

NEIGHBORS

No. 229

June 2024

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Serving the inhabitants and environment of northeastern Connecticut and beyond

What is it?

By Marie Cantino

I present for your consideration the two photos below. These mysterious items are part of the Joshua's Trust Museum collection, which, along with other equally cryptic objects, will be available for you and your family to inspect at our Annual Open House in June.



In the age of Amazon and ubiquitous chain stores, it's hard for kids to imagine how people of a century ago acquired the things they needed for their everyday lives. Most implements were made close to home, and the tools that were crafted showed variations that displayed each artisan's creativity and ingenuity. Trying to guess what

these tools were used for is a fun way to engage in history. Humans are natural innovators and this is a chance to for kids to understand and adults to remember that computers and cell phones are only the most recent additions to our toolkits.

Luckily, we will have Terry Wakeman, one of our trustees and current President of the Early American Industries Association, on hand at **Atwood Farm** to answer your questions and explain how this and other mystery objects were used. While you are there, stop in at the weaver's cottage and see Peggy Church demonstrate how yarn is made and used. You can also take a short trip down the road and learn about another facet of daily life in Connecticut's agrarian past with a tour of the **Gurleyville Grist Mill**. Information about this and other events we are offering in June is listed below.

Bird Identification walk

06/01/2024, 8:00-10:00 AM
Utley Hill Preserve, 60 Hennequin Rd. Columbia, CT
Join us for a bird walk at Joshua's Trust's Utley Hill Preserve. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Please bring binoculars** and appropriate hiking gear. **Pull into the Columbia Recreation Park, take the first right just before the tennis courts and follow the road until you see the Joshua's Trust trail kiosk.** Be sure to visit <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for registration, details, updates and cancellations.

Wednesday Walk at Hubbard Sanctuary and Ages' Pasture

06/05/2024, 9:00 - 10:30 AM
Hubbard Sanctuary, 513 Pheonixville Road, Chaplin, Con-

necticut

The 1.3-mile yellow trail will takes us through the Town of Chaplin's Garrison Park, looping up and through Agnes' Pasture, and the State's Natchaug State Forest. Along the trail is an open habitat hayfield, two ponds, young forest habitat within Agnes' Pasture, and mature mixed hardwood forests, offering a scenic experience for hikers, birders, and wildlife viewers. Be sure to visit <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

Joshua's Trust Open House

06/08/2024, 12:00-4:00 PM
Atwood farm, 624 Wormwood Hill Road, Mansfield Center, CT and Gurleyville Grist Mill, Stone Mill Road, Mansfield, CT
Enjoy a trip into the past with tours of the two historical properties that Joshua's Trust cares for. Grab a cookie and lemonade at Atwood Farm and learn about life on a small farm in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Then go down the road and visit the beautifully preserved 19th century Gurleyville Grist Mill. Be sure to visit <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

Mountain Laurel Walk at Chenes Roches Preserve

6/15/24, 9:00 – 11:00 AM
Chenes Roches Preserve, 71 Blair Road, Willington, CT
Join us at Chenes Roches Preserve to witness our beautiful state flower in bloom. Dense thickets of mountain laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*, dot the landscape here and offer a dazzling display in June. This will be a slow-paced hike as we stop to look at flora, listen to birds, and explore some of the interesting glacial erratics throughout the property. Rain will cancel the walk. Be sure to visit <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

Wednesday Walk at Utley Hill Preserve

June 19, 9:00 -10:30 AM
Utley Hill Preserve, 60 Hennequin Rd, Columbia, CT, United States
Join us at Utley Hill Preserve in Columbia, CT for a multi-habitat 2.5 mile adventure and a little history, too. **Pull into the Columbia Recreation Park, take the first right just before the tennis courts and follow the road until you see the Joshua's Trust trail kiosk.** Be sure to visit <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

On our cover: A photo by Mark Mathew Braunstein taken at The Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme, Connecticut. The show, "Fun & Games? Leo Jensen's Pop Art," dedicates the entire central wall of its third gallery to the documentation of the legendary frogs of The Frog Bridge. Read Mark's article on page 15.

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

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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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Pride in Putnam CT

By Loretta Wrobel



This year the month of May was a delicious time for me as I entered into my eighth decade. On May 4 I witnessed an amazing event- Putnam Pride!!! That I lived long enough to see this huge celebration right in my own backyard was the greatest gift this weird--often cruel and hurtful and exclusionary--world could have presented to me. It came as quite a surprise, as never ever would I have expected this type of event in the Quiet Corner. Hartford, yes, they have had many. NYC, yes, I walked in the 1971 parade up Fifth Avenue. Now pride parades are annual events in several locations in CT. However not in my backyard! What has become of this world in 2024? Are we really changing, even though there is so much divisiveness and discrimination in our world?

I had been totally clueless when a friend let me know the Democrats were having a booth at Pride in Putnam, and asked me to stop by, because she would be at the booth during a certain time frame. I immediately assumed that this event would be about Pride in the city of Putnam not Gay Pride. As I walked to Rotary Park, I was puzzled, as I saw rainbow flags, wonderful colors, marvelous costumes, tons of laughter and an abundance of gay folks. What the whatever is going on?

I quickly started laughing to myself as it dawned on me that, indeed Pride and the LGBTQIA crew had swarmed into Rotary Park. I kept whispering to my stunned brain, "Happy birthday, happy birthday you proud elder."

It sure was a shocker. I probably was the only person there who had come to the event believing it was not for LGBTQIA pride, but for pride in all the activities and events occurring in the city of Putnam. Some situations are hard to digest/accept, when you are not expecting to be included in a community happening, especially since I grew up in the late 1940's and 50's!!!

Finding myself in the midst of a sea of allies, it was imperative that I open myself to relaxing and enjoying this welcoming and exhilarating environment! Trying to ground myself in the warmth of an accepting and supportive totally fun event was a challenge. Not used to walking through a crowd of queer folks in Putnam, I breathed deeply to take in the nurturing and thrilling experience, when I heard someone call my name.

It was not my friend I was expecting to meet, but a new friend I had recently met. We both were surprised and pleased to have this unplanned spontaneous connection. What a perfect addition to an already blessed happening. This is the type of situations I have been encountering the whole month of May. It has been a stretch for me to continue to welcome and expand all these surprises, connections, and synchronistic encounters. Good thing I am old enough and wise enough to be able to take it all in!

I sailed through the rest of the day, shaking my head at the astounding unfolding of my day. I kept reflecting on how such a key event had been organized in

my neighboring town of Putnam. Where did they dig up all those LGBTQIA people? What initiated interest in a Pride festival? How did the organizers manage to connect with the queer community? Many questions circulated in my brain for several days following the festival. I was intrigued and so very curious about how this magical event occurred in Putnam, particularly during my birthday celebration month. Since my actual birthday is in the beginning of the month, I fortunately had the long month to honor my many years, be grateful for my health, and celebrate the years I have walked on this planet!

Being the sleuth that I have become, along with being a proud elder, I was able to locate and connect with Pastor Ross Johnson, Living Faith Methodist Church in Putnam, who was the coordinator of this extraordinary festival in Putnam. The pastor was eager to talk with me and answer questions I had regarding this highly successful first time Pride in the Quiet Corner. I discovered more than I anticipated, since this Pride event was the first in Connecticut that was paid for by the town! The Pastor had approached the Board of Selectmen (BOS) with the idea of a festival focusing on inclusion and love. Previously, Pastor Johnson had lived in the Boston area, and relocated to the Quiet Corner two years ago. Initially, he was told he would have to finance the event on his own. Putnam Parks and Recreation got involved, specifically Marcy Dawley, and Putnam became the first town to fund an LGBTQI celebration!

Both the BOS and mayor attended the festival and were encouraging of the event. Mayor Barney Seney was all in favor of this Pride event and is ready to go even bigger next year! One of the important takeaways from this happening is that everyone saw that it was needed. There were at least two thousand folks at the big party. Pastor Ross stressed it was a collaboration and many were involved in the acceptance and honoring of the queer community. His church was totally supportive, and the whole church came out celebrating this inclusive and welcoming day. The organizers and volunteers did most of the advertising for the event on Facebook and by word of mouth.

Pastor Johnson wants to include more neighboring towns in next year's event, such as Ashford, Eastford and Hampton, and involve more vendors and organizations. Check out their website <quietcornerpride.com> to keep aware of planning for next year and to volunteer if you are so motivated. On the website there is a section, "Why Have Pride?" It talks about how necessary it is for LGBTQIA folks to have Pride, as there is often a feeling of being alone and unworthy of love. The festival erased that myth with a successful day and allowed the queer community to feel included and loved. In my book it doesn't get much better than that. What a fabulous opportunity for me to celebrate my birthday month and be part of a thriving queer community. I was elated to hear that the Pride Festival will be an annual party at Rotary Park in Putnam.

I know where I will be next year on May 3, 2025. Will you join me in the fun and joy of celebrating inclusion, love and community? I guarantee you will be moved by feeling part of a community of love and acceptance, while being out as yourself!

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

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Standing Up for Peace and Justice (Part 1 of 2)

By Michael Westerfield

Anyone who has driven across the Frog Bridge in Willimantic on a Friday evening recently has probably noticed a group of demonstrators calling for Peace, Justice, and Freedom for the people of Palestine, and for an end to military action that has already claimed over 35,000 Palestinian lives and reduced much of Gaza to rubble. Demonstrations such as these are part of a local tradition of publicly speaking out against war and injustice that has been a feature of Willimantic for many years.

As far back as the 1980s, Tony Clark, a member of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, held a long-term, solitary demonstration on Main Street, wearing a sandwich board with an anti-war message. Although no major wars were going on at that time, Tony still had plenty to demonstrate against. In October 1983, under Ronald Reagan we conducted Operation Urgent Fury, invading the Caribbean island of Grenada to save it from communism. Beginning in 1984 we provided naval support to Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran. In 1986 we bombed Libyan targets in Operation El Dorado Canyon. We wound up the decade in December 1989 with an invasion of Panama in Operation Just Cause.

On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded neighboring Kuwait, marking the beginning of the cycle of Middle Eastern warfare that continues to this day. In response, the United States and other countries began a tremendous build-up of military supplies in the region, dubbed Operation Desert Shield. On January 17, 1991, Operation Desert Storm began with a massive bombing campaign to destroy Iraq's fighter planes and air defense systems. In the Willimantic area, concerned residents and anti-war activists spontaneously gathered together on January 19 in Memorial Park for what turned out to be the first of a great many local anti-war demonstrations.

Initially demonstrations were held on Main Street on Thursday evenings in the area of the post office, library, and, most importantly, the armed forces recruiting station. In those days, Thursday was still the day stores stayed open late and both pedestrian and vehicle traffic were at their maximum. The message was strictly an anti-war one, and throughout that first long, cold winter the number of demonstrators varied widely, depending on the weather and the military situation of the moment. After the demonstrations, many of the folks would gather at a local home to warm up and plan future actions. It was at one of these warming sessions that a long enduring group was founded, the Northeast Connecticut Coalition for Peace and Justice (NECTCOPAJ).

That first Persian Gulf War lasted about seven months, ending officially on February 28, 1991. Throughout the next several years tension remained high in the Gulf area, where the USA maintained no-fly zones over much of Iraq. NECTCOPAJ continued its Thursday evening Main Street vigils as our country also carried out military operations in Somalia (1992–1993), Haiti (1994–1995), Bosnia (1994–1995), Iraq—over alleged weapons of mass destruction (1998), and Serbia (1999), among other places.

On July 4, 1999, the Peace Abbey, in Sherborn, Massachusetts, began a 500-mile “Stonewalk,” in which a 2,000-pound granite memorial stone for the “Unknown Civilians Killed in War” was pulled by relays of walkers from Boston to Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. The stone was on a specially constructed caisson that could be pulled by dozens of people at one time. The route of the Stonewalk passed through Willimantic and then down Route 66 through Columbia to Middletown and beyond.

The stone was met in Chaplin by a number of local activists who joined in pulling the caisson to Willimantic. There were enough participants that the people pulling the stone took turns and, by chance, when it arrived in town, Tony Clark, a Vietnam veteran, and I, a conscientious objector during that war, were in the leading position. The walk stopped at the Willi Co-op, where the stone stayed for the night and the out-of-town walkers all were put up by local folks.

The following morning, a large group pitched in to haul the stone west. It moved fairly easily, even up the long and steep hills on Route 66 on the way to Columbia, where we passed it on to the next relay of walkers. Eventually, it reached Arlington, but the national cemetery refused to receive it. Subsequently it traveled for walks in other countries before returning to rest back at the Peace Abbey.

On September 11, 2001, the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York were destroyed in a terrorist attack. Initially, the sympathy of most of the world was on the side of the USA, but this soon changed as the Bush administration began a “war on terror” by invading Afghanistan, despite the fact none of the 19 perpetrators of the day's attacks were from that country. As the war went on and on, demonstrations in Willimantic continued on a weekly basis.

In addition to the Afghan offensive, since his election in 2000, George W. Bush had been calling for action in Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power. In October 2002, Congress authorized the use of force against Iraq and the administration used fraudulent information to convince the American people that Iraq was producing and stockpiling “weapons of mass destruction.”

On February 15, 2003, Willimantic area activists took a bus to New York City to participate in a protest against an imminent invasion of Iraq. Simultaneously, around 15 million people in close to 800 cities around the world joined similar demonstrations. The 2004 Guinness Book of World Records listed the event as the largest protest in human history. In New York City over 300,000 persons showed up for a scheduled march, but the police canceled the march permit and attempted to force everyone into stationary “pens.” This prevented tens of thousands of protestors from getting to the event, but had the unintended consequence of creating hundreds of groups of sign-carrying folks marching or wandering around a wide area, which exposed far more New Yorkers to the demonstration than would have seen the planned march. The heavy-handed tactics of the police on this occasion were widely criticized.

On March 19, the invasion of Iraq began and, in response, demonstrations were again held around the world in opposition. On March 20, between 30,000 and 50,000 protestors, including a number from the Willimantic area, traveled to Boston to take part in the protests. The principal event of the day was a march, terminating in a mass “die-in,” where thousands of folks were to lie down on Boylston Street, representing those dying in the conflict. The group assembled on the Boston Common and, when the march began, by chance, several Willimantic folks found themselves leading the “parade.”

The march passed through the fashionable shopping district, where the expressions of the shoppers ranged from sheer astonishment to utter disgust as the seemingly endless horde filed by, chanting and drumming. When the call came to lie down and “die,” we did so, curling up on the cool asphalt. However, in those days communication was by no means as instantaneous as it is now, and by the time word to “die” had been relayed from the head to the tail of the march, about 15 or 20 minutes had passed. Lying

there surrounded by cops towering over us, it was hard not to be uneasy. We had been told that everything had been cleared by the authorities, but one never knows. At one point a group of black-clad anarchist kids came running up and jumped over us, followed by several police officers, and tailed by two Willimantic “street medics” just in case of casualties.

Back home in Willimantic, the weekly demonstrations continued. At some point the armed forces recruiting station decided they had had enough and moved to the Eastbrook Mall, and the protestors shifted location to the more visible Frog Bridge corner.

On July 26, 2004, the September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows began a second Stonewalk, commemorating those who died in the World Trade Center attacks. This time it went from Boston to New York City and, once again, it passed through Willimantic. On this journey, however, there were far fewer volunteer stone haulers, since the event was put together more quickly and with less organization than in the original walk. The stone again stayed overnight at the Willi Co-op, and when it left in the morning, there were only about a dozen of us pulling the caisson. On the fairly level road, it was not difficult to move the stone, but when we got to very long and steep hills on Route 66 on the way to Hebron, it was a different story. The day was hot and we were already very tired when we reached the final gigantic hill before the day's journey's end. At that point, Clay Colt and I were, I think, the only local persons left among the handful of remaining stone haulers. Dragging that monument up the hill was probably the hardest physical work any of us have ever done, before or since. Putting all our effort into each step, we knew that if any one of us broke down and fell out, the whole effort would grind to a halt, the relay would be broken, and the stone would remain on the side of the road until rescued.

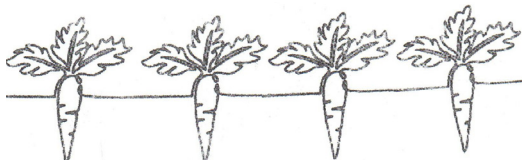
I think we were all astonished when we actually reached the top of the hill and collapsed onto the lawn of a friendly homeowner. Later, as we were given a ride home, Clay said, “You know, I thought I was going to die on the hill. Then I thought, if I did, folks would say, ‘Clay died hauling a giant stone monument to the civilian war dead,’ and that wouldn't be bad at all.”

(to be continued)

Michael Westerfield has been working for Peace and Justice since the Vietnam War, when he was a Conscientious Objector. He's lived in Willimantic for close to 50 years and was Executive Director of the Willimantic Housing Authority for 20 of them. He has written four non-fiction books and is currently writing a fifth about the men who fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill.



From the Ground Up - Buying Local in Connecticut



“Our deep respect for the land and its harvest is the legacy of generations of farmers who put food on our tables, preserved our landscape, and inspired us with a powerful work ethic.”

- James H. Douglas, Jr.

By C. Dennis Pierce

Why do farmers farm? I began writing this column, “From the Ground Up- Buying Local In Connecticut” in March of 2010 with an interview with *Four Mile River Farm* in East Lyme, Connecticut. Little did I know at that time I would introduce to the readers of the *Neighbors Community Paper* all of those individuals that dedicate themselves to Connecticut farming. Many do not think of Connecticut as a farming state despite the fact that the University of Connecticut, the State’s flagship university, was founded as an agricultural school and a Land Grant institution. The State, through its Department of Agricultural, has a committed belief that local farming still plays a huge role in creating strong and healthy economies, environments, and communities.

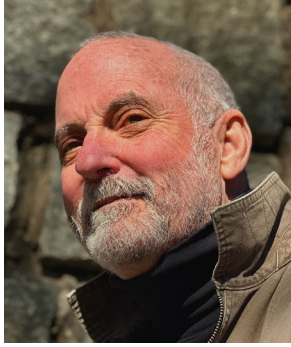
Over the years I often would ask farmers the question, “why do you farm?” This always bewildered me considering farmers have many frustrations and difficulties that they face with the challenges of the ever-changing weather, invasive pests, and the strenuous work it takes to bring a harvest to market. The constant reply that I received was the passion or love of their lifestyle. Farmers farm because they are a special breed of individuals. I used to say they have a different color blood that runs through their veins. In a recent interview a farmer shared that they love to watch and care for the growth of their plants resulting in a healthy, bountiful crop. While others shared, they love working outdoors and not sitting behind a desk. They love the Connecticut weather even though sometimes it is not their best friend. Many have said they liked not having a boss and as in many smaller Connecticut farms, they work where they live.

I have learned a lot from these farmers over the years and I admire them. Because of their connection to the land Connecticut farmers do more to protect and preserve our environment than anyone else. Unfortunately, according to the USDA, from 2017 to 2022 the State of Connecticut had a decline of 460 farms. I could not find the reason, but I would speculate that farmland is being sold off for development as generations change and farming is not a career that the younger generation visualize as a way of life.

In my last column, when talking to Melanie Desch from *Foliota Farm*, I learned there is a service / resource offered by the University of Connecticut’s Extension program for individuals that are new to farming or maybe want to learn more about this way of life. The program is called, *Solid Ground – A Program for New and Beginning Farmers*. The program offers in-person training opportunities as well as e-learning tools for new and beginning farmers. As part of the Solid Ground programming, which is funded by the USDA, the program offers a limited amount of free one on one consultations, with specialists in certain fields of knowledge, to beginning farmers in Connecticut. These consultations are intended for individuals who have been farming for ten years or less, but folks can apply if they have been farming for longer than this period of time. If you are homesteading or have a “hobby farm”, or love gardening these opportunities are not available to you however an alternate resource can be found at the UConn Home and Garden Education Center (<https://homegarden.cahnr.uconn.edu/>)

One of the offerings from the program Solid Ground, is a list of training available, <https://solidground.extension.uconn.edu/trainings/>. Training include but are not limited to, *Soil Benefits of No Till Production*, *Cover Cropping and Crop Rotation* and *Land Evaluation and Farmland Access*. Other offerings are available such as a how to guide on *Preparing to Sell Your Offerings at a Farmer’s Market*, *A Guide to Growing a Farm Business in Connecticut* and a video series for new and beginning farmers. Check out this well-informed web site from the College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources & Extension’s Solid Ground, a Program for New Farms and Farmers at <https://solidground.extension.uconn.edu/>

The beginning of growing season is upon us, and local basil and strawberries will be showcased at our local farmers markets. Try out the following easy recipe for a new experience.



Basil (front) and strawberry plants in author’s garden.

Dennis Pierce photo.

Fresh Strawberry , Balsamic & Basil Salad

Serves: 2 to 3

Ingredients:

1-quart fresh local strawberries (about 2 cups sliced)
2 Tb. of powdered sugar (you could also use brown sugar or honey)
1 Tb. balsamic vinegar
Several grinds fresh black pepper
4-6 basil leaves, thinly sliced (chiffonade – see below).
Added option - top with 2 oz. of crumbled goat cheese

Directions:

Wash and pat dry strawberries, slice, or quarter.
Place strawberries in a bowl and toss with vinegar, black pepper, and sugar.
Add basil strips and gently toss
Place in refrigerator for 15 minutes
Place salad on refrigerated / cold dishes.
Top with goat cheese if desired.
Serve

Chiffonade - is a slicing technique in which leafy green vegetable such as basil are cut into long, thin strips. This is accomplished by stacking leaves, rolling them tightly, then slicing the leaves perpendicular to the roll.

Tip of the month: Wondering why the edges of the leaves of your plants are being chewed off? One cause may be those pesky garden slugs. Sure, you can silently creep up on them at night with your flashlight in hand and remove them. I can assure you they won’t quickly run away. You can also set up a beer in cup slug trap by placing some beer in a cup, placing the cup in a hole so that the rim is equal to the surface of the soil. The slugs love the smell of the beer and jump in thinking it is “happy hour” and find themselves unable to climb out. In a recent interview another solution I found about was to place a board face down on the ground but leave a stone or some item that keeps the board from entirely touching the ground. The slugs will look for the dark cover it provides. In the morning turn the board over and pull off the little intruders and remove them from the area or heck, buy them a beer.

Upcoming local grown events you don’t want to miss:

Coventry Market at Nathan Hale – Sunday, June 2nd.
<https://coventryfarmersmarket.org/>

Veggie Stock – Saturday, June 1st 10:00am to 2:00pm. Veggiestock is a free annual food and garden festival presented by the Windham Community Food Network held at Lauter Park in Willimantic. This is an opportunity for local artisans, musicians, nonprofits, and food vendors to share their talents with the community while promoting the underutilized garden spaces at Lauter Park.

<https://www.windhamfood.org/veggiestock>

And some final thoughts...in Japanese there is a phrase *itadakimasu*, which is said before eating. It is an expression of gratitude toward the food that will be enjoyed. It also conveys gratitude toward the farmers or individuals who made the food for us. Food contains life and by consuming it we ourselves are sustained and we go on living. For this we are grateful for all of the local farmer’s efforts who work diligently to bring fresh ingredients to our plate.

If you find that you enjoy reading this column every month or if you have some gardening hacks you would like to share with others? Please drop me a line and let me know at Codfish53@Yahoo.com. Please 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!



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We Will Never Know

By Delia Berlin



This June 3rd marks the first anniversary of our Senegal parrot's death and the culmination of our first three months with Curly, our rescued mini-poodle. Dog rescue organizations describe the adjustment period of adopted dogs as following a "three days, three weeks, three months" time frame. During the first three days in a new home, dogs are usually scared and overwhelmed. After three weeks, they begin to settle into their new environment and routine, but because of their increased confidence, behavioral problems may start to show up. After three months, most dogs feel at home in their new surroundings, understand household rules, and are comfortable with their new family. Of course, each dog is an individual and this time frame is offered only as a guideline.

Our bond with Curly started to develop before we even got him. He looked so worried and scared in the shelter picture that I could not wait to pick him up and tell him that everything would be all right. He had been found in Bristol, Tennessee, on February 5. He was wearing a collar, but had no identification, tag, or microchip. He was estimated to be around six years of age and was not neutered. He was in serious need of grooming, and the quarantine paperwork described him as both timid and aggressive, weighing only 8 lbs. He was given the name of "Scuttles" by the shelter, but I had been reading that it is a good idea to rename rescued dogs, in case their previous name is associated with scary times. "Scuttles" didn't ring true to me, and "Curly" seemed to fit both his looks and his Stogie-like demeanor.

From the documentation we were given by the rescue organization, it appears that the county shelter that first took him in vaccinated him against rabies and kennel cough, and held him in quarantine for nine or ten days. The shelter also tested him for several possible illnesses and dewormed him. He was given a flea treatment, and then transferred to the rescue organization for neutering, microchipping, and vet clearance for transport to Connecticut. Once its dogs are in our state, this organization relies on foster homes to keep them in a family environment until they are adopted at events at Petco. The family that fostered Curly had already fostered 51 dogs for this organization.

When we adopted Curly on March 3, we were keenly aware that in the preceding 27 days, he had gotten lost; was captured, quarantined, vaccinated, dewormed, neutered, treated for fleas, microchipped, and transported in a dog van from Tennessee to Connecticut; was held in a foster home; and transferred to us at Petco. By then, he had been eating well for a few weeks and had gained a couple of pounds, but he was clearly very worried and anxious. His foster mom had been kind enough to bring him to Petco with his most beloved toy, a lime-green plastic ball. Today, he still sleeps with that ball.

Curly seemed immediately comfortable with us, but the poor thing smelled terribly. Poodles are not supposed to smell. We stopped by a local groomer on the way home and we discovered that he had an ear infection that was the main source of his smell. Fortunately for Curly and for us, I got a vet appointment for the next day. The vet cleaned his ears and applied a long-acting medication. We could not groom Curly's ears for another 30 days, but he no longer smelled and the rest of his body could now be groomed.

I asked the vet about Curly's age, since I didn't know how they could pin it at six years. She said that once dogs are adults, it is not possible to know their age with certainty. The amount of tartar deposit on their teeth and several other variables can provide clues. Dogs of small breeds tend to build tartar faster, and she thought that Curly could be younger, but it was impossible to tell for sure. His foot pads feel soft, his eyes are clear, and he has lots of playful energy. But some say that in terms of playfulness,

poodles remain puppies for life, and that seems to apply to Curly.

For the first few days at our house, Curly could not stand to lose sight of us. If we got up, he followed, even in the middle of the night—there were no lonely trips to the bathroom anymore. We had gotten him several comfortable beds to relax on and put them in different rooms of the house. One of his beds was in our bedroom and next to ours. We had planned that he would sleep there at night. But he had other plans. He would insistently jump onto our bed as soon as we laid down. His will was stronger than ours, and for a few nights he slept on our bed.

I thought we had lost that battle for good, but I am happy to report that Curly now sleeps in his own bed. Unless something disturbs him at night, he doesn't jump onto our bed till dawn. But it turns out that waking up to a soft curly dog licking your face and snuggling around your neck is not bad at all. He stays in bed with me while David



makes coffee, and then it is time for him to get his ball and start playing. He knows that his full morning routine includes face cleaning, outside walk, and breakfast, immediately followed by zoomies with his toys.

The more we know Curly, the luckier we feel to have him. But our curiosity about his history also grows. His affectionate and playful nature suggests that someone loved him. Yet, he wore no identification, was not neutered, and his long hair and ear infection suggest neglect.

As we were told, Curly was housebroken. He only had one accident during the first couple of days with us. We just needed to learn his schedule and subtle ways of communicating his needs. But when I calmly cleaned up

after him, he seemed to cower and had to be reassured. We also noticed this behavior another time, after he threw up. Who would scold a little dog in those situations? Curly's reactions make us wonder.

It is impossible not to be curious about how Curly strayed from his previous home. Bristol, Tennessee, where he was found, seems to be a small and orderly town, with a relatively good standard of living. Weather conditions there around February 5 were not unusual. From what we have observed, Curly does not seem prone to running away from his home. Was he purposefully abandoned? He is such a great dog that we can't imagine that scenario. Even if his family could no longer care for him due to unforeseen circumstances, we think there would be relatives, friends, or neighbors lining up to take him in.

We were told by the rescue organization that Curly got along with everyone at his foster home, including dogs and children, and that he had a slight preference for men. However, initially he growls at almost every stranger, including dogs, children, and particularly men. He makes friends quickly with anyone willing to play with him, but he is particularly fearful of big shoes and work boots. And if a discussion gets animated, he acts scared. What experiences did he have that led to these behaviors? Did he witness any arguments getting out of control? We will keep learning about Curly and understanding him better, but we will never know the answers to any of these questions.

But actually, it matters little what happened to "Scuttles" if we can make Curly happy and give him a good dog's life. For now, we are enjoying his company and settling into new routines. Our own schedules and habits have also changed, but that is for another story.

Dear Reader-

Please consider contributing to Neighbors- Write an article about a person you admire or a local program you believe is important. Take a photo of a friend, loved one or pet. Write a poem or a piece of flash fiction. These pages would be full of press releases without submissions from local residents who care about each other and their community.

T. King, Publisher

Obituary



Robert Wayne Marche (July 7, 1949-May 4, 2024)

Robert Wayne Marche, 74, of Bolton CT, passed from this earthly life on May 4, 2024 at Manchester Memorial Hospital in Manchester surrounded by his close longtime friends Julie Engelke and Tom and Karen King.

Bob is survived by his niece Lois, nephew John, nephew Larry Jr. and wife Linda, and their children Joseph, Ben, Natalie, and Noel. Bob was pre-deceased by his parents Joanetta and Albert, his brothers John, Gary and Larry Sr. and nephew David.

Bob was born and raised in Monongahela, PA. As a young man Bob answered a help wanted ad that brought him to Hartford, Connecticut, and the Institute of Living. His work there resulted in friendships that still exist. After a cross-country road trip, Bob returned to Connecticut and found his true calling working with developmentally disabled residents in Vernon Cottage at the Mansfield Training School. Bob and those clients later moved to Wetherell Street group home in Manchester. Over three decades Bob loved, like family, the residents he worked with. Bob often used sign language to communicate with those who were nonverbal and all responded to his warm and caring heart as well as Bob's innate ability to meet each person where they are, with respect, and dignity. Just as true with those beyond the group home.

Bob was also a founding member of the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford (MCC Hartford), which just celebrated its 50th anniversary, and Bob faithfully served t/his church and its ministries in a variety of capacities over these many years. Most notably, Bob started and faithfully ran the 'Somewhere Coffee House' until just before the pandemic began in 2020. The Coffee House began as a gathering place for the LGBTQ community, one of the few safe and welcoming spaces in Hartford during the 1970's.

Bob was an amazing person, truly one-of-a-kind, who was deeply spiritual, extremely generous, a loyal friend, faithful church member, caring family member, talented performer and singer, an author, formidable story teller, Disney aficionado, world traveler, and so much more. One of Bob's favorite places on earth was the Outer Banks of North Carolina, specifically Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands. He introduced many friends and family members to this special place. No doubt, all who knew Bob have memories they will cherish forever; he will be deeply missed by many. May God's unconditional and eternal love envelop Bob and may it be a sweet reunion -- now joining his loved ones who have gone before and waiting for him.

Rest in peace, dear friend, until we meet again.

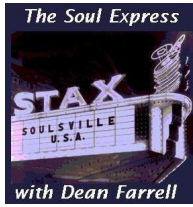
Ed. note: Bob and I became best friends over 40 years ago as co-workers at the Mansfield Training School. He also quickly became a close friend to my wife, Karen. We will never meet a more loving, compassionate, giving, caring and spiritual human being. Bob enjoyed writing about his life in Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Two of his articles appeared on these pages, under the pseudonym, Robert Joy. Joy was his mother's maiden name. He had many more 'in the can' for a book he was working on entitled 'Appreciating the Sky.' We have most of those stories and hope to produce his book in the not-too-distant future. We are thankful for the many memories we have with this wonderful man. We all need to love one another the way Bob loved us.

A Celebration of Life was held at MCC Hartford on Saturday, May 25th. Many attendees spoke about the positive impact Bob had on their lives. Bob did not merely 'touch peoples lives,' he infused everyone he met with his loving and caring spirit. TK

Unsung Heroes of Soul:

The Contours

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 the Contours, who gave Motown one of its earliest hits.

In 1959, Joe Billingslea and Billy Gordon formed a singing group called the Blenders in their hometown of Detroit. The group was rounded out by Billy Rollins, Billy Hoggs, and Hubert Johnson. Rollins soon left and was replaced by Leroy Fair. At that point, they changed their name to the Contours.



In the fall of 1960, they auditioned for Berry Gordy, Jr., at Motown; he turned them down. This prompted the group to seek help from Rhythm & Blues star Jackie Wilson, who was Johnson’s cousin. Wilson got them a second audition with Gordy, who signed the Contours to a seven-year contract. The Motown chief also placed guitarist Huey Davis with the group. Sylvester Potts would later join, replacing Benny Reeves, who in turn had replaced Leroy Fair. (Confused? You won’t be after tonight’s episode of “Soap!”)

After two singles that failed to chart, the Contours recorded the song that would assure their place in rock ‘n’ roll history. Contrary to popular belief, “Do You Love Me” (now that I can dance) was *not* written for the Temptations; it was offered to the Contours first. Berry Gordy only considered giving it to the Tempts when the Contours had trouble getting the song down pat. Of course, the Tempts never did the song. Instead, the Contours took it to #1 on the *Billboard* Rhythm & Blues chart and #3 pop in the fall of 1962. “Do You Love Me” sold over one million copies and was awarded a gold disc. And a 1964 remake by the Dave Clark Five returned it to the top twenty.

As far as the pop charts were concerned, the Contours were done. The Black audience, however, was much more receptive. After the initial success of “Do You Love Me,” the Contours went top forty on the R&B chart seven more times.

In 1964, every member except Billy Gordon quit the group. Berry Gordy added three new members: Council Gay, Jerry Green, and Alvin English. Within a year, Sylvester Potts was back in the group (replacing Alvin English). Billy Gordon himself would soon quit. His replacement was Joe Stubbs, brother of the Four Tops’ Levi Stubbs. However, Stubbs did not last long either and was succeeded by Dennis Edwards. The Contours no longer had any original members. After their Motown contract expired, Edwards left the group to replace David Ruffin in

the Temptations. In 1968, the Contours disbanded.

In the early ‘70s, Joe Billingslea revived the group with a lineup that included ex-member Council Gay. The Contours played locally in Detroit and became increasingly popular throughout the ‘70s and ‘80s, even getting dates internationally. When *Dirty Dancing* became a hit movie in 1987, it led to Motown’s reissuing “Do You Love Me,” which got to #11 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 early the following year. This further led to a Dirty Dancing Concert Tour and a recording contract with the UK-based Motorcity label.

Billingslea kept the Contours going, with many personnel changes, into the 21st century. In 2004, Sylvester Potts formed his own group with that name. This prompted Billingslea to sue. The suit was resolved in an out-of-court settlement that allowed for both “The Contours with Joe Billingslea” and “The Contours with Sylvester Potts.” The latter group disbanded in 2014, at which point the Contours’ name was assigned exclusively to Billingslea.

Of the group’s former members, Hubert Johnson committed suicide in 1981; Joe Stubbs died in 1998; Billy Gordon passed away in 1999; guitarist Huey Davis died in 2002; Leroy Fair passed in 2004; and Sylvester Potts died in 2017. In all, the Contours went through 25 members.

Rock critic Dave Marsh included “Do You Love Me” and its follow-up, “Shake Sherry,” in his 1989 book, *The Heart of Rock and Soul: The 1001 Greatest Singles Ever Made*.

Charted singles:

- “Do You Love Me” (1962) R&B #1 (3 weeks), Pop #3
- “Shake Sherry” (1962-63) R&B #21, Pop #43
- “Don’t Let Her Be Your Baby” (1963) Pop #46
- “Can You Do It” (1964) R&B #16, Pop #41
- “Can You Jerk Like Me” (1964) R&B #15, Pop #47
- “That Day When She Needed Me” (1964) R&B #37
- “First I Look at the Purse” (1965) R&B #12, Pop #57
- “Just a Little Misunderstanding” (1966) R&B #18, Pop #85
- “It’s So Hard Being a Loser” (1967) R&B #35, Pop #79
- “Do You Love Me” (Reissue, 1988) Pop #11

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). 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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To all our contributors-
Thank You!

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

Second Saturday Community Breakfast

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

Gather with us Saturday, June 8th,
for an ALL YOU CAN EAT breakfast of omelets
(design your own), Belgian waffles, corned beef
hash, bacon, sausage, scrambled eggs, baked
goods and more.

\$12.00 per person; Family of (4)
2 adults & 2 children (under 12) \$30.00
For information contact Michele
at the church office: 860-228-9306

Contra Dance

First Friday of each month
Patriots Park Lodge, 172 Lake Street, Coventry, CT
7:30 - 10:30 p.m. Introductory session at 7:15
Partner not required, all dances taught
Live Band & Caller See: HCDance.org
Questions: Dennis at knowdj@frontier.net

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.

From UConn to Gaza: The Emperors Have No Clothes

By Phoebe Godfrey

I reiterate my appeal for both parties to show the political courage and spare no effort to secure an agreement now. To stop the bloodshed. To free the hostages. And to help stabilize a region which is still at risk of explosion. This is a crucial opportunity that the region—and indeed the world—cannot afford to miss.

—U.N. Secretary General António Guterres

Last month I wrote about the student encampment at UConn that was started April 25th and was ended early on the morning of April 30th when over 50 armed police officers from UConn and surrounding towns, as well as state troopers, encircled the encampment and arrested 24 students. I therefore want to share details of what the students' demands were (are) and what ended up happening, as well as other details on the issue. For these details about what happened at UConn, I will be using data from a timeline that was put together and cross-checked for accuracy by those who witnessed the events firsthand and that was publicly shared at a UConn Faculty Senate meeting I attended. The special meeting was called to show support for the arrested students, who were fined and released the same day but who still face further charges, as well as for their demands.

My last article was written on Sunday, April 28, and I was inadvertently remiss, as I didn't know that on Thursday, April 25, the first day of the encampment, after some students had erected tents, about 10 UConn police had entered the encampment and threatened to arrest them. According to the timeline, the police "proceed to destroy the tents and take them away from the students. In the process, they throw students on the ground and cut up the tents." Apparently, they were acting on orders of President Radenka Maric, who had issued a new policy that day stating tents were no longer allowed on campus (in the past, apparently, they had been allowed for sports games). Along with the destruction of the tents, a student was "injured by the police" and another student who "attempted to help the injured one was tackled by five officers and arrested but released later that day." After these events the protest continued, with the students remaining peaceful, and many students choosing to sleep outside without tents despite the cold spring temperatures. Given that the students were staying there day and night, a few new tents were erected to shield them from the elements and to offer them privacy for resting, as well as praying.

I went to the encampment that Friday afternoon and spoke to several students, most of them my own, as well as other faculty, but I did not learn of these prior police incidents, which is why I didn't mention them. From my own experiences at Rutgers in 1985 protesting for divestment from South Africa, during which time there were no arrests and we were allowed to have tents, I was hopeful that UConn would follow a similar path. How naïve of me to think this, even for a moment, given the current political climate and how much in support of Israel our nation continues to be. In fact, Biden has gained approval for an additional billion dollars of military aid this month, on top of an increase of \$14.6 billion this year over the usual \$3.8 billion. As Stephen Zunes wrote on the Truthout website, "Despite [the] near-unanimous ruling [on May 24] by the International Court of Justice for Israel to halt its devastating attacks on the Gazan city of Rafah and Biden's previous pledge to halt offensive military aid if they did so, U.S. arms continue to flow."¹ And this is despite the ongoing slaughter of Palestinian civilians, which constitutes a grave violation of human rights and thus constitutes war crimes on behalf of Biden, the United States, and all of us. Or rather some of us more than others.

The vibe at the encampment that sunny Friday afternoon was joyful as students were talking, playing music, studying, eating, and affirming their commitment to their collective demands, which I will outline below. In addition, students were publicly engaging in Maghrib prayers and that evening there was a Passover seder, modeling religious pluralism and tolerance in a way most around the world should emulate. As for the UConn student demands, like those at other universities, they were and continue to be:

1. disclose the UConn Foundation's investments and divest from the occupation and genocide in

Palestine,

2. sever ties with the war industry,
3. sever ties with the State of Israel, and
4. end repression of Palestinian and pro-Palestinian activists

Of course, these demands are similar to those made by many peace and justice activists, while also recognizing, as we did as students at Rutgers and as other students have done in the past, the hypocrisy of our universities in claiming to uphold justice, equality, human rights, and ethical actions while supporting and even profiting from systems that do exactly the opposite. In other words, the UConn students were doing what we should all do, and that is to hold those in power accountable for what they claim to represent, as opposed to what they actually do. And yet instead of being *commended* by our university for their courage and willingness to face the



reality of what is happening in Gaza and doing so in peaceful solidarity across religious, racial, ethnic, and other identity divides, they were instead set upon by police on day 5 (a day when many student encampments across the country, including at Yale, were also besieged by police, as well as in the days following) in ways that, as I wrote in my last article, make me chant, 'Shame!

Shame! Shame!'

According to the timeline, the 50-plus police officers surrounded the encampment, again citing the banning of tents and tarps, and "gave the students warnings to disperse," as well as making "threats of using force to remove them" if they did not leave. At this point some students left for various reasons (such as being international students), but others chose to remain. The remaining students were "handcuffed using zip ties," while at least "one student of color was put in metal handcuffs" (this is not the only example I have heard of from students of harsher treatment by the police toward students of color), but regardless, "no student resisted arrest." Officers also "confiscated student property," and at the time that the timeline was written, students still had not been given information on how to recover their belongings. The arrested students were released later that evening and fined about \$500, and they may still face further charges.

In response, many at UConn (over 1,000), me included, have signed a letter of solidarity with students' right to protest, and the Faculty Senate has made a motion to urge President Maric to make no further prosecutions. Contrastingly, at other campuses such as Brown University and Evergreen State College in Washington State, administrators were willing to meet with their students and find ways to address their demands. Why has our flagship university failed to do something similar, instead acting more in line with institutions in Republican-dominated states? Why was I asked to serve on a yearlong Metanoia Committee program on "civil discourse" to address discord on campus, when from the UConn administration toward our own students there has been none? And perhaps most ironic of all, why are students who express their political and emotional commitment to the suffering of others seen as criminals, but not those who perpetuate the actual crimes?

In the five days that our students peacefully, civilly, and collectively expressed their freedom of speech, the starvation, killing, and trauma in Gaza on the part of civilians, including thousands of children, continued, and continues. What also continues is the suffering of many others, such as the Palestinians in the West Bank, the remaining Israeli hostages and their families, and all others who are negatively impacted, including those of us around the world who watch in horrified disbelief. We should be thankful that students at UConn and elsewhere have been acting from their hearts and consciences to remind us, as did the American Civil War general William Tecumseh Sherman, that on all levels "war is hell" and should therefore not be supported, funded, or used for profit. In fact, without them there would be no one to point out that the emperors, in this case UConn, but also many other universities and even our own nation, have "no clothes," despite what they may claim.

¹ Stephen Zunes, "Biden Continues to Provide Israel Billions for War Crimes," Truthout, May 26, 2024, <https://truthout.org/articles/biden-continues-to-provide-israel-billions-for-war-crimes/>



Enough!

By Cathy Cementina

Opinion

My family and I have lived in Coventry for over 30 years. Recently we learned that the company that owns the gas pipeline that runs through our town proposes to significantly expand that pipeline and the gas that flows through it. The name of the company is Enbridge. Unbeknownst to us, this pipeline has been expanded two times since its inception 50 years ago. Only now, with eyes wide open in this time of climate change awareness, do we see just what is happening in our town. Only now are we seeing up close how oil and gas companies can run roughshod over local communities without those local towns having a clue as to the corporation's presence or its intention.

This expanded pipeline designated to run through Coventry and beyond has been named Project Maple and it runs from New Jersey to Massachusetts. This project is a danger to the community. The expansion would enable the pipeline to carry significantly more natural gas through Coventry and Connecticut. Natural gas is not benign. It is primarily methane, which is a fossil fuel that has 80 times the heat trapping potential of carbon dioxide over the first 20 years after it is emitted. The natural gas that runs through this pipeline is sourced from the fracking process that pollutes groundwater, increases greenhouse gases, and causes earthquakes. (Fracking uses vast quantities of chemicals known to harm human health, including hydrochloric acid, a caustic acid.) Research has repeatedly shown that gas pipeline leaks occur regularly, contributing to increased planetary warming but also, for those of us in proximity to gas lines, posing a health threat of potential respiratory illness and even cancer.

What is most insulting to us here in Coventry is that Enbridge is also applying to build a connected gas regulator station located on Hop River Road, near the intersection of Bunker Hill Road and Nathan Hale Road. Regulation stations monitor and control gas flow through a pipeline and would likely be a needed component to accompany Enbridge's plan to expand its gas pipeline.

However, Enbridge is claiming that this regulator station is "routine maintenance" and not connected to Project Maple. We think not. We believe Enbridge's characterization of its plan to build a regulator station for the purpose of routine maintenance enables the company to move forward under a 1987 permit to expedite the construction and avoid public participation in the process.

I took a walk to see for myself the likely site on Hop River Road in Coventry where this regulator station will be built if it moves forward. Already, this site is marred with Enbridge natural gas activity. Warning signs, no trespassing signs, cyclone fences, etc., riddle each side of Hop River Road in this section. The addition of a regulator station will exacerbate this soul-crushing vision. Families in this neighborhood did not ask for this assault on their day-to-day landscape-- an assault which offers no returns to them personally.

In 2022 Connecticut codified the goal of moving beyond fossil fuels to green energy by 2040. Senate Bill 10 pledges that Connecticut will transition its electric supply away from relying on natural gas and oil to power its electric grid. How then, in 2024, can this proposal of Enbridge to expand its natural gas pipeline and infrastructure even get traction in our state?

We must do all that we can to prevent Enbridge from securing the permits it will need to proceed with each step of it proposed Project Maple. We must call upon FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) to halt this construction by denying any permits that Enbridge is unjustly seeking.

We must appeal to Commissioner Katie Dykes of our own DEEP (Department of Energy & Environmental Protection) to deny Enbridge the permits for this project which will affect communities in this state who may not have the voice to stand up on their own to this corporation and its plans.

We must let Governor Lamont and our state legislators know that this Project Maple plan would jeopardize the health of his constituents and goes against Connecticut's own codified goal of reaching zero carbon by 2040. And here in Coventry, we must engage our own Town Council in our effort to say no to yet another encroachment of Enbridge's for-profit ventures onto our quality of life. On May 16th, we had a community wide meeting at the library in Coventry to learn in detail about Enbridge's plans as best they can be surmised. Armed with information, we are now anxious and ready to mobilize.



Enbridge Corp. has proposed a 1,131-mile-long expansion of the gas pipeline that runs through Pomfret named "Project Maple." This protest of 19 area residents was organized on less than a week's notice and took place at the junction of routes 44 and 97 across from Vanilla Bean Restaurant. Contributed photo.

In Your Corner

By Pamela Skelly

"Think globally; Act locally." This slogan is relevant to our NAACP branch because our work involves the local community yet we are motivated by the greater good for our world. Our Environmental Justice Committee is very active locally and its efforts are far-reaching because there is no environmental justice without racial justice. You have probably seen our committee members in the community spreading the word to make our world a healthier place for future generations.

Environmental justice refers to the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, and concerns the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Our Environmental Justice (EJ) Committee was formed in 2019 and has done amazing work educating and organizing for the community. Activities by committee and other branch members have covered a range of national, regional, statewide and local marches, programs, protests and informational events in support of racial and environmental justice.

Using the Zoom platform has enabled the EJ committee to bring speakers to us from outside our region as well as speakers during the COVID social confinement. The first branch/community presentation was a January 2019 Zoom call with over 100 participants that featured Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, Michigan professor and pediatrician who brought national attention and spearheaded remediation steps for residents of Flint, MI whose water supply was polluted by lead. Also participating on that Zoom call were Sharon Lewis, Director of the CT Coalition For Economic & Environmental Justice in Hartford and Martha Klein, Sierra Club public health nurse from Norfolk, CT. A couple years later, Ms. Lewis gave a Zoom presentation, "Not In My Backyard," on the topic of polluters in Connecticut and the dangerous effects to these communities, often poor and minority ones, where they build the industrial wastelands, as well as the problems caused by the transporting dangerous chemicals on our highways. The EJ committee hosted another Zoom presentation entitled "Youth on Fire" with a panel of Connecticut environmental justice activists. These are just a few examples of Zoom presentations organized by the EJ committee to keep us better informed about important environmental issues.

Educating the community about how to conserve energy is another powerful tool to reduce our carbon footprint. As individuals, we can save money by being more energy efficient. Collectively we are able to have a powerful impact on the environment. Leticia Colon de Mejias, Windsor, CT Green Eco-Warriors creator, gave an energy efficiency presentation at the Killingly Public Library for adults. For the past two years Ms. Colon de Mejias also conducted a child-centered program for the entire third grade class at Killingly Memorial School that included a sponsorship to provide books, brochures, and comic books starring Dinero the Frog. Conserving energy is a vital way for us to effect positive change, especially on the current climate issues.

The climate crisis has drawn our attention toward the danger of fossil fuels and the importance of renewable energy sources. In the last few years, options for renewable resources continue to improve technologically and become more affordable. The EJ committee has staffed information booths about the harmful effects of fossil fuel energy and in support of transitioning to renewable energy sources, sometimes in conjunction with the Gary Ralls Youth

Council members, at the Willimantic Third Thursdays, the Willimantic Coop Annual Jillson Square Celebration, the Thompson Community Day and Earth Day events in Hartford. Most recently, the committee organized and co-sponsored a "Climate, Coffee & Conversations" gathering of local citizens and officials at Pourings 'n' Passages book store in Danielson. By learning these important facts about our energy options, we can make decisions that will improve our climate for the future.

Protesting draws attention to important issues because the participants' visibility demands to be noticed. Our EJ committee members are very active on the protest scene. Many marches and protests were attended by committee members, including The 2023 New York March to the UN to End Fossil Fuels, several climate emergency protests at the state capitol in Hartford, an annual presence at Travelers Insurance Company stockholders' meetings to urge the ending of insuring of fossil fuel projects, and a recent protest of The Hartford Insurance Company's insurance of fossil fuel projects causing severe health issues to environmental justice communities in Louisiana. Protesting for a safer environment is definitely an example of "good trouble."

Collaborating with like-minded groups to increase the power of the message is a practice of the NAACP. In that fashion, the EJ committee joined with "No More Dirty Power" in Killingly and other environmental justice advocates across the state in weekly protests at Killingly Commons. They distributed fact sheets and urged local residents to contact the governor and D.E.P. commissioner to successfully stop a second gas power plant from being constructed in Killingly. Committee members also were in attendance with questions and advocacy at Thompson and Windham "Climate Pollution Reduction Grants" informational evenings sponsored by Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECOG). Other faith, civil rights and environmental groups that this committee has worked with include the Temple B'nai Israel in Willimantic, the Temple B'nai Shalom in Putnam, the First Congregational Church of Woodstock, the Living Faith United Methodist Church in Putnam, the Sierra Club of Connecticut, the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters and many other regional organizations that share the values of racial and environmental justice. Our power is increased when we work together for the greater good.

There is no environmental justice without racial justice and our Environmental Justice committee has worked for the past five years to bring about both of those goals. Please visit our website at <https://windhamctnaacp.org/> to learn more about our environmental justice work as well as our other events and activities. We welcome new members to support our diverse community and accept donations to support our work.

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Watchful and Determined to be Safe

By Bill Powers

“A fantastic career opportunity” was how I described joining the staff at Hartford Hospital. My first day on the job, I was assigned a small office next door to the office of Safety and Security Director, Bob “Beans” Daly. Later that day Bob and I sat together and discussed the set of beliefs and values that represented the hospital’s culture about safety. It was a top organizational priority. He was a retired Hartford Fire Department officer, who was recruited after the horrific Hartford Hospital fire that claimed 16 lives in December of 1961. We had something in common. My father was a member of Truck Company No.1 and was involved with the rescue of patients and staff on that day of tragedy.

Later during my first day, we met with Dr. Jim McCormick, an anesthesiologist at the hospital, who was also a representative from the American Society of Anesthesiology to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and national committee chairman for medical gases. During the meeting, I was assigned to join them as a member of the hospital’s safety committee. Their enthusiasm about safety, as it turned out, was to leave a lasting impression on me for the rest of my clinical and administrative experiences with hospitals and prehospital emergency medical care. As they saw it, my role as a respiratory therapist would be a valuable addition. Oxygen therapy for patients was administered throughout the patient care areas and my department was also involved with the safe use of ventilators in the critical care units.

Jim McCormick’s role with the NFPA provided him with the current details and insights into the details of incidents involving administration of medical gases from around the world. He frequently shared that information with me. Jim’s “golden rule” was “don’t simply trust medical gas administration equipment but always verify that it is providing the correct gas and the right concentration - always be watchful in order to be safe.”

The key player to require safety as a major priority for the institution was President Dr. T. Stewart Hamilton, who would also play a prominent national role for safety in hospitals. His administration, the medical staff and employees intently required safe practices, but also the reporting of potential hazards to wider audiences. The belief was that clinicians should readily share their safety experiences with their professions and appropriate agencies. This expectation was to promote safety for patients and their health care providers. This perspective was effectively translated into practice and was indeed an important part of the culture.

In my case this enthusiasm served as an inspiration and led to the publishing of my very first article (“High Oxygen Concentrations in Ohio Deluxe Nebulizers”, *Inhalation Therapy, Vol. 16, No.3* 1971) – recipient of a national literary award and prize. During my career in hospitals, writing about safety and hazards accounted for twenty-six additional published pieces in the following journals: *Respiratory Care*; *American Review of Respiratory Diseases*, *Critical Care Medicine*; *Emergency*; *Journal of the National Society for Cardiopulmonary Technology*; and, *Pediatrics*.

While employed at Hartford Hospital, my presence at meetings in the President’s office was infrequent. I vividly recall two such meetings and that involved different safety issues, their reporting to the media and the resulting concerns with corporations. Both had been reported to the Emergency Care Research Institute (ECRI) – (the Consumer Reports for medical devices), and the manufacturers of the medical devices. The reports were published in the *Journal of Respiratory Care*.

The First Meeting in 1975 involved a conference call that included the hospital president, a vice-president, two hospital attorneys, and my Medical Director, Dr. Donald Morrison. Also attending was the vice president of a large corporation and their attorney. The corporation sold a type of oxygen equipment that presented a potential fire hazard based upon a design flaw in an electrical component of an immersion heater, which they denied. We had provided the company with our data, and photos that established irrefutable proof that the problem existed and that it had occurred in a number of devices. We had even suggested a method to prevent the problem. Please believe me when I tell you that an electrical fire in a device that is delivering oxygen to a patient can have catastrophic results! The company was demanding that any article be withdrawn before publication, if not they threatened a law suit. They suggested that our hospital’s experience was a limited and isolated event and likely related to mishandling during the sterilization process in our Central Sterile Processing Department. They claimed **the problem had never before been reported to them**. They were informed that

the Hartford Hospital stood by our experience based on the evidence collected, our data and analysis, and that we had a responsibility to share the story. At the conclusion of the telephone conference, as I was leaving, I must have looked a bit shaken at the prospect of being sued. The vice-president put his hand on my shoulder, looked me in the eye and said: “Don’t worry we’re behind this 100 percent!”

So, the article was published along with a statement that the company had not previously received similar reports about the device. On the day the article was published, the editor and I began to get phone calls from other hospitals that had reported similar experiences with the device to the company and some that had actually resulted in fires. Needless to say, there was no further talk of a law suit and the company actually adopted our recommendation to prevent the problem.

The Second Meeting in 1978 involved a corporation that manufactured a newly marketed top of the line ventilator that was designed for use with critical care patients. Even though the device had completed the required clinical trials for prototypes, we discovered a design flaw that could lead to severe complications for patients. There was a good deal of interest when the first of our new ventilators was used (the maiden voyage, so to speak). On a particular mode setting, the patient was caused to inadvertently rebreathe carbon dioxide in an acute episode of hyperventilation and with the patient feeling severely short of breath. When attempting to determine why the rate and depth of ventilation increased on that setting, measurements of oxygen and carbon dioxide were obtained from the tubes connected to the patient. The carbon dioxide levels were alarmingly elevated. When the mode of breathing was changed, the carbon dioxide level immediately returned to normal levels and the patient’s shortness of breath ceased. The patient had been rebreathing exhaled air! We immediately switched to another company’s older model ventilator. Later that day, during simulation with three of the other new ventilators, the results were found to be consistent with our previous experience.

However, this time there were no lawyers. Representatives from Hartford Hospital were: a vice president; medical director; Bob Howard from our pulmonary function laboratory; Frank Hursey, respiratory care biomedical engineer; and, myself. For the company, there was the president and an engineer. For most of the meeting Bob and Frank and the engineer were involved in conversation. The very next day, the engineer was in Hartford. They were able to correct the issue for our four ventilators.

The following men and woman should also be mentioned: Dr. Leon Chameides, Chief of Pediatrics; Howard J. Wetstone, Chief of Ambulatory Care; and Gertrude Lamb, medical librarian. Dr. Chameides knew right away, when I told him that the noise level in the oxygen hood for a premature infant was too high. The measured decibel level was equivalent to a jet engine. As a result, a new system was devised that permitted the oxygen level to be dialed in without concern for noise.

Dr. Howard Wetstone, who was involved with bringing LifeStar helicopter to the state, was also involved with helping us develop a special device for mask and bag resuscitation to increase the oxygen concentration.

Dr. Gertrude Lamb, worked with me on an audio-visual program for respiratory therapists, medical students, house staff, and others, so that they were brought up to date on the safe use respiratory care equipment. She also provided assistance with an AV program for patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) to assure their pharmacologic safety (Connecticut Chapter of the American Lung Association).

To this day, I can hear Jim McCormick say in his Irish brogue “Always be watchful in order to be safe.”

Bill Powers is a former registered respiratory therapist.

Mists of Time

By Judy Davis

The beginnings of the Irish lie
in the mists of time, where the
voice of a goddess is the gentle
pealing of a harp.

The goddess is a branch in
blossom; a moving stream; summer
within her.

So come with her; race
across the green fields, and
the windy hills, to the land
of music, the land of youth!

In the Holy Land

Dylan called them Masters of War,
Ozzie called them War Pigs.

Both claim to live by the same book,
But neither sees themselves when they read,
The sins of the fathers
Are visited upon the children.

They are the patriarchs, the ruling fathers
Called Netanyahu or called Hamas
They are driven mad by vengeance lust
And hunger for power at all cost.

Like the child of a terrifying father, who finds
Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide,
The innocents suffer hunger and thirst
Death and worse than death.

No water to drink, but blood rains on the earth
In the holy land of their birth.

Kathy LaVallee

Caring Hands

By Carol Wheelock Hall

When you were young and lacking in grace,
Mom and Dad held your hand to keep you safe.
Take my hand was said in a non-verbal way
By your small friends who wanted to play.

When grown up, your love also took your hand.
You created your family and all was grand.
Hand in hand you went through this life,
Through good times, bad times, joys and strife.

You held your children, as a parent held you,
Giving care with love all the years as they grew.
Like old folks before you, now your steps are unsure.
As you helped your parents, now your kids know the cure.

Do you think it came to them from osmosis?
This wondrous cure, just how did they get it?
They learned love from you! They did understand.
And the care torch is passed as they take your hand.

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Achieve Financial Freedom: 7 Steps for Financial Independence

By Leisl L. Langevin, CFP® CDFIA®
Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor



As Americans celebrate Independence Day this July 4th, it's also a great time to think about achieving financial freedom. National Financial Freedom Day is on July 1st and it is a day dedicated to reminding you to take control of your finances. By following some simple steps, you can work towards becoming financially independent.

What is Financial Freedom?

Financial freedom means confidently living your life and doing the things you want and feeling empowered to do them because your finances are in order. It's about building wealth, eliminating debt, and having enough income streams to support your desired lifestyle. Achieving financial freedom takes discipline, planning, and smart money management.

7 Steps to Financial Independence

1. Track Your Spending

The first step is understanding where your money is going each month. Track every expense, big or small, over a period of 2-3 months using a budgeting app like Mint, YNAB, or PocketGuard. This will reveal wasteful spending patterns you can cut. There is a helpful rule of thumb that suggests you should spend 50% of your take home pay on needs like your mortgage, 30% on wants like shopping and vacations, and 20% on savings.

2. Pay Off All Debt

Make a plan to pay down or manage your debt, from credit cards to student loans to your mortgage. The less money going towards high-interest payments each month, the easier it is to save and invest for your future financial freedom.

3. Build An Emergency Fund

Life happens. Having a fully-funded emergency fund with 3-6 months worth of living expenses will prevent you from relying on high-interest debt when unexpected costs pop up.

4. Cut Unnecessary Expenses

Analyze your spending habits and cut out any unnecessary subscriptions, luxuries, and impulse purchases that don't align with your financial freedom goals and budget. Small lifestyle adjustments can equal huge savings over years.

5. Increase Your Income

Explore options to boost your income through a side hustle, earning passive income through investments, or finding a higher-paying job. The more you can earn, the faster you'll achieve financial independence.

6. Save & Invest Consistently

Make saving and investing a monthly priority, not an afterthought. Aim to save 20% of your income for retirement accounts and other investment vehicles that will compound your wealth over decades.

7. Develop Multiple Income Streams

Consider multiple jobs or sources of income. Develop multiple income streams through investments, side businesses, real estate, and other passive income opportunities.

Declare Your Financial Independence

Achieving complete financial freedom might seem impossible at first. By diligently following these steps, you'll make steady progress towards your money goals each year. Celebrate your journey by making this July 4th about declaring your financial independence! With discipline and smart planning, you too can live with absolute confidence.

Are you ready to finally break free from debt and achieve true financial independence? The WHZ collaborative experience synergizes a hyper-personalized financial plan with a custom-tailored portfolio that's proactively managed to provide Absolute Confidence. Unwavering Partnership. For Life. We'll help analyze your current financial situation and create a personalized plan to pay off debt, increase income streams, and grow your wealth over time. To learn more, request a complimentary consultation on our website or call us at (860) 928-2341.

Authored by Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor Leisl L. Langevin, CFP® CDFIA®. Securities and advisory services offered through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. 697 Pomfret Street, Pomfret Center, CT 06259 and 392-A Merrow Road, Tolland, CT 06084, 860.928.2341. <http://www.whzwealth.com> These materials are general in nature and do not address your specific situation. For your specific investment needs, please discuss your individual circumstances with your financial advisor. Weiss, Hale & Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice, and nothing in the accompanying pages should be construed as specific tax or legal advice.



Spike

Spike didn't like his home up the hill from us - so he decided to live with us. He started living on the kitchen counter and progressed from there. He would take walks with us and one day climbed up my coat so I could carry him on the walk! He decided at that moment he liked, loved and trusted us.

Words and photo by Diane Rutherford

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PULL DOWN
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Tai Chi Home

Heaven Knows

By Joe Pandolfo

When June comes, the season of abundance begins. In the meadows a thousand wildflowers are opening their eyes. Overhead the treetop leaves are finding their voice in the breeze... mesmerizing, harmonizing with a hundred songbird calls.

This is the season when the sky can hold the sunset and evening all at once, the clouds wearing all their colors. It's the same with us. It's the time to be your whole self, your real self, feeling the warm solstice spirit through and through.

If there's one thing heaven knows - when the longest day comes and goes we begin our way toward that longest night, on the other side of the horizon.

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Is there a violin in your home hiding under a bed or tucked away in a closet somewhere? Are you an active player or has it been many years since you played? The Quiet Corner Fiddlers are seeking new members and we would love to have you join us. We meet on Monday evenings to play jigs, reels, waltzes and traditional fiddle tunes. If you are interested in joining us, please email Bernie Schreiber for further information at b.schreiber@snet.net.

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Glamping in Lebanon

By Martin Moebus

In 1781, a young Windham girl stood with a candle, aiding her father in shoeing horses for Lauzun’s cavalry, part of Rochambeau’s troops. One cavalryman gave her a little tri-color flag which she kept until her death more than eighty years later. Who were these French military men who traveled our roads?

The leader of this ragtag group was Armand Louis de Gontaut-Biron, duc de Lauzun. His name is way too long, so we shall call him Lauzun. His mother was the daughter of the first owner of Louisiana. Friends described him as brave, witty, or even mad. He had relations with Marie Antoinette of “let them eat cake” fame, and, along with her, lost his head in the French Revolution, but that’s another story. In childhood, according to one historian, he became “a part of that frivolous, gay, witty, corrupt society . . . through the reign of the unhappy Louis XVI.” He didn’t learn his lesson about living high on the hog. Living the life of balls, dances, and gambling, he lost everything, so he became a military man. When France became involved in our revolution, he was, in his words, “too much in fashion not to be employed in some brilliant manner.” He formed the *Volontaires Étrangers de Lauzun*, better known as Lauzun’s Legion—600 hussars (horsemen), artillery, and infantry—eventually winning a battle near Yorktown and ensuring America’s independence. But before all that, he had to winter over somewhere, and that somewhere was Lebanon.

Originally Lauzun’s troops were supposed to be housed in Providence, R.I., for the winter, but the locals were greedy people, raising the going rates for room, board, and horse feed—even though the French were fighting for us. Rochambeau asked if anything could be done. John Trumbull, our governor at the time, offered to host the troops in his hometown of Lebanon. They traveled along an old Indian trail later called the Windham Turnpike and, in our day, Route 14. After a week of snowy camping near the Frog Pond in Windham, they moved into their new quarters.

The great carpet incident of 1781

Lauzun had a very low opinion of our governor, whom he thought old, fussy, and full of himself. “He has all the simplicity of dress, all the self-importance, the pomposity which belong to the head of a little republic,” he stated in one of the many stories about him. As you can imagine, the Lebanon visit was not going to be a totally fun one. Historians mention that the Trumbulls had the only carpet in town. I imagine the tale was oft told around the Trumbull house for years to come.

David Trumbull was excited. His dad, the governor, had given him an important job. He was going to host the Duke of Lauzun! He bent down to run his fingers along the plush fibers of his rug—the only one in Lebanon. His face lit up with delight at the softness beneath his touch. He sprang to his feet, unable to contain his excitement, and rushed to the window to peer outside. “He’s finally here,” David cried as he raced to the door to let Lauzun in. “Lauzun, welcome. We thought only the best would do for you. I have the only carpet in Lebanon!” Lauzun, nodding his head in acknowledgment, approached the carpet. He examined its tired fibers and faded colors, wrinkling his nose in disdain. A disapproving frown creased his brow as he traced the frayed edges. With a subtle shake of his head, he muttered under his breath, “Mon Dieu, what a sorry sight. Surely, there are better options than this ragged relic.” Eyeing the rest of the shabby interior with dismay, his frustration evident, he exclaimed, “I feel like I’m stuck in a Siberian hut.” David told his guest of all the exciting activities they had planned for him, including dinner with Dad and squirrel hunting. Lauzun quickly left Lebanon and stayed away as long as he could for the rest of the winter; the troops, however, remained.

If you think Lauzun was a terrible guest, you must really feel sorry for the Williams family, who had to put up with Count Dillon, Lauzun’s second-in-command. Dillon was offended by everything. The slightest provocation caused his inflated, old-fashioned code of honor to rise, requiring him to defend his reputation by dueling. He had nearly missed the boat to America; having left to mail some letters, he got into an argument, insulting the owner of a horse carriage. He returned four days later, bleeding from sword wounds. Lucky for him, the boat was running late. He was confined to quarters by Rochambeau. Once in Newport he was at it again, over another petty grievance. In Lebanon, word was getting out. Governor Trumbull, aware of Dillon’s reputation, discreetly asked William Williams to host him. He agreed, to the detriment of poor Mrs. Williams. Once ensconced in the Williams house, Dillon

soared off into a frenzy at the slightest whisper of provocation. Mrs. Williams’s quiet mornings were ruined.

What of the troops on the green?

Most were peasants. The rest were tailors, shoemakers, masons, carpenters, butchers, and wheelwrights from the Alsace–Lorraine region, which was part of France at the time but was German-speaking. Officers were mostly French, but some were Swedish, Belgian, English, Irish, Polish, and German. Although they all spoke French, they cursed in Hungarian. World languages became very popular in the Lebanon schools. Lifebuoy soap was also popular when the kids starting picking up the Hungarian curse words.

Typical scene on the green

The soldiers were steeped in French culture. They did not like the corn and rye bread of the locals, oh, no, no. Only the finest fluffiest breads for them. Special ovens were constructed on the green to fulfill their dietary needs. Local businesses set up little cafés and soon the Lebanon Green was filled with the sights and sounds of Gay Paris. Soft morning light filtered through the sheer curtains of the Lebanon café, casting a warm glow on the intricate ironwork of the tables and chairs. The aroma of freshly brewed coffee mingled with the scent of buttery croissants and crusty baguettes, enticing soldiers to step inside. Inside the café, the atmosphere was buzzing with gentle chatter and the clinking of porcelain cups. The baristas expertly crafted cappuccinos and espressos behind the counter. Seated by the window, a young hussar and a Lebanon lass shared a quiet moment, their fingers intertwined as they sipped on their drinks and nibbled on slices of warm, freshly baked bread. They conversed in hushed tones, occasionally breaking into laughter, their affection palpable. At a nearby table, a group of hussars gathered for their weekly catch-up session. Animated gestures punctuated their conversation as they occasionally glanced out the window to view the Eiffel Tower model built on the green. Plates of delicate pastries and a basket of baked croissants sat untouched as they lost themselves in each other’s company.

As Eiffel Towers and café scenes were a bit of a temporal anomaly, Lauzun ordered them taken down. The troops grumbled. Dillon suggested dueling lessons to restore morale. This idea was panned by all the officers. The consensus was that a military parade and VIP speakers would restore enthusiasm and discipline.

The Chevalier de Chastelux, Rochambeau, and Washington were scheduled to speak. Lauzun described de Chastelux as “having a lively brain that cannot keep the same ideas long,” so you can guess what his speech sounded like. As all veterans know, parades and important guests do not make for good morale. Brass must be polished, boots brought to a spit-shine, horses groomed. Lots of yelling ensued as the troops were marched around and rode in precise formation. They were all “butts in seats,” forced to listen as the guests droned on and on. Lauzun was especially peeved, as he had had to come back to the Siberia that was Lebanon for the speeches.

Time to leave

Rochambeau’s troops were on the move in June of 1781. The exile in Lebanon was coming to an end. Rochambeau traveled the same route as Lauzun did the year before. Mrs. Williams, who had had to host Count Dillon, wrote, “Oh how glad and how thankful I shall be when they are gone for never was I so sick of any people in my life. . . . joy go long with them and wish never to see another French man in my life the best of them are nothing but pride and vanity.”

While moving on may have brought joy to the troops and Mrs. Williams, it did not for all local inhabitants. It also confirmed a presumption of the Windham residents about the French. In the lush depths of the vibrant frog pond, a chorus of croaks echoed through the air. The frogs basked contentedly in the warm night in their tranquil domain. As the frogs contemplated the mysteries of life, they heard what sounded to them like *La Marseillaise*, the French national anthem, before all suddenly became quiet. Just three frog generations since the great Windham Frog Fight of 1754, the frogs were again imperiled. Their worst fears were coming true. Human hands with bad intent were reaching out—they were surrounded! Before they could jump, the poor frogs were ensnared and struggling. Rochambeau’s troops were having frog legs for dinner. Oh, the horror! The terror of the night of June 20, 1781, would live forever engraved in the surviving frogs’ memory.

My Shoe Disasters Through the Years

Others may have wardrobe malfunctions,
but I have had shoe disasters!

By Carol Wheelock Hall

The first shoe disaster that I recall was when visiting my grandparent’s dairy farm as a child. I was horrified to accidentally step one foot into the manure gutter that ran behind the cow stanchions in the barn. I cried because of the mess and the thought of getting in trouble with my parents for ruining my footwear. My sweet Grandpa first comforted me and then washed off the offending debris from my foot, sock and shoe. He made it all better and it was a good summer day to go barefoot.

About twenty years later I got another lesson on being careful where you step. In my 30s while enjoying an evening out, I was walking to the dance floor when one of my high heels stepped into the small opening of a floor heat vent. I became stuck in that spot, immobile with my shoe in the grate. My date bent down and assisted in getting my shoe heel unstuck much to the amusement of onlookers, and we proceeded to the dance floor. Like most embarrassing situations, it was more humorous afterwards than at the time.

Jumping ahead another twenty years, I was at the casino to go to a musical production with my daughter when my new pair of dressy flats was uncomfortably rubbing on one of my heels. I resourcefully inserted a small panty liner into the back of that shoe to avert a possible blister. Later while walking down the aisle to our seats, we hysterically laughed when she noticed and alerted me that the liner had partially come out of the shoe and was sticking up out of the back of the shoe. Hopefully she was the only witness to that shoe view before I corrected the situation. So much for my innovation.

About twenty years later, as I was about to enter our local theater to see a play, one of my shoe soles unexpectedly broke apart, making the front of the shoe grotesquely wide and my toes peek out of the closed-toe Mary-Jane style shoe. There was no time to go home to change. Mortified, I walked carefully to my seat, while informing my beloved chuckling companions to not look down, hoping no one else would notice. I stayed seated for the two and a half hours of the stage performance, including intermission. After the play ended I carefully exited the building and I left the offending shoe at the edge of the parking lot, going with one bare foot to my car. Another sight to behold! My regrets to the maintenance crew for having to discard the junk shoe I left behind.

I know I can’t be the only one that had some of these things happen, but perhaps not all of them and in a timed sequence. A friend once told me that she wore two different colored but similar shoes to an event, after hurriedly dressing in the dim light. I’m grateful that never happened to me, at least not yet. Fingers crossed!

Time is ticking. Perhaps in another few years, when I am around 90 years old, there may be another story to tell, as I seem to be quite consistent with my twenty year timing and the malfunctions of footwear. Right now I can’t imagine what scenario could possibly occur for me and my future shoes, but if history repeats itself, it will be something quite memorable. After these experiences I have learned a few things and hereby share my wisdom with you: wear good shoes, be very careful where you step, and if that doesn’t avoid a shoe disaster then have a good sense of humor.

Carol Wheelock Hall lives in Columbia, Ct. and is the author of 4 books available on Amazon. One book contains poetry and ponderings (Signs of Light in Life), 2 are children’s stories (A Trip to the Carnival; and Photo Safari in Africa), and one is her anthology (Many Spokes in the Wheel).

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Hiking the Azores Islands

By Dennis R. Blanchette

We abuse land because we see it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

—Aldo Leopold

The first decision to make when planning a trip to the Azores is how you are going to pronounce “Azores.” When Janet was researching the trip, I asked an acquaintance who speaks Portuguese how to pronounce it. She said “ah-ZOR-es,” rolling the R. When friends asked about our next trip and we pronounced it that way, they looked puzzled and then said, “Oh, you mean ‘A-zorz.’” Google Translate and the dictionary give several other choices, but fortunately, each of the nine islands has its own name, so you never have to say it once you get there.

The hardest part of hiking in the Azores is finding the trailhead. After that, the trails are well marked, with a system of bars and arrows that is far superior to the blazes used around here, and very uncrowded. We hiked six trails on two different islands (São Miguel and Pico) for a total of 33 miles. We saw hundreds of cows but rarely another person.

Furnas, São Miguel Island

The Lagoa das Furnas (Furnas Lake) hike takes one past the hot springs where Furnas’s famous stew, cozido das Furnas, is cooked. Giant pots are filled with a variety of meats and vegetables, buried in the ground, and dug up several hours later. The geothermal heat cooks the food for free and eliminates the argument about whose turn it is to cook. It is served at all the finest restaurants, including the one we went to that night. Our waiter was from the U.S., we were from the U.S., and the menu was printed in Portuguese with English translations. What could go wrong?

“I’ll have swordfish and white wine,” I said to the waiter, a young man about 25 years old.

“Point to it on the menu so I can copy it. I hate writing in Portuguese. I was born in America,” responded the waiter.

“How long have you been here?”

“About a week.”

“Why are you here?”

“They needed someone who could speak English.”

“How did you learn to speak Portuguese if you’ve only been here a week?”

“I learned Portuguese from my father and grandfather in New Bedford.”

His system was not yet perfected, because we were both served the wrong wine and the wrong food.

The next day’s hike was a short one up a river to an allegedly hot waterfall. The guidebook said it was the best kept secret on the island, so we went early to avoid the crowds. It was a very nice waterfall, but the water was tepid at best. The Terra Nostra Botanical Garden in Furnas is stunningly beautiful and well maintained. Admission

includes access to a huge thermal pool of brown water. They advise you to wear an old bathing suit lest your new one get stained by the water.

Pico Island

Mount Pico is the highest mountain in the Azores, at 7,713 feet. The dour ranger at the trailhead handed each of us a GPS and said, “If you lose it, you get a bill for \$300; if you use it to call for help, you get a bill for \$1,200. We close at 8:00 p.m.” The trail was unrelentingly steep. At the four-hour turnaround time, we had ascended 3,100 feet in 1.8 miles. Essentially, we had just climbed a set of stairs two miles long, and all that was left was climbing back down. We made it by the 8:00 p.m. closing time, and a friendly ranger handed us certificates certifying that we had climbed Mount Pico. Fortunately, they said “climbed,” not “summitted,” so we didn’t have to give them back.

Ponta Delgada, São Miguel Island

The Rota da Água trail leads to Janela do Inferno (Window of Hell). The trail begins in lush green meadows reminiscent of Ireland, which slowly give way to jungle vegetation reminiscent of Hawaii. Janela do Inferno turned out to be a hole in the mountain several hundred feet high, from which gushed a small stream of water. I pointed my phone at the QR code posted there, hoping to find out the significance of the name, but there was no phone signal. I took a picture of the code and looked it up at home, and it said, “Thanks for visiting.” There were many old, abandoned moss-covered buildings and aqueducts along the trail that used to supply water to an old alcohol factory. That could be it or maybe I am searching for a connection that does not exist, but there must be a reason for naming this spectacular feature the Window of Hell.

The town called Sete Cidades seemed to be the place to be. All the hikers we had not seen for weeks showed up there on our last day. Cars lined the causeway between Blue Lake and Green Lake and the parking lots were full of vans sporting the logos of various tour companies. It was cloudy and both lakes looked brown. A three-mile hike brought us to a viewpoint over Blue Lake, where the sun came out for a few minutes and turned the Blue Lake a vibrant shade of green.

The Azores are famous for their happy cows, but I am not sure how you can tell if a cow is happy. All the ones I saw were very taciturn, kind of like the people. Considering they are raised for milk and live in paradise, they should be happy. Maybe, like the people, they are tired of tourists invading their paradise. Anyway, I advise you to stay the hell out of the Azores. The cows will thank you, the people will thank you, and I will thank you the next time I go and it is still uncrowded.

Dennis R. Blanchette is a soon-to-be-retired civil engineer and travel writer.

See photos of the trip on the back page. Wanted them in color. Ed.



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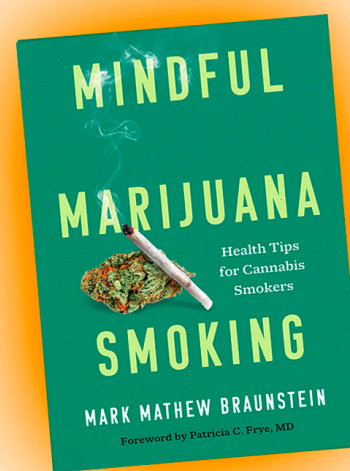


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Coventry Celebrates Make Music Day

Participating in a global celebration of making music on the longest day of the year-

Submitted by Ruth O'Neil

Coventry joins the international Make Music Day Celebration taking place on Friday, June 21, 2023. Make Music Day is a one-day event where free, live musical performances, opportunities to make music, and other musical events take place around the world on the longest day of the year. Musical offerings in Coventry and throughout Connecticut are part of a global celebration of music making in over 800 cities inspired by France's *Fête de la Musique*.

At 11 A.M. aspiring musicians of all ages, especially those who are the youngest, are invited to visit the Booth and Dimock Library located at 1134 Main Street. Coordinated by the Song-a-Day Music Center, activities will include short performances by students, an interactive sing-a-song and a lively on

the spot musical parade around the library.

“To create, to make music is inside each one of us. We all should have the chance to express that creative part of ourselves whenever possible,” says Ruth O’Neil, owner and director of the Song-a-Day Music Center. “We are proud and excited to be part of Make Music Day and are trying to offer something special for all of our community members of all ages. This day is a true gift to communities everywhere.” Music has been shown to strengthen social connectivity, reduce stress, lower blood pressure, stimulate memory, and is integral to a well-rounded, enjoyable life. Now participating in Make Music Day for its seventh year, the Song-a-Day Music Center encourages every form of music making.

For more information on this event contact the Song-a-Day Music Center at 860-742-6878, inquiries@songadaymusic.com or the Song-a-Day Music Facebook Page.

as well as the Booth and Dimock Library at 860-742-7606. The Song-a-Day Music Center, located at 2809 Boston Turnpike, has been in operation since 2002 offering musical instruction, sales, rentals and repairs.

Later in the day, the Coventry Arts Guild will host an Open Mic/Stage Event at Mill Brook Place for Make Music Day from 3 P.M. to 8 P.M. All types and levels of performances are welcome. Pre-registration is encouraged by emailing Tim Timberman at timbermant@sbcglobal.net. Include performance type and length and time preference. This information will be used to develop a performance schedule. Mill Brook Place is located at 1267 Main Street in Coventry. For more information on this and the Coventry Arts Guild, contact www.coventry-artsguild.org, or call 860-428-1919. Make Music Day is presented by the NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) Foundation, and coordinated by the Make Music Alliance. For more information, please visit makemusicday.org.

Summer Tutorial?

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

Summer is less a time to be garden-tutored, than to simply enjoy the garden.

To appreciate how fortunate we are in New England gardens far from global conflict. *Life is Good*, gardening is blissful. Also less to worry about in summer, far-removed from winter's rigor.

This tutorial is my **Top 22 Herbaceous Perennials** that have performed well in the Quiet Corner. There are more, but below are current favorites that I couldn't quite keep to a *Top Twenty*.

Weeds also do well. Mother Ingrid Karlsson had a manicured sensibility, but she respected diversity and coexistence, and would have appreciated how weeds can have both ornamental value and nutrition that feeds the Web of Life. Manicured landscapes often lack mystery and surprise unless well-designed; wilds naturally provide it. And weeds feed imaginations.

POOH? My first year in the Quiet Corner in December 2018, I was clearing a path around our backyard thicket of *Forsythia* gone wild... and noticed a critter path into the center of yellow stems illuminated by a bright winter sun, into a little wildlife sanctuary from predators, especially for bunnies -- a "Pooh place" in Connecticut for "*Rabbits Friends and Relations*" as young Christopher Robin wrote.

I came late to *The World of Pooh* (1957, based on *Winnie-The-Pooh* by A.A. Milne, 1926), but was charmed by the inhabitants of 100 Aker Wood and Where The Woozle Wasn't. Rabbits are a feature of our Chaplin landscape, and our new pets. My Big Bunny (as on the Southbridge, MA super-market along route 131) is a brown chubby bunny with a white tail, the Eastern Cottontail, often seen dusk and dawn avoiding hawks of the Natchaug Valley.

Rabbits are ravenous. I allow some ornamental snacking, and overseed the lawn with clover (*Trifolium*) which they love. No lettuce, but clover lets us distract them. Many ornamental herbaceous perennial plants -- that die to the ground each winter and reappear in spring -- have survived my rabbits the last six years.

TOP 22 My selected perennials are mostly summer-blooming, some simply attractive in leaf. Some remain erect after dieback for winter interest. Some do well on hot and dry sites, but water makes things grow.

WINTER BLOOM !!!

1. ***Helleborus* / Hellebore** Showy white to purple flowers sometimes bloom in February!... very early spring; large attractive leaves suffer winter winds, so site carefully; cold nights delayed my bloom until March in 2024.

SPRING BLOOM

1. ***Iris* / Iris** Many colorful cultivars (cultivated varieties); German (Bearded) Iris has the largest flowers; Sweet Iris *Variegata* has green-yellow striped leaves; tall Siberian Iris is very tough; low Crested Iris appears very early.

2. ***Narcissus* / Daffodil** Common harbinger of early spring; white or yellow, some with orange centers; less color than *Tulipa* / Tulips, but longer living, becoming a floral colony; smallest are the Jonquils.

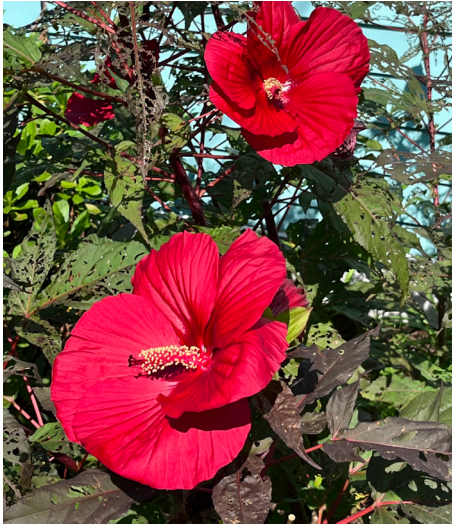
3. ***Paeonia* / Peony** Mid-spring garden staple with large showy flowers of heavenly fragrance (too much for

some) and large leaves that can be a lovely low hedge until frost.

4. ***Papaver* / Oriental Poppy** Garden favorite with vibrant original, red-orange flowers; mine is a stunning orange and blue; no special care for years, but don't like "wet feet"; dormant in summer's heat, so plant with fillers.

5. ***Phlox* / Creeping Phlox** Covered with white, blue, pink or red flowers in April, the low mats thrive on hot / dry sites as an effective ground cover all season, especially when planted with ample compost.

6. ***Polygonatum* / Solomon's Seal** Shade-tolerant and spreading, but not invasive, with delicate white flowers on arching stems; the foliage of a variegated cultivar is very showy, green leaves with white stripes.



'Midnight Marvel' Rose Mallow.

SUMMER BLOOM (some into fall)

1. ***Astilbe* / False Goat's Beard** Finely-scaled, some say fern-like, foliage with dense, feathery plumes of white, pink or red to purple flowers; for shade and wet sites, so water well.

2. ***Hemerocallis* / Daylily** Rugged, vigorous perennial with showy successive flowers, each one lasting only a day; adaptable, good for erosion-control, endures with little care; the natural orange species tolerates more shade.

3. ***Heuchera* / Coral Bells** Tiny bell-shaped red flowers rise above the leaves on wispy stems; hybrids have leaves in many colors, some marbled, veined, or ruffled, but fewer flowers; orangey 'Caramel' is hardiest.

4. ***Hibiscus* / Rose Mallow** 'Midnight Marvel' has large red flowers and purple maple-like leaves that turn orange in fall; vulnerable to aphids, I spray with Neem; emerges late in spring, so interplant with daffodils.

5. ***Leucanthemum* / Shasta Daisy** Classic daisy flower is an old-fashioned favorite with white petals around a bright yellow disc; many cultivars, some very tough; Montauk Daisy is a shrub-like 3 to 4 feet, late summer into fall.

6. ***Lilium* / True Lily** I'm fond of tall Tiger Lilies and the fragrant 'Star Gazer'; Asiatic lilies are tough, Oriental lilies are more fragrant; interplant with plants that distract from lily stems after flowering.

7. ***Rudbeckia* / Black Eyed Susan** Beloved by bees and butterflies, it blooms June to August with golden yellow daisy-like



Hellebore.

flowers; many cultivars, annual, biennial and perennial; give the perennial room, reseeds invasively.

8. ***Salvia* / Garden Sage** Easy-to-grow perennials for a summer show of color; perform best in full sun and are heat lovers; flowers attract butterflies and are deer resistant, and rabbits don't bother in my garden.

FALL BLOOM

1. ***Actaea* (formerly *Cimicifuga*) / Bugbane** White flower spires rise 4 to 7 feet above basal foliage, dark purple leaves on my 'Hillside Black Beauty' cultivar; the name *Cimicifuga* means «bed bug repeller» in pharmacology.

2. ***Sedum* / Stonecrop** Many summer-blooming



Miscanthus 'Morning Light'.

cultivars, some low, but the taller 'Autumn Joy' and 'Autumn Fire' stay erect for winter interest; such succulents perform well on hot / dry sites when established.

3. ***Symphotrichum* (formerly *Aster*) / New England Aster** Prolific fall pollinator with purplish daisy-like flowers and yellow centers starting late summer when summer bloomers decline; bushy plant up to 5 feet.

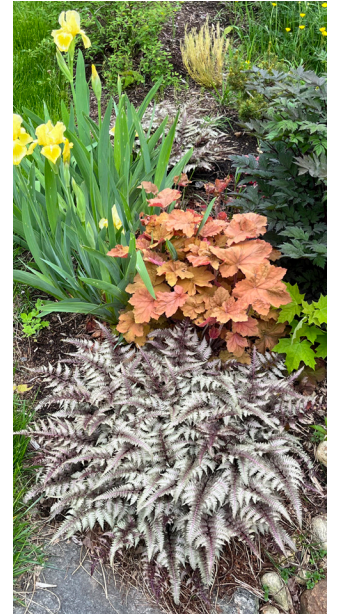
ALL SEASON LEAF

1. ***Athyrium* / Japanese Painted Fern** Low mounds of dramatic foliage stand out in the shade garden; luminescent gray-green fronds with dark centers fade to silver at the edges, some with reddish stems.

2. ***Carex* / Sedge** Low ornamental grasses that are effective accents, especially variegated yellow-green cultivars such as 'Everglow' and 'Evergold'.

3. ***Miscanthus* / Chinese Silver Grass** 'Morning Light' is a large ornamental grass with arching narrow white-striped leaves that fill a wide 6 feet space; brown in winter, but erect for interest; cut back in March before new growth.

4. ***Polystichum* / Christmas Fern** Evergreen native species that is attractive year-round with 2 feet fronds used in holiday decorations on colonial tables; thrives in shade and will take some sun if kept moist.



Yellow Iris with Heuchera and Japanese Painted Fern.

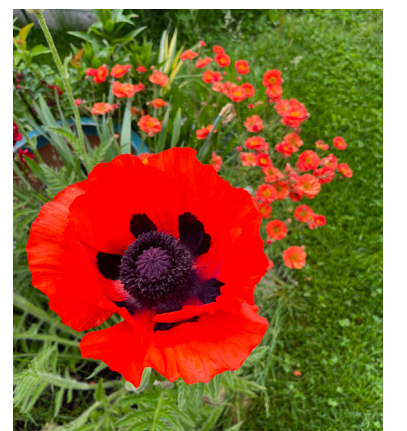
Study site and plants. Some like full sun (6 to 8 hours exposure), some full shade (0 to 2 hours), and some the bright shade in between (3 to 5 hours). Some like hot and dry sites, others cool and moist.

My mantra:

Suit the Site, Fit the Space, then Seek Beauty

When planting, dig holes as deep as plant pots, and 2 to 3 times wider. Remove soil to build a saucer to hold water; on a slope, use saucer on the downside. Amend soil with slow-acting compost. Rooting can be stimulated

with *BioTone*, live colonies of microorganisms plus mycorrhizae. I also fertilize with kelp (liquid seaweed). Finish the soil saucer with compost to leach more nutrients -- not porous mulch that flows away. Then topdress with 2 to 3 inches of mulch (I use shredded pine bark). Renew as the saucer erodes, but *Water Makes Things Grow*.



Oriental Poppy.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, Master gardener / designer; Chaplin, Connecticut & Boston, Massachusetts
Email: briankarlssonbarnes@gmail.com.

Text (preferred): 617.957.6611

KB garden design, 12 Cross Road, Chaplin CT 06235. Photos by author.



The Four Frolicsome Frogs of Willimantic's Frog Bridge

Text and photos by Mark Mathew Braunstein

As any first-time visitor to Willimantic can attest, the city has become known for its landmark Frog Bridge. While city officials christened it "The Thread City Crossing Bridge," Google and Wikipedia and the rest of the world know it as "The Frog Bridge." And the rest of the world certainly has taken notice.

The historical significance of its folkloric frogs is another story altogether, and anyway that folk tale has largely been overshadowed by the entranceway bridge. Not that there is anything remarkable about the bridge itself. Rather, the bridge has achieved fame for its four Disneyesque bronze statuaries of eight-foot-high frogs that perch atop columns shaped into spools of threads. In the mere 24 years since their installation, those four frogs have been canonized into icons representing the very identity of romantic Willimantic.

Yet the origin and evolution of those four larger-than-life-size monumental sculptures seem forgotten even by Willi's own residents. They were designed by the Connecticut pop artist Leo Jensen, and they auspiciously serve as the centerpiece for a retrospective exhibition of his artwork on view at The Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme, Connecticut. The show, "Fun & Games? Leo Jensen's Pop Art," dedicates the entire central wall of its third gallery to the documentation of the legendary frogs of The Frog Bridge.

From preliminary ink drawings to wooden maquette to bronze model to their fabrication in a foundry in Bridgeport to their final installation on the cement spool-like pedestals, their creation spanned from 1995 to 2000. The artist likened the frogs' slouching postures to "beanbags the size of Volkswagen Beetles." The final model Beetle left its assembly line in 2019, but the Frog Bridge four frogs live on. In case you've been wondering, yes, each frog has a name. Willy (for *Willimantic*), Manny (again, for *Willimantic*), Windy (for *Windham*), and Swiftly (for *Swift Waters*, the English translation of the Algonquin word "Willimantic," which means "Land of the Swift Waters"). Dunno who's who. We should ask the artist, but unfortunately he died five years ago, so is no longer granting interviews.

Also unfortunately, by the time you read this article the show will have closed. Darn!. But wait! All is not lost! The museum has spared us not only the trip to the Connecticut shoreline, but also the price of admission. It

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has preserved the exhibition as a freebie virtual tour.

Go to: <https://FlorenceGriswoldMuseum.Org/leo-jensen> Then scroll down to the bottom of the webpage just past the sponsors' logos to "Take a Virtual Tour of the Exhibition."

Or go directly to: <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=iqWHuk9ag8m>

If you're reading the dead-tree edition of *Neighbors* and you dread typing in those obscure characters and symbols, plugging into your search engine "Leo Jensen's Pop Art" will get you there, too. Or if you've wended your way onto the museum's homepage, you will find the *Leo Jensen Virtual Tour* listed under Exhibitions Virtual Tours Leo Jensen.



Once inside the museum's third gallery, in addition to zooming in on the amphibious artworks, you can magnify eight of the wall labels to render them legible enough to read. Good luck, and have fun! Indeed, the title of the

exhibition is, "Fun & Games!"

If touring the online exhibit from the comfort of your home, you might want to add to your fun by playing some ambient jazz music, namely "Get Your Kicks on Route 66." When Nat King Cole in 1946 first recorded his signature song, he was singing about the legendary US Route 66 that stretches from Chicago to Los Angeles. By ironic coincidence, after crossing the Frog Bridge from Route 32 and onto Main Street, you've arrived on Connecticut's own Route 66. Swimmers who engage in the breast stroke perform what's called the "frog kick," so adventurers on the Willimantic River who swim under the Frog Bridge all get their kicks along Route 66.



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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).

Dan Haar: A last-ditch save for CT's climate change and car-tax reform bills? Could happen

CT Insider. "Are you bummed that the Connecticut legislature failed to pass the big climate change reform and fell short on a motor vehicle property tax change on the last day of the session two weeks ago? Maybe you're thrilled. Take heart or take cover. Both could come back in a special session of the General Assembly, most likely toward the end of next month on or around June 24...The legislation would declare a climate crisis in Connecticut (perhaps enabling more cash from the giant federal climate change law); it would bring aggressive new energy-saving targets, incentives for cleaner energy and at least two new commissions. Leaders of the Senate and House are talking about overtime votes next month and Gov. Ned Lamont seems willing to listen. That often leads to a one- or two-day return, especially if, as is the case this year, lawmakers need to come back into session anyway for a few technical fixes of bills."

CT legislature ends session with no major climate change action – again

CT Mirror. "Connecticut's environmental community awoke Thursday morning to yet another legislative session that took no substantial action on climate change. Aside from some slight expansions for solar power and funding for some climate focused projects in the bonding package, other major climate bills failed — a tiny improvement from the previous session, which resulted in no climate action, period..." "Appallingly, this session has turned out to be yet another failure for climate legislation and for Connecticut's people, businesses, and future,"... [The bill] was sacrificed in a legislative deal in the Senate for another bill that would have provided state aide for strikers. That bill, which passed, is expected to be vetoed by the governor." Plus, From Connecticut Public: Most efforts to address climate change died in CT legislature this year

Rhode Island & Connecticut's 704 MW Revolution Wind achieves first 'steel in the water'

Electrek. "The 704-megawatt (M) Revolution Wind, Rhode Island and Connecticut's first utility-scale offshore wind farm, just hit a major milestone..." "America's offshore wind industry is scaling up, and the first steel in the water at Revolution Wind is a tremendous milestone for Rhode Island and Connecticut's clean energy journey,"... onshore construction is underway on Revolution Wind's transmission system in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. In New London, Connecticut, the first turbine components have started to arrive at State Pier, the project's staging and marshaling port, where they will be assembled by local union labor...When it comes online in 2025, Revolution Wind will generate 400 MW of clean power for Rhode Island and 304 MW for Connecticut." Plus: Future Is Now for Offshore Wind, from CBIA.

After Eversource threat, Lamont backs PURA chair for another term

CT Mirror. "The day began with Eversource's chief executive condemning the leadership of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority under Marissa P. Gillett. It ended with Gov. Ned Lamont giving her a vote of confidence and four years of job security. Lamont's commitment Thursday came eight hours after Eversource's president and chief executive, Joseph R. Nolan, told analysts on an earnings call the company will cut spending on capital projects by \$500 million over the next five years...Rep. Jonathan Steinberg of Westport and Sen. Norm Needleman of Essex, the Democratic co-chairs of the legislature's Energy and Technology Committee, had urged him to act after the Eversource earnings call." Plus: Eversource escalates CT fight, saying it will cut investments

UI, Eversource Set New Electric Rates

CT News Junkie. "The summer energy supply rate will drop for customers of both United Illuminating and Eversource, but Eversource customers will see an overall

increase in their total bills based on costs associated with state-required programs and policies for public utilities. Pending approval by the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURA), customers of United Illuminating will see a monthly decrease in their bills of around \$1.55 while Eversource customers' energy rates will decrease from 14.71 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to 8.99 cents per kWh...'This rate adjustment comes after Eversource received a significant rate increase earlier this spring, much of the cost related to the Millstone agreement of 2018 and 2019, which was bipartisan legislation that preserved state jobs and zero-carbon energy...Pandemic-related shutoff prevention programs only represent about a quarter of those increases, and our state has done what it should to protect residents in need and mitigate the impacts of changing weather systems.' "

Opinion: No, heat pumps won't break CT's grid

CT Mirror. "The claim that "[too] many heat pumps would bring grid failure" to Connecticut is a misleading message at a time when there is an urgent need to rapidly electrify our buildings. The grid must undoubtedly expand to facilitate the decarbonization we need across buildings, transportation, and other sectors of the economy. But there are many solutions that can make grid operations more flexible and mitigate the expected demand growth. Battery storage and demand response, for example, can help reduce strain on the grid by shifting load to different times of the day to avoid peak periods and to match surplus, low-cost renewables. When paired with automated controls, distributed energy resources can provide flexible, behind-the-meter resources that meet customer demand while easing congestion and driving down costs. And grid-enhancing technologies (GETs) can better optimize the power flowing through transmission and distribution lines, avoiding the need for expensive upgrades."

Opinion; As young people, we urge CT to stop Enbridge's newest fracked gas project

CT Mirror. "In November, it was announced that the fossil fuel company, Enbridge, who owns the fracked "natural" gas pipeline running from New Jersey to Massachusetts, had released a proposal to significantly expand the pipeline. As young people whose hometowns of Coventry and Mansfield will be directly affected, we're here to say this project must not move forward. Named Project Maple, a misleading title considering the danger of the project, the expansion would allow the pipeline to carry significantly more fracked gas through our state, emitting more greenhouse gasses and accelerating climate change...FERC, CT DEEP, Governor Lamont and state legislators, young people are watching. Our communities, current and future, depend on your actions today."

Opinion: CT needs to ditch dirty oil for clean heat pumps

CT Mirror. "It's no surprise that as Connecticut puts forth a solution to liberate residents from pricey, polluting heating oil, the oil dealers have come out swinging. They're spreading fear through opinion pieces questioning if our electricity grid can withstand a transition to heat pumps. Of course they want to keep us hooked on fossil fuels — those high energy bills pad their profits...Heat pumps are the top-selling heating technology across the country for good reason: they can lower bills for most households, provide heating and cooling in one efficient unit, and drastically cut pollution...It's time for Connecticut to lead the heat pump revolution."

Opinion: Countering the influence of fossil fuel interests in clean energy transition

Hartford Business Journal. "In his recent op-ed, Mike Giaimo, the regional director for the Northeast at the American Petroleum Institute,...argues in favor of including natural gas and oil in the state's energy mix. While Giaimo makes valid points about the complexity of energy infrastructure and supply...he overlooks a crucial aspect: the influence of fossil fuel interests in obstructing the transition to clean energy. Recent revelations show how certain fossil fuel companies use deceptive tactics to undermine clean energy initiatives. In Connecticut and across New England, well-funded campaigns backed by fossil fuel giants have sought to impede the progress of clean energy projects. These efforts often involve spreading misinformation, sowing doubt and mobilizing opposition to delay or halt renewable energy developments...Therefore, Connecticut must remain vigilant against the undue influence of fossil fuel entities in shaping energy policy and project approvals."



Existing trails on the property will be open to the public if the Wyndham Land Trust can acquire the property.

Wyndham Land Trust Launches Fundraising Drive to Protect its Birthplace

Submitted by Michael St. Lawrence

In 1975, Virginia "Jimmie" Booth, the owner of Hillandale Farm and the Golden Lamb restaurant in Brooklyn, looked across the iconic stone walls and hay fields of her farm to the woods that lined the property. She was struck by the beauty of the landscape and thought to herself: "We should start a land trust."

Today, the Wyndham Land Trust has an extraordinary opportunity to protect much of the woods that inspired Booth almost 50 years ago. In April of this year The Conservation Fund, based in Arlington, VA, acquired 320 acres of woodlands on the old Hillandale Farm. The Conservation Fund has given the Land Trust until March 2025 to purchase the property from them.

In response to this challenge, the Land Trust is kicking off a 10-month fundraising drive to raise \$635,000 to acquire what it has christened "The Hillandale Woods." "The property sits at the historic core of the Wyndham Land Trust," said President Mike St Lawrence, "and we knew we wanted to protect it from development. However, we already have two big projects moving forward in 2024, and we just didn't have the financial resources to close the deal this year.

"We are grateful to The Conservation Fund for stepping in and providing us this opportunity to acquire the property. Unfortunately, we have a relatively short timeline to raise the necessary funds. This substantial property is ideally suited for high-end housing development, and The Conservation Fund's mission does not include long-term ownership and management of property.

"We're working hard to raise the money. Because State and Federal grant programs take more than one year to complete, we're applying for grants from a number of private foundations. However, we will need the financial support of the people in the Quiet Corner to reach our goal."

"It's an ecologically important piece of property to preserve," confirmed Andy Rzeznikiewicz, the land manager for the Land Trust and Connecticut Audubon. "It has extensive wetlands that feed into Bush Hill Pond, but the frontage along Bush Hill Road makes it vulnerable to development.

"It's adjacent to our Booth Preserve, a Wolf Den Land Trust preserve, and several properties that are protected by conservation easements. They all link up to connect with Natchaug State Forest and create a large forested block that supports nesting birds like Scarlet Tanagers, Pileated Woodpeckers, and Ovenbirds.

"It's been on our radar for years, and this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to protect this land in perpetuity. There are already trails on the property, and once we own the land, the trails will be open to the public." You can support Virginia Booth's vision and help protect Hillandale Woods by donating to the fundraising drive at wyndhamlandtrust.org.

The Wyndham Land Trust now protects 51 preserves covering over 6000 acres in the Quiet Corner and will be celebrating their 50th anniversary in 2025. What better way to celebrate the formation of the Land Trust than to acquire the property that inspired its founders.

To learn more about the work of the Wyndham Land Trust visit wyndhamlandtrust.org. You can also follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

Solar Today - Honoring Earth Day Every Day

Greetings all,

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



This month I'm going to cover a couple of continued solar solicitation facts and info on some new and exciting alternative technology! Enjoy...

Is solar still viable?

A resounding, YES indeed it is! It was reported in "Renewable Energy World" that the United States surpassed 5 Million Solar installations. That means that 7% of American homes have solar and is expected to grow to over 15% by 2030. That's some pretty fast growth!

Canary Media also reported that for the first time ever, Renewable Energy Production created 30% of Global electricity in 2023!

With growth, there comes challenges!

As we move into the summer months, we are seeing a HUGE increase in door knock solicitations in the area. Some are legit and some are questionable! Unfortunately, the solar industry does not have as many consumer protection solicitation laws as do most other industries. For instance, you don't see many writings about these topics as say, in the insurance industry. That's because those folks would be in jail if they enticed people to sign up using the same type of language that a portion of the solar industry uses.

First, a couple related local stories and then some important things to ask for if you are solicited at your home.

It's heart wrenching to me to keep writing about this topic. However I feel deeply compelled to be a voice for honesty, integrity and consumer protection!

Story 1:

One of the folks in my business network group told me that he had a young gentleman stop by his single story home in East Hartford earlier this week. The young man mentioned that he was in the area helping people transition to solar and was hoping that my associate would be willing to see if his home qualified. My friend responded that he was all set! He mentioned to me that the young man just must have missed the 20 solar panels on his street facing roof as he walked up the driveway??? Turns out the young canvasser and his "crew" were in from Ohio for a week and was instructed by his boss to knock every single door, even if they already had solar!

Story 2:

If you are on any of the local Facebook groups, you will see a large increase in folks asking about being door knocked, sharing pictures of people that are getting in and out of cars or canvassing neighborhoods asking about solar! This week there were 3 local posts. 2 showed the same person and another showed a small group of canvassers before they "spread out" into the neighborhood. One of the guys is a local kid but works for a company on a "travel team", *no it's not a sports team!* These folks make money for setting appointments and then make a commission if someone on the "closer team" makes the sale! One person was shown a Solar Badge! (*Solar Badges are FAKE – this tactic was used in Texas until they got caught*). One homeowner responded that "it was ok because they had a logo on their hat and shirt"!

If you are knocked >> here are a few important things to ask!

CT state law requires a Home Improvement Sales (HIS) and Contracting (HIC) license's – *If they don't have one of these, they are not authorized by the state to sell solar in CT!*

MOST CT towns require a permit to solicit door to door. Take a picture of their Driver's license, permit & HIS license.

Get their business card!

Ask, where the Corporate office headquarters and local offices are located. Google it to confirm!

Get the corporate and local office phone numbers.

Ask, how many years have they been in solar, who they worked for and what positions have they help in the company.

ALL of the above should immediately weed out the fly by nights and the legitimate people/companies!

If you do move forward and have a conversation with a solar sales person... Were they waiting around the corner to make the sale? Or, is it a person on the phone somewhere across the country? Find out where they are and get a phone number so you can call them back. ***Do not sign anything to be able to see..*** a design, system size, production "guarantee", price and always ask to see a full contract before signing it. Don't buy into "Don't worry, you can cancel at any time". All above are red flags!

Social media platforms:

Don't click on any Facebook, YouTube or any online solar, battery or roof ads. It's all click-bait! (*full topic was covered in a previous article*) As a reminder >> *There are NOT any NEW CT solar or battery programs!*

If you are curious about Facebook ads acting like they are local. Right click the posters name and then follow the link. Most are out of the are nationwide companies, in a different country or send you to a landing page! Some do claim to have a local office. Google the address and often you will see a residence and other times you will see that they are in multiple states with CT being a satellite office.

Don't get discouraged, It's not all bad, there is a bunch of good out there!

It's just a bit challenging and takes some deep investigating to make sure that you are working with a legitimate company. If you've been knocked and would like to know who's legit and who's not, contact me and I'll help you figure it out.

My passion for consumer protection has gotten the better of my article space, so next month I'll be sharing about a new and VERY exciting technology to be rolled out in the last quarter of this year. It will help folks with shade issue and those who don't like the esthetics of solar on the roof or don't have the proper roof space to accommodate a full solar array.

Here's a little teaser!

Hydroelectric power generation that hooks up to your in-bound water supply pipe. Carries a 40% fed tax credit (*if eligible*). Costs about 30% less than a similar sized solar system. It is net metered like solar! More info to come next month...

If you, or anyone you know, would like to learn more about capturing the suns energy or Hydro Electric technology to power your home, please reach out.

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

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

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

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

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Call or text Sarah Winter: 860-931-8636

Ashford Senior Center: Tue, Fri 9:30-10:30a
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Coventry Senior Center: Wed 9:30-10:30a
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Everybody Loves Penguins

By Bob Lorentson

They don't make penguins like they used to. Sixty million years ago, after the asteroid crash wiped out the dinosaurs, some penguins saw their opening and evolved into three hundred forty pound behemoths and six to seven foot giants. Life was good - dinosaur free and teeming with fish. Today they have evolved back into more modest sizes, and their populations are crashing. Today life is not so good, still dinosaur free, but now teeming with humans instead of fish. Penguins should be excused if they were to wish for another asteroid.

Most people think they know penguins, but those people probably couldn't tell a stuffed penguin from a live one. Penguins don't tweet or quack like normal birds. Instead they squawk, honk, bray, growl, chirp, laugh, coo, and gecker, which could mean anything from "Hello, bring me a fish," to "Help! The ice is melting!" Jackass penguins, so named for their resemblance to people we all know, are especially vocal during breeding season, the only time we can really understand them. Imagine a Friday night bar scene full of thousands of people braying, "Hey Baby, come here often?" and you'll get a sense of how annoying a Jackass rookery can be.

All penguins, whether they like it or not, are flightless birds with flippers instead of wings. Somehow they get by with an upright posture, webbed feet, a waddling gait, and a sensible preference to keep to the Southern hemisphere. Waddling will only get you so far. Penguins also have a tendency towards monogamy, although they're not sticklers about it. Tendencies will only get you so far too, especially in a relationship.

A penguin's physique is called fusiform, which means that it's thick in the middle and tapered at both ends. As many humans can attest, it is a physique more suited to a life on a couch than to a life on one's feet, but as a penguin's environment is totally devoid of couches, it tends to spend about seventy-five percent of its time in the water. A penguins exercise regimen therefore consists entirely of swimming vigorously away from leopard seals and orcas.

Leopard seals can swim at speeds of twenty-five miles per hour, and orcas thirty-five. Gentoo penguins are considered the fastest penguins, and can reach speeds of twenty miles per hour. Penguins may not be the fastest learners, but most of them can understand basic math. One consolation is that penguins can swim faster than any other bird, which, while a triumph of evolutionary development, still likely leaves them wishing that they could at least fly faster than any other fish.

A penguin's diet consists of krill, squid, fish, and for variety, miscellaneous bits of plastic. King and emperor penguins swim a thousand miles on month-long trips to find the best feeding areas, but it's not like it used to be. These days it's the plastic that's everywhere, and the krill, squid, and fish they seek for variety. Penguins are also able to dive to astounding depths in search of food. Amazingly, they are able to do this by shutting off the blood flow to all but their essential organs, and by changing the shape of the lenses in their eyes to adjust their vision to the low light. Also amazingly, it is not enough to avoid finding plastic.

Of the eighteen species of penguins in the world, ten are vulnerable or endangered. The rest are just worried. It doesn't help when scientists blame them by calling them the slowest evolving birds in the world, and say that they may not be able to adapt to the threats of over-fishing, a warming climate, habitat loss, invasive predators, and plastic pollution. I'd like to see how fast scientists could evolve if they were threatened like these penguins:

Despite their name, Macaroni penguins don't live in Italy, are not 18th century British dandies, and prefer krill to pasta. They breed mostly on remote sub-Antarctic islands where they gather in large colonies to complain about the weather and their egg incubation responsibilities. Most can't wait to get back in the water and be chased by leopard seals and orcas.

Macaroni penguins live up to twenty years, weigh up to fifteen pounds, and dream of flying. They hop instead of waddle. It's not flying, but it gives them hope. With their red eyes and disheveled jumble of yellow/orange feathers on their heads, Macaroni penguins don't look like they get much sleep. Would scientists if their population plummeted by 30 - 50 percent in the last thirty years?

Yellow-eyed penguins live on the southeast coast of New Zealand, at least when they're not dying in gill nets, starving to death from fish depletions, or being prey for invasive dogs, cats, weasels, pigs, and tourists. For variety they can always count on being prey for sharks, seals, and sea lions. Yellow-eyed penguins are not particularly social, and eschew colonial breeding grounds for a bit more dignity at secluded nesting sites in coastal forests. This would be fine if farms hadn't largely replaced coastal forests, or if the penguins could evolve faster to farm life. I wonder how fast scientists could evolve to farm life if their grants were taken away.

Yellow-eyed penguins live up to twenty-three years, and weigh up to twenty pounds. When they molt they lose up to eight pounds and whatever dignity they have left. Their diet consists of fish, squid, and sprat, which is either a sardine or a New Zealand word for plastic. The Maori call yellow-eyed penguins Hoiho, which means 'noise shouter.' And this was before they became the world's rarest penguin.

Emperor penguins live as far away from humans as possible. It hasn't helped. They are one of just two species that live exclusively in Antarctica, where the ice is melting faster than their hopes for the future. Though their population is currently stable, scientists have taken the unusual step of listing them for protection under the Endangered Species Act, in recognition of the climate crisis. This has given many of us hope that at least the scientists are evolving faster than previously thought.

As you celebrate Penguin Awareness Day next January 20, it's good to remember that sometimes you can be destroyed by an asteroid, and sometimes you are the asteroid.

(Bob Lorentson is a local writer and a retired environmental scientist. His latest book is *YOU ONLY GO EXTINCT ONCE (Stuck in the Anthropocene with the Pleistocene Blues Again)*).

Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

This month's topic is Air Conditioning

This month I want to discuss the air conditioning in new cars being produced. The R134A Freon that replaced R12 is being replaced by R1234yf. The cost of this new Freon and the equipment to repair systems on new vehicles will again be more expensive.

Car manufacturers had to find an alternative Freon, something other than R12. R12 Freon has helped to deplete the ozone layer of the atmosphere. The first upgrade was to move to R134A. It was possible to retrofit an R12 system to an R134A and many folks took advantage of this and upgraded. The only real problem with this is the age of the components in the R12 system. Quite frankly they were old and new pressures often overtaxed the system leading to failure. Some systems were just not worth repairing or upgrading.

The following are procedures that we feel should be taken in repairing or servicing an air conditioning system. The customer's complaint is that the air conditioner is not working. The first thing to check for would be the air conditioning compressor, is it engaging? If the answer is a No, then you check for all electrical fuses to be in working order. If the answer is yes, then the high and low service hoses are attached to the vehicle. This will tell the technician if there is pressure in the system, meaning there is still Freon present in your system. The gauges would show NO or LOW pressure in the system. We then try to identify what kind of Freon is in your system. R134A systems have larger service ports than R12 systems so they are easy to recognize. The biggest problem with R12 systems is the alternative chemicals that can be used or the worst scenario, R12 Freon that is cut with propane found to be present in the system. Remember that virgin R12 is very expensive and averages about \$40.00 per pound if you can find it, compared to R134A which averages about \$9.00 per pound. An average system runs on 2 to 3 pounds. The Freon identifier machine tells the technician what type of Freon is in the system. Alternative chemicals cannot be recycled, but they do have to be reclaimed and disposed of by a chemical company. R12 and R134A can be recycled and reused. Bootleg R12 was being sold when virgin R12 prices started to sky rocket. This R12 was cut with propane which made it highly flammable. Luckily most of this R12 was sold in Florida and Texas. Once the type of Freon present has been identified, then it becomes clear what procedure will need to be followed, recycling or reclaiming. The vacuum pump is then turned on after the Freon is removed. This procedure removes moisture from the system and can also tell if a large leak is present. The vacuum gauge should reach 30 inches of vacuum and hold after vacuuming is done. If not, a dye is injected into the system. Air conditioning dye glows under a black light. The leak is found using the dye and the black light. If the gauge holds at 30 inches of vacuum for more than 30

minutes, the correct Freon can be added to the system with tracer dye. The vehicle is then started, the air conditioning is turned on and hopefully the compressor engages. If the compressor does engage, the pressure readings are correct and most importantly cold air is coming out of the air ducts, the car is then road tested and rechecked for leaks. Remember the system was low on Freon which means a leak was present. If no tracer dye is found then a future recheck is scheduled.

The next complaint is inadequate cold air. The technician uses roughly the same procedures as before, the difference is that pressure readings are present they just do not meet specifications. Gauge readings can tell the technician if a compressor is pumping correctly, if there is an obstruction in the system or if the system is just low on Freon. Freon does leak out of a system over the years so vacuuming and recharging a system is a very common service.

The air conditioning or comfort control systems of today entail more than what has been discussed here. Computer controlled systems have added a different twist to repairing a system. Air ducts controlled by servos can fail and the list goes on. Repairs could cost more than the vehicle's value. One thing we can be sure of is that future systems will be more complex as each vehicle manufacturer tries to improve upon their product. Lord, help us all.

I will end this article up with a few facts for you on the new R1234yf refrigerant which will be replacing R134A. This new refrigerant is slowly being phased in. The phase in process began with some 2014 model year vehicles. The new refrigerant is patented and manufactured in a joint venture between Honeywell and DuPont. There are others who are also licensed to produce R1234yf. R1234yf has cooling properties that are like R134A which has been used since it was introduced back in 1994-1995 to replace R12. R134A contains no CFC's which are harmful to the ozone layer of the atmosphere, but it does retain heat well and has a high GWP (Global Warming Potential) rating of 1300. R1234yf has a GWP rating of 4 which is 350 times less than R134A. R134A is to be phased out of domestic car production by 2021. R134A will still be available to service older vehicles. Vehicles that use the new R1234yf refrigerant will require a slightly larger or more efficient condenser and a more robust leak resistant evaporator. R1234yf also requires a new type of compressor PAG oil and new certified recovery and recycling equipment designed especially for the new refrigerant. R1234yf is very expensive. It currently is selling for as much as \$120 a pound. It is also very unlikely that R134A systems will be able to be converted to R1234yf as the materials and lubrication issues make them not compatible.

I hope this month's article has given you a little information on air conditioning. Remember to make sure that you understand the repairs that are being performed on your vehicle and if they will be the answer to your problem.

To all our contributors-
Thank you!

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

Mill Museum To Recall Women's Role in American Revolutionary War Era Through Live Textile Demonstrations, Exhibits

Submitted by Ed Silverstein

As Americans prepare to mark the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in 2026, Willimantic's Mill Museum will begin the commemoration earlier in a major exhibit starting in June related to the homekeeping skills practiced by women in colonial America.

Opening on Saturday June 29, the museum, formally known as the Windham Textile and History Museum, will present the ground-breaking exhibit: *Liberty's Daughters in Northeastern Connecticut: Women, Textiles, and the Nonimportation Movement in the Revolutionary Era*.

Over the ensuing months, the museum will present multiple live demonstrations of preindustrial textile technology and other women's homekeeping skills, as well as sponsor related programs in the museum's main exhibition room.

The presentations and exhibits will bring to life the critical role played by women in the birth of the United States. It will explore how women as makers of textiles, often out of cotton, wool, or flax, contributed vitally to the success of American boycotts against English manufactured goods in the years leading up to the Revolutionary War.

Although not all colonial women could spin or weave, by the time of the American Revolution about 75% of colonial households owned spinning wheels and around 10% owned looms. Enslaved women also produced textile products.

The exhibit will also examine the extent to which women's role in the boycotts empowered them both politically and economically and set the stage for the transformation of the American economy in the years following the Revolution.

"When in the 1760s and 1770s, American colonists decided to protest laws and taxes enacted in [Britain's] Parliament -- indeed, to protest the entire notion of Parliamentary supremacy -- they put teeth in their protests by boycotting British manufactured goods," says Jamie Eves, the Mill Museum's interim executive director and Windham town historian, who is the co-curator of the upcoming exhibit. The boycotts were called the "Nonimportation Movement." Many of the items boycotted by the colonists were textiles. "The male leaders of this Nonimportation Movement quickly realized that, in order for it to succeed, it needed the energetic support of American women, for it was women who knew how to spin thread and yarn, and weave it into cloth," he explained. "Without women's labor and enthusiastic support, the boycotts would have failed."

The exhibit will focus on the contributions of patriot women -- called the Daughters of Liberty at the time -- to the success of the Nonimportation Movement, Eves explained.

"It also explores how women's vital role in the movement may have -- or may not have -- transformed women's political and economic roles in the new republic following the American Revolution, interweaving conclusions reached by mainstream historians with local examples." Peggy Church, co-curator of the exhibit and an experienced weaver and spinner, agrees about the importance of these home-based skills in the 1700s.

"With their skills in spinning and weaving, they provided homespun textiles in support of non-importation of British goods," Church said.

"Women could earn money independent of their husbands, perhaps [indicating] the beginning of suffrage," she

added. "They held spinning bees on village greens to publicly demonstrate in support of nonimportation."

Eves points out that many colonial women took part in these 18th century spinning bees. It was a public act of defiance to the British.

"The importance of the bees was that women had to make a public choice to support the boycotts or not," Eves said. "Not joining the bees risked having the entire household branded as Tories. Joining the bees cemented one's commitment to the cause."

Many historians also say that the political American Revolution was followed by two economic revolutions: the Market Revolution and the Industrial Revolution during the years of the new republic, Eves added. "Women participated in both, in major ways," he recalled.

In recent decades, historians also have debated whether the boycott of British goods in the years before the American Revolution actually led to political empowerment of women.

The question was addressed in a 1980 book called "Liberty's Daughters." Its author is Mary Beth Norton, a former history professor at the University of Connecticut and past president of the American Historical Association. For decades, she taught American history at Cornell University.

In her studies, she has argued that women were empowered by their role in the boycotts and that the American Revolution was a first step in an emerging women's rights movement, according to Eves, who himself is a veteran UConn history professor.

"Since then, other historians have challenged Norton, maintaining that she exaggerated women's political gains and arguing that the Revolution was less liberating than she believed," Eves said. The debate will be addressed during the museum's exhibit.

In coming days, the Mill Museum will list on its website <<https://millmuseum.org/>> a schedule of upcoming events connected to the Liberty's Daughters exhibit.

These include: Spinners are expected to demonstrate the techniques used to spin wool, flax, and cotton. Cotton will be spun on a great wheel and on a charkha. Other information will be presented on silk. Bobbin Lace making and rug hooking demonstrations are scheduled, too.

Among those scheduled to take part are Peggy Church, as well as Mansfield Historical Society Director Ann Galonska.

On Saturday August 17, the Mill Museum will partner with colleagues at Windham Preservation, Inc., to reenact a Revolutionary War-era spinning bee on the Windham Green. The similar bees done in the 1700s were contests to see who could spin the longest thread, usually of flax, Church explained.

In coming months, group and individual tours of the exhibits and attendance at demonstrations are strongly encouraged. The museum's exhibit is scheduled to run through Sunday Oct. 20.

It's being partially funded via a grant from Connecticut Humanities.

Located in the historic former headquarters of the American Thread Company, the Mill Museum houses a museum, historical society, library, and archive. Through its exhibits, programs, activities, lectures, and collections, the museum preserves and interprets the history of textiles, the textile industry, and textile communities in Connecticut.

The Warrior

By Chamele

She crouched lower in her warrior stance. Right knee bent. Left leg out behind her. Weight evenly dispersed between her two feet. Her sword, an extension of herself before her. Ready. All her senses waiting. Sound, sight, touch, the 6th sense of an oncoming challenge. Taking a deeper breath she saw the gleam of the setting sun on her sword, felt a slight tremor in her hand, saw blood ooze down the blade and block the bright reflection.

Softening her stance she held the image of her master in her mind.

"You will be a great warrior," He had told her. He smiled. Tilting his head he studied her.

"Tell me," she asked. Always, she had known of his ability to see into the future. It had made him a remarkable warrior, one she knew she was fortunate to study under.

"The end," he paused. "The end, will come through the eyes of others."

She thought on this, not knowing its meaning until this moment as the sun was setting. She reached up to move her hair from her eyes. Wetness. She looked at her hand, blood and tears.

A breath. She lowered herself and turned ready, sword extended before her. There in the glade by a tree a warrior. She knew he was capable from his stance. Young, he was very young. She studied him. Her heart wasn't in this.

"Perhaps we could leave this battle to another day," she said.

He laughed. "This is the time. This is the day you die," and he took a step toward her in the warrior stance.

Lowering herself, her attention sharp, her senses alert, a drop of blood fell from the tip of her sword. "Have you blooded your sword yet?" she asked already knowing the answer. His skills were sharp but too studied, not organic, like those of a seasoned warrior.

He smiled "Today is the day."

She knew with so many dead, the young were sent to continue on for their cause. He stood before her, a long life to be cut short, by her blade.

Again in aggression, he took another step toward her. "And what is the name of the one that I shall lay low before me?" he said with a cocky smile.

She looked deeply into his eyes, and saw his mother and lover weep. "I am called Esmalthis."

His eyes grew large his body shook ever so slightly, and shifted his weight back away from her.

Aware of the motion and energy shift, she unconsciously shifted towards him. She held his eyes, knowing that they told all about a warrior. His weaknesses, his strengths, his next move. She heard her masters words again, "The end will come through the eyes of others." Playing with the meaning, a sword might come in the thought behind those eyes, but she knew that would not be the case. She had seen the fear in her enemy's eyes. She had seen the fear in people she happened to meet that were not warriors. The fear her name invoked. The bodies left to be buried. Lives

cut short by her sword. Her legacy. She sighed.

He shifted his weight towards her sensing an advantage.

It had begun. The dance toward death.

She began to move through the warrior stance to pivot around the young man. With grace and deadly intent, like a jaguar on a prowl. He followed her movements turning his body with his sword before him. She stopped.

"Why?" she asked.

"What?" he was startled.

"It's a simple question. Why?"

"Why. What?"

"Why are you facing me? Now.

Why?"

He thought for a moment, still on guard thinking this a ploy to unnerve him, to distract him. "Perhaps this is my destiny. Our destiny. Mine to defeat the enemy and yours to die by my blade."

"Perhaps, but I doubt it. I will add your blood to that which still drips from my blade and then walk on into the night. There will be no tomorrow for you.....Unless...."

He started to get anxious. Eager to fight and worried to die at the sword of this famed woman. "Unless what?" he spat out.

She looked in his eyes, knowing his thoughts. "I was like you, eager for battle. I have my scars, losses, too many to remember. I am not invincible. I will die one day. We all accept that as warriors. But somewhere we have gotten tainted. The glory of the cause has marked us. My cause, your cause, is there really a difference?"

He lowered his stance. "What are you talking about? The great Esmalthis, talking nonsense. My cause is different from yours. We are enemies. Let's get on with this."

She stopped circling. "We are each right in our differences. But what does that get us? You are my warrior brother. We are one. We are the same. Who leads us to these separations? Who calls these sides that we defend. In time all will blend together and no one will remember this night. Can we not step aside from our causes and love our common bond?"

"I am ready to die for what I believe and if I die at the hands of a great warrior like yourself, it will be an honorable death."

"Yes," she sighed. "Destiny brought you and I here together at this moment. Our swords ready for blood. But, my heart seeks a different path. I want my warrior brother to live a long life, with love and laughter. This will end for you tonight or a new path could begin."

"You're so sure I will lose?" he circled her with sword out in front of him.

"Yes."

He stopped. Looked into her eyes a question on his lips. Unspoken. "Then this is my fate." He lunged at her. She turned and brought her blade down.

It was over.

She turned away wiping the blood from her blade. Sheathing it, she walked out into the darkness.

To all our contributors-
Thank You!

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

Regional Community Media & Arts News

By John Murphy

Hey, it's June! I hope Life in the Quiet Corner is treating you well.

The summer solstice is almost here and that brings my favorite time of year! I see more bees than last year and hope you do too.

I am excited about my column for this month because I can finally share news about the transformation of my media production from primarily local content to regional coverage for all three counties in eastern Connecticut. You may notice the changes to the media matrix model above that reflect this successful step in building a new foundation for community media service for increased public connection, citizen engagement, and activism.

About ½ million people live in our region and they need more news coverage than ever before, but traditional media coverage has been shrinking. The layers of complexity of the growing challenges before us require a larger perspective and frame of reference that still includes local issues and needs but also includes consideration of the transcendent realities of shared living, cost sharing, and governance in the discussions and solution-finding.

ON THE HOMEFRONT IS SHEDDING ITS SKIN AND EXPANDING ITS IDENTITY COVERAGE WILL MERGE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ISSUES AND NEEDS

I am happy to report that last month the construction of the new media matrix model for serving all eastern Connecticut was completed. The *On the Homefront* series is now operating as an integrated media hub for community service on all local platforms on a 24/7 basis—radio, YouTube, podcasts, public access TV, Neighbors (print), streaming and mobile. We are well beyond the development and proof-of-concept stages into full operations mode and there is exciting potential for growth. There are many ways that our stories are distributed and shared:

- I was pleased to rejoin the media family on Channel 192 at Spectrum Public Access TV. On the Homefront is featured Tuesdays at 5:30 pm and Fridays at 8:00 pm. Check out the other unique shows!
- Hall Broadcasting of Connecticut offered great support and added the program to WICH Radio 94.5 FM and 1310 AM on Thursdays from 5:00-6:00 pm. Based in Norwich their signal also covers New London, rounding out our three-county coverage map.
- WILI YouTube Channel for all Monday-Friday local talk shows—available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@wiliradio7000>. Each program has its own playlist with all the shows. Search on “WILI Radio” and subscribe!
- 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/>
- Archive of my media/arts columns in Neighbors at: www.neighborspaper.com and: <http://neighborspaper.com/category/back-issues/our-writers/john-murphy/>
- Flagship originating broadcasts will continue from our home studio in Willimantic at WILI AM 1400 and 95.3 FM on Wednesdays from 5:00-6:00 pm.

During the past two years I have provided many stories about how life is changing before our eyes faster than ever before. In addition to ongoing coverage of the arts community in all its forms, I continue to cover:

- the housing crisis and shortage of affordable housing—landlord and town-based obstacles
- the growth of tenant unions across the state
- the debate over local economic development projects versus preservation efforts
- citizen reactions to the major changes and shifts happening with the ownership, control, and service delivery by healthcare delivery businesses

TOWN VERSUS COUNTY GOVERNMENT/WHERE LOCAL MEETS LOCO

A new area I will explore during this election year is the possibility to change the form of our state governance from



town-based to county-based. During its history Connecticut has operated under both models. When I first came here from New York in 1978, which is county-based, to manage WHUS Radio at UConn/Storrs, I could not believe a small state like this could have 169 municipalities. A few small and medium cities and tons of tiny towns, an unbelievable map to comprehend! I thought it was ridiculous then and still do now.

Local government as a model has its advantages, true, at least for the locals, but in many places the practice has devolved into another arena for endless conflict and delay over issues and challenges that need resolution but transcend any single town or individual interest. The continuously changing mix of developers and projects (large and small), local landowners, various town government committees, citizen groups, businesses, and residents require an open and more objective mechanism for increased public discussion and information sharing during all steps—proposal, review and assessment, debate, decision, and implementation.

Towns working together under a larger county umbrella could be better for our future in many operational aspects that are better matched to our current conditions. Think of the fortune we spend collectively across the state for multiple municipal redundancies that consume huge amounts of taxpayer resources. Some people want to drop the car tax—not sure if I agree, but how much local town government money could be saved in a way that might allow for the car tax to be dropped or reduced?

The regional Councils of Government (COGS) help with some level of communication and coordination among elected officials and professional managers regarding policy or resources or projects, but they still function on the model with 169 different localities. A county system could connect member towns to create open and continuing and more efficient links for sharing ideas, money, resources, and responsibility for implementation. There is much to learn about this, and I will bring people to the studio who will help us understand this history and why people in our state have tried it both ways.

A NEW SERIES IN DEVELOPMENT THE GREAT AMERICAN METAPHYSICAL CIRCUS: FROM THE SHADOWS TO THE LIGHT

THE ENEMY IS US AND WE NEED TO TALK! ELECTIONS ARE COMING!

We are all Americans, dammit, even the neighbor you despise across the street, or someone waving a flag that makes your blood boil. The negative zeitgeist is in the air a lot these days, it smells different out there than even five years ago, before Covid, and the smell from your video screen as you watch the news now is even worse.

In 2022, the Southern Poverty Law Center (splcenter.org) identified 11 hate and anti-government groups in our state. I include the descriptive labels used by SPLC but there is controversy even over the terms. I am reaching out to other groups and networks with other interests and goals, to add variety and depth to the series. If you have any information to share, please use my email below and thanks for any contributions.

- Act for America—anti-Muslim, statewide
- Connecticut Parents Involved in Education—anti-government, statewide
- Moms for Liberty/Fairfield County Chapter—anti-government
- National Constitutional Coalition of Patriotic American—anti-government, statewide
- Nationalist Social Club (NSC-131)—neo-Nazi, statewide
- Norwich Chapter of Antigovernment Movement
- Patriot Front—white nationalist, statewide
- Proud Boys—general hate, statewide
- The American State Assembly—anti-government, Hamden
- The Post and Email—anti-government, Canterbury
- We Are Change—anti-government, Waterbury



May 15 2024 with Retiring ECSU President Elsa Nunez

Over the past two years I have occasionally posted on their websites, inviting them for free and open conversations on the radio. We all need a safe media space! So far, no replies, but I will continue to reach out.

Are YOU a member of one of these groups? Do you know someone who is? Please consider contacting me to come to the studio and co-create a unique communication opportunity to explore differences and find a way to move beyond arguments. Arguing is easy and lazy, when you do not listen or take the time to think. It is also convenient and inexpensive for media to provide endless studio arguments with people talking mainly to the converted and making sure in some way that their team wins. Media choose teams as well these days, and as the owners change so can the agendas. I hope our local conversations can be better!

Real conversation about major differences does not pander to sensationalism or disrespect, it lives in a quiet place where the red lights and yellow tape go away, and people can talk shit and not get violent. I used to laugh from my flagpole at news footage of riots inside the capitols and congresses of other countries, where fists are thrown along with lots of furniture. Mack Sennett Keystone Cops in the aisles! Really bad behavior that is not funny for those citizens.

And now we have almost the same level of stupid behavior in our Congress—yelling too often, using agenda process to block or control debate and voting until the result is rigged for the party in charge at the moment, and most recently...drum roll please, the ridiculous name-calling catfight that truly insulted serious women who are trying to raise the bar above the damn cliches in political discourse. My media conversations would be about finding the fulcrum and balance of perspectives to create a safe space where, at least for a short time, there are no enemies, and no one needs to win or lose.

The media beast is so out-of-control these days, blurring the firewalls between news (facts) and opinion, and spending more airtime than ever on paid talking heads in studios sharing well-informed opinions. Or the good folks in the news media are trying to repair the damage done by people who are intentionally blurring the firewalls and generating the worst most dishonest political fakery. I understand why people are having a tough time deciding on where to place their trust. We need more real news please, more facts that we can agree on please, more opportunities to learn and less distortion and manipulation from all sides.

A final reminder for the Summer Solstice! Be sure to search on *Make Music Day Connecticut* to learn about all the special events across our region all day on June 21. And wherever you are be sure to make some joyous noise yourself and with some friends. Any nearby object will do...my washboard is in the key of C.

As always, thanks for reading *Neighbors* and for listening to or watching *On the Homefront*. I appreciate your interest and support for local media wherever you find it—and I hope you will stay connected with this project and join me in the studio when you have news to share!

Always keep the faith,

John Murphy
john@humanartsmedia.com

The Politics of Business, the Business of Politics

By Jesse Clark

We are all familiar with the various organizations that have board members and the roles these members have: specifically, president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. This is like a smaller version of our national government. Then there are the other members of the board that help keep the organization going. Those in this position may be referred to as “emeriti.” This tends to keep things democratic. I wrote a skit in high school about a situation that may come up during one of these meetings that now connects directly to our national politics. What would happen if the members decided to change things a bit? Let’s take a look at a fictional meeting to find out.

One evening, the board of directors of the Happy Motorbike Company was having a meeting when one member raised his hand. “I’ve been seeing how we have been operating for a while now, and I think it’s time for a change.”

“What do you mean?” asked James A. Petticoat, the president.

“Well, since the beginning, we have been a democracy, but a few of us have been talking and we would much rather have a dictatorship.”

“What? What are you talking about?”

“Well, it just seems like we have been doing the same thing for a long time and we need a change, a fresh voice. We don’t want a democracy; we want a dictatorship.”

The president was just flummoxed. How could these people *want* a dictatorship? Surely they can’t actually *mean* that.

“So, if I hear you correctly, you want a dictatorship.”

“Yes, we all talked it over. It makes sense. Every time we want to do something, we have to vote to do it. Then we have to vote to see *how* we want to do it. It takes *forever* to get anything done. If we had a dictator instead, they could just tell us what to do and how to do it.”

“The dictator of the Happy Motorbike Company? Doesn’t that sound strange?”

“Well...we like it,” the member said as others murmured in agreement.

Then the president had an idea.

“Okay,” he said. “But to make it official, it needs to be put to a vote. And there needs to be two votes, one to ratify our constitution to make the company a dictatorship and one to see who the dictator is. We probably should do the second one first.”

In the end, both votes were almost unanimous. All but the president voted that there should be a dictatorship and that he should be dictator.

“I don’t *want* to be the dictator,” he protested.

“Well, you have to be, we all voted for you!” one shouted.

“In that case,” the newly elected dictator declared, “I say that we shall always be a democracy and will never be a dictatorship ever. Now that *that* is out of the way, can we *please* move on?”

You may think that that was the end of it, that democracy was saved from becoming a dictatorship, but at that moment, one member piped up with a suggestion. “Hey, how about we work to see if we can actually do something for the good of humanity, helping others?”

“No! Then we won’t be able to make money!” the president shouted.

“Who made *you* dictator?”

“You did! All of you did!”

“Oh, yeah. Maybe that wasn’t the best move. Well, at any rate, you *did* make this a democracy again,” the member protested.

“Fine. Wow. I am actually starting to see the benefits of being a dictator. You *do* seem to get more things done. Nah...this organization should always be a democracy. It is for the best. Okay, let’s take a vote. Raise your hand if you want to put people over profits.”

The only hand that went up was the member who suggested it.

“Okay, now, can we *please* continue with business as usual? *Please*?”

And that’s just what they did. So there was no longer a dictatorship, but things never really got better, at least while that board of directors, that mini-government, still continued with business as usual.

We can’t have a dictatorship, but we also can’t just have business as usual. We have got to get something new, something that actually moves us forward. That does take time, that does take work, but it’s up to us to change it. Like the *workers* of the Happy Motorbike Company, and the *customers*, not just the board of directors.

Sunday Brunch

By Jolene Munch Cardoza

Sunny day, and I am watching from my window the lazy and unrushed mid-morning brunch club scene.

They are not the jet set, the cosmopolitan Bloody Mary or mimosa drinking types. They do not know I am here.

There are no Champagne and orange juice-filled glasses, maybe a few Eggs Benedict orders among pancakes and coffee.

I am still half-asleep as I gaze out upon a parking lot that is a resting ground for family cars, the kind with garbage bags full of chewed bubbled gum globs and straw wrappers.

That’s when I take notice: A young couple has pulled in, sun blazing on the windshield, passenger door ajar, one foot gingerly pressing the pavement.

Her hair is still wet from the shower she took, in a hurry after a clumsy date night that lasted into morning.

“I’ll only be a minute,” she called out, this sudden ghost in my imagination, as she closed the bathroom door and frantically searched his cabinet for a razor.

In the bedroom he scrolled through his phone, looking for April’s number, sending a text message to confirm they’re still on for tonight.

As he stands up, this barely legal Cyrano who is at least a good foot taller than his Sunday morning sidekick, he continues the casual conversation, casually.

He is, in fact, so casual and cool that I immediately recognize that not only is he not at all interested in the squirming, squealing, dancing and

wiggling in place girl he has unwittingly escorted into Relationship Territory, but that she also casually has no idea, no idea at all

that this nascent Romeo, who drives an Acura, who didn’t even pull in all the way, who is so hesitant that he can’t even commit to a parking space,

will break her eager little heart. Secretly, I know they won’t be able to grab a table now, the hour is too late and she took too long in the shower.

And if they stay together for weeks, months, possibly even a year or longer, together, waking up on weekends quietly resenting each other, but not being alone,

he will never allow her to forget the one time he was starving and she took too long shampooing her hair underneath the spray of cold water.

I can tell this because she is looking up at him for answers, her body curved in toward his and he can’t bother to appear interested.

(She will be “too clingy,” and he will end things via text, trying hard to act as though he cared, hiding the phone from his next date.)

They reach the door and he heads in first, reaching back with his arm so that the door doesn’t close in on her. I want to tell her this is a waste of time.

And as they walk in, I wait. I wait for what I know will happen but I am too far away to tell them, you will not be eating here.

You will never really eat together, or even be together, despite what lies he feeds you, despite what the horoscope says.

I want to call out after her, remind her that leaving the house with a wet head is a bad idea, and so is this guy you let in your body and mind.

Two minutes later they walk out, defeated, she skips over to the car, where they will climb in. He doesn’t hold the door open for her. He is trying to hide his agitation.

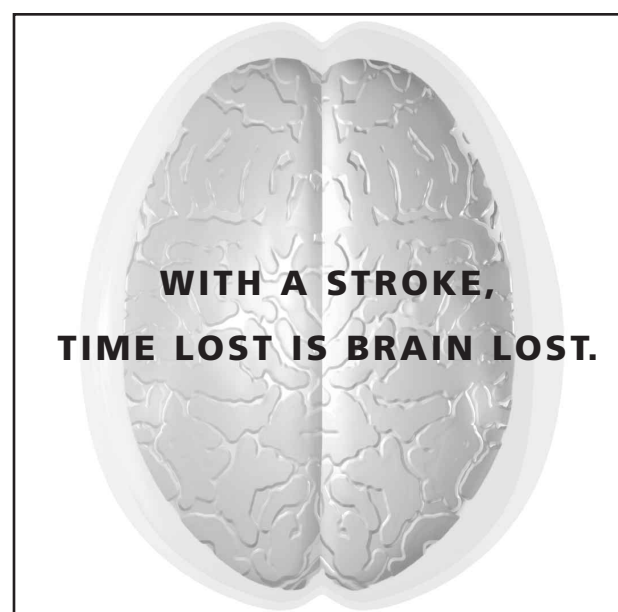
He doesn’t wait for the seatbelt before he simultaneously starts the car and puts it into gear, backing out of this earlier destination, wondering why he ever agreed to it in the first place.

They are off and on their way, and as I watch the Maine tags roll away I wonder where they will stop next, which sad booth will house them for the next hour.

What will he say as she plays with her food, twirling her fork in between the eggs and toast while stealing glimpses of him from beneath her now-bare lashes.

“I’m not hungry,” she’ll claim, and he’ll heroically take the check to the register, drive her home, talking about nothing, cranking up the radio for relief.

The windows will be down when he finally drops her off, and he will grant her a chaste kiss with no promise of seeing her again.



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Triangulation:

Inland Connecticut's Ties to the West Indies and Slave Trade

By Donna Dufresne

New Englanders have a long history of denial when it comes to slavery. We like to think of our region as the birthplace of the antislavery movement and its inhabitants as the “good guys” in the Civil War. Collective amnesia has led Northerners to believe that slavery and racism was only a Southern problem. Yet not too far away from the rolling hills of the Last Green Valley was the center of an eighteenth-century boom economy, the foundation of generational wealth derived from our complicit engagement in the slave trade. And, whether we want to admit it or not, the West Indies merchants drew their support from northeast Connecticut in the triangulation of sugar, rum, and slavery.

When I taught fifth grade social studies, I diligently showed the colorful map of the “Triangle Trade” to my students. It was the same map shown in my own high school textbook in 1970. The caption explained that sugar was produced in the Caribbean islands and exchanged for natural resources (timber and fish) from New England, where it was processed into rum. Sugar, rum, and other natural resources were brought to England in exchange for textiles, which were brought to West Africa with more rum and exchanged for captives who were brought to the Caribbean as enslaved labor. This system was packaged as a sanitized abstraction that seemed too long ago to matter and certainly not relevant to those of us who lived miles from the coastal hub of the merchant class. We didn't question where the merchants got the natural resources. We assumed the captives were sold elsewhere, far to the south. Northeast Connecticut's ties to the West Indies trade were overlooked in the same way that people of African descent had been whitewashed out of local history. An inconvenient truth carefully occluded by denial, myth, and omission.

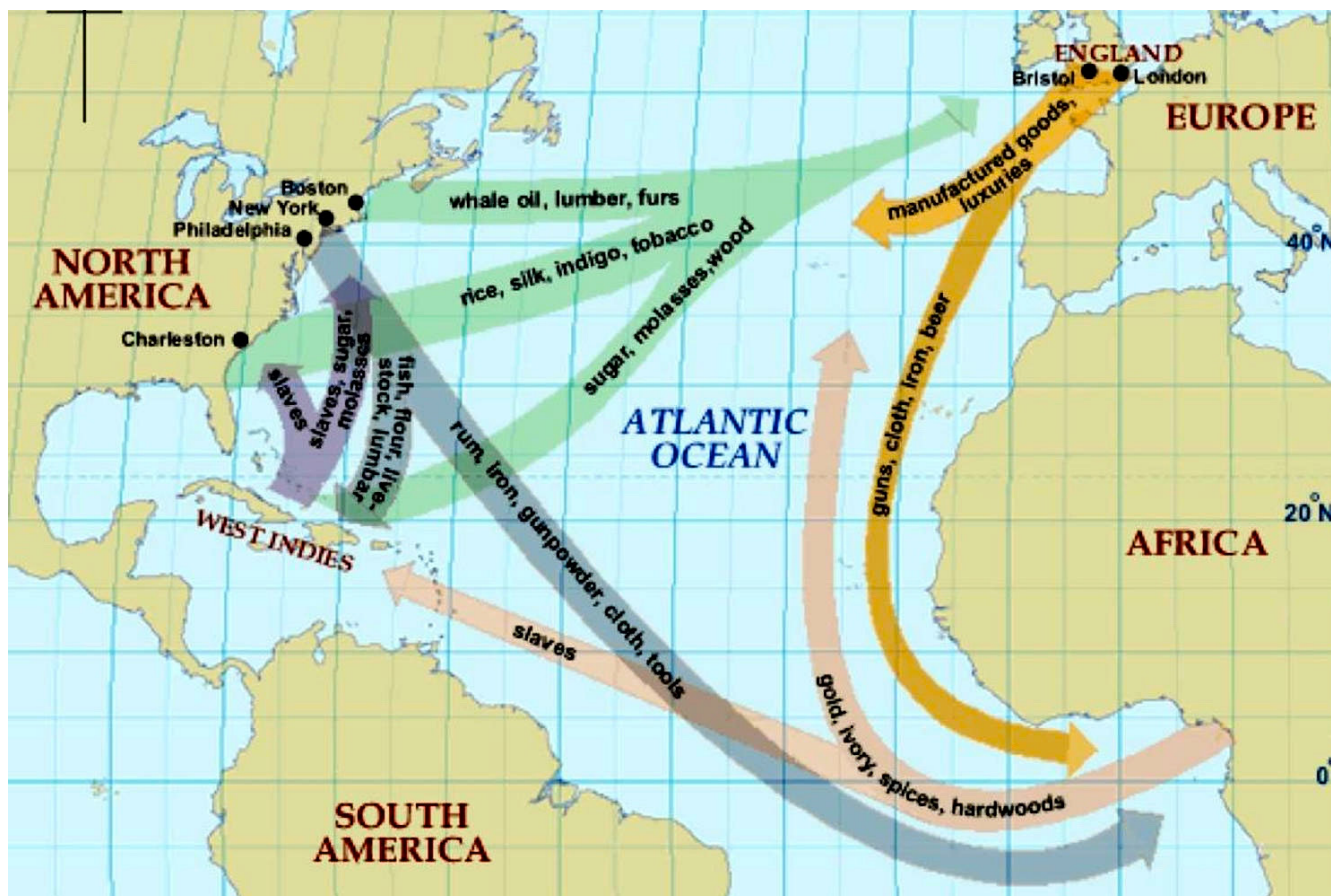
A dive beneath the surface of colonial history reveals traces of the lives of enslaved people in legal documents. Primary sources are the proof of existence which cannot be whitewashed by the culture wars and those who would outlaw the teaching of Black history. Still, the paper trail of enslaved people is scant compared to that of their white counterparts, whose letters, diaries, and material culture are well preserved. It is challenging to complete the story of enslaved Africans without an understanding of their trans-Atlantic world and the merchants who brought them here.

Such is the case of an enslaved man named Pero (or Piero) whom I'm researching for a Witness Stones Project. Pero was brought to Pomfret sometime after 1740 when Godfrey Malbone, the wealthiest merchant in Newport, bought 3,195 acres of land. According to family lore, the enslaved Malbones were brought to Pomfret because they helped fend off pirates during the voyage from Africa to the West Indies, where they would have been sold to work the sugar plantations. Their heroic actions saved the captain, crew, and the ship. Although they were not freed, Malbone compromised by keeping them for his own use rather than selling them in the West Indies. Life expectancy on the sugar plantations was five years from captivity, due to overwork and malnutrition. It was cheaper to buy new slaves from Africa than to feed them properly and treat medical conditions. Pero and the others were the financial collateral of a disaster at sea and became a financial asset for Malbone as he expanded his business ventures.

I like to imagine that Pero had something to do with those negotiations. The “son of an African King,” Pero may have shown leadership during the pirate attack and gained the trust of the captain. Perhaps he tried to negotiate the return of the captives to Africa. But Malbone had other ideas. He needed labor to support his estate in



Pomfret, one of several large feeder farms that produced the exports his ships brought to Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica, and Surinam. On the 1764 land deed where Malbone quitclaimed the Pomfret estate to his sons, it appears the farm was producing livestock and timber for trade. Unlike the coastal farms, which had been deforested, Pomfret had hundreds of acres of timber for barrel staves, hoops, shingles, joists, and boards. There were also 80 cows producing cheese, 45 oxen working the fields and hauling lumber, 30 steers for salted beef, 600 sheep, 180 goats, 140 hogs, and poultry which could be shipped live. Included in the chattel were the names of “27 negroes.” Pero and his son, “Little Pero,” were among them.



The natural resources and produce harvested by slave labor in Pomfret match the cargo lists in Malbone's shipping accounts. By 1745, Malbone was the wealthiest merchant in Newport, Rhode Island. He earned his wealth first by making prolific coastal runs to the Caribbean on a fleet of sloops, brigs, and schooners beginning in the 1720s. By the mid to late 1730s, Malbone's ventures expanded from coastal runs to trans-Atlantic voyages including London, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and, later, Gibraltar and Cadiz. During the 1740 war between France and Spain, he outfitted several brigantines with cannon and dabbled in privateering. His wealth is evidenced by a 1741 will (never executed) in which each of his five children and his wife were bequeathed up to 10,000 pounds and one of the properties he had amassed. These included the Newport mansion and farm, a rum distillery and wharf, and farms on Prudence Island, Jamestown, and Wickford in Rhode Island; Rochester, Massachusetts; and New London, Norwich, and Pomfret in Connecticut. The will also included “negro servants” given to his wife and each of his children.

Malbone's farms produced the items in demand in the West Indies. By examining the items shipped out of Newport in exchange for sugar and molasses, one can track the growth of Malbone's business, as well as the economic growth and expansion of the sugar industry. For example, in January of 1728, the sloop *Katherine* (named after Malbone's wife), left Newport for Antigua carrying 2,000 white oak staves, 8,000 red oak staves, 8,535 boards, 13,550 shingles, 1,400 ash hoops, 1 barrel of oil, 82 geese, 10 live hogs, and 15 horses.

I was surprised by the live animals, especially the horses. The Narragansett Pacer was in high demand on the sugar plantations. These gaited horses (now extinct) were hardy and able to withstand the tropical climates. Known as “slave horses,” they were bred on farms along Narragansett Bay, tended by enslaved men, and shipped to the West Indies. Throughout the 1730s, Malbone was shipping up to 30 horses, along with the water, grain, and hay to sustain them, on the journey. Like the enslaved people chained below deck during the Middle Passage, Narragansett Pacers became collateral damage during storms and wrecks at sea. In one case, the captain of one of Malbone's ships threw a pair of fancy coach horses overboard during a gale. Countless horses were lost at sea between Newport and the West Indies.

With the dozens of sloops, brigs, and schooners

owned by Malbone and his partners, he was able to make hundreds of voyages per year. The coastal runs picked up sugar and molasses, which was brought to the distillery in Newport. Sometimes they added bags of cotton and occasionally a handful of enslaved people, who were sold either in North Carolina on the trip home or in Boston and Connecticut. In June of 1729, the sloop *Mary* brought sugar, salt, rum, guns, and eight enslaved people to Connecticut, possibly Norwich, where Malbone's nephew Evan lived.

In the 1730s, Malbone ventured into trans-Atlantic voyages, bringing rum, sugar, and other local products to London and Europe in exchange for fabric, buttons, Dutch tiles, and other fashionable sundries that would find their way into general stores throughout southern New England. In 1735, he sent his first shipment to Gibraltar and Cadiz, bringing rum, sugar, tar, flour, and New England furniture as well as 125 kegs of oysters. Not long after, he and his partners began to “experiment” with voyages to West Africa, adding slaves to their vibrant trade.

Malbone blamed his failed experiments in the trans-Atlantic slave trade for his economic demise. By 1764 he was broke, due to several shipping disasters and loss of cargo. He had so many debts that he began to mortgage his properties in Pomfret to William Paxton of Boston. His mansion in Newport had burned down in 1744, and Malbone moved to one of his manor houses in Pomfret. By the time of his

death in 1768 he was penniless, and his sons were left to try to recoup the losses. Godfrey Jr. moved to Pomfret and began selling land to pay debts. Although the brothers continued to run the merchant business, they would never gain the immense wealth of their father. Tariffs and taxes made trade with the West Indies increasingly difficult. During the Revolutionary War, the mortgaged land was confiscated by the State of Connecticut, because Paxton was a despised loyalist.

Despite the loss of wealth, most of the original 27 enslaved people, including Pero, remained in Pomfret with Godfrey Jr. In 1916, Earnest Bradford Ellsworth, a Malbone descendant, wrote that Pero was elected as the “king of Malbone's slaves” at a yearly jubilee. Black mayors and governors were common in Connecticut and Rhode Island in the eighteenth century, mostly in large towns and cities where the slave population was higher. But such elections were unusual in a remote community like Pomfret. The yearly elections were celebrated with much fanfare while the slaves chose a leader who would be their spokesperson and negotiate for what little agency they could achieve.

Pero remained in Pomfret, which later became Brooklyn. In 1779, he was one of a handful of enslaved people kept by Godfrey Jr. while the others were sold and dispersed to pay debts. He was baptized in 1788 by Rev. Daniel Fogg of Trinity Episcopal Church (a church Godfrey Jr. built) and was buried in 1789 in the Old Trinity burial ground, not far from Godfrey Jr. The descendants of Pero and the other enslaved Malbones continued to live in Pomfret and Brooklyn in the nineteenth century. They married into other local Black families, including the Lewises, Jacksons, and Ingallses. Somewhere in Windham County there may be a descendant whose ancestor was the son of an African king. His name was Pero.

The Neighbors Paper
Locally Written
Locally Wread

Pioneering Neuroinclusive Wholistic Healthcare

By Michelle Baughman

Adults with ADHD have a life expectancy that is 12 to 20 years shorter compared to neurotypical peers of a similar age and health profile. Studies show the leading causes of death for ADHD individuals are accidents and suicide. Autistic people also have significantly lower life expectancies than the rest of the population. In 2022, average global life expectancy was approximated to be 72 years. For autistic people, though, average life expectancy ranged from 36 to 54 years, with the leading causes of death being premature cardiovascular disease and suicide. There are currently no life expectancy statistics on other forms of neurodivergence because these conditions do not yet have a critical mass of self-advocates to garner attention to their causes.



Neurodivergent (ND) people have:

- high rates of untreated physical and mental health problems
- poor access to healthcare and community support services
- dissatisfaction with their healthcare, school, and social experiences
- lower quality of life

ND children have higher rates of bullying, depression, and anxiety, and higher rates of suicidal thinking and completed suicide.

The ND community is stigmatized, invalidated, marginalized, and “othered” by mainstream society. They live in a world that does not work for their brains. Healthcare, business, schools, and most other things are designed for only certain brains. ND people are all too often told that they “should” be able to do things instead of being offered accommodations for their different neurology. They are told to hide or change their true selves. They are made to feel broken, ashamed, and alone. This creates a very stressful lived experience, which can manifest stress-related health conditions and psychological conditions such as hypertension, stroke, depression, anxiety, and complex post-traumatic stress disorder.

It is even worse for ND members of other marginalized groups, such as the LGBTQ community, people of color, people with lower educational and/or economic status, and people with mental illness. These individuals experience intersectional trauma and barriers to fully participating in their communities. The stress is compounded by the different layers of “othering,” and exacerbated by experiences of racism, bigotry, and intolerance to the point of violence. Racial health disparities (such as the fact that Black women in the U.S. are nearly three times more likely to die during pregnancy or delivery than any other race due to physicians’ unconscious bias) also contributes to the premature mortality rate of this group.

Stigma and ignorance complicate the issue even further. Often parents fear a diagnosis of neurodivergence, worrying that their child will “have a tougher row to hoe” if they are “stuck with a label,” so they avoid getting their child a neuropsychological evaluation. However, earlier diagnosis tends to lead to better life outcomes. Many brain differences go unrecognized. Many challenges and disabilities frequently go unexplained for decades. And often they are intergenerational, so many folks with invisible disabilities do not actually know they have disabilities. They think they are in some way “broken” or “defective” simply because the world was not designed for them. The longer a person goes undiagnosed, the longer they suffer under a self-concept of being defective and having cumulative experiences of unemployment, poverty, and disenfranchisement from society. Thus, they experience more psychological trauma from this difficult lived experience, often without access to the resources needed to adequately cope with it.

ND individuals are more at risk for experiencing misdiagnosis, medical neglect, gaslighting, and trauma from their doctors. This is because the medical model requires physicians to silo the health needs of ND patients, and so they cannot see overlapping medical issues. Also, there are several barriers within the health care system that get in the way of clinicians addressing multiple problems at a time. This can result in a patient being prescribed something intended to help one condition that is contraindicated for another condition (which is not being consid-

ered due to the siloing). Also, most medical professionals are not very knowledgeable about different ND conditions and their comorbid medical issues. They seem to have an expectation that there is some other specialist who the patient needs to see (and so physicians will often refuse to accept ND patients).

Furthermore, Western medicine separates physical and mental health without considering the interplay and causality between the two. Here is a common scenario: an ND patient goes to the doctor seeking relief from chronic pain (migraines, myalgia, arthralgia, etc.) that has become so severe that she can no longer function, and the doctor runs tests (X-rays, MRI, CAT scan, blood tests, etc.). When the test results come back “negative,” the doctor tells the patient that there is nothing “medically wrong with her,” or that her pain is “psychosomatic” or “psychological or emotional in nature.” But the doctor will not refer the patient any further for treatment because psychological, emotional, and psychosomatic issues are not his purview. The

“We all have different brains. We think, learn, play, communicate, and experience the world differently. ‘One size fits all’ does not work for all. Everything we do, we offer in multiple different ways. We believe this is an important part of helping people feel like they belong.”

~ Dr. Mel Houser.

doctor will not even know *where* to send the patient if he is asked. He will reply, “If you find out where to go for it, I will write you the referral,” leaving the task of researching treatment options up to a patient who is already so overwhelmed with her health issue that she cannot function! Experiencing a lifetime of being told “there is nothing wrong with you”/“there is no one who can help you” when you are suffering is traumatizing.



The world is now learning about “trauma-informed” practices. However, there is not enough attention given to the trauma of daily life experienced by the ND community. There is not enough attention given to the systemic ableism and neurotypical bias within the major structures of society. Neurodiversity and access are largely missing from the broader community conversations on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

One inspired physician is doing something about it: Mel Houser, M.D., is an autistic/PDA/ADHD/dyslexic/dyspraxic/dyscalculic board-certified family physician. Dr. Houser holds a doctorate in medicine from the University of Vermont College of Medicine. She completed residency training in family medicine at Middlesex Hospital in Middletown, Connecticut, where she served as chief resident. She also completed a fellowship in medical student education from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, as well as several hundred hours of training in neurodevelopment, autism, ADHD, dyspraxia, and learning differences. From this perspective, she feels uniquely poised to promote her vision of the #LongGame of true inclusion. No “defaults.” No “other.” She looks forward to shifting the greater community’s lens and understanding of neurodiversity to a new world view: *all brains are awesome, and all brains belong.*

And thus, the name of the nonprofit 501(c)(3) community health organization that she founded in November 2021: **All Brains Belong VT** is a nonprofit providing flexible, individualized ways to get healthcare and connect with community. It is located in Montpelier, Vermont. Their mission is to make life better for people with all types of brains. They do this through neurodiversity-affirming medical care, social connection, employment support, neurodiversity education, and helping people arrive at a deep understanding of their access needs. They also educate employers, healthcare professionals, and anyone else seeking to learn a new way. After all, healthcare is more than just medical care.

Dr. Houser’s health care practice takes a holistic look at ND people’s well-being and sees how the various health conditions all are connected, then provides personalized health care to solve their intertwining health conditions. She is reimagining healthcare and other systems that aren’t working for the ND community, breaking down access barriers, and implementing a universal design for all neurotypes.

Dr. Houser was inspired by the patterns that she saw in her patients. “The majority of our patients suffer from a constellation [grouping] of related medical conditions,” she says. “We found that many of the common medical treatments for some parts of this grouping made others worse. The current healthcare system often gets in the way of clinicians addressing multiple medical problems at a time. Yet by treating these intertwined medical conditions as separate, this may result in a person not getting better. Thinking of these medical conditions as a group [or cluster/constellation] may result in more improvements.”

Her nonprofit All Brains Belong (ABB) provides training programs so that clinicians can learn how to better serve their ND patients. In 2023, ABB released “Everything Is Connected to Everything: Improving the Healthcare of Autistic & ADHD Adults” (<https://allbrainsbelong.org/all-the-things/>). Co-created with 100-plus ND community members, this free resource supports patients and their primary care clinicians in recognizing and working through these conditions together. So far, more than 9,700 people from around the world have accessed ABB’s resource.

In addition to trainings, ABB provides free programs for ND individuals to connect with each other, their communities, and employment. They also run events that help improve ND people’s quality of life, like a campaign to document harassment and bullying in Vermont schools and advocating to end the use of seclusion and restraints.

Their programs are informed by the community they serve. All Brains Belong is reimagining systems, and modeling systems change from the ground up. “It’s a story of a community village coming together to reimagine what’s possible. We asked our community what they wish existed, and we created it,” says Dr. Houser.

The ABB leadership team consists of predominantly ND people, including ND people who are marginalized in multiple ways. “We are working intentionally to expand our leadership team to include more people from marginalized communities. We believe strongly that this representation matters and is critically important,” says Dr. Houser.

To learn more about All Brains Belong, visit their website at <https://allbrainsbelong.org>; subscribe to their newsletter at eepurl.com/hf1Isn; or follow them on their YouTube channel, All Brains Are Awesome: https://youtube.com/SkNoRSzNJNg?si=YruCL_jrCDmVFjbl.

Dr. Houser’s medical practice is now full, so she is no longer accepting new patients. The new patient wait list is also full. What is needed is for other physicians and medical practices to replicate what Dr. Houser has created and adopt it for the benefit of their own ND patients. All Brains Belong can help with that through the neurodiversity-affirming physician trainings they provide.

Michelle M. Baughman is a late-in-life diagnosed adult on the autism spectrum, an autism advocate serving on the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities, a parent of a twice-exceptional child, and a trauma-informed AANE Certified Coach who provides intensive, highly individualized coaching to individuals with neurodivergent conditions. Michelle ascribes to the Neurodiversity paradigm and writes to help debunk the general misconceptions surrounding these conditions in order to change the negative cultural narrative about them, and to help neurodivergent individuals live their best lives.

Mansfield Middle School Students Earn Scholastic Art & Writing Awards



Mansfield Middle School (MMS) students earned recognition from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Established in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards is a prestigious nationwide competition challenging middle and high school students to express their creative ideas. MMS award-winners in the 2024 Connecticut Student Writers Contest included Honorable Mention for (back, l to r) Luciana Solis White, Yibin Lin, and Kaylee Wang, (front l to r) Avery Hancock-Braun, Sebastian Kaufmann, and Silver Key winner Raha Esmaili Zaghi. Photo by Winter Caplanon.



Regional Scholastic Writing Award winners included: (back, l to r): Silver Key Winner Nathaniel Klassen, Silver Key Winner Kaylee Wang, and Honorable Mention Winner Chloe Song, (front l to r) Honorable Mention Winner Maia de Sousa, Silver Key Winner Raha Esmaili Zaghi, and Honorable Mention Avery Hancock-Braun. Photo by Winter Caplanon.



Mansfield Middle School Winner Ellie Brooks won a Gold Key for her written work. Gold Key winners may qualify to advance to National competition. Margaret Chatey photo.

Here is a sample of Scholastic Award-winning work: a poem by Raha Esmaili Zaghi which earned Raha a Silver Key.

Blackberry Tears

My grandfather
 In his canary-yellow shirt
 Legs scratched and bruised
 A sacrifice for his blackberry-loving granddaughter

Through the portal
 Into the crammed, thorny thicket
 Eyes like hawks
 Searching for those wild juicy tidbits

Target acquired: Picked and placed
 Into our turquoise plastic basket
 No blackberries in there now,
 Just sweet memories

I knew my grandfather for
 Ten short years
 Then he was gone,
 Like the blackberries we picked

That bitter winter night
 Huddled on the couch
 As the blanket of darkness descended softly outside
 But also in our hearts

I cried
 Till my splotchy cheeks were the color
 Of the blackberry juice I once innocently licked
 Off my tiny fingers

On that numbing evening
 Bittersweet blackberry tears fell from my chin
 Like the dribbly remnants of the fruit
 I loved

But it felt as if this time,
 I had swallowed the thorns
 On the bushes we explored together, laughing.
 That was long ago.



fatherhood.gov



AUTISM SPEAKS
 autismspeaks.org/signs

Ashford's Babcock Cornet Band



Submitted by Madeleine Adam-Kearns

Ashford's Babcock Cornet Band is the oldest continuously-running independent community band in the United States. The Babcock Cornet Band was founded in 1862 with a generous donation of \$3000 by Ashford resident, Archibald Babcock, yet its roots stem back to April of 1775.

For updated, detailed information about upcoming concerts, please "Follow" the Babcock Cornet Band on Facebook.)

2024 Current Concert Schedule-

June 29
Ashford Arts Council at Westford Distillery, Ashford, CT

July 20
Ashford Senior Housing, Tremko Lane, Ashford, CT

July 26
Rehearsal and Concert with the Babcock Summer Youth Band, Ashford, CT

August 17
Union's Old Home Day, Union, CT

September 15
Ashford Family Day, Tremko Lane, Ashford, CT

Reknoned Scholar Amy-Jill Levine Speaks in Pomfret



Submitted by Lorraine Reeder

Christ Church Pomfret is excited to announce that renowned scholar and speaker Amy-Jill Levine will give a talk on "Hearing the Parables of Jesus as Jewish Stories," on Thursday, June 6, at 7:00 p.m. in the church's Great Hall.

Levine is Rabbi Stanley M. Kessler Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace as well as University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies Emerita and Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies Emerita at Vanderbilt. Her numerous publications include *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi*, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, and *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*.

The first Jew to teach New Testament at Rome's Pontifical Biblical Institute, Levine is the recipient of numerous honors, including the Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bridge Award from the UK Council of Christians and Jews, and the Seelisberg Prize for Contributions to Jewish-Christian Relations. She is an elected member of both the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Academia Europaea.

Her talks are noted for combining with historical and literary insight with humor. She is committed to eliminating antisemitic, sexist, and homophobic theologies, values shared by the Christ Church community. A small selection of her books will be for sale after the talk.

Christ Church seeks to serve those of all religious backgrounds or none, and is located at 527 Pomfret Street (Route 169), in Pomfret. Doors to the Great Hall will open at 6:30 p.m. The event is free and open to all.

Where to find the Neighbors paper

Ashford

Terry's Transmissions
Ashford Spirit Shoppe
Ashford Post Office
Hope and Wellness

Bolton

Bolton Post Office
Subway-Bolton Notch

Brooklyn

Brooklyn Post Office
Baker's Dozen Coffee Shop
Salem Village

Chaplin

Chaplin Post Office
Blondies Restaurant

Columbia

Columbia Post Office

Coventry

Highland Park Market
Meadowbrook Spirits
Subway
Song-A-Day Music
eyeTrade

Eastford

Eastford Post Office

Ellington/Crystal Lake

3 J's Deli

Hampton

Hampton Post Office
Organic Roots Farm
Hampton Generall Store

Lebanon

Lebanon Post Office
Market on the Green

Mansfield/Storrs

All Subway shops
Storrs Post Office
Starbucks
Liberty Bank
Chang's Garden

Mansfield Center

East Brook Mall

Mansfield Depot

Thompson's Store

North Windham

Bagel One
Subway
No. Windham Post Office

Pomfret

Weiss, Hale & Zahansky
Vanilla Bean Restaurant
Pomfret Post Office
Baker's Dozen Coffee Shop

Putnam

Subway
Putnam Post Office

Scotland

Scotland Post Office

South Windham

Bob's Windham IGA
Landon Tire
So. Windham Post Office

Stafford

Stafford Coffee Company
Subway
Stafford Post Office
Stafford Cidery
Stafford Library
Mill Pond Store

Tolland

Birch Mountain Pottery
Subway
Tolland Post Office
Parker Place

Willington

Franc Motors
Willington Pizza I & II
Willington Post Office
Willington Library
Willington Senior Center
The Packing House

Windham/Willimantic

Willimantic Food Co-op
Design Center East
Schiller's
CAD Marshall Framing
Clothespin Laundromat
Main Street Cafe
That Breakfast Place
All Subways
Super Washing Well
Elm Package Store
A1 Service Station
Blondie's Restaurant

Windham Center

Windham Post Office

The Planet Press

Happy Summer!

Nº5

June — 2024

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Instagram

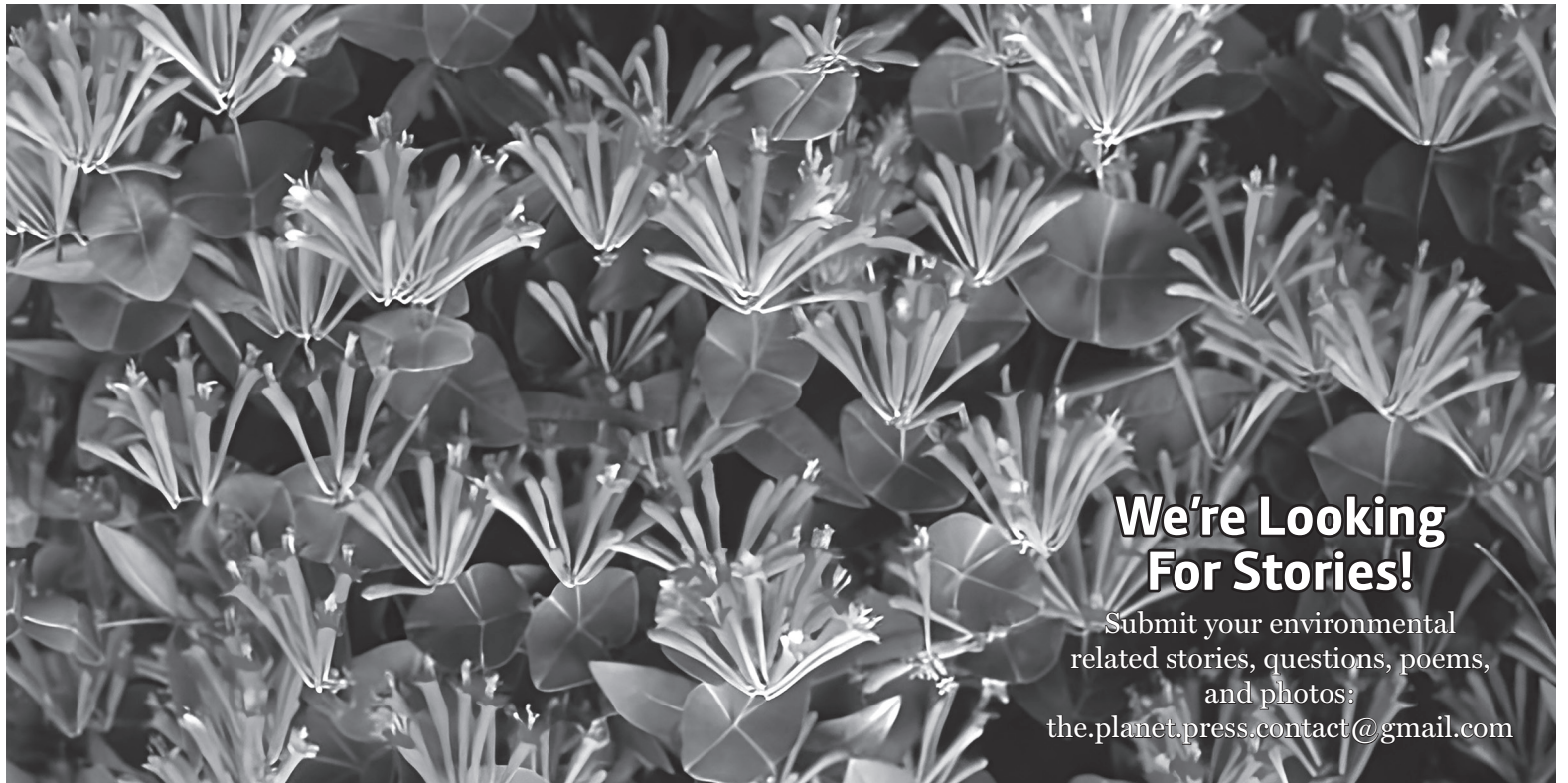
Cameron Yanicky
Writer, Designer, Editor



The Planet Press Mission

We strive to build a resilient community through accurate, and engaging environmental news. Our mission is to illuminate issues affecting Connecticut, fostering positive change through informed dialogue. We value diverse voices and aim to preserve Connecticut's natural beauty for future generations.

News, Articles, and Opinions Impacting Our Planet



We're Looking For Stories!

Submit your environmental related stories, questions, poems, and photos:
the.planet.press.contact@gmail.com

UConn Give and Go

UConn's Give and Go program enables students to donate gently used items at drop-off points across campus. These items are then sorted and distributed to community organizations that assist those in need. The program helps reduce waste sent to incinerators, offers a convenient donation method for students, and supports residents.

The program started in 2009 and continued until the pandemic interrupted it. Over a decade, it diverted more than 40 tons of donations.

Cicadas

At this very moment, something extraordinary is happening across vast areas of the eastern US: the soil erupts with trillions of periodical cicadas growing underground for 13 or 17 years, waiting for this precise moment to emerge from the earth simultaneously.

This surge of life is exceptionally rare. The two groups emerging, referred to as Brood XIX and Brood XIII, coincide only once every 221 years. Brood XIX consists of 13-year cicadas in southern Illinois, Missouri, and parts of the southeast, while Brood XIII comprises 17-year cicadas in and around northern Illinois.

Wildfire Season

Once again, numerous US states are encountering an influx of wildfire smoke as Canada's summer fire season commences. The extensive wildfires, combined with weather patterns, are causing significant amounts of smoke to drift southward, reminiscent of last year.

The principal risks of wildfire

smoke are from delicate particulate matter, like soot (PM 2.5), which can enter the lungs and bloodstream, worsening breathing and exacerbating health conditions such as asthma. Hazardous gases and chemicals in the smoke, such as carbon monoxide and benzene, also pose health threats.

Coal Mining Updates

Activists have long pushed the Interior Department to stop leasing coal mining on public lands, celebrating the decision. It could prevent billions of tons of coal extraction from over 13 million acres in Montana and Wyoming, significantly impacting U.S. climate goals.

In its latest environmental impact statement released on Thursday, the Bureau of Land Management within the Interior Department concluded that ongoing coal leasing in the Powder River Basin would adversely affect the climate and public health. The bureau recommended against any future coal leasing in the basin and projected that coal mining in the Wyoming area of the region would cease by 2041.



Hurricane Season Estimates

Every year, the hurricane season spans June 1st through November 30th. NOAA forecasts an 85% likelihood of an above-normal hurricane season, expecting 17 to 25 named storms, eight to 13 hurricanes, and four to seven major hurricanes, defined as those with sustained winds of at least 111 mph, falling into categories 3, 4, and 5.

As many residents of Connecticut's shoreline communities have already experienced, or may soon experience, insurance companies are not taking any risks. Homeowners insurance rates are rising, with some seeing double-digit increases annually. What was once a rare "hurricane deductible" has become nearly universal.

"The forecast for named storms, hurricanes and major hurricanes is the highest NOAA has ever issued for the May outlook"

- Rick Spinrad
Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

If wind from a hurricane or any other storm blows parts of your house away or topples a tree onto your roof, causing damage, homeowners insurance should cover it (at least after you pay the deductible).

However, if rain from that same storm or hurricane floods and damages your ground floor, homeowners insurance will not cover it. For that, you would need

flood insurance, which is required in many cases but not all.

Climate change is partly to blame.

It has led to unprecedented warmth in the oceans, providing more fuel for storms. Matthew Rosencrans, NOAA's lead hurricane forecaster, noted that sea surface temperatures in the main storm development area are currently where they would typically be in August — 2 to 3.5 degrees Fahrenheit above average for this time of year.



The War on Hydrilla

Hydrilla, an invasive aquatic plant also known as 'water thyme,' was first discovered in the Connecticut River near Glastonbury, CT, in 2016 and has since spread to Essex, Connecticut, as well as various coves, tributaries, and boat basins along the river.

This particular strain of hydrilla found in the Connecticut River is not only invasive but also genetically distinct from others. Its unique biology, largely unknown, has been a subject of intrigue. Surveys conducted in 2019 and 2020 revealed its presence as far north as Agawam, MA, confirming its spread.

The plant poses a significant risk of further expansion to other regional waterbodies as fragments easily attach to boats and trailers, float, and disperse through wind and water currents.

Recognizing the Connecticut River's ecological and economic importance, stakeholders are

advocating for an aggressive eradication and management program. This program, if successful, will not only protect the river's biodiversity but also ensure the sustainability of local businesses and recreational activities.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its Engineer Research and Development Center's (ERDC) Aquatic Plant Control Research Program will spearhead a demonstration project. It

aims to assess the effectiveness of herbicides authorized for aquatic use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in safely diminishing and managing the proliferation of hydrilla in the Connecticut River.

This initiative will delve into hydrilla's growth behaviors and water flow dynamics within the river, and evaluate herbicide performance under laboratory conditions in 2023. These findings will inform larger-scale field demonstrations of herbicide effectiveness slated for 2024.

The hydrilla treatment is expected to impact recreation on the Connecticut River minimally. Except for temporary restrictions when contractors are onsite for treatment, no long-term closures or limitations on access are foreseen.

As for fishing, treatment is anticipated to have minimal to no impact on fishing activities or access to fishing spots.



Hydrilla
Hydrilla verticillata

The Dryest Form of Waste

Typically, we gladly use electrical energy to replace the physical effort needed to handwash laundry.

Even with an efficient washer and dryer, you can significantly reduce the energy and water they use.

Like an adequately filled refrigerator, washers and dryers work best with appropriately sized loads. Regular maintenance of your washing machine will prolong its lifespan and improve cleaning performance. Simple repairs can also enhance dryer efficiency.

Over their lifespan, operating clothes washers and dryers generate more emissions than manufacturing them. Therefore, it is wise to purchase the most energy-efficient models and use them in ways that reduce their environmental impact.

Carbon emissions from your washer and dryer can range significantly from 51 to 159 kg of CO2 annually. On average, each load of laundry washed in hot water and tumble-dried emits 3.3 kg of carbon dioxide.

The dryer is the main offender. Dryers consume significant en-

ergy: 66 billion kWh annually, accounting for 5.8% of all residential electricity use. Current models can differ by over 33% energy consumption for drying the same load.

However, no labeling, incentives, or promotional programs guide consumers toward the most efficient models. The current DOE test procedure only measures part of the drying cycle, overlooking key differences and creating the false impression that all dryers have similar efficiency.

Hanging laundry to dry eliminates the emissions from tumble

drying. If you need to use a dryer, opt for the high-speed spin cycle on your washing machine first; it uses less electricity than drying the water in the dryer. Natural wool dryer balls, a nontoxic alternative to dryer sheets, can also reduce drying time.

Clean the filter after each load to improve air circulation, boost dryer efficiency, and lower the fire risk. While most appliance features consume extra electricity, sensor drying saves energy by stopping the dryer once the clothes are dry.

What Do You Think?

What would make you opposed to not using a dryer to dry your clothes? Email: the.planet.press.contact@gmail.com



The Benefits of Planting Native Species

Spring and summer present ideal growing conditions for many plants, making them ideal seasons for tending lawns and gardens. Though it is easy to succumb to the temptation of exotic plants, avid gardeners and eco-conscious planters recognize the significance of native plants.

Novices may not realize that native plants are much better for a landscape and the local ecosystem it calls home. Recognition of the many benefits of native plants can make for healthier lawns and gardens and a healthier planet.

Native plants are uniquely adapted to local climates. This is a key advantage over exotic plants, which often struggle to thrive in harsh weather conditions. For instance, exotic plants may demand additional watering in areas prone to drought or extended periods without rain in spring and summer. The United States Environmental Protection Agency predicts water shortages in at least 40 states by 2024. By contrast, native plants are more resilient, reducing the need for watering during dry spells in late

spring and summer, and thus helping to alleviate these anticipated water shortages.

Native plants are a cost-effective choice. It's worth noting that native plants can significantly reduce homeowners' expenses. Their ability to thrive in local conditions means they require less watering, leading to lower utility bills.

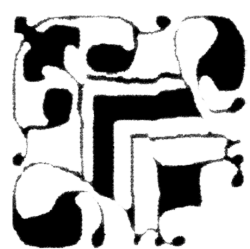
Additionally, native plants typically need less maintenance, saving homeowners from potentially expensive and environmentally harmful pesticides and other amendments required to maintain exotic plants. While this may not always be the case, it's common for exotic plants to be more expensive at nurseries than native varieties.

Native plants save gardeners time. In addition to saving money, native plants don't require as much attention. Though spring and summer are great times to be in the yard, they are also a great time to be out and about. Because native plants thrive in local conditions, gardeners won't need to spend much of their free time tending to them. Exotics

tend to require a lot of extra attention and effort, especially when conditions become harsh. Spending more time outdoors in harsh weather does not appeal to most gardeners.

Native plants blend in with an existing landscape. Native plants look natural within a landscape, adding some instant aesthetic appeal without breaking the bank. When planting exotics, homeowners may need to redesign their entire gardens to create a certain look (think Japanese garden). That can quickly consume a budget and take up a lot of free time in both the short and long term.

Planting season marks a great time to revitalize a landscape. Choosing native plants when doing so pays numerous dividends for homeowners and the planet they call home.



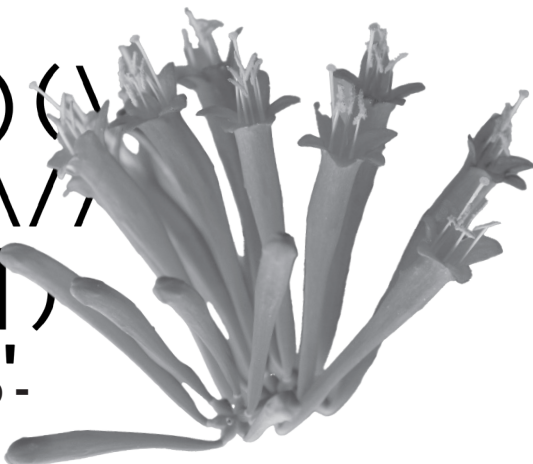
Flower of the Month

June



Honeysuckle

Honeysuckle, along with the rose, is June's birth flower. It symbolizes love, passion, affection, and happiness, which are often linked to warm and romantic early summer days. With its rich symbolism and fragrant blooms, honeysuckle is perfect for June birthdays and special occasions.



The Benefits of Residential Solar Energy

Solar energy panels have gained visibility in neighborhoods across the country. Where it once was a rarity to see solar panels on the roofs of homes, today, a stroll or drive around a given community is bound to reveal that several homeowners have transitioned to solar power. You may be wondering if the investment is worth it.

Although having solar panels on the roof may affect a home's aesthetic, many people find the benefits far outweigh such issues. Consider these perks of going solar.

- Secure your finances: One of the most compelling aspects of solar power is its potential to significantly reduce your monthly utility bill. As electricity costs continue to rise, the cost of solar has decreased by more than 70 percent in the past decade, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association.

- Take control of your investment: The cost of installing solar panels is becoming increasingly affordable. Depending on the size of the system, the up-front cost of a residential solar power system can range from \$3,500 to \$16,000, as noted by Investopedia. The United States has extended the federal residential solar tax credit, allowing you to save

a 30 percent tax credit on the cost of solar systems through January 1, 2033, according to Energy.gov. With a variety of financing options available, you can take control of your investment and make solar power even more affordable.

- Increased home value: According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, homeowners can increase the value of their homes by \$20 for every \$1 in savings on electrical bills from solar energy. Homes with solar panels sell 4 percent higher than those without them.

- Get paid back: Solar incentives in some areas may enable homeowners to turn profits and generate electric bill savings. Solar renewable energy credits compensate you for the electricity generated by the solar panel system.

- Avoid power disruptions: Strong storms or accidents affecting power lines can kill traditional electricity for hours. Battery storage combined with solar energy can be beneficial during a power disruption and eliminate the need to purchase a backup generator.

- Protect the planet: Burning fossil fuels to generate power contributes to carbon emissions. Switching to solar can reduce carbon emissions and help prevent air and water contamination.

Solar energy panels are becoming more visible in residential neighborhoods thanks to the many benefits such panels provide.

Fireflies in the Garden

Here come real stars to fill the upper skies,
And here on earth come emulating flies,
That though they never equal stars in size,
(And they were never really stars at heart)
Achieve at times a very star-like start.
Only, of course, they can't sustain the part.

By Robert Frost

Photos from the Azores
Read Dennis Blanchette's article inside.



Clockwise from top left: Dennis and Janet at overlook of Blue Lake. Blue Lake. Janet at the Terra Nostra Botanical Garden. Pulling pots from the hot springs. Dennis on Pico.
All photos by Dennis and Janet Blanchette.

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