. So, this one story I can recount to you now because history recorded it. I don’t need to edit.

Endangered is another story. You will get to read it in the next few months because I will rise to my editorial responsibility. Mark kept me honest. He challenged me to say my truth and not to hide. I can re-write our love affair anyway I want to. Guess what? I want to remain honest to the story.

But that doesn’t mean I can’t change the order! I can hear Mark giving his blessing now. Tickled that he is still in the story of our lives together.

A Traumatic Cycle: Communication Understandings Between Autistic and Neurotypical People

By Jaime A. Heidel

As a late-diagnosed autistic/ADHD (AuDHD) person who grew up in the ’80s and ’90s, I must have asked myself, “What did I do wrong?” or some variation thereof at least a thousand times.

Day after day, year after year, decade after decade, in family situations, friendships, jobs, romantic relationships, and even some quick conversations with strangers, the mood would shift suddenly and my communication partners would look and behave as though I had slapped them.

From my perspective everything was fine and the conversation was perfectly ordinary, even pleasant. From their perspective, however, I had said or done something that was so socially inappropriate that it warranted a shocked, angry, or hurt response. Or, if I hadn’t actually said or done anything they found offensive, there was something about my tone of voice, facial expression, or inability to pick up on and respond to hidden social cues that completely derailed the interaction while I stood there stunned, unable to connect my behavior to their sudden (and often traumatizing) emotional response.

Before I discovered I am neurodivergent, I truly believed everyone around me was either emotionally unstable or purposefully cruel and simply “putting on” these reactions out of nowhere to mess with me. (This was especially true when I was in my teens and early twenties.)

However, once I got out into the world and joined the workforce, the same strange reactions I’d received from teachers and family members extended to co-workers and supervisors, and I was forced to try to figure out what it was about me that was so incredibly off-putting.

Even with therapy and conducting my own personal research, it wasn’t until doing an irritated Google search for “Why do I take everything so literally?” that I stumbled upon the term *neurodivergence* and finally took the first steps in my journey of discovering just how differently my brain works in comparison to those of everyone around me.

And what a journey it was! Once I figured out I was autistic, I suddenly had an answer for everything, and I excitedly tried to share that answer far and wide, so happy to finally know that I was different, not broken, and that I actually *could* explain my way of thinking.

But, alas, as happens to many a late-diagnosed person, many of the neurotypical people around me simply refused to believe it, even when I eventually received a professional diagnosis.

As crestfallen as I was and as emotionally betrayed as I felt by these responses, I didn’t spend too long curled into a ball and crying. I picked myself up, dusted myself off (as I had so many times in my past, before I even knew who I was), and started talking about my experiences online.

I started a short-lived YouTube series called “Why Autistic People Do That,” and then I started writing discussion questions on social media to help autistic people feel heard and validated and the neurotypical people in their lives to understand their way of thinking and, more important to me than anything else, *believe them*.

I wrote “*What Did I Do Wrong?*” *An Accessible Guide to Preventing Traumatic Misunderstandings Between You and Your Autistic Loved One* as a guidebook for parents, partners, and friends of autistic individuals who want to move past all the clinical explanations and definitions other books provide and simply learn, by literal example, about the truly unoffensive intentions behind the words, deeds, and actions they find offensive when interacting with someone with autism.

The book is also for autistic people to use as a communication tool for explaining their words, actions, behavior, and intentions to neurotypical people who may be continually misunderstanding them.

My sincere hope is that this book can help break the unique and cyclic trauma caused by this largely invisible neurological language barrier. If it can do that (and I’m already getting positive feedback that it has), then every social misunderstanding, every job loss, every breakup, every sudden friendship loss, every experience of being yelled at or verbally abused “out of nowhere” that I have endured will have been worth it just to see this book into the world.

Your Time Is Important to Us

By Delia Berlin



On a recent early morning I woke up to an email from a familiar healthcare megacorporation. It instructed me to log in to MyChart to read a letter that needed my attention. I felt a twinge of annoyance at having received this notice instead of the actual letter. I normally screen my email over breakfast using my phone. I dislike using the phone to type user names and passwords, and to read material on it that is more easily viewed using a larger screen. But this could wait.

Later, at my desk and with my laptop, I logged in and read the letter. It informed me that I was due for my screening mammogram and asked that I call a local phone number as soon as possible to schedule an appointment. Eager to get the task out of the way, I called immediately. I waited, in my judgment, way too long for an answer. During my wait I listened to numerous announcements about the many wonderful services this megacorporation offers with the hefty goal of keeping us healthy. The announcements were periodically interrupted by pulses of music and apologies for the wait.

Finally, someone answered my call. After the necessary explanations and identifications, I was politely informed that I could not schedule my mammogram because a doctor's referral letter was necessary and none had been received. Since my annual wellness exam was near, I requested to be given an appointment several weeks ahead, by which time they would have a doctor's letter. I did not point out the obvious procedural flaws that led to my being asked to make a premature and useless phone call. I just argued that since my phone wait had been significant, I would be much happier if I did not have to repeat that experience. The person on the line patiently explained that, unfortunately, without a referral letter it was impossible even to enter such an appointment in the system.

Just since that incident, I have had at least three more frustrating interactions involving this megacorporation. I will not relate them, because that would be impossible without revealing details that may portray innocent players in an unfavorable light. These interactions are not achieving the corporation's goal of keeping me healthy. On the contrary, they are negatively affecting my wellbeing.

There are many good, caring, and dedicated people working in health care. Unfortunately, their big corporate employers leave much to be desired. As I am sure you have already noticed, your time is not important to them. Only your money is.

Nightmare on Main: All Hallows' Eve

Submitted by Bev York

The annual Halloween themed presentation will be held on six nights between October 6 and 21 has a new venue at the Eastern CT Veteran Community Center at 47 Crescent Street in Willimantic. This event will require online reservations available at spooktober.org.

Nightmare on Main is an entertaining as well as educational tour of haunted and mysterious topics based on history. This year's theme is a dark journey through the creepy traditions and ancient origins of All Hallows' Eve which is the current Halloween. The visitor follows a guided tour both inside and outside to view elaborate sets with actors who recreate some moments in history.

All Hallows' Eve, or October 31, is the eve of All Saint's Day. One theory is that ancient Celts lit fires, sacrificed animals and disguised themselves with masks to avoid the wrath of evil spirits. The souls of the dead are returning to their earthly bones for this night. For protection from apparitions, people of the British Isles carved faces onto turnips and gourds. Going from place to place in search of food and safety is one of the many traditions through the ages. Many common Halloween practices and characters will be featured. Today Halloween still has religious connotations for some people but to many, the holiday is a fun, secular and commercial event.

The 2023 Nightmare proceeds will be donated to the Eastern CT Veteran Community Center located at 47 Crescent Street in Willimantic. The center hosts a weekly Veteran Coffee-house, counseling, business training, clothing, food, Karate, and other ser-



Camila and her mother, Jessica Espinosa, help to build the witch's tree house. Contributed photo.

vices and activities. The center also is the home of the Windham Chamber of Commerce Foundation; Windham Arts and the Coffee Break Art Gallery; and the America Museum exhibits and programs. The community center has free meeting spaces for artists, home school sessions and community groups.

Nightmare on Main is produced by a group of community volunteers who love Halloween. They plan the themed scenes, build the sets, create the props, recruit actors (ages 10 and up and all abilities) and rehearse the show. The themes are loosely based in history and usually from the 19th century. In the past they have produced: Witches; Confinement: Asylums and Prisons; Hauntings; Death

and Dying; Monsters; Villains; Phobias; and Ghost Towns. The proceeds are donated to a local non-profit.

Dated and timed tickets for Nightmare on Main: All Hallows' Eve are \$15.00 per person and should be purchased at Spooktober.org. Click on events at the America Museum. October 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 and 21. Guided Tours leave every 20 minutes between 7 to 9:40 p.m. Please arrive 15 minutes before your tour time. The presentation is geared for visitors over 10 years old. Refreshments will be available. The event is rain or shine. For more information contact bevishistory@yahoo.com.

Windham 4-H Camp News

October 14 – 10 – 2 PM at WINY Radio – Candy wanted – Windham-Tolland 4-H camp teens will be hosting the trick or treat trail at the Fall Extravaganza. Proceeds go to the dam repair fund. Consider donating a bag of candy at the WINY parking lot and help us keep our pond!

October 21 from 1:30 – 3:30 PM - Fall Extravaganza at the Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp. Try our Trick or Treat Trail, \$5 per trick-or-Treater, Ages 2 and up. Smores and Hot Chocolate, Photo Booth, Donut Eating Contest, Games, Food items available for purchase. Wear your Costumes! Proceeds go to the Dam Restoration Fund. 326 Taft Pond Rd, Pomfret Center, CT 06259

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Fake News Splits Americans and Destroys Our Trust in Democracy

*"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble.
It's what you know for sure that just ain't so."*

- Mark Twain

By Bill Powers

'Fake News', also known as disinformation, is not new. These days it gives rise to a toxic environment that splits Americans, and negatively affects our political process, our institutions and the integrity of our democracy.

These days with disinformation running rampant, it becomes difficult to be sure that what you think you know is based on fact. Outright lies and messages of hate are intentionally spread through the traditional media sources, social media and social networking in efforts to persuade. Messages of disinformation arise not only from domestic sources but also from foreign sources often originating from places such as Russia, Iran and China. In the 2016 U.S. election Russian operatives famously flooded social media with disinformation designed to influence the election. In 2022, China has ratcheted up their ability to "create controversy along racial, economic, and ideological lines" while targeting American voters, according to Clint Watts of the Microsoft Threat Analysis Center (September, 2023). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has also recently warned that China is attempting to influence U.S. elections. On September 9, 2023, President Biden extended the National Emergency for Foreign Intervention in U.S. Elections citing "unusual and extraordinary threat" to national security. Domestically there is an overabundance of nonsensical conspiracy theories that infest our society today.

Is 'disinformation' the same thing as 'misinformation'? During the cold war of the 1950s, the term 'disinformation' became popular to describe the intentional spreading of false information in order to mislead. The word propaganda also comes to mind especially during the mid-1900s. The term 'misinformation' is used when incorrect information is spread without the intention of misleading. These days we need truth more than ever before, since there are now countless sources of information where real facts and the truth can be so elusive.

A popular term used today is 'fake news' that can be defined as misleading information presented as intentionally and verifiably false news. A concern is that being barraged by so much information in a short period of time by so many sources can be so confusing, overwhelming, and confounding. Rephrasing Mark Twain's quotation: "What gets you into trouble is what you **think** you know, that factually isn't true." It's hard to know if what we know is true, especially these days. Thinking critically involves sorting out fact and truth, and that takes time and energy. Frequently, I endure the many pundits and bloggers who put forth all sorts of ideas and I'm not really certain if I have just been bedazzled by brilliance or baffled by bullshit. When that happens, I try to pay attention to the resulting unsettling disparity that I am experiencing and simply try not to just laugh it off.

'Fake news' was a factor 100 years ago. It was the topic of a September, 1923, *Willimantic Daily Chronicle* editorial titled 'FAKE NEWS ITEMS'. Here's what the editor wrote: "Every now and then some person with a poorly developed sense of humor sets to work to get a fake news item printed, either telephoning it to the office or sending in an unsigned communication.

"This is one of the many things with which newspaper workers have to contend and to their credit let it be said that a few items of this nature appear in print. It takes all kinds of persons to make the world and we suppose that there is bound to be a certain percentage of these so-called humorists among them. A law making it a criminal offense to furnish a fake news item to a newspaper or its workers would go a long way towards stopping this despicable practice."

Clearly, one hundred years ago fake news was a concern and according to the editor, in an effort to prevent fake news, *the Chronicle* employed a practice for screening anonymous items. However, one could provide disinformation or misinformation as long as they took credit for it. Effective screening is not so easy these days with so many sources of information and fake news. Screening or thoughtful review is preferable to censorship or suppression; finding a happy medium can also present a slippery slope.

From the time of Colonial America, newspapers in America were very politically biased. Using the *Willimantic Chronicle* as an example, its first issue was published on December 3, 1879 and it succeeded a weekly paper called the *Willimantic Enterprise*, that was first published only two years earlier. The *Chronicle* incorporated many new changes compared to the *Enterprise*. Perhaps the biggest change was its devotion to a political ideology. Whereas the *Enterprise* had been apolitical, the *Chronicle* immediately declared itself to be the local advocate for the Democratic Party's views and ideals. As explained in the first issue: "The need for such a paper as we intend for the *Chronicle*, has been felt by those in this community who are in sympathy with the political struggles which it is designed to advocate. Within the past eight years the growth of the Democratic party in the town of Windham from a minority, counted by hundreds, to a majority, has been in the face of the open or disguised opposition to our local press. It is high time the party had some local organ which will inspire into its ranks a united, organized and persistent zeal, and to marshal an unbroken phalanx to the triumph at the ballot box of liberty, equality and law."

The reporting of the news in America, when first amendment freedoms exist, has always been biased and polarized and to some extent characterized by disinformation and misinformation. However, today's electronic social media, with or without interference from foreign sources, further splits Americans and predisposes the destruction of trust in our political process, our institutions, and the very integrity of our democracy.

Perhaps the *Willimantic Chronicle* editor's intuition, from a century ago, calling for "a law making it a *criminal offense* to furnish a fake news item", was on the right track. The problem has grown one hundred fold since that time. The editor got it right! 'Fake news' is a "despicable practice" especially when **it undermines trust of our political process, our institutions and the integrity of our democracy.**

Bill Powers is a retired teacher and resides in Windham.

Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

This month I want to go back to a discussion on electric vehicles. I recently read a letter to the editor in the *Sunday Hartford Courant* that provided some real food for thought about the future of motor vehicles in this country and the problems that will exist. The letter to the editor was from Sunday, September 10, 2023, and was written by Clark Parkhurst of Prospect, CT. What follows here is Clark's letter:

"Getting charged up about electric vehicles"

"I noticed in the article, 'Both sides charged up about EVs' (August 23, 2023, page 1 *Hartford Courant*) that people were not talking about the practicality of forcing everyone to own an electric vehicle. At the moment our electric grid cannot handle the extra demand put on it during the hot summers when everybody uses their air conditioners, so how is it going to handle all of the electric vehicles?"

People will need to add a charger to their home. Many will have to pay a licensed electrician to install it, plus many homes have older electrical systems that would need to be upgraded. Would landlords install the charging for their tenants? And what about large apartment buildings that have hundreds of residents. Will that mean they will install hundreds of charging stations? What about traffic jams? A person who runs out of "fuel" on the road cannot just go down the street and get a can of electricity to get going again. What about when a natural disaster hits? After Hurricane Sandy many areas were without power for days. How could people get around?"

Even the cold weather here could affect the EVs.

This year Eversource increased its electric rates. How are people going to afford to charge their vehicles, especially those with low incomes? Switching to LED bulbs has not helped people's electric bills when the power companies keep raising the rates. Don't forget that all of the electricity needed to charge these vehicles is still produced by fossil fuel power plants.

Until all of these problems can be solved, we should be looking at gasoline/hybrid vehicles. I owned one that got about 50 mpg. The gasoline/hybrid engine was rated as SULEV (super ultra-low emission vehicle). I am sure that gasoline/hybrid technology can be improved. Yes, the environment needs saving, but we should be looking at developing more nuclear power plants and pushing to have companies reduce their emissions."

My take away on this is that one shoe does not fit all. This applies to motor vehicles. If this was true then a vehicle with one color and one model would be all we would need. Americans like options in their lives. We identify ourselves with the clothes we wear, our heritage, where we live, and yes, the vehicles we drive. I firmly believe that every action has a reaction and most of the time it creates another issue.

Rick Ostien is the owner of Franc Motors in Willington.

Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Welcomes Kayla Densmore

POMFRET CENTER and TOLLAND, CT (September 21, 2023) — Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors (WHZ) has welcomed Kayla Densmore to the team as a client relationship senior associate. In that role, she assists clients with operational and administrative needs in collaboration with WHZ's financial advisors and larger team to help ensure a great client experience and advancement of client goals.

Densmore brings over 15 years of experience in customer service, team leadership and business management to her new role. Prior to joining WHZ she was the Operations Manager for Green Valley Hospitality, overseeing high level management functions for four companies. She launched her own accounts administration business in 2020, with a mission to help connect small companies with their business metrics and manage their account reconciliations & tax filings.

"As we continue to grow, we're maintaining a laser focus on ensuring that our goal to provide an exceptional client service experience for all our clients is never compromised. The addition of Kayla to our team, with her demonstrated client service skills, background in finance and collaborative, warm personality, will help us to maintain that standard. We're very

happy to have her on board as part of our team," said WHZ Principal, Managing Partner and Chief Goal Strategist James Zahansky, AWMA®.



WHZ is an independent investment and fiduciary asset management firm serving clients in 25 states from its offices in Pomfret and Tolland, CT. The firm provides financial planning and wealth management services to individuals, families, business owners, executives, and not-for-profit institutions through its comprehensive "Plan Well. Invest Well. Live Well.™" strategic financial planning process. To learn more, visit www.whzwealth.com.

How The Extension on Roth Catch-Up Contributions Could Totally Change Your Retirement

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



The IRS recently granted a two-year delay on new limitations to retirement plan catch-up contributions. If you're 50 or over and eligible for catch-up contributions this could be a game-changer for you in terms of how much you're able to save before you retire. Here's what you should know to take advantage of this potentially valuable opportunity.

What are catch-up contributions and what are the limits?

Catch-up contributions allow workers who are age 50 and over (or who will turn 50 during the year) to make contributions to their qualified retirement plans in excess of the standard limit.

In 2023, the standard contribution limit for IRAs (both traditional and Roth combined) is \$6,500. But those who are 50 or older can contribute an additional \$1,000. The standard limit for a traditional 401(k) is \$22,500, with an additional \$7,500 in catch-up contributions allowed, and the standard limit for a Roth 401(k) is \$22,500, with an additional \$5,500 in catch-up contributions allowed.

What is a Roth account?

A Roth retirement account is a type of retirement account – either an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or an employer-sponsored 401(k) – in which contributions are made with after-tax dollars. This means you don't enjoy the tax break that you'd get from contributing to a traditional IRA or 401(k) with pre-tax dollars. However, qualified withdrawals from a Roth account are typically tax-free in retirement. This makes Roth accounts a popular choice for individuals who anticipate being in a higher tax bracket when they retire or those who want tax-free income in their retirement years.

What are the recent changes to rules regarding catch-up contributions?

In late 2022, Congress passed the SECURE 2.0 Act which, among other changes, reshaped how catch-up contributions work for higher-earning households, espe-

cially those with employer-sponsored plans like 401(k)s. The new legislation said that if you earned more than \$145,000 in the previous tax year, you must make all catch-up contributions on a Roth basis – meaning individuals would no longer get a tax break on those contributions in the current year.

This change was set to kick in on January 1, 2024, but there's been a recent development. In September, the IRS announced that it would postpone the mandatory Roth IRA catch-up contribution requirement for high-earning participants until 2026.

How can I benefit from the delay of the Roth catch-up contribution rule?

The delayed implementation of this rule offers a golden opportunity for those who are eligible for catch-up contributions to maximize those contributions with pre-tax dollars in the next couple of years. Thanks to compounding interest and the historically favorable long-term performance of the stock market, those additional funds could turn into a much larger nest egg to rely on, especially for those who are still on the younger side of the catch-up contribution age requirement, with decades likely still left to live.

As you near retirement, it's important to understand how much you can (and should be) contributing to your retirement plan, as well as other tax and deferral implications. Working with a qualified financial advisor can be illuminating as you prepare for this important life milestone. Here at Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Financial Advisors, we can help you make a strategic retirement plan using our Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well™ process. You can request a complimentary consultation on our website at whzwealth.com or call us at (860) 928-2341.

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Northeast Healthy Living Expo

Submitted by Joyce Gootkin

Senior Resources Agency on Aging hosts the Northeast Healthy Living Expo, Wednesday, November 1, at Plainfield High School, 105 Putnam Road, Central Village, CT from 9:30am to 12:30pm.

This one-stop information and assistance expo is geared to older adults, service professionals, caregivers, family members, and others concerned with aging or disability issues. Sponsors and vendors will be on hand to provide valuable information aiding participants to make appropriate, informed decisions regarding their healthcare and lifestyle. Free parking and admission are available for all visitors with no registration required.

The location is handicap accessible.

Vendors are encouraged to take advantage of exciting Early Bird Specials by October 2nd. New Sponsorship Opportunities are also available. Vendors registration and additional information can be found online at seniorresourcesec.org.

For more information contact Joyce Gootkin, Senior Resources' Consumer Information Specialist at 860-383-1532. *Senior Resources, the Area Agency on Aging in Eastern Connecticut, is a private non-profit organization established in 1976 and authorized by the Older Americans Act of 1965 and state statute to provide unbiased access, information and referral to programs related to aging.*

Support our local farmers

Shop at the Willimantic Food Co-op, Bob's IGA and other local markets.

Look for locally sourced produce when you dine.

Frequent our farmers markets. There are some winter markets in our area.

To find a farmers market close to you visit the CT Department of Agriculture website for a link to markets.



Tai Chi Home

The Edge of the Woods

By Joe Pandolfo

Here it is, October, bringing the first touch of long night-times. Even after the moon rises it feels like it's sitting closer in the sky. The wind moves in the twilight, and you might hear the voice of the loved one you really miss.

It's the season of all the old souls, with all their old wisdom... the shine in their eyes reaching back to you from the edge of the woods.

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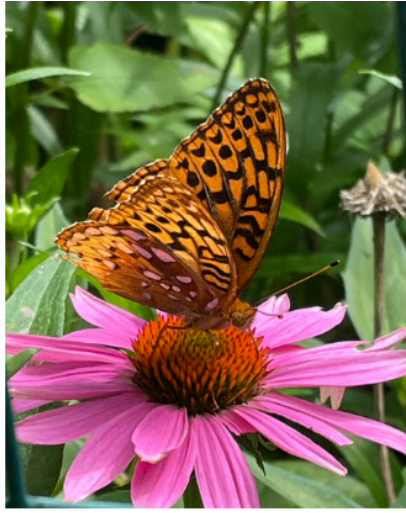
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Scotland Farmers Market



Wednesdays in October 2:30-5:30 pm
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We accept the Senior and WIC FMNP.
39 Devotion Rd. Scotland



A Joshua's Trust Challenge

What's that thing crawling up my back?

By Marie Cantino

As a child I spent many happy hours trailing after my brother, five years my senior and already a budding naturalist, wading and bushwhacking our way through the swamps and woods of central Michigan. Later in life I gravitated towards a career in laboratory research, but since retiring and with grandchildren to entertain, I have returned to my roots. I now follow my grandkids in their quests for interesting wildlife to observe. I never achieved my brother's level of proficiency in identifying plants and animals, but technology has come to my rescue in recent years. The proliferation of free or low-cost nature apps has allowed me to put names to the many fascinating things we find on our forays.

With this in mind, Joshua's Trust is offering a Fall Discovery Challenge to help motivate adults and kids to get out on our trails and appreciate the diversity of nature.

The challenge is to hike eight Joshua's Trust trails between now and December 1, and identify a species in at least two of four broad groups of living organisms along each trail. Awards (e.g., hats or totes, stickers for kids) will be given for completing the challenge. For details and a form on which to record your observations, go to <https://joshuastrust.org/event/discovery-challenge/>

Other activities being hosted by Joshua's Trust in the month of October (and part of the Last Green Valley Walktober Calendar) are listed below (go to <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for details and cancellations).

Stargazing at Atwood Farm

October 13, 6:45 pm - 9:00 pm, Atwood Farm, 624 Wormwood Hill Road, Mansfield Center, CT
Join us for stargazing at Atwood Farm. A local night sky enthusiast will point out major stars, constellations and planets.

Cider Pressing at Atwood Farm

October 21, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm, Atwood Farm, 624 Wormwood Hill Road, Mansfield Center, CT
Join us for a traditional cider pressing at Atwood Farm. Take a tour of the farm's heirloom orchard and historic buildings.

Gurleyville Grist Mill Tours

October 1 and 8 - 1:00 pm, 134 Stone Mill Rd., Mansfield, CT
Nestled on the banks of the Fenton River, the Gurleyville Grist Mill stands much as it was in 1830. Docents will be available to give tours of the mill and extant machinery.

Wednesday Walks at various Joshua's Trust properties through the month of October.

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Autumnal Meditation for a Rainy Day

By Jesse Clark

Sitting on a rock, in a park,
I look out and the trees around me.
After months and months of rain,
the Earth feels more alive than it's ever been.

I hear noises. Is it other people?
I investigate as small nuts rain from the sky
from the unseen animals of the forest.

I touch the trees, my heart and spirit touching theirs.
I laugh, smiling,
intoxicated by the Earth's spirit,
dancing for joy of the gift of nature.
Fall is here, but a green one.
Change is happening.
A time dying replaced by life
vibrating stronger than ever before.
A return to the Earth.
Away from the life that we know,
the fast paced, concrete world.
We open our eyes to what our ancestors saw
millennia ago.
As the simple ancient music fills the air,
granting peace,
granting comfort.
Showing us the way.
As I leave this sacred place,
I put this meditation,
this experience,
in my pocket,
carrying it with me,
knowing I can take it out whenever I want
and experience that timeless feeling
once more.
Making any place sacred in the process.

Later on, at home, I walk on concrete.
As soon as I put my bare feet on the green grass
of my front yard,
I am intoxicated once again from the Earth.
So blessed to be able to
carry that feeling with me wherever I go.
What would my next experience be like?
Will my body dance with the Earth's spirit,
or will I lie on the ground,
surrounded by grass, flowers and plants
surrendering to the Earth,
becoming one with it once more?

Root Beer Floats and Coors in the Rockies

By Bill Powers

In 1972 while on a lengthy road trip to California, we discovered A&W Root Beer stands while traveling through the mid-west and western states. We left the interstates, when it was time to fuel up the Ford Pinto and to grab a bite to eat. It was summer and it was hot! The Pinto was not equipped with air conditioning. Driving through the center of a small town in Iowa, just off Interstate 80, we spotted an A&W Root Beer stand where they served little more than the root beer at curbside. It was a day to remember, not only since it was a very hot day and we were parched, but it was the first time that we, including my wife, and our son, had ever experienced a root beer float. We had previously enjoyed drinking root beer and eating vanilla ice cream but not a mixture consisting of the two. On that sweltering day, the combination served in a frosted mug was such an incredible event that we vowed to stop at every A&W Root Beer stand that we came across for the rest of the trip for root beer floats. It was a vow that we kept, and something that we to looked forward to after long hours of driving.

The trip was broken up by visits to a number of National Parks. On our return trip from California, we changed our route to include Rocky Mountain National Park. It was there while sitting by a roaring mountain stream and enjoying a picnic lunch that I was treated to my first ever Coors beer. It was wonderful. In those days it wasn't available east of the Mississippi. It was unpasteurized and contained no preservatives. It was truly an unforgettable "Rocky Mountain High!" A few months later John Denver's recording was released and to this day each time that I hear it, I visualize that beautiful mountain view, and for some reason get thirsty.

In the March issue of *Neighbors*, I wrote about the Hampton General Store. When visiting the store, I was taken back to my youth and a similar store in Glover, Vermont where, from time to time, I had vacationed with relatives in the Northeast Kingdom of the state. Whether visiting in Vermont or at the Hampton General Store, it was like stepping back into the general stores of the 1800s. Now, I often stop by the Hampton store in order to bring home one of the many delicious 'Take and Bake' meals that are available and some of the home baked goodies.

Six months ago, when talking to Kara Hicks, who reopened and runs the Hampton General Store, one of her upcoming goals was to provide soda fountain treats for customers at the marble soda fountain counter, which she had recently located in Stamford, CT, purchased and had installed. At the time I asked her if by any chance she

would be offering root beer floats and was delighted to hear her say, "Absolutely!" The soda fountain is up and running and in addition to root beer floats, there are shakes, malts and many kinds of ice cream sodas to be had. She offers many delights using ice cream and her home-made brownies and cookies for brownie Sundays, cookie specials and brownie ice cream sandwiches.



Hampton General Store's Kara Hicks creating a special soda fountain treat for a customer. Photo by author.

The Hampton Congregational Church is celebrating their 300th anniversary this year and they have scheduled special events to honor this notable achievement. On Sunday November 12, the Band of Steady Habits will appear at the church at 3P.M. and on December 3, Rick Spencer will perform at "11ish" (after Sunday services). The Band of Steady Habits, led by our previous State Historian, Walt Woodward will be providing music, singing and providing historical facts about the Congregational Church. The following month Rick Spencer, known for his historical music programs will perform a selection of Christmas songs popular at the end of the 1800s. I have heard both the Band and Rick perform several times and they are consummate musicians and proficient historians. Be sure to witness these performances that will be complete with unique historical themes.

And take the opportunity to explore the Hampton General Store just across the street from Hampton Congregational Church. Check out the soda fountain and perhaps partake of a ROOT BEER FLOAT!

Bill Powers is a retired Hartford and Windham Public Schools teacher who writes a regularly appearing local history column for the Willimantic Chronicle.

Ashford Area Arts Council News

Submitted by Christine Acebo

The Ashford Area Arts Council had a big bash on September 13th at Knowlton Hall to celebrate the art, writing/poetry, performance arts and volunteer efforts of our supporting members. Over 50 people enjoyed a large food spread, a "Tiki bar," a bluesy jazz/funk band, dancing artists, and a stellar art display. The AAAC is a volunteer-based organization and we are grateful to all our volunteers. Each was presented with a stunning thank you award created by Kathy Lepak, calligrapher.

"We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give." (Winston Churchill)

Some comments by those who attended the event:

John Stanovich - "We had a great time last night. I enjoyed talking with so many old and new friends, looking at art work displayed by talented artists, and also the great music."

Marilyn Makuch - "I loved the friendliness fostered by the new chairperson, the artwork on display was beautiful, the Tiki Bar was a blast, the food was amazing and the band, Blu J'ank, was superb."

AAAC is so thankful to outgoing Chairs of the AAAC, Debra



Gag and Kathryn Eidson. Nancy Bunnell, the new Chair, is excited to support their ongoing AAAC initiatives: Holiday Artists Market, Summer Palette, Farmers Market Booths, and the Vanilla bean Exhibitions. Ms. Bunnell's vision is to share art and culture not only with Ashford but to the surrounding Communities as well.

Are you interested in finding out more and joining us? Go to our website: AshfordArts.org

In photo above: Kathy Lepak (at left) and Debra Gag. Photo by D. Drobney.

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Let's End Hate in Connecticut

By Brenda Buchbinder

Let's have no hate, no violence, not in our hearts, homes, or communities.

We have a common concern about the growing hate and threats of violence in both our community and the larger communities in Connecticut. We gather this afternoon to work together to bring an end to this time of division, meanness, threat, and violence.

I am a first generation American on my father's side, and he and his family survived genocide in hiding. I have grown up with small town values and Judaism that have instilled active solutions to bigotry and violence. The growing rates of antisemitism, racism, homophobia, and blind othering of groups, vulnerable and distinct enough to target, call to us to act to combat this.

This is a time to stand together and look out for one another and to speak up against any member of our community who is subjected to hate and intimidation. We can grow out of our isolation and cast a wider tent of safety and together we can change our society.

Rabbi Yael Levy's prayer sustains me: *May I have love, may I have peace, may I have safety, may I have well-being.*

I believe hate stems from fear, simplistic persecutory thinking, and finding someone or some group to objectify and blame as the source of one's suffering. Hate blindly holds vulnerable and visible groups as responsible for evil and wrongs in the world. Hate grows where there is lack of empathy for all of our human family. So, as it grows, it can be healed by listening, asking respectful questions, and learning about the histories that have been distorted by stereotypes.

An example of the hate is the antisemitic belief that Jews are "globalists and part of an international conspiracy." It can be busted by understanding the history of migration due to pogroms, inquisitions, and other government expulsions and threats. Jews moved to be safe and to survive to practice our faith and raise families without threat. We did not choose to be so dispersed, and we are certainly not part of any large conspiracy. We are diverse in culture, language, color and sexual orientation. So, we are not a single type to stereotype. Emerging Jewish communities include Africa, South America, Asia and the Iberian Peninsula.

Here is my antidote list to combat hate, and you may have some ideas to add as well:

- Value empathy and learning about people who are different from you.
 - Look for common interests and nuances that dispel simplistic perceptions.
 - One's hurts and those of another can be held at the same time, without comparison nor competition.
- Just as we all have suffering, we all have strengths

and innate goodness.

-Stand up for yourself and stand up for your human family members. If you experience or witness the prejudice act to yourself or someone different, speak up. Let them know they are not alone.

-Be a daily ambassador of tolerance and peace.

-Report all incidents of hate and violence to a trusted person, NAACP, Anti-Defamation League, town hall, Police, fire department and schools.

-No hate no violence, not in our hearts, not in our communities.

We are a Sanctuary City since 2017. We have a nearly 40-faith Windham Area Interfaith Ministry to secure housing, employment, clothing, furniture and hope. Our NAACP Chapter is the most diverse and inclusive in the state.

Here in Willimantic, we formed the Windham United to Save Our Healthcare, a grassroots 13-community group coalition that secured a law that will allow a birthing center in our community.

We have Third Thursdays and Shaboo Stage events, and a Frog Bridge that showcase the beauty of our many cultures. We also have a CCAR Recovery Center, and a Windham High School "Hero in Town" essay contest to counter media shaming of drug addiction.

Here in Willimantic, we have a People's Corner where Fridays healthcare, environmental and social justice issues are presented.

Here in Willimantic, we hold an End Hate Across the State rally for Northeast Connecticut.

We have more ways to promote peace in our community:

Here in Willimantic, we are advocating a Citizen's Review Board to work with law enforcement to address racial profiling and promote racial tolerance.

Here in Willimantic we are advocating for a "Fair Rent Commission" to protect affordable housing units.

Here in Willimantic, let's strengthen our Sanctuary City. Together we will make our community more safe and loving when we all are aware and active to combat hate.

Let us close with the inclusive version prayer of Rabbi Yael Levy:

*May we all have love
May we all have peace
May we all have safety
May we all have well-being*

Shalom, salaam, peace to each and all of us.

Brenda Buchbinder, a licensed social worker, lives in Willimantic.

Possibilities



Possibilities, are never ending

Endings, are from the past

The past, inspires new ideas

New ideas, encourage growth

Growth, equals enhancement

Enhancement, provides inspiration

Inspiration, gives forth achievement

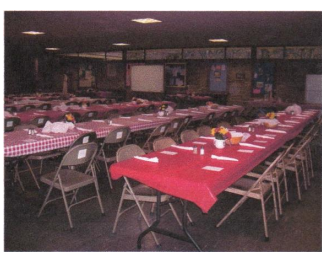
Achievement, fulfills dreams

Dreams, explore possibilities

Possibilities, are never ending

By Jeanne Esterquest

Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish Haitian Ministry Pasta Supper & Basket Raffle



St. Mary Church Hall
1600 Main St.
Coventry, CT

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Adults \$10 – Child \$5
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All proceeds benefit our school in Les Palmes, Haiti

October Events in Our Community

Submitted by Bev York

America Museum

Oct. 21 Grave Tales Cemetery Tour 1-4 Old Willimantic Cemetery Free Tour with spooky stories. 860-428-7739.

Oct. 23 LiberTea Discover and discuss spies of the America Revolution and more. 4 p.m. Free. Donations appreciated. The America Museum at the Eastern CT Veteran Community Center, 47 Crescent St. Willimantic.

Oct. 26 Folktales of Windham Apparitions. Discover the legendary ghosts that lurk in town. 7 p.m. Stories by Bev York, America Museum, Eastern CT Veteran Community Center, 47 Crescent St. Willimantic \$10 per person

Oct. 27 Dinner in Wax Museum., A light dinner by candlelight among the figures in the wax museum exhibit. A one time unique experience presented by Windham Arts. Eastern CT Veteran Community Center, 47 Crescent St. 6:00 p.m. \$30 Reservations at Spooktober.org 860-208-0790

Oct. 29 The Witch Trial of Rebecca Nurse.: A theatrical play reading of the 1692 Salem Trial. 4 p.m. Free -Donations appreciated. The America Museum. Eastern CT Veteran Community Center, 47 Crescent St.

Veteran Community Center

Oct 6,7,13,14 ,20 ,21 Nightmare on Main moves to 47 Crescent Street! All Hallow's Eve: Creeping Through Time. Tours leave every 20 minutes between 7 and 9:40. Arrive 15 minutes early, Eastern CT Veteran Community Center in Willimantic. Ages 10 and up. \$15 pp. On line tickets at Spooktober.org / events. 860-944-4945

Oct. 28 Veteran Car Show Jillson Square, Willimantic 1 to 4 p.m. Vintage Cars donate to Vets, free to public, donations appreciated. 860-428-7739

Jillson House Museum

Oct 18 Stories from the Crypt. Told around the fire side by Rachel. 5:30 Donation. Jillson House Museum 627 Main Street, Willimantic.

Oct 25 Tavern Night Program Discover interesting facts about Stephen King including his favorite food and drink. 5 p.m. Donation \$10. Jillson House Museum 627 Main St. Willimantic.

Oct 28 The Ghosts of Titanic 7 p.m. until the ship sinks. Come dressed as a non-surviving passenger. (optional) food, music major fund raiser for the Jillson Museum. Jillson Square. Willimantic Ticket information 860-207-2651

Keep Your Drugs off Drugs

By Mark Mathew Braunstein

During past prohibition, only home growers knew exactly what they were putting into their pipes and smoking. For the rest of us, purity was what we wanted, while impurities were what we got. Though both clandestine and corporate growers continue to apply an arsenal of chemicals to cannabis, now at least we are better informed about the identity of those toxic chemicals.

Eating any plant laden with chemical pesticides poses health risks, but what about smoking that plant? Does combustion destroy or neutralize those contaminants? We wish it did. Research instead has proven that, same as in tobacco smoke, toxic residues do indeed get transmitted in light and airy cannabis smoke.

A study published in 2013 analyzed the chemical residue not in cannabis itself but in its smoke. Testing for only three pesticides and one growth hormone, it found all four in the smoke. Soon after, research published in 2020 showed that in addition to pesticides being transmitted in cannabis smoke, combustion produced totally new contaminants, some that combined to become more toxic than each pesticide individually.

In decades past, dealers typically sold black market cannabis in flimsy see-through plastic sandwich bags that enabled buyers to glimpse its contents. Those bags were the only things transparent about that cannabis. Black market cannabis was unaccountable, unregulated, untested, chemicalized, and often contaminated. While molds carried by air and heavy metals harbored in soil are almost unavoidable, their inclusion in cannabis is unintentional. Growers do knowingly apply other contaminants. These include pesticides, plant growth regulators, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

Pesticide-Free or Free Pesticides?

“Pesticides” is a codeword for an array of nasty chemicals that include herbicides, algicides, rodenticides, insecticides, nematocides, miticides, fungicides, and germicides. Pesticides thus embody herbicides that stamp out weeds, rodenticides that poison furry little animals, insecticides that swat dead flying and crawling and burrowing insects, miticides and nematocides that eradicate even smaller buggies, fungicides that eliminate or prevent fungi and molds, and germicides that wipe out bacteria and viruses. If your only tools are pesticides, then your entire world looks like one big pest. At some point, the cost of pesticides can exceed the value of the crop whose loss they are intended to prevent. As a valuable herb, cannabis can carry an especially heavy toxic load of pesticides. Yet regulations that limit pesticides on food crops either lag behind or set no limits whatsoever on cannabis.

When Canada legalized cannabis nationally in 2018, its Health Canada agency set strict limits on the applications of pesticides on cannabis. Testing is mandatory for 96 contaminants, pesticides included. Other than Canada, no other nation regulates on the federal level the application of pesticides on cannabis for adult recreational use. Some individual states in the United States do, but only minimally, except for California. Nevertheless, California’s past oversight has failed miserably.

Since 2018, California has issued regulations through its Department of Cannabis Control (DCC). Of 66 common pesticides, 21 are banned altogether, while the other 45 are allowed within limits. In 2019, the BCC published the results of its testing thousands of marketplace samples of bud, oils, and tinctures. One in twelve failed its guidelines. Of the flowery flunkies, one in four was contaminated by the very 21 banned pesticides.

Pesticide contamination is the cannabis industry’s dirty little secret that has never been little and is no longer so secret. Equally disturbing, the legal industry that upholds higher standards of purity comprises only a small segment of the market. Licensed growers, if unscrupulous, may simply switch to other hazardous pesticides that they expect will not be tested. Unlicensed growers avoid being tested (and being taxed) altogether, which cuts their expenses, which lowers their prices, which outsells licensed and tested growers, which further compromises standards of purity.

Health Tip for Avoiding Pesticides: Even where cannabis is legal, an untold segment of the clandestine crop continues to be tainted by all manner of untested and so undetected pesticides. Whenever bootleg bud is sold, buyer beware!

Insecticides, Out to Make a Killing

All insecticides are pesticides, but not all pesticides are insecticides. Confused? You should be. The toxic sprays we aim at insects alone we call “insecticides.” From among

the vast taxonomy of insects, only a few species compete for our crops. Yet insecticides kill many non-targeted species, including the beneficial pollinators. Cannabis is a costly crop to lose to insects, so many farmers ensure against damage by applying heavy doses of insecticides. Insecticidal munitions are applied even to cannabis cultivated in greenhouses, where swarms of herbivorous insects can flourish in the absence of their natural insectivorous predators, especially birds. For example, to control ever ubiquitous spider mites, some indoor growers routinely “air bomb” their entire complex with the insecticide bifenthrin, a known carcinogen.

Here’s just one more from a multitude of other grim examples. In 2016, fully half of all samples from Californian medical dispensaries contained the two insecticides most commonly used on cannabis: abamectin and bifentazate. Both are banned from use on fruits or vegetables because both are toxic to mammals, which means to humans. Despite California’s bureaucratic oversight, even its cannabis intended as medicine was tainted.

Fungicides, My-Oh-My Oh Myclobutanil

In 2017, Los Angeles officials randomly tested the cannabis products sold in fifteen medical marijuana dispensaries. Of 44 samples analyzed, 41 failed California’s standards for pesticide residue in cannabis. The fungicide myclobutanil was found in 23 of those 41 flunkies. Which would you prefer on your cannabis? Fungus or fungicides? Both pose health risks when smoked. And both taint cannabis from large-scale indoor grow ops.

Of the fungicides often applied to cannabis, the most common and most dangerous is myclobutanil. When heated or burned, myclobutanil produces toxic fumes, including hydrogen chloride and hydrogen cyanide, both which are deadly to inhale. Indeed, hydrogen cyanide is used in gas chambers to execute death row inmates. Yet, in unregulated or underregulated markets, myclobutanil is routinely applied to cannabis, especially when grown indoors.

Health Tip for Avoiding Fungicides: Seek cannabis that is grown outdoors, which is less likely to be bombarded with fungicides, among them myclobutanil.

Regulate Your Exposure to Plant Growth Regulators

Plant growth regulators (PGR) are pharmaceutical hormones intended for plants. For cannabis, they pump up flower mass the way that steroids for humans pump up muscle mass. PGRs are routinely included in hydroponic formulas for cannabis without being listed as an ingredient. The array of hydroponic formulas that are sold in cannabis grow shops is staggering. When marketed separately, PGRs are advertised to promote heavy, dense, rock-hard nuggets of flowers when dried. Fattening buds increases crop yield, which benefits growers. But what benefits growers comes with risks to users. No PGRs are fit for human consumption. Those commonly found in cannabis include carcinogens that are harmful to all mammals.

For cannabis cultivation, the two most common PGRs used to promote flower growth are daminozide and paclobutrazol.

Daminozide was formerly called alar, that name withdrawn after the news media frenzy over the 1989 “alar scare.” Daminozide, i.e., alar, slows the growth of leaves and stems. It is banned for use on all food crops because it is a proven carcinogen. Yet, it remains legal for use on non-food crops and ornamental plants.

Paclobutrazol is totally banned in the European Union. It keeps plants short and stocky by inhibiting the lengthening of stems and branches, making it ideal for indoor growing. While promoting flowering in cannabis, it produces flowers that are deficient in cannabinoids and terpenes. Low in terpenes, the buds may emit little aroma. Low in cannabinoids, they may provide only a mild psychoactive high or medicinal relief.

Health Tip for Avoiding PGRs: Search the internet for images comparing keywords “PGR Weed/Pot/Cannabis” with keywords “Normal/Regular Weed/Pot/Cannabis.” Small, solid, smooth and tightly packed buds weighing heavy for their size and lacking crinkles along their sides are clear signs of PGRs. Though not listed on their labels, many hydroponic formulas contain PGRs. So avoid cannabis grown hydroponically.

Bypass PAH Burnout

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) are common environmental toxins. When wood, coal, or oil burns, their carbons transform into PAH released in smoke. PAH coat cannabis when the drying process is hurried with portable propane or kerosene heaters that fill the indoor air with their fumes. Since 2015, the European Union (EU) has

set limits for PAH in oil-based food supplements. That includes cannabis and hemp oils. While testing for PAH in cannabis is neither mandatory nor routine, tests that are performed in the U.S. show levels in cannabis oils that far exceed the EU guidelines.

Health Tip for Avoiding PAH: To minimize your exposure to PAH in cannabis, avoid products that were grown or dried indoors near combusted heating. Also, PAH coats soil where it is absorbed by roots, so avoid cannabis grown outdoors near wildfires or in heavily industrialized environments.

Organically Groan

It’s coming, if by the time you read this it has not already come. Eventually, the United States will grant full legal status on the national level to the recreational use of cannabis. Once granted, one path to purity resides in regulating and certifying cannabis when organically grown (OG), same as for food. After dallying for years with administrative delays before finally implementing its statewide OCal program in 2021, California remains the only state or country whose agricultural department oversees an OG certification program for cannabis. Elsewhere, an assortment of third-party certifiers has stepped in to fill the OG regulatory void, but each abides by its own set of rules. The number of third-party certifiers is both encouraging and disheartening. Encouraging that there are so many, disheartening that their protocols diverge so widely. Meanwhile, the trail map to that lofty goal of OG cannabis remains blurry and uncertain.

Cannabis has been the holy herb of Rastas, the holy grail of hippies, and the holy healer of patients. It is now also the font of riches for Corporate Cannabis. Years ago, medical marijuana patients rhapsodized in online forums and political rallies about their cannabis community. Now, CEO’s tabulate in spreadsheets and annual reports about their cannabis industry. Community has been lost to industry, cooperation lost to corporation.

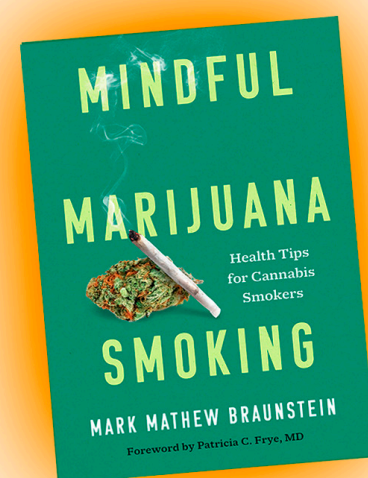
In Connecticut, all four multi-state corporations that have grown medical marijuana since 2012 by law have grown them inside massive warehouses under artificial lighting and with heating or cooling that consume endless megawatts of energy. Their plants are feminized mutant clones that are highly susceptible to mold, mildew, spider mites, and other infestations. Three of our four cannabis corporations grow only hydroponically, which may mean grown with PGRs that can be toxic to consumers and that foul the air and water. None of the four grow organically. None.

In pursuit of low prices, high yields, and sky-high profits, other out-of-state commercial growers may operate with little regard for the safety of the consumer or for the sanctity of the planet. In contrast, as a home gardener you can assure its purity by growing your cannabis as organically as you want it to be.

Health Tip for Selecting Cannabis: In Connecticut, since July 1, 2023, it has been legal for adults to grow their own. If that is impractical, then know your grower. Purchase only from legal, vetted, and tested sources. Choose craft cannabis over corporate cannabis. Seek what’s grown locally, organically, and in soil, preferably outdoors where the living plant can be bathed in life-giving sunlight, showered by purifying rainfall, and can reach towards the limitless sky.

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

Health Tips for Cannabis Smokers



How to smoke in ways that reduce its risks

Book & eBook from all booksellers
Audible audiobook from Amazon
Rowman & Littlefield Publishers 2022

“The bible for cannabis smokers who care about their health.”
— Carol Bedrosian, editor *Spirit of Change Magazine*

www.MarkBraunstein.Org

1979

By Tom Woron



Nineteen Seventy-Nine! The final year of the 1970s. It was one of the most eventful years in recent history. A lot happened that year that was noteworthy, seemingly much more than in most other years. There were climactic match ups in sports, great music, and much upheaval in other countries. It was a pivotal year that changed the world.

In 1979 the President of the United States was James Earl "Jimmy" Carter. The year began with President Carter extending diplomatic recognition to the Communist government of mainland China. Since 1949 the U.S. only recognized the Nationalist Chinese government on the island of Taiwan as the legitimate government of all of China. It was ultimately in the best interest of the United States to establish diplomatic relations with the Chinese Communists.

In the 1960s and early 70s, the United States tried to prevent Communists from taking control of all of Vietnam and its neighboring country, Cambodia. The efforts failed and Communists took full control of both countries in 1975. Strangely enough the two Communist neighbors began to fight each other in 1977. It escalated into full scale war in late 1978 and on January 7, 1979 Vietnamese troops drove the Khmer Rouge, the ruling Communist faction, out of the Cambodian capital of Phnom

Penh, effectively taking over the country. The Khmer Rouge had been responsible for a genocide in Cambodia over the previous few years, however, the United States and many nations disapproved of the Vietnamese action.

On January 16, 1979 a full year of upheaval in Iran reached a climax. The U.S. supported Shah (king) of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, left the country after many months of violent demonstrations against his rule. The revolution was inspired by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, an Islamic religious cleric who was exiled from Iran years earlier for opposing the Shah's rule. For a few weeks Iran was in chaos as it was not clear who among several opposing groups was going to lead the government. On February 1st the Ayatollah Khomeini was welcomed by thousands as he returned to Iran from exile. Iranian Army troops that were still loyal to the Shah were quickly defeated by rebel groups opposed to him. On February 11 Khomeini effectively took over leadership of the country and soon after proclaimed an Islamic Republic. The repercussions of the revolution are still felt by the world today.

We all heard of the Iranian hostage crisis that began in November 1979 when the U.S. embassy in the Iranian capital of Teheran was seized by Iranians loyal to Ayatollah Khomeini and held American diplomats prisoner for over a year. However there was an earlier, little known hostage crisis also involving the seizure of the U.S. embassy in Teheran. During the chaos in February, armed Iranian urban guerrillas seized the American embassy and held U.S. Ambassador to Iran, William Sullivan and his staff hostage for over two hours. In what was later to become a bit of an irony, Iranian forces loyal to the Ayatollah Khomeini drove the guerrillas out and rescued the American diplomats.

In 1979 as was the case for decades, the Communist giant, the Soviet Union was the opposing superpower to and the ideological rival of the United States. The two had struggled for years to promote their opposite ideologies to other countries and prevent the other from doing so all the while trying to avoid going to war directly with each other. Both superpowers possessed many nuclear weapons. In his State of the Union Address on January 23, 1979, President Carter, in what was seen as a warning to the Soviet Union, stated that just one of our Poseidon submarines, which comprised of less than 2 percent of our nuclear weapons capability, possessed enough nuclear warheads to destroy every large and medium sized city in

the Soviet Union.

The Southeast Asian picture got even more complicated in February. Communist China attacked and invaded Communist Vietnam on February 17th. The reason was that the Chinese supported the Khmer Rouge Communists who had ruled Cambodia and they were not at all happy about the Vietnamese invasion of that country. China and Vietnam were historic enemies despite the fact that they were allies during the Vietnam War. Vietnam then turned to the Soviet Union for support. China and the Soviet Union at the same time had been feuding with each other for a while. As if giving them the go-ahead to oust the Chinese supported government of Cambodia, the Soviets signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with



The large round cooling towers of the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania became a symbol of the public's fear of nuclear energy after a March 1979 accident at the plant.

Vietnam on November 3, 1978 effectively bonding the two countries together against the Chinese. The Chinese attack on Vietnam was "to teach them a lesson" and was clearly in retaliation for for the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. It all seemed so strange because United States participation in the Vietnam war from 1961 to 1973 was to prevent the North Vietnamese Communists from taking control of South Vietnam. Successive American administrations refrained from taking drastic action against Communist North Vietnam, that could have won the war, fearing that Communist China would enter the war on the side of the North Vietnamese. Ironically now the two Communist countries were fighting each other. Headlines stating that Chinese jets were attacking the Vietnamese port of Haiphong seemed odd since American jets had attacked Haiphong often in 1972. Fighting raged in northern Vietnam for a few weeks and the world wondered if the Soviet Union would enter the war on the side of the Vietnamese. The Soviets did not and the Chinese withdrew their forces in March. The headline on the cover of the March 5, 1979 issue of Time magazine was: COMMUNISTS AT WAR.

In sports the 1978 National Football League season was concluding as the post season was played out in early 1979. The powerhouse Pittsburgh Steelers obliterated the Houston Oilers 34-5 in the American Football Conference Championship game on January 7 to win the right to play in Super Bowl 13. Later that same day in Los Angeles a powerful Dallas Cowboys team squared off against a strong Los Angeles Rams team for the National Football Conference Championship. The Rams had great teams during the 1970s but always failed to reach the Super Bowl. They would fail again this time as the Cowboys prevailed 28-0. That set up what was anticipated to be a really Super Super Bowl!

The cover of the January 22, 1979 issue of Newsweek magazine hailed "A Really Super Bowl." The cover was shared by Steelers quarterback Terry Bradshaw and Cowboys linebacker Thomas "Hollywood" Henderson. During the two weeks between the conference championships and the Super Bowl, Henderson caused a stir as he taunted Steelers players in the media and insulted the talent and intelligence of Bradshaw. Henderson had taunted the Rams and correctly predicted that the Cowboys would shut them out. The Steelers did not reply to Henderson who predicted that the Cowboys would win the Super Bowl 31-0.

Super Bowl 13 truly lived up to the hype as it turned out to be one of the best ever. Hollywood Henderson was correct in that the Cowboys scored 31 points, however...

The teams battled it out in Super Bowl 13 scoring a combined nine touchdowns. At one point the Steelers led 35-17. The Cowboys battled back to make the score 35-31. That's how it ended as time ran out on the Cowboys. The heartbreaker for them was that a veteran receiver, Jackie Smith, dropped a certain touchdown pass in the end zone earlier in the game. Had Smith held onto the ball it could have made the score 35-35 at the end of regulation time.

A week later the Pro Bowl, the NFLs all star

game, was played in Los Angeles. The crowd was eerily quiet the whole game something the telecasters attributed to the Rams again failing to reach the Super Bowl.

In March President Carter scored a triumph as he played a critical role in getting bitter enemies Israel and Egypt to conclude a peace treaty between them, the Camp David Accords.

On March 28 a partial meltdown at the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor in Pennsylvania caused radioactive gases to be released into the environment in a heavily populated area. The accident gave a strong boost to the movement opposed to nuclear power because of the dangers it entails.

In the field of aviation the McDonnell Douglas DC-10 aircraft was not having a good year in 1979. On May 25 a DC-10 taking

off from Chicago's O'Hare Airport had an engine detach from its wing upon take-off resulting in the aircraft crashing. It was the worst aviation accident in U.S. history with 273 fatalities. Two other DC-10 crashes later in the year were not due to anything wrong with the aircraft itself but a famous image of the Chicago DC-10 missing its engine just before the crash was particularly damaging.

In May 1979 the world of hockey fans yawned as the National Hockey League's Montreal Canadiens won the Stanley Cup for the fourth year in a row. A second major hockey league, the World Hockey Association played out its last playoffs as the league was soon to cease operations. The last WHA champion was the Winnipeg Jets. Four WHA teams, including the Hartford Whalers, would join the NHL.

June 1979 saw a re-match of the previous year's National Basketball championship finals with the Seattle SuperSonics prevailing over the Washington Bullets, the opposite result of the year before.

In the spring of 1979 Americans began to feel the repercussions of the Iranian Revolution earlier that year. Oil production from Iran was greatly reduced and a major oil crisis resulted. Panic buying then led to fuel shortages. Long lines formed and long waits occurred at gas stations and many states imposed odd-even gas rationing. This meant that whatever number or letter your license plate ended with determined what days in the month you could buy gas. In the late spring of 1979 outraged Americans saw the price of a gallon of gasoline go over a dollar for the first time.

In the spring and early summer of 1979 TV news broadcasts frequently covered civil war in the Central American nation of Nicaragua. Fierce battles raged in the streets of the cities and towns of Nicaragua as rebels called Sandinistas, named after a martyred hero, fired from behind barricades at troops of the government's army, the National Guard. The heavily armed National Guard was eventually defeated as town after town was taken over by the rebels who were widely supported by the general population. The government of the American supported dictator of Nicaragua, Anastasio Somoza, had long fallen into corrupt ways which in turn fueled the rebellion. The final battle for the capital city of Managua led to Somoza leaving the country on July 17 and the collapse of the National Guard two days later. The new Sandinista government

continued on next page



On October 3, 1979 a tornado measuring F4 passed through Windsor Locks and Suffield before ending in Agawam, Massachusetts. Contributed photo.

seemed moderate at first but it eventually became allied with Communist countries namely Cuba and the Soviet Union.

1979 was a great year for music. Undoubtedly the anthem of 1979 was "My Sharona" by The Knack, an American band from Los Angeles. Released in June 1979, "My Sharona" reached number one on the Billboard hot 100 singles chart and remained on top for six weeks. "My Sharona" was also placed number one on Billboard's Top Pop Singles year-end chart for 1979.

In 1979 Americans often said "No!" when they heard British Rock Star Rod Stewart sing the line "Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?" from his song titled the same. The song, released in late 1978, was everywhere in 1979.

In March 1979 the British Rock band Supertramp released their highly successful album *Breakfast in America*. Three big hits from it, "The Logical Song," "Goodbye Stranger," and "Take the Long Way Home," became very popular.

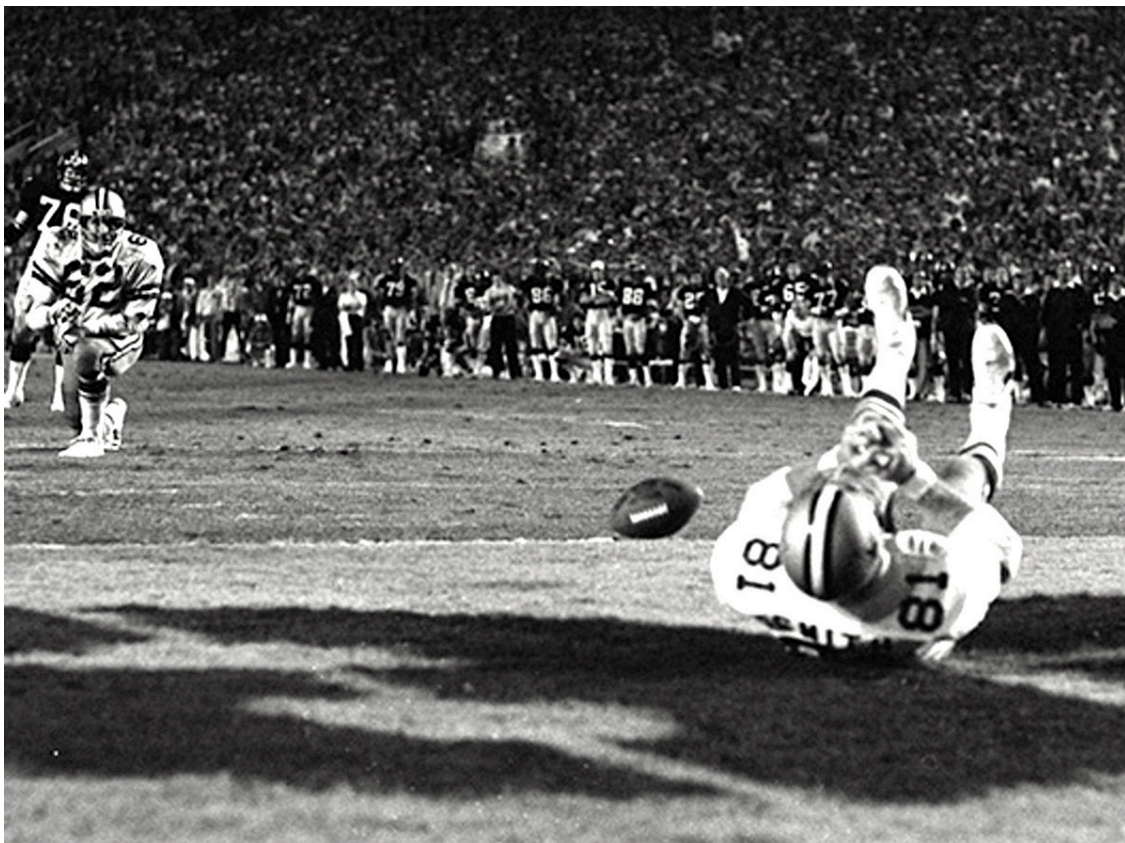
Electric Light Orchestra released an album containing the song, "Don't Bring Me Down," a big hit that has stood the test of time. The Australian rock group The Little River Band released their song "Lady" in September 1978 and it was a big hit in 1979. The American group The Charlie Daniels Band had its big hit "The Devil Went Down To Georgia" in 1979. The American rock band Styx released their number one hit "Babe" in September 1979. English singer Robert Palmer sang "A Bad Case of Loving You" making the song written by an American songwriter a big hit in 1979. The band Kiss had its hit "I Was Made For Lovin' You" in 1979. The band Foreigner released its hit song "Head Games" in late 1979. There were, of course, many other hit songs in 1979.

In the early summer of 1979 there was a sense of suspense. America's first space station, Skylab, which was launched in 1973 and used by astronauts up until February 1974, couldn't maintain its orbit around the earth. It was going to come crashing down to earth. But where? On July 11th Skylab disintegrated over the Indian Ocean showering debris there and onto part of Australia.

The unmanned American space probes Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 made close approaches to the planet Jupiter in March 1979 and July 1979 respectively. The probes transmitted high resolution photographs of the planet and some of its moons. Voyager 1 discovered that Jupiter has a ring around it and observed active volcanoes on Io, a moon of Jupiter. In September another U.S. space probe, Pioneer 11, was the first probe to fly by and transmit close-up photos of Saturn, its rings and its moon Titan. The probe detected that the average temperature on Titan was minus 315 degrees Fahrenheit.

In the late summer of 1979 a political firestorm erupted when the U.S. intelligence community revealed that there was a Soviet combat brigade stationed in Cuba. The brigade was believed to consist of about 2,600 Soviet troops and had been in Cuba for many years. It was the timing of the release of the information that caused the uproar. The United States and the Soviet Union were in a period of time in the 1970s, called detente, during which tensions and threats of previous decades were easing up. The two superpowers were at the time negotiating limiting the number of nuclear weapons between them.

President Carter and a number of U.S. politicians deemed the presence of Soviet combat troops in Cuba as unacceptable. U.S. Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, met with Soviet envoys to try to persuade them that the brigade must be removed. The Soviets had no intention of removing the brigade and assured the Americans that its presence in Cuba was only for training purposes. Unable to force the Soviets to withdraw the troops from Cuba, President Carter, in his speech to the nation on October 1 declared that the combat brigade in Cuba posed no direct threat to the United States.



Early 1979: Dallas Cowboys tight end Jackie Smith drops a certain touchdown pass in the end zone in Super Bowl 13. The Cowboys lost 35-31. Contributed photo.

The furor calmed down and the crisis was all but forgotten. The September 17, 1979 cover of *Time* magazine had in large letters: **STORM OVER CUBA**. The Cuban crisis of 1979 did not involve nuclear weapons as did the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. Unlike in 1962, it was the U.S. side that backed down from a potential confrontation with the Soviets. Although the crisis turned out to not be as big a deal as originally thought, it did derail nuclear weapons limitation negotiations and was the beginning of the end of the period of detente.

In a little known incident, on September 22, 1979 an American Vela satellite detected a double flash, consistent with a nuclear weapon test, in the South Atlantic Ocean roughly half way between South Africa and Antarctica. Originally called the South Atlantic Flash, the cause of the double flash was never officially determined. Although no nation ever claimed responsibility for a nuclear weapon test in the ocean (banned by international treaty) at that time, the Vela Incident is believed to have been a joint nuclear weapon test between Israel and South Africa.

On a local note the residents of Windsor and Windsor Locks, Connecticut that were alive and old enough to be aware will never forget October 3, 1979. That was the day an unexpected tornado started in the Poquonock section of Windsor and made its way northward roughly following Route 75. The tornado measuring F4 passed through Windsor Locks and Suffield before ending in Agawam, Massachusetts. The twister left 3 people dead and many homes and businesses destroyed or damaged. Many aircraft on display at the Bradley Air Museum near Bradley Airport were damaged or wrecked.

The Major League Baseball season was different

in 1979. The New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox dominated the American League East the previous few years but 1979 saw the Yankees and Red Sox down in the standings and the Baltimore Orioles on top almost from the start. In October the Orioles met the Pittsburgh Pirates the World Series. In a series played in much cold weather, Baltimore won three of the first four games. However, the Pirates won the next three games and the World Series Championship. The Pirates adopted the 1979 Sister Sledge hit song "We Are Family" as their theme song.

Also in October the government of the Central American nation of El Salvador was overthrown leading to a civil war that would become a major issue for the United States in the 1980s.

Iran was back in the news on November 4 as Iranians loyal to the Ayatollah Khomeini seized the U.S. embassy in Teheran and held 66 Americans as hostages. The reasons for the seizure was that the deposed Shah of Iran was in the U.S. for medical treatment and the Iranians feared an American attempt at restoring the Shah to the throne in Iran. They also demanded that the U.S. hand the Shah over to them so they could put him on trial for brutality carried out by his secret police against Iranians during his reign. The crisis escalated as newscasts showed thousands in the streets of Teheran burning American flags and engaging in anti-American demonstrations. The images broadcast around the world of blindfolded American captives in the hands of fanatical Iranians was a national humiliation. The Iranians released some Americans but 53 remained captive as the year ended.

With the humiliation of the hostage situation,

Americans needed a lift. They got it, sort of, in the form of a song. Some genius composed a humorous song about the hostage situation sung to the tune of "My Sharona." The word "Ayatollah" was used in place of "My Sharona" and there were some made up words that rhymed with "Ayatollah." I remember many people getting a big kick out of that song.

If the hostage situation in Iran wasn't bad enough, on November 21 the U.S. embassy in Pakistan was stormed and burned down by Islamic fanatics who were inspired by the Ayatollah Khomeini. A couple of Americans were killed and some were taken hostage. They were subsequently rescued by Pakistani troops. It was a very somber holiday season in the U.S. with the Pakistan incident and seemingly no resolution to the Iran hostage situation in sight.

As 1979 was winding down into its final days, the southwest Asian country of Afghanistan was suddenly front page news. Afghanistan had been taken over by

a Communist government in April 1978 with Communist General Secretary Nur Muhammad Taraki installed as its leader. This began a chain of events that would plunge Afghanistan into seemingly endless turmoil that continues to this day. A rebellion by Moslem Afghan tribes began fighting to overthrow the Communist government. In September 1979 Taraki was assassinated and Afghan prime minister Hafizullah Amin took over leadership of the country. Dissatisfied with Amin's rule and unsure if the Communist government could hold out against the rebellion, the Soviets had Amin assassinated and sent about 85,000 troops into Afghanistan in the final week of December.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 was seen as a threat to world peace and seriously soured relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. It began a new period of potentially dangerous tensions between the two superpowers.

The Chinese zodiac had 1979 as the Year of the Ram. In the 1979 NFL season the Los Angeles Rams, the franchise that had many good teams over the years but never made the Super Bowl, was not expected to accomplish much. Their owner died in an accident over the summer and the front office had a shake-up. The team lost its starting quarterback to injury. The Rams had only a so-so regular season of 9 wins and 7 losses. But it was enough to get into the playoffs.

On December 30, 1979 the Rams got a measure of revenge against the Dallas Cowboys for their humiliating playoff defeat early in the year. They beat the Cowboys in Texas 21-19 in a playoff game. With that victory, the Rams were on their way to their first Super Bowl!

REGIONAL COMMUNITY MEDIA AND ARTS NEWS



By John Murphy

Hi folks, I hope our Quiet Corner summer treated you well and that autumn is off to a good start!

If you have been reading recent issues of *Neighbors*, you know that I have been busy building a unique community media partnership between WILI Radio and the Windham Regional Community Council (WRCC) in Willimantic. It is a nonprofit and for-profit collaboration to provide new and expanded communication opportunities for people and organizations across eastern Connecticut. The need is high as our local media is increasingly limited. The *Neighbors* archive has all my previous columns for tracking the history of this effort.

Your support is essential right now, and I am not talking about money! It is important for us to build a collection of comments from program listeners and guests. Please use the email john@humanartsmedia.com

-If you have ever listened to or watched one of our WILI radio broadcasts or YouTube channel videos—and found it informative or useful for your efforts in some way—please send a quick note via email to let us know.

-The same goes for listeners to the WECS radio rebroadcasts on Wednesdays 12-3 pm. WECS is at Eastern Connecticut State University and available at 90.1 FM and www.wecsfm.com.

-If you have been a guest on any of our programs and we helped you communicate with our community, let us know!

-If you follow these columns in *Neighbors* please let us know that you are interested.

It makes a real difference for us to know how we have helped people and the results of our media support efforts. Thanks in advance to all who take a moment to share their thoughts with us!

In the months ahead we will continue our regular coverage of the arts in all its forms, as well as the usual wide range community events and programs across the region. The Quiet Corner is not always quiet—and I love to hear about creative noise anywhere! Two topics of high local interest and activity that have generated audience interest are:

- the growing power of tenant unions and the movement for tenant rights
- the increasing effects of the structural and economic changes to the health care delivery system, especially regarding maternal and child health care

We will keep offering free and open microphones for people to share their concerns and plans to respond.

ON THE HOMEFRONT IS ON LIVE RADIO AND YOUTUBE ANYTIME! AUDIO PODCASTS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE

The *On the Homefront* series is available on YouTube for 24/7 access anywhere. Just search on “WILI Radio.” 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!

The *On the Homefront* audio podcast archive is available 24/7. Subscribe to get every new program!
<https://www.wili.com/on-the-homefront-podcast/>

Below is our archive of programs, topics, and guests for July—September. Some shows were pre-empted by Red Sox coverage. Many conversations are not dated, and they provide good local information.

July 5: <https://youtu.be/jtxTSQdqzPg?si=Q-zSH-8S9AV1H8uDy>

1. Repair Café—Saturday July 8 10 am to 4 pm
First Congregational Church
Ginny Walton, Recycling Coordinator/Town of Mansfield
Judy Prill, Repair Café Crew, electrical repairs

2. Year in Review—A Conversation About the Year Ahead at ECSU
Dr Elsa Nunez, President, her 18th year. Her last year, retiring July 2024

July 12: <https://youtu.be/FMGUDeFn11Y?si=aCvIb-0z48XyU2I-->

1. CLiCK – Small Food Business Incubator
Sydney Clements, Director, Windham Community Food Network

Chelsea Cherrier, CLiCK Education Coordinator
www.clickwillimantic.com
www.windhamfood.org

2. The Bradley Playhouse – A Chorus Line August 4-13

Aiden Horrigan, Director
Cast member Brenna Griswold/Cassie
Cast member Marc Cerrone/ Zach
www.thebradleyplayhouse.org

3. Maternal Health Care Challenges—major changes in eastern Connecticut
Susan Johnson State Representative/Windham, Deputy Majority Leader
Brenda Buchbinder, Windham United to Save Our Health Care

July 19: —pre-empted Red Sox coverage

July 26: <https://youtu.be/jJRAfnYE9RE?si=Yt4SGA5x-jWPYbqeW>

1. Windham Theatre Guild—new season opens with *Young Frankenstein*/July 28—August 12
Kathy Burdick, Stage Manager/Board member
Ken Noll, cast member, with WTG for 20 years!
www.windhamtheatreguild.org

2. Julia De Burgos Poetry in the Park Series
Jon Anderson, Curbstone Press Foundation
Suzanne Staubach, Curbstone Press Foundation

3. Assets for Artists/MASS MoCA—support for artists
Molly Rideout, Assistant Director, Assets for Artists, MASSMoCA

August 9: audio podcast posted at <https://share.transistor.fm/s/84bbc916>

1. The Stomping Ground—Terry Paquette/Owner-Manager
www.the-stomping-ground.com and 132 Main St. Putnam, CT hand crafted food, craft beer/selection, and live music. Music blog w videos and Wed 7 pm Sound Guy Trivia

2. Side Door Jazz Club at the Old Lyme Inn—Chris Beaudry/Manager
www.oldlymeinn.com/TheSideDoorJazzClub and 85 Lyme Street
Old Lyme, CT 06371

Review of current and future performances
3. Horizons – Chris McNaboe, Co-Founder
127 Babcock Hill Rd, South Windham, CT 06266
www.horizonsct.org

create and sustain person-centered opportunities for people with developmental disabilities where they live, learn, work and play.

Horizons was founded in 1979 by sisters Chris and Kathleen McNaboe

August 16: <https://youtu.be/MhExfiIT74c?si=OoYJWS-4G9EikEkFb>

1. The 224 EcoSpace Gallery— www.the224.org
–Andre Rochester, Program Manager
Website: <https://www.andrerochester.com>

He curates exhibits, oversees arts events and programs, including the Artists of Color Accelerate Fellowship. Art Curator at UConn Health Center, manages a collection of over 2500 works of art

2. CT Tenants Union—Luke Melanakos-- www.cttenantsunion.org

The Connecticut Tenants Union (CTTU) brings together tenants, tenant unions and associations from across the state who are organizing collectively to demand stronger rights for tenants

Jay Osborne, Windham Mills Tenant Union

3. CLiCK – Small Food Business Incubator
Sydney Clements, Director, Windham Community Food Network

Chelsea Cherrier, CLiCK Education Coordinator

www.clickwillimantic.com

www.windhamfood.org

August 23: https://youtu.be/_ZcZGh22vJM?si=pIFJ7on-v3F9wW8_Q

1. Health Care in Connecticut – series continues about changes in eastern Connecticut

Cheryl Kapelner Champ, Nurse, People United to Save Our Health Care
Rev Jane Newell, Pastor of Federated Church of Christ in Brooklyn
Facilitator, Save Day Kimball Hospital www.SaveDKH.org

2. Windham Free Library-Jazz in the Garden
Fundraiser on Sunday September 10

Aline Hoffman, artist

Andrew Celantano

www.windhamfreelibrary.org

3. Windham Textile & History Museum

Kira Homes, Executive Director

Sept 1 opening – Sewn Stories, Shared Lives: The Artwork of Linda Martin and Carol Vinick

August 30: —pre-empted Red Sox coverage

September 6: <https://youtu.be/wcBMhZMY8cI?si=TY-D3iM-mk3BuF8LE>

1. Windham Regional Community Council—4th program in a special series about the agency

This month’s focus is the Youth Services Bureau

Jeff Beadle, Executive Director

Kailey Strong, Windham Juvenile Review Board

<https://wrcc.online/>

September 13: <https://youtu.be/Wlx2LkiB-FjM?si=O5YyKB8GgzbFSELz>

1. Coventry Art Guild—Arts on Main Street Festival

Richard White, President

Linda Blakesley, Vice President, and a poet member moderator of the Poets’ Corner feature of the Arts on Main event.

2. Musician Evan Wood

his music, performing today at venues, the arts economy, music education at Eastern

3. Quiet Corner Contra Dance—monthly dance series at Patriot’s Park Lodge, Coventry

Joyce and Dennis Knowlton/local info contact at: knowdj@frontier.com

Ruth Tracey

Related resource website = www.HCDance.org

September 20: <https://youtu.be/dccKH1SyMLE?si=-hdSLxFWx93scY0k>

1. June Bisantz—jazz singer, new release with Gordon Morrell

It’s Been a Long, Long Time

www.music.junebisantz.com

Performance at Downtown Country Fair

2. Willimantic Downtown Country Fair—Saturday September 30 11 am to 4 pm/Jillson Square

Donna Nicolino

Ian Harrington

<https://www.willimanticfood.coop/events/downtown-country-fair/>

3. EC-CHAP Artist in Residence Sarah Moon—new play reading with talkback September 30

She is a playwright and Director of the Dye & Bleach

House Community Gallery

<https://www.ec-chap.org/artist-in-residence>

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.

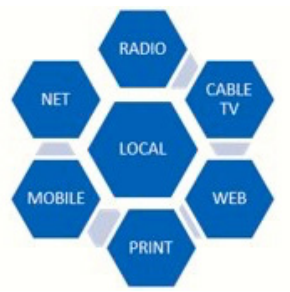
Always keep the faith,

John Murphy

john@humanartsmedia.com

To all our contributors—
Thank You!

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



Solar Today - Honoring Earth Day Every Day

By John Boiano

Greetings all,

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



A reminder from last month's article >>> It's fall, we live with trees.. PLEASE leave the leaves!

Leaving the leaves is more important than most people think, see a small bit at the end of this article for their importance and impact this topic has on our eco-system. For more detailed info, please see my article from last month, right here in Neighbors!

This month I'm going to cover: How long solar panels, inverters and batteries last.

Solar Panels: With today's tier 1 panels producing on average of 395kwh to 420kwh (*there are larger ones but not worth the upcharge*) and having an efficiency rating of about 20%, give or take a little (19 – 21%), the better panels are rated to be at 87 – 92% efficiency at the end of 30 years. The better solar companies that offer the **Homeowner peace of mind, 30 year SolarInsure Warranty** has a big leg up on the companies who offer manufacturer warranties. With **SolarInsure**, the equipment, labor, roof penetrations and insolvency are all covered for 30 years and the policy is automatically transferred to new owners of the property for the term. Manufacture warranties are usually 25 years on the parts, 10 years on the labor and if they go out of business, well, there is no warranty. The useful life of a Tier 1 panel today is expected to be 40 to 50 years!

Inverters: Inverters are the items that do all of the heavy lifting on in a solar system. Solar panels do not have any moving parts, hence part of their longevity. Inverters change the DC current produced by the solar panels into usable AC energy for your home. Inverters have a 12yr or 25yr warranty depending on the manufacturer warranty. The 12yr warranties can be upgraded to a 25yr warranty for a small additional fee. Unless, of course, you work with an installer that has the **SolarInsure** 30 year warranty, then everything is covered for 30 years. In "most" cases, there will be an inverter change before the solar panels see their end use date.

Batteries: Batteries are another conversation on its own. Maybe I'll feature them in an upcoming article. It's probably worth it. Batteries typically have a short 10 year warranty and they are not eligible for the 30 year warranty.

If you're wondering by now, yes, All of my customers receive the Customers Peace of Mind SolarInsure warranty.

Posting this important information from last month's article>>> Leaves aren't litter!

According to the *Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation*, "**one of the most valuable things you can do to support pollinators and other invertebrates** is to provide them with the winter cover they need." **Leaving the leaves.**

Of course, this will require a shift in mindset, but it's not out of reach. Here are some things to consider:

Leaves are a great addition to compost. Bag or pile extra leaves near your compost pile, and add a handful or two every time you empty your food scraps. This helps the compost process, protects insects hibernating in the leaf litter, and also deters scavenger animals. Note that it is better to leave leaves whole (rather than mulch them) to protect overwintering insects.

Many of the insects we love and attract with native plants (like pollinators!) require safe habitat over the winter. The majority of butterflies and moths overwinter in the landscape (including leaf litter) as an egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, or adult. Some tuck themselves into a pile of leaves for protection. Others lay eggs in fallen leaves, which are also food when the eggs hatch. Bumble bees burrow under the ground and need leaves for extra protection from the cold. Other leaf-dependent animals – spiders, worms, beetles, millipedes and more – are necessary food sources for chipmunks, birds, and amphibians.

Leaves are free mulch, protecting perennial plants, especially those that sprout early. Consider piling leaves on empty vegetable beds or perennial beds, or around the bases of trees to protect from cold and keep in moisture. They also keep weed seeds from sprouting.

So PLEASE, leave the leaves. You can get them in the springtime, AFTER the Earth warms up.

And of course, 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.

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

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

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T. King, Publisher

To all our contributors- Thank You!

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

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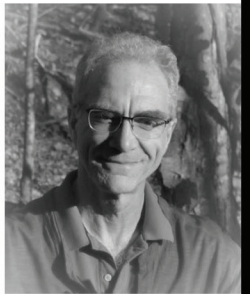
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CT Green Energy News

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).

Low-income electric customers in Connecticut will soon see savings

NBC Connecticut. "Thousands of customers across Connecticut will soon be paying less for electric. Eversource and United Illuminating will offer eligible customers a new low-income discount rate (LIDR) beginning in December....(PURA) directed Eversource and UI to establish a low-income discount rate to improve the affordability of electric rates in the state...Eversource and UI customers who already have a financial hardship status on the account will automatically receive the new rate. According to PURA, at least 28,000 UI customers and at least 74,000 Eversource customers will benefit. Households with incomes at or below 60% of the state median income are eligible to receive a 10% discount on their monthly electric bill. Households with an income at or below 160% of the federal poverty guidelines are eligible to receive a 50% discount on their monthly bill..."

Fossil fuel company wants to expand gas pipeline in Northeast

WBUR. "At a time when many states in the Northeast are actively trying to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels to help fight climate change, the company that owns a major natural gas pipeline in the region wants to expand the system and bring in more fracked gas...This pipeline runs from northern New Jersey through parts of New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and into Massachusetts... By expanding gas capacity on the pipeline, Enbridge says the project will help stabilize gas prices, increase electric reliability and "[support] New England's continued journey to Net Zero" by displacing oil use in the region on cold days...But for environmentalists, building new gas infrastructure is unnecessary and antithetical to the stated carbon reduction goals of many states in the region..."Expanding this pipeline as the region is quickly moving to electrify its heating sources and develop more renewable generation makes little sense."

CT needs clean cars and trucks

CT Mirror. "Connecticut has an opportunity to clean up our most polluting sector and help us all breathe healthier air by updating our state's clean air regulations to include the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) and Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) rules...The ACT and ACC II are life-saving programs that aim to cut deadly transportation pollution and improve our air and climate by setting increasing electric vehicle sales targets...if Connecticut were to move to clean transportation and energy generation the state could see tremendous benefits from 2020-2050 including: \$13.7 billion in health benefits, 1,250 premature deaths avoided and 27,400 asthma attacks avoided....And yet, fossil fuel interests have mobilized to stop adoption of these programs in our state and in other states...Gov. Ned Lamont, DEEP and the General Assembly must put the health of our community and climate first and move swiftly to adopt both the ACT and ACC II. There's no time for delay."

Eversource Launches Campaign to Help CT Residents Navigate Impending Winter Energy Rate Hikes

CT News Junkie. "Eversource's campaign, spanning digital advertising, media and social media, billboards, and website notifications, is urging consumers to compare and potentially switch to more competitive rates via Energizect.com, an approved platform for energy shopping in Connecticut. The company also offers step-by-step video guidance on the shopping process on their site, Eversource.com/supplier. While 23% of Connecticut's residents had, by the end of August, shifted to a third-party supplier, the majority remained on the Standard Service, an energy procurement system with rates adjusted semi-annually... While the new rates will exceed the current 13.82 cents per kWh, it's expected to remain below last winter's steep 24.17 cents per kWh."



A CT town is going solar to save taxpayers millions on its electric bill

Hartford Courant. "Newington is starting to save on its electric bill by installing solar panels on eight town-owned buildings. The town expects a cost-savings of \$3.54 million over 20 years on the eight buildings, according to Town Manager Thomas Hutka..."All of the construction is done," Hutka said. "All but ... three of them are in operation, have been certified permanent and working supplying power to the grid and the other three have been installed..."In other solar initiatives in the region, in Hartford, about 200 residents have taken advantage of Solar for All Hartford, a public-private partnership through the statewide Solar for All program that is working to bring energy efficiency to city residents regardless of credit score or annual income."

UConn students demand university divest from fossil fuels

CT Mirror. "After obtaining more than 1,000 online signatures of support within two weeks, a group of students at the University of Connecticut pleaded with university officials Wednesday to commit to a plan for divesting from fossil fuels and work toward decarbonizing the campus..."Climate change is here and is already causing irreparable harm which will get increasingly catastrophic if left unchecked...You all have the power to transform this university into one that cares for and achieves a sustainable tomorrow..."Last year, UConn President Radenka Maric announced the university's goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. A "comprehensive Sustainability Action Plan" was expected to be released in the spring of 2023, according to a news release from December 2022 — something students say never happened."

Going Green: Car dealerships say they are ready for 'electrification' of auto industry

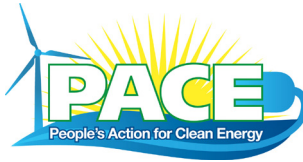
Hartford Business Journal. "Connecticut is on track to join eight states in adopting new standards to slash vehicle emissions, an effort that includes requiring manufacturers to deliver 100% electric vehicles to the state by 2035. The topic has been a hot-button issue in recent weeks, with supporters emphasizing the need to confront climate change, while detractors say electric vehicles are currently too expensive for the average car buyer. But some local car dealerships don't seem concerned about the new standards. Car manufacturers are increasingly adding new electric vehicle models, with some, like General Motors, already committing to a fully electric fleet of car, truck and SUV models by 2035..."We're on an irreversible path to electrification", but it will be gradual," said Jeff Aiosa, an executive board officer at the Connecticut Automotive Retail Association (CARA)...It's a dial that is turning, it's not like flipping a switch."

2.1 MW warehouse solar array in Milford is CT's first Shared Clean Energy Facility project

Hartford Business Journal. "A Milford distribution center has become the first operational Shared Clean Energy Facility (SCEF) project in the state with the debut of a 2.1 megawatt solar array...The SCEF program was created through legislation passed in 2018. It allows low- and moderate-income ratepayers to own part of a solar system, creating an opportunity for them to receive benefits from clean energy sources...It's expected to generate enough electricity to power about 300 homes each year, while offsetting roughly 1,825 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually. There is a growing trend in commercial real estate to host community solar projects on industrial rooftops."

Connecticut's HVAC Systems Under Scrutiny

CT News Junkie. "Environmental groups...released a report today drawing attention to the role HVAC and water heating equipment have on the state's air quality..."The state limits pollution from vehicles, power plants, and other key drivers of smog, but no equivalent standards currently exist for HVAC and water heating equipment. Closing this loophole is essential to achieve cleaner air in Connecticut..."Pollution-free technologies like heat pumps can meet Connecticut households' heating needs, even in frigid temperatures, without fueling our state's air quality crisis. When polluting HVAC and water equipment burns out, it should be replaced with pollution-free alternatives. It's that simple..."The environmental groups say that state incentives and soon-to-be available federal incentives can support Connecticut households in accessing money-saving heat pumps. Energize Connecticut offers up to \$15,000 in combined incentives for residents to upgrade to a residential air-source heat pump. "The heating oil bills many Connecticut households saw this winter were simply staggering."



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Christine Acebo photo.

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